

Social Media Guide for Leatherhead Methodist Church

This simplified guide outlines how staff and volunteers at **Leatherhead Methodist Church (LMC)** should use social media. It covers both official church accounts and your personal profiles.

Webteam composition as from May 26

Minister	Rev Dan Baldon
Webmasters	David Stoves
	Julian Rickard
Youth & Family Lead	Nic Joyce
Church administrator	Carol Stoves

1. Why We Use Social Media

Social media helps us promote our mission, share news, and build a supportive online community. We use it to:

- Share updates and celebrate successes.
 - Publicize events and church services.
 - Engage in helpful conversations with the community.
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2. General Rules (The "Headlines")

- **Be Kind:** Do not insult, bully, or harass anyone.
 - **Be Respectful:** Respond to others professionally, even if you disagree.
 - **Be Honest:** Do not post inaccurate info. If you make a mistake, fix it quickly.
 - **Be Safe:** Always ensure your posts do no harm to others or the church.
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3. Using Official LMC Accounts

Only the **Webteam** and authorized staff may post on LMC's official Facebook, WhatsApp, or YouTube channels.

- **One Voice:** Use the church's "tone of voice," not your personal one.
- **Permission:** Do not create new LMC-branded groups or pages without trustee approval.
- **Consent:** Never post photos or videos of people (especially children) without express permission from them or their guardian.
- **Stay Neutral:** LMC does not support specific political parties or candidates.

- **On Message:** Ensure that postings align with both LMC and Connexional policy (if relevant), unless the trustees have explicitly approved otherwise.
- **Like or Repost:** Always double-check that the whole of any posting by others you endorse or re-post complies fully with this policy

4. Your Personal Social Media

You are free to use your own accounts, but your posts can still reflect on the church.

- **Clear Distance:** Make it clear that your views are your own. Use a disclaimer like: *"Views are my own"*.
 - **Privacy:** Set your privacy settings to "strict" to protect your personal info.
 - **VIPs:** Do not message famous people or big donors on behalf of LMC from your personal account.
 - **Press:** If a journalist contacts you about an LMC-related post, do not reply. Tell the Webteam immediately.
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5. Staying Safe & Legal

- **Copyright:** Don't use images or text created by others without permission.
 - **Confidentiality:** Do not share private church information or "internal-only" news.
 - **Safeguarding:** If you see something online that suggests a child or vulnerable person is at risk, report it to the Minister or Safeguarding Officer immediately.
 - **AI Tools:** You can use AI to help write content, but it must still follow all church standards.
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6. What Happens in a Crisis?

If you see a "flame war" or a serious complaint escalating online:

1. **Do not delete or argue** with the person if you aren't on the Webteam.
2. **Report it** to the Webmaster or Minister immediately.
3. The Webteam will handle the response to keep the church's reputation safe.

Last amended June 2026