

**L**ord, make us instruments of your peace. Where there is hatred, let us sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is discord, union; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; where there is sadness, joy.

**G**rant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console; to be understood as to understand; to be loved as to love.

**F**or it is in giving that we receive; it is pardoning that we are pardoned; and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

—*Saint Francis of Assisi*

**S a i n t S t e p h e n ' s  
E p i s c o p a l C h u r c h**

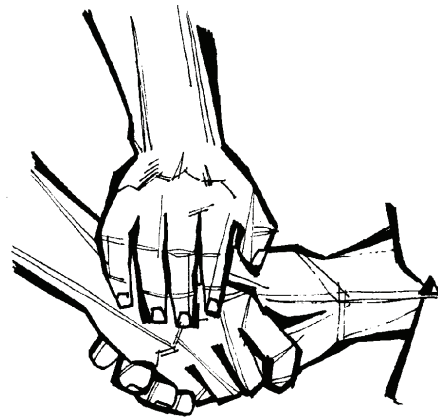
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**S a i n t S t e p h e n ' s  
E p i s c o p a l C h u r c h**

**Parish  
Peacemaking**

**Process:**

**A way to resolve conflict and establish peace, endorsed by the vestry and rector of Saint Stephen's Church.**



*"Blessed are the peacemakers,  
for they shall be called  
children of God."*

—*Matthew 5.9*

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**Rights  
and  
Responsibilities**

**You have a right**

- to your opinion
- to your feelings
- to voice your concerns
- to be heard
- to be treated with respect and dignity

**You have a responsibility**

- to be a peace-maker
- to build up the church
- to address your own concerns directly with the appropriate person or group
- to utilize an appropriate process to resolve conflict
- to listen to others
- to treat others with respect and dignity

**O** God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, our only Savior, the Prince of Peace: Give us grace seriously to lay to heart the great dangers we are in by our unhappy divisions; take away all hatred and prejudice, and whatever else may hinder us from godly union and concord; that, as there is but one Body and one Spirit, one hope of our calling, one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of us all, so we may be all of one heart and of one soul, united in one holy bond of truth and peace, of faith and charity, and may with one mind and one mouth glorify you; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

—*Book of Common Prayer, 818*

## The Process

### Conflict can be healthy

Conflict can be a normal and healthy part of any church's life. Faithful people with differing points of view may disagree about what "ought to be" in regard to parish life and ministry, but creatively managed conflict can lead to growth and new possibilities.

Jesus, the Prince of Peace, invites us to be peace-makers, not simply to "keep the peace" at all costs. We all share in the "ministry of reconciliation" and have a responsibility to handle our differences in a way that strengthens the church. As Christians we are to engage our differences in a way consistent with our baptismal promise to "respect the dignity of every human being."

### Steps for addressing conflict

- Go directly to the person with whom you have concern.
- State your own concerns and desired outcome.
- Listen to the other person's concerns and desired outcome.

- Further accuracy in communication by using paraphrasing (restatement).
- Ask if the desired outcome is consistent with scripture and Episcopal Church norms.
- Repeat steps as needed as long as progress is maintained.
- Ask for assistance from the Parish Peacemaking Committee (PPC) if there is an impasse.

### Parish Peacemaking Committee

The PPC is charged by the vestry and rector to further peacemaking. Members of the PPC assist the parish in addressing conflict and in facilitating mediation sessions.

*For contact information consult the wardens, rector, or the directory.*

- Anyone can request PPC assistance.
- The PPC will consult with both parties to determine willingness to mediate.
- If there is agreement to mediate, the PPC will set up a mediation session.
- In the absence of agreement, both parties will be informed and given information about constructively dealing with differences.

### Before the mediation session

All parties will receive written information about the following:

- Ground rules helpful for addressing concerns and resolving differences.
- An overview of what to expect from a mediation session.
- Information on effective problem solving.

### PPC-facilitated mediation session

- Mediation process reviewed.
- Ground rules, including observance of confidentiality.
- Agreement to mediate established.
- Opening statements (concerns and desired outcome).
- Paraphrasing (restatement) for clarity.
- Individual and group interaction as needed.
- Issues specifically defined.
- Possible solutions identified.
- Agreement drafted, or discussion of helpful actions in event of an impasse.

### Scriptures for Praying

"If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between him and you alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every word may be confirmed by the evidence of two or three witnesses. If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and tax collector" (Matthew 18.15-17).

"Take heed to yourselves; if your brother sins, rebuke him, and if he repents, forgive him; and if he sins against you seven times in the day, and turns to you seven times, and says, 'I repent,' you must forgive him" (Luke 17.3-4).

"Therefore, if any one is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, behold the new has come. All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation" (2 Corinthians 5.17-19).