



Standing with
People of Color

CRUCIAL CHRISTIAN CONVERSATIONS

We are asking the entire Church of the Brethren to engage in conversations in various settings in the next year, using the discussion prompts below. We hope the church will share together around the family table, in Sunday School or other congregational settings, in districts, and in other Brethren agencies and venues.

Instructions:

Using the “BELOVED” model for Crucial Christian Conversations (on the back), share with each other your personal stories and experiences for each of the discussion prompts below.

Consider using a short statement prior to each person sharing their responses such as “Peace be with you” “We hold you in the Light of God,” or a gem of gratitude after each person has shared.

At various times during your sharing circle, check your feelings and emotions and check-in with others.

Consider naming an emotion you are feeling while sharing your own responses or while listening to others. Use 1, 2, or 3 words to briefly describe what you understand the person speaking has shared.

Discussion Prompts:

1

Share your family’s origin story. Go back as many generations as you know and start there. Briefly share some of your family history/tree up to your current family.

2

Share a compelling memory of when you became aware of cultural, racial, or color differences.

3

Share the message Jesus has for you or us about justice and racism. What does Jesus want you to hear or see? What does Jesus call you or us to do next?

4

If you listen to Jesus’ call, what spiritual healing or personal growth might you have to do?

5

If you are a white/dominant culture Brethren, how can you support/stand with people of color (POC)? If you are a POC, what does it mean for you to stand with other people of color?

6

Imagine if things were different and there were more racial justice. What do you envision?

7

What are you willing to sacrifice to achieve that goal?



BELOVED Model for Crucial Christian Conversations

Before You Share

B Before sharing, remind yourself of the purpose of the activity and contemplate your responses. Centering oneself can be done through a brief meditation, silent prayer or a few deep breaths. Visualize a safe space for yourself and others to become a BELOVED community.

Empathize

E Empathize with others and oneself. Feel with your heart. Put yourself in the other person's shoes. Display empathy for each person as you journey together to understand your unique history, background, and experiences. Strive towards mutual trust and respect with one another while seeking justice and healing.

Listen

L Listen from your heart to one another. Some may feel vulnerable especially if sharing painful experiences or memories. Paraphrase (2 or 3 words) or summarize to show that you are listening deeply and striving to understand.

Offer Your Perspective

O Offer your perspective. Calmly share one's own perspective and feelings, experiences and understandings, memories, pain, or puzzlements. Speak only for yourself and about your own unique experience. Share the Truth as you have discerned and remembered it.

Visualize

V Our vision of a BELOVED community is learning to nurture the Realm of God here on earth. Visualize and share what you might do differently as a result of this conversation.

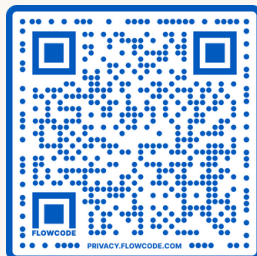
Engage

E Actively participate while being aware of relationship dynamics. Remind yourself to "Step Back" if you usually get the floor and/or find yourself sharing often or too long and "Step Up" if you usually are quiet or feel hesitant to share. Be curious. Lean into listening and wondering.

Discover and Discern

D Reflect on your own learning during this time of sharing together. Share what you learned with others while protecting another's vulnerability. Remember to maintain anonymity (unless the person states that it is okay to share their experiences with others). Discern your own pathway about where else you might engage in sharing or moving forward with these justice issues.

Pain humans experience includes not being seen, not being heard, not being trusted, not being recognized, not feeling safe and secure.
- Sister Theresa of Winnipeg



BELOVED Model developed by Barbara Daté and Christy Schaub for the 2022-2025 Church of the Brethren Standing with People of Color process

StandingWithPeopleofColor@brethren.org
www.OnEarthPeace.org/swpoc
www.brethren.org/swpoc