



Introducing: Courageous Conversations

ST. CROIX CHURCH
OCT. 11, 2026
W. THIESSEN

Jesus & Conversation

- not afraid to get personal, be vulnerable, name a problem or invite a response
- not afraid to be counter-cultural – to name realities and invite responses different from the culture
- not afraid of how he's perceived
- not afraid to say, “do the hard thing”

Jesus & Conversation

- He was kind and encouraging with the weak, firm and challenging with the powerful – and in either case, compassion looks a lot firmer than we tend to think now
- He would warn about and foretelling consequences
- He would confidently name that what's happening now – what's possible now – is amazing

Meg Wheatley on conversations

- Even among friends, **starting a conversation can take courage. But conversation also gives us courage.** Thinking together, deciding what actions to take, more of us become bold. And we become wiser about where to use our courage. **As we learn from each other's experiences and interpretations, we see the issue in richer detail.** We understand more of the dynamics that have created it. With this clarity, we know what actions to take and where we might have the most influence. We also know when not to act, when right timing means doing nothing.

Meg Wheatley on Paulo Freire

- Paulo Freire, a Brazilian and world educator who used education to support poor people in transforming their lives, said that we “cannot be truly human apart from communication...”
- When we humans don't talk to one another, we stop acting intelligently. We give up the capacity to think about what's going on. We don't act to change anything. We become passive and allow others to tell us what to do. We forfeit our freedom. We become objects, not people. When we don't talk to each other, we give up our humanity. **Freire had a deep faith in every person's ability to be a clear thinker, and a courageous actor.**

Meg Wheatley on conversations

- If you start a conversation, others will surprise you with their talent and generosity, with how their courage grows. I think the greatest source of courage is to realize that if we don't act, nothing will change for the better. Reality doesn't change itself. It needs us to act.
- **It takes courage to start a conversation. But if we don't start talking to one another, nothing will change. Conversation is the way we discover how to transform our world, together.**

Meg Wheatley on conversations

- For conversation to take us into this deeper realm, I believe we have to practice several new behaviors. Here are the principles I've learned to emphasize before we begin a formal conversation process:
 - we acknowledge one another as equals
 - we try to stay curious about each other
 - we recognize that we need each other's help to become better listeners
 - we slow down so we have time to think and reflect
 - we remember that conversation is the natural way humans *think* together
 - we expect it to be messy at times