

Social Media Policy Resources from FaithTrust Institute

- **FaithTrust Institute Resources: Relevant articles available online at** <http://www.faithtrustinstitute.org/resources/articles/clergy-ethics>, including:
 - [“Social Networking and Healthy Boundaries in Ministry: Asking Critical Questions”](#)
 - [“Faith Community Considerations: Social Networking](#)
- The Ultimate List of Social Media Policies for Churches & Ministries: <http://justinwise.net/social-media-policies-churches-ministries>
- That’s Not Cool: <http://www.thatnotcool.com/>
(resource for teens about issues related to social media)
- Common Sense Media: <https://www.common sense media.org/social-media> (information for parents on social media and youth)
- Glossary of Social Media Terminology: <http://www.socialbrite.org/sharing-center/glossary/>
- Social Media Policy Template(aimed at non-profit organizations, but generally useful): <http://www.idealware.org/smpolicy>
- UCC Connecticut Conference Social Networking Handout: http://www.ctucc.org/resources/pdfs/Social_Networking_Handout_201006.pdf

EXAMPLE SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY LANGUAGE:

Proposed language pending approval in the Northern California Nevada United Church of Christ, shared in draft form.

- Adults should not submit “friend” requests to minors or youth. Youth may request friendships with adults, and adults should discern the level of contact they want to maintain with youth prior to responding to these requests.
- When and where available, authorized youth workers may choose to create separate private and professional profiles on networking sites to create a line of privacy.
- If an authorized youth worker chooses to accept friend requests from minors or youth that are associated with their community of faith, we recommend that other youth workers (within the same community of faith) have full access to the professional youth worker’s profile and correspondence. *(Some people, for example, share all correspondence with the senior pastor if in a church*

Social Media Policy Resources from FaithTrust Institute

setting. Others keep documentation of all conversations and save them to a file on their computer so that they can retrieve them whenever needed. You may want to specify what you expect.)

- All youth and adults should be informed that any communication that is sent via digital means (email, social networking site notes or posts, etc.) is not confidential and may be reported or shared with others. *(If you adopt the policy that someone reads all communications between a youth worker and a youth, then you need to let the youth know.)*
- Use “closed” groups, but not “hidden” groups. These groups should have both youth and adult administrators. Closed groups mean outsiders cannot see what is posted; hidden means no one can see that the group exists.
- Covenants should be created to govern what is appropriate and inappropriate content to be placed and displayed in the online group for a camp, youth group, etc.
- Any inappropriate material that is not covered by “Mandatory Reporting” laws should be deleted from the site. Any material that is covered by “Mandatory Reporting” laws should be reported *(include information about to whom and how to report)*, documented for church records, and then deleted from the site.
- Any content that details inappropriate behavior (outside of the bounds of the established covenant) during a church sponsored event or activity should be addressed by authorized youth workers and parents.
- Parents should be informed that content that appears on youth pages or groups that are not sponsored by the church are NOT within the purview of authorized youth workers.