

GO SPEAK: RECONCILIATION EDITION—GUIDELINES

The purpose of these guidelines is to:

- Explain the Go Speak concept and its goals.
- Outline the guidelines intended to create a safe and trusting environment for all participants.

This new deck of cards, *Go Speak: Reconciliation Edition*, was created as part of our diocesan theme, Equipping the Saints. Using these cards with prompts about faith, Jesus, race and reconciliation will give us practice to speak out of our own, and listen to others', faith stories. As we grow stronger as listeners and tellers of where in our lives we have encountered Jesus, especially with someone who looks to be "other," we are equipping ourselves to become agents of reconciliation, ambassadors of the Good News of God in Jesus. In other words, *Go Speak: Reconciliation Edition* brings evangelism and reconciliation together.

Above all, enjoy this opportunity to find your voice as a "messenger and ambassador of one hope in God's call to us." Be playful, be serious, be determined to be stronger as a listener and as a teller of the Good News in Jesus: where you have found it, where you have seen it in your own life and when you have heard it in the life of your neighbor.

And then go forth—in the power of the Spirit to love and serve the Lord.

"We must dare to share our personal faith stories and the joy we know in the presence of Jesus Christ for our own spiritual health as well the joy and blessing it may bring to others." - The Rt. Rev. Anne E. Hodges-Copple

CONCEPT OF GO SPEAK GATHERINGS

The concept of Go Speak is to set aside some intentional time of sharing in which each person reflects on a particular question and then tells a story. The questions do not seek facts and opinions so much as examples, stories and metaphors from people's lives that illustrate how God is active and present in their lives.

The others at the table **listen** and **appreciate**, rather than agree or disagree, like or not like, or compare or contrast what's being said to one's own experience.

GOALS OF GO SPEAK: RECONCILIATION EDITION

- To create a safe and trusting environment that encourages people to share and reflect upon their stories including when they encounter someone who looks to be "other" but, through a shared experience, they discover a neighbor.
- To provide the experience of articulating a faith story and having it heard.
- To begin to equip ourselves for the hard work of engaging difficult conversations related to race and reconciliation by telling and listening to faith stories.

GO SPEAK: RECONCILIATION EDITION—GUIDELINES

GUIDELINES FOR GO SPEAK

These guidelines can be downloaded and printed (two per page) from the diocesan website. One copy can be given to each participant so everyone is responsible for creating a safe and trusting environment.

Go Speak: Reconciliation Edition Guidelines for Sharing Faith Stories

- A chance to **tell** our faith stories in a confidential, non-judgmental, small group setting.
- A chance to **hear** the faith stories of other members of the body of Christ.
- Participants will tell their story in response to a question they select from the provided deck of cards. Each person selects their own card. The same card may be used more than once by different people.
- Everyone will have an opportunity to speak for **5 minutes** in each round.
- **Others** in the group will **listen** to the story.
- This is not a time for discussion or conversation. It is a time for one person to speak and others to listen and hold the story with respect.
- A time of **Holy Silence** follows the story. When the storyteller says “Amen,” the next person selects a card and tells their story.
- The group will follow the process **twice** with a break between the rounds.

*Following the silence after the last person has told a story in the 2nd round, the group may engage in conversation, **reflecting** on this **experience** and how it **equips** each person to follow in the Jesus Movement.*

HOLD/LISTEN/TELL

A comfortable, safe and trusting environment is created by everyone present. Silence is a part of this: it “**holds the space**” and prevents the human tendency to vocalize internal chatter and fill gaps when there is no one speaking. As we **listen silently**, we show respect. We are creating a safe space so a person can take sufficient time to **tell a story** of God’s reconciling presence in their life.

Some people may feel uncomfortable with it, but it is good to have silence following each person’s story. Having the storyteller “break the silence” by saying “Amen,” is a good way to transition from one person to the next.

A FEW KEY POINTS FOR GUIDING GO SPEAK AS A GROUP

- Each individual selects their own card. If a person wants to tell a story from a card that has already been used, they may do so. Remember: it is their story to tell.
- As a group, agree on a time limit for each person to speak. To figure out how much time each person has to tell their story, consider the established end time, the number of participants, and two rounds of storytelling with a break in between. Honoring the time limit is part of creating a safe and respectful environment. The recommended time for each story is no more than 5 minutes.
- If a person tells a very short story, leave some silence so he/she can add something else.
- Agree as a group that commentary or questions are not allowed during the storytelling. Take time to debrief at the end of the two rounds and for conversation afterward.