

## Holy Manners

1. We're all responsible for success – everyone's participation is needed and **expected**.
2. Start off believing that everyone is trying his or her best to have this church serve God faithfully and well.
3. If it becomes obvious that behaviors are non-productive, disruptive, or destructive – confront the behaviors **without bringing dishonor to anyone**.
4. Speak only for yourself, using “I” statements: “I believe...” vs. “Lutherans believe...”; “I think...” vs. “Some people think...”
5. Ask questions to clarify your understanding or to check out assumptions.\* (Be a good researcher!)
6. Avoid defensive reactions.
7. Be open to new ideas.
8. Feel free to disagree with issues or methods, but **restate** what you are disagreeing with **first**.
9. Participate fully, but don't try to “win,” prove your point, or prove someone else is wrong.
10. Say what is on your mind without blaming or shaming others.
11. Remember that hidden agendas are **always destructive**.
12. We all need to work at staying fully engaged in this process in order that, together, we can achieve our purpose (which is to serve God).

### Remember—

- This is Christ's church. We are here to discern and **do God's will**.
- We are servants of God and stewards of God's Holy Church.
- Our words and our behaviors communicate many things; what we see and hear passes through many internal filters. Some of these include our faith, our fears, our visible and invisible loyalties, our sense of self and sense of others, our past experiences. What I intend to say is not always what you hear and vice versa, so please be patient. God willing, **together**, in some way for Jesus' sake, we will succeed and thereby build up God's kingdom here on earth.
- Remember that understanding people is more important than trying to do something to fix them!

*\*Studies have shown that healthier behavior surfaces in a group or congregation simply by asking “good questions” (who, what, where, and when; avoid why questions) as opposed to having a trained specialist work with a group or congregation. This indicates that having more knowledge is not necessarily more effective when dealing with conflict or anxiety.*