

Social Media Policy for Alberta and Northwest Conference

Be Wise, Be Respectful, Be Who God Expects You to Be

Social Media offer many opportunities for us to connect with others within and beyond our churches, throughout the country and internationally. When participating in social media, be human and be yourself. We live in a society that still values authenticity, honesty and integrity.

Participation in social media for United Church employees, volunteer leaders and participants involves the same values, Biblical principles, ethics and adherence to policies and legislation that we are expected to live in our day-to-day lives.

1. Be respectful and act responsibly in all communications.
2. Protect yourself and others. Be careful about what personal information you share online.
3. Know the boundaries: In Social Media, the lines between a person's work or volunteer life and personal life are often blurred. Readers may not discern the difference between official comments made for your work in social media or personal comments made on personal pages and blogs.
4. If you post about church-related matters that are within your area of work or volunteer responsibility, it's important to disclose your affiliation with the United Church of Canada.
5. State that it's YOUR opinion. When commenting on church-related items, unless authorized to speak on specific issues, state that the views expressed are your own.
6. Be diligent in respecting intellectual property (copyright and trademark), libel and slander laws, financial disclosure laws, false advertising, etc. Different medium; same laws and rules.
7. Your participation in social media should follow the following United Church policies: Ethical Standards and Standards of Practice for Ministry Personnel; Human Resources Policy Manual: Code of Conduct, Policy 3.1; Social Media Guidelines for People Involved in Youth Ministry in the United Church of Canada.

The above policies can be found at the following links:

http://www.united-church.ca/files/handbooks/pastoral_ethical.pdf

http://www.united-church.ca/files/handbooks/hr_manual.pdf

http://www.united-church.ca/files/local/duty/caring_social-media-guidelines.pdf

8. Social media posts and blogs are not the places to air personnel issues, work conflicts or personal grievances with your employer or colleagues. Please use appropriate channels.
9. If you spot a potential issue on Social Media and believe that a response is required from ANW Conference or other church bodies, please forward via appropriate channels.
10. Please contact the Conference Office if you need assistance in responding to a situation in social media or on the internet.

Approved by the Executive of Alberta and Northwest Conference on October 15, 2014.