



christian churches together

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Training for Christian Churches Together on the Consensus Process 2021 Edition

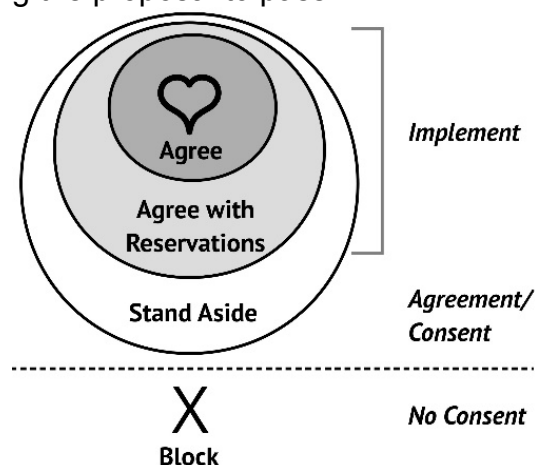
This document is intended for use in training Consensus Facilitators for Christian Churches Together gatherings and meetings. For more detailed information see the "Consensus Manual." It is highly recommended every Consensus Facilitator be thoroughly versed in that document.

1. **VISION:** The vision of CCT is to enable churches and national Christian organizations to grow closer together in Christ in order to strengthen our Christian witness in the world. This vision should be recalled before every gathering, along with a time of worship and a call to humility.
2. **CONSENSUS:** Consensus is the spiritual discipline through which the common heart and mind of the gathered Body is discerned about the wisest way forward on a particular matter at a particular time. CCT strives to make all decisions through a process of consensus-building.
3. **CONSENSUS FACILITATOR:** The Consensus Facilitator is the person assigned to lead this consensus process. This person must be well-versed in the consensus process and would do well to study carefully the full Consensus Manual.
4. **DECISION-MAKING SESSIONS:** CCT has three kinds of sessions: General Sessions (worship or fellowship), Informational Sessions (Bible study or theological teachings of the Families) and Decision-making Sessions (times when decisions need to be made). Consensus Facilitators are responsible for facilitating during Decision-Making Sessions.
5. **QUORUM:** For any decision to be made a quorum must be present. A quorum is two-thirds of all the Participants of CCT, including at least one Participant Representative from each Family.
6. **BEGINNING:** Consensus Facilitators begin by recalling for the Body:
 - a. the CCT Vision,
 - b. what consensus is,
 - c. what listening skills and assertion skills are,

- d. our call to Christ-like genuineness, humility, love and empathy among the whole group all the time, and
- e. the question the group has been called to answer.

7. GUIDELINES: The CCT process is guided by the following principles:

- a. If a person wants to speak, he/she should stand (or raise a hand) and wait to be recognized.
- b. Initial speeches may be up to three minutes in length. Subsequent speakers may speak up to two minutes. The Consensus Facilitator will balance speeches.
- c. Orange and blue cards may be used to indicate the mood of the Body.
- d. No one may interrupt anyone else, except for a Point of Order. The speaker gains the attention of the Consensus Facilitator with the words, "Point of order!"
- e. An Order of the Day necessarily stops the discussion. It is continued after the event.
- f. Remember, consensus does not mean unanimity. Some may feel the decision is not their first option. They can choose to speak against it, and by doing so may turn the tide of the whole Body. There are four options, with the first three allowing the proposal to pass:



- i. Consensus
- ii. Agreement with reservations
- iii. Stand aside
- iv. Block

- g. If the Consensus Facilitator believes the Body is moving toward consensus he/she should summarize the discussion and name the proposed decision. He/she may then want to use the cards one more time or may simply ask if consensus has been achieved.
- h. A time to stretch and pray/think may be given. The whole Body may be called to still themselves for prayer.
- i. If consensus cannot be reached, it is appropriate to refer the issue to the Steering Committee or Executive Committee to decide whether the matter

should still be considered. The issue can also be tabled for a named amount of time.

- j. If the decision must be made at that meeting, the final option is to use the process for Formal Majority (voting).

8. MOVING FORWARD:

- a. Recognition and celebration is appropriate after a decision is discerned. It should be immediately recorded in writing. Remember, decisions are discerned for that particular group at that particular time, and they can change over time. Acknowledgement of those agreeing with reservation or standing aside should be given.
- b. If a decision calls for a Call to Action, a process for its implementation should also be discerned immediately and persons or groups named to lead that process.