

Coventry and Nuneaton Methodist Circuit – Social Media Policy

SCOPE This policy covers the actions of circuit officers, employees of the circuit and those operating the social media accounts for the circuit, while acting on behalf of the circuit.

INTRODUCTION

Coventry and Nuneaton Methodist Circuit recognises that many people make positive use of social media for ministry and mission purposes and in a personal capacity as well. Whether acting on behalf of a Methodist church and/or circuit, or in a personal capacity, we must be aware that damage can be done to our mission if the work we do is not safe and respectful. This policy aims to ensure that where we use social media we are, as in all other areas of our work, ensuring that safeguarding is central to the mission of the circuit.

PURPOSE

To contribute to the active mission of the circuit and to support the social media presence, and online witness, of local Methodist churches, in order to make more disciples of Jesus Christ, and to serve Christ in the world.

OBJECTIVES

- a) To maintain an active circuit profile on main social media platforms but in the first instance the circuit will develop its presence on Facebook and set up various Facebook groups.
- b) To connect the circuit's churches which already have a Social Media presence
- c) To promote the online work of the Methodist Church in Britain.
- d) To develop new online aspects of church life that are safe and effective.

As a Circuit Meeting we commit to the following:

1. Our online and Social Media work will be done according to the latest Methodist Church in Britain connexional guidance or policy. We will post links to these within the social media. *(See the links at the bottom of this document).*
2. We will use, and promote the use of, social media, alongside other media, for the sharing of good news, helpful resources and communications that encourage the mission of the circuit's churches and the circuit.
3. Any communication made through digital and social media will:-
 - * not bring the Methodist Church into disrepute
 - * not breach confidentiality nor copyright
 - * not do anything that could be considered discriminatory against, or bullying or harassment of, any individual or group
 - * not contain content or images that are discriminatory or offensive (or links to such content)
 - * not be abusive or threatening or sexual or inappropriate in nature (or links to such content)
4. Responsibility for oversight of digital and social media communications and reputation management lies with the Circuit Meeting.
5. The administrators have the right to delete posts.

6. Our guidance for the content of our social media is as follows:
 - a) We will keep within the core subject of the particular group, or the core mission of the Methodist Church.
 - b) There needs to be some kind of link to churches, other circuits or the wider connexion, if it is not directly linked with the work of the circuit itself.
 - c) Posts about activities or issues that are not specifically Christian in nature are permissible if they are of help to the work of the Methodist Church within this circuit.
 - d) Each person posting is accountable to the circuit for the things they do, say or write on this circuit's social media and we will make this clear on each social media platform.
 - e) Text and images shared can be public and permanent, even with privacy settings in place and so we expect contributors to show respect for all people, and to generate good conversations.
 - f) If you're not sure, don't post it.

Administration

1. There will be a minimum of 3 administrators for each circuit social media platform, with a member of the Circuit Leadership Team being one of these.
2. Administrators for any circuit social media will be appointed by the Circuit Meeting and recruited according to safeguarding principles. The administrators of each circuit social media platform, will make sure that the Circuit Safeguarding Officer is kept informed of any safeguarding concerns and will keep in touch with the Circuit Safeguarding Officer for any monitoring and advice.
3. The rules for each account will be posted on the appropriate platform and also post the links to these on the website.
4. Passwords for the accounts will be kept by the circuit office/Superintendent minister, and 'spot checks' may be carried out at any time.
5. This policy should be read in conjunction with the Coventry and Nuneaton Methodist Circuit safeguarding policy and with the latest Methodist Church in Britain guidance - *(see links below which are accurate as at 21st February 2024)*. Any updates of this policy and guidance will become the relevant ones at any time.

<https://www.methodist.org.uk/for-churches/guidance-for-churches/digital-communication-guidance-for-churches/social-media-guidelines/>

<https://www.methodist.org.uk/safeguarding/policies-procedures-posters-and-leaflets/policies-and-guidance/>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/charities-and-social-media>