

Living Hope Digital Communication Policy

Living Hope GMC desires to promote safety and create a healthy environment for smartphones, instant messaging apps, and digital communication among its youth workers and students participating in youth ministry activities. As a result, Uncommon Church has developed the following guidelines:

1. Employee and volunteer youth workers who want to communicate with minors using smartphones, instant messaging apps, email, group chat, social networking websites, or other forms of digital media must first sign a consent form and agree to follow the ministry's communication policy. The policy outlines the recommended practices, limitations, and legal parameters for texting, social media, and other forms of digital communication within youth ministry.
2. Ministry youth workers may not transmit any content that is illicit, unsavory, abusive, pornographic, discriminatory, harassing, or disrespectful when communicating with each other or with minors involved in ministry activities.
3. Except in an emergency, youth workers may not transmit any personal information pertaining to a minor without the youth ministry participant and his or her parents or guardians signing consent forms. This applies to group texting, group email, group chats, instant messaging, or any other public method of digital communication. Personal information may include such things as a minor's name, phone number, email address, or photograph.
4. Youth workers will occasionally instruct youth about the Youth Ministry Digital Communication Policy and the dangers of such conduct as "sexting."
5. Youth workers who become aware of possible child abuse through digital media must immediately notify their supervisor. The ministry will consult with its attorney and report abuse as required by law.
6. All information, images, or videos shared digitally on public ministry communications channels aren't considered confidential.
7. To participate in ministry digital communications, youths must sign a related consent form.
8. Youths who violate this policy may lose the right to interact on the youth ministry's digital channels or be removed from the youth ministry program. The ministry's pastoral leadership will notify parents immediately of any violation.
9. Youth workers on ministry business may never use a mobile phone while driving — even hands free — unless it's an emergency.
10. Any texts, chats, instant messages, or emails sent by ministry youth workers must go to a group rather than to individuals.