



## **MCSI SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY**

This document is the Social Media Policy of Melbourne CSI Church (MCSI).

### **A. WHATSAPP POLICY**

WhatsApp is a very useful tool that our congregation and the leadership team prefer to use both personally and officially. This social app is a fantastic tool to pass on information, share thoughts, prayers, comments and organise events.

However, with all the great things WhatsApp offers, if a group is not properly managed it could have the potential to breach people's privacy. As a result, the leadership team at MCSI have put into place the following WhatsApp guidelines to ensure every official MCSI WhatsApp group adheres to and continues to meet the MCSI Privacy Policy requirements.

#### **What is the difference between 'personal' WhatsApp groups and 'official' MCSI WhatsApp groups?**

Sometimes members of the congregation and / or members of the church leadership may set up a personal WhatsApp group that could include other people from the MCSI congregation. In these situations, MCSI is not responsible for the running, privacy, or management of these groups, even if the group discusses MCSI related content. If a personal group has been set up and you would not like to be in it, you have the right to leave that group at any time.

Official MCSI WhatsApp group is defined as a group that has been created by the church specifically to communicate church related information (including events or prayer). The group will be managed by a member of the church leadership team in consultation with the Vicar and the church Secretary and will adhere to the guidelines below.

#### **Official MCSI WhatsApp Group Guidelines:**

MCSI will only create a group in order to communicate church related information. You have the right to leave the group at any time and can contact the administrator directly to request to not be added to any future groups.

The current official MCSI WhatsApp group is an interactive WhatsApp group. An interactive WhatsApp group is your standard type of group, where members can comment and ask questions in the group.

- Once a group of this nature has been set up, the administrator will then inform you the purpose of this group. An example of this type of group could be an official MCSI organisation group where members can share matters related to the specific church organisation.
- Due to the nature of interactive groups, there is the potential for sensitive data to be shared by the members of the group. As a result, an administrator may shutdown this type of group once per term (two years) and immediately reopen for those who are applicable. This is in order to ensure this sensitive data does not remain accessible for an unreasonable period of time and also to ensure



group members are still an active part of MCSI and / or relevant to the content being shared. The administrator will give 2 days' notice before closing down the group. At any time, you can tell the administrator directly that you would no longer wish to be added to a group that is about to be reopened.

- An administrator will communicate this information upon the original creation of this interactive group.
- Only the administrator can add people to an interactive group. If you think another member of the congregation should be part of this group, please let the administrator know.
- An interactive group will be shut down when it is no longer needed, which will be determined by the administrator or another member of the church leadership team. The administrator will provide members a 2 days' notice period before closing the group.
- Only one WhatsApp group is required for the church, which will serve as the official WhatsApp group of the church. We will continue using the existing MCSI WhatsApp group as the official WhatsApp group of the church and will implement the new policies into this existing WhatsApp group.
- The name of all official WhatsApp groups of the church including those of the sub-organisations of the church should start with "MCSI".
- The Vicar, secretary and wardens of the church should be the only admins of the official MCSI WhatsApp group.
- All WhatsApp groups of the sub-organisations of the church such as choir, youth, Sunday School, etc. should only have the Vicar, church secretary and the secretary of the sub-organisation as the admin.
- Before the initiation of a new WhatsApp group by a sub-organisation, the pastorate committee is to be intimated and their permission must be obtained.
- The church WhatsApp groups can be made available to all subscribed members of the church and also to regular participants in the church services and programs.
- Once the office bearers or the Vicar cease to continue in their respective positions and ecclesiastical authority, they will cease to continue as admins. Admin responsibilities and duties must be handed over to the new office bearers after each term in all WhatsApp groups of the church.
- If the Vicar or a member need to quit their ministerial position or church membership or stop being part of the church due to the transfer of their place of work, or due to any other official or personal reasons, the admins should remove them from the church WhatsApp groups.
- Admins have the right to remove inappropriate/irrelevant posts to the WhatsApp groups.
- Members are allowed to post only matters relevant to the church in the WhatsApp groups and they should also ensure that only constructive feedback is posted in the WhatsApp groups.



## **B. OTHER SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY**

This policy relates to all other official social media of the church including Facebook, YouTube, Website and Apps.

### **Social Media Guidelines:**

- All social media of the church will be managed by a person/people authorised by the pastorate committee in due terms.
- The church reserves the right to publish photos and videos of the church programs in the official social media of the church.

### **Commencement**

These guidelines will come into effect from 30 November 2020. Any existing official WhatsApp groups created prior to this date will be informed about these changes moving forward. Any new official WhatsApp group created after this date, will adhere to the guidelines above.

### **Contact Details**

In accordance with our Privacy Policy, we have appointed the church secretary as the Privacy Officer (PO) who is responsible for overseeing questions in relation to this privacy notice. If you have any questions about this privacy notice, including any requests to exercise your legal rights, please contact the PO at [secretary@melbournesichurch.org.au](mailto:secretary@melbournesichurch.org.au) or writing to:

The Privacy Officer, Melbourne CSI Church, 334 High St, Ashburton, Vic 3147.

### **Availability of this policy**

A current copy of this guideline is available on the MCSI website. A hard copy will be provided free of charge upon request.

### **Review of the policy**

The policy will be reviewed every two years by the pastorate committee based on the feedback from the congregation.

### **Amendment review**

If there are any concerns raised or feedback received on this version of the policy, the committee will facilitate the review process and amend the policy accordingly.

Date of last review: May 2023

Date policy last updated: November 2020

Date of next review: April 2025