

First Unitarian **Online Photo Directory** Frequently Asked Questions

What is the online photo directory?

An online photo directory is an electronic version, rather than a printed version, of names, contact information, and a photo for each member and contributing friend of First Unitarian Church of Providence. It gives easy, instant access to the church directory through your smartphone, tablet, laptop, or desktop computer.

Who can see the directory?

Only members, contributing friends, and church staff members can access the online photo directory and only after they sign in online to use it. Family members whose email addresses appear in the directory can also access the directory.

Why are we doing a new online photo directory?

We hope that the new online photo directory will help everyone to more easily connect with each other and connect faces with names. It will also help new members make connections and even to help our minister and staff get to know us. An online photo directory is also more economical than printed copies and will be easier to keep up to date.

Will the information in the directory be used for any other purposes?

No. The information in the directory is intended only as a benefit to assist members and friends of the congregation in identifying and connecting with each other and will not be used for any other purpose.

Do I have to pay to be part of the photo directory?

No! The photo directory is a service of the church for its members and contributing friends. The cost is absorbed in the church's technology budget and amounts to about 20 cents per person per year.

Who is responsible for the photo directory project?

The Online Photo Directory Team includes Cynthia Rosengard, First U Membership Coordinator Jenn Nardone, Bev Koteff, and Bill Koteff. They are managing the project and serving as directory administrators. The online photo directory project was first proposed by Cynthia a couple years ago, and interest has grown over time. In the spring, the team formed, investigated possible approaches, selected an online service, and piloted a trial run. The Prudential Committee recently approved a proposal to go ahead with the project.

Members of the Online Photo Directory Team can be reached by email at firstuphotodirectory@gmail.com.

Do I have to be listed in the directory?

No family or individual is required to be in the directory, although we hope you will be unless there is a reason of personal privacy that prevents you from doing so.

Can newcomers to the church be part of the online photo directory?

Only members and contributing friends can be listed in the directory and access it.

How do I remove myself from the photo directory?

Send an email to firstuphotodirectory@gmail.com.

Getting Started

How can I create an account to access the directory?

Click on this link: members.instantchurchdirectory.com

What mobile phones and devices are supported in the mobile apps?

Photo directory apps are available for iPhones, iPads, Android phones and tablets, Kindle Fire, and others. To access the First U photo directory on your smartphone, tablet, or other mobile device, go to your app store and click on Instant Church Directory. It is a free app. Your email address with the password you created will work on all the Instant Church Directory apps on any device.

Where did you get the information to start up the photo directory?

All information comes from the official members and contributing friends database maintained by the church staff.

How is the data in the photo directory organized?

Entries in the online photo directory are organized by family. Within each family entry, specific information is listed for each individual, such as phone numbers, email addresses, different last names, etc. One adult in each family is designated as "head of household" and is the primary individual around whom the directory entry is organized and alphabetized.

What information per individual and family is included in the photo directory?

Family information includes family names, address, phone number, and email address. Individual information includes first name, last name if different from primary family last name, email address, and phone number. Absolutely no church financial information is included.

How many phone numbers and email addresses can I have for my family in the directory?

You can have an unlimited number of phone numbers or email addresses for your family.

Either my partner and I and/or our children do not have the same last name. How will people be able to find both of us if we are listed as part of one family unit?

The searching function in the photo directory software is quite good and will locate any name or part of it for any individual, either adult or child.

How can I change my email address in the photo directory?

Any changes in the directory must be made by one of our designated photo directory administrators. Send changes in an email to firstuphotodirectory@gmail.com.

Can my spouse or partner have a different login and password?

Yes, as long as both email addresses are in the photo directory database. Contact us at firstuphotodirectory@gmail.com if you would like to enter additional email addresses.

Do I have to provide data for all fields in the photo directory?

No. Almost all fields can be left blank if you wish, although the more information you provide, the better the chance that someone who needs to get in touch with you will be able to find you. For children's email addresses and phone numbers, you can choose to not include them in the photo directory. However, there MUST BE AT LEAST ONE EMAIL ADDRESS for each family, since this address serves as the username for that family to login to the photo directory. This address can be hidden but will make you unreachable by anyone looking at the directory. You will still be able to login to the directory either online or through a mobile app.

Contact us at firstuphotodirectory@gmail.com if you would like to make any changes to the data for your family, delete information, hide certain fields, or more.

If I have you update my information in the photo directory, will those changes be made in the church office directory as well and vice-versa?

No! The directories are not connected to one another, and changes to one do NOT propagate back to the other.

How often will the photo directory be updated?

Constantly. An online photo directory is by design constantly updatable, as opposed to a printed directory which is accurate only at the time it is printed and then quickly goes out of date. Your mobile devices will automatically refresh if it discovers that changes have been made to the directory since the last time you used it.

PLEASE let us know whenever your information changes and needs updating by contacting us at firstuphotodirectory@gmail.com. We envision periodically reminding all directory users that they should update their information or photos to stay current.

I'm not sure what names or emails we provided for the official church office directory. How can I find out?

Send an email to us at firstuphotodirectory@gmail.com, and we can tell you which email was used.

How do I delete information from the photo directory or remove myself entirely?

Send an email with your request to firstuphotodirectory@gmail.com.

Photos

How many photos can I have in the directory?

There can be only one photo for each family, and the space provided for the photo is square in shape.

How can I add my picture to the photo directory?

As we initially load photos into the new directory, we will send email messages to every member and contributing friend asking them to submit their photo. Requests will be sent alphabetically, and this whole process will take a few weeks.

How can I change my/our picture on the photo directory?

Pictures can be changed only by the directory administrators. You can request to change your picture at any time by sending a new photo to us at firstuphotodirectory@gmail.com. Be sure to identify those in photo, left to right.

Why can't I change my own picture in the photo directory?

To provide quality control for the images and ensure privacy, the service we use requires photos to be posted by one of the photo directory team administrators.

How big can my picture be?

All photos in the directory are almost square. After you submit your photo, the directory team will crop it to the necessary size and insert it. If there is a problem with your photo, we will let you know.

Can I use a selfie or other phone camera photos for my picture?

Yes. Try to keep people in the photo as close together as possible so that we can crop it to the square format as mentioned above. When using a phone camera, setting the format to "square" will help you frame the picture more easily.

Can we have our picture taken by someone at the church?

Yes. We have recruited a number of volunteer photographers from the congregation who can take a picture of your family and provide it to us directly to include in the directory. Watch your email for dates of photo opportunities after Sunday service.

I would like to use a print photo for my picture but don't have a scanner to make an electronic copy. Can you help?

Yes! We'll be happy to scan your photo for you. Either bring or mail it to the church office and mark it "Photo Directory" so we can get it to the right person. Be sure to also include the names of those in the printed photo, left to right, even if it is only one person.

Do I have to include my photo in the photo directory?

No, but we certainly hope you will! In a congregation our size, many of us recognize familiar faces but don't always connect names with faces. The photo directory is a great tool to help solve this problem.

Security

Where is the data stored for the directory?

The directory information and photos are stored on the Internet on a commercial photo directory service. This service is secure and *not* scanned by search engines.

Does the directory provider sell or share my data?

No. They explicitly guarantee not to sell or share customer data.

Is any of the data for the photo directory stored on the church website?

No. We will be providing a link on our church website to the photo directory service and some information about the service, but no data is stored on our church website.

Will you be posting the full photo directory on the website so that we don't have to login to see it?

No. Posting directories in any form, including encrypted PDF documents, is simply not secure; data is often compromised when this is done. Such documents can be scanned by search engines and are easily decrypted.

Can I get a printed copy of the full directory?

We are considering producing printed directories at a cost for those who do not use online tools and services, but we have not made a final decision about cost or availability. If you are interested in this alternative in the future, please send an email to firstuphotodirectory@gmail.com or send a note by postal mail to the church office, attention Photo Directory.

If I am looking for someone from church who provides a particular service such as accountant, plumber, or grant-writer, will I be able to search for them in the directory?

Good idea, but unfortunately, no. Only the name fields are searchable at this time.

What is the timeline?

The initial photo directory is already up and running online and ready for members to create their accounts and begin using it. It currently has information on 498 families, with a scattering of photos that we have pulled from our church files. Over the summer we will be inviting members to create their accounts, submit photos, and request edits/changes to their information in the directory. We will be persistent in our efforts to get congregants to review their entries and submit photos. Our goal is to make sure all information is accurate and that we have photos of every member and friend at First U!

Who do I contact for help?

Send an email to firstuphotodirectory@gmail.com, and one of the team members will get back to you as soon as we can.