

## **Rules of Engagement**

*Guidelines for robust and respectful conversations  
in public worship services*

As we embark on a conversation format for sermons in the weeks ahead I'll need to create a safe space to engage with tricky topics in our public worship services. It's important that we moderate our inflated opinions and avoid the argumentative spirit that too often causes people much harm on various social media platforms. Christians enjoy the endowment of the Holy Spirit as promised by Christ to all His followers. Apostles like Paul (e.g. see Romans 12) exhort Christians to aspire to be the new community made possible by the impact of Jesus' death and resurrection for us.

Therefore, we urge everyone who will participate in public conversations on trending Twitter topics to prayerfully consider the following document that was presented to the general Synod in 2014 for similar purposes.

### **Being a community:**

We will value the wellbeing of others. We will encourage each other to participate in the life of the church. We will consider the impact of our behaviour on others.

### **Relating to each other:**

We will treat each other with respect and dignity, irrespective of ability, gender, sexuality, race, age or contribution to the church. We will act with integrity and honesty in our interactions with each other.

**Communicating with each other:**

We will communicate respectfully with others, and not in a way that threatens, belittles or humiliates. We will speak with integrity and honesty, and refrain from speculation and gossip.

**Acknowledging difference:**

We will respect those who are different from us and not isolate or ridicule them. We will listen to and seek to understand the beliefs, opinions, and practices of others, even when we do not share their views.

**Responding to conflict:**

We will accept responsibility for our part in a conflict. We will be willing to play our part in resolving a conflict.