

Healthy Communication in Community

We are committed to these norms within the Saint Mark's Cathedral community and the spaces we hold together:

1. We **listen with empathy to understand** until the speaker has finished, and we do not interrupt.
2. We **ask clarifying questions**.
For example, "Thank you for sharing. May I ask a clarifying question?"
3. We graciously **allow space for different opinions** and remain present.
4. We **speak for ourselves**, not our cohort, our group, or anyone else.
For example, "I disagree with this" vs. "Everyone is saying that you..."
5. We **use "I statements"** whenever possible.
For example, "I feel disrespected when others interrupt me."
6. We **keep confidentiality**.
7. We **hold each other accountable to these norms** without shaming, blaming, or judgment. *For example, "Would you be willing to rephrase that as an "I" statement?"*
8. We **say what needs to be said to the person who needs to hear it**, and we do not participate in gossip or destructive language about others.
9. We **speak the truth in love**. Lying is disrespectful and anti-community. We know there might be more than one truth in a system, but we strive to tell ours and own it.
10. We **create safe spaces** in which all voices can be heard.
11. We **resist judging others** when tensions arise. Comparisons are a form of aggression.
12. We **acknowledge that power dynamics impact our communication** (such as primary language, education, physical and cognitive ability, cultural and racial differences, gender, sexuality, and age), and we seek to honor our equality in Christ and the sacredness of the other.

We will, with God's help.