

# Welcome to Digital Life at Hope

We're glad that you've chosen to be on staff here. Our number one goal is to reach out to the world around us with the everlasting love of Jesus Christ. We believe we can do this as a church staff both offline and online. We have great confidence in your ability to accomplish the mission of Hope in both areas.

Guidelines for functioning in an electronic world are the same as the values, ethics and confidentiality policies employees are expected to live everyday, whether you're Tweeting, talking with Hope members or staffers, or chatting over the neighbor's fence. Remember, your responsibility to Lutheran Church of Hope doesn't end when you are off the clock. For that reason, this policy applies to both Hope sponsored social media and personal use as it relates to Hope.

## Social Web Guidelines

### What You Should Do

**Exercise Proper Judgment:** Use best judgment in all situations. If you wouldn't want your grandmother seeing what you're doing, do not put it online.

**You Represent Hope:** Whether offline or online, you are representing Lutheran Church of Hope at all times. Please keep this in mind as you interact, create and share in the digital world.

**State That It's Your Opinion:** Unless authorized to speak on behalf of Lutheran Church of Hope, you must state that the views expressed are your own. If you need examples of how to phrase this, please contact Hope's digital director.

**Be Mindful:** Please be sensible when using social networks during your working hours. We realize this is a powerful and effective medium to keep in touch with friends, co-workers and volunteers, but please be mindful of how much time you spend doing non-Hope related online activities. *(Please see Connection Matrix to determine appropriate level of social network engagement during work hours.)*

**Remember Internet Permanency:** What goes on the Internet, stays on the Internet. Google has a very good (and very permanent) memory. Think about this before sharing anything online.

**Protect Yourself:** Be safe when online. Don't give out too much personal information about yourself, your location, your surroundings or your home address. Because you are on staff at Hope, you have a higher profile than most people. Be mindful of this and stay safe.

**Build Your Online Community:** Trust your community. When using social networks for ministry purposes, enable your online community to contribute in whatever ways seem appropriate. There is tremendous opportunity in letting your community write, share, comment, police, and rate the content that results from your social network.

**Have Fun:** Above all else, have fun. The social web is an amazing place to connect with old friends, meet new ones and strengthen connections with your co-workers here at Hope. Be mindful of the guidelines above, yes, but also take time to enjoy yourself ... and others!

**Honor Our Differences:** Live the Scriptural values that we abide by. Hope will not tolerate discrimination (including age, sex, race, color, creed, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, citizenship, disability, or marital status or any other legally recognized protected basis under federal, state, or local laws, regulations or ordinances). We love others because God loves others. All people bear his image and are worthy of the dignity inherent in that identity.

## **What You Should Never Do**

**Ignore a Hesitation:** If you hesitate before clicking the mouse, chances are it's a bad idea to share whatever you've just written and/or created.

**Air Personal Grievances:** Social networks are never a good place to air personal grievances with other staff members or Hope members. Unfortunately, social networks are breeding grounds for passive-aggressive behavior. Rise above that. If you have a conflict with someone, please respect yourself (and them) enough to work through it in person.

**Solve Conflict Online:** If conflict arises in an official Hope-sponsored social network, never attempt to prove a point in a public forum. Ask clarifying questions if you need to, but if someone is upset by something you've shared, contact them personally and resolve it in a private manner. This will save you (and Hope) lots of heartache.

**Disclose The Numbers:** Non-public financial or operational information. This includes strategies, budgets and most anything with a dollar-figure attached to it. If it's not already public information, it's not your job to make it so. Hope has yearly meetings to disclose financial information as well as open accounting books. You do not need to broadcast sensitive financial information.

**Give Out Personal Information:** Never share personal information about our staff, Hope members or guests. This is a bad idea. Always.

**Post Someone Else's Material:** Let them post their own stuff; you stick to posting your own creations. This includes illegal music sharing, copyrighted publications, and all logos or other images that are property of Lutheran Church of Hope.

**Post Confidential Information:** Do not publish, post, or release information that is considered confidential or top secret.

Basically, if you find yourself wondering if you can talk about something you learned at work — don't. Follow Hope's employee handbook and live out Kingdom values and principles. They're there for a reason.

## **A Gentle Closing Reminder**

Just in case you are forgetful or ignore the guidelines above, here's what could happen. You could:

- Get fired (and it's embarrassing to lose your job for something that's so easily avoided)
- Get Lutheran Church of Hope in legal trouble with members or the community
- Cost us the ability to get and keep members
- Ultimately, set back the work of advancing God's Kingdom through the mission of Hope

Remember: protect Hope, protect yourself.

Please feel free to ask Hope's digital director any question at any time about digital life here at Hope and in general: [digital@hopewdm.org](mailto:digital@hopewdm.org).