

St. John's Episcopal Church, Gloucester Massachusetts
Covenant For Vestry, Officers and Clergy

Recognizing that Holy Scripture will be our authority governing our behavior and relationships with one another and with the congregation, and acknowledging St. Paul's directive to Timothy (*1 Timothy 4:12*) concerning his role as church leader to be "an example to the believers in speech, life, love, faith and purity," we therefore agree to the following covenant.

To love one another by:

Creating and nurturing within the vestry a safe and trusting atmosphere in which all members can feel comfortable and confident in expressing their thoughts and opinions,
 Being sensitive to the different styles and personalities of individual vestry members,
 Seeking to validate, appreciate, acknowledge, and understand the unique and special gifts of each vestry member.

Treating each vestry member with respect by:

Speaking and acting in such a way as to build up and support one another,
 Confronting issues without demeaning anyone,
 Refusing to listen to backbiting or gossip about any other Christian, especially of our church leaders,
 Insisting that people who have accusations to be made against another church leader do so in the presence of that individual,
 Recognizing that certain discussions are of a confidential nature, thus maintain good, wise judgment in respecting that confidentiality,
 Confronting with love those individuals who have hurt me in any way,
 Following St. Matthew's principle

(Matthew 18:15-17) for conflict resolution between individuals: speaking first to the individual alone; if to no avail, bringing another (vestry member) and then, if necessary, finally referring the matter to the larger church (entire vestry).
 Practicing forgiveness for those I feel have wronged me,
 Seeking to encourage those vestry members who may be suffering through trials of one kind or another,
 Nurturing a servant attitude in that the vestry's role is that of serving both God and His church.

To seek God's will by striving for unity in all matters through:

Joining with the entire vestry in submitting significant matters to prayer, especially prior to voting or decision-making,
 Upholding the final decision of the vestry even when I may disagree,
 Always seeking to better understand others,
 Submitting to one another in love,
 Refraining from all discussions and conversations that are unwholesome and from a divisive course,
 Consciously seeking to abandon personal agendas and self-serving attitudes.

To be an example to the congregation by striving to:

Faithfully attend Sabbath worship,
 Consistently engage in study of the Scriptures,
 Live out the Christian life through regular, sacrificial giving,
 Support the church through active attendance and participation,
 Be faithful to the (name of church) mission statement.

Date: March 12, 2013

Bret B. Hays
Bruce Cole
Jim McCarthys
Bone Stolt
Janet M. Pate-Robb
Marion Kasper
MA Jery

Mark Murray
Naomi Astyk
Ernest Runnels
Richard Evrattin
Elizabeth Redmond
Martha M. Whitney
Jean M. Meyer