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INTRODUCTION TO THE TEAM

The United Church of Christ (UCC) MarCom team, the communications and marketing arm of the Office of Philanthropy, Technology, Identity & Communication (OPTIC), develops and executes effective and relevant communication and marketing strategies to build awareness of the UCC's mission.

The team manages multiple delivery platforms to ensure all information is streamlined and clearly communicated to the appropriate audiences. This includes branding, online and digital presence, video production, advertising, direct marketing, printed materials, public relations activities, sponsorships and more.

The National Setting should think of MarCom as its in-house agency, to be partnered with on strategic, data-driven, and transformative communications that advance the UCC's priorities. Our design and content professionals will partner with you to determine the best way to present your information, while remaining on brand and using best practices to share a positive, values-based message that supports your programs, initiatives and the UCC's mission and strategic priorities.

This document is our guide and yours to ensuring the multiple requests, responsibilities and activities MarCom is tasked with are executed in a timely, efficient, and effective manner, while always delivering a consistent message in line with UCC's brand. While this document is intended to serve as a comprehensive guide, we recognize that changes will be necessary over time as we move through an ever-evolving digital environment.

MARCOM TEAM MEMBERS

Name	Position	Email
Charles Jefferson, Jr.	Director Marketing and Communications (MarCom)	jeffersonc@ucc.org
News Team (newsteam@ucc.org)		
Maic D'Agostino	Communications Strategist and News Director	dagostinom@ucc.org
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Bob Lormor	National Video Services Manager	lormorr@ucc.org
Web & Digital Services (webteam@ucc.org)		
Chris Gabriel	Web and Digital Strategist	gabrielc@ucc.org
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Currently vacant	Web & Digital Specialist	
Social Media Services		
Laurel Steinetz	Digital Marketing & Communications Strategist	steinetzl@ucc.org
Brooke Canada	Social Media Specialist	canadae@ucc.org
Administrative Support		
Julie Dombos	Program Assistant	dombosj@ucc.org
Keri Foster	Strategic Marketing and Communications Program Manager	fosterk@ucc.org
Renee DeLuca	Multimedia Content Specialist	delucar@ucc.org

GENERAL OVERVIEW OF SERVICES PROVIDED

Whether through web pages, media relations, videos, social media, graphic design, email marketing, printed publications, paid advertising or other means of communication, the consistent application of strategies to promote and protect the UCC's mission and its brand is of vital importance.

A data informed communication and marketing plan is necessary to create a strategy for delivering information to your target audiences with measurable results. MarCom, when brought into the conversation in the beginning stages, can recommend and help you develop a plan that will ensure clear, specific messaging to target audiences across multiple media channels. We will offer insight, expertise, and help you organize, construct and execute your plan through the following:

- *Event Support/Special Projects* – MarCom will work with you to develop a comprehensive plan by recommending the appropriate services from the comprehensive list that follows to support events and special projects, including but not limited to:

  o Webinars
  o Special Initiatives
  o Sponsorships
  o Events

- *Web & Digital Services* – MarCom oversees the entire web presence of the UCC. From content and design to development and analytics, our team collaborates across the National Setting to keep all websites and pages on brand, accessible and accurate. We strive to create the best experience possible for our various user groups by making content and design recommendations based on data-informed best practices. We will review your request to determine where your content will best fit and perform within our digital platforms.

- *News & Media Relations* – MarCom is the primary contact for all media interactions ("media" refers

to all representatives of newspapers, magazines, newsletters, online publications, television and radio). The team produces and distributes news to audiences near and far — from the National Setting, UCC Board, Affiliated Ministries, Conferences and Local Churches to the news media and beyond – including press releases, formal statements on behalf of the UCC, and other materials related to timely messages of the UCC. We will review your request to determine if it is newsworthy, timely and objective. If it is, we will then work with you to craft a solid pitch to the media or distribute news through our platforms when and where relevant and appropriate.

- *Video Production Services* – To ensure video productions stay on brand, coordinate with existing efforts, and meet the highest production standards in the most cost-effective manner, MarCom oversees video production on behalf of the UCC. Great videography is an art form with a deeper aim of conveying meaning or creating a connection. We strive to give our audiences a sense of being here, belonging here and of being in some way connected to the people, places and things in each shot. We will review your request to determine the appropriate video format and delivery for your content, and whether production can be done in house or in collaboration with another vendor.

- *Social Media* – MarCom maintains oversight of social media channels on behalf of the UCC to support the denomination's mission, goals, programs and initiatives. Social media is a unique set of digital platforms that allows the UCC to engage with our audiences in a more personal and interactive way. It is estimated that more than half the world's population is on sites like Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, TikTok, SnapChat, Pinterest and LinkedIn, which are all very nuanced in their purpose and functionality. This makes social media an important and influential method of communication, and it is imperative the UCC maintain its brand identity and integrity across those platforms. We will work with you to determine which platform is most appropriate for your communications needs.

- *Graphic Design* – As the keeper of the UCC's brand guidelines, MarCom is also responsible for oversight of graphic design. We will work with you to transform your vision and creative content into vibrant visual communications that engage target audiences, applying the UCC brand in different and appropriate ways.

- *Email Marketing* – MarCom is equipped with the central tools and expertise to send emails to build distribution lists and target audiences at the appropriate time to get the most effective reach. Informed by data and best practices, we will review your request to determine how to best help you strategically email your audiences in a world where everyone's inbox is overloaded with noise, while connecting to and leveraging our other communications channels.

- *Marketing & Advertising* – All work of the UCC connects back to the mission: *United in Spirit and inspired by God's grace, we welcome all, love all, and seek justice for all.* This means all efforts are interconnected and interdependent. MarCom has the unique position and ability to cross promote, intertwine campaigns, and align specific initiatives with the overall mission. We will review your request to determine the most effective channels, timelines and messaging to promote a specific program or initiative within the overall brand.

- *UCC Content and Events Calendars* – MarCom is responsible for maintaining the central UCC Event Calendar accessible to the public on ucc.org. MarCom has also started a content calendar to layout publishing schedules for weeks or months in advance.

- *Contracted Services* – Overall development and application of UCC communications and marketing strategies rests primarily with MarCom. However, when appropriate, we may engage on your behalf or refer you to freelance videographers and photographers, marketing firms, content developers or other vendors for the development and production of your projects. To ensure proper use of the denomination's various visual identity elements, provide a consistent look to the UCC brand, and prevent conflicting messages or market saturation, MarCom should always be involved in discussions with third party agencies of this nature.

- *Appeals* – This process is owned by Philanthropy. However, MarCom does assist with communications via emails, web, and social media.

The marketing and communications procedures in this document establish the lines of responsibility and standards for the UCC's branding, marketing and communications efforts.

UCC BRAND GUIDELINES

The UCC Brand Guidelines dictate proper use of the denomination's various visual identity elements to provide a consistent look to the UCC brand. These standards include a comprehensive identity system, including logo and crest usage, typefaces, color palettes, photography use, correspondence guidelines and templates for Conferences and Churches to use when using both their logos/names and the United Church of Christ logo/name.

The UCC Brand Guidelines can be easily found on ucc.org under "Who We Are". These standards have the endorsement of the General Minister and President, and oversight for proper use is the responsibility of the MarCom, involving the Office of General Counsel when necessary.

Proper and consistent use of UCC logos, crest and marks enable the UCC to achieve clarity, accuracy and efficiency in all print and digital communications and better position the UCC brand while aligning throughout its organizational and operational structure – from the National Setting offices in Cleveland to Conferences, churches and other UCC-affiliated entities.

The National Setting of the United Church of Christ reserves all rights, including the exclusive right to prohibit any usage it deems inconsistent with the purpose, mission, and vision of the United Church of Christ.

UCC Brand Guidelines must be reviewed before engaging in the use of UCC assets. Questions about these standards should be directed to the MarCom Team.

PURPOSE, VISION AND MISSION

- *Purpose* – To love God with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength and our neighbor as ourselves

- *Vision* – United in Christ's love, a just world for all.

- *Mission* – United in Spirit and inspired by God's grace, we welcome all, love all, and seek justice for all.

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST LOGOS, CREST AND MISSION MARKS

Our logos, crest and mission marks are the most visible and recognizable elements in our identity. The UCC logo features an updated typeface as well as a modified "ICON" which is known as the "God is Still Speaking Comma"; various alternative UCC marks are also approved for use. The "God is Still Speaking Comma" symbol continues the foundation build by just the comma in the "Still Speaking" campaign. The traditional UCC "crest" has been slightly modified to better align with the refreshed UCC logo identity. Finally, mission marks have been developed to bring consistency to the work of the Church and, consistency that better aligns this work with the United Church of Christ.

The three marks—logo, still speaking comma, and crest—are registered trademarks of the UCC and best practices in trademark usage should apply?

Please refer to our Brand Guidelines for specific usage.

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST LOGO

The United Church of Christ logo is the most visible and recognizable element of our identity. Our logo includes a version with and without the tagline "A Just World for All." The logo consists of three colors: black, UCC dark blue and UCC light blue.

Please refer to our Brand Guidelines for specific usage.

PHOTOGRAPHY

Photography is a powerful tool to support the UCC story. However, image use must align with the visual and voice of the United Church of Christ.

Photography may be used in full-color, duotones or as black and white images. All photography used should be of high-resolution quality. Photography may come from various resources including original photography taken by a member of your organization/church; from online stock image providers; or the National Setting of the United Church of Christ's MarCom team can help source needed photography.

Regardless, original photography taken must include Photo Release Forms that must be signed by any person(s) included in a photo; any stock photography must be properly secured and paid for by your organization/church; the National Setting of the UCC is NOT RESPONSIBLE for payment of stock images/photography. A license must be secured from the owner of the copyright to the photograph prior to use. Do not download, copy, or embed photographs from any website or search engine without copyright permission.

Please refer to our Brand Guidelines for specific usage. MarCom is also working with the Office of General Counsel on a NMUCC Copyright Compliance Handbook, which will be available soon.

CO-BRANDING FOR CONFERENCE AND CHURCHES

Aligning the United Church of Christ with your Conference/Church, both entities become stronger. The UCC National Setting understands the importance, and power, of your local identity. Your local identity (name, logos, ICON) should always be the PRIMARY identity in any co-branded communications with the United Church of Christ. The United Church of Christ should be used as a secondary brand.

When co-branding your organization with the United Church of Christ, with NO EXISTING United Church of Christ Identity/reference to the United Church of Christ brand included, include the logo and name as a secondary logo to your organizations' logo, placed below with "United Church" justified right to the right end of your organization's name (see example below).

For more information, please refer to our Brand Guidelines.

COPYRIGHT

A copyright can be thought of as a bundle of rights to a creative work, like a book, song, video, painting, photograph, speech, poem, and even a sermon. The rights include the right to reproduce, distribute, publicly perform, publicly display, and create a derivative of a creative work. It's valuable property that can be bought and sold, in whole or part, much like any other property. Using a copyrighted work without permission is generally prohibited by U.S. Copyright Act, a federal law. The permission that is necessary to use a copyrighted work is also called a license.

All staff and employees have the responsibility to follow copyright laws and to prevent copyright infringement. Copyright is a social justice issue for owners of creative works, who deserve to be justly credited and compensated. Infringement can also result in monetary and reputational damage to the UCC.

Please refer to the following resources for questions and concerns about copyright compliance:

- NMUCC Copyright Compliance Handbook (coming soon)
- General Copyright FAQs
- Hymnal Copyright FAQs
- Copyright Compliance Basics for Churches

MARCOM REQUEST FORM SYSTEM/SUBMITTING MARCOM REQUESTS

The following guidelines outline the timelines and processes for submitting a project request to MarCom.

Reminder: More time is always better than less whenever possible, particularly if your request falls under the Event Support/Special Project category and/or requires strategic communications, marketing and promotion. Adequate planning and targeted outreach allow for better outcomes.

OVERVIEW

All project requests for MarCom <u>MUST BE</u> submitted through the centralized MarCom Request Form, which can be found on the UConnect homepage in the upper right-hand corner **or** within the Wrike project management platform.
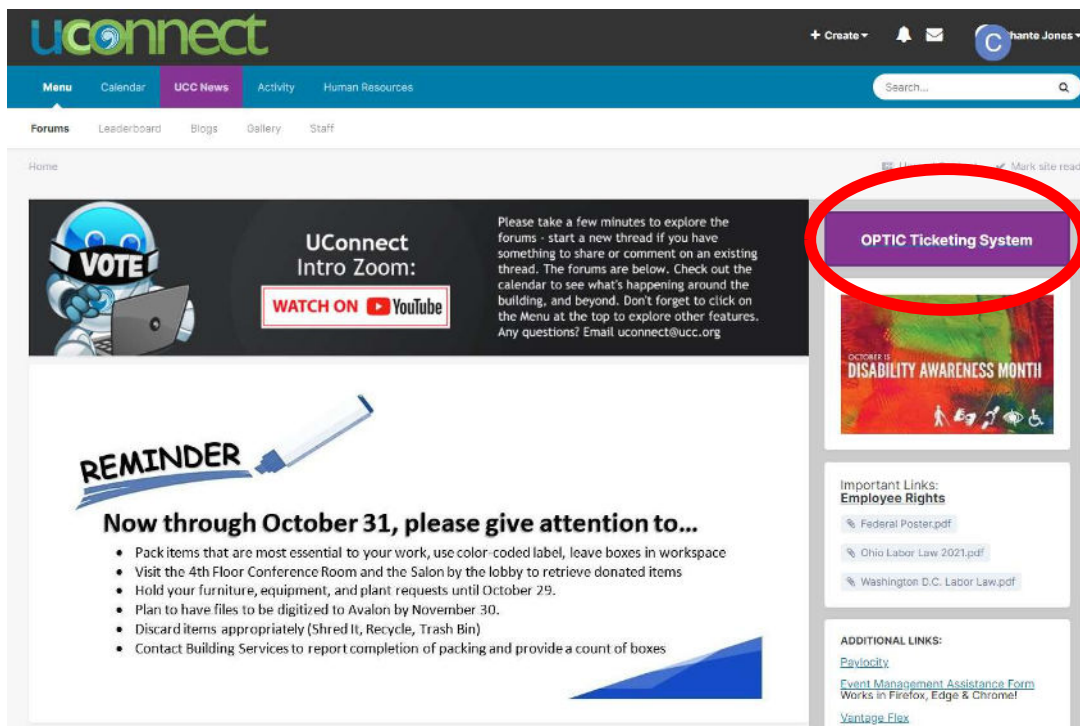
To find the Request Form in Wrike, look for the large green box with the white plus sign in the upper right-hand corner of your screen. Click onto the green box.
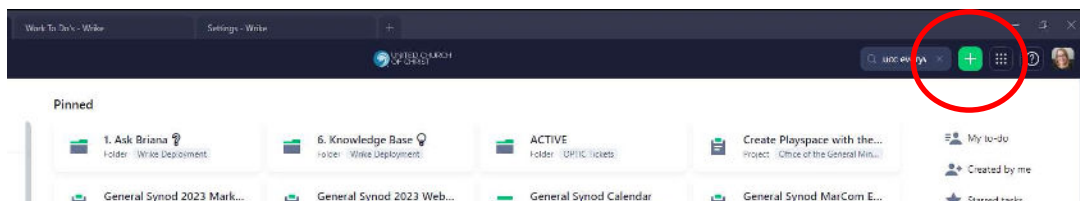
The second choice from the bottom is "Request." Choose this option.
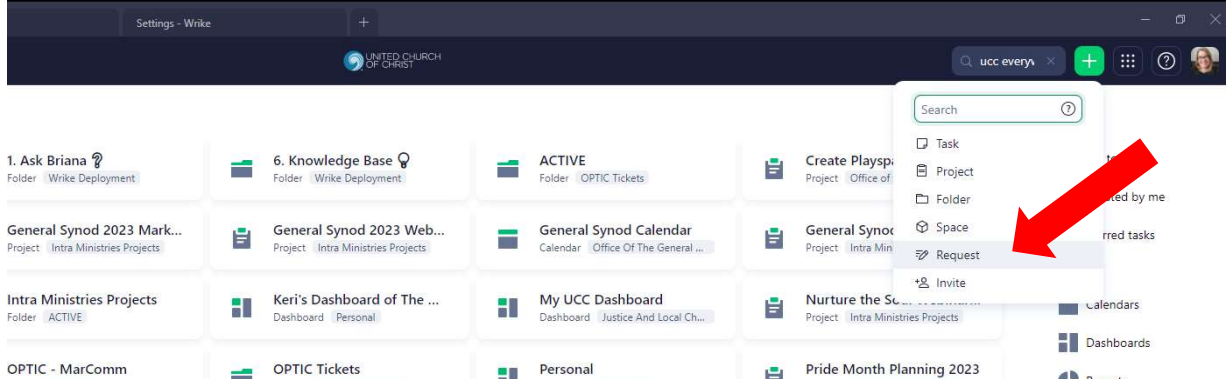
The first choice is "*MarCom Request Form (formerly OPTIC Ticketing). Click onto that. The form is easy to navigate and there is helper text throughout. As always, if you need assistance, please feel free to reach out to the MarCom team and we will assist you through the process.

Using this system, rather than directly emailing individual team members, allows the Director of Marketing and Communications and Strategic Marketing and Communications Program Manager to ensure transparency and accountability when it comes to managing, monitoring, evaluating, and reporting projects' delivery performance. It also prevents requests from getting lost in overloaded inboxes and allows you to check the status of your project in real-time.

TIMELINES

As a general rule, ***please plan for at least three to four weeks of production time ahead of your desired completion date.*** If you need accelerated assistance, please make note of that on the submission form and also notify the Director of Marketing and Communications.

MarCom reviews requests as they come in and will respond within 48 business hours to update you on next steps and whether the service you requested is the appropriate one to meet your needs.

Many projects are initiated with a kick-off meeting, at which time action steps and a specific timeline will be established. If, for some reason, MarCom is unable to assist you, due to abbreviated timelines or capacity issues, we will suggest alternatives to meet your needs. Please see below for typical timelines by request type.

REQUEST TYPES

- *Event Support/Special Projects* (Choice #1 in request form) – MarCom will work with you to develop a comprehensive plan by recommending the appropriate services from the comprehensive list that follows to support events and special projects, including but not limited to:

  - Webinars – 3 to 4 weeks (6 to 8 provides better planning and opportunities)
  - Special Initiatives (like Join the Movement or General Synod) – Timeline will vary based on scope of the initiative
  - Sponsorships – 6 to 8 weeks
  - Events – 6 to 8 weeks (events larger in scope may require at least three months)

  This request type will be managed through Wrike and is to be used when more than one of the following services is needed or for long-term projects.

- *Web & Digital Services* – MarCom oversees the entire web presence of the UCC. From content and design to development and analytics, our team collaborates across the National Setting to keep all websites and pages on brand, accessible and accurate. We strive to create the best experience possible for our various user groups by making content and design recommendations based on data-informed best practices. We will review your request to determine where your content will best fit and perform within our digital platforms. Typical projects and timelines are as follows:

  - Edits to a web page – 3 to 5 days
  - Web content management training – 3 weeks
  - Web page creation or redesign – 4 to 6 weeks
  - Google Analytics Reports – 1 to 2 weeks
  - New web sites (limited to specialized initiatives such Join the Movement or General Synod) – timelines vary based on complexity, but plan for at least 12 weeks

- *News & Media Relations* – MarCom is the primary contact for all media interactions ("media" refers to all representatives of newspapers, magazines, newsletters, online publications, television and radio). The team produces and distributes news to audiences near and far — from the National Setting, UCC Board, Affiliated Ministries, Conferences and Local Churches to the news media and

beyond – including press releases, formal statements on behalf of the UCC and other materials related to timely messages of the UCC. We will review your request to determine if it is newsworthy, timely and objective. If it is, we will then work with you to craft a solid pitch to the media or distribute news through our platforms when and where relevant and appropriate. Typical projects and timelines are as follows:

o News story production for UCC News Digest (published every Tuesday) and website – 3 business days to 3 weeks based on complexity
o Press release/media advisory preparation and distribution – 1 day to 2 weeks
o UCC Press Conference – 3 weeks
o Media interview preparation and coordination – 3 days to 1 week
o Key message and Q&A development – 1 week
o Letters to the editor and opinion-editorial (op-ed) columns – 1 to 3 weeks (varies by outlet)
o Ucc.org column development – 3 weeks (columns should run on a weekly to biweekly and MarCom does not product content for columns)

- *Video Production Services* – To ensure video productions stay on brand, coordinate with existing efforts, and meet the highest production standards in the most cost-effective manner, MarCom oversees video production on behalf of the UCC. Great videography is an art form with a deeper aim of conveying meaning or creating a connection. We strive to give our audiences a sense of being here, belonging here and of being in some way connected to the people, places and things in each shot. We will review your request to determine the appropriate video format and delivery for your content, and whether production can be done in house or in collaboration with another vendor. Typical projects and timelines are as follows but may vary, as video production is currently a one-man operation:

o Full Video Editing Requests (note: video dept does not write scripts):
  - Client submits all video elements through "selfie-shot video" and supplies graphics and b-roll footage; MarCom supplies royalty-free music from stock music membership – 5 to 10 business days per edited video minute
  - Client submits "selfie-shot video"; MarCom creates simple graphics, finds b-roll from video archive library or stock image memberships, and supplies royalty-free music – 8 to 15 business days per edited video minute
  - Client requires MarCom to shoot local interviews in person to add to above requests – Add at least 1 to 2 days per shoot to each of the above timelines
  - Client requires MarCom to travel to shoot a video request (once travel is again approved) – Timeline varies and will require close consultation on a case-by-case basis

o Simple Requests:
  - Simple webinar upload requests to YouTube/Vimeo – 2 to 3 business days
  - Zoom/webinar recording clean-ups (add graphic slide at beginning, adjust audio, add fades to beginning and/or end of video, add logo to end) and then upload to YouTube/Vimeo – 2 to 4 business days
  - Create an animated open/close with the above requirements – 5 to 7 business days

- *Social Media* – MarCom maintains oversight of social media channels on behalf of the UCC to support the denomination's mission, goals, programs and initiatives. Social media is a unique set of digital platforms that allows the UCC to engage with our audiences in a more personal, interactive

way. It is estimated that more than half the world's population is on sites like Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, TikTok, SnapChat, Pinterest and LinkedIn, which are all very nuanced in their purpose and functionality. This makes social media an important and influential method of communication, and it is imperative the UCC maintain its brand identity and integrity across those platforms. We will work with you to determine which platform is most appropriate for your communications needs. Typical projects and timelines are as follows:

- Posts to UCC's official social media pages – 1 week (requests with shorter deadlines will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis)
- Social media campaign development – 4 weeks, which could include graphic design time (including video will extend timelines)
- Social media toolkit creation – 6 weeks; 8 weeks if we include graphic design/video time
- Set up a new Facebook Group – 4 weeks (this option replaces individual pages)
- Set up webinar livestream broadcast – 3 to 4 weeks, depending on if multiple platforms are involved
- Livestream requiring more extensive production (using something like OBS or Restream Studio) – 6 weeks
- Training on usage and best practices – 4 weeks for new presentation creation; 6 weeks for new presentation with documentation/how-to videos
- Livestream coverage of in-person event – 6 to 8 weeks

- *Graphic Design* – As the keeper of the UCC's brand guidelines, MarCom is also responsible for oversight of graphic design. We will work with you to transform your vision and creative content into vibrant visual communications that engage target audiences, applying the UCC brand in different and appropriate ways. Typical projects and timelines are as follows:

  - Logo creation – 2 to 3 weeks
  - Web graphics – 1 week
  - Social media graphics – 1 week
  - Print designs (cards, signage, posters, flyers, letterhead, etc.) – 2 to 3 weeks

- *Email Marketing* – MarCom is equipped with the central tools and expertise to send emails to target audiences at the appropriate time to get the most effective reach. Informed by data and best practices, we will review your request to determine how to best help you strategically email your audiences in a world where everyone's inbox is overloaded with noise, while connecting to and leveraging our other communications channels. Typical projects and timelines are as follows:

  - Sending emails from official UCC accounts – 3 to 5 days (if content is ready)
  - Creating email templates – 3 to 5 days
  - Develop email campaign – 4 to 6 weeks
  - Generating email performance analytics – 1 to 3 days

- *Marketing & Advertising* – All work of the UCC connects back to the mission: *United in Spirit and inspired by God's grace, we welcome all, love all, and seek justice for all.* This means all efforts are interconnected and interdependent. MarCom has the unique position and ability to cross promote, intertwine campaigns and align specific initiatives with the overall mission. We will review your request to determine the most effective channels, timelines and messaging to promote a specific program or initiative within the overall brand. Typical projects and timelines are as follows:

- o Marketing/advertising plan development – Varies by complexity but requires at least 6 weeks
- o Digital advertising campaigns – 6 to 8 weeks
- o Drip marketing email campaign (for larger initiatives using email marketing) – 6 to 8 weeks
- o Advertising on ucc.org – varies based on inventory

- *UCC Content and Events Calendars* – MarCom is responsible for maintaining the central UCC Event Calendar accessible to the public on ucc.org. MarCom has also started a content calendar to layout publishing schedules for weeks or months in advance.

  - o Content Calendar – 2 to 3 days
 - o Event Calendar – 2 to 3 days

CHECKING THE STATUS OF A REQUEST

All tickets you have created in Wrike can be found in "My UCC Dashboard." This dashboard is set up to collect the data for whoever is opening it. At any time, you can check the status, add comments, or ask for updates in Wrike.

To find this dashboard, click onto the nine white dots that create a square at the top right-hand of your screen.
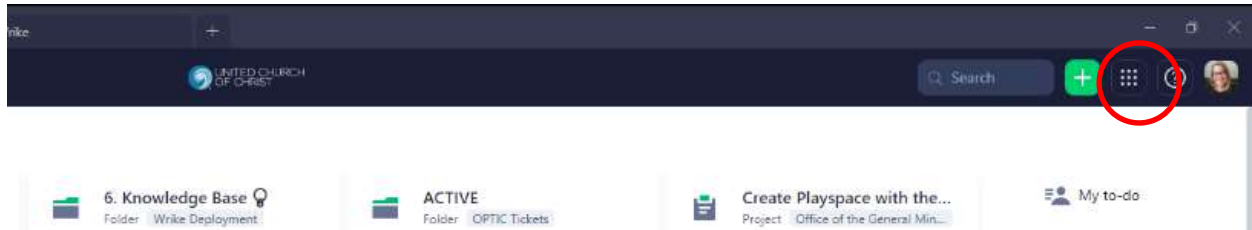
Click on the Dashboards icon
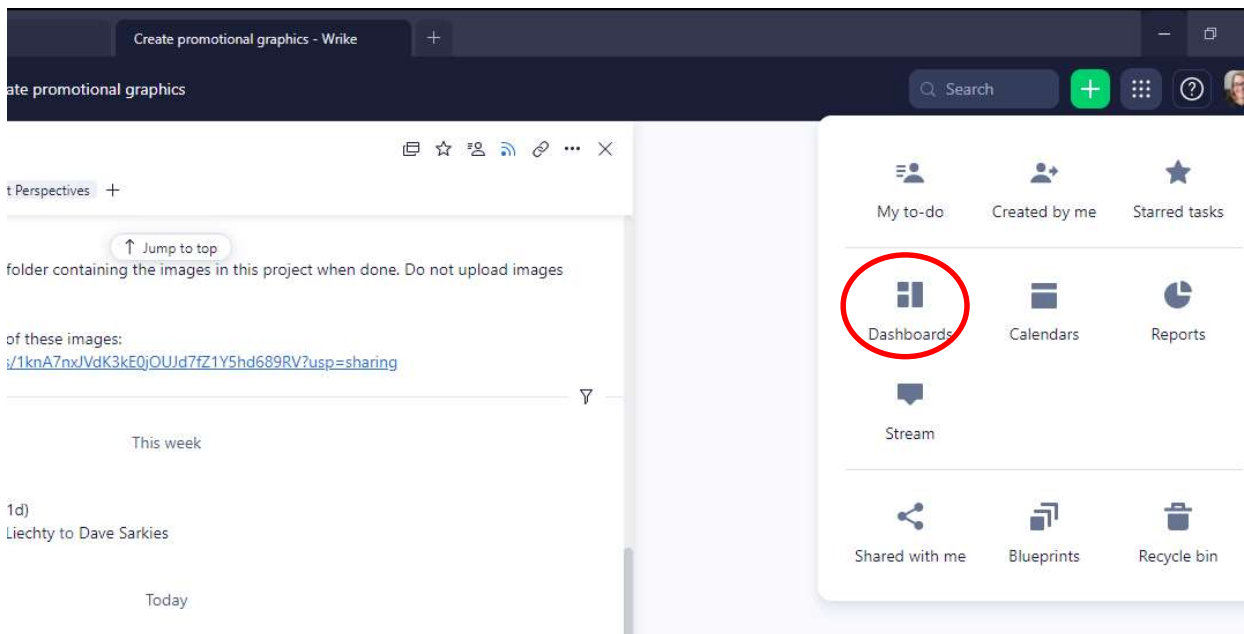
In the upper left-hand corner one dashboard will be seen, with a carat that you can click to see more. Click that and you will see an extensive list of existing dashboards. Although you may use as many as you like and can create your own custom dashboards, the one that has already been formatted for you is **My UCC Dashboard**.

*Please note that if you make any changes to this dashboard, it will effect everyone who uses it. Please do not change the settings on this dashboard; rather, you can create your own dashboard for custom needs.
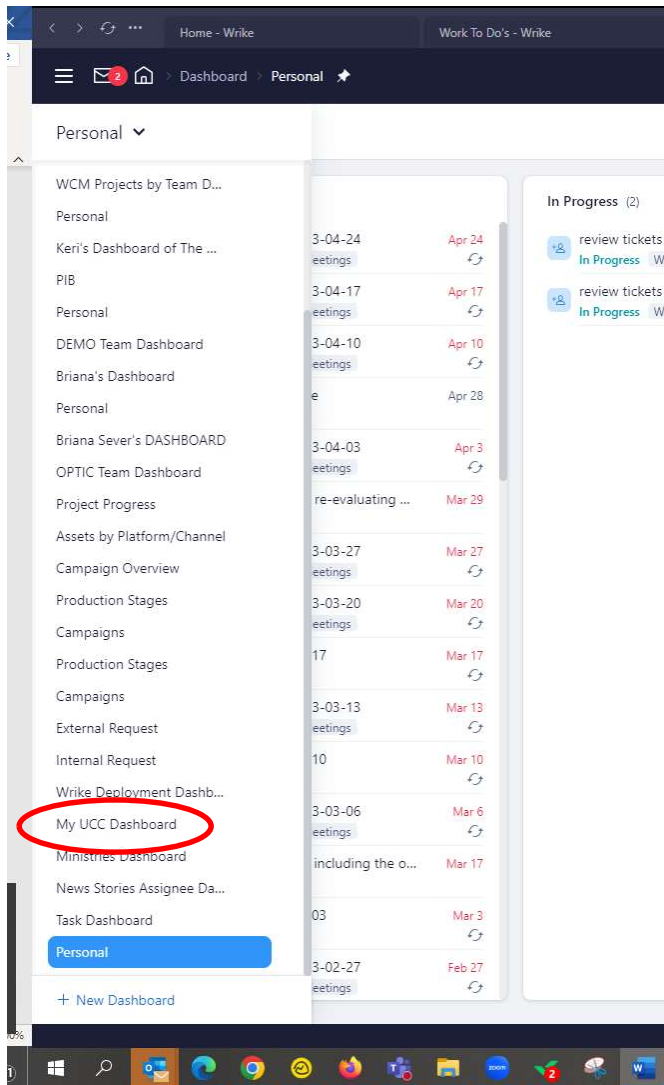
If you click onto this dashboard, there are many lists included: My Projects, My Overdue Tasks, etc. The furthest column on the right is **Tickets/Requests I've Created**. This has all the requests you've filled out, regardless of type (Graphics, Web, etc.).

You can immediately jump to a request by clicking onto it in your dashboard. Once there, you can ask for updates, make a comment, or ask questions.

***Please remember**: If you are asking MarCom staff a question or making a comment that you'd like them to see, you must use the "@" symbol and their name. This triggers an alert to that colleague that there is something for them to review. **If you do not tag the person, no alert will be sent, and nobody will know you wrote the comment/question.**

EVENT SUPPORT/SPECIAL PROJECTS

The UCC's brand identity is both its visual and verbal representation. It is how we differentiate ourselves from other denominations and create a recognizable connection with our churches and the public at large. The following guidelines are designed to ensure the brand adherence, strategic planning and successful execution of the following:

- Webinars
- Special Initiatives (like Join the Movement or General Synod)
- Sponsorships
- Other Events

MarCom will work with you to develop a comprehensive plan by recommending the appropriate services to support events and special projects, including:

- Web & Digital Services
- News & Media Relations
- Video Production Services
- Social Media
- Graphic Design
- Email Marketing
- Marketing & Advertising
- UCC Content and Events Calendars

Please note: All of the above services are not always appropriate or effective for each event or project. We will make recommendations based on your desired outcomes AND data-informed best practices.

PROCESS TO REQUEST EVENT SUPPORT/SPECIAL PROJECT

Timelines will vary based on the scope and complexity of your request. To request assistance with an event or special project:

- Use the MarCom Request Form (formerly OPTIC Ticketing), which can be found on the UConnect homepage in the upper right-hand corner OR in Wrike.
- Select Option number one ("I would like the Marketing and Communications team to review my event or initiative and give me their recommendations on the best way to share, promote, and communicate it.")
- Describe your request (type of event or initiative, proposed timeline and purpose).
- A MarCom team member will respond to your request within 48 business hours.
- A consultation meeting will be set up to conduct a needs assessment and determine which of the above services are necessary to achieve your goals.
- A timeline and project plan will be established based on the needs assessment that takes into account lead times for all services included.
- The project will then be managed in Wrike.
- Should there be a need to engage other vendors for the development and production of your projects, we will work with you to set that up. To ensure proper use of the denomination's various visual identity elements, provide a consistent look to the UCC brand, and prevent conflicting

messages or market saturation, MarCom should always be involved in discussions and work with third party agencies.

WEBINARS

Webinars are live sessions that allow for real-time interactivity between the presenter and attendees. They should be used to educate and engage your target audiences and allow for adequate time to promote them.

Best Practices
For your webinars to perform successfully and give you a return on your investment, the following best practices should be kept in mind ahead of planning one and requesting assistance from MarCom:

- *Research* – Pick an engaging and appropriate topic for your target audience by finding out what resonates most and what they are talking about. For example:

  o Poll your audiences by sending them a survey to learn about what content they want from you.
  o Take stock of the most successful social media posts – likes, shares, comments – to gauge what resonates most and will be the most engaging.
  o Check blog posts to see which ones performed best.
  o Refer to previous webinars to see which ones performed best. Those are your best opportunities to create a series, webinars on offshoot topics, or rerun ones that generated a lot of interest.
  o Pick a topic that is relevant in the here and now.

- *Content development* – Best practice is for a webinar to provide 30 to 60 minutes of engaging content. Be sure you can generate enough interesting and interactive material to fill that amount of time. If a topic cannot do that but you still want to share it, consider a pre-recorded format instead of a live session.

  o Webinars should include a mix of live discussion and prepared slides. Content on slides should be visually engaging and not copy heavy.
  o Slides should not mimic what the presenter is saying but instead support it.
  o If webinars are being recorded for audiences to have later access, "presenter view" should be used instead of "gallery view" unless there is a panel of speakers. This allows for easy cleanup and editing for recorded sessions.

- *Timing is everything* – Market research indicates most webinars perform best on Wednesdays and Thursdays; Mondays and Fridays generate the least interest and attendance.

- *Market your webinar* – Market research also indicates webinars perform best when promotion begins at least 3 to 4 weeks ahead of the event.

  o Webinars should be added to event calendars 3 to 4 weeks prior.
  o Promotional emails should start 3 to 4 weeks prior to the webinar and should include basic information, along with registration details and instructions.
  o Once attendees register, reminder emails should be sent.
  o Social media posts should start at least 2 to 3 weeks prior to the webinar.

Webinar Support Offered by MarCom

In addition to helping you determine the appropriate platform(s) to go live with your Webinar, MarCom will work with you to provide the following support when all required information is provided according to the timelines below:

- _4 to 6 weeks ahead of event_ – This option provides the best opportunity to promote your webinar and achieve the best attendance:

  - All graphics produced in-house (turnaround time approximately 1 week)
  - Inclusion in 2 Events Newsletters (email sent as a blast twice monthly with all events listed)
  - Facebook Event listing (turnaround approximately 1 week)
  - Website Event listing (turnaround approximately 1 week)
  - LinkedIn Event listing—For those topics that are appropriate (turnaround approximately 1 week)
  - Up to 4 Tweets (once weekly)
  - Up to 4 Facebook Stories (once weekly)
  - Up to 4 Instagram Stories (once weekly)
  - Up to 2 SMS Messages (about 1 week ahead and about 1 day before)
  - Cross promotion through emails that contain related content (varies depending on topic of event; MarCom will advise)
  - UCC Digest Listing (varies depending on topic of event)

- _3 weeks ahead of event:_
  - All graphics produced in-house (turnaround approximately 1 week)
  - Inclusion in up 2 Events Newsletters (email sent as a blast twice monthly with all events listed)
  - Facebook Event listing (turnaround approximately 1 week)
  - Website Event listing (turnaround approximately 1 week)
  - LinkedIn Event listing— For those topics that are appropriate (turnaround approximately 1 week)
  - Up to 3 Tweets (once weekly)
  - Up to 3 Facebook Stories (once weekly)
  - Up to 3 Instagram Stories (once weekly)
  - Up to 2 SMS Messages (about 1 week ahead and about 1 day before)
  - Cross promotion through emails that contain related content (varies depending on topic of event; MarCom will advise)
  - UCC Digest Listing (varies depending on topic of event)

- _2 weeks ahead of event:_
  - All graphics produced in-house (turnaround approximately 1 week)
  - Inclusion in up 1 Events Newsletters (email sent as a blast twice monthly with all events listed)
  - Facebook Event listing (turnaround approximately 1 week)
  - Website Event listing (turnaround approximately 1 week)
  - LinkedIn Event listing— For those topics that are appropriate (turnaround approximately 1 week)
  - Up to 2 Tweets (once weekly)
  - Up to 2 Facebook Stories (once weekly)
  - Up to 2 Instagram Stories (once weekly)
  - Up to 2 SMS Messages (about 1 week ahead and about 1 day before)

- Possible UCC Digest Listing (varies depending on topic of event and if information can be added)

- *1 week ahead of event:*
  - **POSSIBLY** 1 graphic produced in-house (For events listings on Facebook, Website, LinkedIn, etc. depending on MarCom workload)
  - Inclusion in up 1 Events Newsletters email (sent as a blast twice monthly with all events listed)
  - Facebook Event listing (turnaround approximately 1 week)
  - Website Event listing (turnaround approximately 1 week)
  - o LinkedIn Event listing— For those topics that are appropriate (turnaround approximately 1 week)
  - Up to 1 Tweets (once weekly)
  - Up to 1 SMS Message (about 1 day before)

SPECIAL INITIATIVES

Special initiatives (like Join the Movement or General Synod) will have needs and timelines that vary based on scope of the initiative. Initiatives like these will most likely require MarCom support via multiple services, including but not limited to:

- Web & Digital Services
- News & Media Relations
- Video Production Services
- Social Media
- Graphic Design
- Email Marketing
- Marketing & Advertising
- UCC Content and Events Calendars

Timelines for each of the above services will need to be considered when planning for a special initiative. Please submit an MarCom Request Form and choose Option One in the beginning stages to ensure adequate time for planning and consideration for if – and when – other vendors need to be engaged to assist.

SPONSORSHIPS

Timelines and services will vary based on sponsorship packages. Typically, 6 to 8 weeks is sufficient time for MarCom to promote UCC sponsored events according to the opportunities we are granted within our sponsorship level. An MarCom Request Form should be submitted as soon as a sponsorship opportunity is presented to the UCC so that a consultation meeting can be set to determine which sponsorship package offers the best value and to assess appropriate MarCom services or assistance.

Please note: MarCom has a limited sponsorship budget and typically covers the following on an annual basis:

- Global Cleveland Welcoming Week
- Parker Lecture Series

Costs for other sponsorships are the responsibility of the associated ministry or program.

OTHER EVENTS

MarCom can provide assistance for other events such as special worship services, planned protests, etc. Timelines vary based on scope, with 6 to 8 weeks being the typical turnaround for deliverables. Please submit a request form and choose Option One.

WEB & DIGITAL SERVICES

The following guidelines apply to all UCC websites (ucc.org and its subdomains) and are intended to promote a strong and consistent UCC brand, in conjunction with a clear and accessible interface for those seeking information about the denomination via the web.

MarCom oversees the web presence of the UCC and provides best-practice guidance, using data analytics to achieve prime search engine optimization (SEO), driving traffic to the denomination's sites . From content and design to development and analytics, our team collaborates across the National Setting to keep all websites and pages on brand, accessible and search engine optimized.

UCC Websites are as follows:

- ucc.org
- jointhemovementucc.org
- generalsynod.org
- globalministries.org (UCC and the Christian Church/Disciples of Christ)

All web related requests must be submitted through the MarCom Request Form. Once your ticket has been received, we will review your request to determine what is most appropriate for SEO and reaching your target audience, and where your content will best fit and perform within our digital platforms.

PROCESS TO REQUEST EDITS TO A WEB PAGE

To request edits be made to a web page where you **are not** an administrator:

- Use the MarCom Request Form, which can be found on the UConnect homepage in the upper right-hand corner.
- Select the option "I need the services of the Web team.".
- Describe your request (page requiring edits; content to be edited, deleted or added).
- A MarCom team member will respond to your request within 24 to 48 business hours.
- Most edits can be completed within 3 to 5 business days.

If you are an administrator for your team's web page, you can make most edits and update as necessary on your own. Should you run into issues or forget how to edit your page, please submit a ticket, as outlined above.

PROCESS TO REQUEST WEB CONTENT MANAGEMENT TRAINING

UCC websites are managed through the WordPress content management platform. All page administrators (anyone requiring editing or publishing access to their team's page) for UCC websites must complete WordPress training to understand what is required to comply with web standards.

Training can be set up for individuals or groups and topics include general WordPress usage, adding features with widgets and plugins, optimizing media and requirements for accessibility.

To request content management training:

- Use the MarCom Request Form, which can be found on the UConnect homepage in the upper right-hand corner or in Wrike.
- Select the option "I need the services of the Web Team.".
- Describe your request (content management training for specific page(s) and reason for needing editing/publishing access).
- A MarCom team member will respond to your request within 24 to 48 business hours.
- Most trainings take approximately and hour and can be set up within 3 weeks.

PROCESS TO REQUEST WEB PAGE CREATION OR REDESIGN

MarCom is diligently working with OrgStory to update all existing web pages and create new ones where appropriate. If your page has not been redesigned or created, submit a request as follows:

- Review the template documentation to identify the template option(s) best match your needs (all can be customized).
- Use the MarCom Request Form, which can be found on the UConnect homepage in the upper right-hand corner.
- Select the option "I need the services of the Web team."
- Describe your request (web page creation or redesign; include your desired template).
- A MarCom team member will respond to your request within 24 to 48 business hours to let you know where are you are in the queue of pages to be completed.
- A kick-off meeting will be set up with you, any other team members you request, MarCom and OrgStory (if necessary), and a timeline with roles/responsibilities will be established.
- This process takes 4 to 6 weeks once work has started and is heavily dependent upon the level of customization required and the timely receipt of content from your team(s).

Please note: If you are already a page administrator and you feel you can get started building your page independently after reviewing the template documentation, please create a ticket using the process outlined above and simply request the templates you need. OrgStory will be alerted within Wrike and will create and send them to you to get started within 2 weeks.

PROCESS TO REQUEST GOOGLE ANALYTICS REPORTS

MarCom uses Google Analytics to gain insight into the users' journey on our website and make informed decisions about what works and what doesn't. Google Analytics allow us to:

- Understand what works by measuring traffic sources, interactions with our content and more.
- Advertise more effectively by linking.
- Tap into aggregated audience demographics like age, gender and location.
- Compare results by channel, like search or YouTube, to see which marketing channels perform best.
- Understand and adapt to the user journey across devices (mobile and desktop), and make more informed decisions.

MarCom can also provide analytics reports to help you understand how your page is performing. To request reporting:
- Use the MarCom Request Form, which can be found on the UConnect homepage in the upper right-

hand corner.

- Select the option for I need the services of the Web team."
- Describe your request (analytics report for desired page).
- A MarCom team member will respond to your request within 24 to 48 business.
- Most reports can be provided within 1 to 2 weeks.

PROCESS TO REQUEST A NEW WEBSITE

The UCC's web presence—whether a full website or simply a social media page—is often the first engagement an audience will have with the denomination or one of its initiatives. That makes it critical that the messages conveyed online are on brand and compliant with web and SEO standards.

UCC.org is the official website and main domain of the United Church of Christ. ***New websites should only be created for large, long-term and specialized initiatives (such as Join the Movement or General Synod) and never without first submitting a request to MarCom.***

If after consultation it is determined a new website (rather than a new web page or already existing site) is needed, we will work with you, or a contracted vendor if necessary, to develop a compliant website that meets your needs.

To request a consultation for a new website:

- Use the MarCom Request Form, which can be found on the UConnect homepage in the upper right-hand corner.
- Select the option "I need the services of the Web team."
- Describe your request (new website development).
- A MarCom team member will respond to your request within 24 to 48 business hours.
- A consultation meeting will be set up to conduct a needs assessment.
- If it is determined a new website is needed but capacity does not exist in house, we will work with you to select a vendor for website development.
- If in house, the next step will be to obtain a domain name (subdomains are recommended and a best practice for SEO) and start the discovery process to understand:
  o Your target audience
  o Messages you want to deliver
  o Behaviors or actions you want your audience to take
  o Information your audience needs from your website and where they're most likely to look for it
- Once discovery is complete, we will move on to site mapping, design mockup and content development.
- Timelines vary based on complexity, but plan for at least 12 weeks to develop your site.

Please note, your site development will need to be accompanied by a strategic communications and marketing plan. You need to continually drive traffic to your site through promotion, content updates and traffic analysis.

NEWS & MEDIA RELATIONS SERVICES

MarCom is the primary contact for all media interactions ("media" refers to all representatives of newspapers, magazines, newsletters, online publications, television and radio). The team produces and distributes news to audiences near and far — from the National Setting, UCC Board, Affiliated Ministries, Conferences and Local Churches to the news media and beyond – including press releases, formal statements on behalf of the UCC and other materials related to timely messages of the UCC. We will review your request to determine if it is newsworthy, timely and objective. If it is, we will then work with you to craft a solid pitch to the media or distribute news through our platforms when and where relevant and appropriate.

MarCom also coordinates all press conferences and coordinates media requests for interviews with UCC staff and ministries.

PROCESS TO REQUEST MEDIA RELATIONS SERVICES

To submit a news story or pitch idea, request a press release or news conference:

- Use the MarCom Request Form, which can be found on the UConnect homepage in the upper right-hand corner.
- Select the option for "I have an idea or pitch for a news story."
- Describe your request (UCC News Digest/KYP story, press release/media advisory, op-ed, etc.).
- A MarCom team member will review your request to determine if it is newsworthy, timely and objective, and respond within 24 to 48 business hours.
- MarCom reserves the right determine if content is appropriate for one of our news channels and to edit content as appropriate for grammar/usage/punctuation, style and brand guidelines and clarity. We will work with submitters when necessary to edit content.
- Please do not submit interview requests from the media here. Please send those directly to the MarCom News Team.

Please note, MarCom cannot guarantee the placement of content pitched to media outlets.

UCC NEWS DIGEST/KYP

The News Digest is published every Tuesday and serves as the primary news and information source for UCC audiences. News stories are distributed through email, ucc.org and social media. Content submitted for consideration in the New Digest should be critical, timely or "need-to-know" information and should be provided at least 3 business days to 3 weeks ahead, based on complexity.

PRESS RELEASE/MEDIA ADVISORY

All press releases (including media advisories and news events) must come through MarCom and depending on the scope and timing of the issue, require 1 day to 2 weeks to prepare and distribute.

As the central resource and primary contact with the media, MarCom will determine, with input from appropriate UCC staff, the best and most appropriate approach (press release, media advisory, etc.) through which UCC news shall be released to the media.

News releases will be posted to ucc.org and social media and sent to the appropriate news outlets.

PRESS CONFERENCES

MarCom will advise in the set up and planning for all UCC news conferences, which will be dependent upon scope and timing. When possible, a minimum of three weeks' notice should be given.

MEDIA INTERVIEW PREPARATION AND COORDINATION

Should you receive a call or email from any member of the media requesting general information or asking questions, regardless of the nature of the story or desired information, please immediately direct them to/email the MarCom News Team. **DO NOT** submit a ticket in this instance.

Our team is staffed by professionals with extensive experience working with journalists on a daily basis and is best equipped to determine whether or not granting an interview is in the best interest of the UCC. Should it be determined an interview is appropriate, the MarCom News Team will arrange the interview with the appropriate staff member(s) and ensure individuals are appropriately prepared for the interview. Lead and prep time are dependent upon reporters' deadlines but typically range from 3 business days to 1 week.

KEY MESSAGE AND Q&A DEVELOPMENT

When appropriate, MarCom will craft responses and advise on messaging to ensure that UCC's position on a given topic or initiative is accurately and effectively communicated through interviews, news releases, news conferences and other contact with the media. Message development is dependent on the scope or changing nature of a given topic or initiative but typically takes approximately 1 week.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR AND OPINION-EDITORIAL (OP-ED) COLUMNS

If representing an official UCC response or view, or if the author is writing as part of their official responsibilities, letters to the editor and op-ed pieces must be cleared through MarCom.

Placement guidelines vary by outlet and often include the following:

- 1 to 3 weeks for response time.
- Exclusivity, meaning placement with ONLY their publication. This means pitching one media outlet at a time and waiting for a response before pitching elsewhere.
- Word count limits.
- Description of a professional connection to the topic being submitted.

MarCom cannot guarantee placement of letters to the editor or op-ed pieces, as this is at the discretion of the news outlet(s).

UCC.ORG COLUMN DEVELOPMENT

Columns ideas must be thoroughly vetted with MarCom and typically take 3 weeks to develop. To start a column, you should:

- Know your audience. Who are you writing for?
- Have enough content. Online columns are typically between 200 and 500 words and writing should be engaging, interesting and demonstrate subject matter expertise.
- Be consistent. Columns do best when they run on a weekly to biweekly schedule and go live the same day/time when published. Once your readers know you, they will come to expect that you will publish content on the target subject regularly.

VIDEO PRODUCTION SERVICES

To ensure video productions stay on brand, coordinate with existing efforts, and meet the highest production standards in the most cost-effective manner, MarCom oversees video production on behalf of the UCC. Great videography is an art form with a deeper aim of conveying meaning or creating a connection. We strive to give our audiences a sense of being here, belonging here and of being in some way connected to the people, places and things in each shot. We will review your request to determine the appropriate video format and delivery for your content, and whether production can be done in house or in collaboration with another vendor.

PROCESS TO REQUEST VIDEO PRODUCTION SERVICES

Typical projects and timelines are as follows but may vary, as video production is currently a one-man operation. To submit a request:

- Use the MarCom Request Form, which can be found on the UConnect homepage in the upper right-hand corner.
- Select the option "I need video assistance."
- Describe your request (see options below).
- A MarCom team member will respond to your request within 24 to 48 business hours.

FULL VIDEO EDITING REQUESTS (NOTE: VIDEO DEPT DOES NOT WRITE SCRIPTS)

- Client submits all video elements through "selfie-shot video" and supplies graphics and b-roll footage; MarCom supplies royalty-free music from stock music membership – 5 to 10 business days per edited video minute
- Client submits "selfie-shot video"; MarCom creates simple graphics, finds b-roll from video archive library or stock image memberships, and supplies royalty-free music – 8 to 15 business days per edited video minute
- Client requires MarCom to shoot local interviews in person to add to above requests – Add at least 1 to 2 days per shoot to each of the above timelines
- Client requires MarCom to travel to shoot a video request (once travel is again approved) – Timeline varies and will require close consultation on a case-by-case basis

SIMPLE REQUEST

- Simple webinar upload requests to YouTube/Vimeo – 2 to 3 business days
- Zoom/webinar recording clean-ups (add graphic slide at beginning, adjust audio, add fades to beginning and/or end of video, add logo to end) and then upload to YouTube/Vimeo – 2 to 4 business days
- Create an animated open/close with the above requirements – 5 to 7 business days

ASSISTANCE WITH SCRIPT WRITING

Should you need assistance with script writing, please make note of that in your project request, as this will require assistance from other MarCom team members and will impact turnaround time.

SOCIAL MEDIA

MarCom maintains oversight of social media channels on behalf of the UCC to support the denomination's mission, goals, programs and initiatives.

Social media is a unique set of digital platforms that allows the UCC to engage with our audiences in a more personal, interactive way. It is estimated that more than half the world's population is on sites like Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, TikTok, SnapChat, Pinterest and LinkedIn, which are all very nuanced in their purpose and functionality. This makes social media an important and influential method of communication, and it is imperative the UCC maintain its brand identity and integrity across those platforms.

OFFICAL UCC SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS

Every time we post content to social media, whether it's a video, news story, graphic, blog or anything else, we exercise the UCC's brand voice. This makes it imperative that our voice remains consistent.

Social media, just like any other marketing or promotion channel, must be measured to gauge its success. As the UCC expands its digital footprint to continue meeting our audiences where they are, we must be able to measure our performance and engagement to adjust accordingly. We must use our social media channels to drive traffic to our website to keep our SEO rankings at the top.

It is for this reason, the UCC only maintains one official account on each platform and no longer allows for individual accounts. UCC's official social media platforms are as follows:

- Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/UnitedChurchofChrist
- Twitter: https://twitter.com/unitedchurch
- Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/unitedchurchofchrist/
- YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/user/uccvideos/
- LinkedIn: https://www.linkedin.com/company/unitedchurchofchrist
- TikTok: https://www.tiktok.com/@unitedchurchofchrist

PROCESS TO REQUEST SOCIAL MEDIA SERVICES

To submit a request for social media services:

- Use the MarCom Request Form, which can be found on the UConnect homepage in the upper right-hand corner.
- Select the option "I need to create social media posts."
- Describe your request (post to official UCC social account(s), campaign development, toolkit creation, online community/Facebook Group/Discord creation, livestream broadcast, etc.).
- A MarCom team member will review your request and respond within 24 to 48 business hours.
- If a marketing plan has already been created in Wrike, there is no need to create a separate request for social media services.

Please note: all content is not appropriate for all social media channels. We will work with you to determine which platform is most appropriate for your communications needs.
Typical timelines are as follows:

- Posts to UCC's official social media pages – 1 week (requests with shorter deadlines will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis)
- Social media campaign development – 4 weeks, which could include graphic design time (including video will extend timelines)
- Social media toolkit creation – 6 weeks; 8 weeks if we include graphic design/video time
- Set up a new online community (Facebook Group or Discord) – 4 weeks (this option replaces individual pages)
- Set up webinar livestream broadcast – 3 to 4 weeks, depending on if multiple platforms are involved
- Livestream requiring more extensive production (using something like OBS or Restream Studio) – 6 weeks
- Training on usage and best practices – 4 weeks for new presentation creation; 6 weeks for new presentation with documentation/how-to videos
- Livestream coverage of in-person event – 6 to 8 weeks

FACEBOOK GROUP OR DISCORD

To accommodate teams who need to maintain a more focused presence and targeted audience, we are now offering opportunities to create digital communities online through Facebook Groups and Discord. These communities serve as a rallying point or a coming together of individuals around a cause, allowing teams to create more awareness or additional promotion of events, initiatives and programs, while not oversaturating or self-competing on our official UCC account. Features include:

- Members can engage in group chats.
- Direct communication that fosters a community feeling among members and increases engagement.
- Groups can be public, closed or secret. Public groups are open for anyone to join. Closed groups are invitation-only, and so are secret groups but the latter are only visible to the members. Anyone can view a closed group though they may not be able to join it.
- Members can post files and links to share and search within group conversations.
- Events and promotions can be shared at will.

Before Requesting a Digital Community
- Determine the intention (the "why") of creating a digital community. Is it to share information about a ministry area or initiative with a segmented group/specific audience? Cultivate community around a specific ministry area, identity, kind of congregation, other? Activate an audience toward general or specific policy advocacy or organizing? Something else?
- Identify the target audience for the community. Is it geared toward clergy? If congregants, what are shared the interests or actions of people who might join this community?
- Coordinate with people in your ministry area outside of the National Setting. Do you have 2-3 people across a few different US time zones who would be willing to serve as a moderator for the community? While we can train specific tools of Facebook Groups or Discord, these volunteers should be comfortable with using social media. MarCom will assist in the moderation and administration of the community, but there needs to be additional helpers across the country. At

least one volunteer should be willing to check in 30 minutes each day on the weekend (it doesn't have to be the same person every weekend).
- Schedule time on your calendar every workday to check in on the community. Plan approximately 30 minutes to engage and moderate—10 minutes at the beginning of your day, 10 minutes in the middle of your day, 10 minutes at the end of your day. Understand that you will also need to plan time to coordinate and check in with volunteers—this can be a periodic email to make sure everyone is feeling good about their commitment, updating rules or moderation practices (MarCom provides), or sharing new information about the ministry area that might arise in the community conversations.
- Gain approval from your supervisor. They should plan to cover your daily check-ins with the community and your volunteer moderators (or delegate these duties) when you are on vacation.
- Use the MarCom Request Form to have this conversation. Be prepared to talk with us about the intention and target audience of the community.

Process for Developing a Digital Community
- Once you submit a ticket, MarCom's Social Media Specialist will set up a consultation with you (ideally within 1 week of opening the ticket) to discuss intention, audience, and the plan for continued activation of community members.
- Have a follow-up meeting if there are further questions or needs for creating the community (ideally within 1 week of the first meeting).
- Schedule training for the individual leading (administering) the community. Connect volunteers with MarCom for moderator training. Set a "due date" for this training to help keep people engaged.
- Identify 3-4 pieces of content that can be shared within the first week (either things you have created or from partner organizations) to kickstart engagement.
- MarCom will identify a few ways to promote this new community to your target audience.
- MarCom will set up the community on the appropriate platform (likely Facebook Groups, possibly Discord, others) and set up the intro questions to ensure that real people are joining the community, not bots or trolls.

Process for Launching a Digital Community
- MarCom will officially open the community and promote to your target audience.
- MarCom will continue to provide help with administration, moderation, platform standards updates, additional tasks, and guidance. Additional training and training for additional volunteer moderators will be available upon request.
- You and your volunteers will continue to engage your community; continue to promote joining the community when you can; share content you create, opportunities for education or action, content or opportunities from ministry partners, and more.
- MarCom will continue to cross promote the community where possible. From time to time, MarCom may cross post your ministry's or initiative's content in related communities. From time to time, MarCom may cross post content from related communities in your ministry's or initiative's community. For example: events that highlight intersections between climate and economic justice; content from a partner organization within your ministry area, like the Poor Peoples' Campaign, 350.org, Faith in Public Life, others.
- Check in every quarter or twice a year. Consider questions like: Is this community still serving the audience? Is the audience still actively involved with commenting, "liking," posting, etc.? Is the community inspiring the audience to work outside the digital space? Are the volunteers still actively engaged in the community? Do any of the volunteers need to switch out for a time? Are there

others within the audience who could rise up and help moderate/lead the community, and become more deeply involved?

GRAPHIC DESIGN

As the keeper of the UCC's brand guidelines, MarCom is also responsible for oversight of graphic design. We will work with you to transform your vision and creative content into vibrant visual communications that engage target audiences, applying the UCC brand in different and appropriate ways.

MarCom should always be consulted before you use a third-party vendor to create a UCC branded logo to ensure compliance.

PROCESS TO REQUEST DESIGN WORK

To submit a request for a design work:

- Use the MarCom Request Form, which can be found on the UConnect homepage in the upper right-hand corner.
- Select the option "I need to create a graphic, a UCC-branded resource, or a UCC resources item."
- Choose the request that best fits what you need (logo, web, print designs, etc.).
- A MarCom team member will respond to your request within 24 to 48 business hours.
- If it is determined capacity does not exist in house, we will work with you to select and consult with a vendor for your design work, which must be approved by MarCom before use.

Typical projects and timelines are as follows:

- Logo creation – 2 to 3 weeks
- Web graphics – 1 week
- Social media graphics – 1 week
- Print designs (cards, signage, posters, flyers, letterhead, etc.) – 2 to 3 weeks

EMAIL MARKETING

MarCom is equipped with the central tools and expertise to send emails to target audiences at the appropriate time to get the most effective reach. Informed by data and best practices, we will review your request to determine how to best help you strategically email your audiences in a world where everyone's inbox is overloaded with noise, while connecting to and leveraging our other communications channels.

It can be easy to forget that UCC email distributions include large numbers of recipients and lists often overlap. If different teams want to communicate to the same groups, recipients can be easily overwhelmed and emails ignored. MarCom will work with you to determined which channel is most appropriate for your needs. Certain communications may reach your target audience more directly through web pages, social media, etc.

A creatively designed, branded email will result in increased reader engagement and a higher response to your call to action (CTA).

PROCESS TO REQUEST EMAIL MARKETING

To submit a request for email marketing:

- Use the MarCom Request Form, which can be found on the UConnect homepage in the upper right-hand corner.
- Select the option "Newsletter/Email creation or content."
- Describe your request (create email content, send email from UCC account, create template, create email campaign, etc.).
- A MarCom team member will respond to your request within 24 to 48 business hours.

Typical projects and timelines are as follows:

- Sending emails from official UCC accounts – 3 to 5 days (if content is ready)
- Creating email templates – 3 to 5 days
- Develop email campaign – 4 to 6 weeks
- Generating email performance analytics – 1 to 3 days

BEST PRACTICES FOR EMAIL MARKETING

Before submitting a request to MarCom, think about and follow these best:

- Plan ahead; do not rush blasts right before something is due or an event is starting. With a few exceptions, emails of this nature do not perform well.
- Identify target audiences for messages; ensure messages are tailored appropriately.
- Be brief, self-explanatory, clear and concise.
- Consolidate content with others when possible to avoid duplication and over-sending.
- Avoid excessive emails on the same topic.
- If your target audience is not already available as a list work with MarCom to determine how best to create your distribution list.

- Always have a clear call to action (CTA) such as, "RSVP Today" that links to a form, or "Contact the us to learn more."
- Allow time for relevant and appropriate graphics to be created for more engaging content.

MARKETING & ADVERTISING

All work of the UCC connects back to the mission: *United in Spirit and inspired by God's grace, we welcome all, love all, and seek justice for all.* This means all efforts are interconnected and interdependent. MarCom has the unique position and ability to cross promote, intertwine campaigns and align specific initiatives with the overall mission. We will review your request to determine the most effective channels, timelines and messaging to promote a specific program or initiative within the overall brand.

PROCESS TO REQUEST MARKETING & ADVERTISING PLANNING

To submit a request for assistance with creating your marketing and advertising strategy:

- Use the MarCom Request Form, which can be found on the UConnect homepage in the upper right-hand corner.
- Select the option for Marketing & Advertising.
- Describe your request (plan development, digital campaign, advertising on ucc.org, etc.) and included your proposed outline/timeline.
- A MarCom team member will respond to your request within 24 to 48 business.
- A consultation meeting will be set up to conduct a needs assessment. You should come to the consultation prepared to do the following:
  - Identify your project's/initiative's purpose and audience (why is it necessary, most important message to communicate, primary/secondary audiences, what do you want to accomplish)
  - Determine how to measure success
  - Identify dependencies (what outside entities or extenuating circumstances could have an effect on the prompt and timely execution of this communication plan)

Putting the plan in writing in Wrike will help you organize your tasks, assign deadlines and responsible parties, and include any notes or reminders. It is important to remember as you construct your plan it should be considered a living document. Changes and updates can and should be made to as they are necessary during the course of the project. Make sure to share any changes with all involved parties and mark each revision to the document with the date.

Typical projects and timelines are as follows:

- Marketing/advertising plan development – Varies by complexity but requires at least 6 weeks
- Digital advertising campaigns – 6 to 8 weeks
- Drip marketing email campaign (for larger initiatives using email marketing) – 6 to 8 weeks
- Advertising on ucc.org – varies based on inventory

Please note, if your plan requires market research to be done in advance, this could add an extra 4 weeks to the timeline. Market research focuses on collecting and reporting data about the preferences and needs of our audiences and stakeholders. Analysis may be conducted through interviews, surveys, internal and external dat. Research can help you determine the market viability for your initiative or program and how to best communicate program messaging to target audiences.

UCC EVENT WEB PAGE

MarCom is responsible for maintaining the central UCC Events Page accessible to the public on ucc.org.

To submit a request for assistance with creating your marketing and advertising strategy:

- Use the MarCom Request Form, which can be found on the UConnect homepage in the upper right-hand corner.
- Select the option "I need the service of the Web Team."
- Describe your request (event, content to be added).
- A MarCom team member will respond to your request within 24 to 48 business hours.
- Please note: If you are already working on a comprehensive marketing plan for your event, initiative, or webinar, you do not have to fill out a separate request form.

Typical timelines are as follows:

- Event Page – 2 to 3 days

Before submitting content for an event to include, please review the Events Page. If several pieces of content or another event is planned for your desired date/time, you may want to consider another timeslot or working with MarCom to cross promote with existing events of pieces of content.

CONTRACTED SERVICES

Overall development and application of UCC communications and marketing strategies rests primarily with MarCom. However, when appropriate, we may engage on your behalf or refer you to freelance videographers and photographers, marketing firms, content developers or other vendors for the development and production of your projects. To ensure proper use of the denomination's various visual identity elements, provide a consistent look to the UCC brand, and prevent conflicting messages or market saturation, MarCom should always be involved in discussions with third party agencies of this nature.

If you're planning a marketing or outreach project and you need outside help, please contact us first. Depending on your project, we may be able to support you internally with graphic design, strategic planning or other services, in conjunction with enlisting the assistance of a third party.

APPEALS

This process is owned and managed by Philanthropy. However, MarCom does assist with communications via emails, web, and social media.

The process to initiate an appeal is as follows:

- Reach out to Kent Siladi and Jacqueline Owen and be prepared to answer the following questions:

  - Describe the purpose of this campaign/project. Consider the following in your response:
    - Who will be served (e.g., refugees, disaster relief survivors, etc.)?
    - Who will provide the service (e.g., service partners, local churches, etc.)
    - Why is there a need? (Provide statistics if possible. e.g., According to the US Dept. of Health, in 2020 1,000 refugees were in need of medical supplies)
    - How will we know we are meeting the need? What measurements will be used?
  - When should fundraising efforts begin?
  - Are you or other members of your team willing to meet with donors to describe the need in detail?
  - Will you be willing to guide marketing efforts? For example, submitting documents to Marketing so that a one-page fact sheet can be generated?
  - What is the projected monetary goal? Are there other goals to consider as well? For example, adding volunteers or raising awareness.
  - Are you willing to acknowledge donors through calls, written communication, or virtual meetings?
  - Will you celebrate milestones? For example, celebrating that you have reached 50% of your goal.
  - What will be the ending date for this campaign/project?
  - When will you be able to tabulate your campaign's impact? After 3 months, 6 months?
- If it is determined that an appeal is warranted, use the MarCom Request Form to submit a request for your desired services.
  - A MarCom team member will respond to your request within 24 to 48 business.
  - A consultation will be set up with you, MarCom and Philanthropy to discuss the campaign.

Please note: If an appeal is needed immediately due to a disaster, an email should be sent to both Kent Siladi and Charles Jefferson to determine next steps.