

Unity and Consensus Decision making in Church matters:

John 17:20-23

²⁰“My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, ²¹ that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. ²² I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one— ²³ I in them and you in me—so that they may be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.

Jesus prayed for unity so the World would know God had sent Him.

Consensus Decision Making is a process whereby a group of persons make decisions by agreement rather than by majority vote. It replaces traditional decision making such as a) hierarchical approach where senior leaders make the decision and b) voting with majority rule. *These traditional methods of making decisions risk losing Church members/friends who may not agree with senior leaders or the majority.*

Consensus Decision making requires solutions that everyone in the group actively supports, or at least can live with. If concerns remain unresolved a decision is prevented from being made. It requires hard work to find solutions that address everyone's needs.

This approach to decision making recognizes that participants in the group are co-equals. It requires in depth discussion of different opinions, an opening up to really hear others concerns. The approach leads to a stronger community and better relationships.

Areas of application at the Highlands include the Worship Team, Priesthood, Congregation leaders; everywhere a group of persons need to make joint decisions and achieve deep commitment for implementation. *Without running the risk of 'losing' fellow members literally or by an absence of engagement and support.*