

BUCC Social Media Policy

This policy governs the publication of and commentary on social media by employees and representatives of Brecksville United Church of Christ and its related ministries ("BUCC"). For the purposes of this policy, social media means any facility for online publication and commentary, including without limitation blogs, wiki's, social networking sites such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Flickr, and YouTube. This policy is in addition to and complements any existing or future policies regarding the use of technology, computers, e-mail and the internet

BUCC employees and representatives are free to publish or comment via social media in accordance with this policy. BUCC employees and representatives are subject to this policy to the extent they identify themselves as a BUCC employee (other than as an incidental mention of place of employment in a personal blog on topics unrelated to BUCC).

Notwithstanding the previous section, this policy applies to all uses of social media, including personal, by BUCC employees and representatives would be well known within the community. Such representatives include, but are not limited to the positions of BUCC Pastor, Office Manager, Music Director, Finance Director and Ministry Chairs.

Publication and commentary on social media carries similar obligations to any other kind of publication or commentary.

All uses of social media must follow the same ethical standards that BUCC employees and representatives must otherwise follow.

Setting up Social Media

Assistance in setting up social media accounts and their settings can be obtained from BUCC's Communication and Outreach Ministry Chair(s).

Social media identities, logon IDs and user names may not use BUCC's name without prior approval from the Moderator.

Disclaimers

Many social media users include a prominent disclaimer saying who they work for or represent, but that they're not speaking officially. This is good practice and is encouraged, but don't count on it to avoid trouble - it may not have much legal effect.

Wherever practical, you must use a disclaimer saying that while you work for or represent BUCC, anything you publish is your personal opinion, and not necessarily the opinions of BUCC.

Don't Tell Secrets

It's perfectly acceptable to talk about your own work and ideas and have a dialog with the community, but it's not okay to publish confidential information. Confidential information includes things such as unpublished details about our community members, visitors, financial information, information disclosed during prayer that might be deemed sensitive, and other personal issues. We must respect the wishes of our members and visitors regarding confidentiality.

BUCC Social Media Policy

Protect BUCC members, visitors and friends

Members, visitors or friends should not be cited or obviously referenced without their approval. Never identify a member, visitor or friend by name without permission and never discuss confidential details of a church or personal relationship. It is acceptable to discuss general details and to use non-identifying pseudonyms for these individuals, so long as the information provided does not violate any non-disclosure agreements or expectations of privacy that may be in place with the individual, or make it easy for someone to identify them.

Protect your own privacy

Privacy settings on social media platforms should be set to allow anyone to see profile information similar to what would be on the BUCC website. Other privacy settings that might allow others to post information or see information that is personal should be set to limit access. Be mindful of posting information that you would not want the public to see.

Be Honest

Do not blog anonymously, using pseudonyms or false screen names. We believe in transparency and honesty. Use your real name, be clear who you are, and identify that you work for or represent BUCC if you are posting as such. If you are not posting as a representative of BUCC, be sure to make it clear that the views and opinions expressed are yours alone and do **not** represent the official views of BUCC. Nothing gains you notice in social media more than honesty - or dishonesty. Do not say anything that is dishonest, untrue, or misleading. If you have a vested interest in something you are discussing, point it out. But also be smart about protecting yourself and your privacy. What you publish will be around for a long time, so consider the content carefully and also be cautious about disclosing personal details.

Respect copyright laws

It is critical that you show proper respect for the laws governing copyright and fair use or fair dealing of copyrighted material owned by others, including BUCC's own copyrights and brands. You should never quote more than short excerpts of someone else's work, and always attribute such work to the original author/source. It is good general practice to link to others' work rather than reproduce it.

Respect your audience, BUCC, and your fellow/potential members

The public in general, and BUCC's employees and members, reflect a diverse set of customs, values and points of view. When speaking/posting as a representative of BUCC, don't say anything contradictory or in conflict with the BUCC website. Don't be afraid to be yourself, but do so respectfully. This includes not only the obvious (no ethnic slurs, offensive comments, defamatory comments, personal insults, obscenity, etc.) but also proper consideration of privacy and of topics that may be considered objectionable or inflammatory - such as politics. Use your best judgment and be sure to

BUCC Social Media Policy

make it clear that the views and opinions expressed are yours alone and do not represent the official views of BUCC

Controversial Issues

If you see misrepresentations made about BUCC in the media, you may point that out. Always do so with respect and with the facts. If you speak about others, make sure what you say is factual and that it does not disparage that party. Avoid arguments. Brawls may earn traffic, but nobody wins in the end. Don't try to settle scores or goad others into inflammatory debates. Make sure what you are saying is factually correct.

.Discussion of topics with an open mind and open dialogue is good, tossing comments designed to dismiss, offend, or aggravate those with opposing opinions is not an open dialogue. Also be mindful that discussions that start out open minded and constructive can quickly degrade as emotions and passion for individual points-of-view are fueled through discussion. It is important to always be mindful of this. You must recognize when this has happened, and gracefully end the dialogue before the situation escalates.**Be the first to respond to your own mistakes**

If you make an error, be up front about your mistake and correct it quickly. If you choose to modify an earlier post, make it clear that you have done so. If someone accuses you of posting something improper (such as their copyrighted material or a defamatory comment about them), deal with it quickly - better to remove it immediately to lessen the possibility of a legal action.

Think About Consequences

For example, consider what might happen if a BUCC employee or member is discussing something with a member or visitor, and someone pulls out a print-out of your blog and says "This person at BUCC says that Buddhism sucks."

Saying "Buddhism is a religious tradition that differs from what I am accustomed to" is fine; saying "Buddhism sucks" is risky, unsubtle and amateurish.

Once again, it's all about judgment: using your blog or post to disparage or embarrass BUCC, our members, or visitors, is dangerous and ill-advised.

Social Media Tips

The following tips are not mandatory, but will contribute to successful use of social media.

The best way to be interesting, stay out of trouble, and have fun is to write about what you know. There is a good chance of being embarrassed by a real expert, or of being boring if you write about topics you are not knowledgeable about.

Quality matters. Use a spell-checker. If you're not design-oriented, ask someone who is whether your blog looks decent, and take their advice on how to improve it.

The speed of being able to publish your thoughts is both a great feature and a great downfall of social media. The time to edit or reflect must be self-imposed. If in doubt

BUCC Social Media Policy

over a post, or if something does not feel right, either let it sit and look at it again before publishing it, or ask someone else to look at it first.

Enforcement

The Communication and Outreach Ministry, the Pastor and/or the Moderator reserve the right to remove or block anyone who blogs or posts on social media and represents BUCC in any way contrary to these guidelines.