

# **The First Presbyterian Church in Pitman**

## **Social Media/Internet Policy**

**Adopted June 5, 2017**

### **Purpose**

At First Presbyterian Church in Pitman (FPCP), we value the way in which photography and videography can help us flourish as a faith community. Photography and videography help us be more inclusive, highlighting the work of those who serve in less visible roles. They also allow us to better reach out to our community, communicating our mission as a church via our website and social media. Finally, and most importantly, they provide important ways for us to bear testimony, both now and to future generations, to the work God is doing in our life together as a body of believers.

The following policies are designed to help us foster and encourage the gifts of photography and videography that are outlined above. It is important to us that photography and videography are used in ways that bring us together, communicate our mission, and highlight God's work amongst us.

### **A Note about Etiquette**

The FPCP Photo and Video Policy sets forth guidelines for images commissioned and used by the church. It makes no attempt to regulate the personal use of cameras during our events. However, we ask that everyone be mindful of privacy concerns when taking images—moving or still—and/or posting them to social media websites. We affirm the value of photography and videography and believe lives can be enriched by these technologies, but we encourage our community to be one of caring deference when concerns are raised. In addition to privacy, avoiding undue distraction is important, especially during worship. When appropriate, please be discreet when using cameras in and around the church.

### **Use of Video and Photography During Worship Services**

The Session of FPCP has decided that Sunday morning church services shall be recorded on video and streamed on church social media accounts and the church website. This is an important ministry of the church for both homebound members, and as a form of outreach. The following policies will be observed:

1. This activity shall be governed by the church's Photo and Video Policy as outlined below.

2. Notice of the use of video shall be posted in both the church bulletin and on a sign outside of the sanctuary. This notice shall note that attendees in the sanctuary may be incidentally captured on video as the camera moves about the sanctuary.
3. A section of the sanctuary, in the back third, will be provided for those who do not wish to appear on video.
4. All participants in church services will be notified prior to their participation that they will be captured on video. If a lay participant objects to appearing on video, every reasonable good faith effort will be made to edit them out of the video prior to posting.
5. Participants in special events, such as baptisms, will be advised they can opt out of appearing on video.

## **Photo and Video Policy**

1. Regarding children/minors:
  - a. It is the stated policy of FPCP that identifying images of children shall not be used on the church website or social media outlets without a signed release form. If a minor is clearly identifiable in a shot but does not have a signed a release form, the shot cannot be used until a release form is obtained. If it is a group shot and minors are not clearly identifiable, a release is not needed.
  - b. Unless permission has been otherwise granted, no full names or other identifying information (e.g., phone numbers, emails, addresses) shall be posted with images of minors. This includes tagging on Facebook.
  - c. We will only post photographs of minors *after* an event has occurred. For example, we may post a photo of a past youth event, but will not post a child's photo with the date and time of a future youth event.
  - d. Photo Release Forms will be handed out and maintained by the Sunday School, and by organizers of church events. Photo Release Forms must be separate from sign-up forms, and it must be clear that signing the Photo Release is not a condition for participation in a church activity.
2. Regarding adults:
  - a. The photographer will always ask permission before taking an image to be used on the church website or social media. Permission will also be asked at this time.
  - b. Unless permission has been granted, we will not post online a photo or a video with any full names or other identifying information (e.g., phone numbers, emails, addresses) except for church staff, officers and ministry leaders. This includes tagging photos on Facebook.
  - c. We will not knowingly post anything that would be embarrassing, objectionable or hurtful to anyone in the image.

- d. We will gladly remove any photo or video immediately upon request. If you see a photo or video that includes you or your child and would like it removed from our website or social media, please contact the church office.

### **Policy for Posting to Church Social Media Accounts**

1. Church social media accounts and the website will be maintained and overseen by the Invitation & Outreach Committee.
2. Through the Invitation & Outreach Committee, the Session of the FPCP shall designate individuals with permission to post to church maintained social media accounts and the website. This shall include the Church Administrator and the Pastor, and shall be reviewed annually. A designated member of Session shall act as the editor-in-chief of church social media accounts and the website. Any disputes arising from posts on social media accounts or the website shall be decided by the Session.
3. Those posting to church social media accounts, and the website must, adhere to the church's Photo and Video Policy as outlined above.
4. Good judgment shall be used by those approved to post on FPCP social media accounts and the website. The following guidelines should be considered:
  - a. Social Media will be used by FPCP as a place to post basic information, inform of upcoming and past events, share congregational moments, maintain history, share inspiration, and communicate generally with our congregation and interested public.
  - b. Pictures, video clips, audio clips and text may appear on FPCP's social media and website from time to time.
  - c. It is the intent of FPCP that all material posted, linked, or otherwise associated with FPCP will be consistent with the mission, purpose and values of FPCP.
  - d. Information and conversations considered confidential or sensitive shall not be posted to FPCP social media accounts or its website.
  - e. All copyrighted or trademarked material should be used according to guidelines.
5. For employees and those who hold leadership positions within the church, it is advised that you are generally seen by our members, attendees and outside persons as representatives of FPCP. This means that while you may view your social media use as a personal project, many readers will associate the views you express with the church. Therefore, we ask that you use good judgment when using social media.