

Norms for Diocese of Albany Gatherings – Summary

The Diocese of Albany's "Mission" is Disciples making Disciples.

*The Diocese of Albany's "Vision" is One Church fulfilling the **Great Commandment** and **Great Commission**, moving from membership to discipleship; equipping, emboldening, and sending disciples to make disciples.*

General norms for Diocesan gatherings:

- Begin and end in prayer, inviting the Holy Spirit to guide and bless our conversations.
- Put God first.
- Love my neighbor as myself.
- Listen carefully and respond with well thought-out statements.
- Assume positive intent and avoid passing judgment and personalizing differences
- Accept that opinions may change.
- Respect the dignity of every human being and value every voice.
- Use “I” statements. (i.e. “I feel uncomfortable,” rather than “you are making me feel uncomfortable”)
- Seek first to understand the view point of others rather than to be understood for my viewpoint.
- Offer successive conversations, if necessary, to achieve beneficial and mutual understandings to help the parties go through the journey of reconciliation together, experience the pain, and come out together on the other side.
- Respect confidentiality. (what is spoken between individuals or within a group is not shared with others)
- Avoid political jabs.
- Speaking and acting so that we build up and support one another. "speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ." Ephesians 4:15 (NIV)
- Should I find, myself engaged in conflict with another member of the Diocese of Albany or in my duties to represent the Diocese of Albany that I am unable to resolve directly with the other party(s), I commit to following the procedures and behaviors outlined as "healthy" in the Diocese of Albany Covenant of Community.

Meeting-Specific norms:

In addition to the general norms, the following norms apply to meetings

- Begin and end in prayer, inviting the Holy Spirit to guide and bless our conversation.
- Respect the meeting timeline by starting and ending on time.
- Appoint a facilitator for the meeting.
- Come to the table with a reconciling heart.
- Allow one person to speak at a time, without interruption.
- Speak for 2-minutes or less (with grace) so everyone has a chance to speak.
- Eliminate distractions (turn-off cell phones, email, etc.).

Norms for Diocese of Albany Gatherings

General norms for Diocese of Albany Gatherings:

- Begin and end in prayer, inviting the Holy Spirit to guide and bless our conversations.
Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:6-7
- Put God first.
But strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Matthew 6:33
- Love my neighbor as myself.
He said to him, “‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.” Matthew 22:37-40
- Listen carefully and respond with well thought-out statements.
You must understand this, my beloved: let everyone be quick to listen, slow to speak, slow to anger. James 1:19
- Assume positive intent and avoid passing judgment and personalizing differences.
Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. I Corinthians 13:4-7
- Accept that opinions may change.
“What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first and said, ‘Son, go and work in the vineyard today.’ He answered, ‘I will not’; but later he changed his mind and went. The father went to the second and said the same; and he answered, ‘I go, sir’; but he did not go. Which of the two did the will of his father?” They said, “The first.” Matthew 21:28-31a
- Respect the dignity of every human being and value every voice.
In everything do to others as you would have them do to you; for this is the law and the prophets. Matthew 7:12
- Use “I” statements. (i.e. “I feel uncomfortable,” rather than “you are making me feel uncomfortable”)
All must test their own work; then that work, rather than their neighbor’s work, will become a cause for pride. For all must carry their own loads. Galatians 6:4-5

- Seek first to understand the view point of others rather than to be understood for my viewpoint.
How much better to get wisdom than gold! To get understanding is to be chosen rather than silver. Proverbs 16: 16
- Offer successive conversations, if necessary, to achieve beneficial and mutual understandings to help the parties go through the journey of reconciliation together, experience the pain, and come out together on the other side.
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. Ephesians 4:1-3
- Respect confidentiality. (what is spoken between individuals or within a group is not shared with others)
A gossip goes about telling secrets, but one who is trustworthy in spirit keeps a confidence. Proverbs 11:13
- Avoid political jabs.
And the Lord's servant must not be quarrelsome but kindly to everyone, an apt teacher, patient. 2 Timothy 2:24

Meeting-Specific norms:

In addition to the general norms, the following norms apply to meetings

- Begin and end in prayer, inviting the Holy Spirit to guide and bless our conversation.
Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:6-7
- Respect the meeting timeline by starting and ending on time.
- Appoint a facilitator for the meeting (if needed).
All things should be done decently and in order. 1 Corinthians 14:40
- Come to the table with a reconciling heart.
All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation. 2 Corinthians 5:18
- Allow one person to speak at a time, without interruption.
You must understand this, my beloved: let everyone be quick to listen, slow to speak, slow to anger. James 1:19
- Speak for 2-minutes or less (with grace) so everyone has a chance to speak.
When words are many, transgression is not lacking, but the prudent are restrained in speech. Proverbs 10:19

- Eliminate distractions (turn-off cell phones, email, etc.).
Let your eyes look directly forward, and your gaze be straight before you. Proverbs 4:25