

uncharted 2019

local formation looks toward the horizon

Covenant of Presence

Be fully present, extending and presuming welcome. Set aside the usual distractions of things undone from yesterday, things to do tomorrow. Welcome others into this learning space and presume you are welcome as well.

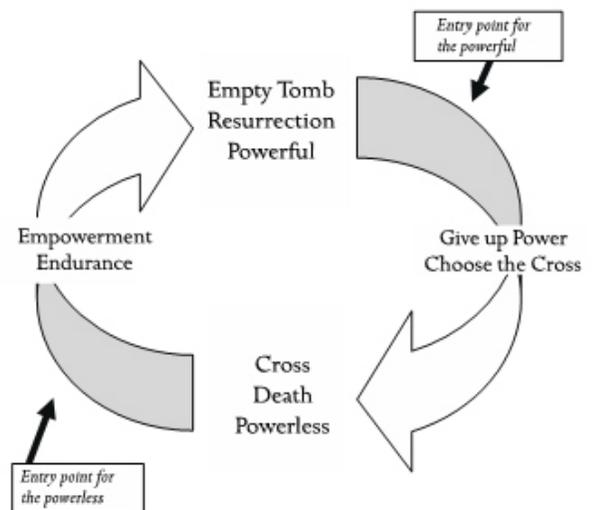
We come as equals. We don't have the same contexts, gifts, limits, or experiences, but no person's contexts, gifts, limits, or experiences are more or less important than another's. Be mindful of how power manifests between us with respect to race, gender, sexuality, ability. Remember, too, that power shows up in this room in the form of our orders of ministry, educational attainments, affiliations, and experience. You are invited to claim authorship of your own story and share it for the sake of our common discernment of the Holy Spirit's work among us. Speak your truth and open yourself to other perspectives.

Listen Generously. Listen intently to what is said; listen to the feelings beneath the words. As Quaker Douglas Steere writes, "To listen another's soul into life, into a condition of disclosure and discovery, may be almost the greatest gift we can offer to another."

No fixing *without being asked*. We are not here to set someone else straight, right a wrong, or author a grand solution. We are here to witness God's movement in and among our contexts and to build partnerships for the future. If you want the wisdom and resources of others, ask for it clearly!

Turn to wonder. If you find yourself becoming judgmental or cynical, try turning to wonder: "I wonder why she shared that story or made those choices?" "I wonder what my reaction teaches me?" "I wonder what he's feeling right now?"

CYCLE of Gospel Living



Eric Law, *The Wolf Shall Dwell with the Lamb*

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Hold each other with care and prayer. We show up tender, vulnerable, powerful, changing, and mysterious even to ourselves. We show up for a church that is changing, dying, and being resurrected. Imagine hearing another as you would listen to scripture – attentively, mindfully, and open to the holy.

Keep confidentiality, share learning. We reveal our personal experiences in trust that we will be heard with care. We offer our learnings in hope that they will be useful to each other.

Believe that it is possible for us to emerge from our time together refreshed, surprised, and less burdened than when we came. Expect that our work together can provide renewal, refreshment, and possibilities for what we can do together to create the future that is waiting to be born, and that seeds planted here will grow and flourish in the days ahead in service to God's church and to God's renewing work in the world.

In creating this sacred space we hope that that the deepest gifts and goodness of our faith communities may be allowed to unfold. Assuring safety for each of our contributions to this conversation is the beginning. But the real end is that our faith communities live into their part of God's mission of reconciliation. That call takes us beyond conventional notions of safety and into the "wild places" of our shared stories of call. We are like those children in Narnia who, upon learning about Aslan the Christ-Lion, ask, "Is he quite safe?" The response comes back, "Safe? Who said anything about safe? [Of] course he isn't safe. But he's good." We begin our conversation with trust that the Spirit is leading us forward into something deeply good, even if we can't see yet what it is.

*Adapted from **Living in the Green**. Adapted Touchstones used in The Center for Courage and Renewal's Circles of Trust Retreats and adapted from The FTE Guide to VocationCARE, 2012, the Forum for Theological Education, pp. 11-12*