



COMMUNICATIONS GUIDELINES, TOOLS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

2016 Revision

This document outlines the communications best practices, style/writing guidelines, and communications resources for Bothell UMC.

2016 Communications Team

1/19/2016



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INTRODUCTION

This document contains communications resources and guidelines to be used by the various groups and staff at Bothell UMC. The goal is to have a more cohesive communications strategy at the church and have high quality / consistent communications from the various groups in the church to both internal church members and the external community.

Areas include:

- writing/style guidelines
- communications templates/clip art
- how to submit content for the witness / e-news
- bulletin boards
- content review / auditing best practices
- communications tools
- where to get help if you need it.

COMMUNICATIONS TEAM RECOMMENDATIONS

The Bothell UMC Communications Team's overall goal is to help facilitate clear, concise, accurate, and consistent communications between church staff, church members, church groups, and the community. The Communications Team is here for you as a resource when you are creating communications or are managing existing communication channels. We are not trying to hinder or gate your ability to send communications, and merely want to provide a set of standard tools, guides and support services that you can opt to use if/when appropriate. Upon request we can provide document templates and help you review/audit content.

WRITING GUIDELINES

Bothell UMC has a writing guideline (separate document: Bothell UMC Writing Guidelines.pdf) that outlines writing conventions for written communications. The document can be found on the website under the About Us | Church Resources page or is available in the church office. Things covered include:

- Church name conventions (i.e. use Bothell UMC and not BUMC)
- Church groups and ministry names
- Church location names
- Abbreviations
- Capitalization
- Punctuation
- Writing style
- Electronic Media Guidelines

STYLE GUIDELINES

Bothell UMC has a style guideline (separate document: Bothell UMC Style Guidelines.pdf) that outlines graphical style conventions for printed and electronic graphical media. The document and logos can be found on the website under the About Us | Church Resources page or is available in the church office. This document covers things like:

- Church name and logo
- Color palettes
- Fonts
- Graphical layouts and style

DOCUMENT TEMPLATES, CLIP ART AND STOCK PHOTOGRAPHY

The Bothell UMC Communications Team is in the process of developing a number of document templates that you can use for your meeting agendas, meeting minutes, and half page and one page brochures/flyers. These templates will include church logos, fonts and other style settings that can give the church digital and printed materials a consistent look. It will not be mandatory to use these, but their use is encouraged. Once these resources are completed and published, they will be found on a CD in the front office and on the church website under About Us | Church Resources.

The church has a subscription to ChurchArt Online, a pay library of church clip art. If you need a specific image, contact communications@bothellumc.org with the type of image you are looking for and the date you need the image. Church staff or the Media/Worship team can meet with you to preview some images if you don't know exactly what you are looking for.

Clip art can also be found on the Company share on the volunteer computer in the front office. Clip art is also available on the UMCcommunications website at www.UMCOM.org

Stock photography can be found in a variety of places. Both free and paid. Free stock photography is available on the www.UMCOM.org website.

IDENTITY GUIDELINES

The purpose of Identity Guidelines is to provide professionalism, clarity and consistency to Bothell UMC's publications, printed materials, websites and videos.

Church Name: Bothell United Methodist Church

Abbreviated name: Bothell UMC (do not use BUMC)

Mailing address: 18515 92nd Ave. NE, Bothell, WA 98011-2299

Web address: www.bothellumc.org

Phone number: 425-486-7132

Fax number: 425-486-0303

WITNESS SUBMISSION

Please write up your submission in narrative form. If you are informing people of an event or program, your submission should include who, what, where, and when. Send your submission to the church office admin at communications@bothellumc.org

Please honor the deadline, which is generally midnight on the Monday before the Witness is published. The deadline date is published in the previous Witness and calendar, both of which are posted on the website. You can also contact the office for the information. Send your items in a plain, 11 point font (Century Gothic, if possible) in a Microsoft Word document (.doc extension).

Check your article for correct dates of the event, spelling, etc. Please use contractions such as “we’ll” instead of “we will.” That’s how people speak, and your article should read like a friend talking to another friend.

Bullet points will be included when possible, but there may not be enough room for the message when formatted that way.

Articles should be limited to roughly 250 words or less. The Witness editor will edit accordingly to fit in the space available.

Photographs are always a good idea, and depending upon room, we prefer photos rather than clip art. If using someone’s image, a photo release form (or other written consent) is needed before we can print a photo. Please send the photo release approval with your photo.

E-NEWS SUBMISSION

The E-News is designed for timely, short messages about coming events that are relevant to most of the congregation. This is the visual version of a 20-second sound bite so short and concise, roughly 100 words, is what works.

Send your submissions to the church office admin at communications@bothellumc.org by Tuesday afternoon of the week you want the announcement to be sent.

Links that connect to event registration may take longer to set up in the E-News announcement, so please submit it by Monday of the week you would like it announced.

BULLETIN SUBMISSION

Information for the bulletin should be sent to the church office admin at communications@bothellumc.org. This should be an extremely short message of roughly 28 words or less. The church staff will approve the content for inclusion in the bulletin.

WEBSITE NEWS SUBMISSION

Website Front Page News articles consist of a title, a few paragraphs of content and a graphic. News items should be for events at least 3 weeks in the future so that there is adequate time for people to see the news item. (Please do not submit news for events occurring in less than 7 days.) Articles should be submitted to church office admin who will approve the content and schedule it for publication.

If there is a date or time for the event it should be in either the title or the first sentence of content so it is visible on the home page without clicking.

You can include links to external websites or registration forms in the Website news article.

WEBSITE CONTENT UPDATES

Website content updates for the static web pages (not news or calendar) should be directed to the church office admin who will review the content request and forward it to the appropriate resource for implementation. It is important to review your pages regularly and let the church office admin know if something is out of date or additional content should be added. There are audits performed twice a year on the website to ensure the pages are accurate. However, each content stakeholder should take responsibility for policing their own pages so they are kept up to date between audits.

DISCOVER BOTHELL UMC BLOG SUBMISSION

There are a number of blogs available on the <http://discovermorebothellumc.wordpress.com/> website. These include blogs from mission, reconciling, trustees, UMW, vision team, and worship team. The leaders of these groups should have access to post blog messages. If you need access, contact Kristin Joyner at joynusall@comcast.net

NARTHEX BULLETIN BOARDS

There are a number of bulletin boards available for groups to use for announcements. In addition, a number of groups have permanent bulletin boards in the Narthex for their use (Children's Ministry, Missions and UMW).

To request the use of a bulletin board, send an email to communications@bothellumc.org and specify the board you would like to use, the dates you would like to use it, the purpose and content of the board. Before you use the board you must get confirmation that your request has been approved.

NARTHEX PORTABLE BANNER SIGNPOSTS

There are ten portable banner stands that can be put up in the Narthex with special communications. You can use one or several of the stands to communicate a special activity/event on Sunday morning or throughout the week. Please note, they can be either single-sided, or double sided to be seen by people both entering and leaving the church.

To request to use the banner stands, send an email to communications@bothellumc.org and specify the date and number needed, intended purpose, content for the banner and where the banner will be setup. It is best to get confirmation of approval by staff before you print the banner. It is recommended, but not required, that you send a copy of the banner for review prior to printing.

The banner paper available to use is 4' tall by 11.75" wide. To print and attach them to the signposts you will need to use this paper which is available in the office. The church office staff or worship/media team can help you use the correct template and print them in the church office. Please contact Communications@bothellumc.org for more information on this option.

EMAIL BLASTS, EVENT REGISTRATIONS AND SURVEYS

ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS to large groups from the church is done mostly through www.constantcontact.com. Constant Contact provides the church with managed email lists, email blasts, event registrations, and surveys. Here are some frequently asked questions on the capabilities of Constant Contact

What is Constant Contact?

Constant Contact, Inc. is an online marketing company offering email marketing, social media marketing, online survey, event marketing, digital storefronts, and local deals tools, primarily to small businesses, nonprofit organizations, and membership associations. This service also integrates a "Tracking Metrics" that allows users to receive real-time reports (track opens, clicks, forwards, social shares, and more) so you know what is (and isn't) working. Bothell UMC has a subscription to this service and all groups are welcome to utilize it free of charge.

How does Bothell UMC use it?

Some examples of how/where this is currently used: Weekly All-Church E-News, Youth E-News, Women's E-News, retreat/VBS registrations, online sign-ups for Special Events/Classes/Dinners, surveys.

How do I utilize this tool/service?

All requests for e-mail announcements, surveys and on-line registrations need to go through the church office admin at communications@bothellumc.org. Once a request is received, the church office admin will make sure it is approved by staff and put you in contact with the Worship Media coordinator (if needed) to assist you in setting up the request.

How can my group use it?

E-mail Blasts: Most of the time, announcements can be made through the weekly all-church e-news. However, specific groups (i.e. Youth, Children, Women etc.) can also send an announcement through Constant Contact. Separate e-mail lists can be created and utilized. Please note, e-mails that go out from Constant Contact cannot be made into a "thread." All initial replies will go to the sender only.

Special Event and Sign-Ups/Registrations: This can be set up with or without online payment options. It can be as simple as a head count, or you can collect detailed information like name, phone number, address, demographics, special needs etc. You also have the option of creating an “event web page” that can be viewed/visited before and after someone has registered. This allows you to update information, if needed, about your event. Through this tool, you can import your “paper” registrations and manage all your registrations together.

CONTENT REVIEW / AUDITING BEST PRACTICES

The Bothell UMC Communications Audit Guidelines (coming soon) document includes a list of auditing best practices, recommended audit schedule for various communications channels, and other suggestions regarding keeping your communications clear, concise, relevant, accurate and consistent.

COMMUNICATIONS TOOLS AND SOFTWARE

All staff computers and the Volunteer computer have Microsoft Publisher, Word, Excel and PowerPoint installed. Worship laptops have versions of Photoshop Elements and Premiere Elements installed.

Some church members have full versions of Adobe Creative Suite and/or Creative Cloud including Bart Dellinger bart_dellinger@hotmail.com and Brian/Chi Cornell brian@cs.unc.edu

There are a number of free/open source programs available to perform various computing needs including:

GIMP (Photoshop/Illustrator like vector graphics program) <http://www.gimp.org/downloads/>

Handbrake (video recording app – converts video from one format/resolutions to a different format/resolutions) <http://handbrake.fr/downloads.php>

VLC Media Player (plays media of many file types without codec packs) <http://www.videolan.org/vlc/download-windows.html>

PDF Creator (create PDF files from Word/Excel documents for viewing on computers that may not have application installed) <http://www.pdfforge.org/pdfcreator>

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH RESOURCES

There are additional resources available from the United Methodist Communications website, www.UMCOM.org The website includes resources on church marketing, online services, social media, video and audio production, communications auditing, advertising, and graphics library (graphics, photos and logos).

Graphics and Logos resources: <http://www.umc.org/resources/graphics-logos>

WHERE TO GET HELP

If you need special help, these resources are available to you:

Communications advice

- Celeste Deveney (Staff / Communications Team) celeste@bothellumc.org
- Bart Dellinger (Communications Team) bart_dellinger@hotmail.com
- Apryl Davis (Communications Team / Worship Team) apecakes@live.com
- Barb Donovan (Staff / Communications Team) barb@bothellumc.org
- Brian Cornell (Communications Team) brian@cs.unc.edu
- Mark Dearing (Communications Team) mdearing1@gmail.com
- Tim Balaoing (Communications Team / Worship Team) burnt_lumpia@hotmail.com
- Alan Jacobsen (Communications Team) ajacobsen47@msn.com

Brochures / Graphical Layouts:

- Apryl Davis (Communications Team / Worship Team) apecakes@live.com
- Elaine del Rosario elaine.delrosario@gmail.com

Video creation / editing:

- Apryl Davis (Communications Team / Worship Team) apecakes@live.com
- Bart Dellinger (Communications Team) bart_dellinger@hotmail.com

Graphics/Icons:

- Apryl Davis (Communications Team / Worship Team) apecakes@live.com
- Elaine del Rosario elaine.delrosario@gmail.com

Website layouts / HTML:

- Bart Dellinger (Communications Team) bart_dellinger@hotmail.com

Surveys

- Apryl Davis (Communications Team / Worship Team) apecakes@live.com

Constant Contact / Email blasts

- Apryl Davis (Communications Team / Worship Team) apecakes@live.com