

Agreeing and Disagreeing in Love

Adapted with permission from the Lombard Mennonite Peace Center,

Adopted by Unity of _____ Board of Directors, (date _____)

The members of Unity of _____ are invited to commit themselves to applying the 12 principles of “Agreeing and Disagreeing in Love” to our church business, relationships and interactions. As a community we ask for and welcome support from each other as we learn and grow in our abilities to apply these principles. Our desire is that our ministry will be a demonstration of how the application of spiritual principles can make a positive difference in an environment of diverse people and ideas.

Endeavoring to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace (Eph. 4:3), as both individual members and as a spiritual community, we agree that we shall agree and disagree in love.

IN THOUGHT:

1. **I accept Conflict:** I acknowledge that conflict is a normal part of life in the church.

Romans 14:1-8, 10-12, 17-19, 15:1-7.

2. **I affirm the Truth:** I endeavor to see conflict as symptomatic of what’s missing in our intention to create authentic community. Peacemaking is creating a pathway to God. Matthew 5:9.

3. **I commit to Prayer:** I examine where I am coming from and release my need to be right. I acknowledge that all parties have needs and pray for win/win solutions (no prayers for my success or for the other to change). James 5:16.

IN ACTION:

4. **I go to the Other:** I go directly to those with whom I disagree; I avoid behind the back criticism. I refrain from engaging in “parking lot” conversations. Matthew 5:23-24, 18:15-20.

5. **I go in the spirit of Humility:** I go in gentleness, patience, and humility. I own our part in the conflict instead of blaming others and acting as if others are responsible for how I am. Galatians 5:1-5.

6. **I am quick to Listen:** I listen carefully, summarizing and checking out what is heard before responding. I seek as much to understand as to be understood. James 1:19; Proverbs 18:13.

7. **I am slow to Judge:** I suspend judgments, end enrolling others in my position, discard threats, and act in non-defensive and non-reactive ways. Romans 2:1-4; Galatians 5:22-26.

8. **I am willing to Negotiate:** I work through disagreements constructively. Acts 15; Philippians 2:1-11.

---I identify issues, interests, and needs of all (rather than stake positions).

---I generate a variety of options for meeting all party’s needs (rather than defending our own individual way).

---I evaluate options by how they meet the needs and satisfy the interests of all sides (not just one side’s values).

---I collaborate in working out a joint solution (so that each side gains, grows and wins).

---I cooperate with the emerging agreement (accepting the possible, not demanding the ideal).

---I reward myself for each step forward, toward agreement and I celebrate mutuality.

IN LIFE:

9. **I am steadfast in Love:** I am firm in my commitment to seek a mutual solution: I am steadfast in acting out of Principle (doing the right thing); I am hard on issues and soft on people. Colossians 3:12-15.

10. **I am open to Peacemaking:** I am open to accept skilled help. If I cannot reach agreement among us, I will use those with gifts and training in peacemaking.

11. **I trust the Community.** I trust the wisdom of the community and if I cannot reach agreement or experience reconciliation, I will turn the decision over to the membership and/or seek assistance from Member Services of Unity Worldwide Ministries. Acts 15.

12. **I seek to be an expression of the Christ:** I am committed to peacemaking and the demonstration of Principle rather than resorting to courts of law. Corinthians 6:1-6.