

# COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

Unitarian Universalist Congregation at Montclair

Approved by the Board of Trustees: June, 2018

Amended April 2020

**Purpose:** To establish boundaries, accountability and authority with regard to the official communication and communication channels for both internal and external communication at UUCM.

## Internal Communications Authority:

- The Office & Communications Manager manages UUCM's internal communications. The Office & Communications Manager is accountable to this policy and is responsible for making day to day decisions with respect to this policy.
- The Minister charged with serving as the point of contact for communications supervises the Office & Communications Manager and is responsible for ensuring that the day to day decisions the Office & Communications Manager makes, serve the mission and vision of the congregation.
- The Communication Team has the authority to monitor the internal communications at UUCM and suggest new practices or methods to the Office & Communications Manager. With the Office & Communications Manager's approval the communications team can engage in active internal communication on behalf of UUCM.
- The Board of Trustees has the authority to amend this policy.

**General Boundaries for all Internal Communications:** Items communicated internally must be relevant to the life of the congregation, and help the congregation live into its mission and vision. With a few exceptions spelled out below, internal communications are restricted to congregation or UU Association specific events, opportunities, and activities.

## Internal Communication Platforms and specific guidelines:

- Website
- Newsletter
- Weekly E-blast
- E-blast "More Announcements" section - *can include announcements from partner organizations (such as interfaith congregations.)*
- E-blast Special Solo Announcements - *can include Newsletter, death/memorial service of a member, all-congregation events, messages from the Board, messages from the pledge, social justice or finance teams, staff changes, and weather alerts.*
- Sunday Spoken Announcements - *will be limited to 1 (or 2 on special/rare occasions.) These are to be no more than 60 seconds in length.*

- Sunday Written Announcements - *internal events or meetings take precedence over those happening outside of UUCM; will include outside announcements only if space allows.*
- UUCM Social Media Pages/Outlets
- Printed/Posted Flyers - *can include personal announcements (such as member's performances in local plays) on appropriate bulletin boards.*
- Leaders List - *reserved for leaders specific information.*

**Notes:**

- All announcements and remembrances (that give permission) from Sunday will be included in the weekly e-blast and newsletter. Will also include announcements on the website and social media if still relevant after Sunday (not remembrances).
- The Religious Education Staff have the authority to send out their own E-blasts relevant to the RE program.

**External Communications Authority:**

- The Communications Team manages UUCM's external communications. The Communications Team is accountable to this policy and is responsible for making day to day decisions with respect to this policy.
- The Minister charged with serving as the point of contact for communications guides the Communications Team and is responsible for ensuring that the day to day decisions the Communications Team makes serve the mission and vision of the congregation.
- The Board of Trustees has the authority to amend this policy.
- The Board of Trustees has the sole authority to make statements on behalf of the congregation. Once the Board has used this authority the Communications Team is empowered to disseminate these statements.

**General Boundaries for all External Communications:** Items communicated externally must convey honestly, accurately, and respectfully events, activities, and opportunities at the congregation. As stated above, the Communications Team does not have the authority to make statements on behalf of the congregation (such as "Our Congregation opposes the Death Penalty"). The Communication Team can, however, disseminate such statements when they have been approved by the Board of Trustees. The Communications Team can also disseminate statements made on behalf of specific leaders (such as the Ministers) or committees (such as the Social Justice Coalition,) if and only if they attribute those statements appropriately. It is the Communications Team's responsibility to ensure that it is not disseminating information that can be misinterpreted as a statement of the Board/Congregation, if it is not.

### **External Communications Platforms include but are not exclusive to:**

- Social Media
- Local Media Outlets
- Press Releases

### **Content Moderation Policy for Social Media:**

UUCM has the right to delete any inappropriate content from social media pages, including but not limited to: irrelevant content, hateful content, attacks against an individual, financial solicitations, endorsements of a political candidate or party, and content that violates the social media outlets terms of use, code of conduct, or other policies. Content that violates the social media outlets policies may also be reported.

### **Content Disclaimer:**

UUCM does not officially endorse the material posted on this page.

### **Content Moderation Guidelines for social media:**

- All content dispersed over social media will be moderated by members of the Communications Team and the Office and Communications Manager.
- The majority of social media content will promote activities of UUCM, activities occurring on the UUCM campus, and activities sponsored by Unitarian Universalist congregations, UUA affiliated organizations, or interfaith affiliated organizations.
- Other types of content will include personal comments, photos, etc. from the page moderators, and people who have “liked” the Page, and these will be related to UUCM, Unitarian Universalism, values historically uplifted at UUCM, members’ events (such as art exhibits, performances, etc.) and members of our congregation, etc.
- The UUCM logo, colors and typefaces should resemble our other media “branding” styles.
- The UUCM Mission Statement should be prominently displayed.
- The UUCM Content Moderation Statement should be easily accessible.
- The account owner needs to be registered with an official UUCM email address so that ownership role can be transferred if and when we have personnel changes.
- The contact information for UUCM should be prominently displayed.
- If photos of children are posted they must comply with the photo guidelines contained in the UUCM Safety Policy.
- Administrators and Moderators should monitor and suggest edits to, or remove any content that does not comply with the guidelines contained herein; habitual offenders may be banned from further contributions.
  - If moderators have questions regarding the appropriateness of a post or if two or more moderators disagree on how a post should be handled, the moderators will deliberate and work toward an agreement.

- When posts are removed, the moderators will share the reason for removing the post, with the poster.
- Posting should be checked for inappropriate content on a daily basis.
- Serial posting should fall within these parameters: Once a week for posts about congregational events or activities; once a month for posts from members on items outside the congregation.
- New content should be added by a Moderator at least once per week.

**Social Media groups managed by leaders of the congregation**

- UUCM group leaders are welcome to use social media outlets to promote specific groups or initiatives.
- It is suggested that UUCM group leaders utilize the content moderation policy and content guidelines in this Communication’s policy to manage their groups content.
- Groups that are not established by the Communication’s Team or UUCM Staff must not be designed so that they could be mistaken for official UUCM communications outlets.

**Personal Information, Photos and Videos in all our official internal and external communication:**

- Staff and Communication Team members should seek and be compensated for education about sensitivity to online privacy issues and training about how to maintain online privacy.
- Photos will be displayed over the website or social media according to the guidelines in the UUCM Safety Policy.
- The personal contact information of our members will not be included in any unprotected online communications (such as email, facebook, or website) by our Communications Team or staff members. Efforts will be made to provide and train our leaders to use @uumontclair email addresses in as timely a manner as possible.