Live Oak UU Church
Email List Guidelines

Users of the church sponsored email lists are expected to observe commonly held and understood rules of behavior in these electronic forums. Be careful and cautious about what you say about whom/what. Anything you say here you should be willing to see in print on the **front page of the New York Times**. Communication that is not appropriate for such broad distribution should be sent privately via email and not posted on the lists. Be cautious with electronic communication. Without the body language and facial gestures of face-to-face communication, it can be easily misinterpreted and escalate a touchy situation into a full-fledged argument before those participating realize what has happened.

Dos and Don'ts

- **Do** engage in civil discourse and treat each other decently and with respect.
- **Do** have authentic conversations -- from the head, the heart, and the gut.
- **Do** foster a spirit of group creativity, experimentation, exploration, and good will.
- **Do** have a shared commitment to work together toward better communication and better conversations.
- **Do** share your insights, your knowledge, and your gifts and talents.
- **Do** help newcomers feel welcomed, and contributors feel valued.
- **Do** support each other in a positive and affirming way.
- **Do** discuss problems and controversial issues in a constructive and general way to avoid hurting others' feelings or starting flame wars.
- **Don't** use the email lists to send personal attacks, slurs, or offensive or disruptive messages.
- **Don't** "flame": "Flaming" is sending messages that are far more belligerent, sarcastic, accusatory, or just plain mean than you would be in person. If you are tempted to send an angry message, take a walk around the block first.
- **Don't** talk if you don't have anything to say: avoid posting messages that say "me too!" or "I agree!" when you don't have anything to add to the discussion.
- **Do** use descriptive subject lines: a subject line that says "Need 4th grade curriculum about Islam" is much more useful than one that just says "Help!".
- **Do** identify yourself: sign your messages with your entire real name and your email address if it is not identified in the header.
- **Do** include the relevant parts of the original message when replying, but trim the unnecessary parts that each reader doesn't have to wade through headers, signatures, and other stuff that doesn't pertain to your message.
- **Do** reply privately when your message isn't of interest to the group. If you want to make a point that contributes to the group discussion, post your reply to the mailing list. If you want to criticize, ask a personal question, or ask something off the topic of the list, send your reply directly to the person who wrote the message.
- **Don't** forward somebody's private email to the entire list without his/her permission.
- **Don't** post chain letters, pyramid schemes, virus warnings, email petitions, mass forwards, or other types of email spam. While people usually mean well, these are almost always bogus or outdated and even if they aren't, they rarely have the intended effect.