

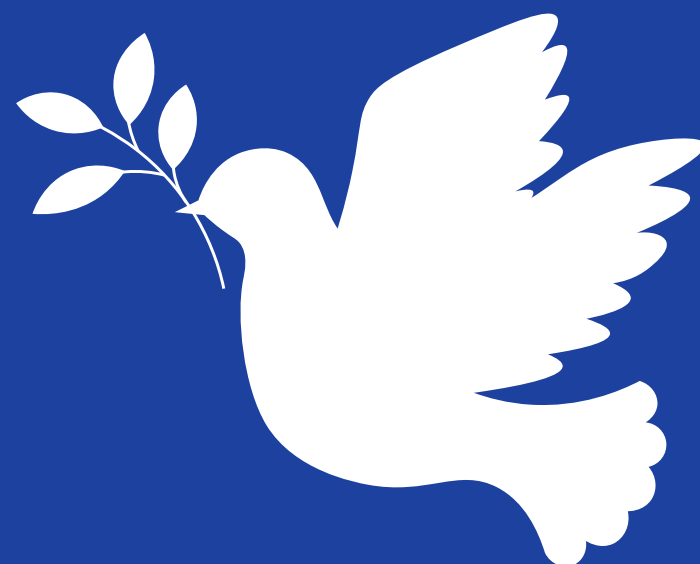


SEEKING TO BE FAITHFUL TOGETHER

Guidelines for Presbyterians in Times of Disagreement

PRESBYTERIAN PEACEMAKING PROGRAM





In a spirit of trust and love, we promise we will...

GIVE THEM A HEARING... LISTEN BEFORE WE ANSWER

SPEAK THE TRUTH IN LOVE

MAINTAIN THE UNITY OF THE SPIRIT IN THE BOND OF PEACE

Guidelines for Presbyterians in Times of Disagreement

GIVE THEM A HEARING... LISTEN BEFORE WE ANSWER

JOHN 7:51 (NRSV)

“Our law does not judge people without first giving them a hearing to find out what they are doing, does it?”

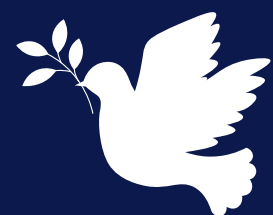
PROVERBS 18:13 (NRSV)

“If one gives answer before hearing, it is folly and shame.”



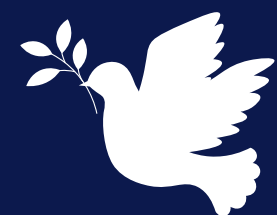
GIVE THEM A HEARING... LISTEN BEFORE WE ANSWER

1. Treat each other respectfully so as to build trust, believing that we all desire to be faithful to Jesus the Christ.
 - We will keep our conversations and communications open for candid and forthright exchange.
 - We will not ask questions or make statements in a way that will intimidate or judge others.



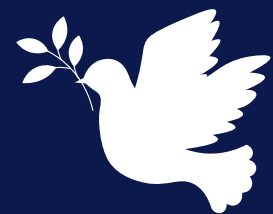
GIVE THEM A HEARING... LISTEN BEFORE WE ANSWER

2. Learn about various positions on the topic of disagreement.



GIVE THEM A HEARING... LISTEN BEFORE WE ANSWER

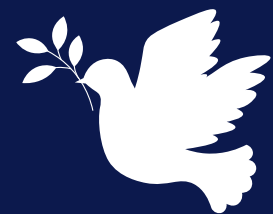
3. State what we think we heard and ask for clarification before responding; in an effort to be sure we understand each other.



SPEAK THE TRUTH IN LOVE

EPHESIANS 4:15 (NRSV)

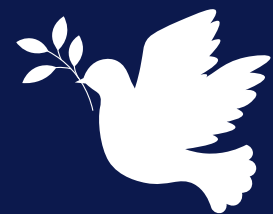
“But speaking the truth in love, we must grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ”



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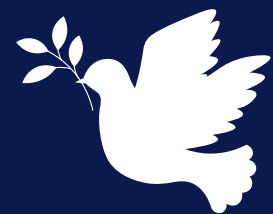
SPEAK THE TRUTH IN LOVE

4. Share our concerns directly with individuals or groups with whom we have disagreements in a spirit of love and respect in keeping with Jesus' teachings.



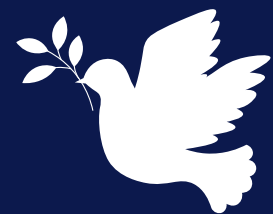
SPEAK THE TRUTH IN LOVE

5. Focus on ideas and suggestions instead of questioning people's motives, intelligence or integrity.
 - We will not engage in name-calling or labeling of others prior to, during or following the discussion.



SPEAK THE TRUTH IN LOVE

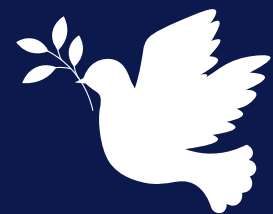
6. Share our personal experiences about the subject of disagreement so that others may more fully understand our concerns.



MAINTAIN THE UNITY OF THE SPIRIT IN THE BOND OF PEACE

EPHESIANS 4:1-3 (NRSV)

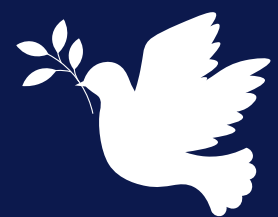
“I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.”



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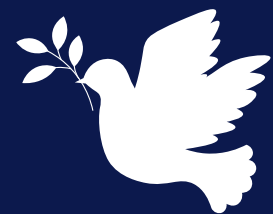
MAINTAIN THE UNITY OF THE SPIRIT IN THE BOND OF PEACE

7. Indicate where we agree with those of other viewpoints as well as where we disagree.



MAINTAIN THE UNITY OF THE SPIRIT IN THE BOND OF PEACE

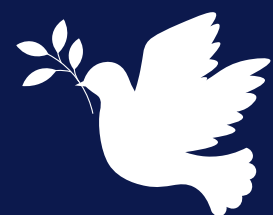
8. Seek to stay in community with each other though the discussion may be vigorous and full of tension.
 - We will be ready to forgive and be forgiven.



MAINTAIN THE UNITY OF THE SPIRIT IN THE BOND OF PEACE

9. Follow these additional guidelines when we meet in decision-making bodies.

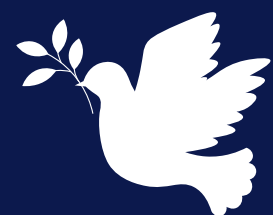
- Urge people of various points of view to speak and promise to listen to these positions seriously.
- Seek conclusions informed by our points of agreement.
- Be sensitive to the feelings and concerns of those who do not agree with the majority and respect their rights of conscience.
- Abide by the decision of the majority, and if we disagree with it and wish to change it, work for that change in ways that are consistent with these Guidelines.



Guidelines for Presbyterians in Times of Disagreement

MAINTAIN THE UNITY OF THE SPIRIT IN THE BOND OF PEACE

10. Include our disagreement in our prayers, not praying for the triumph of our viewpoints, but seeking God's grace to listen attentively, to speak clearly and to remain open to the vision God holds for us all.



SEEKING TO BE FAITHFUL TOGETHER

Guidelines for Presbyterians in Times of Disagreement

Looking at each guideline, ask the following questions:

- How might the use of this Guideline help create a healthy atmosphere for dealing with conflict?
- How might the use of this Guideline help deal with an existing conflict?
- Would you like to change this Guideline or remove it from the list?