

ASSEMBLIES OF GOD THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
Continuing Education Course in conjunction with
Church Life Resources
July 15-18, 2008
PTHB 640 Managing Conflict in the Church
(3 credits)

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Summer 2008
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COURSE SYLLABUS

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course provides an examination of the dynamics of leading congregations through the various phases of church life, especially as difficult situations arise. Students will develop a biblical and practical understanding of how to deal with difficult people and situations of conflict arising from church life and church growth. The course will address issues related to fairness, compromise, conciliation, and cooperation. Special focus will be given to the leader's conflict management style as well as the pivotal role of the leader in conflict management.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this course, the student should be able to

1. Identify the sources and nature of healthy and unhealthy conflict.
2. Articulate a biblical theology of conflict for the local congregation and/or religious organization.
3. Assess one's own conflict management style(s) and reflect upon the utilization of one's style(s) in church relationships and leadership.
4. Describe models of conflict development, conflict management, and conflict resolution.
5. Understand some of the basic concepts of family systems theory and how they relate to congregational life.
6. Think critically about conflict intervention in the local church context.

TEXTBOOKS

Required

Haugk, Kenneth C. *Antagonists in the Church: How to Identify and Deal with Destructive Conflict*. Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1988.

Sande, Ken. *The PeaceMaker: A Biblical Guide to Resolving Personal Personal Conflict*. 3rd ed., Grand Rapids: Baker, 2004.

Shawchuck, Norman. *How to Manage Conflict in the Church: Conflict Management Learning System including Volume III*. Leith, ND: Spiritual Growth Resources Press (800-359-7363), Seventh Printing (2001).

Shawchuck, Norman and Roger Heuser. Chapter 13: Conflict Management, Chapter 14: Family Systems Theory, and Chapter 15: Intervening in Dysfunctional Systems in *Managing the Congregation*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996.

Susek, Ron. *Firestorm: Preventing and Overcoming Church Conflicts*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1999.

Van Yperen, Jim. *Peace: A Guide to Overcoming Church Conflict*. Chicago: Moody, 2002.

Other Suggested Reading

If you have read the required texts, choose one of the following as a substitute:

Hagberg, Janet O. *Real Power: Stages of Personal Power in Organizations*. Mpls.: Winston Press, 1985.

Halstead, Kenneth A. *From Stuck to Unstuck: Overcoming Congregational Impasse*. Washington, D.C.: Alban Institute Publication, 1998.

Hugh F. Halverstadt. *Managing Church Conflict*. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1991.

Mayer, Bernard. *The Dynamics of Conflict Resolution: A Practitioner's Guide*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2000.

Smedes, Lewis B. *Forgive and Forget: Healing the Hurts We Don't Deserve*. New York: Pocket Books, 1984.

BASIC OUTLINE

Session 1	The sources and nature of healthy and unhealthy conflict
Session 2	Creating a biblical theology of conflict
Session 3	Models of conflict development
Session 4	Conflict style assessments
Session 5	Leadership, power, and conflict; assessing conflict scenarios
Session 6	The pastor's role in change and conflict management
Session 7	Effective conflict resolution with church boards
Session 8	Leadership, power, and conflict
Session 9	Family systems and dysfunction
Session 10	Conflict resolution tools
Session 11	Models of conflict resolution
Session 12	Scenarios of conflict resolution
Session 13	Summary, reflection, class project paper

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

A. Pre-Session

1. Read the textbooks required for this course. A reading report (attached to this syllabus) must be submitted. It is imperative that you come to class fully prepared to engage in the group's discussion and exercises. As you read, either underline or jot notes of important information, questions, or points of disagreement. No reaction

papers for texts are required, so spend the time reading the texts thoroughly.

2. Carefully study and complete all instrumentation exercises in Shawchuck's published notebook.
3. Prepare a fictional conflict scenario for class assessment and discussion. This scenario should be no more than two pages, double-spaced. Please give as many details as possible in the length allotted. These scenarios will be shared with the class, so exercise caution with names, exact information, etc. The scenarios will be utilized in various sessions. *The fictional scenario is due the first day of class sessions.*

B. Class Session Participation

1. Class attendance and participation are mandatory and vital to the learning experience of this course.
2. Prepared conflict scenarios will be utilized in various class sessions *so have these available on the first day of class.* Simulated conflict resolution sessions will occur in the class sessions.
3. Various assessments will be completed during class sessions and also assigned.

C. Post-Session

Choose from the following written projects to synthesize your learning experience:

1. *Research Paper:* Choose a major theme related to conflict and write a 28 to 30 page research paper. The paper should begin with a good thesis statement stating the purpose of the project. An introduction must outline the issues and key ideas to be investigated. The body of the work needs to reflect in-depth investigation of the topic and the student's reflections upon the research for his/her ministry context. The conclusion section should contain comments on how the research will impact the student's future leadership practice. Supporting footnotes and works cited page must be included.
2. *A Conflict Management Training for the Local Church Leadership:* Create a conflict management training for your local church staff, or lay leadership. This training should be 28-30 pages and include the following components: a theology of conflict, a model for conflict development, management, and intervention, and an introduction to the basic skills needed for conflict resolution. Supporting footnotes and works cited page must be included. Additional components (not included in the 28-30 pages) for this project might include a PowerPoint presentation, a teaching manual or annotated outline, and student handouts.
3. *A Conflict Management Case Study:* Analyze a current or past conflict setting in light of the course content. Include such components as conflict development, stages of conflict, reactions to the conflict, and appropriate steps for resolution. Integrate the biblical principles pertinent to the case and propose a model for resolution. Propose the model; then walk thru the steps of resolution. Integrate content from textbooks and from class sessions. Exercise caution with names, exact information, etc. The case study paper should contain 28-30 pages with supporting footnotes and works cited page.

Please integrate the content from the assigned texts, from class handouts, and from information shared in class. Utilize Turabian format for all assignments.

DUE DATE for post-session project: September 22, 2008. Please submit electronically to educationcohort@msn.com.

GRADING PROCEDURE

Class participation (includes scenario).....	20%
Pre-Session Reading Assignments.....	30%
Post-Session Project Assignments	<u>50%</u>
Total	100%

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Augsburger, David W. *Caring Enough to Confront: How to Understand and Express Your Deepest Feelings Toward Others*. Ventura, California: Regal Books, 1981.
- Augsburger, David. *Caring Enough To Forgive: True Forgiveness and Caring Enough to Not forgive: False Forgiveness*. Ventura, Calif.: Regal Books, 1981.
- Donnelly Doris. *Learning To Forgive*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1979.
- Friedman, Edwin H. *Generation to Generation: Family Process in Church and Synagogue*. New York: The Penguin Group, 1988.
- Gangel, Kenneth O. and Canine, Samuel L. *Communication and Conflict Management in Churches and Christian Organizations*. Broadman and Holman, 1992.
- Hagberg, Janet O. *Real Power: Stages of Personal Power in Organizations*. Mpls.: Winston Press, 1985.
- Halstead, Kenneth A. *From Stuck to Unstuck: Overcoming Congregational Impasse*. Washington, D.C.: Alban Institute Publication, 1998.
- Halverstadt, Hugh F. *Managing Church Conflict*. Louisville, Ky.: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1991.
- Haugk, Kenneth C. *Antagonists in the Church: How to Identify and Deal with Destructive Conflict*. Minneapolis: Augsburg Press.
- Hoffman, Virginia Curran. *The Codependent Church*. New York: Crossroads, 1991.
- Johnson, David & VanVonderen, Jeff. *The Subtle Power of Spiritual Abuse*. Bethany House Publishers, 1991.
- Keating, Charles J. *Dealing with Difficult People*. New York: Paulist Press, 1984.
- Leas, Speed B. *Leadership and Conflict*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1982.
- Leas, Speed B. *Moving Your Church Through Conflict*. Washington, D.C.: Alban Institute

Publication, 1998.

Leas, Speed B. and Paul Kittlaus. *Church Fights: Managing Conflict in the Local Church*. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1978.

Lederach, J. P. *Understanding Conflict: The Experience, Structure, and Dynamics of Conflict*. MCS Conciliation Quarterly, Summer, 1987, p. 2.

Linn, Dennis and Matthew Linn. *Healing Life's Hurts: Healing Memories Through Five Stages of Forgiveness*. New York: Paulist Press, 1978.

Marshall, Shelley. *Well-Intentioned Dragons*. Bethany House Publishers, 1994.

Mueller, Joan. *Is Forgiveness Possible?* Collegeville, Minn.: The Liturgical Press, 1998.

Patton, John. *Is Human Forgiveness Possible?* Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1985.

Reina, Dennis S., and Michelle L. Reina. *Trust and Betrayal in the Workplace: Building Effective Relationships in Your Organization*. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 1999.

Saint, Steven, and James R. Lawson. *Rules for Reaching Consensus*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1994.

Sande, Ken. *The Peacemaker – A Biblical Guide to Resolving Personal Conflict*. Baker Book House, 1991.

Schell, David W. *Forgiveness Therapy*. St. Meinrad, Ind.: Abbey Press, 1993.

Shelley, Marshall, ed. *Leading Your Church Through Conflict and Reconciliation*. Minneapolis: Bethany House, 1997.

Smedes, Lewis B. *Forgive and Forget: Healing the Hurts We Don't Deserve*. New York: Pocket Books, 1984.

Whitesel, Bob. *Staying Power: Why People Leave the Church Over Change (And What You Can Do About It!)*. Nashville: Abingdon, 2003.

SPECIFIC DATA

Prepared by Wayne H. Lee and Sherry B. Lee, April, 2008.

READING REPORT

To be completed and submitted by Monday, August 18, 2008.

Haugk, Kenneth C. *Antagonists in the Church: How to Identify and Deal with Destructive Conflict.* Pages read _____

Shawchuck, Norman. *How to Manage Conflict in the Church: Conflict Management Learning System including Volume III.* Pages read _____

Shawchuck, Norman and Roger Heuser. *Managing the Congregation.*
Chapter 13: Conflict Management,
Chapter 14: Family Systems Theory,
Chapter 15: Intervening in Dysfunctional Systems Pages read _____

Sande, Ken. *The PeaceMaker: A Biblical Guide to Resolving Personal Personal Conflict.* Pages read _____

Susek, Ron. *Firestorm: Preventing and Overcoming Church Conflicts* Pages read _____

Van Yperen, Jim. *Peace: A Guide to Overcoming Church Conflict*
Pages read _____

Substitute Reading

_____ Pages read _____

_____ Pages read _____

_____ Pages read _____

Name _____

Date _____