



Church Leadership 101 – Healthy Communication

BEING A LEADER IN THE WHOLE CONGREGATION

Congregational Leadership

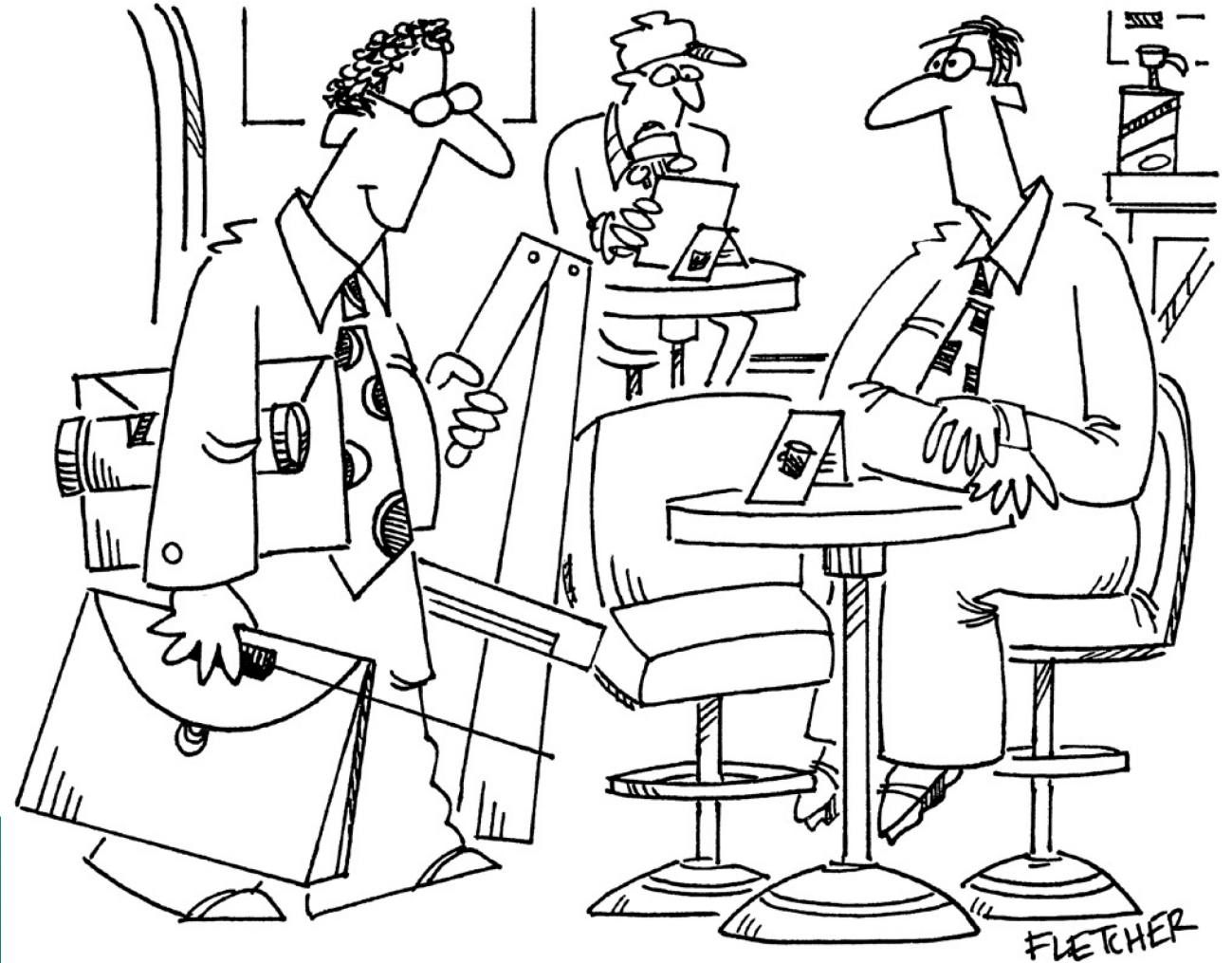


You've been elected to the church council, or to lead a committee or group ... what does this mean?

No matter the size or location of your congregation, as a leader, you'll deal with...

- Agendas

Agendas for meetings, different people's personal agendas, and God's agenda



Even before they ordered their lattes, Larry sensed that Pastor Jim might have an agenda.

No matter the size or location of your congregation, as a leader, you'll deal with...

- Budgets

And people's opinions about them!



"How am I supposed to transform the youth group into spiritually mature believers when you cut my soda and sugary snack budget in half?"

No matter the size or location of your congregation, as a leader, you'll deal with...

- The mission/vision



**"It's not a great mission statement,
but we'll revise it if things get better."**

Mission Statements, Strategic Plans, Goals

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No matter the size or location of your congregation, as a leader, you'll deal with...

- The mission/vision

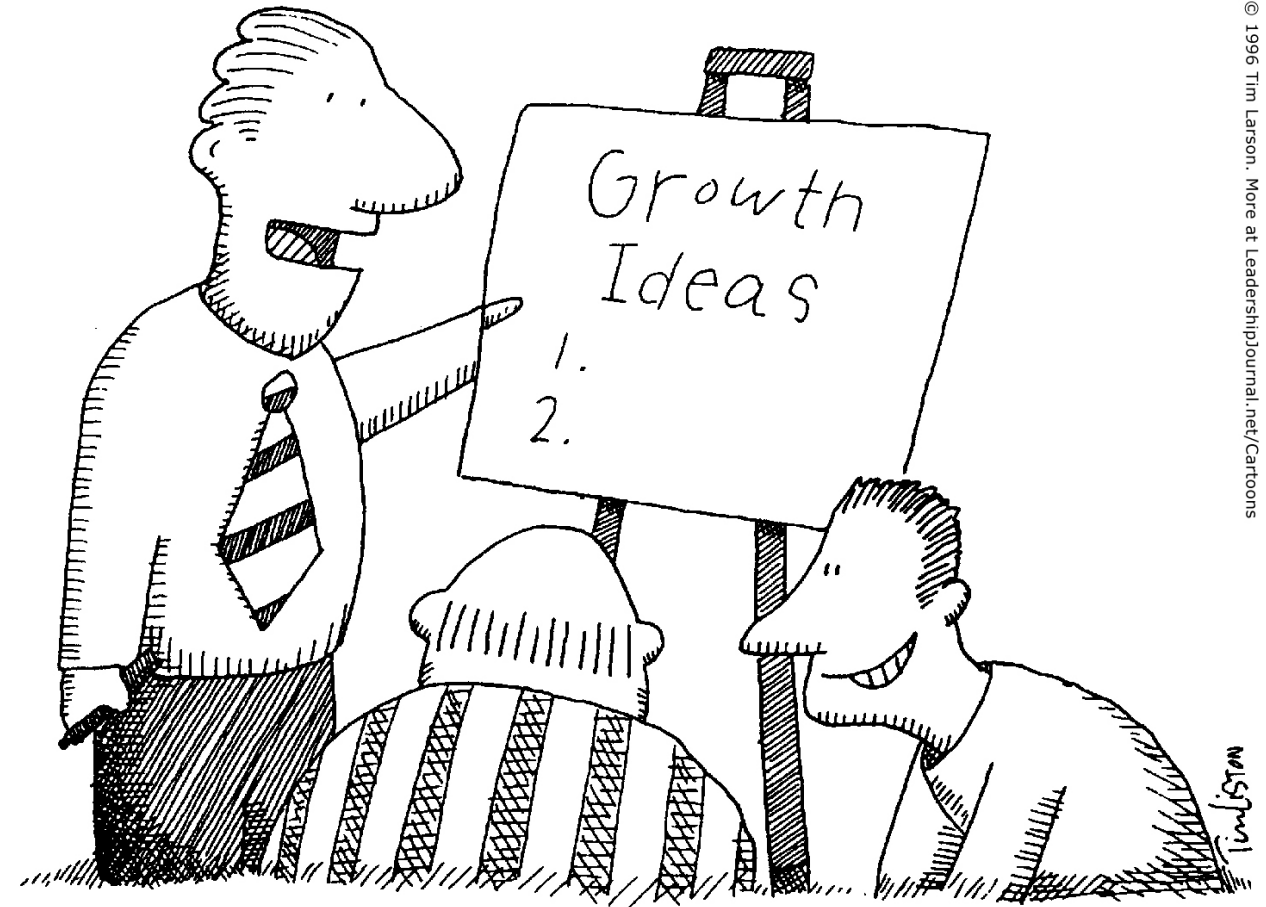


"That's our new mission statement."

Mission Statements, Strategic Plans, Goals

No matter the size or location of your congregation, as a leader, you'll deal with...

- Different Ideas



"Besides calling every Sunday 'Easter,' does anyone else have ideas for improving church attendance?"

LOTS of different ideas from LOTS of perspectives!

No matter the size or location of your congregation, as a leader, you'll deal with...

- Different Ideas



"So . . . if there are no more comments, we'll change the order of worship on Sunday."

LOTS of different ideas from LOTS of perspectives!

No matter the size or location of your congregation, as a leader, you'll deal with...

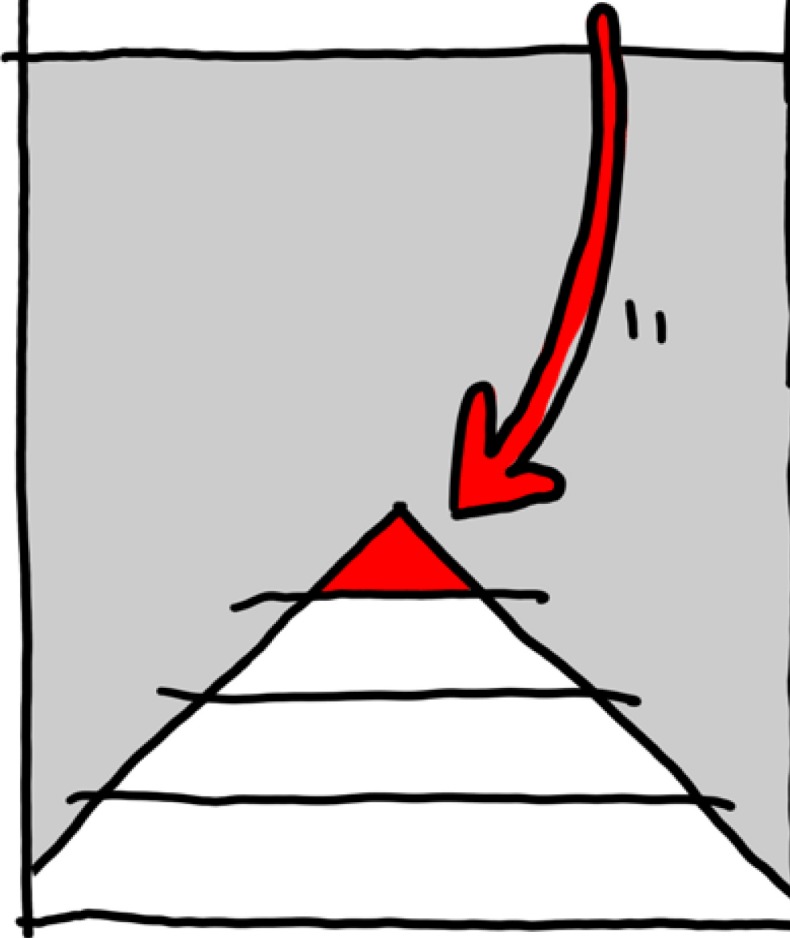
- Different Generations!

LOTS of perspectives!

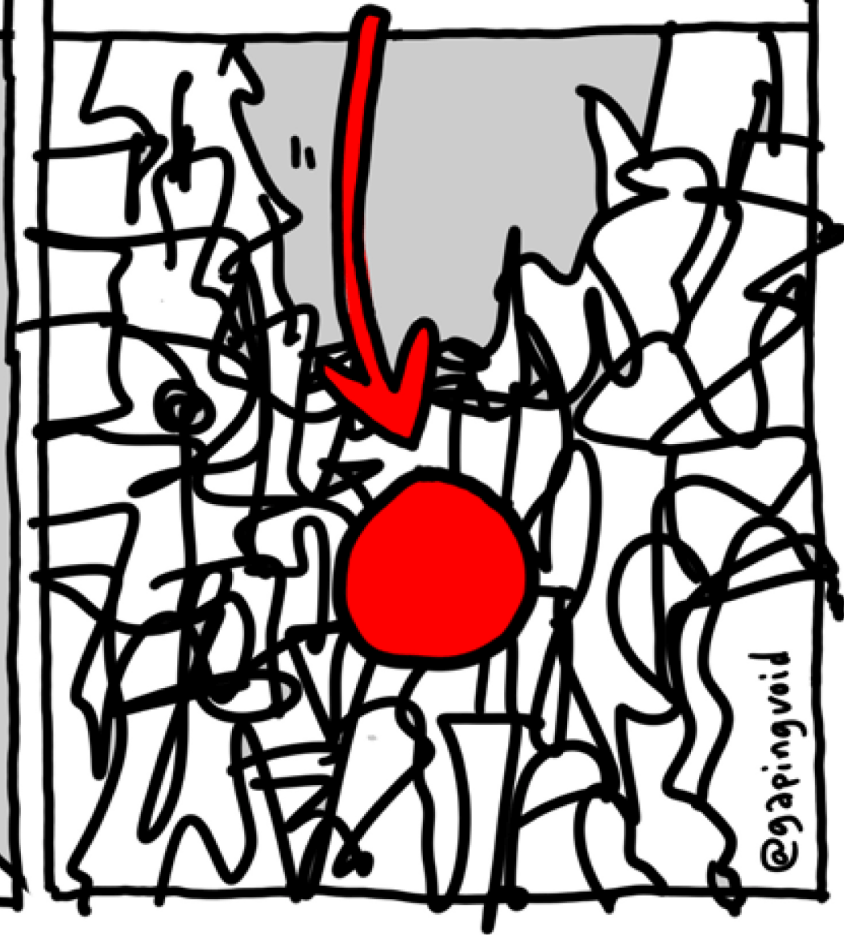


"Our small group curriculum is multi-generational ... it includes a DVD, VHS, a CD, a cassette and an 8 track tape."

what leadership
looks like.



what leadership
feels like.



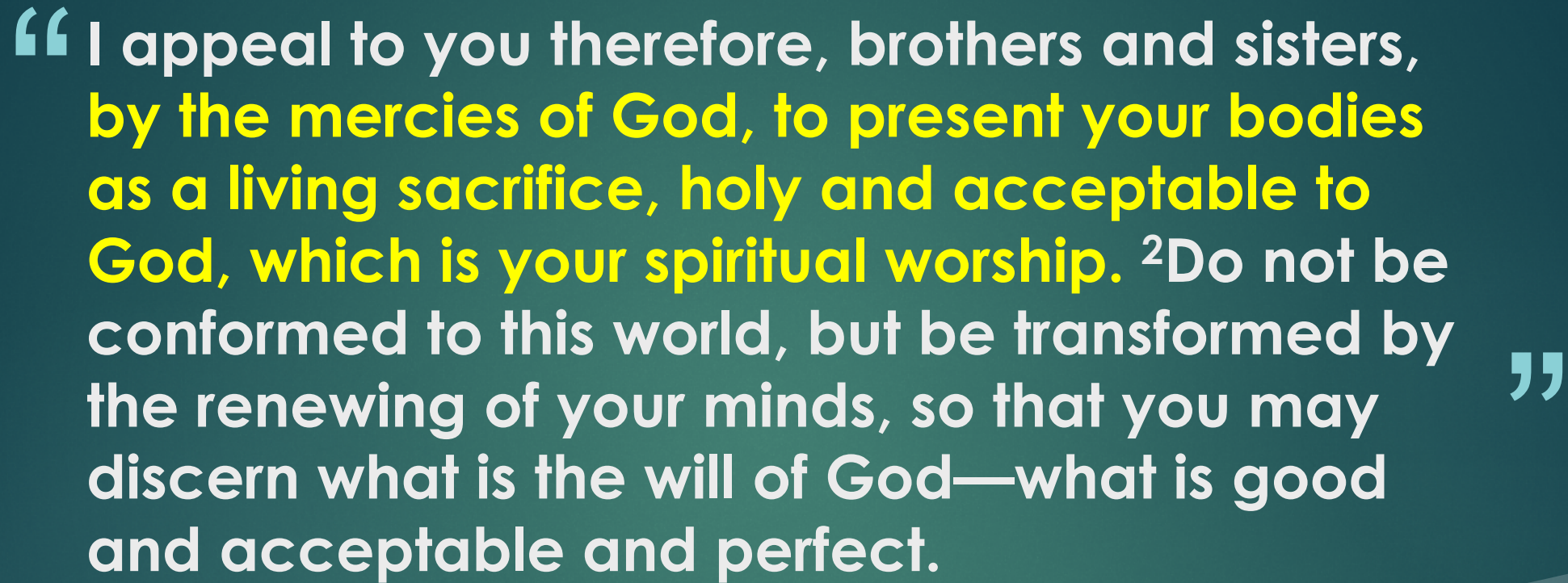
No matter the size or location
of your congregation,
or what your council, committee,
task force or group deal with,...

No matter what you **DO**,
What matters most is **HOW** you do it,
HOW you treat others,
And how you **ARE** while doing it.



Healthy Communication is **KEY**

We are the Body of Christ - the hands, feet, eyes, ears,
mouth and heart of Christ for each other and the world




“ I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters,
by the mercies of God, to present your bodies
as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to
God, which is your spiritual worship. ²Do not be
conformed to this world, but be transformed by
the renewing of your minds, so that you may
discern what is the will of God—what is good
and acceptable and perfect. ”

Romans 12:1-18 Paul wrote to church leaders then and NOW
about what it means to be the Body of Christ and **HOW** that Body
works in wholeness and health

³For by the grace given to me I say **to everyone among you not to think of yourself more highly than you ought to think**, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. ⁴For as in one body we have many members, and not all the members have the same function, ⁵so **we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another.**

Romans 12:1-18



⁶We have gifts that differ according to the grace
“ given to us: prophecy, in proportion to
faith; ⁷ministry, in ministering; the teacher, in
teaching; ⁸the exhorter, in exhortation; the
giver, in generosity; **the leader, in diligence**; the
compassionate, in cheerfulness. ⁹Let love be
genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is
good; ¹⁰love one another with mutual affection;
outdo one another in showing honor.”

Romans 12:1-18

“¹¹Do not lag in zeal, be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord. ¹²Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, **persevere in prayer.** ¹³Contribute to the needs of the saints; extend hospitality to strangers.

¹⁴Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. ¹⁵Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep.”

Romans 12:1-18



“

¹⁶Live in harmony with one another; do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly; do not claim to be wiser than you are. ¹⁷Do not repay anyone evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all. ¹⁸If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.”

Romans 12:1-18 A **TALL** order! We can't do it apart from Christ!

We are the Body of Christ - the hands, feet, eyes, ears, mouth and heart of Christ for each other and the world!



Healthy Communication is KEY

Congregational Leadership



- Leading the congregation in being the Body of Christ for each other and the world!



Healthy Communication = 2-Way



God gave us two ears and one mouth
for a reason....

**“You must understand this, my beloved; let everyone be quick to listen,
Slow to speak, slow to anger” – James 1:19**

Healthy Communication = 2-Way

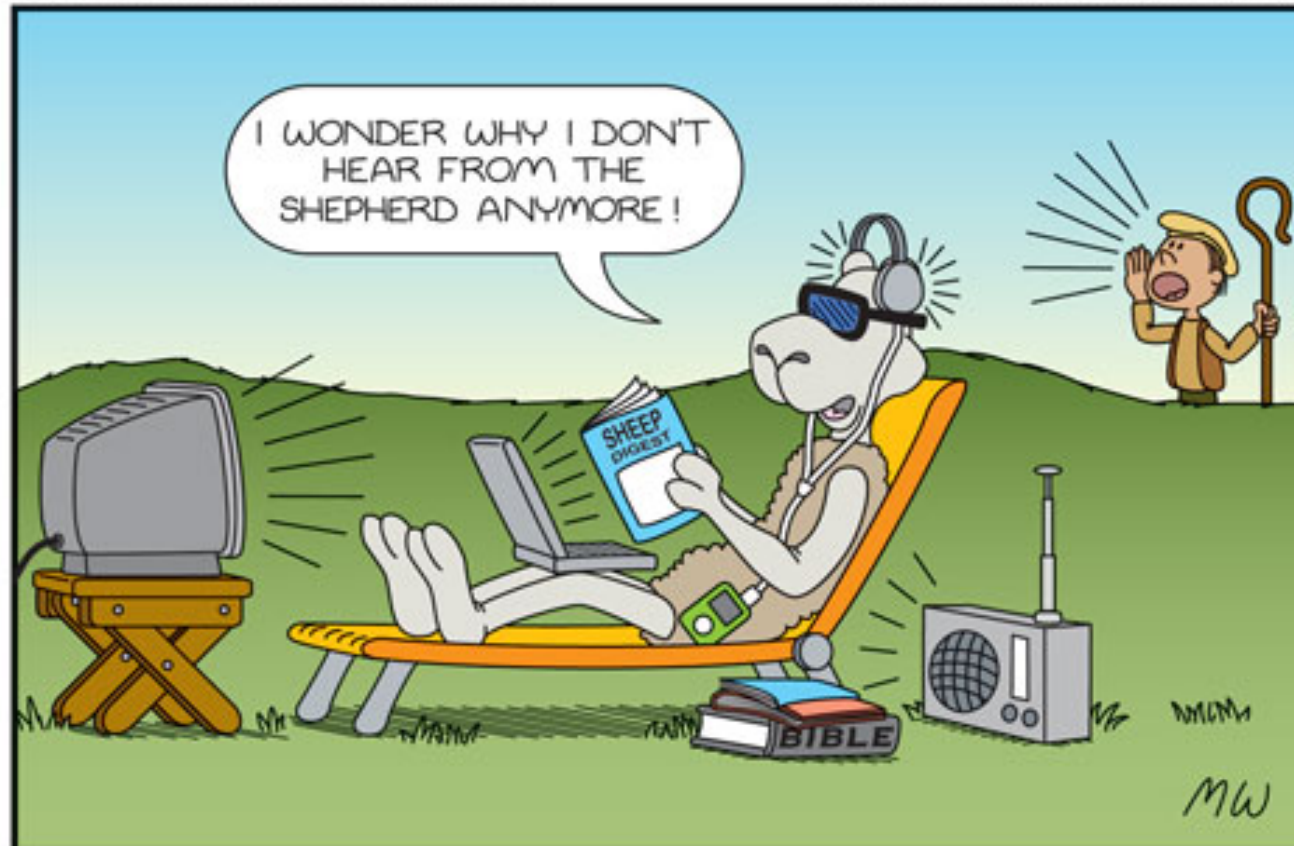


Speaking AND Listening, Listening AND Speaking –
with GOD and with each other

Healthy Communication = 2-Way

SHEPHERD'S VOICE

A Joyful 'toon by Mike Waters



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My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me.

- JOHN 10:27 NIV

Listening to God -- Breath Prayer

Inhale

God of love

Grace to us

Lord in your mercy

Holy Wisdom

When I fear

Exhale

Help me listen

Grace through us

Hear our prayer

Guide us

Help me trust You

Listening to each other – Dialogue & Active Listening

The art of dialogue is one practice that trains us to listen with our hearts. *Dialogue* comes from the Greek **dia (through)** and **logos (meaning or word.)**

So a dialogue is a flow of meaning through words in which new understandings emerge that might not have been present before. It is done in a spirit of inquiry—wanting to know.

We look for shared meaning beyond our individual understanding.

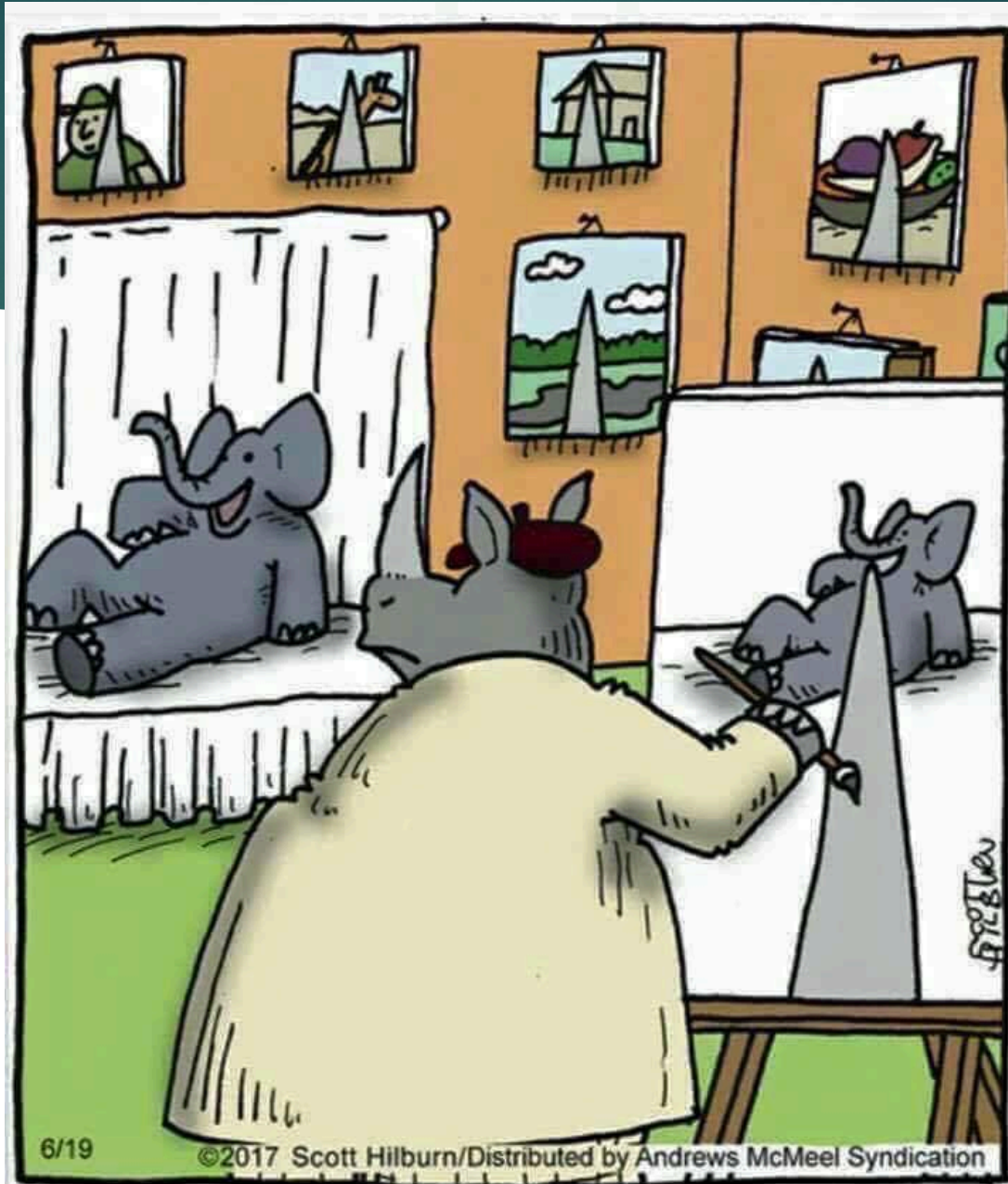
Practicing the Sacred Art of Listening by Kay Lindahl.

Listening to each other – Dialogue & Active Listening

PRINCIPLES OF DIALOGUE

1. When you are listening, suspend assumptions.
2. When you are speaking, express your personal response, informed by your tradition, beliefs, and practices. Speak for yourself. Use “I” language.

Practicing the Sacred Art of Listening by Kay Lindahl.



Listening to each other – Dialogue & Active Listening

3. Listen and speak without judgment. The purpose of dialogue is to come to an understanding of the other, not to determine whether is/he is good, bad, right, or wrong.
4. Suspend status. Everyone is an equal partner in the inquiry.
5. Honor confidentiality.

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Listening to each other – Dialogue & Active Listening



Equal partners?
What a concept.



someecards
user card

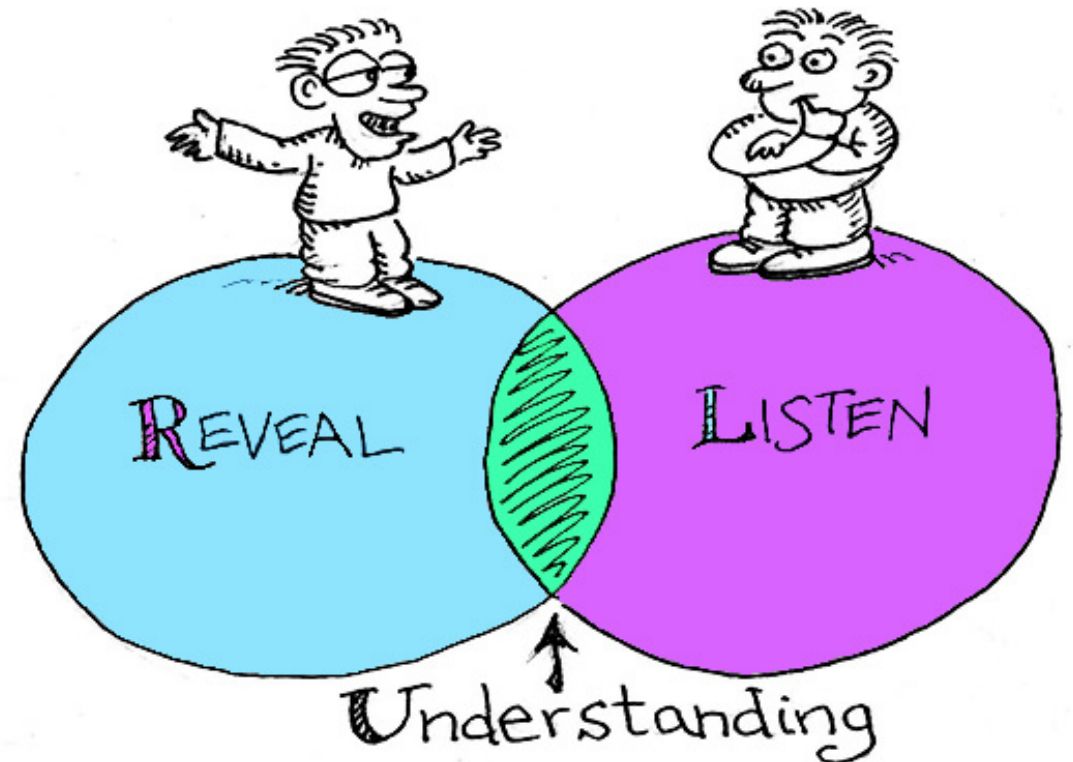
Listening to each other – Dialogue & Active Listening

6. Listen for understanding, not agreement or belief.
7. Ask clarifying or open-ended questions to assist your understanding and to explore assumptions.
8. Honor silence and time for reflection. Notice what wants to be said rather than what you want to say. Allow time to take in what has been said.

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Listening to each other – Dialogue & Active Listening

The biggest
communication problem
is we do not listen to
understand.
We listen to reply.



Listening to each other – Dialogue & Active Listening

9. **One person speaks at a time.** Pay attention to the flow of the conversation. Notice what patterns emerge from the group. Watch that each person has an opportunity to speak, knowing that no one is required to speak.

At the close of the dialogue, each participant shares one idea or insight that he/she gained by participating in the dialogue.

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Listening to each other – Dialogue & Active Listening

Sister,

I feel bad when you're talking because I'm nodding my head, but I'm not listening.



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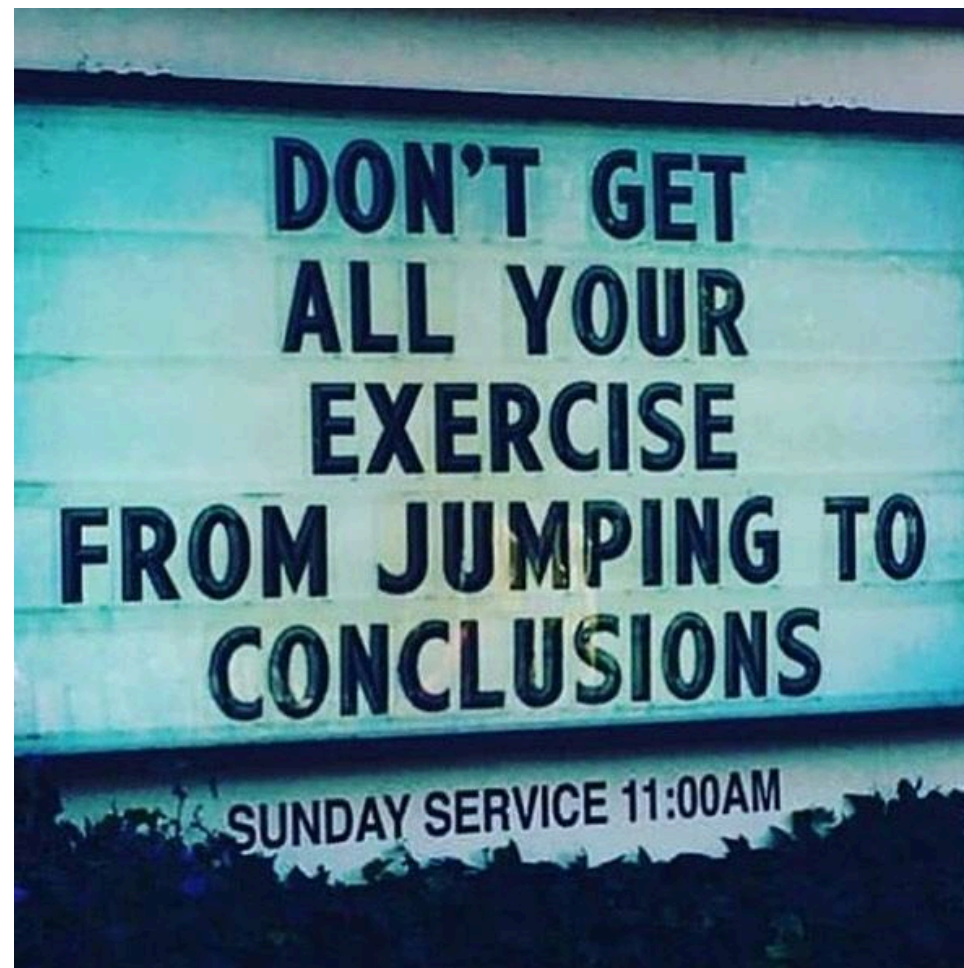
Listening to each other – Dialogue & Active Listening - Let's practice!

- * Find a dialogue partner – Decide who is A and who is B
- * Practice the Principles of Dialogue
- * Partner A share
 1. Who you are
 2. Something that has stood out to you in this session so far & why you think that might be.
- * Partner B listens, then repeats back what Partner A shared.
- * Switch and have Partner B share while Partner A listens then repeats.
- * After both have shared, listened, repeated, each Partner shares an insight they gained from the exercise.

Congregational Leadership



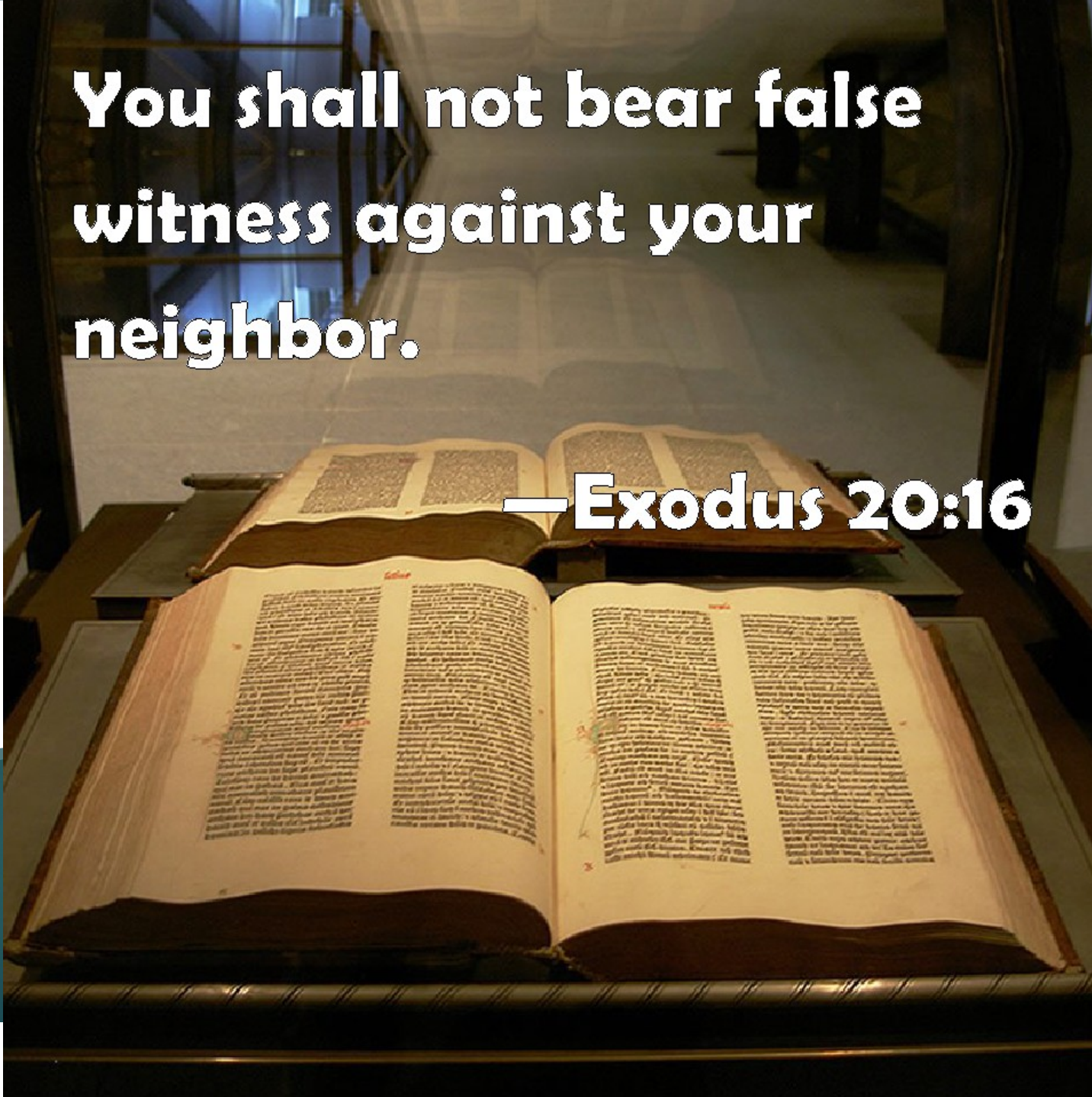
- Leading the congregation in being the Body of Christ for each other and the world!
- Being the Body of Christ means listening to God and to each other.



¹⁰ ...outdo one another in **showing honor**.... ¹⁷Do not repay anyone evil for evil, but take thought for what is **noble in the sight of all**. ¹⁸If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. ~Romans 12

**You shall not bear false
witness against your
neighbor.**

—Exodus 20:16





The 8th Commandment

You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

What does this mean?

We are to fear and love God, so that we do not tell lies about our neighbors, betray or slander them, or destroy their reputations.

Instead we are to come to their defense, speak well of them, and interpret everything they do in the best possible light.



Healthy Communication for Leaders

As church leaders, you lead the way in showing us how to treat each other. The eight keys to healthy communication are: (based on Matthew 18:15-17)

- ▶ **We speak to each other, not about each other behind their backs**
- ▶ **If someone complains to us about another person, we ask them to speak to that person first and tell them it is so important that we will follow up in a week to see how the conversation went.**
- ▶ **We don't respond to anonymous comments or letters.**

Healthy Communication for Leaders



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Healthy Communication for Leaders



- ▶ We don't carry other people's mail. We ask, "What would you like me to do with your comment? You can come to council/meeting yourself or I can go with you."
- ▶ We explain, "I can carry a signed written statement to the person/council/meeting for you, but please don't ask me to speak for you. I don't want to express your views inaccurately."

Healthy Communication for Leaders

**Learning to
express your
feelings in a way
that explains
but does not
accuse can be a
challenge.**

- ▶ We recognize that “what doesn’t come out straight, comes out crooked.” Unexpressed concerns, grief, anger or pain build up and get uglier. Eventually they will come out. Best to speak them, calmly, before they become ugly and truly hurtful.
- ▶ We say “I,” not “You;” as in, “I was upset by what I heard,” not “You hurt my feelings;” or “I felt attacked” rather than “You attacked me.”

Healthy Communication for Leaders



- ▶ We explain each other's actions in the best possible light. We check with the person quoted or referred to for accuracy before we repeat the comment. (Luther's explanation to 8th Commandment)

Congregational Leadership



- Leading the congregation in being the Body of Christ for each other and the world!
- Being the Body of Christ means listening to God and to each other.
- And honoring each other through healthy communication.

Congregational Leadership



*"Yes, I knew that listening was crucial
to being a good leader...."*



*"But I never knew that I was the one who
had to do the listening."*

Congregational Leadership

PEANUTS CLASSICS By Charles M. Schulz



Congregational Leadership



- Leading the congregation in being the Body of Christ for each other and the world!





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