

COMMUNICATION POLICY



This Communication Policy is for internal First McKinney staff use.

July 2025

Communication Policy

Purpose |

The Communications Department exists to equip and empower the ministries and congregation of First McKinney to connect people to the mission of "Making disciples who live and love like Jesus". We aim to ensure consistent, excellent and value-driven communications to members, guests, and the community. This policy establishes guidelines to foster unity and clarity between the Communications Department and other ministries.

Scope |

The Communications Department is your in-house marketing and branding resource. We coordinate our communication channels' messages to ensure ministries receive the time and attention required for successful promotion. We exist to bring excellence to your message. **Documents and graphics intended for wide distribution**—more than just an internal serve team; weekly programming, such as students' and kids' messages and on-stage announcements; one-off messages; etc. (rule of thumb: will it be seen by 50% of the First McKinney community?)—**should be approved by the Communications Department.**

Brand Guidelines |

Refer to the [Branding Guidelines](#) document for appropriate use of the logo, brand colors, font choices, and general graphic style. When templates are created for ministry use, please do not change the colors, font, or logos on the template.

Requests |

The project request form should be used for **every** request made to the Communications Department. This will ensure your request is handled according to the required timelines and with the details you requested, while adhering to the First McKinney Brand Guidelines.

Procedure:

1. Submit a complete and clear [Project Request Form](#) online, at least **two weeks** before the actual push date. Any missing information will cause the request to be placed on hold.
2. Receive confirmation and clarifying questions from the Comms Team. A preliminary timeline will be established at this point.
3. If necessary, a meeting will be scheduled to discuss details.
4. The Comms Team will deliver a draft or final package for your approval. A response is necessary. **Any response that takes longer than 48 hours will place the project on hold and the project will be added back to the queue, in order of receipt, once information is gathered.**
5. Request edits and/or give final approval once the design is satisfactory.
6. Final designs will be delivered and orders will be placed if necessary.

Timelines: Plan ahead. Lead time is generally two weeks before the promotion start date for an average project. Special request projects will need up to three-four weeks of lead time.

Promotional Tiers |

The amount of coverage provided to any event or activity will be determined by the tier it falls under. Tiered communication helps ensure that our main messages have priority.

Tier 1: This tier applies to events that are relevant to nearly every person in the church—80% is a good rule of thumb. These events promote church-wide initiatives and are central to the mission of the church. The Communications Team will create a plan with leaders such as lead pastor, executive pastor, creative minister, etc. (e.g. McKinney Christmas, Easter, Fall Launch, Multiply, Mission McKinney/VBS Outreach etc). These events can receive the highest level of marketing and advertising: complete graphics suite, dedicated webpage, dedicated email, promotional video, stage announcements, social media, printed material, and texts.

Tier 2: This tier applies to events relevant to ministry-specific areas affecting 40% or more of the church. The Communications Department will assist in strategy conversations and craft promotions in partnership with ministry leaders. (e.g. Summer Mission Trips, Xtreme Camp, MidWeek Bible Study, Conference, etc.).

Tier 3: This tier applies to events relevant to a narrow group of individuals. The Communications Team will support the ministry's efforts through graphic design assistance, resources, and coaching. The ministry leader will retain primary responsibility for promotion (e.g., College events, Incredible Kids, Bible Study, and MomCo).

Promotion parameters will follow the timeline below:

- a. Promotion begins **two weeks** before the event date if the event/activity is a common event on campus. The Comms Request must be received **four weeks** prior to the event date.
- b. Promotion begins **three weeks** before the event start date if the event requires a payment or is meeting at an off campus location. The Comms Request must be received **five weeks** prior to the event date.
- c. Promotion begins **four to six weeks** before the event start date if the event is considered an A Level event. The Comms Request must be received **six-eight weeks** prior to the event.
- d. Communications for an event can appear in the weekly email and on the website for up to three weeks and can be on the events page up to 90 days before the event start date, provided the communications request has been received and the information is complete (details marked TBD will not be included in publications).

(Communications outside of these parameters will need further discussion and approval.)

Communication Channels |

Our current communication channels include stage announcements, weekly email, weekly Sunday bulletin, Sunday announcement loop slides, Facebook posts, Instagram posts, printed materials for handing out on Sunday, hallway posters, mounted TV/LED announcements, printed materials for literature racks, and various texting options. Requests can be made for your ministry's event to be added to any of these channels. Final decisions for stage announcements are made by the pastoral staff and worship planning team. Decisions for emails, bulletins, announcement loops, and main First McKinney social accounts are made by the Communications Department in conjunction with our overall communication strategy. Ideas and suggestions are always welcome.

Frequently Asked Questions |

- What can you help us with?

- Overall strategy for events
- Templates (in Canva, Word, MailChimp, etc.)
- Posters
- Flyers
- Postcards
- Banners
- Instagram/FB posts
- Graphics for web/social/email
- Social media ads
- First Glance email
- Event specific email
- Texts (church wide or specified groups)
- Website event
- Web page
- Form creation (Jotform)
- Apparel
- Specialty items (sticker/magnet)
- Light copywriting

- Why can't I run promotions for my ministry for a longer period of time?

Running a promotional campaign for up to a month can lead to audience fatigue, where the message might become less effective over time as people become less responsive to repeated information. Additionally, shorter campaigns allow for more strategic and focused communication, ensuring that the message remains engaging and impactful. *Event registration trends show that a significant proportion of sign-ups occur just before the event. Around 22% of registrations typically happen within the last 48 hours before an event goes live, indicating a substantial increase in numbers close to the event date.*

- Can I outsource communication needs?
Yes, you can. Once the design is complete or reaches an approval milestone, please send the files to us for approval before printing or publication.
- Can't I just email or text anyone in Comms what I need?
NO, please don't. Respect their time and their craft by following the procedures in place. Text message requests will not be accepted. In addition, a meeting will not suffice as a Comms Request. We are happy to have a meeting to help with a strategy and direction, but that will be a supplement to the Comms Request you will need to submit.

BEST PRACTICES

First McKinney Name |

The current common name of the church is First McKinney. All written and spoken references to our church should be "First McKinney." Avoid using the following: 1st McKinney, First, FBC, FBC McKinney, First Baptist McKinney, First Baptist Church McKinney, First Baptist Church of McKinney. Caveat: Legally, the church name is still First Baptist Church McKinney so when communicating your workplace or for purchase transactions, it is helpful to use our legal name: First Baptist Church McKinney.

Grammar Details |

Capitalizing the pronouns of God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit is good and right. The Oxford comma is also good, right, and used by the educated.

Newsletters |

Utilize MailChimp and a custom created template to send regular communication to your selected group of participants. This provides the best ability to track email opens, link clicks, and provides a more visual pleasing product than Realm. Additionally, through programs like MailChimp, you are able to set the "sender" as your ministry name/email rather than your personal email that people might not recognize. (No offense to our hard working, yet flying-under-the-radar-staffers.) In the event that you must use Realm, please make formatting your text a priority of the communication.

Forms |

Forms embedded or linked from firstmckinney.com will be JotForms created within the Communications Department or Realm registrations created by the ministry. When a Jotform is created, ministries will be given access to the collected data via Google Sheets integration or other selected methods.

Email | [E-mail policy addendum](#)

External email should be formatted with a business-appropriate type font, such as Arial, Calibri, Times New Roman in **BLACK**. Avoid using alternative colors and unusual fonts.

Signatures: Email signatures should be consistent with published guidelines (see Branding Folder) and size recommendations. Any design deviation from the approved signature should be approved by the Communications Department. Scripture or quotes included in the signature should be consistent in font type, size, color to your overall email and should follow your signature.

Social Media | [Usage of First McKinney Social Media Accounts addendum](#)

Social media is an excellent method for engaging specific demographics in our body and our community. These accounts require continual attention and collaborative strategy for successful function.

Any additional social media accounts (accounts that are not the official First McKinney account operated in collaboration with the Communications Team) representing themselves as ministries of First McKinney (i.e.: Just for Students) must include a member of the Communications Department on their admin list and be approved by the Communications Director.

General guidelines for social media include;

- Account creation must be approved in advance by the Communications Department
- Administrative rights will be shared with one or more members of the Communications Department
- The Communications Department reserves the right to remove any content deemed inappropriate for publication.
 - Posts should be made at least two-three times each week to each channel.
 - First McKinney associated accounts should refrain from posting politically divisive or highly opinionated content.
 - Social media accounts should maintain a look and feel consistent with our branding guidelines as much as possible given the targeted audience. (Deviations are expected for Students and Kids, but quality is still necessary.)
- Facebook groups (i.e.: Life Group, MomCo, Incredible Kids, etc) are preferable to additional Facebook pages.
- Goal: to be a branded church rather than a church of brands.
- First McKinney staff members should also refrain from engaging in controversial postings, comments and interactions on their personal accounts, always keeping in mind that we are representatives of this church.

Texting | [Usage of First McKinney Text Messaging policy](#)

Access and Privilege: Access to Powered by Text will be distributed to the Ministry leader only and not distributed among other team members. Access to the text messaging database is a privilege. Failure to adhere to First McKinney's text messaging policy may result in revoked rights.

Purposeful Communication and Strategic Use of Powered By Text or Other Texting Platforms:

- Use messaging to inform members about key events, important announcements, informative updates - ***not for over solicitation or social purposes. Facebook and Instagram should be used as your source of storytelling.***
- The ministry leader will have access to their approved group to send approved messages following the approved timeline for the ministry. All messages should be coordinated with the Communications Department and scheduled in advance (this can be achieved in a monthly meeting with the Comms Digital Media Specialist/Communications Director).
- Messages should be concise, informative, relevant and grammatically correct.
- Include key details: Who, What, Where, When, and Cost.
- Avoid slang, jargon, or overly casual tones.
- Craft messages suitable for mature adults, aligning with our mission to make disciples who live and love like Jesus.
- Include the First McKinney name and a clear call-to-action.
- Use text messaging for strategic invitations and stay on brand with any images while maintaining professionalism.