

Learning to listen to those you disagree with can often be a fraught task, but faith can enable deep connections to form despite difference, according to Christian podcasters.



The co-hosts of *With All Due Respect* are two Christians with differing views on life and faith.

Megan and Michael agree, however, their faith can help them.

Michael explained: "Our society has really lost the ability to disagree well. But of all people, I think Christians have a chance to do this better."

Megan added: "If we trust in God then we don't have to fight all the battles right here, right now, by ourselves. We are actually freed to act graciously, to act sacrificially."

One example of conflict includes ordained ministry for women.

Yet both acknowledge their friendship does not depend on the resolution of their areas of disagreement or on abandoning their convictions.

Nor does it depend on avoiding differences and focusing only on what they have in common. It depends on a commitment to having a relationship. It is this commitment that enables them sometimes to explore the more painful topics together knowing that agreement is unlikely.

Both Megan and Michael's actions have prompted wider discussion. The "counter-cultural" act of disagreeing well can prove inspiring. Megan said: "Suddenly we're both no longer as much in our echo chambers."

These issues can be explored in *The Difference Course* an five-session course which equips participants with the skills to disagree well.

In each session, the course applies three "habits" that help us encounter others well, cross divides and see society transformed. These are "be curious", "be present", and "reimagine".

The Church of England's theme for Lent 2022 is Embracing Justice, with daily reflections linked to a weekly topic.

The third week of Lent's topic is 'Justice as Encounter' with a suggested action to 'try to speak to someone you would not normally speak to someone you disagree with.'

More information:

- More information can be found on [The Difference Course training and resource hub](#), with an introduction by Archbishop Justin Welby.
- It can be run by both large and small groups, online and in-person.
- The *With All Due Respect* podcast is a Christian podcast available online.

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