

Ethical Dissent Policy

May 2023 Draft

Embrace dissent: The church's Enduring Principles - Blessings of Community, Worth of All Persons, Responsible Choices, and Unity in Diversity - creates a framework which not only tolerates dissent, but actively embraces it. Therefore, a person's affiliation with and love for the church is not contingent upon complete agreement, and no one should be excluded or alienated from any form of church life for dissenting, including partaking in the sacraments or serving in the priesthood.

Respectful Expression: Authentic communities are built upon respectful and empathetic communication. Doing so encourages open dialogue where everyone is able to share their viewpoints and strive to understand them. This education is crucial to the wellbeing of our community, and in the past we have implemented "Listening Circles" to facilitate this education. We encourage seeking knowledge, re-evaluating pre-existing notions, and embracing opportunities for personal transformation.

Embrace Continuing Revelation: We, as a prophetic people, remain open to further guidance from the Holy Spirit, and thus acknowledge that our understanding may evolve over time. Throughout our history prophets who have dissented from the norm have helped us refine our beliefs and practices. While the church provides various legislative conferences for debate, grassroots activism and self-initiative may also be reflections of the Divine's promptings.

Background Information:

- Doctrine and Covenants 131: 4A - 4B; 164: 5 - 6
- "Ethics of Dissent" by First Presidency, April 1970
- "Statement on Ethical Dissent" by the Standing High Council, 1988
- "National Conferences: General Questions and Answers" by the First Presidency, June 2012
- "Faithful Disagreement Definition and Principles" by the World Church Leadership Council, March 2013