

Handout 5

HOLY CONFERENCING

Guidelines:

1. Every person is a child of God.
2. Listen before speaking.
3. Strive to understand from another's point of view.
4. Strive to reflect accurately the views of others.
5. Disagree without being disagreeable.
6. Speak about issues; do not defame people.
7. Pray, in silence or aloud, before decisions.
8. Let prayer interrupt your busy-ness.¹

Instructions:

1. Begin by reading this prayer aloud together:

A Covenant Prayer in the Wesleyan Tradition

I am no longer my own, but thine.

Put me to what thou wilt, rank me with whom thou wilt.

Put me to doing, put me to suffering.

Let me be employed by thee or laid aside for thee,
exalted for thee or brought low by thee.

Let me have all things, let me have nothing.

I freely and heartily yield all things
to thy pleasure and disposal.

And now, O glorious and blessed God,
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,

thou art mine, and I am thine. So be it.

And the covenant which I have made on earth,
let it be ratified in heaven. Amen.²

2. After you have prayed, be in silence together for a moment or two.
3. Together, consider and discuss this question, observing the eight guidelines for holy conferencing: "What is essential for the church to be a vital witness to the love of Christ in the world?" It is not necessary that you come to agreement; the idea is to observe the eight guidelines for holy conferencing as you share with one another.
4. End your conversation by reading the covenant prayer again with gratitude for the opportunity to share.



1. Bishop Sally Dyck, "Eight Principles of Holy Conferencing: A Study Guide for Churches and Groups," https://www.minnesotamc.org/assets/uploads/documents/Holy_Conferencing_Study_Guide_2012.pdf (Minneapolis: 2012), 3–14.

2. *The United Methodist Hymnal* (Nashville: The United Methodist Publishing House, 1989), 607.