

These Truths We Hold, Healthy Society & Healthy Relationships

Union of Saints

These truths we hold are that relationships depend upon ongoing effort, understanding, and trust. A healthy relationship is sustained through a shared understanding of events, mutual interpretation of experiences, emotional attunement, and reciprocity. When these processes weaken over time, confusion, frustration, and distance are often experienced between people.

We hold that conflict frequently develops when facts, feelings, and interpretations become intertwined. Facts involve observable events, feelings reflect personal emotional experiences, and interpretations assign meaning to those experiences. Disagreements become more difficult when interpretations are treated as unquestionable facts rather than personal conclusions. Feeling misunderstood is often more damaging to a relationship than the original disagreement itself.

We hold that memory is not a perfect record of the past. People reconstruct memories through emotion, current beliefs, and personal narratives. As time passes, individuals may sincerely remember shared experiences differently without any intention to deceive. These differing recollections can create tension when one person's interpretation becomes accepted as the only legitimate account of events.

We hold that blaming, blame shifting, and gaslighting can damage trust and undermine healthy communication. Blaming places emphasis on fault rather than understanding and resolution. Blame shifting redirects responsibility away from one's own actions, while gaslighting seeks to make another person doubt their reasonable perceptions, memories, or experiences. Relationships become unstable when accountability is avoided and reality itself becomes a source of dispute.

We hold that grudges, past shaming, and recurring accusations can prevent healing and understanding. When previous injuries are repeatedly revisited without meaningful resolution, people may begin to define one another by old conflicts rather than present conduct. Relationships suffer when every disagreement becomes evidence for a larger narrative of fault. Genuine reconciliation becomes difficult when individuals are denied the opportunity to grow beyond past mistakes.

We hold that people naturally construct narratives about the relationships in their lives. These narratives help organize experience and create meaning, yet they can also limit understanding. Once a narrative becomes firmly established, new information may be interpreted in ways that reinforce existing beliefs. As a result, people may feel that their explanations, intentions, and efforts no longer matter.

We hold that emotional validation is not the same as agreement. A person can acknowledge another's feelings without accepting every interpretation attached to those feelings. Many conflicts escalate when understanding is mistaken for endorsement or when disagreement is viewed as rejection. Healthy relationships allow space for emotional acknowledgment alongside honest differences in perspective.

We hold that the pursuit of moral certainty can sometimes hinder meaningful dialogue. Individuals may come to view themselves as occupying a moral high ground and may dismiss alternative perspectives without fully considering the larger context. Complex issues often involve multiple factors, competing interests, and experiences that are not immediately visible. Relationships suffer when moral judgment replaces curiosity, humility, and a willingness to examine the full picture.

We hold that public issues such as immigration and armed conflict often carry emotional, cultural, and personal significance. People may interpret these issues through experiences involving family, community, economic concerns, security, opportunity, identity, or humanitarian values. During times of war, information is frequently incomplete, disputed, or influenced by competing narratives, making interpretation more difficult. Individuals may view the same events through different experiences and assumptions while believing they are acting from sincere convictions.

We hold that periods of social and political change can create feelings of uncertainty, vulnerability, and misunderstanding for many people. Immigrants may experience suspicion, exclusion, prejudice, or pressure to defend their presence and identity. Americans may experience concerns about cultural change, economic security, community cohesion, or a loss of familiarity and belonging. Individual interpretations of these experiences may differ significantly, yet meaningful understanding requires careful consideration of personal experience, reality, and the humanity of those whose perspectives may not match our own.

We hold that feelings of replacement, exclusion, or displacement can be experienced within personal relationships and communities. Changes involving family structures, friendship groups, cultural identity, or immigration may lead some individuals to feel that their place, influence, or sense of belonging has diminished. These experiences can produce grief, anxiety, resentment, or confusion even when others interpret the same circumstances differently. Such feelings deserve thoughtful consideration rather than immediate dismissal or ridicule.

We hold that trust is strengthened when people distinguish facts from interpretations, intentions from outcomes, and disagreement from hostility. Psychological safety exists when people are not repeatedly mischaracterized and when their perspectives receive fair consideration. Individuals are more likely to remain engaged when they believe their words will be heard accurately and in good faith.

We hold that lasting relationships require openness, accountability, and a willingness to understand how others arrive at their beliefs. Repair becomes possible when people accept partial responsibility, avoid identity based judgments, and remain willing to engage with one another despite disagreement. Long history alone does not guarantee understanding, trust, or connection. Even when agreement is not reached, relationships are more likely to endure when individuals remain committed to respect, honest dialogue, loyalty and recognition of each other's humanity.

We hold that a free and healthy society depends upon the same principles that sustain healthy relationships. Trust grows when people are willing to listen before judging, seek understanding before assigning blame, and recognize the dignity of those with whom they disagree. A society cannot thrive when misunderstanding, contempt, and narrative distortion replace honest dialogue and mutual respect. We therefore affirm the enduring values of accountability, humility, compassion, and truth seeking as essential foundations for both personal relationships and community life.