

March 27, 2020

Our organization, [Crossroads Resolution Group, LLC](#), has been requested by Faith Church Elders and Faith Christian School's School Board to provide assistance in addressing unresolved disagreements, misunderstandings, and offenses between certain individuals. It is difficult to focus on and address these situations, particularly in an environment of uncertainty which the Coronavirus pandemic has created. Although nothing seems normal now, with school suspended, church services suspended, and less personal interaction, the biblical command to be in unity as disciples of Christ is still preeminent and core to who we are as "the church".

Our heavenly Father is the source and essence of love. (1 John 4:16). Jesus calls us to imitate this love so that "all men will know" Him, and us as His disciples "if you love one another" (John 13:34 & 35). God's plan for letting the world know who He is, is his disciples' "complete unity". (Jesus prayed for us ". . . may they be brought to complete unity *to let the world know* that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me." (John 17:23). When we, as brothers & sisters in Christ have unaddressed and unresolved disagreements, misunderstandings, and offenses ("conflicts"), this unity is threatened and often destroyed, along with our witness to the world, our love for one another, and our experiencing the love of the Father.

When this occurs, we are called to address the conflict with a desire to seek reconciliation. (Mathew 5:24, 18:15). We often don't follow God's plan to seek reconciliation and resolution but attempt to escape or eliminate our conflicts using the methods and approaches of the world in which we live. We ignore the admonition of Proverbs 3:5 - 6 to **not** lean on our own understanding.

We are to approach it differently, intentionally. Hebrews 12: 7 - 15 calls us to endure God's discipline of seeking His plan to address our conflicts, by pursuing peace with one another with all the intent and energy we have. "Make every effort to live in peace with all men and

to be holy, without holiness no one will see the Lord. See to it that no one misses the grace of God and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and defile many” (Hebrews 12:14 & 15). Our efforts to seek reconciliation, peace, and unity, even in times of uncertainty and hardship in our world is imperative to God’s mission of letting the world see and experience His grace and love.

The assistance we provide calls individuals in conflict to consider God’s word, His plan for resolving conflicts and seeking reconciliation with one another, and to engage in conversation with one another to truly understand the other person’s concerns, hurts, and perspective, and seek to know where each of us needs to turn away from unwholesome and destructive words, actions, and thoughts, and to seek reconciliation through mutual confession and forgiveness (Eph.4:29-30,32). Our assistance seeks to hear the stories and hearts of everyone, helping them to both reflect on their stories and hearts in light of God’s word, and to coach them to be able to have conversations with those with whom they are in conflict, either one-to-one or with our assistance.

The steps we will be taking (and have already started) includes in-depth conferences with the individuals involved, providing resources to better understand the situation (most of these are referenced below), help individuals prepare for meetings with individuals with whom they are in conflict, lead the meetings between individuals or groups of individuals (mediation), and assist in developing a restoration plan to step forward from reconciliation to rebuilt trust and unity as the body of Christ. These steps will be led by [David Schlachter](#), [assisted by Roger Duerksen, and Allison Pickering](#).

Many of you reading this article will not be directly involved. How do you become positive encouragers of those who are, and support their faithful efforts toward reconciliation and resolution? The following are some guidelines we believe are both biblical and necessary for everyone in the body, whether directly involved or not.

1. Be in prayer for each individual involved, as well as the church and school community as a whole and the individuals within the community. Daily pray Ephesians 3: 14 - 19 for specific individuals and the community.
2. Look for ways to affirm each other and to affirm your relationships with each other, and the relationships others have. Believe the best about others (Phil. 2: 3-4), and avoid judging others, engage in charitable judgments (Col. 3:12-17). ([See this article on Charitable Judgments](#)).
3. Talk to each other, not about each other to someone else. This is known as gossip, and always leads to more conflict and hurt. (Proverbs 26:20). If you have difficulty speaking with the person with whom you disagree or have an offense, seek assistance through coaching or help in the actual conversation from a neutral, mature believer.

4. Avoid using social media (Facebook, texts, emails, twitter, Instagram) to discuss information or concerns about disagreements, misunderstandings, or offenses. The limitations and temptations of this less personal communication creates and exacerbates conflicts. Stay away from reading comments about issues in conflict on social media.
5. Look for ways to have direct, face-to-face communication with others, if necessary, ask for neutral help. Do not communicate anonymously or read anonymous communications. It is impossible to respond to or seek understanding from anonymous communications.
6. Give people space regarding the issues and concerns they may be working through, specifically if you are not directly involved. Offer to pray for them, show empathy and care, but don't ask for details about the facts or individuals who you think may be involved.
7. If you have a concern that you believe you do need to share with someone else outside of the church and school community, contact us. We are available to hear your story and provide coaching on how you can biblically respond to your concerns. You can do so by emailing David Schlachter at david@crossroadsresolution.com and requesting a call. All such communications are confidential.

Finally, there are several resources and helps we want to offer you during this time of negotiating the reconciliation efforts.

1. We will be making available to everyone in the church and school community, including those who may have left, access to a recorded seminar addressing biblical principles for conflict resolution. The seminar title is *Pursing Peace Together* and will be available on the church's web page. It is accompanied by a participant guide for each individual. The seminar is a recorded video, consisting of 2 sessions, each 2.5 hours in length. You will be able to access it at your convenience and be able to break it up into segment lengths that work for you. We encourage you to watch it with family members or community group members by using video conferencing platforms. The seminar does not discuss any specific conflict in this situation but provides invaluable insight into God's plan and purpose for addressing conflict in every aspect of our lives including, family, marriage, parent/child, work, school, and neighbors.
2. We will be hosting a 30-minute live webinar before the 1st session is active, to give a quick overview and provide some direction on the seminar. The webinar will also be recorded and available for those who cannot attend.
3. After the 1st session, we will have another live webinar for a Q & A time about the material covered in the 1st session.
4. After the 2nd session, we will have another live webinar for a Q & A time.

5. The schedule for the seminar and 3 webinars are as follows. The Church will be providing you with the information for accessing the link to watch the seminar video and to participate in the live webinars:
 - a. April 3, 7:00 – 7:30 p.m. and April 4, 9:00 – 9:30 a.m. -1st webinar to introduce the seminar (it will be offered twice and available as a recording).
 - b. April 4 – 13 – 1st session of seminar video will be available for you to access and watch.
 - c. April 13, 7:00 – 7:30 p.m. and April 14, 9:00 – 9:30 a.m. – 2nd webinar for Q & A about the 1st seminar (it will be offered twice and available as a recording).
 - d. April 14 – 20 – 2nd session of seminar video will be available for you to access and watch.
 - e. April 20, 7:00 – 7:30 p.m. and April 21, 9:00 – 9:30 a.m. – 3rd webinar for Q & A about the 2nd seminar (it will be offered twice and available as a recording).
 - f. The Church will also let you know how you can pick up a Participant Guide for the seminar (one per couple or family) before you start watching the seminar. Having the Participant Guide as you watch is recommended.
6. We will be providing the entire congregation a preparation devotion for your meditation during late April & May. (May will hopefully be the time period when we can schedule the actual in-person mediations, assuming Coronavirus regulations will allow.) This congregational devotion will help you support and pray for those involved.
7. Read one of the following books¹:
 - a. *The Peacemaker*, Ken Sande
 - b. *Resolving Everyday Conflict*, Ken Sande & Kevin Johnson
 - c. *The Young Peacemaker, Student edition*, Ken Sande
 - d. Access and take the free on-line course in Relational Wisdom from RW360. You can access it on-line through the following blog – [RW Training](#).
8. Read the book of James, as a complete book, repeatedly and several times a week, and spending time in prayer for God’s wisdom in your life.

Thank you for allowing us to serve you and your community. We look forward to the work God is doing and the results He will achieve.

David Schlachter & Roger Duerksen.

¹ All books can be purchased through [RW360](#), or on Amazon.