

## ***THE WAY WE WERE: TOGETHER IN MINISTRY***

Trinitarian Congregational Church, Concord MA

Sunday, May 21, 2017

### **Guidelines for Small Group Conversations**

The goal of these conversation guidelines is to create a safe, productive, and worshipful small group experience. The practice of Speaking the Truth in Love as Church as found in Ephesians 4:15 serves as the framework for these guidelines.

#### **Speaking –**

I will listen before speaking, and with my whole self.

I will speak respectfully, without interrupting others.

I will communicate directly to others using the first person, rather than reporting what I think *others* think or feel.

I will refrain from “preaching,” giving advice, or trying to “fix” another’s feeling or opinion.

I will take turns speaking and use a talking stone if helpful.

#### **the Truth –**

I will be as honest with others as I possibly can, and work to build trust.

I will strive to understand and speak from factual information, rather than assumptions, speculation, or hearsay.

I will keep an open mind in order to see things in another way, and from the vantage point of the larger truth.

#### **in Love –**

I will continually turn to God as we proceed in order to grow in love.

I will be present to the members of my group, listen actively to understand the other’s point of view, and give everyone a chance to be heard.

Knowing that we do not necessarily have to agree with each other, I will note the differences as they arise and practice staying power if the topic is difficult.

I will exercise grace toward mistakes and allow others to start over if they mess up.

#### **as Church –**

I will seek to learn about others and look for Christ in them, so that ‘the mind of Christ’ can lead the Body of Christ.

I will remember that we don’t have to have the same experience of the same event, situation, or ministry, but must honor each other’s, bearing with one another in love.