

# Guidelines for Civility in the United Methodist Church

1. Respect the personhood of others, while engaging their ideas.
2. Carefully represent the views of those with whom we are in disagreement.
3. Be careful in defining terms, avoiding needless use of inflammatory words.
4. Be careful in the use of generalizations; where appropriate offer specific evidence.
5. Seek to understand the experiences out of which others have arrived at their views. Hear the stories of others, as we share our own.
6. Exercise care that expressions of personal offense at the differing opinion of others not be used as means of inhibiting dialogue.
7. Be a patient listener before formulating responses.
8. Be open to change in your own position and patient with the process of change in the thinking and behavior of others.
9. Make use of facilitators and mediators where communication can be served by it.
10. Always remember that people are defined, ultimately, by their relationship with God--not by the flaws we discover or think we discover in their views and actions.