

Communications at All Saints Church

Some suggested Guidelines

We live in busy times and often rely on emails, texts and other social networking media to help us to keep in touch with people and to communicate.

The downside with these media is that you cannot always tell how the person is feeling and the effects it is having on the person.

We have been thinking about this in the PCC and these are some suggestions to help us when we use social media:

General

1. Be a good ambassador for Christ, the Church and your part in it.
2. Difficult issues: Always be mindful of the effect that emails, texts, blogs and other social media can have on their recipients. Would it be better to revisit the content in the morning again before sending it off immediately? How would you feel if you received this? Would it be better to talk the issue over face to face?
3. If you discuss other members of the church family, question whether this ought to be brought to the person concerned in the first place rather than to others.
4. Emails and other information can be received at all hours on a smart phone and tablet; this means that the work/church /home life can be blurred. Recipients need to be aware of looking at emails, texts etc and senders need to be mindful of the time and place that they are received!
5. Be careful when forwarding emails as they can have a previous trail of emails which may not be relevant.
6. Be the first to correct your own mistakes.
7. Try to add value. Provide worthwhile information and perspective. The Church is best represented by its people and what you say and publish may reflect on not only the Church but also Christianity.

Wider media Implications

8. Know and follow the Child Protection Policy. This includes the transmission and publication of images of young people.

9. Social media entries may well attract wider media interest in you as an individual. Proceed with caution and remember that you are responsible for your on-line activities.
10. If you publish content online relevant to All Saints and the Church of England in your personal capacity, use a disclaimer like: "The postings on this site are my own and do not necessarily represent the views of All Saints Church"
11. Respect copyright.
12. Respect libel and defamation laws.
13. Never provide details of confidential matters or the performance of individuals or groups
14. Do not cite or reference individuals without their approval. If you are telling a story about a third party, ask yourself, "is this my story to tell?"
15. When you do make a reference, link back to the source. Don't publish anything that might allow inferences to be drawn which could embarrass or damage an individual.
16. Respect your audience. Don't use personal insults or veiled threats or engage in any conduct that would not be acceptable in a Christian environment or Church of England work place.
17. Blogs may carry a title referring to the individual posting on the site for example, Jenny Wren, Vicar of St Mary's but they may not carry a title utilising the name of the parish Church, for example, "The St Mary's, Walford blog." The former makes it clear that the opinions belong to one individual whilst the latter sounds as though this is the official position of the entire congregation.

If there are difficult issues to discuss please wait until after worship, not before, as time needs to be given to prayer, contemplation and preparation.

