



CANTON
 FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
cantonfirstumc.org

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Marketing and Communications Policy

Purpose for the Policy

Communication is a vital role in any organization, relationship, or community. As a church, we believe that God is actively moving through our congregation, services, ministries, and events, and our main purpose is for others to know God and join God in the work He has for their lives. As we seek to effectively communicate this to our congregation and the community around us, our goal is to be consistent and concise with the messages we are communicating and effective with the mediums in which we communicate. A communication policy is necessary to maximize effectiveness, minimize information overload, and ensure the message of the Gospel is communicated clearly and intentionally.

The Canton First United Methodist Church (CFUMC) Marketing and Communications Policy is designed to do the following:

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

Importance of a Church Brand

Our brand communicates the identity of our church and makes a statement about who we are and what we believe. If we are intentional with our branding, our brand has the power to effectively communicate our vision and mission as a church.

Every message we communicate—print, electronic media, social media, website, email, signage, graphics, or any other promotional material—is an avenue to communicate our brand and who we are as a community of believers. Therefore, all external communication done within the Cherokee County area, state of Georgia, or nationally, will be approved by the Director of Administration, Executive Pastor or the Lead Pastor of CFUMC to ensure and protect the brand.

Scope of Policy

The Marketing and Communications Policy applies to all printed and digital communications that are related to the ministries of CFUMC, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Weekly announcements in the bulletin
- Announcements/presentations during worship services including Ministry Moments from the pulpit
- Weekly email updates
- Monthly newsletters
- Church websites
- Bulletin Boards/monitors/displays/posters/flyers
- Outdoor signs and banners
- Print and online advertising, marketing, and information, including social media
- Email communications made on behalf of church staff, lay leaders, or activities hosted by CFUMC
- Sunday School communications, including flyers, sign-up sheets, and binders
- Emergency communications
- Privacy of church member and staff information

General Communication Guidelines

The CFUMC Marketing and Communications Policy applies to any group, class, or individual that wishes to communicate to a larger audience (either within or outside the church congregation) information pertaining to activities including, but not limited to, the following:

- Fundraisers and Outreach
- Missions
- Meetings and Events
- General Announcements

The following general guidelines apply to all marketing and communication requests:

- All communication requests (staff and laity) are to be submitted using the **Communications Request Form** (<https://www.cantonfirstumc.org/communications-requests/>), at least **4 weeks BEFORE** the promotion start date of the event. (Promotion start date is the date on which the announcement or other promotion will begin to allow enough time for production and implementation.
- To ensure we receive timely and complete information so that we can best promote the event or activity, we are unable to accept requests from handwritten notes, phone calls, voicemails, or hallway conversations.

- CFUMC events are promoted for a maximum of 6 weeks and a minimum of 2 weeks, with exceptions at the discretion of the Director of Administration, Executive Pastor or Lead Pastor.
- All written and digital communications referring to the ministries of CFUMC must be consistent with the overall branding of the church. Submitted information will be edited as required to comply with CFUMC communication standards and branding.
- Communication requests may be denied or deferred based on relevancy, timeliness, and scope of audience and considering when and how information will be most effectively presented.

Privacy

CFUMC is committed to protecting the confidentiality of personal information of its staff and membership, to include, but not 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.

The church's email distribution lists and member contact information lists will only be used for communications related to the activities of the church. Contact lists will not be used for solicitations or to communicate events or activities which are not specifically related to CFUMC. At any point, subscribers to our email lists can remove themselves from certain distribution lists, such as the church newsletters and periodicals.

Emergency Communications

When a significant event or emergency occurs at CFUMC, it is important to communicate the events or emergency situation to the Lead Pastor or Executive Pastor immediately. This may include, but is not 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 Lead Pastor.

Press Releases or Statements

Only the Lead Pastor is to make a statement or press release on behalf of the church. At the Lead Pastor's discretion, a staff or lay leader may be given the authority to speak on behalf of a ministry program or mission of the church.

Social Media

Regarding social media content, any staff or lay leader who engages in conflict, gossip, rumor, or slander in any form will be dismissed from the area/areas in which they work, serve, or lead.

Specific Media Guidelines

Weekly Worship Bulletin Announcements

The main purpose of the printed weekly bulletin is to serve as a guide for worship in all areas of our services. Space for announcements is limited. As such, announcements should be brief and limited to events and activities of the church that are open to either all members or large segments of the membership and community.

Weekly E-News Update or Email “Blasts”

The church provides a weekly email update containing upcoming activities to its staff, members, and visitors who have submitted functioning email addresses. In addition, a one-time email blast (e-blast) may be sent out when deemed appropriate by the Communications Specialist (under direction of the Pastors).

Church Website

The church website is a “first impression” resource to people looking to engage in a church community and also serves to update and inform the members of CFUMC. The ministries, mission, events, activities, event calendar, and registration information are included on the website. The Communications Specialist will remove content once the event has passed.

Announcements/Presentations During Worship

In order to protect the time needed to effectively communicate the message/sermon for the week, announcements or presentations during worship will be limited at the discretion and approval of the Pastors.

Bulletin Boards/Monitors/Displays/Posters/Flyers

All paper and electronic bulletin boards, monitors, floor displays, countertop displays, posters, flyers, handouts, stickers, bookmarks, or other signage on church property shall be used only for church-related or church-sponsored events and activities. Placement of flyers on windshields in the church parking lot is prohibited.

Outdoor Banners or Signage

Use of the outdoor banners or signs on church property will be limited to church-sponsored events and activities.

Print and Online Advertising, Marketing, and Information

No print or online advertising, marketing or information (including newspapers, magazine, or online articles) should be arranged, with or without cost, on the church’s behalf without the review and approval of the Pastors.

Social Media (Facebook, Instagram)

Social Media can be a great way to share our events and outreach to our community. A request for a social media event is suggested for any marketing and communications campaign.

Sunday School Communications

Communication to adult Sunday School classes must be filtered through the Sunday School Binders and approved for distribution by the Pastors. Communications to children and student ministry Sunday School classes or small groups must be approved by the Director of Children's Ministry or the Student Minister as applicable.

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 bulletins, funeral and memorial guides, quarterly newsletters, campus maps, Sunday School class information, Bible study and small group information, visitor and new member materials, and brochures. If church office resources for printed materials are exhausted, staff members and/or volunteers may choose to use off-site printing. In either case, the Office Manager and Communications Specialist will need to approve a final copy before any printed materials are distributed.