

**Presbyterian Church of Western Springs**  
**Social Media Policy**  
**June 1, 2015**

**PREAMBLE**

The Presbyterian Church of Western Springs is a welcoming, inter-generational community of faith, seeking to reflect God's inclusive love. Towards that end, the goal of this policy is to promote the well-being of all people--including staff members, church members and guests--everyone using the internet and social media. As a church we value human dignity and respect and wish to treat everyone with the love of Jesus Christ. An interpretation of this policy outside this goal is a misinterpretation of this policy.

**POLICY**

This policy is intended to provide guidance to staff, volunteers, guests and members ("the Users") of the Presbyterian Church of Western Springs for the use of social media, which should be broadly understood for purposes of this policy to include blogs, wikis, microblogs, message boards, chat rooms, electronic newsletters, online forums, social networking sites and other sites and services that permit users to share information with others in a contemporaneous manner. This policy is to be followed in addition and in a complimentary manner to the Presbyterian Church of Western Springs Email, Internet and Electronic Communication Policy.

**PROCEDURES**

The following principles apply to professional and personal use of social media on behalf of the Presbyterian Church of Western Springs as well as use of social media when referencing the Presbyterian Church of Western Springs.

- Users need to know and adhere to Presbyterian Church of Western Springs policies when using social media in reference to the church.
- Users should be aware of the effect their actions may have on their images as well as church image. The information that Users post or publish may be public information for a long time.
- Users should be aware that the church may observe content and information made available by Users through social media. Users should use their best judgment in posting material that is neither inappropriate nor harmful to the church, its staff or its members.
- Although not an exclusive list, some specific examples of prohibited social media conduct include but are not limited to posting commentary, content or images that are defamatory, pornographic, harassing, libelous or that can create a hostile work or worship environment.
- Users are not to publish, post or release information that is considered confidential. If there are questions about what is considered confidential, a User should discuss the matter with the Head of Staff or their designee.

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- Social Media networks, blogs and other types of online content sometimes generate press and media attention or legal questions. Users should refer these inquiries to the Head of Staff or their designee.
- If a User encounters a situation while using social media that threatens to become antagonistic, the User should disengage from the dialogue in a polite manner and seek the advice of the Head of Staff or their designee.
- Users should seek appropriate permission before referring to or posting images of current staff, volunteers, members or family and children of members. For more information, please see the Photo Release Form.
- Social media should not interfere with the User's responsibilities at the church. Per the Presbyterian Church of Western Springs Internet Usage Policy the church computer systems are to be used for church business purposes only. When using church computer systems, use of social media for church purposes is allowed (ex: Facebook, Twitter, blogs and LinkedIn) but personal use of social media networks or personal blogging of online content is discouraged and could result in disciplinary action.
- Users will not violate United State or Illinois trademark or copyright laws.
- Subject to applicable law, after hours online activity that violated church policies may be subject to disciplinary action.
- It is highly recommended that Users keep church related social media accounts separate from any personal accounts.

Any sensitive accusations of inappropriate use of the Social Media Policy should be directed to the Head of Staff for a proper investigation. If any sensitive accusations are directed towards the Head of Staff, then you are advised to discuss the situation with the Moderator of the Personnel Committee for investigation and resolution. We will be guided by Section D10.200 of the Book of Order in all instances.

The Head of Staff will post this policy in a conspicuous place so that guests have an opportunity to read and acknowledge if they wish.

**User Compliance**

I understand and will abide by the Social Media Policy. I further understand that should I commit any violation of this policy, my access privileges may be revoked, disciplinary action or appropriate legal action may be taken.

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Signature

Date