

Holly Osburn: 11/5/19
Peacemaking

Dear Springs Family,

My name is Holly Osburn. My husband, Mike and I have been members of The Springs for the last 20 plus years. Recently, I was asked to lead the Peacemakers team. I wanted to write and tell you a little about what the Peacemakers team is, and why I think it is important.

Our peacemaking team is a group of people who will work to educate our members on Godly conflict management and to cultivate a culture of peace both internally and externally. We will be offering Peacemakers classes this fall and spring of next year. The team members include Monema Stephens, Josh Nichols, Melia Mullins and Andy Harbert.

I'd like to explain why I think Peacemakers is important by telling you a little about me. I was raised in the church (as they say). My parents and my church taught me to do the right thing which meant things like always tell the truth, don't take advantage of others, and be kind. These were the values my family and church instilled in me. They shaped who I am today and I am more than thankful for them. However, while I know I got a very solid start, over the years I have found that my upbringing didn't give me all the tools I needed to deal with the difficult conflicts that I had at work, with my family and friends, within my marriage or even in the church. The lessons I had weren't "real" enough to be relevant when things got raw and hard. I found this to be true with my fellow Christians as well. We are willing to "love" until we disagree and be "kind" until we have a point to make. Despite my shared love for Christ with many people, heartbreaking conflict still happens ... a lot.

As a result of serious conflict in our own church, I was introduced to an organization called Peacemakers, a non-profit established by a Christian attorney named Ken Sande who wrote a book, also entitled Peacemakers, about how to biblically deal with conflict. The Peacemakers organization creates resources, writes curriculum, and trains people to deal with conflict using the Bible as a guide.

The training I received opened my eyes to many things I need to do differently in my own conflicts. For example, when I started the training I believed that I didn't have issues with conflict, but I quickly learned that is because I tend to avoid conflict rather than deal with it biblically. Before, I viewed conflict as a sign that something was wrong, unhealthy or perverse in a relationship. Through Peacemakers, I learned that conflict is actually an opportunity to show God's love in a very tangible way and make a relationship stronger. Learning these biblically based principles changed the way I view conflict.

I have learned that the power of the gospel can be found when we honor God through conflict. As a result of our history, the Springs wants to continue to cultivate a culture of peace that is only available through Jesus Christ. The principles that come from Peacemakers can help us all

as we deal with problems we have at church, at work, with our spouses or in parenting. We hope you will join us in pursuing peace as a priority in our everyday lives.