

LITANY FOR A DIALOGUE AMONG DISCIPLES

Adapted from *Home Mission Advocate*, June/July 2005

Adapted from a litany by Rev. Vicki Brooks-McDonald, Schenectady, NY

- One:** Each of us is on a journey, growing in faithfulness, witnessing to the mercy and love granted to us by God through Jesus Christ. Jesus has called us to be disciples as we seek to be faithful to God's will. Please join with me in a Litany for a Dialogue among Disciples.
- All:** In a spirit of love and trust, we, as a particular expression of the Church of Jesus Christ in the world, promise to be guided by the following practices:
- All:** In times of disagreement we will strive to treat each other respectfully so as to build trust, believing that we all desire to be faithful to Jesus the Christ.
- One:** May God's spirit of love and trust make it so.
- All:** In times where we are faced with conflict and high convictions, we will strive to learn about various positions on the topic of disagreement.
- One:** May God's spirit of love and trust make it so.
- All:** In times when it is most difficult to listen, we will strive to state what we think we heard, and ask for clarification before responding, in an effort to be sure we understand each other.
- One:** May God's spirit of love and trust make it so.
- ALL:** In speaking the truth in love, we commit ourselves to share our concerns directly with individuals or groups with whom we have disagreements, in a spirit of love and respect, in keeping with Jesus' teaching.
- One:** We pray for God's guidance.
- All:** Guided by the scripture to uphold the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace, we will indicate where we agree with those of other viewpoints, as well as where we disagree.
- One:** In hope and with joy.
- All:** With constancy and faith we will include our disagreements 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.
- One:** May it be so with God's help.
- All:** Amen.

"HOLY MANNERS"

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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 which will intimidate or judge others.
2. Learn about various positions on the topic of disagreement.
3. State what we think we heard and ask for clarification before responding, in an effort to be sure we understand each other.
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' teaching.
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.
6. Share our personal experiences about the subject of disagreement so that others may more fully understand our concerns.
7. Indicate where we agree with those of other viewpoints as well as where we disagree.
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.
9. Follow these additional guidelines when we meet in decision-making bodies:
 - Urge the persons 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 which are consistent with these Guidelines.
10. Include our disagreements 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.