

HAVING THE CONVERSATION: TIPS FOR LANGUAGE

AVOID...	INSTEAD TRY:
Entering frustrated, or in a rush...	Prepare for the conversation. Pray. Ground yourself with breathing. Remind yourself of your why.
Criticizing or complaining about people...	Talk about the <i>policies</i> that conflict or align with your values.
Partisan talking points...	Talk about how policies impact you, your neighbors, your community. Speak about impacts you see personally or local data.
All or nothing language; violent language...	Look for points of connection where we can work together. Ground yourself in hope. Ask questions and be curious! Use constructive language.
Labels, name-calling, us vs. them...	Labels tend to be divisive. Instead, focus on the humanity of everyone by speaking with love. Ask yourself, "who's they?"
"March, protest, demonstration..."	The Palm Sunday action of this path is a processional worship. Holding to this language emphasizes that what we are doing is grounded in our Christian values, not partisanship.
"Let's not get into politics..."	Politics is nothing more or less than our shared life together in community in organized groups. Which we should definitely talk about together! Draw distinctions between <i>politics</i> and the <i>partisanship</i> that often dominates.
"Church shouldn't get into politics..."	<i>Public witness</i> is a central part of Christian life. We are called to speak clearly and publicly about our values as a way of expressing our faith and caring for our neighbors.