

# ClergyNet Guidelines

The ClergyNet group list serve was established by the Virginia Conference Board of Communications in January 2001 to help clergy across the Virginia Conference communicate with one another. There are approximately 1,300 members of this group.

We have received questions about membership in ClergyNet. Laity are currently allowed to join ClergyNet (just as clergy are allowed to join LaityNet). If laity were not allowed to join, that would eliminate many postings from our conference staff and district secretaries who are lay people. Also, many clergy appreciate having their secretaries, administrative staff, etc., being allowed to view and post to ClergyNet. When an e-mail address is sent to ClergyNet asking for membership in the group, it is not a policy to ask if they are clergy or laity. It has been suggested that it would be helpful if persons posting e-mails identify themselves as clergy or lay, IN ADDITION TO identifying themselves by name and church.

In order to provide useful service to the greatest number of people, it will be helpful if we each try to keep in mind a few simple principles established by the Virginia Conference Board of Communications:

- Posts which violate the *Book of Discipline* or the Social Principles of The United Methodist Church, or promote events which violate the *Book of Discipline* or the Social Principles of The United Methodist Church are not permitted.
- This is NOT a discussion group. The ClergyNet list serve allows Virginia Conference clergy to share information, news, or questions of general interest to their colleagues in ministry. To respect all opinions, and because ClergyNet is not a forum suited for discussion, politically driven material should be posted elsewhere.
- PERSONAL information should be limited to unique circumstances, such as births, deaths, or career changes.
- Messages should be SHORT. Try to keep the length of your announcements or questions to a minimum, perhaps no more than a single paragraph.
- REPLIES to questions should be directed to the individual posting the question, unless the answer might be of general interest to other clergy.
- Items, events or activities, including workshops or events sponsored by individuals or for-profit organizations, books, trips and used items, may be offered for sale on VaUMCTalk as long as the sale is not in violation of the Social Principles of The United Methodist Church. No items, events or activities may be offered for sale on ClergyNet or LaityNet if the proceeds from the sale will benefit an individual or a for-profit organization. This includes workshops or events sponsored by

individuals or for-profit organizations, books, trips and used items. Announcements of items being given away for free may be posted. Conference sponsored events and activities and fundraising benefits for churches or 501C3 charitable organizations may also be posted on ClergyNet and LaityNet.

- The conference communications office will MONITOR all messages, not to censor but to guide information toward the most appropriate channels. The communications office reserves the right to delete messages that are deemed inappropriate, or considered a personal attack. Some information might be communicated more effectively in other ways.

#### CLERGYNET GUIDELINES RE SELLING ITEMS

The board of directors of Virginia United Methodist Communications, Inc. has approved the following policy regarding selling items on Virginia Conference e-mail groups:

Items, events or activities may be offered for sale on VaUMCTalk as long as the sale is not in violation of the Social Principles of The United Methodist Church. Workshops or events sponsored by individuals or for-profit organizations, books, trips and used items may all be offered for sale on VaUMCTalk.

VaUMCTalk is an open forum for Virginia United Methodists to discuss current topics of interest. This group is not moderated, however all discussion should be done in the spirit of Christian conferencing, and we reserve the right to ban anyone who uses profanity or libels other people.

No items, events or activities may be offered for sale on ClergyNet or LaityNet if the proceeds from the sale will benefit an individual or a for-profit organization. This includes workshops or events sponsored by individuals or for-profit organizations, books, trips and used items. Announcements of items being given away for free may be posted. Conference-sponsored events and activities and fundraising benefits for churches or 501C3 charitable organizations may also be posted on ClergyNet and LaityNet.

I hope these guidelines are helpful. Please don't hesitate to contact me if I can answer any questions or concerns you might have about the ClergyNet list serve.

In Christ's Service,

[Brenda Capen](#)

Moderator, ClergyNet

Virginia United Methodist Communications