

Guidance for the use of email within the Hughes Baptist Church.

Communication is an important part of the church and the church should ensure that its communication glorify's God and does not embarrass His church.

Email is one of the modern forms of communication and this guide is designed to be a practical help to members and adherents of the church in ensuring that their communications are constructive and effective.

IN SHORT

1. Email addresses published within the church directory are primarily to facilitate the building of relationships and assist communication within the church. They should not be utilised for personal profit or reward. No service or product requiring payment should be advertised utilising members and adherents email addresses without the permission of the Board.
2. Emails should not be used to criticise or complain against another member or adherent within the church.
3. Distribution of emails should be limited only to those who have a need to know, especially if they are of a sensitive nature.
4. The privacy of personal conversations via email should be respected.
5. The Privacy of peoples email addresses should be respected.
6. Except for the case of emailed announcements, all emails sent by members of the church should clearly show who the email is addressed to and who the sender is.
7. Care should be exercised by the sender of an email, especially when it involves sensitive information to ensure that the email address is appropriate and that the recipient can be trusted with the information supplied.
8. An Individual's right to have their email address removed from your distribution list should be respected and acted upon as soon as possible and before using that address list again.
9. Care should be taken to ensure that information is only supplied to those people that have indicated a desire to receive such information.
10. Care should be exercised in relation to the use of email for making decisions. It is recommended that decisions that involve the expenditure of church funds, deal with the relationships of people, or require debate should not be carried out with email as the sole communication tool.
11. Perceived non-compliance with this guide should not be communicated via email.

WITH EXAMPLES

1. Email addresses published within the church directory are primarily to facilitate the building of relationships and assist communication within the church. They should not be utilised for personal profit or reward. No service or product requiring payment should be advertised utilising members and adherents email addresses without the permission of the Board.

Example

- *Sue is part of an organisation that sells cosmetics though the holding of parties. She receives a commission on all the cosmetics she sells. She advertises her cosmetic parties using the email addresses listed in the church directory to those people she does not know personally. This would be against this guide.*
- *The girls brigade leader wants to sell chocolates in order to raise money for disadvantaged members of the girl's brigade to assist them to attend the annual girl's brigade camp. For each chocolate sold a commission is paid to the girl's brigade. She asks the Board for permission to advertise the sale of chocolates to the members and adherents of the church via their email addresses. The Board agrees on the basis that the reason for the project and the commission basis is clearly explained in the announcement. This would comply with this guide*

2. Emails should not be used to criticise or complain against another member or adherent within the church.

Example

- *Paul believes that Peter's comments in their home group were inappropriate. He sends an email to Peter detailing his complaint against him. This would be against this guide. It is recommended that Paul endeavour to speak privately with Peter about his grievance face to face. If the matter cannot be resolved they should then commit to following the Hughes Baptist Church conflict resolution process.*

3. Distribution of emails should be limited only to those who have a need to know, especially if they are of a sensitive nature.

Example

- *Paul believes that Peter's comments in their home group were inappropriate. He sends an email to Peter detailing his complaint against him. Feeling aggrieved that his reputation has been damaged by Peter's comments he also sends copies of his email to Peter to all members of their home group. This would be against this guide. It is recommended that Paul endeavour to speak privately with Peter about his grievance face to face. Part of their discussion can be on how to address the damage to Paul's reputation. If the matter cannot be resolved they should commit to following the Hughes Baptist Church conflict resolution process.*

4. The privacy of personal conversations via email should be respected.

Example

- *Tom has been discussing a subject with Mike through an exchange of emails. Tom, without consulting with Mike, decides to include Mary in the discussion. He does this by forwarding a question to Mary in an email which includes all the previous messages between Mike and himself. This would be against this guide.*

5. The Privacy of peoples email addresses should be respected.

Example:

- *An announcement is emailed to all "Life Group" members, and all the "Life Group" members email addresses are included in the "To" or "CC" fields. All the people's email addresses have now been revealed to everyone else in receipt of the announcement. This is against this guide.*
- *An announcement is emailed to all "Life Group" members, and all the email addresses are in the "BCC" field. No recipient of the email can see the other recipients email addresses. The emailed announcement indicates that this message is an announcement to all "Life Group" members so that each member is aware that they are not the sole recipient of the message. This is in accordance with this guide.*

6. Except for the case of emailed announcements, all emails sent by members of the church should clearly show who the email is addressed to and who the sender is.

Example.

- *Greg emails John concerning his thoughts about suitable candidates for the election of Board members. He blind copies (BCC field) Donald into the email. On receipt of the email John is*

unaware of the fact that Donald has been included in the correspondence. This would be against this guide.

7. Care should be exercised by the sender of an email, especially when it involves sensitive information to ensure that the email address is appropriate and that the recipient can be trusted with the information supplied.

Example

- *Ted sends Alice an email concerning the difficulties that Rebecca is having at work. He sends it to Alice's email address, as listed in the church directory, without first consulting with Alice to see if this is appropriate. All members of Alice's family have access to the email address, as it is the family email address. Julie, Alice's 9 year old, accidentally opens the email and reads it. Not understanding its contents, she asks her parents about it while they are entertaining guests. Ted's action puts Alice in a difficult position. In order to comply with the guide, Ted should check with Alice that it's OK to correspond by email about this personally sensitive matter and whether the listed address is OK with Alice.*

8. An Individual's right to have their email address removed from your distribution list should be respected and acted upon as soon as possible and before using that address list again.

Example

- *You have been sending out a missionary newsletter to a group of church members and adherents who had previously indicated to you that they wished to receive the same. Gary contacts you and says that he has become involved in another ministry and no longer wishes to receive the newsletter. In order to comply with the guide you would remove him from the distribution list as soon as possible and before using that address list again.*

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9. Care should be taken to ensure that information is only supplied to those people that have indicated a desire to receive such information.

Example

- *Pamela is a 14 year old student at Deakin High School, each week she receives an announcement detailing the program for the "How to be a Godly Man" life group. It is recommended that church members and adherents should be given the opportunity to identify the types of announcements that they wish to receive.*

10. Care should be exercised in relation to the use of email for making decisions. It is recommended that decisions that involve the expenditure of church funds, deal with the relationships of people, or require debate should not be carried out with email as the sole communication tool.

Example

- *Lisa is a member of the church involved in Youth Ministries. She wants to spend \$1,000 on the next youth outing. She contacts each of the Board Members or Ministry Leaders by email and asks if they agree. The majority of leaders respond in a positive manner so she goes ahead with the purchase. This would be against the guide. The opportunity for debate has been bypassed and each leader has made their decision in isolation.*

11. Perceived non-compliance with this guide should not be communicated via email.

- *Example*

- *Jim receives an email from Jessica, detailing her views on how the choir could improve its performance. The email has been circulated to all choir members. Jim feels that the email is critical of him personally, and as such is against the guide. He responds to Jessica by email, copying all choir members in, stating that she has behaved inappropriately. This is against the guide. Jim should contact Jessica and speak with her personally about the issue, so as not to escalate the matter.*