

## Policy Governing Presence of Unitarian Church of Montpelier on Facebook and Social Media

Proposed to the Executive Team by the Unitarian Church of Montpelier's Communications Committee, August 6, 2014 and accepted on September 3, 2014.

We propose the creation of a **page** on Facebook called "Unitarian Church of Montpelier" to be maintained by members of our Communications Committee.

A page differs from personal or group Facebook accounts. Our page would add another means for Unitarian Church of Montpelier (UCM) to connect, inform, and communicate. It also has potential to be an important tool in attracting visitors by enabling them to discover us through mutual Facebook "friends" of UCM.

Facebook offers a relatively simple way for a greater number of individuals to express themselves by posting comments, photos, web links, etc. to a UCM **closed** group. Closed groups are only accessible to people who have been invited to join the group, and are not visible to the general public. Group pages would be in addition to the UCM Facebook page and are something we are investigating and testing for use by committees, task forces and other church groups. The Communications Committee will work toward educating church members who might be interested in creating closed groups with Facebook.

This statement sets forth a number of guidelines for the content on the Facebook Page and likely will be subject to change as the technology changes. Other guidelines will need revision as we gain experience with this medium and learn the most effective use of the technology.

An additional presence on social media will not replace anything that is now in place, but rather provide an additional means of communication. The contact information for UCM will be prominently displayed including links to the UCM web site and other UCM social media sites if and when they are created.

The Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) will be notified that UCM has a Facebook Page and we will ask to be added to any UUA social media directories or resources that are available

The majority of our Facebook content will

- promote activities occurring at UCM,
- activities in which members of UCM are participating and
- events in the greater Vermont area that are sponsored by Unitarian Universalist churches and UUA affiliated organizations.
- other posts that encourage, promote and support the mission statement of UCM.

Other types of content may include personal comments from people who have "liked" the page. Administrators will monitor the UCM Page and remove any content

that does not comply with the guidelines contained herein; habitual offenders may be banned from further contributions to the Page. Posting will be checked for inappropriate content on a daily basis.

New content will be added by an administrator at least once per week.

- If photos of children are posted they must comply with the photo guidelines contained in the Communications and Website Management Policy for the Unitarian Church of Montpelier.
- Additionally, all other privacy guidelines set forth in the aforementioned policy will also be respected as well as those put forth in the Sexual Abuse Prevention Policy.
- One or more representatives of the Communications Committee will be designated as a Facebook administrator and share responsibility for monitoring the content that is presented on Facebook.
- The UCM Facebook Page administrators shall report to the Communications Committee, which in turn shall report to the UCM Executive Team.
- These persons shall have full authority to create, delete and maintain the content.
- Within the content :
  - We will speak our truth.
  - Spam, profanity, hate or copyright infringements will be deleted. Offenders will lose commenting privileges.
  - We will speak with our own voices and/or share those voices historically linked with our faith.
  - Errors and/or omissions will be corrected as soon as they are known and the correction will be noted.
  - All disagreements will be done honorably and respectfully.
  - We will reply to comments, where appropriate, as promptly as possible.
  - We will link to references and source materials directly.
  - When we will ask permission before posting picture of parishioners on our public page.
  - Periodic reminders will be given to the congregation that photos on our private page are not to be shared on their public page without permission of others in the photo, respecting the rights of those who wish their UCM involvement not be made public.
  - In addition, content will avoid slander, libel, violations of copyright, profanity, off-color humor, and advocacy of political candidates.
  - Content will not reveal private personal information or advertise commercial businesses.

As the Communication Committee begins to investigate, test, and 'experilearn' how we might use Facebook groups the following guidelines are set forth with the

understanding that this is a living documents and will in all likelihood need to be revised as more information becomes available.

Facebook Group will follow all of the above guidelines.

- They will be closed groups with content only visible to members of the group.
- Group members will be reminded regularly of the privacy policies as it applies to posting and sharing content.
- Membership in the group will be limited to church members and friends.
- Membership may be denied by the Group administrator.
- As a matter of safety and transparency groups involving youth will also be open to parents of those youth upon request.