

Use of Social Media and Digital Communications

It is important to understand best practices in our digital presence as a team. Social Media, email, and texting are mediums in which nuance and context matters greatly. We must always keep these guiding principles in mind when communicating with members of the diocese and the wider public:

1. Remember that everything is discoverable. Post, text, and email only things you would be comfortable having discovered. If material is highly sensitive and confidential, it should always be marked as such. Your ethics for even so-called private communications, such as instant messaging, should be the same as in all other areas of your professional life. These communications are all, ultimately, not private. Generally, it is best to communicate sensitive material face-to-face or in forums that are non-electronic, except where such communication within the proper circles of leadership is necessary by means such as email. In those cases, avoid personal commentary but stick to the facts as closely as you can.
2. Avoid using email to debate or discuss fraught issues; these are conversations that are best conducted in person.
3. Avoid expressing views on Facebook or any other medium that reach beyond The Episcopal Church's stance or our stance as The Episcopal Church in Colorado. (This still allows room for a wide range of commentary on challenging issues as both The Episcopal Church and our diocese have taken some courageous stands). Because a medium like Facebook blurs private and public life, it is important not to use it to vent or express highly partisan views about candidates for public office, etc. or to share humor that could be at the expense of or to the offense of some members of the diocese. You forfeit some of leeway you might have as an individual member of the Facebook community by virtue of your public role in this office.
4. When you are texting or messaging any member of the diocese or public, maintain an understanding that it is a public communication and can be shared with other members of the diocese. These are not the place to air grievances, or express frustrations.
5. Never speak for the Bishop (or any other member of staff)—online or in any other medium. It's okay to repost things the Bishop has said publicly—sermons, articles, etc. But not to say, "The Bishop thinks..." This is only for the Bishop to say.
6. If you are uncertain about how to respond to a situation with your communication, reach out to the Director of Communications and possibly at times to the Canon to the Ordinary. They will be able to help in this area.