Church Copy

Moorends and Thorne Pentecostal Church

Social Media Policy

Policy Statement

This policy aims to safeguard members of our fellowship involved with 'MTPC' online social media groups, and so we would encourage those who are part of our church to follow the guidelines below. The Elders/Leaders will review this policy on a regular basis and propose changes that are deemed necessary to maintain its effectiveness.

- Social media posts, for example, on the Facebook Members' page, are immediate and can have a lasting impact and you should assume that anything you post is permanent. Even if you delete it later on, it may have been seen and republished, referred to, or even screen shotted and used elsewhere.
- You are to remember that if you are part of our church fellowship, others who are not will see you as a representative of 'MTPC' and of Christ when you post anything on our church social media groups. There are risks associated with personal opinions being seen as public statements.
- Anonymity or 'hiding' behind aliases when using our church social media groups is not allowed.
- The informality that social media encourages can mean that it might be harder to maintain the professional distance that is 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. You're advised and expected to send such messages to young/vulnerable people only to groups, rather than individuals, or else share publicly.

- Whilst sharing thoughts and reflections with friends or followers via our church social media groups can seem private and personal, 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. So, if you wouldn't say something in a public meeting, don't say it online.
- Be careful of confidentiality. Within the life of our church there are private meetings and conversations, particularly in terms of pastoral work. Breaking confidentiality on our church social media group is as wrong as it would be in any other context. Remember: is this story mine to share or do I have explicit permission to share it?
- Don't overshare personal information. Never publish detailed personal information such as your or anyone else's address or telephone number within our public church social media groups.
- Always use Biblical wisdom when utilising our church social media groups. For example, if someone has offended you, consider speaking with them privately on the matter. Do not post offense responses publicly.
- Social media groups are for information and edification. Users should refrain from personal opinions on such areas as politics, theology etc.
- Please refrain from posting photos of individuals or identifying those individuals on our church social media groups without their consent prior to posting.
- Please refrain from posting any personal (i.e. non-'MTPC' activity) fundraising requests, selling personal items, publicising

one's business, or the business of a family member or friend etc etc. Such posts should remain on one's personal page.

- Those admitted to a 'MTPC' social media group by a member of the Leadership Team should be deemed a regular attendee of the church. Those who leave the church will be removed from such groups.
- Any prayer requests for the 'Messenger Group' is best to go through the Pastor or leadership team first.
- Any posts deemed inappropriate will be removed by a member of the admin team.
- In areas where this policy does not provide a direct answer for your question, please check with a member of the Leadership Team.

The policy was approved by the Leadership Team and Trustees on

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(signature) **(date)**