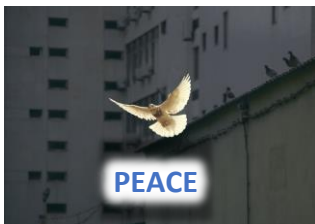
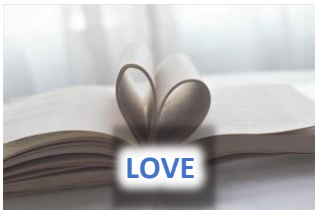


Christian Engagement in the Public Arena

The European Evangelical Alliance's Code of Conduct

Knowing we are called to be Christ's ambassadors in all of life, being so aware of our inadequacy, and motivated only by a desire to glorify the King of Kings, we ask the Lord to help us engage in the following ways and recommend these guidelines to all Christians involved in the public arena.





We will speak and act with grace, gentleness, and mercy to all.

We will seek to build genuine relationships with all in the public arena, including with those who disagree with us.

We will especially love those that society marginalises, care deeply for them and dare to challenge the injustices that oppress

“When we support vulnerable women and their children, when we contribute to the integration of migrants, when we cooperate to increase the sense of belonging and give opportunities for a fresh start to refugees and their families, I always remember these words of Jesus: “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, so He anointed me to evangelize the poor; He sent me to proclaim deliverance to the captives and to restore sight to the blind, to set free the oppressed and to proclaim the Lord’s acceptable year” Luke 4:18-19. Evangelizing is not only about speaking to someone of our convictions of faith. It is about proclaiming truth and justice, so that generational cycles of slavery and poverty are broken and people know the true freedom that is in Christ, in all aspects of their lives: spiritual, material and social. Men, women, nationals, foreigners, young, old, rich, poor, God’s love is for all.”

Elsa Correia Pereira, Member of the Portuguese Evangelical Alliance’s Network for Women, Refugees & Human Trafficking



We will remember that only the Lord can bring about good change.

Knowing that having or being near power can be corrupting, we remember our dependency on the Lord and draw close to Him through prayer.

It is so easy to react to trouble with unrighteous anger. But we dare not dishonour Christ, so we cling to Him in our weakness and ask Him to gently correct us.

We will be accountable to a politically diverse group of friends who will help us remain faithful to our calling.

We will adopt an attitude of service towards both the weak and the strong.

“When a Member of the European Parliament publicly criticised me & all Evangelicals I was so angry, I needed to leave the Parliament building to calm down. The irony was that I’d been thinking about this code of conduct early that morning, thinking about the importance of grace and not getting angry. I thought I was quite good at getting this right. As my blood pressure slowly returned to normal, I remembered and laughed at how spectacularly I’d been wrong about myself. Humility and grace to all. That is not easy. But we are called to be different.”

Julia Doxat-Purser, EEA Socio-Political Representative



TRUTH

We will speak the truth and act with integrity at all times.

Our political ideas and actions must be based on all of Scripture. We must not use the Bible to confirm our pre-formed ideas. Rather, we will study with Christians of different political philosophies to ensure that our ideas are truly biblical. We will work to ensure we reflect the breadth of God's concerns, not just focusing on one or two issues.

There are so many distortions of truth in politics and media's portrayal of it. We will do everything we can to seek the truth by careful monitoring and analysis and to advocate strongly for the truth.

"Some European countries have a much higher level of corruption than other countries, where truth is neglected. This is especially true in the political sphere. Therefore, my Christian testimony in politics lies not only in the public proclamation of Christian doctrines, but also in not crossing the "red lines". Too often, corruption makes it possible to solve many issues faster and more conveniently, but we have to say no. It is the only way to be the light of Christ in this area."

**Andrew Hnidets, Anti-corruption investigation and prosecution expert,
European Union Anti-Corruption Initiative in Ukraine**



PEACE

Disagreement and confrontation are inevitable, but we will disagree with grace.

As peacemakers, we will build bridges wherever possible. We seek to persuade, not argue.

“It is not difficult to maintain peace and unity when we all agree on everything, but sometimes we disagree. Then peace must be built through a process of identifying the core of our shared identity and an active effort to know how the other perceives things and, if possible, readjust our own positions as far as is reasonable. An example of this is the question of managing different perspectives on national identities. We should not avoid the issue because it is increasingly important in Europe, but we should be a good witness, showing that we know how to approach the matter as peace builders. As EEA we must not give up seeking common paths where others find conflict unavoidable; thus, in a tense environment like the present one in Spain, in the Spanish Evangelical Alliance we are learning to open these paths.”

Xesús Manuel Suárez García, Spanish Evangelical Alliance General Secretary



COURAGE

In some countries, engagement can lead to real danger. When trouble comes, we pray God will give us both courage and wisdom to know what He is asking of us. We will always stand with brothers and sisters in danger and ask them to tell us how we can assist.

Elsewhere, trouble may come in the form of criticism, misrepresentation or legal challenge. Again, we will ask the Lord for courage and wisdom so that we honour Him in our response. We will help one another in times of difficulty.

Our first priority must always be faithfulness to Christ. We pray for the courage to hold on to this.

“While it is not always easy engaging politicians or diplomats, especially on contentious issues, I don’t dare to claim the label of being courageous for doing so. The really courageous people are our brothers and sisters ‘in the field’ who are facing the daily heat of discrimination, threats, harassment, or even violence because they decided to follow Jesus Christ. It is a privilege to speak up for these courageous and faithful people with politicians and diplomats, either discretely or publicly.”

Arie de Pater, EEA Brussels Representative



Politicians do not have to listen to us. Rather, by building good relationships and providing excellent, relevant and wise ideas and information, presented professionally, we trust that some will wish to listen.

Where possible, Christians should join different political parties. No party, not even a “Christian” one, is perfect, all need salt and light. As Evangelical Alliance, however, we must steer clear of party allegiance as much as possible. The Gospel is for all; we cannot give the impression that the Lord prefers those of a particular party.

We encourage pastors to play their vital role of supporting and discipling their congregations as they engage in society and in urging prayer for the public arena and biblical reflection on issues.

“It is an honour and privilege for the European Evangelical Alliance to know, pray and work with Christians who serve the Lord in many different political parties and, indeed, to collaborate with those of good will from across the political spectrum. Equally, we acknowledge the vital role of individual Christians serving in the media, civil service, education etc., their church communities who provide biblical guidance and the ministries and networks who provide their expertise. It is the Body of Christ working together, studying Scripture together, seeking the Lord’s wisdom together that can bring Him glory. That’s Evangelical Alliance at work from local, to National and the European Level.”

Thomas Bucher, EEA General Secretary



Our hope of change is based on God. He can enable salt and light to make a difference.

With joy, we wait for Christ's return and the full establishment of His wonderful Kingdom.

Meanwhile, we will live in and share the joy of this hope. The hope of the Gospel brings light to the darkest situation.

“High expectation with patience” is how I tried to describe hope to my young son referring to Romans 8:25. Then, as an example to capture somehow what this attitude of the heart does for the Christian, I was reminded of Peter when he was imprisoned by Herod Agrippa (Acts 12). The whole church was constantly praying for their leader who was imprisoned, secure in chains and under threat of certain death. This is a way Christian hope is evidenced, namely, pleading with undaunted expectation that the sovereign God who oversees all intervenes in all circumstances on behalf of his own. But hope is also being like Peter who, after all his own striving, in faith working with all his strength of body and mind, endured patiently in the sight of certain death. He went to sleep as if in normal circumstances, waiting for the new morning with God’s new grace in the wings.”

Ylli Doci, Albanian Evangelical Alliance President

“As Christians, we know that it is not only the result that counts. We also want to ensure that the way we work for the result is in line with our values and ethics. The code of conduct and the EEA socio-political approach are excellent guides when we advocate our causes, as they invite us to check that our motivations, our goals and the path we choose to achieve them are in line with the Gospel and the example of Christ. The 7 values presented in the Code of Conduct sum up this state of mind: we wish to act with love, humility, truth, peace, courage, wisdom and hope. In my advocacy work, I try to remember these values on a daily basis and, when we read a statement at the United Nations Human Rights Council, we hope that this attitude can be reflected in our tone and content.”

***Michael Mutzner, Permanent Representative at the United Nations in Geneva,
World Evangelical Alliance, Spokesperson for the Swiss Evangelical Alliance***



European Evangelical Alliance

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