

C. Continuing the Effort Toward Mutual Flourishing

Wherever in the world The Episcopal Church is present, four issues—ongoing anti-Jewish bigotry, anti-Muslim bigotry, systemic racism, and unjust treatment of indigenous peoples—inform and complicate interreligious work.

The baptismal covenant promise to strive for justice and peace among all people issues to Episcopalians a warrant for the work of cultivating positive interreligious relations as part of the larger mission of creating Beloved Community wherever in the world we find ourselves.

D. Building Beloved Community

For cultivation of deeper understanding and interreligious problem-solving, The Episcopal Church commends dialogue, fostering the mutuality so necessary for making common cause with regard to peace, social justice, and religious liberty.

Opportunities abound for developing creative relationships with people who embrace other religions, yet are searching, as are Episcopalians, for justice, peace, and sustainability. Episcopalians prepare for interreligious engagement by fulfilling the baptismal covenant promise to “continue in the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers.”



Because God first loved us, we embrace the commandment to love God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength; and to love our neighbors as ourselves. When we engage the other, we better know ourselves, and we work out our commitment to the love to which God calls us.

In this time of reckoning and renaming, this document provides guidance for parishes and other Episcopal communities to develop and maintain interreligious relationships. This is an abbreviation of the full guidelines document, which can be found at

<https://www.episcopalchurch.org/ministries/ecumenical-interreligious/>.

I. An Episcopal Theology of Interreligious Relations

A. Our commitments

The Episcopal Church's approach to thinking theologically about interreligious concerns has distinctive aspects.

1. *Communio oppositorum* (a communion of opposites)—the unique charism brought by The Episcopal Church to interreligious relations: our commitment to hold difference together.
2. Balance between Scripture, reason, and tradition.

3. The baptismal covenant as warrant for interreligious work.
4. Radically incarnational, hence a church that is radically open to the influence and ideas with which our faith comes into dialogue.
5. The doctrine of creation: humankind created in God's image — thus the implication that religious diversity has potential for good and that difference can be celebrated.
6. The role of the Holy Spirit, which is unhampered by religious, cultural, and geopolitical boundaries, encourages breadth in Episcopal interreligious friendship and collaboration.
7. Reconciliation and salvation — conveying our confidence that, in the coming of God in Christ, the transformation of all of creation has already been set in motion —and that God, who has been generous in creation, is no less generous in salvation. God's gracious love is not limited to the Christian community.

8. Trinitarian monotheism—the notion that Trinitarian theology offers abundant resources for understanding religious diversity as a good that is integral to creation, rather than as cause for concern and division.
9. Our commitment to an ecumenical approach

The Episcopal Church is committed to an ecumenical approach to interreligious-relations work. The Episcopal Church's radically incarnational and Trinitarian interreligious relations theology emphasizes mutuality, interdependence, and reciprocity—which, in turn, has implications for love of neighbor; for embassy, and for hospitality. It is to our theology in action that we now turn.

II. Practical Interreligious Relations Guidelines for Episcopalians

A. Knowing our History

When undertaking interreligious work at any level, it is useful to understand The Episcopal Church's history, both negative and positive, with respect to the peoples, groups, religious traditions, or worldviews with which we wish to engage.

1. Episcopal involvement in global and national interreligious work.
2. Previous influential statements on interreligious engagement.
3. Episcopal engagement with Judaism and Jewish people.
4. Episcopal engagement with Islam and Muslims.
5. Episcopal engagement with Indigenous traditions—emphasizing the importance of eschewing the Doctrine of Discovery.

B. Contextualizing Interreligious Work

The contexts in which The Episcopal Church is found vary greatly. Yet, since The Episcopal Church is headquartered in the United States, what happens sociopolitically in that context has churchwide implications. The full document expounds on three examples:

1. Improving understanding of Islam and Muslims.
2. Dismantling racism.
3. White supremacy and Christian nationalism.

