



Loyalty Policy

Dealing with Disagreements

To:	Friends and Members of Resurrection
Policy Author:	Congregational Council
Adopted on or Effective Date:	October 5, 2010
Statement of Policy:	To provide a consistent, Biblical method for members to resolve conflict and deal with disagreements.

Even brothers and sisters in Christ can disagree or become frustrated with one another. The Loyalty Policy provides direction on how to resolve conflicts. The 8th commandment and its meaning are the basis for this policy:

- a. "You shall not bear false witness against one another." Exodus 20:16
 - b. "We are to fear and love God so that we do not betray, slander, or lie about one another, but defend, speak well of the person and explain their actions in the kindest way." Small Catechism, Luther
1. If you have an issue or frustration with an individual, speak directly and privately with the person involved. Jesus outlines this approach in Matthew 18:15-17:
¹⁵ If another member of the church sins against you, go and point to the fault when the two of you are alone. If the member listens to you, you have regained that one. ¹⁶ But if you are not listened to, take one or two others along with you, so that every word may be confirmed by the evidence of two or three witnesses. ¹⁷ If the member refuses to listen ever to the church, let such a one be to you as a Gentile and tax collector.
 2. When upset with an individual, refrain from sharing those frustrations with others including any member or friend of the congregation. Do not use social media (e.g. Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, etc) as a forum to vent your frustrations to third parties about that person(s) as a substitute for dealing directly and privately with that person. Instead, if you have a complaint about someone, deal directly and privately with that person as Jesus instructs us.
 3. If you are unable to resolve your difference satisfactorily, ask the Pastor to be a participant in a conference with all parties present. If your dissatisfaction is with the Pastor, ask one of the executive council to serve as a third party.

4. If you are the person to whom the criticism is directed, seek mutual understanding with the offended person and if possible, reconciliation. Regardless of the outcome, you are also to abide by items 1, 2, and 3 listed above.
5. In situations in which an individual approaches you to speak critically about another person:
 - a. Listen carefully, help the individual sort through their feelings, but do not allow that person to come to the conclusion that you agree (although you may).
 - b. Encourage them to speak directly to the person they are criticizing.
 - c. Encourage them to be specific regarding the particular event and details that created the issues because it is difficult for anyone to respond to broad generalizations.
 - d. If they refuse to approach the individual (for whatever reason, e.g. have already tried or they believe it would not do any good), state you would be willing to go with them as a witness as they speak with that person.
 - e. If they are unwilling to do so, tell them that you will consider the conversation as having not occurred. Explain that this is a church policy.
 - f. If they request that you keep confidence, explain that this places you in an uncomfortable position. You cannot do anything about it. Tell them you will consider the conversation as having not occurred.
 - g. If you hear about a conflict between others at Resurrection, be sure to avoid gossiping about it.
6. Whether you are one of the individuals in the conflict or simply a third party hearing about the conflict from one of the aggrieved parties, everyone should:
 - a. Seek to understand.
 - b. Listen non-defensively.
 - c. Ask for needed clarification.

Conclusion

In dealing with disagreements, it shall be the goal of Resurrection that members seek mutual understanding and help to maintain a climate of peace and goodwill within the congregation. While we need not agree on everything, we should treat each other with love and respect.