



CONVOCATION ONE:
Many members, one body
The Episcopal Diocese of Florida

AGENDA
JANUARY 27, 2024
Camp Weed

- 8:30 a.m. Gather
- 9:00 a.m. Welcome by Teresa Seagle and Joe Gibbes
- 9:15 a.m. Morning Prayer with Bishop Scott Benhase, preacher
- 9:45 a.m. Break
- 10:00 a.m. Opening Remarks by Bishop Mary Gray-Reeves
- 10:15 a.m. Lectio Divina on 1 Corinthians 12:14-26
- 11:15 a.m. Introduction to Psychological Safety and conversation over lunch
- 11:30 a.m. Prayer over Lunch
- 11:35 p.m. Table groups pick up lunch and assemble for conversation over lunch
- 12:45 p.m. Break
- 1:00 p.m. Communication norms for diocesan use going forward
- 1:30 p.m. Introduction to homework assignment and congregational resources
- 2:00 p.m. Prepare for worship
- 2:15 p.m. Closing Eucharist with Bishop Scott Benhase, preacher

MUTUAL INVITATION & LISTENING WITHOUT FEEDBACK INSTRUCTIONS

from The Wolf Shall Dwell With the Lamb by Eric H. F. Law

In order to ensure that everyone who wants to share has the opportunity to speak during our table conversations today, we will proceed in the following way:

The leader or a designated person at your table will share first. After that person has spoken, he or she then invites another to share. Whom you invite does not need to be the person next to you. After the next person has spoken, that person is given the privilege to invite another to share. If you are not ready to share yet, say "I pass for now" and then you can be invited again. If you don't want to say anything at all, simply say "pass" and proceed to invite another to share. Do this until everyone has been invited.

During the Lectio exercise, you are invited to listen and not to respond to someone's sharing -

During the lunchtime conversation, you may choose to ask questions without judgment but try to ask questions for clarification only, for understanding further what someone is saying.

A basic outline of these instructions is as follows:

After a first person shares, each person who is invited has three options:

1. Share and invite.
2. Pass for now and invite. The group will return to this person later, or
3. Pass and invite. When a person chooses to 'pass,' the group will not return to this person in this round.

Ask questions without judgment, try to ask questions for clarification only. Do this until everyone is invited, remembering to return to those who 'passed for now.'

Explanation of the benefits of Mutual Invitation

Because there will be participants with different perceptions of power, facilitation that exclusively uses the “volunteer style” of interaction that favors those from individualist cultures excludes those whose interactions favor a collectivistic culture. Therefore, the Mutual Invitation process is used in order to ensure that everyone who wants to share has the opportunity to speak when the facilitator gives the instruction to do so. As group members become more accustomed to using this tool, they make connections with everyone in the session, because they are required to invite each speaker by NAME. The person who is invited may or may not be someone from whom she/he ordinarily wants to hear.

When Mutual Invitation is used, it encourages deep and holy listening to one another, because there are no interruptions or refutations allowed until everyone has spoken who wants to speak. It is important to remember that in some cultural settings, group members will not speak up in a discussion unless they have been invited. The reasons for this may be gender- or age-related or other traditions embedded deeply in one’s culture. There may be those who are uncomfortable singling a person out to share. For them it may feel like when they were a child and were being selected (or not selected) to play on a team.

There are two safeguards built into the process that can assuage people’s fears. One: each person invited has three options: share, pass for now (which means “I am not ready, please come back to me”), or pass (which means “I do not choose to share on this topic”). However, no matter which option is selected, the one invited has the privilege of inviting another person in the group by NAME. Two: Throughout the process, the invitation to speak passes back and forth, and no one is left out of the process.

This form of sharing requires self-discipline, and mutual care and respect for others. It also allows for deeper sharing than might be had in everyday conversation.

Thank you for participating in mutual invitation!

Indeed, the body does not consist of one member but of many. If the foot would say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. And if the ear would say, "Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole body were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. If all were a single member, where would the body be? As it is, there are many members, yet one body. The eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you," nor again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you." On the contrary, the members of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, and those members of the body that we think less honorable we clothe with greater honor, and our less respectable members are treated with greater respect; whereas our more respectable members do not need this. But God has so arranged the body, giving the greater honor to the inferior member, that there may be no dissension within the body, but the members may have the same care for one another. If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it. [NRSV, 1 Corinthians 12:14-26].

Questions for Lectio Divina

Please use the accompanying instructions for Lectio Divina and Mutual Invitation

1. What word or phrase draws your attention?
2. Where did your chosen word or phrase take your attention?
3. What are your hopes for your diocese as you engage this scripture today?

Any answers to be shared with the Steering committee may be uploaded into the link provided or written and turned in at the Steering Committee table.

What is “Psychological Safety” ?

Psychological safety is a key concept in reconciliation and conflict prevention work.

To build an environment where participants feel (1) included, (2) safe to learn, (3) safe to contribute, and (4) safe to challenge the status quo—all without fear of being embarrassed, marginalized, or punished in some way is key to success and ultimately to the emotional and spiritual healing that can emerge through the work of the Holy Spirit.

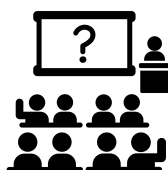
Psychological safety “is a group level phenomenon — it shapes the learning behavior of the group and in turn affects team performance and therefore organizational performance,”¹ Amy Edmondson, Harvard Business Review

The psychology of it:

Timothy Clark, author of the “4 Stages of Psychological Safety”, delineates level of safety as follows:



Inclusion Safety – members feel safe to belong to the organization. They are comfortable being present, do not feel excluded, and feel like they are wanted and appreciated.



Learner Safety – members are able to learn through asking questions. Organization members may be able to experiment, make (and admit) small mistakes, and ask for help.



Contributor Safety – members feel safe to contribute their own ideas, without fear of embarrassment or ridicule. This is a more challenging state, because volunteering your own ideas can increase the psychosocial vulnerability of organization members.



Challenger Safety – members can question others’ (including those in authority) ideas or suggest significant changes to ideas, plans, or ways of working.²

¹ ibid

² Psychsafety.co.uk, Psychological Safety, Synopsis of The Four Stages of Psychological Safety, Timothy Clark, Berrett-Koehler, 2020.

I am psychologically safe when I feel it is okay to:

take risks,

express my ideas and concerns,

speak up with questions,

admit my mistakes,

and I have no fear of negative consequences.³

Helpful terms to promote psychological safety, healing, transformation, and reconciliation

- Help me understand where you're coming from⁴
- Thank you for being honest with me
- What I heard you say is... Did I get that right?
- When you said/did that, I felt...
- I agree with you on...
- Let's work on this problem together
- I see how I've contributed to the problem
- Let's see how we can prevent this from happening in the future
- I hear your point, but I have a different view
- Agree to disagree?
- I heard/saw something I didn't expect

³ Amy Edmondson, Harvard Business Review,

https://hbr.org/2023/02/what-is-psychological-safety?utm_medium=paidsearch&utm_source=google&utm_campaign=domcontent_leadership&utm_term=Non-Brand&tpcc=domcontent_leadership&gad_source=1&gclid=Cj0KCQiA2KitBhCIARIsAPPMEhJB0Z_zy8gjjgMIVKCDHbu-VhrnJA3cciMVMpeDrhBcbys0JaE0jYoaAvyHEALw_wcB, accessed 1.19.24

⁴ <https://www.inhersight.com/blog/employer-resources/create-psychologically-safe-conversations-at-work>, accessed 1.15.24

Instructions and Questions for Lunchtime Conversation on Psychological Safety

Please use the Mutual Invitation process for this conversation as you did for Lectio Divina. This conversation is confidential, with all sharing remaining within the table group. Please maintain anonymity when speaking of other people if you are including certain individuals in your sharing. In the notes shared with facilitators, or if you want to quote someone or share an image of them, do so ONLY with their permission.

Consider a meaningful experience you have had in the diocese.

- Based on the psychological safety definitions of inclusion, learning, contributing and challenging, how would you describe your experience?
- Based on your interpretation of the definitions of psychological safety and your personal experience, what you would like to see continue and what do you think needs to change in the diocese?
- How could you positively contribute to change in the diocese?

Answers may be uploaded into the Google form with the link provided or handwritten and turned in at the Steering Committee table.



Becoming Beloved
Community¹ :
The Diocese of Florida
Convocation Series for
Healing and Reconciliation
Beginning January 2024

¹ Adapted from The Episcopal Church's Long-Term Commitment to Racial Healing, Reconciliation, and Justice.

3. For the Human Family (BCP, 815)

O God, you made us in your own image and redeemed us through Jesus your Son: Look with compassion on the whole human family; take away the arrogance and hatred which infect our hearts; break down the walls that separate us; unite us in bonds of love; and work through our struggle and confusion to accomplish your purposes on earth; that, in your good time, all nations and races may serve you in harmony around your heavenly throne; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

14. For the Unity of the Church (BCP, 818)

O God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, our only Savior, the Prince of Peace: Give us grace seriously to lay to heart the great dangers we are in by our unhappy divisions; take away all hatred and prejudice, and whatever else may hinder us from godly union and concord; that, as there is but one Body and one Spirit, one hope of our calling, one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of us all, so we may be all of one heart and of one soul, united in one holy bond of truth and peace, of faith and charity, and may with one mind and one mouth glorify *thee*; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

14. For the Unity of the Church (various occasions no. 14) (BCP, 204)

Almighty Father, whose blessed Son before his passion prayed for his disciples that they might be one, even as thou and he are one: Grant that thy Church, being bound together in love and obedience to thee, may be united in one body by the one Spirit, that the world may believe in him whom thou didst send, the same thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord; who liveth and reigneth with thee, in the unity of the same Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

6 (Collect no. 6 BCP, 95)

Lord Jesus Christ, you said to your apostles, "Peace I give to you; my own peace I leave with you." Regard not our sins, but the faith of your Church, and give to us the peace and unity of that heavenly City, where with the Father and the Holy Spirit you live and reign, now and for ever. Amen.

28. In Times of Conflict (BCP, 824)

O God, you have bound us together in a common life. Help us, in the midst of our struggles for justice and truth, to confront one another without hatred or bitterness, and to work together with mutual forbearance and respect; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Q What is the mission of the Church?

A The mission of the Church is to restore all people to unity with God and each other in Christ.

Q How does the Church pursue its mission?

A The Church pursues its mission as it prays and worships, proclaims the Gospel, and promotes justice, peace, and love.

Q Through whom does the Church carry out its mission?

A The church carries out its mission through the ministry of all its members.

-An Outline of Faith (Book of Common Prayer, 855)

We believe Becoming Beloved Community, a spiritual exercise developed to respond primarily to the long-standing injustices of systemic racism, is adaptable for use by any community committed to healing and reconciliation who may have suffered systemic conflict, injustice, and injury. A commitment to this forever work “across borders and boundaries that divide the human family of God must be made. This is difficult work. But we can do it. It’s about listening and sharing. It’s about God.”²

The Context

Becoming Beloved Community is:

- Rooted in The Jesus Movement: The ongoing community of people centered on following Jesus into loving, liberating, life-giving relationship with God (evangelism), with each other (reconciliation), and with creation (environmental stewardship).
- Called forth by General Convention Resolution C019 (Establish Response to Systemic Injustice)
- Crafted by the leaders of the House of Bishops and House of Deputies – Presiding Bishop Michael Curry, House of Deputies President Gay Clark Jennings, House of Bishops Vice President Mary GrayReeves and (now former Vice President) Dean Wolfe, and House of Deputies Vice President Byron Rushing and Secretary Michael Barlowe – with staff and many partners
- Frames a multi-year journey as part of a long-term, multi-generation commitment
- Moves beyond the United States and beyond black and white, to consider racism in many nations, among many races, ethnicities and cultures / A commitment to this forever work “across borders and boundaries that divide the human family of God”
- Designed to support, complement, and amplify local, diocesan, provincial and network efforts

² Presiding Bishop Michael B. Curry, Sermon preached on Nov. 1, 2015, Installation of the 27th Presiding Bishop of The Episcopal Church.

Where We Are Today

The Diocese of Florida is in a tender and volatile moment. The culture that exists is fragile and requires prayerful and deliberate attention from all sides. We have experienced both an election and convention, each revealing that the work of healing and reconciliation are in order. Fragile relationships and a controversial Episcopal transition have led us to a moment that requires communication, understanding, and discernment as members consider their place of belonging in the diocese as well as The Episcopal Church.

The Convocation Steering Committee hopes to create fruitful gatherings in a safe space for clergy and lay leaders of the Diocese of Florida that will lead to healing and reconciliation between groups and individual members, the diocese as a whole and The Episcopal Church as a whole.

A Way Forward

Given these realities, the Standing Committee discerned a fresh commitment to reconciliation and healing is the path forward. This includes the establishment of the Convocation Steering Committee to discern and craft a series of Diocesan Convocations.

The Convocations will consist of three gatherings including parish homework to begin to equip the diocese with the skills and space to work towards healing and reconciliation and, ultimately, toward a successful bishop election.

The original Becoming Beloved Community task force created a successful system for understanding, absorbing, imagining, and implementing liberating steps towards healing and reconciliation. They discovered, “that this work (of healing and reconciliation) is less about walking a linear path and more about engaging in a reflective, deliberate, spiritual practice. Like walking the labyrinth, we engage and re-engage the commitments that lead toward reconciliation, healing, and justice: Telling the Truth, Proclaiming the Dream, Practicing the Way of Love, and Repairing the Breach. We never have the sense that we have mastered or completed any one stage, nor are we naive enough to imagine anyone ever truly ‘finishes’ the work. The commitment is long-term; the formation is life-long.”³ While originally primarily to address systemic racism and creation care, we believe this same format can be successfully adapted to understand, respond, and reconcile a community in distress.

The Steering Committee offers in order to attain the goal of the first gathering, we are all required to understand and value the importance of taking slow and deliberate steps as we move forward together in a safe and respectful manner. To that end, the first event will focus on listening, communication practices, and understanding the importance of Psychological Safety.

³ Becoming Beloved Community, p 4.

We will also begin the work of storytelling and holy listening; that is, practicing respect and offering safety by hearing one another's stories without offering feedback.

We admit this first Convocation is perhaps not the experience people will expect.

This is the beginning; the organized design of which is created prayerfully with the utmost caution. What we offer will be too tame for some and too bold for others, but we hope together we will create solid ground upon which the diocese will build.

The Steering Committee hopes,

- you have come with a commitment to the healing of the diocese,
- you will experience safety as you participate,
- we can all respectfully learn together,
- we can all respectfully reflect together, and
- we will commit to and engage the process going forward.

The long-term objective of this process, of the convocations and the homework to be completed in between Convocations, is to develop the opportunity for healing and tools for reconciliation, both of which should happen at the interpersonal level, congregational level, and diocesan level within the framework of Becoming Beloved Community.



We pray for a Beloved Community, a Diocese, where all people experience belonging, dignity, and the mutual flourishing of ministry. We invite you to join us in this journey of forever work and holy transformation.

Becoming Beloved Community in the Diocese of Florida

Telling the Truth

Who are we?
What things have we done and left undone regarding our life together?



Proclaiming the Dream

How can we publicly acknowledge the things done and left undone?
What does Beloved Community look like for us?
What behaviors and commitments will foster justice, reconciliation, and healing?

Repairing the Breach

What systems are broken?
How will we participate in repair, restoration, and healing of people and systems?

Practicing the Way of Love

How will we grow as reconcilers, healers, and justice-bearers? How will we actively grow relationship across dividing walls and seek Christ in one another?

Becoming Beloved Community in the Diocese of Florida 2024

Telling the Truth about the Diocese and Community



- **Baptismal Promise:**

We will persevere in resisting evil, and whenever you fall into sin, repent and return to the Lord.

- **Core Questions:**

Who are we? What things have we done and left undone (for good and for bad) regarding our life together?

- **Diocese-wide Initiatives:**

- History of the Diocese
- History of The Episcopal Church
- Gather for holy listening and experience one another's stories.

Proclaiming the Dream of a Beloved Community & Diocese



- **Baptismal Promise:**

We will proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ.

- **Core Questions:**

How can we publicly acknowledge things done and left undone?
 What does Beloved Community look like in the Diocese of Florida?
 What behaviors and commitments foster healing, reconciliation, and justice?

- **Diocese-wide Initiatives:**



Practicing the Way of Love & Mutual Abundant Ministry

- **Baptismal Promise:**

We will seek and serve Christ in all persons loving our neighbors as ourselves.

- **Core Questions:**

How will we be transformed and grow as reconcilers, healers, and justice-bearers? How will we actively grow relationship across dividing walls and seek Christ in the other?

- **Diocese-wide Initiatives:**



Repairing the Breach in Diocese, Congregation & Intrapersonal Relationships

- **Baptismal Promise:**

We will strive for justice and peace among all people and respect the dignity of every human being.

- **Core Questions:**

What systems are broken? How will we participate in the repair, restoration, and healing of people and systems?

- **Diocese-wide Initiatives:**

Communication Norms

These Suggested Norms for Conversations in the Diocese of Florida are designed to foster and encourage understanding between all participants.

Be curious and open to learning. Conversation is as much about listening as it is about talking. Try to enjoy exploring how others' experiences have shaped their values and perspectives. Our purpose is not to reach consensus, convert someone to our own ways of thinking or believing, or win a debate. Be patient with yourself and others.

Show respect and suspend judgment. People tend to judge one another. Setting judgment aside opens you up to learning from others and makes them feel respected and appreciated. Try to truly listen, without interruption or crosstalk. Listen deeply and respectfully to learn: don't fix, debate or judge. Be aware of your own body language. Eye-rolling, head-shaking and snorting are not helpful. Assume positive intent, but acknowledge impact.

Note any common ground as well as any differences. Look for areas of agreement or shared values that may arise and take an interest in the differing beliefs and opinions of others.

Be authentic and welcome that from others. Share what's important to you. Speak authentically from your personal experience. Be considerate of others who are doing the same. Each response or story is a gift of trust. Receive it in a trustworthy way. Keep shared personal experiences and voiced opinions confidential. If you feel a need to share something you hear, ask permission from the person whose story or opinion you want to share.

Be purposeful and to the point. Do your best to keep your comments concise and relevant to the question you are answering. This conversation method is structured to help us practice listening—not talking. Allow for silence.

Own and guide the conversation. Take responsibility for the quality of your participation and the conversation as a whole. Be proactive in getting yourself and others back on track if needed. Use an agreed upon signal like the "time out" sign if you feel the agreed norms are not being honored. You may be tempted to abandon the question asked of the group and have free-floating conversation. That's the group's choice, but make sure everyone gets equal airtime, to ensure that no one's agenda takes over. If you do, consider having a few minutes of open conversation, asking if anyone has clarifying questions or comments, at the end of each round. Knowing there will be a time for that helps people listen during the rounds.