

## **UUCOD Communications Policy**

**Scope of the Policy:** This policy is intended to help facilitate communication within the church. It sets forth the principles the church (“UUCOD”) will follow when communicating with its members, friends (“congregants”), visitors, and the public. It defines: (1) UUCOD’s current communications methods; (2) the guiding purposes of church communications; (3) sound communication practices; and (4) responsibilities and authorities for the content and distribution of communications. It also establishes data security as an important church goal.

This Policy and the Procedures combines and replaces the

- Communication Policy approved November 2013, and
- Communication Procedures approved September 2017
- Facebook Policy approved January 2019

### **Communications Methods**

UUCOD uses a variety of methods and systems to communicate with congregants, visitors, and the public. These include email announcements, brochures and newsletters, online calendar, church website, Facebook and other social media. Currently, electronic communication methods are the main methods of communication at UUCOD.

### **Communication Purposes**

UUCOD communications serve four main purposes:

1. To inform about the governance of the church (policies, documents, Board of Directors minutes)
2. To build community and to inspire congregants
3. To provide accurate and timely information about church activities
4. To foster outreach and connection to the greater community and denomination.

### **Communications**

To achieve the four purposes stated above, UUCOD communications must be:

1. Authorized and monitored
2. Consistent with the church’s mission
3. Accurate
4. Timely

The names “Unitarian Universalist Church of the Desert” and “UUCOD” belong to the church. *Individual church members or unofficial church groups may not represent themselves as the church by using these names, or otherwise imply that they represent the church, unless*

*such communications have been authorized by the Board, a recognized church committee or group, or the Lead Minister.*

All church communications (paper and electronic) must be authorized by the Board, Board designee, Lead Minister, committee chair/designee, or activity leader.

All committees and groups are responsible for monitoring their communications to ensure relevance, accuracy, and timeliness. For example, the church's website and social media must be monitored on a regular basis to ensure that out of date and inappropriate messages are deleted.

### **Consistency with the Church Mission, Vision, Covenant and Policies**

All UUCOD communications are intended solely for official church business. The content of any communications should be consistent with, and promote the mission, vision and values of, the church, as reflected in our church covenant, policies and bylaws, as well as UUA principles. Examples of appropriate communications include:

1. Information about Sunday worship
2. Community building
3. Church activities
4. Outreach

Our seven principles and church covenant should guide us when deciding what communication is appropriate. If in doubt, don't communicate it.

Communications should also refrain from implying unilateral opinions on the part of the UUCOD congregation or its congregants. Facebook moderators, in particular, should be mindful that public pages represent the entire congregation and are not avenues for individual comment.

Church communications should not be used to disseminate personal items, or to disseminate personal items on behalf of others. Inappropriate communications include:

- Information about private events or activities
- Information about events or activities of other organizations, except for those who a charitable purpose compatible with the mission of UUCOD (subject to the approval of the Board designee, or Lead Minister)
- Advertisements for good or services

Any questions about the content of a communication should be directed to the Board, Board designee or the Lead Minister.

## **Privacy**

When writing and distributing church communications, responsible parties should always keep privacy in mind. Personal identifying information about our members and friends, such as home addresses, phone numbers, personal emails, and other contact information, are confidential and never revealed to people or entities outside of the church, without the express permission of the individual. Files containing contact or identifying information should be password-protected; lists and directories containing contact information should be secured and kept private.

## **Responsibility and Authority**

The Board of Directors (“Board”) has the responsibility to define and manage church communications, including content and distribution. Questions about this policy should be directed to the Board. The Board may delegate communications responsibilities to:

1. Office Administrator, who is primarily responsible for distributing most church communications.
2. Board designee, an individual or group, who will be authorized to communicate on the church’s behalf, as well as to maintain church communications methods and systems.
3. Recognized church committees and groups
4. Ad hoc church group tasked with a specific goal.

Adopted by action of the Board of Directors at its Duly Constituted and Noticed meeting held on December 21, 2021.

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Linda Savard, President

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Rod Belshee, Secretary