

This workshop will help you understand . . .

- A systems view of conflict, recognizing that we all play a role when conflict erupts.
- That one needs to focus on one's own functioning in the midst of conflict, rather than blaming others.
- The difference between acute anxiety and multigenerational chronic anxiety.
- How chronic anxiety can amplify the level of reactivity to a current moment of acute anxiety.
- That self-differentiated leadership is the key to overcoming resistance.
- That conflict need not be bad, but is an opportunity for growth.
- Your own style of response to conflict.
- The communication skills necessary to bring about reconciliation.
- Interest-based problem-solving as the path to win-win agreements.
- How to identify historic conflict patterns within an organizational system.

“All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation.”

(2 Corinthians 5:18)



For information about Systems Thinking Ministry – training, family systems coaching for clergy, consulting – contact: RBlackburn1921@gmail.com

The same email address can be used to seek further information about the reconciliation process.

About the Workshop:

On February 27, 2025, Bishop Stevenson issued a statement “in regards to Shrine Mont Camps... calling for a time of intentional listening, sharing, and prayer, with the goal of reconciliation.”

The reconciliation process includes: information gathering phase, education phase, healing phase, and problem-solving phase. The information gathering phase includes: telephone interviews with key stakeholders representing the diverse perspectives surrounding past conflicts; and a series of small group sessions for which all are encouraged to sign up to participate.

This workshop, as the main part of the education phase, is designed to prepare people to participate in the small group sessions and the healing phase of the process in a way that contributes to reconciliation. People will be equipped with the skills that they will be asked to draw upon during the healing sessions, while also being familiarized with the systems thinking foundation that will guide those sessions.

The small group structured dialogue sessions are scheduled for May 17, 2025, and will be held at the diocesan office. Participants will attend one 90 minute session, where all will be given uninterrupted time to share their perspective, while interests are being documented that will ultimately feed into the problem-solving process.

Sessions in the healing phase are scheduled for August 9 and September 6, 2025 – 9:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. each day. More will be communicated about those sessions later. For now participants are asked to hold open those dates on their calendars. Options regarding the problem-solving phase will emerge from the process and be scheduled after the healing phase is completed.

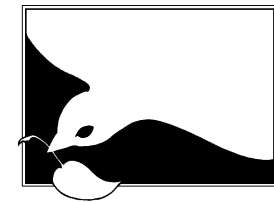
Systems Thinking and Conflict Transformation

May 3, 2025

9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

**Grace & Holy Trinity
Episcopal Church**

8 N Laurel Street
Richmond, VA



Sponsored by
Episcopal Diocese of Virginia

Led by:
Richard Blackburn

Systems Thinking Ministry
Leadership Training, Coaching, Consulting

Who Will Benefit:

The workshop is designed for:

- All connected with Shrine Mont Camps who may have been impacted by past conflicts and have a vision for healing and reconciliation.

Workshop Location:

Grace and Holy Trinity Episcopal Church
8 N Laurel Street
Richmond, VA

Workshop Leader:

Rev. Richard Blackburn is a trainer, coach, and mediator, with broad experience in serving as a consultant to conflicted church systems. He participated in Dr. Edwin Friedman's *Postgraduate Clergy Seminar in Family Emotional Process* and the *Postgraduate Program in Family Systems Theory and Its Applications* at the Bowen Center for the Study of the Family in Washington, D.C.

He regularly serves as a coach to pastors and others via Zoom who face challenging situations in their ministry setting. The coaching process focuses on understanding the situation through the lens of systems thinking, while challenging one to manage self in the midst of anxiety from a family systems perspective. He previously served as Executive Director of the Lombard Mennonite Peace Center for 37 years, having retired in 2020.

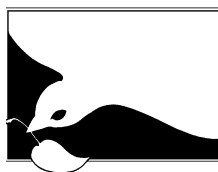
Registration:

Registration is being handled by the staff of the Episcopal Diocese of Virginia. In order to ensure that you receive the Doodle invitation to register online, you may contact Bill Martin at bmartin@episcopalvirginia.org. Registration must be completed **no later than April 23, 2025**, to ensure that we have sufficient workshop manuals.

Workshop Schedule:

Saturday, May 3, 2025

8:30-9:00	Registration
9:00-10:30	<i>What Is Systems Thinking</i> <i>Healthy Church Systems Respond to Anxiety</i>
10:30-10:45	Break
10:45-12:15	<i>Healthy Church Systems Invite Differentiation of Self</i> <i>Healthy Church Systems Focus on Strengths</i>
12:15-1:00	Lunch
1:00-2:30	<i>Healthy Church Systems Transform Conflict</i> <i>The Nature and Role of Conflict</i> <i>Understanding Your Style of Response to Conflict</i>
2:30-2:45	Break
2:45-4:30	<i>Win-Win Collaborative Skills</i> <i>Organizational Responses to Conflict</i>



Further Information:

The content issues surrounding past conflicts will not be discussed at the workshop. It will be purely educational in nature. Discussion surrounding content issues will take place during the subsequent sessions in the process, beginning with the May 17, 2025, small group structured dialogue sessions. The workshop is designed to equip people to participate in those later sessions in a non-reactive, non-blaming way, while demonstrating empathetic listening – key steps toward achieving the desired goal of reconciliation.

All are encouraged to attend the workshop in person, which will allow participants to reap the most benefit. For those who live at a distance from Richmond and are not able to travel to attend the workshop, participation via Zoom will be offered.

However, participation via Zoom will have its limitations regarding ability to fully participate in the role play and small group exercises. Moreover, one goal of the workshop is accomplished by having people, who may hold differing perspectives on past conflicts, join together in a shared, on-site learning experience.

Those participating via Zoom will miss the opportunity for the kind of interpersonal interactions, which happen both when "in-session" and during breaks, that can lay a foundation for the genuine reconciliation we seek to facilitate when we get to the healing phase of the process. Thus, Zoom participation is limited to those who will not be able to travel to Richmond for the workshop – or have a special circumstance.