

Communications Policy

Note: This is the 2009 version, not the current Communications Policy.

Communications can be in the form of letters, e-mail, telephone conversations, or face-to-face meetings. Whenever communications are concerned with any aspect of Mountain Light UUC (henceforth referred to as the Church) they should be guided by this policy.

Types of Communications

Though a communication may be issued with a particular constituency in mind, it will in all likelihood have multiple audiences as soon as it is sent. Also, it is important to note that e-mail has blurred the line between internal and external audiences.

- **Personal Correspondence:** Any communication that is meant to be shared between two or more individuals concerning external matters rather than church business.
- **Church Business:** Any communication that is meant to be shared between two or more individuals that pertains to the internal business of the Church, especially Team interactions. For the purposes of this policy, committees, the Board of Directors (Board), panels, task forces, etc., shall all be referred to as Teams.
- **Discussion Groups:** Any communication in a discussion group format where individuals post to the Group (or List) and all members can read comments and make replies (e.g., the MLUUC Google Discussion Group).
- **Announcements:** Any communication that is meant to inform but does not invite replies.
- **Publications:** Any communication published as an information resource (e.g., the Newsletter, the Website, and brochures).
- **Public Relations:** Any communication publicly issued on behalf of the Church.

Guidelines

All communications, regardless of type, should conform to a covenant of respect for one another.

Personal Correspondence

Each member of the Church shall be assigned a personal e-mail address. It will be

formed from the member's first name (when available) and designated as part of the MLUUC network (name@mluuc.net). Messages sent to that address are automatically forwarded to the primary e-mail account as specified by the member. The Webmaster shall be responsible for maintaining this list.

Personal e-mail may not be used for mass-mailing campaigns. Instead, issues concerning the congregation should be presented in a Discussion Group platform (such as the MLUUC Google Discussion Group).

Individuals having concerns directed at a specific Team should follow the Church Business protocols as described below.

Church Business

Church Business communications should be as succinct as possible, preferably addressing only one primary topic at a time. When the message is sent via e-mail, it should have an established topic clearly delineated in the subject line, to make identification easier for the reader.

Teams should speak with one voice. Consequently and whenever possible, communications between Teams should originate from and be directed to Team Leaders. Individuals who are not part of a particular group should likewise direct messages to the Team Leader when communicating with a particular Team.

Team messages should be sent (copied) to the members of that Team only, though special exceptions may warrant otherwise. When in doubt, ask the Team Leader for direction.

The minutes from Board meetings should be posted to the website.

Discussion Groups

Discussion groups shall be overseen by an Owner who shall be approved by the Board. Groups should have more than one Owner, and all members of their Moderator Teams should be active members of the Church.

Discussion Groups are the preferred communication platforms to discuss broad issues pertaining to the entire congregation.

- The MLUUC Google discussion group is an MLUUC members-only group. Its members therefore can and should expect reasonable assurances of privacy. What is said in the group remains in the group unless express permission is given by the author to allow sharing elsewhere.

Announcements

Announcement-only groups should have more than one Owner. The Moderator Team should contain the President of MLUUC, the Vice-President, the newsletter editor, and

anyone else the Board sees fit to allow to make announcements directly.

Announcement-only groups are designed to post information and to make general announcements. They are not intended to be for personal use by any member. Personal opinions and discussions of church business belong in personal correspondence or in a Discussion Group.

When at all possible make announcements on the Website. A Web page can always be revised whereas e-mail messages can not be called back (nor can attachments be recalled).

Publications

Information resources should be professional in their presentations and not extensions of any personal agenda. Wherever possible, information should be shared among the various publications sponsored by the Church.

E-mail addresses for the Church's leadership positions shall be designated as part of the MLUUC organization domain (e.g., webmaster@mлуuc.org). These shall be used in publications as standard listings whenever a position, rather than the individual currently holding it, is to be contacted. The Webmaster shall be responsible for maintaining this list.

Newsletters

The Newsletter shall be overseen by an Editor appointed by the President and approved by the Board. Though answerable to the Board, the Editor will have final approval over content.

Website

The Church's Website shall be overseen by a Webmaster appointed by the President and approved by the Board. Though answerable to the Board, the Webmaster will have final approval over content. The Website should be updated no less than once a week and as often as important information becomes available.

All Domains associated with the Website shall be registered to Mountain Light UUC, with the Webmaster as registrant contact. Unless otherwise directed by the Board, the Webmaster shall act as Billing contact and will be responsible for maintaining the registration of all affiliated domains as well as the web-hosting contract.

The Technical contact, unless otherwise designated by the Board, shall be the Webmaster.

The Administration contact should be an individual other than the Webmaster. This person should be approved by the Board and have access to all Website

accounts.

The Website should be considered the "front door" of the church's Internet presence. As such it welcomes new visitors. Therefore, the home page should contain at least the following information: the location of the church, the service times, and a description of who we are.

The Website should also serve as an information center for the congregation. Any and all information wanted or needed by the membership should therefore be readily available on line.

In accordance with the UUA principle of Democratic Process (Rule #G-2.1), all Teams should submit their official presentations to the Webmaster (webmaster@mluuc.org) for posting on the Website.

Brochures

All brochures produced for the Church must be presented to the Board of Directors for final approval before distribution.

Public Relations

The President of the congregation or other designated spokesperson shall be the sole voice of the church when addressing the community at large, since increasing the number of spokespersons increases the likelihood of inconsistencies.

Restrictions

The following restrictions apply to all MLUUC-related communications.

Endorsements: It is unacceptable to use the name or logo of MLUUC or the UUA in any way that implies, without advance permission from the Board of Directors, that the Church endorses, supports, or is affiliated with any product, service, or organization. Links from a MLUUC-hosted Website to any Website not affiliated with MLUUC must not express or imply MLUUC's endorsement of the latter site's products, services, or other content, with the exception of links to officially endorsed Websites.

Advertising: No advertising may be accepted in connection with the use of MLUUC communications, except with respect to official MLUUC activities and programs; with respect to sponsorships approved by the Board of Directors, or as otherwise allowable under other MLUUC policy. It is acceptable to acknowledge sponsorship of MLUUC events and programs on MLUUC-hosted Web pages provided that such acknowledgment does not advertise a product or service.

Other Restrictions for which MLUUC communications may not be used:

- unlawful activities;
- commercial purposes not under the auspices of the Church;
- personal financial gain;
- personal use inconsistent with that authorized by this Policy; or
- uses that violate other Church or UUA policies or guidelines.

This policy was submitted by the Communications Team (Kasey Castleberry, Lead) to the Board of Directors of Mountain Light Unitarian Universalist Church and was approved, 2009 February 08.