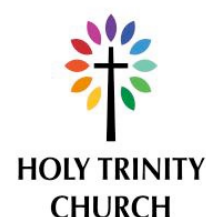


HOLY TRINITY CHURCH
Social Media Policy (Jan 2018)



Communication that demands a new way of thinking

This policy will be reviewed annually or when major change takes place.

PURPOSE

The purpose of using social media within the church is both outreach and to inform our own congregation. Through the various social media platforms we are able to engage with our own congregation and people and churches we would not otherwise be in contact with. This is a very positive opportunity allowing us to communicate what HTC is about, open up our events but also to learn from other churches and related organisations.

WEBSITE

Holy Trinity, Geneva
<http://holytrinitygeneva.org/>

Current Administrators
Jo Kitson
Jill Bechet
Armel Ayegnon

FACEBOOK

Holy Trinity Church, Geneva <https://www.facebook.com/HolyTrinityGeneva/>

Current Administrators:
Jo Kitson

TWITTER

@GenevaAnglican
<https://twitter.com/GenevaAnglican>

Tweeters:
Jo Kitson

POLICY GUIDELINES

Social media is immediate, interactive, conversational and open-ended. This sets it apart from other forms of communication and demands a new way of thinking.

The following CofE guidelines (developed initially by Baths and Wells) are based on principles of common sense and good judgement. Essentially, participate online in the same way as you would in any other public forum. Ensure communications are consistent with Christian values and remember the authors are always responsible for the things they do, say or write.

1. Don't rush in

The immediacy of social media is one of its benefits – the ability to respond quickly to questions, correct misunderstandings, give a perspective about a breaking story in the news media. Responding quickly doesn't mean doing so without due consideration.

Before posting always think:

- Is this my story to share?
- Would I want my mum to read this?
- Would I want God to read this?
- Would I want this on the front page of a newspaper?

2. Transient yet permanent

Social media updates are immediate and will outdate quickly BUT they can have a more lasting impact and so assume that anything posted is permanent. Even if deleted later on, it may have been seen and re-published or referred to elsewhere.

3. An ambassador

Like it or not, others will see your communications as representative of the Church. When communicating reflect upon this. For policy type statements, items should be checked by Canon Alex.

4. Don't hide

Anonymity and 'hiding' behind aliases when using social media is frowned upon. How can anyone really connect with an alias?

On any social media platform, include brief personal details in the section about the authors.

5. Blurring of public/private life boundaries

There are risks associated with personal opinions being seen as public statements. Use church accounts only for church ministry. Use privacy settings wisely.

6. Safeguarding

The informality that social media encourages can mean that it may be harder to maintain a professional distance required when working with children, young people and the vulnerable.

Communicating directly online with someone, for example with private messaging, is like meeting them in private. Only send messages to groups, rather than individuals, or share all messages publicly.

7. Stay within the legal framework

Whilst sharing thoughts and reflections via social media can seem personal and private, it is not. By law, if one or more people can access it, content is classed as published, in the public domain and subject to legislation around libel, defamation, copyright and data protection.

If you wouldn't say something in a public meeting or to someone's face or write it in a newspaper or on headed paper – don't say it online.

8. Confidentiality

Use of social media does not change the Church's understanding of confidentiality. Within the life of the Church there are private meetings and conversations, particularly in terms of pastoral work.

Breaking confidentiality is as wrong as it would be in any other context. Arguably, it is worse as via social media a broken confidence could spread rapidly and be impossible to retract.

9. Be mindful of your security

Don't over-share personal information. Never publish personal information such as your address or telephone number, unless in a private message to someone you know and trust.

NEGATIVITY ON LINE

Unfortunately, there may be times when HTC's social media can attract negative comments. Initial response is to issue a bland and neutral statement (Thank you for your comments. Please contact us directly to continue this discussion). This way we avoid inflaming the issue by responding but encourage a Private Message if this might be helpful. Second level response is to **report** the comments using the tools offered by the social media websites. Finally, individuals can be **banned** if their comments continue to be offensive – they will no longer be able to see content or post on our site

SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

Profile and Cover picture

- Always use the HTC logo
- Cover picture should be people not building focussed

Photographs and Illustrations

- Ensure you have the right to publish – either from photographer or use free website sources (www.unsplash.com. www.freelyphotos.com. www.pixabay.com, www.pexels.com)
- Never tag photos on Facebook
- Photographing during services should be agreed with the chaplain and the congregation advised via the pew sheet or verbally
- People wishing to be excluded from photographs can advise administrators and tweeters
- No photography of children under 18 unless written permission from parent/guardian is available – see also safeguarding policy

Language

- 97% of people don't go to church – avoid using liturgical language as this will alienate
- Use plain English and explain technical terms if they must be used
- Always be positive
- Church is we, user is you

Events

- Two weeks' notice must be given to the administrators/tweeters to allow content to be developed and planned
- Detail must be provided to allow the administrators to generate copy. It is not the administrators' responsibility to chase for information.
- Reports from events should be forwarded as soon as possible afterwards to enable follow up reports to be posted

Website

- 'Old' news to be removed regularly
- Headlines to be consistent and all articles to include pictures/illustrations where possible

Facebook

- Keep it busy – regular posting encourages engagement
- Posts should encourage responses by adding questions in the wording – 'will you be coming along?' as an example.
- Facebook posts can be shared on other pages where relevant
- Use of 'boost' can be considered for advertising with permission from the Treasurer
- Service posters for events such as Easter and Christmas should be pinned at the top of the Facebook page and removed immediately after the event

Tweeting

- Keep it busy – try and post daily
- Use of hashtags to generate interest and retweeting
- Diocese of Europe/Bishop tweets should be retweeted daily
- Weekly Sunday service to be tweeted on Thursday
- Other relevant retweets as appropriate

Use of other advertising Platforms

- HTC will use the following websites to promote events: Glocals, Angloinfo, WRS, Know it all passport, Tribune de Geneve, Radio 74 and any other relevant platforms that become available

Passwords – note all passwords are held centrally in the office

Jo Kitson
Jan 2018