

Eastern Shore Chapel Vestry Covenant and Norms

1. Love one another and speak the truth in love

- Be positive in conversation
- Avoid parking lot meetings or being triangulated
- Do not except anonymous complaints
- Vestry speaks as one voice
- Be welcoming to all since we are representative of the church
- Always demonstrate respect for one another

2. Treat each other with respect in all forms of differences

- Listen to each other with intent and without interruption - “seek first to understand, then to be understood”
- Be positive when speaking about vestry decisions
- Speak in only “I” statements
- Respect the time and energy of others
- Show up on time and read all materials

3. Deal with conflict by speaking first to the individual

- Avoid triangulation. Seek to connect those in concern with those who deal directly with the issue
- Be transparent and in the light
- DESC
 - Describe the conflict in one sentence
 - Express how you feel about it
 - Be Specific about what you would like to see happen
 - Share the Consequences both good and bad if the conflict is not resolved amicably, or is not resolved.
- Remember Covenants 1 and 2

4. Strive for unity in seeking God’s will for ESC

- Unify behind a clearly defined church mission
- Approach matters related to the underbelly of the church with a productive mindset, as difficult issues are an opportunity for us to put scripture into action and clarify the vision of God’s kingdom here on earth
- Prevent burn out and know that we are in this together by leaning on each other

5. Be a living example of faithfulness through study, worship, giving, and prayer

- Lead by example by attending as many events, meetings, retreats and Bible studies as you can at this parish
- Pray for one another with love – begin Vestry meetings by checking in personally with all members in a confidential manner in order to provide focus and meaning to your prayers

6. Respect Confidentiality

- Use strict discretion when discussing any vestry matter with spouses
- A closed session is to remain closed until told otherwise
- Speak as one voice
- Transparent decision making is not simply a legal obligation but at the core of vestry’s relationship with parishioners, clergy and staff. Without transparency, trust is diminished, which is essential to vestry’s ability to fulfill its mission
- Organizations that lack transparency resort to (and often depend) on gossip for communication purposes, which is time consuming, inaccurate and emotionally taxing for members of the organization