

**Church of the Nazarene
Theology Conference
December 3-5**

Small Group Discussion Guidelines

Introductory Session

The small groups are intentionally diverse with regard to ministry assignment, region and levels of education. With this in mind, introductions are especially important.

- 1) Have each member of the group briefly introduce himself/herself and say a bit about family, place in ministry, and/or reasons for attending and hope for the conference.
- 2) Briefly review the intended outcomes and ground rules for the small group discussions.

Intended Outcomes

The small groups are arranged for the purpose of conversation among a diverse representation of the church around the core doctrines of the church as presented in the conference papers. It is intended that the conversations will result in:

- 1) mutual learning from the presentations and from the insights of others;
- 2) a greater appreciation for the common heritage we all share in the Church of the Nazarene;
- 3) a greater appreciation for diverse perspectives within our common heritage;
- 4) a spirit of unity in the midst of our diversity;
- 5) a renewed sense of God's call for us as God's holy people to know God, to love God and to serve God in the world; and
- 6) a catalyst for a renewal of holiness in the life of the church.

Discussion Guidelines

Given the diversity of backgrounds and perspectives of people in each small group, attention will need to be given to intentionally hearing and receiving the words of others. With this in mind, there are several “ground rules” that should be observed. It is expected that group leaders will lead the groups with these ground rules in mind.

- 1) Open and close each session with prayer.
- 2) Be careful of persons dominating the discussion. Invite the reticent to voice their perspectives. Make sure that everyone has the opportunity to speak in each small group session.
- 3) As much as possible, respect the views of members of the group and build upon them rather than challenging them or putting them down.
- 4) Keep the discussion generally to the issues related to the Articles of Faith, the presentation of the papers, and relevant implications for the Church of the Nazarene and the broader Church of Jesus Christ.