

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Fairfax Social Media Operational Policy

Subject: Social Media and Blogs

Number: VII.A.

Effective Date: 9/16/15

Approved By: Coordinating Team

Updated: 6/30/24

Policy

UUCF uses social media, including but not limited to, [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), TikTok, [YouTube](#) and the UUCF "[Faith Matters](#)" blog, to communicate about the congregation's mission, values, programs, and activities and to serve as an online community for UUCF members and friends. As such, these media represent the congregation to the public and may be accessed by any user who is interested in UUCF. The UUCF director of communications will maintain a regular presence on UUCF social media and monitor the use of all UUCF social media and edit/delete as necessary according to the guidelines outlined in the Procedures section below to maintain a positive public image and protect UUCF's interests.

Permission must be obtained from a parent or legal guardian to post photographs or videotapes of children under age 18 on UUCF social media. Posting full names of children is avoided. First names and last initials are used to provide recognition for that child/youth, with a parent's permission.

Procedures

The following guidelines are intended to help staff and congregants reflect UUCF's values through the use of social media. While individuals are personally responsible for what they write on social media, UUCF is the entity most at risk, legally and by reputation, when postings are irresponsible. Therefore, these guidelines are designed to encourage responsible online communication that reflects positively on UUCF.

- Confidentiality of private information must be maintained. When sharing another person's social media content, do not share personal or sensitive information. Not all material is appropriate for public sharing. If in doubt, please consult the individual before sharing. Remember that these are public media that may be viewed by anyone with internet access, and that the UUCF social media postings, both text, images and videos, are fully publicly viewable.
- Copyrights must be respected. Copying other people's writing is considered plagiarism. Such posts will be removed. Material cited that is not available online must be attributed to the speaker/author. Spoken text can be attributed by using the speaker's name. Written text should be attributed using the title and author. Full

reference citations are not necessary for social media. Citations of information seen, heard or read online should include the link to that information. Consideration should be given to the nature of the material cited and the nature of the site itself so as not to conflict with the mission, values or activities of UUCF.

- Postings will be removed by the administrator that contain any of the following: insensitive, inflammatory or offensive language, jokes or slanderous comments, whether in text form or image form, based on a person's gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, ability, politics, age, or religion.
- Personal attacks and attacks on the congregation are inappropriate and will be removed by the administrator.
- Solicitations to support personal or organizational fundraisers are not permitted and will be removed.
- Personal affiliations and conflicts of interests should be noted by those posting comments. If the administrator notes postings where this information is not revealed, such postings are subject to removal.

UUCF Blog

UUCF will maintain one main blog that will be posted on the UUCF website and shared on social media. The blog will carry posts from the ministers and lay leaders. Other blogs with specific audiences or purposes may be added by the administrator when the director of communications, in consultation with the Coordinating Team, deems it appropriate.

Individuals interested in posting to the UUCF blog may submit an entry or query to the director of communications. If there are questions about the appropriateness of the entry or about more than two entries submitted by the same person in the same week, the Coordinating Team may be consulted to make a decision regarding publication using the following criteria:

- Relevance and importance to the overall UUCF mission.
- Potential interest to a high percentage of UUCF congregants.
- Whether there are more effective, alternate ways to communicate that message.

Appropriate materials for a blog include discussions on a topic, well-examined opinions on a subject, stories about events related to UUCF, profiles of significant or prominent members, participants or figures or similar content. Material that solely promotes an event or activity or provides a brief comment on a recent activity, sermon or previous blog is welcome on the UUCF social media, but is not generally considered blog material. Those uncertain about whether to post on a blog should contact the director of communications to discuss the material.

The UUCF blog is not to be used as a venue for airing grievances or conflicts. Differences of opinion may be expressed with respect. Views expressed as accusation, confrontation or argument may be removed by the communications specialist.

Facebook and Instagram accounts

UUCF has one primary [Facebook](#) and one primary [Instagram](#) account: These accounts are administered by the director of communications and communications assistant, with UUCF ministers and other key staff and volunteers also holding administrative privileges.

UUCF-affiliated groups/committees (affiliated group is defined as a group that uses the UUCF name and/or logo) may wish to establish Facebook pages or Instagram accounts to communicate specific agendas and/or establish identities to a broader audience than that served by a Facebook Group. Establishing a Facebook page must be affirmed by at least one UUCF lay ministry and the Coordinating Team.

UUCF-affiliated Facebook pages or Instagram accounts will operate in the following ways:

- Each page/account must be set up by a primary administrator, designated by the sponsoring committee. There must be more than one administrator for each. In addition, the UUCF communications specialist must also be made an administrator for all pages/accounts.
- The most current UUCF logo must be used on all UUCF-affiliated pages and must be placed on the page when the administrator sets it up. Administrators should contact the director of communications when they are uncertain of protocol for using the UUCF logo (spacing, colors, location, etc.).
- Primary administrators are responsible for conduct on their accounts and will be responsible for deleting inaccurate or offensive posts or posts in violation of the policies outlined in this document. The minister may take on this role if inappropriate posts have not been removed by the designated administrator.

Facebook Groups

Facebook Groups can be more private/exclusive than Facebook pages. UUCF-affiliated groups and committees may use Facebook Groups to communicate among group members. Facebook Groups offer flexibility, including the ability to post documents, schedule events, post photos, chat real-time and more. All participants on Facebook Groups must have Facebook profiles (accounts). The group's shared email address can be used for communication with the group and members can choose to be notified of new posts.

There are three types of Facebook groups:

- Secret - Only members can see the group and what members post.

- Closed - Anyone can see the group and members. Only members see posts. Posts cannot be shared outside of the group because posts are not public.
- Open (public) - Anyone can see the group and what members post.

UUCF-affiliated Facebook Groups will operate in the following ways:

- UUCF-affiliated groups generally should be secret or closed groups unless they are promoting a specific agenda or activity to the general public. These may be open groups but will be monitored on an ongoing basis by the director of communications.
- Each UUCF-affiliated group must be set up by the director of communications and administered thereafter by a primary administrator designated by the committee. There must be more than one administrator for each group. In addition, the director of communications must also be made an administrator for all groups.
- An interested individual can be admitted to a group by requesting to join or have a member request that he or she join. An administrator must approve all entries into each group.
- The most current UUCF logo may be used on UUCF-affiliated group pages and must be placed on a group site when the administrator sets up a group. Administrators should contact the director of communications when they are uncertain of protocol for using the UUCF logo (spacing, colors, location, etc.).
- Primary administrators are responsible for conduct within their groups and will be responsible for deleting inaccurate or offensive posts or posts in violation of the policies outlined in this document. The director of communications may take on this role if inappropriate posts have not been removed by the designated administrator.

YouTube channel

UUCF's official YouTube channel is at

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCfrtBJtsDoELXi1FO-ThYMQ>. The channel is open to the public and houses sermon videos as well as member testimonials and other videos that highlight UUCF's mission, vision, and values.

- The channel is administered by the director of communications. The director of communications may post official videos to the channel or link to videos on other channels.
- If congregants request that videos be posted on the channel, the director of communications will consult with the ministers to determine appropriateness.
- The director of communications may remove any video from the channel that does not conform to the policies stated in this document.
- The most recent 2 years' worth of sermon videos will be available on the channel.
- Other videos will be removed after 2 years or if the director of communications determines they are no longer useful in reflecting positively on UUCF.

TikTok

UUCF's [TikTok](#) is used primarily to promote initiatives and events through short videos. The director of communications manages and oversees all content posted to TikTok.