

## \_\_\_\_\_ United Methodist Church Policy on Staff Use of Social Media

Social networking is quickly becoming integrated into everyday life. The electronic tools aid us in communication, relationships, and information sharing in way we never before conceived possible. The use of social networking often also causes lines to blur between work, personal life and church relationships. In general, what you do on your own time is a personal decision. However, activities in or outside of work that are shared via social media may have adverse effects on your job performance, leadership abilities, and faithful witness of Jesus Christ. Therefore, it is incumbent upon us to carefully consider how we will utilize social media while employed at \_\_\_\_\_ Church.

As such, this policy is offered to provide official guidelines for social media use for all employees of \_\_\_\_\_ United Methodist Church. It is the expectation that all who participate in social media will understand and follow these guidelines.

As a child of God, a member of the church universal, and as an employee of \_\_\_\_\_ United Methodist Church, I covenant to use Facebook and other social media in ways that bring honor to God, show respect for self and for all others that might view my posts.

In particular, I covenant to:

✓ Recognize and respect that my behaviors and actions on-line are also a reflection of how other Christians and people associated with \_\_\_\_\_ United Methodist Church may be portrayed.

Just by identifying yourself as an employee of \_\_\_\_\_ United Methodist Church (either directly or as a part of your user profile) you are creating perceptions about what it means to be a Christian and a part of \_\_\_\_\_ Church.

Refrain from posting items that could reflect negatively on \_\_\_\_\_ UMC or otherwise bring embarrassment to the body of Christ. Be sure that all content associated with you is consistent with the church and your witness for Jesus Christ.

✓ Be cognizant of all that I post (in personal information, posts, images and links) and its reflections on me as a disciple of Jesus Christ and a leader in the church.

This might include but is not limited to posts/pictures about drug or alcohol use, profanity, degrading humor of any kind, or other inappropriate conduct.

Obey the law especially those governing defamation, discrimination, harassment, copyright and fair use of proprietary information.

✓ I will work within my ministry team to establish appropriate boundaries especially as it relates to building relationships on-line with children, youth, parents, and other constituents of \_\_\_\_\_ Church.

✓I will take extra care so as not to hinder or cause harm to the staff, pastors, members and ministries of \_\_\_\_\_ United Methodist Church.

I will not speak negatively or disparagingly about the pastors, staff, volunteers, members or the leadership of which they offer.

I will show respect for all people and will refrain from topics that may be objectionable or inflammatory.

I will refrain from ethnic and racial slurs, personal insults, obscenities and pornography.

I will respect confidentiality and respect personal privacy. There are many times in which employees may receive confidential or private information regarding a person/family they are serving in ministry. It is imperative that all information given you remain confidential unless you have expressed consent to share the information publicly on social media.

✓Respecting differences, appreciating the diversity of opinions and speaking or conducting yourself in a professional manner is expected at all times.

If you aren't completely confident about what you intend to share, seek advice and input before you post.

Remember that everything you post on-line is discoverable and able to be shared. If and when you do choose to delete a post, comment, image, etc. it is still available and discoverable by others, including law enforcement.

I will regularly monitor the amount of time I spend on social media, the ways in which I am utilizing it, and its effects on my ministry and service in Christ's name.

I have read \_\_\_\_\_ United Methodist Church's social media policy. \_\_\_\_\_ (initials)

I understand \_\_\_\_\_ United Methodist Church's social media policy. \_\_\_\_\_ (initials)

I agree to adhere to the policies as they are set forth in this document. \_\_\_\_\_ (initials)

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

