

09-06-26 FOR THE JOURNEY THIS WEEK

“Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, did not lead a life free of conflict. He freely and fully entered the maelstrom that is humanity at large. He did so with grace and tact beyond measure. We are called to follow his example every day of our lives. We cannot evade conflict; instead, we must embrace it. When we do so, we also welcome the transformation it brings.”

Jack Crowley



Matthew 18:15-20

Questions for Reflection —

- In general are you someone who shies away from or who engages conflict? What would it look like for you to embrace conflict? How might you see conflict as opportunity? Have you ever observed transformation occur as a result of engaging conflict? How have you experienced God using previous conflicts in your life to help you grow as a Christian disciple?
- Where do you presently see a need for reconciliation in your own life? What broken relationships with family, friends, coworkers, or neighbors are in need of restoration? What would it mean for you to pray for those with whom you are experiencing friction? What will enable you to handle disputes and disagreements with love, compassion, and gentleness? What will keep you aware of God's presence with you in the midst of conflict?
- Where do you see a need for reconciliation in the life of our congregation? In our society and world? How can we more fully and openly acknowledge that disagreement and differences of opinion are realities in congregational life, especially in a diverse congregation? What can we do to ensure that we work out any differences in the light of God's reconciling love? What do you see as the role of Christian community in dealing with conflicts in broader society? How can we as a congregation be a people of peace and reconciliation in addressing issues causing conflict in the world outside the church?

Daily Household Prayer

Gracious and loving God, open our hearts so that we can admit to you the fullness of our lives – that which is beautiful and good, and that which is hurtful and hateful. We confess that we do not follow Jesus in all that we do. We love with condition. We judge and condemn. We cast the first stone and keep the logs in our own eyes. We do not turn to You as the source of our healing. Forgive us, we pray. Forgive our sin and empower us to be imitators of Christ in love and service. Amen.