

# REDISCOVER MACEDONIA

A spirit of gratitude and generosity



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
God's work. Our hands.

## LOAVES

There is an art to conversation. Here is one word that summarizes six helpful ways to have a masterful conversation.

**Listen**                   *... let everyone be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to anger.*  
James 1:19

Good listening skills are vital to healthy relationships. You become an active listener when you make a conscious effort to hear not only the words that another person is saying but, more importantly, try to understand the complete message being sent. In order to do this, you must pay attention to the other person very carefully. Some refer to this as listening with your heart. Helpful ways to become an active listener are: *maintain eye contact; don't interrupt the speaker; sit still; nod your head when agreeing; lean toward the speaker; and ask appropriate questions when the speaker has finished.*

**Observe**                   *Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.*  
Psalm 119:105

For people in leadership roles, developing a keen sense of observation is a must. Observation describes the act of taking notice, fixing the mind upon something. Observation is *not just the seeing*, but is also the *comprehending what you see*. This allows you to become mentally aware of what you observe. So, simply put, keep your eyes and ears open at all times and never fail to register what you see or hear.

**Assess**                   *For judgment will be without mercy to anyone who has shown no mercy; mercy triumphs over judgment.*  
James 2:13

It is often easy to judge others. Yet with an open heart, it is easy to listen to others without judging. It is in this listening that a relationship is developed. Sometimes this may be a ministry of presence, where time seems to stop.

**Value**                   *But even the hairs of your head are all counted. Do not be afraid; you are of more value than many sparrows.*  
Luke 12:7

Value is so very important to the success of ministries. To value someone is more than regarding them as important. To value them is to appreciate their finer qualities and to invest time, energy, effort and sacrifice in sustaining the relationship. Above all, you *treat* them well. It is important to create a positive climate in which people feel encouraged to participate; where their views, ideas, contributions and efforts are valued. Affirm what people are doing in their ministry and tell them you value all the work they do.

**Encourage**

*Therefore encourage one another and build up each other,  
as indeed you are doing. 1 Thessalonians 5:11*

One of the most powerful forces in our lives is encouragement. Encouragement is so important because it is life-altering; not only for the person who gets it, but also for the one who gives it. It is an asset that does not diminish. When you encourage people, you are giving them a reason to pursue their goal or dream. You're saying you "get it" and that may just give them the confidence to move forward and go for it. Don't pass up the opportunity to encourage others. Your simple words of encouragement can have a profound effect on someone's life. If you see someone with a great talent, point it out and lift it up.

**Support**

*...we ought to support such people, so that we may become  
co-workers with the truth. 3 John 1:8*

Giving support or mentoring is an essential leadership skill and is important to helping others continue to learn, grow and become more effective in their ministry. Giving support includes helping and guiding another individual's development of their skills. A mentor shares ideas and resources; offers open and honest communication; is non-judgmental; shows respect; and is willing to spend time building relationships.