

# UCM Facebook Policy – 2019

## Private Facebook group for UCM members and friends (internal)

1. The existing internal group is a private, closed group with unrestricted posting by group members. It will be moderated by the Communications Specialist, and is aimed at UCM UUs and other interested individuals.
2. **Purpose of the internal group** – Provide news and information to members and friends, general sharing of concerns and issues of interest to the UCM community, including social justice and other issues. Broad purpose: to create a sense of community interaction online, including a feeling of closeness and support from core staff and other members.
  - Individual privacy and opinions must be respected.
  - More insider language is allowed.
  - Conversation will be encouraged with response varying from simply liking a post to the development and sharing of experience and opinion (subject to the terms and conditions of what posts are and are not acceptable).
3. **Content will include general UCM news** – notifications of services, posted sermons, events, interesting articles and information and sharing by group members including local events in the extended community, general social justice issues and events. Members will be encouraged to post solution-oriented information. Education about issues will also be encouraged.
  - Content will be facilitated through the creation of “themed” days for posts. This is to encourage posts of a certain nature on certain days of the week, with the goal of facilitating conversation and bonding among members.
4. **Entry to group** – A vetting process is necessary to ensure the safety and security of the group. All new members who apply to be part of the internal group will be screened. The screening process can include:
  - a) A review of the person’s **personal** Facebook page, including any potentially defamatory, offensive, or violent language and imagery. This review includes posts made on the applicant’s personal profile, as well as on other groups, conversation threads, and other people’s Facebook walls, etc. Posts that are

contrary to the values and principles of the Unitarian community will also be considered as criteria for exclusion.

- b) Profiles may be deemed “**high risk**” and excluded from entry on the basis of:
- Having under 100 friends on Facebook.
  - Have a profile that has been made in the last year.
  - Having little to no published content, and little to no personal information available about themselves available (no pictures or biographical information).
  - If the account is registered as originating from a country outside of Canada/United States.
  - The Facebook account name and profile picture do not correspond to the person’s personal identity.
  - They have been removed from the private group before or have a history of harassment/defamation against members of the Church.
  - The person’s profile has been used for the purposes of spamming other members, individuals, or Unitarian pages in the past.

c) **New members will be asked to make an introductory statement about themselves, including their reasons for joining the group.** New members who do not respond or interact with this introductory post will be closely monitored for potential problematic activity. A lack of response to this invitation to introduce oneself to the group will be considered suspicious.

5. **Policy for removal of posts:** Posts must not fall into following categories, or they may be removed/deleted permanently from the internal group. This removal may occur without prior warning, and is subject to the discretion of the Communications Specialist.

- Content determined to be inappropriate or otherwise contrary to the purposes of the forum
- Posts and conversation threads which have become contentious or have devolved into arguments that are no longer constructive to the larger group
- Profane, defamatory, offensive, or violent language
- “Trolling” or posting deliberately disruptive statements meant to hijack comment threads or throw discussions off-track

- Attacks on specific people or groups, or any comments meant to harass, threaten, or abuse an individual or group
- Hateful or discriminatory comments regarding race, ethnicity, religion, gender, disability, sexual orientation, or political beliefs
- Photographs/videos of individuals who have not consented to having their picture/image released, as well as photographs of children under 18 whose parents have not given explicit consent for their photos/images to be released
- Links or comments containing sexually explicit content material
- Discussion of illegal activity
- Spam, link baiting, or files containing viruses that could damage the operation of other members' computers or mobile devices
- Acknowledgement of intent to stalk an individual or collect private information without disclosure
- Commercial solicitations
- Violations of copyright or intellectual property rights
- Content that relates to confidential or proprietary business information
- Promoting products, services, or brands
- Personal promotion, unless related to relevant non-profit or volunteer work
- Posts that serve as an endorsement of candidates, parties, or party issues

#### **6. Policy for removing members from the group:**

- Warnings, sanctions, and consequences are applied by the Communications Specialist, at his/her/their discretion.

- Members who violate any of the above guidelines for posting will be given their first warning via Facebook message, including a mention of which guideline has been broken. The post will then be removed, as well as any posts that follow of a similar nature. First violations will be scrubbed after a total of **12 months**.
- Members who have been given previous warnings regarding their posts should consider this as their first warning, even if warnings were given in previous years or by the previous Communications Specialist.
- Members who violate the guidelines for posting a second time will have their ability to respond on that post revoked, and will be muted (unable to post in the group) **for 7 consecutive days**. They will be given their second warning via Facebook message, including a mention of which guideline has been broken. The post will then be removed, as well as any posts that follow of a similar nature.
- Members who violate the guidelines for posts a third time will be removed completely from the group upon their third violation. This may occur without warning, as previous warnings will have already been given. The post will then be removed, as well as any posts that follow of a similar nature. Members may not re-apply to the group for a total of **six months and their application is subject to a full review**.
- Members who pose a virtual or physical security risk to the personal safety and integrity of other members, or to the congregation as a whole, will be removed immediately from the group without warning and at discretion of the Communications Specialist.

## 7. Themed Day posts

Facebook posting will be facilitated through the creation of “themed days” for posting. They will be as follows:

[#MotivationalMonday](#) = Motivational quotes or images that are related to UU principles.

[#TransformationTuesday](#) = Name and describe a UU event, a service, a sermon, a mediation, or a gathering that helped transform your life in a positive way!

[#WisdomWednesday](#) = What is a piece of wisdom you learned from a fellow UU member or friend?

[#ThankfulThursday](#) = What is something you are thankful for? In what ways do you show gratitude and appreciation for the small and big things in life?

[#FearlessFriday](#) = Are there any big challenges you overcame in your life? How did you take fear and convert it into courage and positive action?

[#ShoutoutSaturday](#) = Are there organizations, groups, small family-owned businesses, or charities that do great work in the neighborhood? While we normally don't encourage posts related to commercial ventures, Saturdays are an exception! Let us know about great work being done in our communities.

[#SundayRead](#) = Are there any good books that members of our community should know about? Have you rented a book from our library and want to share what you thought? Let us know!

## **Unitarian Church of Montreal Public Facebook page (external)**

### **1) Purpose of the external group:**

- Public facing page and platform for dissemination of general UCM news or events, email campaign information, limited social justice concerns, other community events of interest, UCM historical facts, and announcements about building operations when deemed useful to announce to wider community (i.e. office being closed).

### **2) Topics:**

- We post about the upcoming Sunday service weekly, usually on Wednesdays along with other special programming on Sunday and other UCM sponsored events such as the SECC film series, RE sponsored soup-and-bread lunches following the service, etc. These posts will appear on Thursday or Friday of the week preceding the service. Posts may include images, music, videos, quotes, memes, links to other websites, etc.
- We post reminders about upcoming events and activities we sponsor.
- As it comes, we post information from other sources and organizations related to causes we officially endorse. (Examples: LGBTQ, environmental justice, interfaith dialogue, and anti-poverty concerns.)
- References to the UCM website are common, with the intention of driving traffic to our website.
- For significant events, we create a FB event page instead of a single post.
- We occasionally post items from CUC and UUA, but not too many as we are aware that such information can be considered “insider” to a lot of our audience.
- Posts from the newsletter may be posted as relevant material.

### **3) Messaging:**

- On the external page, we post as though we are talking to people who have never been to our church or know anything about UU’ism.
- We are intentional about language and try not to use too many churchy words or UU insider language or acronyms.
- Key messaging includes the core of our mission statement with emphasis on our being a welcoming, diverse, inclusive, spiritual community.
- We do not position ourselves as “us vs. them” with respect to other churches or beliefs systems.
- We always stay positive and do not generally engage in directly calling out of people or organizations.
- We try to answer, to the best of our ability, any questions related to event or

service information.

### **Posting Process:**

- The admin (Communications Specialist) does most of the posting, aiming for 2-5 posts per week on the UCM page. Posting is similar in the UCM group, but is restricted to content that only makes sense to announce publicly.

### **Moderation:**

- We have one admin for both the group and the page (the Communications Specialist), with a backup volunteer selected by the UCM Communications Specialist and approved by the minister, who also has backup admin privileges.
- We decline requests to post non-sponsored events on the public UCM page.
- Individuals' posts on our official Facebook event pages must be approved before they are made public.
- Comments/posts on general page content is "open," but may be removed at the discretion of Communications Specialist if deemed in violation of policy.

### **Posting Policy:**

Posts are in violation of our posting policy if they contain...

- Content that is determined to be inappropriate or otherwise contrary to the purposes of the public page
- Posts and conversation threads that are contentious or have devolved into arguments that are no longer constructive
- Profane, defamatory, offensive, or violent language
- "Trolling" or posting deliberately disruptive statements meant to hijack comment threads or throw discussions off-track
- Pictures/videos taken without the explicit consent of the person photographed, or without the consent of a parent (if the person in question is under the age of 18)
- Attacks on specific people or groups, or any comments meant to harass, threaten, or abuse an individual or group
- Hateful or discriminatory comments regarding race, ethnicity, religion, gender, disability, sexual orientation, or political beliefs

- Links or comments containing sexually explicit content material
- Discussion of illegal activity
- Spam, link baiting, or files containing viruses that could damage the operation of other people's computers or mobile devices
- Acknowledgement of intent to stalk an individual or collect private information without disclosure
- Commercial solicitations
- Violations of copyright or intellectual property rights
- Content that relates to confidential or proprietary business information
- Promotion of products, services, or brands
- Personal promotion, unless related to relevant non-profit or volunteer work
- Posts that serve as an endorsement of candidates, parties, or party issues

**Restrictions on UCM posts:**

- We do not post or re-post political positions from the US, Canada, or internationally.
- We do not post content that is in direct violation of our own posting policy.
- Photos of children are not be posted without parental approval.
- Photos of members and friends are not be posted without approval.
- If the Communications Specialist is contacted with a request to remove a photograph posted without authorization, it should be done at the earliest possible date, to respect individual privacy.

**Sharing events on Facebook:**

- People will be encouraged to share events with their friends and to invite people they know to the UCM's event pages.

**Co-hosting events:**

- Instead of creating their own Facebook event pages, committee chairs and



event planners should contact the Communications Specialist to create the associated Facebook event so that UCM is clearly identified as a sponsor.

**Facebook advertising:**

- Within budget confines, UCM can use paid and targeted Facebook advertising for specific events.

**Restrictions on participation:**

- Robin Edgar will be excluded from participation.
- Any other members who are in repeat violation of our posting policy (in the external or internal group) may have their posts removed and may be banned from the public page for **six months**, with the eligibility of appealing to the Minister via e-mail, with the Communications Specialist cc'd in the email conversation. After such time, the Minister may re-establish posting rights at her/his/their discretion.

**Photos:**

- Dates/times/location of official picture-taking, whether happening at events or services, will be announced up to three or more days prior.