

## Invocation Guidelines

Because of the wide diversity of beliefs, religions and faith traditions in Gwinnett County, the invocation should use religious terminology that is either inclusive of all faith traditions or avoids religious language altogether. Invocations should appeal to the common interests and goals of all residents in Gwinnett that may be in attendance at the meeting, virtually or physically, and those who will view the video recording at a future time. The following are suggested ways of reinforcing common interests and goals:

- Celebrate the diversity of Gwinnett that enriches the community and brings a wide perspective of experience to the decision making process.
- Recognize that attendees and potential viewers of the video recording may have a variety of opinions on policy options but are united by their common purpose of improving the quality of life for all residents of Gwinnett County.
- Express an intention that the meeting will be conducted in a civil manner where differences in opinion are welcomed and respected.
- Express a desire that the board will make decisions and take actions that are in line with the responsibilities of their positions and honor the trust residents of Gwinnett have placed in them.
- Express an intention that all participants will listen with an open mind to the opinions expressed at the meeting.
- Express the desire that public comments offered by attendees will be constructive and considerate of those with differing opinions.
- Express appreciation to those risking their lives to insure public safety and protect our country.
- Recommended that invocations not exceed 1 minute.

### **Example:**

As we gather together as citizens and public servants, we invite all present to bring their best selves, their open minds and caring hearts, to the work before us.

We invite each person here to call forth the spirit of love and compassion as we engage one another in our shared purpose to move our county and our communities towards a better quality of life for all residents.

Let each of us present call forth the strength from our various faiths, beliefs, and moral codes to become better stewards of the trust and funds of all our residents.

May we offer our compassion to all locally and globally who are suffering and in need of strength, courage, and resources to alleviate their suffering.

We ask for our public servants the conscience and wisdom to make the right decisions on behalf of the citizens of our growing community.

We offer our appreciation for those who serve our country, state, or county to preserve the peace and order in our communities.

We seek to make this a welcoming environment for all in attendance, viewing remotely, or watching this record through time.

Give us thankful hearts for our good fortune to live in this country with its high ideals for life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. May it be so. Please join in the pledge of allegiance: