

North Cape Lutheran Church

Policy and Practice No 2-7: Communication - Church Organization

Date Accepted: 6-8-17

Date Revised: _____

Policy Statement

It is our policy to welcome, teach and inform our members and community through effective communication by providing multiple communication streams to the congregation, external non-members, and Ministry Clusters as needed to facilitate the mission of our church, which is to grow committed followers of Jesus Christ. This includes monthly newsletters, weekly bulletins, Email, Social Media, bulletin boards, on-property signage as well as all other outreach programs. It also includes external communication for Press Releases, Media Interviews, Signage and Film/Video development.

Practice

General Communication

All communication that represents church business should be reviewed and approved by the Senior Pastor, or designated singularly appointed individual (see Communication Vehicle Ownership Chart). An approved draft version should be provided to the Office Administrator for final review and publishing. This includes monthly newsletters, weekly bulletins, Email (Blast & Express), social media (Facebook, twitter, etc.) and other outreach programs. The information, tonality, and general verbiage in all communication should represent NCLC's mission, bylaws, and policy practices. The policy should be reviewed annually by the Board Vice President in conjunction with the Pastoral Staff and Office Administrator. Any suggested changes should be forwarded to the Board for consideration.

The Senior Pastor serves as the chief editor and publisher, in conjunction with the church office administrator, for all North Cape Lutheran Church communication. The Senior Pastor may delegate some of his / her responsibilities at times to Board Members or other church leaders when appropriate. The Senior Pastor will lead a communication team consisting of all pastoral staff and the office administrator. The communication team should meet weekly to plan, review, and approve all communication.

Steps for Effective Communication at North Cape Lutheran Church

1) Review and Approval

All communication going externally or to the church membership needs review and approval by the Senior Pastor and/or Church Board President in conjunction with the Office Administrator

2) Contact Cluster Coordinators for Specific Communications Relating to the Following Ministries

- Learning and Growing
- Equipping and Supporting
- Worshipping and Praising
- Caring and Connecting
- Serving and Reaching

(See Page 11 & 12 for current contact /ownership information on communication process needs and decision rights)

3) Contacting the Respective Action Teams (El Salvador, Youth Mission, WELCA, etc.)

Refer to the Church Phone Directory or the Action Team Lead contact list or contact the corresponding Cluster Coordinator.

4) Main Contact

The church Office Administrator will be the main contact for coordination of communication placement and execution within each communication process and execution.

5) Communication Vehicles and Deadlines for Church Members and Outside Entities

Weekly bulletin	Wednesday mornings by 9:00 am of the week to be published
Monthly Newsletter	Fifteen day of each month for the next month's newsletter
Weekly Express	Wednesday morning of the week to be published in the Xpress
Email Blast	Determined by importance and best time to advertise
Web Site placement	Placed into website based on time sensitive material; typical insertion placed two weeks to one month before.
External news articles	Information given to Senior Pastor or church office administrator via email or office at least two weeks prior based on deadline per external media source.
Church Annual Report	Due December 15 th of each year or as determined and communicated by the Church Board.

6) Weekly Communication Review Meetings

Weekly communication review meetings should be established with the date published as part of a communication team and date published as part of the church calendar. Based on the scheduling by the communication team, the meetings may be held as requested/needed topic versus weekly.

7) Ministry Leaders and Board Members Requests

Ministry Leaders and Board Member requests should present their requests to the Senior Pastor and Office Administrator for review. General church members should engage the Ministry Leaders or Cluster Coordinators and Pastoral staff for communication ideas or requests.

8) Disputes Regarding Communications

Any disputes regarding communication should be addressed by contacting the Senior Pastor and following the conflict resolution process.

9) Dissemination of Church Member Lists | Contact Information

The Pastoral staff and church leadership should have access, as needed, to contact information for the congregational members, including address, phone numbers, and email addresses. The confidentiality of this information should be maintained and should never be disseminated to any outside source or vendor. Cluster Leaders and Board members should have access to contact information of ministry leaders, staff and other council members as needed unless individuals request their information be kept private. Selected staff members have access to the database and can generate lists of church members according to any desired criterion for their use (e.g. members of a ministry or group, newcomers since a particular date, members of a specified age group, etc. The office administrator through the communications team, will make these lists available as outlined above for the requesting individual. The office administrator will also maintain and decide with Sr. Pastor input as to what personal contact information shall be published in the bulletin and on the Church website. Communications between groups as spelled out above should have no specific regulations except that contact lists should not be exchanged for individuals that request to be taken off a list.

10) Support for Reports and Communication

The office administrator working directly with the Cluster Coordinators and Team Leaders will provide support for reports and communication as requested.

11) Communications Within Church Membership or Congregation

Pastoral staff and Ministry Leaders, as a priority, when discussing sensitive topics like Personnel, Conflict or Budgetary topics should first use personal contact and face to face meeting time versus written communications. E-mail should be avoided in these situations of potential conflict or confidentiality concerns. Disclosing confidential information to those outside of the staff is a violation of NCLC Confidentiality policy 2-6 (needs approval) and may be cause for disciplinary action. Several vehicles are available for communicating with the church membership and external community as outlined on page four:

Weekly Bulletin

Submit all articles via Email or with the Communication Form, located outside of the church office, for review with the Pastoral staff.

- Articles need to be in to the church office no later than Wednesday of the week of publication by 9:00 am.
- Articles may run for up to four weeks, typically based on the event occurring or the subject running its course.
- Full page and half page articles must be reserved ahead of time, and in most cases, are on a first come basis.
- Due to the number of articles for each bulletin, it may be necessary to edit some of the wording so that everything that needs to go into the bulletin in a timely fashion will fit.
- Articles may be postponed from running if time allows so that items that are more time sensitive can be printed. If articles need to be postponed, it needs to be relayed to the person or committee requesting the publication of article.
- Church articles occurring outside the church will only run when space is available and at the discretion of the Senior Pastor. Church news will take precedent.

Monthly Newsletter

Submit all articles via Email or with the Communication Form, located outside of the church office, for review with the Pastoral staff.

- Articles need to be submitted to the church office no later than the fifteenth of each month or as requested, with amended submission date noted in bulletins, newsletter, and Xpress.
- Articles accepted are preferably requested to be sent via email to the church office at northcapelutheran@gmail.com.
- Articles submitted in hard copy form may be submitted to the church office administrator's mailbox.
- If articles need to be postponed to the next publication, it needs to be relayed to the person or committee requesting the publication of article.
- Due to space issues in the newsletter, it may be necessary to edit some of the wording so that everything that needs to go into the newsletter may be done.
- Church articles will take priority versus external articles when space is a consideration. The Senior Pastor has the discretion working with the office administrator to decide on communication priority.

Mailings

Mailings to church membership are to be done at the discretion of the Pastoral staff and coordinated with the Office Administrator. Ministry leaders may send mailings to members of their group as approved by the Senior Pastor, with budgetary restraints. Leaders may request mailing labels and access to the "mass mailing list" for these mailings. The church office administrator will assist with these mailings. Church mailings that are requested to be sent by the church office need to be scheduled at least two weeks prior, to arrange for volunteer mailing help. For mail purposes, only the church's return address may be used.

**Congregational meetings per the Constitutional Guidelines (Annual and Special) require special lead-times for written and bulletin notification (see NCLC Constitution Document for reference)

Phone Communications

Lists of Congregational member phone numbers shall be distributed and used according to the guidelines above related to confidentiality. Church members' wishes to keep numbers unlisted except for church business shall be honored. Occasional use of "phone blasts" to send a specific message to all church members will be at the discretion of the Senior Pastor and office administrator or communication team.

Other Printed Communications

Ministry leaders may request ongoing or special items to be included as space allows:

- Other publications, such as handouts for a particular church service or event, may be created with the permission of the Senior Pastor.
- Material on display in the Narthex, at the Welcome Desk and on bulletin boards must be approved by the Senior Pastor, office administrator, or communications team.
- Printed materials and books, as well as guest speakers, used by church groups must be pre-approved by the Senior Pastor.
- Church Email, newsletter or e-news: the content is posted by the church office administrator as directed by the Sr. Pastor. Mass emails will be sent to all church members at the discretion of the Sr. Pastor. These will be handled by the church office administrator.

Interior and Exterior Signage and Bulletin Boards

Requests for exterior signage, large and/or small, are to be submitted to the Senior Pastor or Cluster Coordinator for Caring and Connecting with oversight by the office administrator. Requests are then brought to the Senior Pastor for approval. All expenditures for artwork, etc, should fall into specific ministry budgets or require Pastoral approval. Interior signage is limited to bulletin boards and digital signs. Bulletin boards and digital signs are strategically located in all buildings on the church property. No signage is to be posted on doors, windows, walls or bulletin board cases at any time. Meeting times and locations are available and can be provided from the office administrator or the church web site calendar and are posted monthly outside of the church office.

Website, Social Media and Other External Communication Vehicles

North Cape Lutheran Church provides for social media and website communications. They have been established to promote both membership communication and also for visitors and interested community members that may be looking for a church setting.

NCLC Website

The North Cape Lutheran Website has been established to provide daily access to information about ministries, activities via calendars, contact information and policy to church members and visitors to the site. The website is updated at the beginning of each month or as needed by the church office administrator. Content of the site will be determined by the Pastoral staff with support from the church office administrator or communications team. Links to websites other than the official NCLC website must post a disclaimer stating that the viewed site is not an official website of North Cape Lutheran Church. Information for the website may be submitted by Pastor, staff and/or Ministry leaders. Information should be submitted in writing, preferably by email to the church office administrator or communications office team. Example of

Disclaimer: *“If you are clicking on a web site link from the North Cape Lutheran site it is not the responsibility of nor may it represent the views and mission of North Cape Lutheran Church”*

Social Media

Content is posted and updated by the church office administrator as directed by the Pastoral staff. Hot linking of non-NCLC sites must post a disclaimer stating that the viewed site is not an official site of North Cape Lutheran Church or representative of our church mission. Pastors and staff should not use church social media sites for personal use. A separate personal social media access is recommended. The NCLC social media and website messages and content should align with all church policies and no partisan views on social issues be posted at any time. Any educational or editorial views on social issues should align with the Social Statements of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and North Cape Lutheran Church local policy.

Press Releases

All articles for local media are to be submitted to the Pastor, the church office administrator, or communications team. Once approved by the Pastor, the church office administrator or communications team will send them to specified news outlets. Articles may need to be delegated and/or approved with a sense of urgency and appropriate timeline due to deadlines determined by the news agency.

Media interviews

Interviews with any member of the media about anything pertaining to North Cape Lutheran Church should be conducted only by the Senior Pastor or a designated representative. Approvals and all information communicated must be approved by the Senior Pastor.

Solicitations

See the separate North Cape Lutheran Church Fundraising Policy.

Electronic Mail or EMAIL

North Cape Lutheran Church provides internal and external electronic mail (e-mail) facilities to employees for business purposes. The Church owns all e-mails sent or received at its domain address. Be aware that whenever you send e-mail, your name, user id, and location are included in each e-mail message. Therefore, all e-mail users should exercise good judgment and common sense when creating and distributing e-mail messages. Further, you should be aware that there is no privacy with an e-mail message, and that the Church reserves the right to access all aspects of employees' e-mail at any time for any reason without notice to the employee.

1. When requesting information or response please clearly ask for a date and time the response is needed and highlight in the communication
2. Church staff should set out of office response feature on email when gone for more than 48 hours
3. Forgery (or attempted forgery) of e-mail messages is prohibited.
4. Attempts to read, copy, modify, or delete e-mail messages of others is prohibited.
5. Setting up a proxy for another's mailbox is prohibited, if a proxy is needed, contact the Church Administrator.
6. Sending harassing, threatening, obscene, inappropriate, or other objectionable messages via e-mail to anyone is prohibited.
7. Sending unsolicited junk mail, "for profit" messages, or chain letters is prohibited.
8. Do not open e-mails from a sender you do not recognize.
9. Using the organization's Internet services to access, download, upload, save, receive, or send sexually explicit material or vulgar, sexist, racist, threatening, violent, or defamatory language is prohibited.
10. Using the organization's Internet services for commercial, gambling and/or illegal activities is absolutely prohibited.
11. Using the internet in a way that interferes with the work performance and/or that is consistent with professional conduct.
12. It is understood by all staff and church members that in the normal course of business, they may have access to confidential information and that it an obligation not to share it with anyone other than my immediate supervisor and/or the Pastoral staff and Cluster Teams as appropriate. Confidentiality is critical to the work of the church and covered by separate policy. Violation of Confidentiality may be subject to discipline up to and including immediate termination.

The above practices should be followed in all social media communications and activities. See next page for Email best practices.

Email Best Practices

If an email is the best form of communication for a message, below are a few best practices to consider:

1) Make the subject line clear:

When the recipients receive your email they should be able to see at a quick glance how the message relates to them and why it is important or action is required. Many people have their email set to be able to preview the subject only and/or a few lines of each message they receive either on their phone or computer. If your subject line is confusing or irrelevant your note may be deleted or ignored. Take advantage of the first few lines of the message to grab attention and be clear as to what you might need and when. This can be done in both the subject line and initial part of the communication. Therefore make the subject line specific and if forwarding a message, take the time to type a new precise subject line that includes clear action and timeline. To get an even faster response in the body of the communication be sure to clarify how the action desired impacts the recipient or project, work stream or mission and provide clear due dates. There are basically four types of action you can request:

Purposeful Action- The recipient (s) needs to respond or perform an action. For example “ Provide a proposal for a 5% reduction in a mission budget by x date”

Response – The recipient needs to respond to your message with specific information. Time, date and clarity of expectation can be bolded or underlined. Example: Let me know **by 9:00AM , this week Friday if you can attend the staff meeting**

Read-Only – The recipient needs to read only for information purposes or understanding. No response is necessary. For Example: Please read the attached document before the next board meeting on XX date.

FYI!, Read and Comprehend- the recipient should read & review information and file away or prepare questions or comments as appropriate. Example: Enclosed or attached file is for your records and future usage.

- 2) **Surface key information on the top or subject line**- If you are forwarding an email or copying additional people, it is important that you make it easy for them to understand the email purpose Therefore, you should make sure that all relevant information appears at the top of the email chain, not littered throughout the communication.
- 3) **Provide the proper date and documents** – Make sure you give the recipients all the information they need to complete the action or respond effectively. The recipient should not have to come back to you and ask for additional documents, links to web site or file attachment. Before sending the email be sure the file is attached and is the correct file.

- 4) **Send the message ONLY to relevant recipients**- Target your message to the right audience. Only people who have to complete an action on the subject line should be included on the TO line. The CC line should be for those who you see a need to be informed of the action only.

Anyone on the CC list should not be required to complete any action other than reading the communication. Be careful using BCC function. It can be a cause for issues and poor communication exchanges. It might be better to send a second email to someone if you feel they need to be aware of the communication and not be on the TO or CC list.

- 5) **When addressing large mail groups**- you can use the BCC function to protect confidentiality of the email addresses of the email recipients
- 6) **Double check before you send**- Review the points above as well as grammar and spelling before sending. If the topic is emotionally charged it is good to leave it for a half day or overnight before final review and sending.

COMMUNICATION REQUEST FORM

Date of request _____

Name of person submitting _____

Committee or Event _____

Dates requested for Publication From _____ To _____

Form/s of Publication Requested

- Newsletter (articles due the 15th or as requested by Church Office)
- Bulletin (articles due the Wednesday before by 9:00 AM)
- Friday Xpress (articles due the Wednesday before by 9:00 AM)
- Email
- Website (articles due the 15th of each month for the upcoming month's updates)

Newsletter Article (include date, time, event name)

Bulletin Article (include date, time, event name)

Website Submission (include date, time, event name / short description)

- Request artwork (work with Office Manager to prepare artwork or to submit artwork already prepared)
- No artwork

Rough Draft prepared by Church Administrator. Some articles may require editing by the church office administrator as needed to align with space requirements, etc.

Contact Information for Communications policy (Edit this page annually)

Pastoral Leadership, Board Members and Church Administrator

Communications Office Team

Senior Pastor Brad Brown

Email pastorbrad.brown@gmail.com

Cell 414-305-2349

Associate Pastor Delany Schlake-Kruse

Email delaneyschlake-kruse@hotmail.com

Cell 314-853-2893

Board President Margie Fischer

Email margie.fischer@aurora.org

Cell 414-531-0473

Office Administrator

Email Northcapelutheran@gmail.com

Office line 262-835-2206

Cluster Coordinators for specific communications pertaining to the following ministries:

Learning and Growing - Lori Christiansen

Email TBD

Cell 262-498-5630

Equipping and Supporting – Nancy Rasmussen

Email Rasmussen657@gmail.com

Cell 262-878-2851

Worshipping and Praising – Donna Polston

Email:

Cell 262-878-5252

Caring and Connecting – Jill Peterson

Email: petejil@raymond.k12.wi.us

Cell 262-758-1611

Serving and Reaching – Sue Klaus

Email: sjklaus1@gmail.com

Cell 262-534-3061

Communication Vehicle Ownership – Communications Office Team Members

Communication Type

Weekly Bulletin

Weekly Email

Email Blast

Prayer Chain

Bulletin Boards

General Phone Contact

Social Media

External Communications

Press Releases

Outdoor Sign's

Media Interview/releases

Social Media

Flyers/Event Public Relations

Approval, Review, Placement

Office Administrator

Office Administrator

Pastoral Staff/Office Administrator

Pastoral Staff/Office Administrator

Office Administrator

Church Paid Staff

Pastoral Staff/Office Administrator

Sr. Pastor

Sr. Pastor

Sr. Pastor or Designee

Pastoral Staff/Office Administrator

Office Administrator/Ministry Leaders