



ORDINATION *We're listening.*

FIVE FIRST PRINCIPLES OF DIALOGUE

Introduction

The Lutheran Church of Australia's (LCA) Ordination Dialogue Group was called together by the President of the Church in 2011. This was an outcome of the 2009 LCA National Convention of Synod which asked for a more consensus based approach after 20 or more years of debate on the Scriptural arguments for and against ordaining women.

The 2013 Synod received a brief report from the Dialogue Group and encouraged it to continue its work. Since then the Group, consisting of 5 pastors not previously involved in the public debate, has been exploring ways to make its work more accessible to the wider church. This is in line with its task to assist the LCA in coming to consensus.

Therefore the members of the group have reflected together on what they have learned so far about the process of dialogue and the issue of consensus. They offer the church these first five principles of dialogue as part of the fruit of that discussion, to be made available through 'Ordination: we're listening' on the LCA website.

Five principles of dialogue in the LCA

1. **Communion:** Because God has gathered us in communion with one another through his word and sacraments, we have freedom to dialogue with one another on contested matters. Strengthening this God-given communion is the goal of dialogue.
2. **Trust:** Because God has made us brothers and sisters in Christ, we can trust God to use our communion to build us up in love and use our differences to grow us in holiness of life.
3. **Listening:** Because God gives each of his children a unique perspective, we can listen to each other trusting God that as we listen we will grow in understanding of ourselves, of the other person, and of the communion that God creates.

4. Speaking: Because God gives each of his children a unique perspective, we can speak to each other trusting God that as we speak we will grow in understanding of ourselves, of the other person, and of the communion that God creates.
5. Patience: Because the communion God gives us in Christ is God's doing and not ours, we can be patient in listening and speaking to each other, trusting that God will deepen the unity he has already given us.

*LCA Ordination Dialogue Group
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