

Guided Conversation

Opening time for worship and prayer (15 minutes)
Include time for table group introductions

An overview of the situation calling for discernment. (45 Minutes)

- A conference leader will share an overview of historical background and issues related to Mennonite Faith and Polity. (15 Minutes)
- Representatives of Faith will share from the congregation's story (30 Minutes)

Orientation on Ground Rules for Dialogue (10 Minutes)
Participants will be assigned to table groups with no more than two people from a congregation present at each table. Table hosts will receive an orientation prior to the meeting. Using the circle process table hosts will facilitate a guided dialogue:

“Fears and hopes” (10 Min. Total)

Table Instructions:

- (a) Do not sign your card. On the ruled side of the card, write the **fears** you have as we approach the conversation when congregations differ on matters of faith, such as same sex orientation and committed same sex relationships. (3 Minutes)
- (b) Do not sign your card. On the un-ruled side of the card, write the **hopes** you have as we approach a conversation when congregations differ on matters of faith, such as same sex orientation and committed same sex relationships. (3 Minutes)
- (c) Table Hosts: Please collect the cards and read the fears aloud and then read the hopes aloud. Spend 5 minutes reflecting together on any commonalities or perspectives that you noticed. (4 Minutes)

(15 Minute Break)

“Scripture passages/ Scripture stories” (50 Min. Total)

Table Instructions:

- (a) Spend the next 5 minutes privately jotting down your reflections on scriptural passages and/or stories that shape your understanding on giving and receiving counsel within the body of Christ when congregations differ on matters of faith, such as same sex orientation and committed same sex relationships. (5 Minutes.)
- (b) Please pick one of your passages /stories and expand for other members of your table group how this passage impacts your thought/beliefs as it relates to congregations taking a variant position with the Confession of Faith in Mennonite Perspective on matters such as same sex orientation and same sex committed relationships. (45 Minutes)

Giving Our Counsel: (45 Min. Total)

Table Instructions

Hold what has been shared in a time of prayerful silence and reflection. Conclude with the Lord's Prayer.

Invite sharing of what is being heard through or from your conversation around the table. (Elizabeth)
As you reflect on the discussion in your table group, as well as your sense of the Holy Spirit's leading today, what counsel do you offer?

- (a) To one another – Congregations of CPMC
 - (b) To Faith Mennonite Church
 - (c) To the Pastoral Leadership Committee
 - (d) Conference Board
- Turn in Compiled responses on feedback forms

Closing Worship (5 Minutes)