

LCUUF Communications Policy

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I. Congregational Communications

The community of the Lake Chapala Unitarian Universalist Fellowship values openness, oneness, and compassionate service to all beings. The Fellowship's communications efforts support its mission to provide an inclusive community dedicated to spiritual growth, education, and justice.

This communications policy is in place because LCUUF wishes to support members, friends, visitors, and newcomers in staying connected with each other and in keeping abreast of what is going on in our beloved community.

The LCUUF communications policy encourages those who are facilitating communications to provide information that is accurate, clear, and timely. To that end, and to ensure that all means of communication are available to the greatest degree possible, it is recommended that more than one person be familiar with, and able to provide, each type of communication.

LCUUF communications include but are not limited to:

- Directory of Members and Friends
- Email Notices (groups.io or other applications)
- LCUUF Website, Website Calendar, and Facebook Page
- Listings in Lakeside Directories
- Newsletter
- Newspaper Advertisements
- Virtual/Online/Video Meetings (Zoom, Skype, or other applications)

- Orders of Service
- Physical Bulletin Board in the Fellowship Hall
- Press Releases
- Weekly Announcements (online or hardcopy)

LCUUF expects that all methods of communication will be used in ways that are socially responsible, respectful of each other and our community, and in keeping with our Unitarian Universalist values. Members and friends of the LCUUF are personally responsible for their posts in all forms of LCUUF communications or on social media sites.

Communications channels including, but not limited to, groups.io, Sunday announcements, newsletter, etc. are used primarily for Fellowship business. Official statements of congregational policy are approved through the LCUUF Board of Directors. The Board of Directors has authorized only the President of LCUUF and the Minister employed by LCUUF to represent the Fellowship and speak directly to the press, media, or other groups on behalf of the Fellowship.

Moderators, editors, and producers of official LCUUF media are responsible for ensuring compliance with the Communications Policy and consulting Board members when appropriate.

By taking part in an LCUUF event, attendees grant the Fellowship the right to use the images resulting from the photography/video filming, and any reproductions or adaptations of the images for fundraising, publicity or other purposes to help achieve the Fellowship's aims. This might include (but is not limited to), the right to use them in their printed and online publicity, social media, and press releases and funding applications.

II. Policy Regarding Use of the LCUUF Facebook Site or Other Social Media

We all want the LCUUF community to be a safe and comfortable environment through which people connect and share ideas and information, and to be a useful and productive tool for growing and learning together. To ensure this, each participant agrees to the following as a condition for participation in any type of LCUUF social media:

- I will behave responsibly and respectfully toward everyone using LCUUF social media outlets, respecting their value and viewpoints as well as their rights and feelings. I understand that all content should be consistent with the Seven Principles of Unitarian Universalism.
- I will work with others to ensure that the LCUUF community embraces diversity and remains welcoming to new participants and ideas.

- Acknowledging that differences of opinion and conflict will undoubtedly occur, I agree to resolve conflict constructively.
- I understand that every member of this community is entering into this same agreement and that we all have a stake in seeing that it is observed and enforced. My behavior toward other members of this community will reflect that I am abiding by this agreement.
- I acknowledge that if the Social Media Administrator concludes that I have repeatedly and willfully violated this agreement, my rights to participate in this social media community can be terminated.

III. Social Media Reminders and Suggestions

Use of the LCUUF social media outlets (email lists, Facebook, and the like) are expected to observe commonly held and understood rules of behavior. Be careful and cautious about what you say about whom/what. You should be willing to see anything you say on a social media platform published on the front page of *The New York Times*.

- **Do** engage in civil discourse and treat each other decently and with respect.
- **Do** have authentic conversations from the head, the heart, and the gut.
- **Do** foster a spirit of group creativity, experimentation, exploration, and good will.
- **Do** have a shared commitment to work together toward better communication and better conversations.
- **Do** share your insights, your knowledge, and your gifts and talents.
- **Do** help newcomers feel welcomed, and **do** help contributors feel valued.
- **Do** support each other in a positive and affirming way.
- **Do** discuss problems and controversial issues in a constructive and general way to avoid hurting others' feelings or starting flame wars.
- **Don't** send personal attacks, slurs, or offensive or disruptive messages.
- **Don't** "flame": "Flaming" is sending messages that are far more belligerent, sarcastic, accusatory, or just plain mean than you would communicate in person. If you are tempted to send an angry message, take a walk around the block first.

IV. Communicating During Virtual/Online/Video Meetings

Communications during virtual meetings may be problematic due to:

- Confusion and misunderstandings about verbal and nonverbal cues, or about the absence of verbal and nonverbal cues;

- Difficulties in establishing and maintaining trust and relationships among meeting participants; and
- Difficulties in obtaining the consensus needed to make decisions.

Participants in these meetings are encouraged to establish ways to ensure that each person feels included and heard. Participants may wish to establish methods of communication that include hand signals to indicate when someone wishes to speak; covenants about not interrupting each other; policies about eating, drinking, or conducting side conversations during meetings; and deciding how to deal with persons who may need to be encouraged to share the floor.

Remember: We are in this together, and this is new for many of us!

V. Moderators and Conflict Resolution

All LCUUF communications, including groups.io; comment and responses areas, such as the LCUUF Facebook page; announcements; etc. must be moderated. Those responsible for such areas will ensure that information and posts do not violate our standards for civility, misrepresent the position of the congregation or the LCUUF Board, or include profanity, defamatory language, or speech that is otherwise inappropriate or off-topic. Moderators will not permit anonymous comments. All moderators reserve the right to ban repeat offenders.

Should conflicts or issues arise concerning **any** form of LCUUF communications, the moderator, editor, or producer of the communications will contact the LCUUF Board of Directors Subcommittee on Communications. At this time, Eric Luria and Susan Miller are members of the subcommittee.

The moderator, editor, or producer will provide information about the conflict, the name of the involved parties, and any other data as necessary. The subcommittee will work with the moderator, editor, or producer to resolve said conflicts or issues.