

The Episcopal Church Office of Government Relations

Civil Discourse Five Week Curriculum



**OFFICE OF
GOVERNMENT
RELATIONS**

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WEEK 4: THE COMPLEXITIES OF POLICY PARTICIPANT HANDOUT

Opening Prayer:

O God, you made us in your own image and redeemed us through Jesus your Son: Look with compassion on the whole human family; take away the arrogance and hatred which infect our hearts; break down the walls that separate us; unite us in bonds of love; and work through our struggle and confusion to accomplish your purposes on earth; that, in your good time, all nations and races may serve you in harmony around your heavenly throne; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. (Prayer for the Human Family, BCP p. 815)

Reflection:

- How do you make decisions based on your knowledge, ethics and values?
- When those decisions are difficult, who or what do you turn to for help?

Practicing Civil Discourse

In small groups, read through “Voices from the Church” and then engage in a short 15-minute conversation about this issue that is modeled on the outline below on civil discourse.

Have one person at each table act as the facilitator to get the conversation going and keep it flowing in a productive way, gently reminding participants about the Covenant. If your group begins going to a different topic, gently remind them about the topic at hand.

1. Facts are put on the table
2. People express an opinion
3. Engage in productive dialogue
4. Understand how to accomplish goals through compromise

Closing Prayer:

Lord Jesus, who traveled with the disciples on the road to Emmaus:
Be with us on the way,
that we may know you in the scriptures,
in the breaking of bread,
and in the hearts of all whom we meet. Amen.

([Saint Augustine's Prayer Book](#), Forward Movement)

