

COMMUNITY GUIDELINES FOR LCMS SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNELS

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) operates and manages all LCMS social media channels. Therefore, they operate as Christian communities. Open discussion is allowed; comments may appear that are not consistent with the LCMS' confession of faith.

The LCMS moderators reserve the right to hide or delete comments, or entirely ban people from commenting. The following activities will result in a comment being hidden or deleted, or an immediate ban from LCMS social media channels:

- 1 Swearing and using vulgarity, especially directed at someone else on the page: This kind of behavior is not welcome on a Christian page and isn't conducive to productive discussion.
- 2 Posting derogatory remarks, insults, abusive or intentionally inflammatory comments.
- 3 Posting off-topic comments/pushing your agenda across multiple unrelated posts: Keep your comments relevant to the thread you are on. Posting the same thing in multiple threads is often the sign of a troll. (read this article for further guidelines on trolls: <http://blogs.lcms.org/2016/when-trolls-attack>)
- 4 Proselytizing for other religions or denominations.
- 5 Posting from an account we identify as spam or fake.

We reserve the right to ban anyone from all LCMS social media channels if banned from one LCMS channel for any of the above behaviors.

If you have been banned and wish to appeal the decision, send an email to socialmedia@lcms.org.

People are free to express a viewpoint contrary to Scripture and our Lutheran Confessions. Doing so will not necessarily result in a person being banned as long as they do not violate the above guidelines.

Guidelines for posting and commenting

Faithful Lutheran pastors and laypeople are strongly encouraged to correct views that are contrary to Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions in a kind and compassionate manner and in concert with the church's confession. Such conversation can be helpful to the original commenter and others as they learn what Scripture teaches about various topics addressed on LCMS social media accounts.

If you reply to or post a comment, keep the following in mind:

- 1 Your response is an opportunity to clearly confess the Christian faith.
- 2 Social media makes nuanced conversation difficult, so put the best construction on someone's comment and respond in the kindest way.
- 3 The proper distinction between Law and Gospel is especially difficult in social media; most interactions are heard as Law. Point people to their local pastor for true spiritual care whenever possible.
- 4 It is often helpful to pause and not respond immediately. Or at all.

**SOME LCMS GROUPS AND CHANNELS MAY HAVE
ADDITIONAL GUIDELINES AND RULES IN PLACE**

