

A close-up photograph of several dandelion seed heads, rendered in a light blue, semi-transparent style. The seed heads are arranged in a diagonal line from the top left towards the center, with their fine, radiating seeds clearly visible. The background is a soft, light blue gradient.

Engaging Conflict

Wisconsin UMC Laity Leadership Convocation 2016

Greg Carpenter and Chris Santos-Lang

Why Engage Conflict?

“Understanding what conflict is helps to make clear why we encourage its engagement. *Conflict, simply stated, is two ideas trying to share space.* The conflict may be one of values, or interests, access to information or interpretation of data, or as often believed, conflict could even be about personalities. People usually only acknowledge the presence of conflict when the behaviors that happen in response to the conflict become unacceptable. It is worth emphasizing that shouting, fighting, passive aggressive resistance to plans, and similarly disruptive behaviors are NOT conflict. These are most often a response to conflict and the behaviors themselves become secondarily conflict producing. When the behavior becomes unacceptable, conflict management efforts often focus on the behavior not the conflict. We encourage parties to engage the conflict itself and not simply the responses to conflict.”

Hooker, David Anderson "Engaging Conflict." *JustPeace eNewsletter*, Web, January, 2016

Just Peace Approach

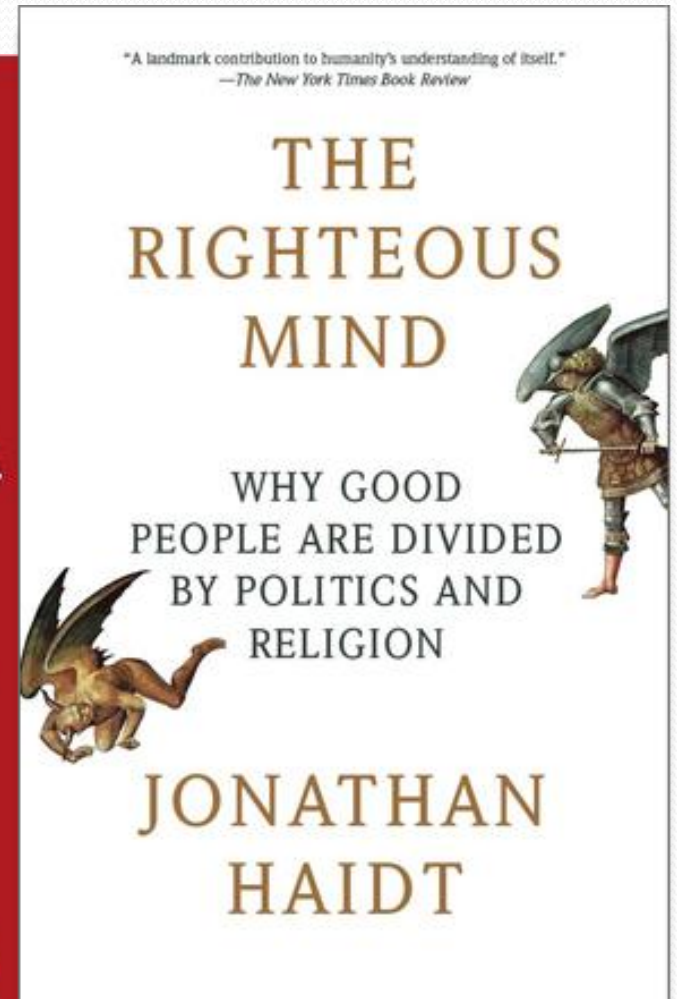
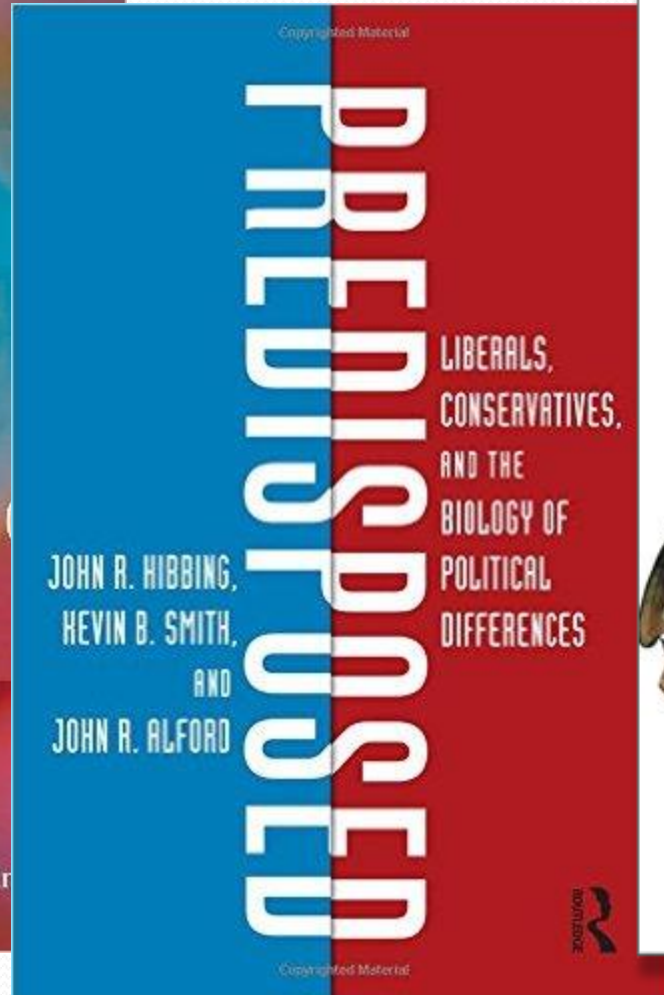
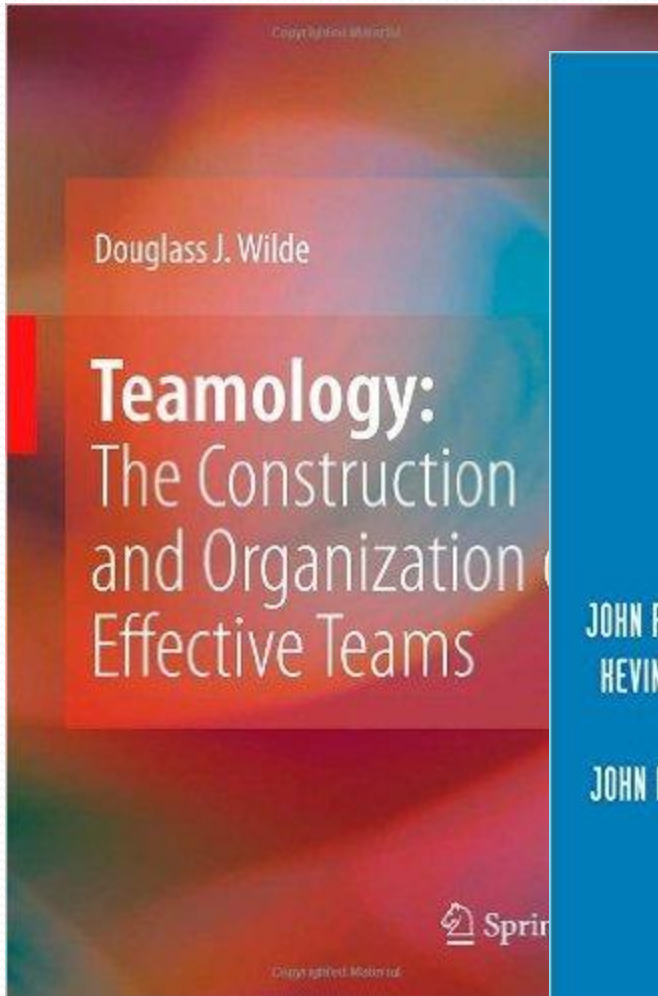
In order to engage conflict we must first acknowledge that:
People are not the problem; the problem is the problem.

Just Peace incorporates these four principles when entering into congregational, community, and denominational conflicts.

- Embracing Conflict
- Honoring Relationships
- Welcoming Conversation
- Transforming Community

Hooker, David Anderson "Engaging Conflict." *JustPeace eNewsletter*, Web, January, 2016

Conflict Research





To Attain Humility

- **Scriptures** which reveal your weakness
- Reproducible **tests/experiments**
- **Listening** to people who differ from yourself

To Manage:

- **Monitor** changes in diversity and support for diversity

Conflict Management

Wisconsin Conference of the United Methodist Church
Conflict Management Resources 2016
750 Windsor Street, Sun Prairie, WI 53590
Phone: 608-837-7328 Toll Free: 888-240-7328

Response Team -- addressing claims and charges of clergy misconduct

Conflict Transformation Team -- addressing congregational conflict situations and resourcing for healthier congregational environments.

Cross-Cultural Appointments Task Force -- addressing the challenges for both clergy and congregation in cross-racial, cross-ethnic, cross-cultural appointments. Hope to do a better job preparing both for effective ministry; less remedial/reactive process.

Commission on Religion and Race (CORR) -- addressing the larger challenges of racial and ethnic minority issues in an increasingly diverse church.