

## Guidelines for Respectful Dialogue

The Long Obedience Team: Pursuing Compassion, Mercy and Justice is committed to providing safe spaces for people to share thoughts, feelings and ideas as we pursue a deeper understanding of God's vision for compassion, mercy and justice together. In that pursuit, we respectfully maintain the following guidelines as we enter intentional conversation about diversity and racial reconciliation.

1. *Show up to listen and to learn*

We will listen more than we talk. Our goal will be to understand rather than prove our own points. We will learn from one another's experiences. We will speak in turn. We will approach our time together in a posture of humility.

2. *Speak out of your own experience*

We will share honestly from our lives. We will avoid broad generalizations and assumptions. We will use "I" statements.

3. *Use language that values the image of God in all humans*

We will avoid broad generalizations and characterizations of groups of people. We will remove the words *them*, *those*, and *they* in references to people who represent a different culture than our own.

4. *Recognize that discussions about race and racism can be uncomfortable* We recognize that we might find ourselves feeling uncomfortable discussing race and racism. We will treat one another with grace and assume positive intent.

5. *Remember that in all things we seek to know and glorify God*

We will pray for God to guide us, to lead us, to bind us together in unity, to share His heart with us, to convict us, to lead us to repentance, and to do his work in this world through us.

Racial Reconciliation cannot be done in isolation; it must be done in community. -Rev. Dr. Brenda Salter McNeil