



From Frazer UMC, Montgomery, Alabama Employee Handbook • Updated Sept. 7, 2010

SOCIAL MEDIA & NETWORKING WEBSITES

a. PERSONAL WEB SITES/SOCIAL MEDIA

Personal web sites, blogs and social media (hereafter referred to collectively as social media) have become prevalent methods of self-expression and community interaction in our culture.

1. Representation of the Church

Frazer UMC respects the right of employees to use social media during non-working hours. However, because the nature of these sites is essentially public, certain guidelines apply in the same manner as if the employee were speaking in person to a public gathering. Thus, if an employee is identifiable as a Frazer UMC employee on a social media site (their own, or as a public contributor to someone else's), he or she must adhere to the following guidelines:

- *Communicate in a manner that honors Christ and demonstrates His love for others. Our responsibility to lead the church by example as followers of Jesus includes the online realm of social media.*
- Uphold Frazer UMC's value of respect for the individual and avoid making defamatory statements about Frazer UMC employees, members, and others.
- Do not disclose any information that is confidential or proprietary to Frazer UMC. Examples of confidential information include members' financial information and giving records, medical information, and personal or family problems you may become aware of during the course of your work. Requests for prayer should be made public only if you have express permission from all those affected by the information you release.
- Make it clear to the readers that the views expressed are yours alone and that they do not necessarily reflect the view of Frazer UMC.
- Employees are expected to show a duty of loyalty to Frazer UMC. The use of good judgment and discretion is expected.

2. Use of Time and Equipment

- Employees may use Frazer equipment to access social media during work hours if the nature of their job duties and ministry responsibilities include interacting with members of the congregation and the community to promote our mission to worship, win, disciple and serve.
- Employees should not use work time or Frazer UMC equipment to access social media for personal use.



- Communication over the Frazer UMC network is not considered private and the church reserves the right to monitor such internet activity. Note that in certain situations the church may be legally compelled to access and disclose information sent over our network.

If social media activity is seen as compromising Frazer UMC or interfering with the employee's job, the employee may be asked to cease such activity and may be subject to counseling and/or potential disciplinary action.

b. CHURCH-SPONSORED WEB SITES/SOCIAL MEDIA

Church-authorized social networking and blogging is used to convey information about Frazer UMC, raise awareness of church activities and events, communicate with members, and otherwise work toward our mission to worship, win, disciple and serve to the glory of God. When communicating through social media, Frazer UMC must ensure that the content and style used maintains our identity, integrity and reputation. The following guidelines apply to social media when authorized by Frazer UMC and done for church-related purposes:

1. Creating Sites

- Only authorized employees may create sites that represent Frazer UMC or any of its ministry areas. "Sites" include creating Groups or Pages within social media.
- Authorized employees are the Director of Communications and those approved by the Director of Communications.
- Official sites must have more than one staff member as an authorized administrator and employees are required to turn over passwords and administrative privileges in the event they leave employment at Frazer UMC.

2. Posting Content

- Only authorized employees may post content to church sites. "Posting" includes using church sites to make announcements, distributing media, and initiating topics of discussion.
- The publication of confidential information is prohibited.
- Employees are expected to comply with copyright laws and avoid plagiarism. Any copyrighted information where written reprint information has not been obtained in advance cannot be posted.
- If uncertain about any information, material or conversation, discuss the content with the Director of Communications.

3. Commenting

If employees participate in discussion on church-sponsored social sites by commenting on posts, the following guidelines should be observed:



- Employee comments should only be factual or positive in nature. Constructive criticism should be communicated privately, not through social media.
- Comments should be worded with great care to avoid unnecessarily offending any group or individual. Employees who are perceived as offensive, even if that is not their intention, may be asked to attend training and/or asked not to comment on church sites.
- Only authorized employees should attempt to respond to a comment that is critical of the church or a church leader, and/or may be deemed obscene or offensive.
- Employees should report any concerns about inappropriate comments to the Director of Communication or Coordinator of Digital Ministry.

4. Unofficial Sites

Frazer UMC cannot control and cannot be responsible for sites started by non-employee subgroups of the church on their own initiative (e.g. classes, small groups, or individual church members). However, employees who have a position of leadership in a ministry area are expected to:

- Use their influence to encourage groups and individuals in their area of ministry to communicate online in a manner in keeping with the mission and values of the church
- Advise groups and individuals not to represent themselves as official church sites
- Report any unofficial sites which they become aware of that are not acting in keeping with the mission and values of the church to the Director of Communication to determine if further action is necessary



Decatur First Methodist Preschool and Kindergarten Social Networking Policy Decatur, Georgia

The following guidelines apply to all social networking media, including but not limited to Facebook, Twitter, MySpace, Wiki and personal web pages, for all employees of Decatur First Methodist Preschool and Kindergarten Weekday Children's Ministries (DFUMWCM).

- DFUMWCM employees are personally responsible for the content that they publish online. Be mindful that what you publish on a social media network, such as Facebook or Twitter, is viewed not only by the intended recipient but any and all individuals who have access to that individual's account.
- Your online behavior should reflect the same, if not greater, standards of honesty, respect and consideration than you use face to face. Remember that online communications are in writing and not subject to a "he said, she said" defense.
- Remember your association and responsibility with DFUMWCM in online social environments. If you identify yourself as a DFUMWCM employee, ensure your profile and related content is consistent with how you wish to present yourself with colleagues, parents and students.
- Even if you DO NOT specifically identify yourself as an employee of DFUMWCM, remember that those viewing your online postings may already know that you are a DFUMWCM employee. Therefore, the same responsibility to ensure that your postings are consistent with how you should present yourself with colleagues, parents, students and as a representative of DFUMWCM
- Concerns that you may have with the policies of DFUMWCM should not be aired publicly on social networking sites that can be viewed by DFUMWCM employees, families and/ or students.
- No last names, school names, addresses or phone numbers should appear online postings.
- When contributing online, never post confidential student information.
- When uploading digital photos to your social media sites, be sure that you do not post photos of your students and do not post photos of other staff members without their express approval.
- Remember that DFUMWCM is a church based preschool. Any online postings that are derogatory toward DFUMWCM employees, families and / or students reflect negatively on Decatur First Methodist Preschool and Kindergarten. In short, use common sense and common decency when contributing comments on social networking sites.
- There will be no texting or emailing during preschool hours or during any school related workshop or staff meeting. In extenuating circumstances, texting and / or emailing is permissible, as long as the employee informs the Preschool and Kindergarten Director, preferably at the start of the day if possible, that such an emergency exists.



Social Media Policy *Samples* from UMC Weekday Preschools 2010

- Any violations of the aforementioned social networking policy may result in disciplinary action, including, but not limited to, termination of employment from Decatur First Methodist Preschool and Kindergarten.



Johns Creek United Methodist Church Preschool Social Networking Policy Johns Creek, Georgia

The following guidelines apply to all social networking media, including but not limited to Facebook, Twitter, MySpace, Wiki and personal web pages, for all employees of Johns Creek United Methodist Church Preschool (“JCUMCP”).

- JCUMCP employees are personally responsible for the content they publish online. Be mindful that what you publish on a social media network, such as Facebook or Twitter, is viewed not only by the intended recipient but any and all individuals who have access to that individual’s account.
- Your online behavior should reflect the same, if not greater, standards of honesty, respect and consideration that you use face-to-face. Remember that online communications are in writing and not subject to a “he said/she said” defense.
- Remember your association and responsibility with JCUMCP in online social environments. If you identify yourself as a JCUMC employee, ensure your profile and related content is consistent with how you wish to present yourself with colleagues, parents and students.
- Even if you DO NOT specifically identify yourself as an employee JCUMCP, remember that those viewing your online postings may already know that you are a JCUMCP employee. Therefore you have the same responsibility to ensure that your postings are consistent with how you should present yourself with colleagues, parents, students and as a representative of JCUMCP.
- Concerns that you may have with the policies of JCUMCP should not be aired publicly on social networking sites that can be viewed by JCUMCP employees, families and/or students.
- No last names, school names, addresses or phone numbers should appear on online postings.
- When contributing online, never post confidential student information.
- When uploading digital pictures to your social media sites, make sure you do not post pictures of your students and do not post pictures of other staff members without their express approval.
- Remember that JCUMCP is a church-based preschool. Any online postings that are derogatory towards JCUMCP employees, families and/or students reflect negatively on Johns Creek United Methodist Church. In short, use common sense and common decency when contributing comments on social networking sites.
- There shall be no texting or emailing during preschool hours or during any school-related workshops or staff meetings. In extenuating circumstances, texting and/or emailing is permissible, so long as the employee informs the Preschool or PMO director, preferably at the start of the day if possible, that such an emergency situation exists.



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- Any violations of the aforementioned social networking policy may result in disciplinary action, including, but not limited to, termination of employment from JCUMCP.