



Ambassadors  
of  
Reconciliation™

# Group Reconciliation Assistance



**Assisting  
conflicted  
churches &  
other groups  
to reconcile**

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*Cultivating Lifestyles of Reconciliation*

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# Group Reconciliation Assistance

*The following is an excerpt from AoR's Agreement for Group Reconciliation Assistance.*

## **Biblical Basis for Process** *(certain phrases highlighted for this workshop)*

**Unresolved conflict and broken relationships within a congregation can either tear it apart or provide three opportunities:** to glorify God, to serve others, and to grow to be more like Christ.

**Both the Congregation and AoR believe that as Christians we are guided in our response to conflict by what God teaches us in Holy Scripture.** The basic commandments and promises that provide a biblical response to conflicts between children, between spouses, and between Christian business people are the same commandments and promises that apply in responding to conflict within the church, including conflict resulting from any leadership misconduct.

**When asked to assist a church in reconciliation, AoR seeks to determine the root causes of the conflict and guide and encourage the Congregation's professional workers and lay leaders to respond with biblical faithfulness.** All aspects of assisting the Congregation in reconciliation are conducted in accordance with the *Rules of Procedure for Christian Conciliation* of the Institute for Christian Conciliation. A copy of these rules is included in *Guidelines for Christian Conciliation* (available at [www.iccpeace.com/guidelines](http://www.iccpeace.com/guidelines)). The *Rules of Procedure* are incorporated herein by reference as set forth in their entirety.

**Both the Congregation and AoR acknowledge that a reconciliation team is not an arbitration panel. The reconciliation team will neither ask for nor seek authority to make any binding judgments regarding individual actions or particular issues. AoR does not have authority to terminate elected, called, or employed persons. Instead, the reconciliation team will teach, gather background information through personal interviews with key parties, facilitate meetings between parties who are ready to work toward reconciliation, and offer insights, analysis, and counsel to assist and guide the Congregation toward a biblical resolution of these matters.**

Both the Congregation and AoR agree that **the reconciliation team is not to assume total responsibility for resolution of the conflict.** The team cannot and should not assume this responsibility. While the reconciliation team will work with the Congregation to identify individuals involved with the conflict who would be key candidates for private mediation, it is the Congregation's responsibility to exercise discipline if necessary. **In other words, since Christ gave the Office of the Keys to the church, the Congregation should not expect the reconciliation team to replace in any way the responsibility that can be exercised only by the Congregation and its appointed leaders.**

Although the Lord has blessed the reconciliation team members in this area, both the Congregation and AoR recognize that **the reconciliation team's role is limited. The reconciliation team is to clearly and accurately teach and challenge listeners with God's Word; however, only God can grant repentance and change a person's heart** (2 Timothy 2:24-26).

This process is designed to assist the Congregation's leaders and members in addressing current biblical obligations towards those who have been deeply hurt, leadership challenges, potential long-term cultural norms in the Congregation, community relations, and individual coaching opportunities – all incorporating the ministry of reconciliation given us in Jesus Christ.

## Team Approach

- Varies with size of congregation, usually from two to six people
- Team often includes a pastor, a lay man, and a lay woman.
- May include special backgrounds according to needs, e.g., attorney, counselor, etc.

## Process

### THE FIRST PART (including four to five-day on-site visit)

1. **Conflict Resolution vs. Reconciliation** (or another Bible study seminar on peacemaking)
2. **Data-gathering and coaching appointments**
  - a. Conduct in-person meetings with:
    - Individual Leaders (staff and non-staff)
    - Leadership groups (e.g., elders, deacons, council, school board, etc.)
    - All households in the congregation
  - b. Collect information from two coaching forms during appointments
  - c. Share Scripture, give Gospel-based hope, coach each appointment, and pray
3. **Homework**

Assigned to leaders, leadership groups, and entire congregation

### BETWEEN FIRST AND SECOND PART

Church leaders and members complete homework  
Reconciliation team studies all data, including coaching appointment forms & notes  
Identify key parties for more coaching and possible mediations  
Contact key parties for coaching and mediation appointments

### THE SECOND PART (including a three and a half-day on-site visit)

4. **Coaching, Consultation, Mediation and Teaching**
  - More extensive coaching for key individuals
  - Mediation for key parties
  - Teaching of leadership groups
5. **Initial Oral Report**
  - Provide opportunity for reports of any reconciliation (by parties – protect confidentiality)
  - Provide opportunity at end of report for public confession and forgiveness

### THE THIRD PART (Written Report within 30 days)

6. **Written Report**
  - Documentation of process utilized
  - Description of the church's blessings and weaknesses
  - Problem identification and clarification of major conflicts
  - Identification of sinful behaviors (Ten Commandments broken) and underlying idols
  - Proclamation of God's forgiveness through Christ
  - Report on reconciliations achieved and still needed
  - Recommendations (spiritual and material; short-term and long-term)

## THE FOURTH PART (Follow-up)

### 7. Ongoing Peacemaking

Recommend appointment of congregational reconcilers  
Recommend support training of congregational reconcilers

### 8. Follow-Up Visit (1 day on-site)

May include additional coaching or mediation  
May include leadership training  
Encouragement

## Additional Agreement Terms

Christian Conciliation Clause  
Approval by Congregation (or its authorized leadership)

## Group Reconciliation Assistance (GRA) Training

### GRA Practicum (June 13-15, 2018, Fergus Falls, Minnesota)

A three-day intensive practicum preparing you to be part of a team to assist a group (church, school, or other Christian organization) for reconciliation.

Pre-requisites: Must have completed 2-day *Conflict Coaching* practicum and 2-day *Mediating People in Conflict* practicum by one of these peacemaking ministries:

- Ambassadors of Reconciliation
- Peacemaker Ministries (since 2012)
- PeaceWise (in Australia)
- Other courses or qualifications that meet the pre-requisite requirements include:
  - *AoR Church Reconciler Training* (week-long course)
  - D-Min Course taught by AoR at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis (6 credit course)
  - Designation as a Certified Christian Conciliator by the Institute for Christian Conciliation

### Leading GRA Teams (June 16, 2018, Fergus Falls, Minnesota)

A one-day intensive course preparing you to lead a GRA team. This course includes:

- Proposing a GRA
- Assembling and Leading a Team
- Teaching the Bible Study Seminar on Biblical Peacemaking
- Scheduling Interviews
- Conducting Group interviews
- Preparing and Assigning Homework between Visits
- Preparing and Delivering Reports

AoR strongly recommends that **in addition to training**, team leaders have experience in coaching, mediation, and serving on a GRA team before leading a reconciliation

Pre-requisite: Must have completed one of the following:

- AoR GRA Practicum
- Peacemaker Ministries' *Reconciling Church Conflict* course (since 2012)