

Task Force on Communion Across Difference, November 2019

Our meeting opened with a check-in time for each participant. What have you been thinking about, and what would you like for us to do more of? Responses follow:

- S. Brokenleg: I've been thinking about the term "wo-lakota," which refers to all things being in right relationship
- T. Wallace: I've been thinking about young people and leading on things that matter. Coming together in disagreement is a good example. I also would like us to come up with something useful for parishes.
- S. Garno: I think more heavy-lifting work is ahead for us to do.
- J. Bauerschmidt: Yes, I agree with Scott.
- M. Escobar: I'm facing what feels like my family falling apart because of my wedding this past summer. And I'm working with students who are struggling with their sexuality. I'd like to have conversations about the human consequences of our work.
- J. Hylden: I'd like to talk more about the doctrine of the church and liturgical revision.
- G. Brewer: I'm interested in raising up new ordained leaders. There's also significant racial conflict in our country. Does racial reconciliation work help us reflect about what we do?
- C. Wells: Let's pursue the love of one another as we are. This could be encouraging for others. The recent conference on Lambeth 1920's call for communion, and also the upcoming VTS conference.
- M. Quezada: I recently took part in a Trinity Wall Street sponsored conference on emerging leadership. I'm soon going to a Province 9 bishops' gathering. We share a desire to grow the church.
- S. Russell: I'm now working as canon for engagement across difference in the diocese of LA. I've found there is a lot of desire for this! E.g., not watering down our differences, but also not demonizing people. Marriage itself is so iconic and challenging, that talking about this has potential to benefit the whole church and the wider culture. I'd like to remind us to focus on our resolution's task, which is to focus on communion across difference with respect to marriage.
- F. Ellis: Dallas diocesan convention was a good experience. Marriage, General Convention, B012, DEPO were all a non-issue. It's still not easy of course; we recently had Bp Sumner visit St. Thomas to preach but not celebrate, but it still felt meaningful.

New updates:

- G. Brewer: There's been lots of turnover in the HoB, and many new bishops are unaware of the work we're trying to do.
- J. Bauerschmidt: We used the exercise this group came up with at the last HoB gathering.
- M. Quezada: We need translations to let our people know what's going on. Our attention has been elsewhere; namely, sustainability. We face many challenges! That's where our attention is focused right now.
- F. Ellis and J. Hylden: We shared about our own work here in Dallas. We proposed to Bp Sumner, and he agreed, that we'd use the conversation exercise our group came up

with to check in here about communion across difference between our progressive and traditional congregations.

- S. Russell: I'd like to highlight a resource for civil dialogue from the Episcopal Public Policy Network, Golden Rule 2020. This term has sometimes been heard with some trepidation by the marginalized. Yet I think we can be in respectful, honest dialogue with people with whom we are in deep disagreement. Perhaps we should see how this could be useful to the wider church?
- M. Escobar: I sometimes get concerned about a focus on civility, since it can be surface-level rather than honest and direct.
- S. Brokenleg: Cultures are often very different in their approaches to conflict; some more conciliatory and indirect, and some more confrontational and direct. This represents a challenge!
- C. Wells: The Golden Rule may be a unique Christian contribution, since love goes further than dignity, respect, and civility.
- F. Ellis: The Golden Rule material from the policy network is good, but I do want us to focus on marriage.
- S. Russell: I brought it up only b/c I thought it applied to our wider cultural dynamics and challenges.
- F. Ellis: Praying for one another is essential.
- J. Hylden: I think we need both the 'bottom-up' prayer, love, and conversation work; and also the structural doctrine, discipline, and worship work—since why would we do all this work unless we love each other, and want to be in fellowship?

Updates:

- J. Hylden: I've been talking with M. Gray-Reeves about the structural, doctrinal work, as requested.
- M. Escobar: I've been talking with S. Brokenleg about biblical images of reconciliation.
- Further conversation about the intent/goal to include LGBT persons in the subgroup conversation about doctrine/polity/liturgy, with J. Hylden and M. Gray-Reeves. This was agreed to by J. Hylden, and the goal set to include others from our group who would like to volunteer.

Process issues:

- How can we use our phone calls to go deeper into some assigned topic, not just spend the majority of the time doing check-ins?
- Next call: Jan or Feb?
- A. Haeffner: Is there a possibility of a third face-to-face meeting?
- S. Russell: No, unfortunately.
- S. Russell: Also recall that we can call in others to take part, such as a rep from the liturgical revision task force.

We closed with prayer requests and prayer.