

Digital Media Policies

First Congregational United Church of Christ; Waterloo, Iowa

Digital media platforms include and are not limited to: Websites, Facebook, Facebook Messenger, Twitter, Instagram, church blogs, message boards, LinkedIn, and YouTube.

In 2022, the most common platforms for FCUCC are the church website and the church Facebook page. The primary purpose of the website is to provide information pertaining to the workings of our congregation. Examples include: The weekly postings of Tidings; provide helpful information for visitors, i.e. directions, where to park. The primary purpose of the Facebook page is to provide a snapshot of daily or weekly happenings. Examples include postings about Sunday worship service, upcoming activities, cancellations, or a recent event.

All forms of digital media that are associated with FCUCC's name are a reflection of the church as a whole, which is a congregation of diverse people, beliefs, and values.

DIGITAL CONTENT:

Acceptable Digital content includes:

- Basic information about upcoming events (worship, classes, activities); i.e. date, time, place, title, with an appropriate image (that which is appropriately cited).
- Cancellations of events.
- Worship service recordings and live feeds.
- Updates pertaining to worship services (i.e. reopening committee updates)
- Links to other official FCUCC digital media platforms (ex. A link to the Spring Talent show originally posted on YouTube)
- Daily or weekly happenings at the church, including a picture with a short description. Example: A picture of youth painting on a canvas paired with description: "This week, our youth created art to decorate the Murphy Youth Room with!"
- Posts for state and federally-recognized holidays. Example: "Thank you to our Veterans on this Memorial Day" and "Merry Christmas from all of us at First Congregational."
- Information pertaining to church missions. Example: CROP Walk, Moment for Missions

Unacceptable Digital content includes:

- Postings promoting personal preferences.
- Political or highly charged issues.
- Pictures with identifying photos of minors without written media release consent form. (see Appendix A for Media Release Form)
- Links and other information that is not approved or vetted by the Digital Media Team (see below).

Other notes to consider:

- Complex, multi-faceted topics should be discussed in one-on-one private conversations, small group discussions, or classes, not on FCUCC digital media formats.
- Facebook posts should be limited to 75 words or less and alternatively posted to the website or blog. Brief summaries of content on the website or blog *can* be posted onto Facebook with a link to the content.
 - For example: “This week during service we are talking about the flood story. Read some comments about the scripture on the church website here:
www.firstcongucc.org/abcdefg.”

POSTING PROCESS:

Individuals in the following roles will have access to posting: Pastor, Office Administrator, Youth Director, Music Director, Organist, Moderator, Digital Media Committee, and a member of the Board of Trustees. All of these individuals will have read, acknowledged, and signed an agreement to follow this policy. Others can submit ideas for posts to any one of the aforementioned individuals for consideration.

REFERENCES:

- “5 Social Media & Email Guidelines For Church Staffs.” Houston, TX: Vanderbloemen, May 5, 2020.
<https://www.vanderbloemen.com/blog/5-social-media-and-email-guidelines-for-church-staffs>.
- Deborah Ike. “Social Media Policies for Churches.” Church Tech Today, January 15, 2020.
<https://www.churchtechtoday.com/social-media-policies-for-churches/>.
- Ministerial Excellence, Support & Authorization Ministry Team. “A Sure Foundation: Resources for the Relationship Between Pastors and Congregations.” Cleveland, OH: United Church of Christ, 2018. <https://ucctcm.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/A-Sure-Foundation.pdf>.
- “Social Media Guidelines for Clergy & Congregational Leaders.” Atlanta, GA: North Georgia Conference of the United Methodist Church, February 2016.
<https://www.ngumc.org/files/fileslibrary/communications/social+media+guidelines+2016.pdf>.

Abbie Chronister

Diane Highnam

Kay Thuesen

Evie Waack

Last Reviewed & Edited 25 February 2022

Approved by the Board of Trustees 8 March 2022

Media Release Form for Minors

First Congregational United Church of Christ (Waterloo, IA)

Name of Minor: _____

Name of Parent/Legal Guardian: _____

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> I hereby authorize First Congregational United Church of Christ (FCUCC) to be able to take photos and/or videos of the aforementioned minor. | <input type="checkbox"/> I hereby authorize FCUCC to use photos and/or videos of the aforementioned minor on FCUCC-sponsored social media and the official FCUCC website. ¹ |
| OR | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I hereby DO NOT authorize FCUCC to take photos and/or videos of the aforementioned minor. | <input type="checkbox"/> I hereby DO NOT authorize FCUCC to use photos and/or videos of the aforementioned minor on FCUCC-sponsored social media and the official FCUCC website. ¹ |
|
<input type="checkbox"/> I understand that this Media Release Form may be revoked by the aforementioned minor or parent/legal guardian at any point. | |

Signature of Minor: _____

Signature of Parent/Legal Guardian: _____

Date: _____

¹ Official FCUCC social media and website as of January 2022:
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/FirstCongregationalUCCWaterlooIowa>
YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCEAghse6zokFoExGGdkzQTg>
Website: <http://www.firstcongucc.org/>

<p>To be filled out by a representative of FCUCC:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> This Media Release Form has been received by FCUCC and will be honored.</p> <p>Name/Position of FCUCC Representative: _____</p> <p>Signature of FCUCC Representative: _____</p> <p>Date: _____</p>
