

CORE VALUES AND BEHAVIORS

The House of Bishops of the Episcopal Church

Revised July 29, 2020

1) ATTENDANCE, as demonstrated by full participation in meetings and worship.

As the Body of Christ, all members are significant, the Body is diminished by the absence of some, and we have vowed to “share with [our] fellow bishops in the government of the whole Church” (BCP 518)

Will you be faithful in ATTENDANCE?

I will with God’s help.

2) FULL AND INTENTIONAL INCORPORATION in the House, as demonstrated by engagement with the work of the College for Bishops and rotation of leadership in core and working groups during meetings of the House.

“For as in one body we have many members, and not all the members have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another. We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us: prophecy, in proportion to faith” (Rom 12:1ff). We have also leadership of the Church” (BCP 517).

Will you be faithful in FULL AND INTENTIONAL INCORPORATION in this Body?

I will with God’s help.

3) COLLEGIALITY, as demonstrated in our mutual respect for each other and our attention to how our individual and corporate actions affect the Church.

“But God has so arranged the body, giving the greater honor to the inferior member, that there may be no dissension within the body, but the members may have the same care for one another. If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it (1Cor 12:24b-26).

Is there anyone among you who, if your child asks for bread, will give stone? Or if the child asks for a fish, will give a snake? If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good things to those who ask him! In everything you do to others as you would have them do to you; for this is the law of the prophets” (Matt 7:9ff).

Will you be faithful in COLLEGIALITY in this Body?

I will with God’s help

4) MUTUAL RESPECT, as demonstrated by respectful listening and talking, and increased attention to avoid mean-spiritedness, with appropriate confidentiality. To demonstrate EQUALITY IN COMMUNICATION in core and working groups as well as conversations in plenary sessions.

We have promised to “respect the dignity of every human being” and to “seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself” (BCP 305).

Whoever becomes humble like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven (Matt 18:4).

Will you be faithful in MUTUAL RESPECT AND EQUAL COMMUNICATION in this Body?

I will with God’s help.

5). RECKONING WITH RACISM, as expressed and experienced in the life of the House, guarding one another’s dignity and, whenever we witness anyone being demeaned or oppressed, intervene by naming and stopping the painful speech or behaviors and seek reconciliation in the moment. We shall also hold one another accountable for creating and supporting environments where racial healing and justice can flourish.

The prayer of consecration of a bishop prays that we will exercise without reproach the high priesthood to which God has called us, serving before God "day and night in the ministry of reconciliation....” (BCP 521).

Will you be faithful in RECKONING WITH RACISM in this Body?

I will with God’s help.

6) COLLECTIVE WISDOM, as demonstrated in retaining materials that need further attention from one meeting to the next, and in learning from each other.

“A bishop in God’s holy Church is called to be one with the apostles... You are called to guard the faith, unity, and discipline of the Church... With your fellow bishops you will share in the leadership of the Church (BCP 517). Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit? I believe in ... the communion of saints “(BCP 304).

Will you be faithful in sharing COLLECTIVE WISDOM in this Body?

I will with God’s help.

6) DIRECTNESS IN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE COMMUNICATIONS, as demonstrated by a “check it out, talk it out” covenant.

“Let your word be “Yes, Yes” or “No, No”; anything more than this comes from the evil one (Mat 5:37).

“For I fear that when I come, I may find you not as I wish, and that you may find me not as you wish; I fear that there may perhaps be quarreling, jealousy, anger, selfishness, slander, gossip, conceit, and disorder (2Cor 12:11).

“Your joy will be to follow him who came, not to be served, but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many “(BCP 517).

Will you be faithful in DIRECT COMMUNICATION in this Body?

I will with God’s help.

7) ACCOUNTABILITY, as demonstrated in past work to involve conversation and prayer before moving toward controversial actions.

“Will you persevere in resisting evil, and, whenever you fall into sin, repent and return to the Lord? (BCP 304). Will you be faithful in prayer, and in the study of Holy Scripture, that you may have the mind of Christ? (BCP 518).

“ Are you persuaded that God has called you to the office of bishop? (BCP 517).

Will you be ACCOUNTABLE to God and your fellow bishops in this Body?

I will with God’s help