

Ground Rules for our Crucial Conversation

A crucial conversation is needed when:

- 1) The stakes are high.
- 2) Emotions are involved.
- 3) There is a disagreement.

To have a constructive crucial conversation **SAFETY** needs to be established.

Safety is established through:

- 1) Maintaining and communicating genuine and mutual respect.
- 2) Reaffirming the deeper goals that you have in agreement.

Safety is lost when anyone turns to silence or violence. Silence is obviously shutting down and not fully engaging. Besides physical abuse, violence also includes sarcasm, put downs, and trying to change the other's mind or prove the other wrong.

This will be a structured conversation that maintains safety.

1. Please try to understand and accept that no one should be out to change another's mind on the subject.
2. Pastor Layne will be diligent in keeping his opinions mostly to himself.
3. Please try to seek to understand more than to be understood.

Real listening is the key. We are going to practice active listening in a highly structured mode of conversation. What does this mean? We may ask you to repeat what they heard and ask if you have been heard correctly. Sometimes it is also helpful to have the speaker ask the listener, "*Do you know what I mean?*" or simply ask the listener to restate what they heard you say.

The initial goal of our conversation is to simply get everyone's thoughts, feelings, and experiences into the "pool of meaning" which is like a kiddie pool in the space between you so that everyone can hear and see what is going on inside of each other.

In a particularly emotional conversations it is helpful to regularly pause to **reaffirm our common respect** that we have for each other and the **deeper goals that we have in common**. This helps to maintain safety. We will achieve this by affirming that even on the things that divide us we are one in the faith we claim and proclaim:

Apostle's Creed

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the virgin Mary.
He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.
He descended into hell.*
On the third day he rose again.
He ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen**

The Small Group Conversation Construction

Below are four positions regarding the 2019 Churchwide action to become a Sanctuary Denomination.

1. Solidly in favor of the Sanctuary decision.
2. Leaning in the direction of the Sanctuary decision.
3. Leaning in the direction of not in favor of the Sanctuary decision.
4. Solidly not in favor of the Sanctuary decision.

Based on what you self identify, you will be placed in small groups that will consist of one person in each small discussion group which holds one of each of the four positions. Pastor will then give a synopsis of the subject and you will be given time to discuss.

We will then enter back into a large group discussion. Here you will be asked to share only something that you heard in your small group that stirred a new thought or question.

We will end this part of our conversation by restating our mutual respect and deeper goals that we hold in common. Then we will look at what God's Word says to us to assist us in our reflection.