



GUIDELINES FOR SOCIAL MEDIA

Synod Office:

1. Liz Zehr, Stephanie Clayton, Keith Myra and Riitta Hepomaki have access to manage and post on to the Synod web site. Riitta Hepomaki is responsible for the content of the web site.
2. Liz Zehr edits the Synod newsletter. Riitta Hepomaki is responsible for the content of the newsletter.
3. Liz Zehr and Riitta Hepomaki can post on Twitter and Riitta is responsible for its content.
4. Riitta Hepomaki is responsible for the content of the Eastern Synod Facebook page.

Ministry Directors

1. Ministry Directors manage their Ministry blogs and are responsible for their content.

Congregations

1. Congregations are responsible for their own social media platforms.

GUIDELINES FOR PASTORS AND EMPLOYEES

The Eastern Synod of the ELCIC is committed to share the Good News of Jesus Christ in the world. Social media offers new opportunities to communicate effectively and interactively. Social media is changing rapidly; today's policies and guidelines may be outdated tomorrow. The Eastern Synod trusts that its pastors and employees use their common sense when using social media and take responsibility for their own actions. The purpose of these guidelines is not to limit pastors' or employees' activities in social media but help to foster communication with high standards.

1. As a pastor or an employee of the Eastern Synod you are seen as a representative of the church even though you may see your website/blog/Facebook/Twitter etc. as a personal project.
2. Be authentic. Always use your real name and when appropriate disclose your position as a pastor or employee of the Eastern Synod. Make it clear when speaking personally.
3. Be responsible for what you write. Exercise good judgment and common sense. Don't say anything that is untrue, dishonest, or misleading.
4. Always respect confidentiality. Confidential information includes things such as private conversations with individuals, pastoral care/counseling, confidential reports, and decisions or information of meetings that are not disclosed to the public yet.
5. Be mindful of your audience. Remember that your readers may include current, past or prospected congregational members, people of all age groups with various backgrounds, values, and theological or political views.
6. Always check the links/likes/groups that you associate with or post onto your site. This is important particularly if your audience include children and young people.
7. Respect copyright laws. Always give people proper credit for their work. Make sure you have the right to use materials owned by others.
8. All the time you spend on your personal sites should be your personal time, not work time.
9. Protect your own privacy. Privacy settings are changing constantly and thus need to be updated.
10. Social media is a public forum. Eastern Synod does not monitor its pastors' or employees' activities in social media. However, disciplinary or other applicable policies will be followed if a complaint is received.

Approved by Synod Council – March 16, 2012

Staff names updated by Riitta Hepomaki and Liz Zehr – November 2014