



Northwestern Ohio Synod

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

GENERAL RULES FOR CONFLICT RESOLUTION

First and foremost, as Christ followers, when there are issues and conflict that arise in the parish, we want to handle conflict in a caring, meaningful way so that the very best result for all parties is attained. Jesus gives us a model to follow in Matthew 18:15-17:

1. Go directly, face-to-face – not in email or text, to the person you have a conflict with and talk with him/her and attempt to resolve the issue.
2. If there is still issue, take a couple of people with you – wise, discerning, loving people who are trusted. Address the issue again and attempt resolution.
3. If there is still issue, use the whole Body of Christ, the parish with whom you reside to disclose the situation and attempt both resolution and forgiveness.
4. If there is still issue, set limits that are healthy for you and the other person(s) [Limits and boundaries may vary from personal/internal limits to formal discipline – there is much variation here depending on the gravity of the situation), and then let it go and forgive.

Here are some general rules by which to address a conflictual situation. It is best if both parties agree:

- Work, honestly and meaningfully, to resolve the conflict
- Always treat each other with respect
- Be clear and truthful about what is really bothering each person in the situation, and honest about what behaviors/conversations, etc each person wants changed
- Listen to each other – REALLY listen to the other person to try and understand his/her point of view, where he/she is coming from, etc. The other person will know if you are not honestly engaged in this process
- Always be willing to stand up and take responsibility for one's behavior
- Look for ways to compromise; give and take goes a long way