

# **First Unitarian Church Communications Procedure**

February 2017

## **Introduction**

This is a procedure that describes the coordination of the activities that provide internal and external communications within First Unitarian Church and to deliver one message about First Unitarian Church to the outside world. The procedure includes and frames:

- Need to *facilitate flow of communication* throughout First Unitarian in all directions
- *Disseminate* First Unitarian information to the public-at-large
- *Establish* policies and procedures concerning communications
- *Evaluate* communication effectiveness, both internal and external

## **Administration of the Procedure**

This procedure will be overseen by the Business Manager, in consultation with the Executive Team. (Communications teams will report through ET)

## **Speaking for the Church**

The First Unitarian Society of Wilmington fully and completely supports the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States. Any member may say anything he or she wishes to any one he or she wishes – as a citizen and as a member of the Church. However, speaking *for the* Church is a different matter.

If the media, political or legal affiliates address First Unitarian with questions regarding its position on a given subject, the ministers and/or the President of the Board of Trustees will respond in accordance with Executive Limitation 8.11.

## **Bulletin Board [non-electronic] Procedure**

The bulletin boards in the Parish Hall and the hallways are provided to create accessible, useful, and interesting ways to communicate information to First Unitarian members. The staff, board, committees and members may post information on the bulletin board that is of general interest to the First Unitarian community. All messages should be dated, unless of an ongoing nature.

The bulletin board will be divided into logical sections to best serve First Unitarian members and help them locate pertinent information.

When posting items on the Bulletin Board, please remember to include a contact name and telephone number along with complete information. Partisan political announcements may not be posted on the bulletin boards. For more information, see procedure below:

## **Procedure for Bulletin Board Posting**

### Bulletin Boards:

All Flyers, notices, and articles must be submitted to a member of the ET or Program Staff for approval before posting. Staff person who approves an item for the bulletin board will initial and date the item in lower right corner.

Priority will be given to:

1. First Unitarian Church classes and events
2. UU Congregations, the JPD, and the UUA
3. Local Non-profit Organizations with direct church connections

Flyers shall be taken down immediately after the date of the event; other notices (such as obituaries and news clippings) will be removed no later than 30 days after posting.

Flyers and notices are to be posted on designated bulletin boards in the parish hall, the narthex, and area hallways ONLY.

- Items may be posted on the CYRE bulletin board only with the permission of the DRE.

### Other publicity:

- No notices or flyers shall be taped to walls, windows, or doors without approval by ET or Program Staff.
- Taped up flyers should be used with discretion, as their impact is greater when used less often.
- Flyers shall not be placed on tables, racks, nor handed out without ET or Program Staff approval.

The staff may rearrange or remove items from the bulletin board that are:

- Outdated
- Overly large
- In violation of these policies

### **General information about publications deadlines**

Because we are such a busy church, we usually have more activities to promote than space in our publications. It can be challenging to fit it all in, keep it attractive, and meet all the deadlines. Please help us be more efficient and follow these guidelines

- For Friday E-news, “This week at First Unitarian Church” and Order of Service the deadline for articles is NOON on the Tuesday before.
- Please make your articles brief and concise.

- Please do not add fancy formats or typefaces. We need to use a consistent style since we are fitting your articles into a single document. Plain text or Times New Roman in your word document work best.
- Please Email to [Programadmin@firstuuwilm.org](mailto:Programadmin@firstuuwilm.org)
- We can also accept neat, handwritten entries in Publications Assistant's mail box in the office. Please include your name and phone number so she can contact you if she has questions.
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### **Procedure for requesting an extra Constant Contact Email Blast**

The office is able to support one additional E-News blast, focused on a single event or issue, per week, over and above the routine Friday E-News publication.

- [Programadmin@firstuuwilm.org](mailto:Programadmin@firstuuwilm.org) is the contact email for the person who manages the schedule for Wednesday E-Blasts, and schedules on a first come, first serve basis.
- Requests should be submitted in writing (email preferred) to [programadmin@firstuuwilm.org](mailto:programadmin@firstuuwilm.org) at least one week ahead of the publication date requested. We will confirm date via email once the request has been assigned a date.
- Once scheduled, the content is due to [programadmin@firstuuwilm.org](mailto:programadmin@firstuuwilm.org) by noon on Monday of the week it is scheduled to go out.
- Extra blasts are sent out on Wednesdays.

### **Inserts in the Order of Service**

Written announcements distributed with the Order of Service on Sundays are compiled from the Friday E-news content. The primary function of the Sunday announcements is to provide reminders about upcoming events.

- The normal insert that goes into the order of service on a normal Sunday is “This Week at First Unitarian Church.”
- Office staff will format additional inserts as needed.
- Content for the insert is due to the [programadmin@firstuuwilm.org](mailto:programadmin@firstuuwilm.org) no later than noon on the Tuesday before the Sunday in which the insert is to appear. Items submitted after this deadline may not be included as an insert.
- Office staff will check with worship leader on whether we can approve an insert.
- Criteria in order of importance:
  - a. Items relating directly to the worship service e.g. Responsive readings for the New Member Recognition or Child Dedication.
  - b. Words to hymns that do not otherwise appear in the hymnal.
  - c. Inserts for “big” events that affect everyone in the congregation.  
Examples here would be Ingathering or Guest at Your Table Materials.

## **Pulpit Announcements**

- Announcements from the pulpit are read by the minister or Worship Associate performing the liturgist role in the worship service. They complement the announcements that appear in the *This Week* insert and on the slide show and are intended to highlight events that are significant to the entire church community.
- We try to keep spoken announcements to a minimum since these disrupt the service and can make it unnecessarily long. A maximum of three to five spoken announcements is a good guide for most Sundays.
- All announcements should be submitted in writing to the minister or other person leading the service by end of business Thursday. Announcements given to the ministers Sunday morning before church have a low priority in terms of being shared.
- Pulpit announcements should be no longer than approximately 70 words. Shorter has a greater impact! Announcements that are longer than this will be edited by the minister announcing them.
- Announcements which contain inappropriate material will not be given.
- The minister may eliminate some announcements if the information is available in other formats.

## **Church Directory**

The First Unitarian directory is a collection of names, addresses, phone numbers, family members and e-mail addresses of First Unitarian members and friends.

The directory is updated monthly, and posted to the web site in a password protected area. Printed copies are available in the church office; new ones are printed when supplies run out.

The Church office is responsible for producing the directory, but may solicit and enable volunteers to aid in its preparation.

## **First Unitarian Website - [www.firstuuiwilm.org](http://www.firstuuiwilm.org)**

### **Purpose**

To engage and attract those who may be seeking a liberal religious community, to provide general information about our church, and to serve as an ongoing resource for our members and friends, via the Internet.

### **Priorities**

- Outreach-oriented information about our church activities and practices, location, and schedule, and links to information about Unitarian Universalism in general
- Current information such as the schedule of upcoming sermon topics or services, weekly calendar, and certain topical announcements
- Current information relating to our Religious Education Programs
- Information regarding various fund raising efforts of the Congregation
- Reference information such as material describing our church history
- Archival information such as texts of past sermons

In adapting material from the First Unitarian Church of Wilmington and other internal church sources, the Web editor will take into consideration the highly public nature of the Internet and remove information judged inappropriate, such as unduly personal news items, names of minors, and contact phone numbers or addresses not intended for general distribution. Publication of photographs of minors requires permission of their parents. Children registered with CYRE have permission forms on file. Photographs for adults may be used without names, and will be removed from publication if requested.

### **Sunday Morning Parish Hall Tables Procedure**

The Parish Hall tables are provided to create accessible, useful, and interesting ways to communicate information to First Unitarian members. The staff, board, committees and members may provide personnel and maintain tables that are of general interest to the First Unitarian community.

Since space in the Parish Hall is limited, a standard layout has been established, and a procedure has been developed to approve table requests. Not all requests for a table may be granted.

Partisan political organizations and/or commercial organizations or companies may not have a table at First Unitarian.

### **Coffee Hour Procedures**

- All tables for coffee hour will be coordinated via email to [programadmin@firstuuwilm.org](mailto:programadmin@firstuuwilm.org)
- The following groups will have a permanent table in the coffee hour: Booster Cards, UUSC Coffee, Social Action Team, and Welcome Table. Each of these groups needs to provide a monthly schedule for table use to the Business Manager by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the previous month. If no one is manning these tables they will be released to other groups to use on a given Sunday.
- Book Corner will also have a dedicated card table, book cart and greeting card display in addition to its cabinet.
- A 6 or 8 foot table will also be set up for food and refreshments provided by different church groups. The schedule will be managed via a Sign Up Genius app and the Membership Team.
- Requests for the coming Sunday should be submitted via email to [programadmin@firstuuwilm.org](mailto:programadmin@firstuuwilm.org) no later than noon of the Thursday before.
- The Business Manager has the full authority to assign tables, keep the schedule, and determine the lay out of the Parish Hall for coffee hour.
- No group will reserve the extra table for more than three weeks in a row. After a week off, the same group can reserve another three week block.
- The Business Manager will use the following criteria in resolving conflicts over the table schedule. Groups that meet the following criteria, from most important to least, will be granted a table:
  - First request submitted
  - Group is affiliated with a member of the Program Staff
  - Group is affiliated with the Church
  - Group is outside the church but matches the mission/Ends of the church
- Requests for exceptions to this procedure must be approved by the Executive Team. Such exceptions might include all-church activities or special events.

### **First Unitarian Church Facebook Procedures**

First Unitarian Church has a Facebook page at <http://www.facebook.com/firstuuwilm>

Program Staff, ET members and approved volunteers all have moderator status and can post albums, events, post comments, delete inappropriate posts and add links, videos, etc. Anyone can “like” the page and post content to the wall, add photos, links and videos, or start a discussion.

The purpose of the page is to promote our activities both within and outside our church community. Open discussion by church members and staff is encouraged.

The following guidelines apply to moderators of the Facebook Page:

Moderators should monitor the Facebook Page and remove any content that is inappropriate. Inappropriate content includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Posts that speak on behalf of the church unless in compliance with Board of Trustees Executive Limitation 8.11.
- Posts that attack other people or that otherwise do not align with our principles and purposes.
- Posts that disclose sensitive, proprietary, confidential, or financial information about the church, other than what is publicly available
- Posts of any material that is obscene, defamatory, profane, libelous, threatening, harassing, abusive, hateful or embarrassing to another person or any other person or entity.
- Moderators should use Facebook to promote their church activities and programs, and help encourage participation in those programs.
- Paid FB ads may be created by approved volunteers or staff. Funds are provided by the publicity budget.

The following guidelines apply to all users of the First Unitarian Church Facebook page and are to be posted in the information section of our page:

- Those who have liked our Facebook page are able to post to our page, and are encouraged to do so in an appropriate manner.
- Only photos of children whose parents have given permission to the Director of Religious Exploration as part of their CYRE registration process may be posted.
- Photos of adults may be posted, provided that the subject(s) of the photo(s) are aware they are being photographed and have not indicated that they do not wish to have their photo published.
- Photos will be removed upon request by the subject.
- Do not post the following:
  - Posts that speak on behalf of the church.
  - Posts that attack other people or that otherwise do not align with our principles and purposes.
  - Posts that disclose sensitive, proprietary, confidential, or financial information about the church, other than what is publicly available.
  - Posts of any material that is obscene, defamatory, profane, libelous, threatening, harassing, abusive, hateful or embarrassing to another person or any other person or entity.
  - Advertisements, solicitations and/or market and/or promote any business or commercial interest, chain letters, or pyramid schemes.

### **Collecting & Reviewing News Articles**

Set a Google Alert for First U News Articles at <https://www.google.com/alerts>

Set alert for “First Unitarian Wilmington”

Choose options for email frequency and search sensitivity

When articles come in through Google Alert – print and include in news archive binder

Member death – print copy of obituary to post to web, link to enews article announcing death (<http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/delawareonline> )

Sometimes articles are also brought in by church members – make a copy and include it in the news archive.