



St. Francis Episcopal Parish & Community Center Community Agreements

St. Francis Episcopal Parish & Community Center is a welcoming community of faith and loving-kindness. We accept people as they are and are committed to deepening our relationships with our community members by seeking understanding, demonstrating grace, and engaging in radical acts of love - to love our neighbors as ourselves. We believe that we are all children of God and siblings in Christ, and as such, we are bound by our Baptismal Covenant to love one another wholly and completely.

We do not think these are just words to live by, but values to be embodied in how we engage with each other and define our mission together. In 2023, the Vestry of St. Francis took on the responsibility of discernment around mutual ministry to create Provocative Propositions and Community Agreements that embody our vision for St. Francis and the teachings of our faith.

The Provocative Propositions represent the things we believe are possible for our community and a roadmap to our vision. These are aspirations we have for St. Francis Episcopal Parish & Community Center:

We, St. Francis Episcopal Parish & Community Center, cultivate communities of change.

- **We honor creation through creating positive environmental change.**
- **We invite all to gather around tables.**
- **We serve our neighbors by strengthening relationships.**
- **We nurture generations of change-makers.**

You are welcome here no matter who you are or where you are from.

To make our aspirations actionable, we have developed a set of Community Agreements to guide us along this journey towards a resilient community that can endure change and respect its tradition. Through the process of exploring our values, we found clarity in our mission as St. Francis Episcopal Parish & Community Center.

Our mission returns to the familiar call of Micah 6:8:

“Do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with God.”

The Vestry took responsibility to create Agreements that embody the teachings of our faith in our vision for St. Francis with feedback from the St. Francis Community:

Do Justice:

1. **St. Francis will operate from a place of transparency.** “Little children, let’s not love with words or speech but with action and truth,” (1 John 3:18). We believe that it is important for information to flow as freely as possible and for people to feel included in and informed about decisions that are made in a timely manner. We aim to make all meetings easily accessible, share notes from Vestry meetings in a timely manner, and create pathways for people to ask questions and receive straightforward answers from leadership.
2. **We will communicate with one another honestly.** We commit to engaging with one another in ways that respect one another’s dignity and autonomy. We recognize that within all relationships and communities, conflict and disagreement are inevitable. We believe that we can embody the imperative to love our neighbor through our interpersonal connections and interactions, even in times of trial (Matthew 18:15-20).
3. **We are committed to acts of justice through feeding our neighbors.** Food insecurity is a crisis that shows no signs of slowing down. St. Francis commits to dedicating resources, time, and energy to creating mechanisms for food security in our community. As Jesus fed the 5,000, we believe it is necessary for us to engage in feeding people as part of our commitment to our faith (Matthew 14:13-21; Mark 6:31-44; Luke 9:12-17; John 6:1-14). We commit to maintaining and supporting our Food Ministry Team and advocating for resources in our community and beyond.
4. **We are committed to acts of justice through creation care.** “The Lord God took the human and settled him in the garden of Eden to farm it and to take care of it,” (Genesis 2:15). Our Earth, God’s creation, is our home. As stewards, we

are committed to continuing our environmental projects through our Green Team. We will invest time and energy into maintaining the flora and fauna at St. Francis, engaging in sustainable energy efforts, and growing food to nourish the bodies of our community members.

Love Mercy:

- 1. We are committed to being a welcoming space for all.** “I was hungry and you gave me food to eat. I was thirsty and you gave me a drink. I was a stranger and you welcomed me,” (Matthew 25:35). Everyone deserves to feel like they belong at St. Francis. We are committed to greeting and getting to know all who come through our doors whether for worship, sustenance, safety, or belonging (Matthew 25:35-40). We commit to creating and maintaining a committee to engage in outreach to relate to people we do not yet know.
- 2. We accept everyone for who they are.** We believe in the radical act of love. No one will be excluded from our spaces for who they are (Luke 14:12-14). We will work to foster a community of care where all feel like they belong and are able to be their whole selves.
- 3. We are committed to building intergenerational community that provides a strong foundation for our children.** Providing love and care for our members of all ages is vital to the continued health of our community. We are committed to creating space for children and youth so that they may learn and grow in faith and love. We will continue to nurture our Children, Youth, and Families program and encourage the participation of all community members to help us raise our children. “‘Allow the children to come to me,’ Jesus said. ‘Don’t forbid them, because the kingdom of heaven belongs to people like these children,’” (Matthew 19:14).
- 4. We are committed to building a community of disciples.** We want to mean what we say and embody the teachings of Christ in all we say and do. We are committed to outreach to our surrounding community to share our love and resources. We are committed to creating space for fellowship and hospitality to nurture our relationships with one another and providing pastoral care to all members through our Pastoral Team to deepen our sense of belonging (Luke 19:1-6).
- 5. Everyone is a leader.** We are committed to leadership development for everyone in our community. We recognize that we all have different strengths (1 Corinthians 12:4-11). We have the courage to know when to step up and the humility to know when to step back.
- 6. Clear is Kind.** We will be clear in our communication with one another to advocate for our needs and share our feelings. We are committed to

understanding one another. “Be kind, compassionate, and forgiving to each other, in the same way God forgave you in Christ, (Ephesians 4:32).

7. **We are committed to being integral to our community.** We are committed to engaging our community with intentional care so that all may have what they need (Luke 6:43-44). Our spaces can and will be accessible to all community members for the purpose of building community through solidarity, love, and support, as well as providing resources. We have much to give.

Walk Humbly With God:

1. **We are committed to our faith.** Our Worship Team will continue to steward our worshiping community and provide space for programming including indoor and outdoor worship, Music Ministry, and children’s sermons (Ezra 1:5-6).
2. **We will treat everyone with respect.** “The rich and the poor have this in common: the Lord made them both,” (Proverbs 22:2). We are all children of God and are deserving of respect, no matter who we are or what we believe.
3. **We will hold ourselves accountable for our actions.** We all make mistakes. We are committed to accountability and ownership of our actions. We will foster a community that allows space for mistakes, the humility to recognize them, and the grace to forgive. “Be tolerant with each other and, if someone has a complaint against anyone, forgive each other. As the Lord forgave you, so also forgive each other,” (Colossians 3:13).
4. **We are committed to being a bilingual community.** We recognize that many of our community members speak Spanish, and we are committed to providing access to all of our resources and activities in an accessible way to everyone (Acts 2:1-4).