

## ***Master Communications Policy - Second Unitarian Church of Omaha***

Date of Approval by Board of Trustees: 5/12/2011

Policy Updated: 1/12/2012, 7/25/2016

Policy Owner: Marketing and Communications (MAC) Committee

### **GENERAL:**

1. **Communications** include any information about the church or church events that is distributed internally to the congregation or externally to the larger community.
  - a. **Internal Communications** – Communications intended primarily for church members, affiliates and visitors
  - b. **External Communications** – Communications intended for the larger community. This includes any communication publicly representing Second Unitarian Church of Omaha. All external church communications will include the Second Unitarian Church logo and contact information.
  - c. **Church Logo** – All references to the church logo in this document refer to the approved graphic containing the chalice and church name.
2. **Mission and Values** – All communications of Second Unitarian Church of Omaha will reflect the mission and values of the Church.
3. **Submissions**
  - a. All submissions for publication are subject to review for appropriateness. Items not related to church business or church-supported activities and organizations (as shown on the list held by the Board Secretary) will not be published unless the Office Administrator has been notified by the Board Secretary that they have board approval. It is the responsibility of the submitter to request this approval.
  - b. All submissions will be in writing.
  - c. All submissions will meet posted deadlines.
4. **Privacy** – Respect for the privacy and safety of members, affiliates, and visitors are primary considerations. Prior to submitting articles containing personal information, including phone number, street address (the use of street address is discouraged for safety and liability reasons), email address, etc., the author must obtain the subject's permission and notify the Office Administrator that this has been done. No personal street addresses will appear on the website without express permission for this. Generally, the last name of youths under age 19 will not be used.
5. **Photographs**
  - a. Parents, when registering their children for Religious Education, may restrict photos of their children from appearing in church publications. Photographs that include minors (youth under age 19) must be checked against photo-restriction records kept on file by the Director of Religious Education.
  - b. Adults who wish to opt out of having their photograph published should let the Office Administrator know.

- c. Published photographs should credit the source.
- 6. **Communicating Cancelations** – In the event of changed/cancelled major church-wide events (excluding committee meeting changes), the Minister, the Office Administrator and the Marketing and Communications (MAC) Committee chair must be notified. Information will be put on the office telephone message, posted on the church website, sent by e-mail and possibly posted on social media sites and sent to local media. It is the responsibility of committee chairs or off-site event hosts to notify event participants of changes for non-church wide events.
- 7. **E-mail lists**
  - a. The Office Administrator e-mail address and e-mail lists will not be used to send messages without approval from the Office Administrator, the Minister or the MAC Committee Chair.
  - b. The e-mail list will only be used to communicate major church updates and announcements.
- 8. **Advisory Assistance** – The MAC Committee will act in an advisory capacity for internal and external publicity.
- 9. **Electronic Communications** – Electronic communications will be sent only to those who have given permission by “opting in” to receiving electronic communications from the church.

**REPRESENTING OR SPEAKING ON BEHALF OF THE CHURCH IN PUBLIC:**

The requirements for publicly representing or speaking on behalf of the church, also known as public response, are found in the “Use of Church Name Policy.” To request Board permission to represent the church, complete the “Application to Represent or Speak for the Church in Public.”

- 1. **Press Communications** – Press communications refer to information provided by the church to any media source. They may or may not represent public response. The following distinguishes public response from non-public response press communications.
  - a. **Public Response** – Members and non-ministerial staff must follow the “Use of the Church Name Policy” for the following public-response press communications:
    - i. Press releases that include a position and/or an opinion.
    - ii. All letters to the editor.
    - iii. Press conferences.
    - iv. Responses to journalists’ questions.
  - b. **Non-Public Response** – Press releases that do not include a position and/or an opinion, such as simple event and/or meeting announcements, do not fall under the “Use of the Church Name Policy,” but they must be coordinated with the MAC Committee.
  - c. **Coordination** – Committees are responsible for working with the MAC Committee on the creation of all press communications.

## NEWSLETTER:

1. **Purpose** – The purpose of the newsletter is to communicate information and opportunities for connection and involvement to our members, affiliates, and visitors.
2. **Contents**
  - a. The newsletter will include a list of events that covers Church activities for at least the upcoming month. Included on the listing will be Church related activities, as well as those of other groups using the Church and events taking place offsite.
  - b. The Minister, Board Chair, DRE and Treasurer will submit articles for the newsletter each month.
  - c. Committees are encouraged to submit articles for the newsletter with brief announcements that would be of interest to the congregation at large.
  - d. The topic of each article is at the discretion of the writer. Each article is subject to editing.
  - e. Each newsletter article will have a limit of 250 words (approximately one half page of newsletter space) per individual contributor or committee, not including the articles submitted by the Minister, Board Chair, DRE, and Treasurer.
  - f. Upcoming Sunday sermon titles and descriptions will be given in the newsletter.
  - g. The following contact information will be published in the newsletter:
    - i. Church phone numbers and e-mail addresses for the minister and staff.
    - ii. Names of board members and committee chairs as space allows.
3. **Versions**
  - a. The **electronic** version of the newsletter will be issued monthly and will be e-mailed prior to the beginning of the month to those members and affiliates who have opted to receive it this way.
  - b. The **print** version of the newsletter will be mailed to all members and affiliates who request it.
  - c. The **web** version of the newsletter will be e-mailed to those other than members or affiliates who have requested to receive the newsletter electronically.
  - d. The newsletter **posted on the website** will be similar to the one that is distributed to members and affiliates, **except that**:
    - i. No last names of minors will be published.
    - ii. No phone numbers, addresses, or email addresses will be published except for the church contact information for the Minister and Church staff members.
    - iii. Personal news or information will not be posted on the web version. Examples would include items such as “New Member

Profiles,” “Joys and Concerns,” or other columns which serve similar functions.

### **WEBSITE:**

1. **Administration** – The site administrator(s) will be some combination of: the Office Administrator, the Minister, and designated members of the Technology and MAC Committees.
  - a. **Technical Administration** – The Technology Committee is responsible for the technical administration of the church website.
  - b. **Content Administration** – Requests for postings or other content should be submitted to the Office Administrator, who may delegate this to volunteers. The Office Administrator will establish accounts at the appropriate access level for volunteer content providers.
2. **Timeliness** – Committee web pages should be updated or reviewed at least annually. This ensures that a visitor to the site sees at least relatively recent news and information.
3. **Training** – The Technology Committee or Office Administrator will provide training for committee members who wish to maintain their own web pages or posts on the church website.
4. **Design Consistency** – Committee pages cannot have a different color scheme or have other design elements that are inconsistent with the 2uomaha.org website theme.
5. **Privacy** – Personal information (e.g., phone number, email address) will not be published on the church website without permission. Committee Chairs who wish to keep their email addresses confidential can be issued church email addresses.

### **WEEKLY eNEWS:**

The purpose of the Weekly eNews is to disseminate timely information and calendar events announcements about church business to our members and affiliates and guests who “opt-in”. It may also include information from church-supported organizations.

1. The Weekly eNews will provide information about all Church activities for at least the upcoming one-week period. Included will be all church-related activities, as well as those of other groups using the Church and Church events taking place off-site.
2. Sunday sermon titles and speaker’s names will be given for the next one-week period.
3. Generally, each article will have a limit of 75 words per individual submission. Each item is subject to editing. Committees are encouraged to submit brief headline announcements.

## **ORDER-OF-SERVICE COMMUNICATIONS:**

1. **Written Announcements** – The order of service announcements are meant to highlight particularly timely or important church events. Articles are subject to editing and should be between 15-50 words.
2. **Highlighted Verbal Announcements** – Communication of particular announcements during the worship service should be coordinated by the minister. Anyone wishing to have their announcement highlighted should contact the minister no later than the Friday before the service.
3. **Inserts** – Any insert (extra sheet of paper) into the Order of Service should preferably be one-half sheet of paper and must relate specifically to: (1) the worship service, (2) the church activities or mission of Second Unitarian Church of Omaha or (3) an approved event or organization to which we relate. Inserts must be submitted to the office administrator no later than Wednesday the week of the scheduled inclusion. In keeping with our Green Sanctuary commitment, we ask that people limit the use of inserts.

## **ADVERTISING:**

Advertising refers to paid announcements in any non-church media.

1. **Coordination** –Advertising will be coordinated by the MAC Committee, which may include representatives from the Membership, Social Justice and Technology committees, as well as a Board representative, Minister and the Office Administrator. Committees are responsible for working with the MAC Committee on ads.
2. **Budget** – Costs for committee-specific advertising will be taken from the MAC Committee budget.
3. **Placement** – Committees will work with the MAC Committee to determine where the ads will be placed.
4. **Templates** – Advertisements and public communications will use templates provided by the MAC Committee which will use the church brand. Templates will include the church logo, church contact information, and standard font in order to have a consistent look.

## **SOCIAL MEDIA:** (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Blogs)

1. **Administration** – The MAC Committee will have access to all social media accounts that belong to the Second Unitarian Church of Omaha. The site administrator(s) will be some combination of: the Office Administrator, the Minister, and/or a member of the MAC Committee, as determined by the requirements and boundaries set by the sites in question as well as the MAC Committee.
2. **Access to Public Accounts** – All who are interested will have access to our public social media accounts if they voluntarily opt-in. This is done differently by different media. An example is that anyone who “Likes” the Second Unitarian

Church of Omaha Facebook page has “opted-in,” or anyone who has chosen to “Follow” the Second Unitarian Church of Omaha on Twitter has opted-in.

3. **Access to Closed Accounts** – Access to closed social media accounts will be limited to the intended audience. Examples might include accounts created specifically for our YRUU youth group or specifically for our church members and affiliates.
4. **Mission and Values** – Information posted on these media resources will be written with the mission, values and covenant of Second Unitarian Church of Omaha in mind. Information may include: announcements, event details, worship and class titles and speakers, pastoral or theological messages, or other information as the MAC Committee, or spokespersons of the Congregation, deem appropriate. The MAC Committee will regularly check the information printed, emailed, or posted on social media sites to ensure that they are within the values and mission of Second Unitarian Church of Omaha. Concerns about information or postings will be shared with this group.
5. **Timeliness** – The nature of social media is that events happen consistently, on an ever-evolving basis. As such, postings on these sites will be as timely as possible given the resources of staff hours and volunteer hours. Social media will be one of several tools used to inform members, affiliates and guests of information (such as closures, etc) but not the only tool.
6. **Ownership** – The nature of social media, and the Internet, is that new technologies arise continuously. New media opportunities may be pursued, at the guidance of the MAC Committee. Only the MAC Committee or the Board of Trustees may approve accounts associated with Second Unitarian Church of Omaha. These accounts are the sole property of the congregation instead of an individual. Any individual who creates a social media account or username that is meant to imply a relationship to Second Unitarian Church of Omaha will either:
  - a. relinquish the account or username to the congregation or
  - b. have that account or username reported as fraudulent to the media site’s owners.
7. **Awareness** – Information about our social media will be shared in various forms of Second Unitarian Church of Omaha communication (including but not limited to: newsletters, orders of service, website, etc).