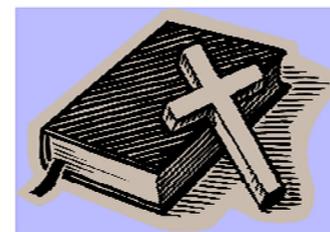




Mission Statement

To provide a safe and caring place for discerning God's will in grievance situations within the common life and ministry of the Episcopal Diocese of Albany



This publication outlining steps for mediation and conflict resolution has been established as a resource to honor the baptismal covenant of its members. It is our common commitment to do all we can to support these promises. Our promises include our commitment to:

“continue in the apostles’ teaching and fellowship in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers; to persevere in resisting evil, and, whenever we fall into sin, to repent and return to the Lord; to proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ; to seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving our neighbor as ourselves; and to strive for justice and peace among all people, and to respect the dignity of every human being”



Episcopal Diocese of Albany

Disciples Making Disciples

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**As members of the Christian community of
THE DIOCESE OF ALBANY**

Jesus tells us in the 18th chapter of the Gospel according to Matthew (vs. 10, 15-17) what we are to do when we have a grievance against a brother or sister. He tells us to:

“Take care that you do not despise one of these little ones;...If another member of the church sins against you, go and point out the fault when the two of you are alone. If the member listens to you, you have regained that one.



To access a mediation resolution to unresolved conflict first requires that work at reconciliation be attempted by the parties as follows:

- Speak directly with the person(s) with whom you have a disagreement. Attempt to resolve the issue.
- Speak with the person in charge of the particular ministry area in which the conflict resides, or the chaplain if there is one assigned to the ministry area or community in which the issue has arisen. This contact is for the purpose of arranging a joint meeting with that person and the parties in conflict.
- If the conflict remains unresolved, speak with the Bishop or Bishop’s representative about the issue and your actions to resolve the matter.
- Receive referral to a Mediation Team by the Bishop or the Bishop’s representative.

HEALTHY	UNHEALTHY
ATTITUDE: Conflict is inevitable; it is a chance to grow.	ATTITUDE: Conflict is wrong or sinful.
PERSONALIZED: Disputants are clearly able to see the difference between the people and the problems and do not mix the two.	PERSONALIZED: Disputants quickly mix people and problems together and assume that by changing the people, the problem will be solved.
COMMUNICATION is open, people speak directly to one another and everyone has the same information.	COMMUNICATION is diminished, with people speaking only to those with whom they already agree. Third parties or letters are used to carry messages.
THE BALANCE SHEET is short. The principals address the issue at hand, not what happened months or years ago.	THE BALANCE SHEET is long. The list of grievances grows and examples are collected. People recall not only what they think was done to them but what was said or done to their friends as well.
THE CHURCH IS INTERACTIVE. There is give and take, an exchange of ideas and a spirit of cooperation and openness. There is careful listening and thought out statements.	THE CHURCH IS REACTIVE. It cannot be “touched” without exploding. I write a memo to you and you immediately fire back a nasty letter to me.
ACCEPTANCE: Disputants acknowledge the existence of a problem and the need to solve it.	DENIAL: Disputants tend to ignore the real problems and deny what is going on.
TIMELINESS: Resolution takes as much time as needed. The parties take the time to go through the journey together, to experience the pain and to come out together on the other side.	LACK OF TIME: There is a strong need to solve the problems too quickly. People are very solution oriented and seek to avoid the pain of conflict by saying, “Let’s get it over with.”

We, being sinners and falling short, promise, with God’s help,

To “welcome one another, therefore, as Christ has welcomed us, to the glory of God”

And to relate to each other through Christ, promising to ourselves and each other to:

- 1. Communicate Clearly.**
Listen to each other (James 1:19)
Speak directly to one another (Matthew 18:15)
- 2. Accept Conflict is Inherent to Community.**
Do not judge one another (Romans 2:1)
Address conflicts as opportunities to grow (Ephesians 4:22-24)
- 3. Challenge Each Other With the Truth.**
(Ephesians 4:15-16)
- 4. Pray for one another.** (James 5:16)
- 5. Strengthen Each Other.** (Ephesians 4:29)
- 6. Forgive One Another.** (Luke 6:38)
- 7. Freely participate in the Body of Christ according to our gifts and talents.**
(Matthew 10:8)

It is our hope and desire that we may journey together to know the joy of Jesus Christ through our life and labors.

Signature and date _____