

The Round Table of the UMC in Germany

Guidelines for the Round Table discussions

The continued series of discussions at the Round Table meetings were also made possible by the reassurance that the agreed "Guidelines for Cooperation" were clearly understood and constantly in focus. The members of the Round Table are convinced that these guidelines are of fundamental importance and reach far beyond the work and the proposals of the Round Table. Based on trust and a will to journey together, the guidelines are crucial for every aspect of church life:

- **We present each other's point of view as fairly as possible.**
We refrain from generalizing judgments and over-simplified, prejudiced portrayals of each other, and we sincerely endeavor to understand the other person and to take them seriously.
- **We endeavor to break the winner-loser model.**
We prioritize the question »What does the other person need?« over »What do I need?«
- **We assume good things about one another.**
We agree to believe that we speak and act sincerely according to our respective beliefs. On this basis, any disagreements or

questionable behavior must be clarified openly.

- **We may argue with each other, but not in ways that lead to public polarization.**
Even more: We pro-actively oppose all harmful attempts at polarization, and are quick to have a moderating effect on our environment.
- **We approach the questions at hand with wisdom and theological sophistication.**
The Methodist »Quadrilateral« (the scripture, tradition, reason, and experience) serves as a helpful framework for our communication. Simple black and white thinking does not help.
- **We base our speeches and actions on the model of »convicted humility«.**
We share our deep convictions and stand up for our point of view. However, we combine this with humility, which knows that all knowledge remains piecemeal (1 Cor 13:9, 12, 13) and therefore needs to be supplemented and corrected.
- **We believe each other's faith.**
We acknowledge one another's love for Jesus Christ, for the Scripture, for our Church, and for our mission.