



Episcopal Church in Idaho Spiritual Guidelines for Respectful Conduct

Policy Title: Upholding Collegiality and Respect in Our Community

Purpose:

These guidelines articulate the Episcopal Church in Idaho's commitment to collegiality, mutual respect, and democratic principles in all interactions among its members, clergy, and leadership. The purpose is to foster a healthy, Christ-centered community where disagreements can be addressed constructively, and all individuals are treated with dignity, reflecting our shared baptismal covenant.

Scope:

These guidelines apply to all members, clergy, lay leaders, and staff of the Episcopal Church in Idaho in all aspects of their engagement within the church and its ministries.

Guidelines for Conduct:

1. Mutual Respect in Disagreement:

All members of the church are expected to treat one another with respect, even when disagreements arise. Our shared faith calls us to honor the inherent dignity of every person, regardless of differing opinions or perspectives.

2. Respectful Questioning and Receiving:

- **Asking Questions:** Members are encouraged to ask questions respectfully, seeking understanding and clarity.
- **Receiving Questions:** Leaders are expected to receive questions respectfully, acknowledging them as legitimate inquiries. While not every

question can be answered immediately or fully, leaders should endeavor to answer questions honestly and to the best of their ability, or direct the inquirer to appropriate resources.

3. **Refraining from Harmful Speech and Behavior:**

To maintain a healthy and supportive environment, all individuals are called to refrain from:

- **Name-calling:** Using derogatory or demeaning labels for others.
- **Belittling in Public:** Disparaging or diminishing individuals in public settings.
- **Speaking Ill in Absence:** Spreading negative comments or gossip about others when they are not present. This includes refraining from speaking ill of the Diocese, the Bishop, the clergy, your staff, or others in their absence, recognizing that all individuals and institutions deserve respectful treatment, even amidst disagreement.

4. **Addressing Issues Directly and Constructively:**

If issues arise concerning the Diocese, a local church, or its leadership, individuals are encouraged to approach the leaders or people with whom they disagree directly and one-on-one, as scripture suggests (Matthew 18:15). This approach promotes reconciliation, understanding, and constructive resolution, fostering a stronger and more unified community.

5. **Avoiding Triangulation and Promoting Direct Communication:**

To foster healthy relationships and avoid triangulation, if a person attempts to discuss issues concerning another individual with you rather than speaking directly to that person, gently encourage them to communicate directly with the individual involved. Emphasize that individual problems are best resolved between the individuals concerned. If direct communication is not possible or fruitful, then the biblical guidelines found in Matthew 18:15 should be followed.

6. **Guidelines for Meetings and Interactions:**

When meeting with another person in an office setting, please ensure the door remains open if there is no glass panel. If meeting with an underage person, please ensure another adult, such as their parent or a responsible guardian, is visible to both you and the child throughout the conversation. To avoid unnecessary accusations and complaints, refrain from any physical contact. Additionally, please refrain from meeting an underage person in areas with insufficient lighting.

7. Substance Use and Prohibited Activities on Premises:

No person shall perform any church service or engage in individual sessions during work hours while under the influence of alcohol or illicit drugs. Smoking, vaping, or the use of snuff is strictly prohibited on all church premises.

Review:

These guidelines will be reviewed periodically by the Bishop and Diocesan Council to ensure their continued effectiveness in promoting a culture of respect and collegiality within the Episcopal Church in Idaho.