

## What is "Consensus"?

Consensus is a method of discerning or deciding in groups. Consensus is much more than a majority up/down vote, and it is not quite unanimity.

There are four levels of expression. Colors help define.

- Green signifies consent and support.
- Yellow expresses support with reservations that one can live with.
- Red means the person disagrees with the decision but will stand down for the sake of unity.
- Black means the person disagrees, period. One "black" vote blocks any decision.

The intent of working to gaining consensus is to allow all members of a group to express their reservations in order to work on alternatives that are responsive enough to the reservations so that the group may reach a common decision.

For the June Vestry decision to authorize a parish process, it was decided that if more than three members expressed reserved support (yellow or red) we would not have consensus. Nine persons expressed consent and support (green), and two members expressed support with reservations (yellow or red).

Follow the series of four parish conversations, the Vestry will convene to discuss what they have heard, and they will see if they can reach consensus about a position toward the pastoral blessing of committed same-gender unions. There are three possible outcomes:

- (1) A consensus that the Vestry does not support such blessings
- (2) A consensus that the Vestry does support such blessings.
- (3) We do not have consensus.