

# West University United Methodist Church Communications Policy

The purpose of the West University United Methodist Church (West U Methodist) Communications Policy is to:

- Ensure consistent, high quality, and appropriate communications to all members of the church, prospective members, and the neighboring community
- Ensure all communications are accurate and appropriate within the context of a United Methodist faith community
- Effectively utilize the limited budgeted resources for approved communications
- Protect the privacy of all church members

Scope of the Policy:

- Weekly worship guide announcements
- Announcements/presentations during worship services
- Weekly email update
- Quarterly newsletter
- Church web site
- Bulletin boards/monitors/displays/posters/flyers
- Outdoor marquee and banners
- Print and online advertising, marketing, and information
- Email communications made on behalf of church staff, members, or activities
- Sunday school communications, including flyers, sign-up sheets, and binders
- On-site and off-site printing
- Emergency communications
- Privacy of church member and staff information

## **Weekly worship guide announcements**

The main purpose of the weekly worship guide is to serve as a guide for worship at the 9 and 11 am services. As such, announcements included should be brief and limited to near term events and activities of the church which are open to either all members or large segments of the membership and community. All weekly worship guide announcement requests should be submitted at least 10 days prior to the worship service through the Office and Facilities Manager. Inserts to the worship guide will not be normally considered unless approved as exceptions by the Senior Pastor.

## **Announcements/presentations during worship services**

Announcements during worship shall be made by the Associate Pastor or designated replacement. All requests for announcements or presentations outside of the worship outline should be directed to the Associate Pastor at least 10 days prior to the service date. Although other member or outside speakers will normally not be considered due to time constraints, a video may be submitted for consideration but shall be no more than one and half minutes in length.

### Weekly email update

The church provides a weekly email update with upcoming activities to its staff, members, and visitors who have submitted functioning email addresses. Requests for announcements to be included in the update should be submitted at least 10 days prior to the Office and Facilities Manager.

### Quarterly newsletter

The church provides a quarterly newsletter to report on past and upcoming church activities and events. Requests for articles to be included in the newsletter should be submitted as follows:

| Articles for:                              | Submit to:                          | By this date:                               | Staff submits by this date:                     | To:                           | For this newsletter:                                      |
|--|-------------------------------------|---|---|-------------------------------|---|
| School                                     | Director of West U Methodist School | January 1<br>April 1<br>July 1<br>October 1 | January 20<br>April 20<br>July 20<br>October 20 | Office and Facilities Manager | Feb/Mar/Apr<br>May/Ju/July<br>Aug/Sept/Oct<br>Nov/Dec/Jan |
| Children                                   | Director of Children's Ministry     | January 1<br>April 1<br>July 1<br>October 1 | January 20<br>April 20<br>July 20<br>October 20 | Office and Facilities Manager | Feb/Mar/Apr<br>May/Ju/July<br>Aug/Sept/Oct<br>Nov/Dec/Jan |
| Youth                                      | Director of Student Ministries      | January 1<br>April 1<br>July 1<br>October 1 | January 20<br>April 20<br>July 20<br>October 20 | Office and Facilities Manager | Feb/Mar/Apr<br>May/Ju/July<br>Aug/Sept/Oct<br>Nov/Dec/Jan |
| Music                                      | Director of Music Ministries        | January 1<br>April 1<br>July 1<br>October 1 | January 20<br>April 20<br>July 20<br>October 20 | Office and Facilities Manager | Feb/Mar/Apr<br>May/Ju/July<br>Aug/Sept/Oct<br>Nov/Dec/Jan |
| Adults<br>Prayer<br>Missions<br>Fellowship | Associate Pastor                    | January 1<br>April 1<br>July 1<br>October 1 | January 20<br>April 20<br>July 20<br>October 20 | Office and Facilities Manager | Feb/Mar/Apr<br>May/Ju/July<br>Aug/Sept/Oct<br>Nov/Dec/Jan |
| Worship<br>Finance<br>Outreach<br>Trustees | Senior Pastor                       | January 1<br>April 1<br>July 1<br>October 1 | January 20<br>April 20<br>July 20<br>October 20 | Office and Facilities Manager | Feb/Mar/Apr<br>May/Ju/July<br>Aug/Sept/Oct<br>Nov/Dec/Jan |

### **Church web site**

The church has one authorized web site, [www.westumethodist.org](http://www.westumethodist.org), to represent its ministries, events, activities, staff members, and membership. All requests for changes, corrections or additions to the church's web site may be directed to and must be approved by the Office and Facilities Manager.

### **Bulletin boards/monitors/displays/posters/flyers**

All bulletin board space shall be used only for church related or sponsored events and activities. This policy includes all paper and electronic bulletin boards, monitors, floor displays, countertop displays, posters, flyers, handouts, stickers, bookmarks, or other signage on church property. Requests which meet this requirement may be directed to the Office and Facilities Manager. Placement of flyers on windshields in the church parking lot is prohibited.

### **Outdoor marquee and banners**

Use of the outdoor church marquee and any outdoor banners on church property will be limited to church sponsored events and activities. Requests should be made to the Office and Facilities Manager.

### **Print and online advertising, marketing and information**

No print or online advertising, marketing or information (including newspapers, magazines or online articles) should be arranged-- with or without cost-- on the church's behalf without the review and approval of the Office and Facilities Manager.

### **Sunday school communications**

All inserts for Sunday school binders must be approved by the Associate Pastor.

### **On-site and off-site printing**

Church communications staff, paper, copiers, and printers are precious resources reserved primarily for church communications including but not limited to weekly worship guides; funeral and memorial worship guides; quarterly newsletters; campus maps; Sunday School class information; Bible study and small group information; visitor, new member, and informational brochures. Staff members and volunteers needing formatting and printing services should contact the Office and Facilities Manager to request services as far in advance as possible. If church resources for that time period are exhausted, staff members and volunteers may choose to use off-site printing. In either case, the Office and Facilities Manager will need to approve a final copy before any printed materials are distributed.

### **Emergency communications**

When a significant event or grave situation occurs at West U Methodist church or school, it is important to communicate the event or grave situation to the Senior Pastor immediately. This may include, but not be limited to natural disasters, accidents with injury or death, law enforcement or firefighter notification and response, or a serious misconduct by a member, student, faculty, or staff. No member should speak on behalf of the church without receiving prior consent from the Senior Pastor or Chairperson of the Board of Stewards. Closures of the school and cancellation of after-school children programs will follow HISD closures during situations related to bad weather and as such will serve as the formal notification provided to parents and guardians for students and participants.

**Privacy of church member and staff information**

West U Methodist is committed to maintaining the privacy of its membership. The church will take all reasonable measures to ensure the confidentiality of member information to include but not be limited to home addresses, family membership, email addresses, and contact information. Email distribution lists, contact lists or mailing lists containing member information may be used only for communications related to the activities of the church, staff, committees, or sponsored groups. Under no circumstances may member lists be used to solicit or communicate events or activities which are not specifically church-related.

**Please note:** In all cases above, although all communications requests will be given due consideration, there is no guarantee that an announcement requested will be included. If approved, it may be edited as deemed necessary for content and length. Thank you in advance for understanding and respecting the church's need to limit the number and length of communications vehicles in order to be good stewards of church members' time, our environment, and church resources.