

Bridge-Roadblock-Emerging Trail Exercise Group Work

Bridges

- Social Principles (x5)
- Shared values + concerns
- Great + brave leaders
- Wesleyan tradition/heritage (x2)
- Agency staff
- Building trust (from existing relationships)
- Relying on God's providence (positive intent, God doesn't abandon) as an undergirding/framework
- Watching over one another in love
- Holiness
- Wanting to ensure marginalized groups don't get thrown into "lava"
- Listening
- Wespeth serves vulnerable people
- Social + political differences as an asset
- Trust
- Power of capital
- Presumed integrity
- Be UMC
- Deep faith + commitment
- Diversity of experiences
- Concern for future generations
- Connecting one side to another
- Bridge on a ship for leadership
- Dental bridge
- Bridge in music
- Bridge in glasses
- Power source
- Clergy-lay partnerships
- Jesus
- John Wesley
- Hope
- Creativity
- Talent
- Discipleship
- Want a secure future for our clergy

- Care about all people and human rights
- Want to save our planet
- Building relationships
- Openness to others including ideas I disagree with
- Trust the Holy Spirit to fill the unknown
- Desire to live up to what we have said
- Responsibility to commitments
- Shared commitment to change
- Diverse cultural contribution
- Shared work that has to get done

Roadblocks

- Passive vs. active investing
- Funding
- Conflicting issues + desires
- Being mean
- Condescension
- Impatience
- Hurt people hurt people
- Power differences
- Different kinds of extremism
- Contextual needs and challenges
- Lack of transparency
- Trauma
- Lack of subject matter expertise
- All or nothing/reductionist
- Fear + anxiety → gets misplaced
- Mistrust
- Use of bad theology
- Opposite sides
- Assuming intent
- Hopelessness
- Hostile government
- Perspective: “Who is the problem?” What may be a roadblock for one is an aggressor for another
- Increase returns vs. Social responsibility
- Closed mindset

- Best to: Avoid? Invest + influence? Just invest only?
- Competing interests
- Trust/distrust
- Familiarity
- Accountability
- Experience of harm from fossil fuel companies
- Language/definitions
- To whom does 717 apply?
- Lack of awareness
- Knowledge from Gen. to local
- Conflicting commitments + accountabilities
- Distrust
- Past actions
- Contradictory messages (“Fiduciary duty” vs. “People over profits”)
- Lack of experience/expertise
- Stubbornness
- Different understanding of how hard investing is
- Do we expect a breakthrough
- Risk
- Fear
- Differing timelines
- Tension
- The muscle memory in the UMC = fighting
- The naysayers
- Perfectionism
- Different words/language but meaning similar things or using same word but meaning different things
- Splitting hairs, turtles all the way down
- At what point have we divested “enough?”
- Are the communities + community leaders most impacted being thought of and protected? (Rural churches, oil-dependent communities)
- Choosing some neighbors over others
- Moral dilemma
- Privilege
- Power
- Money
- Segregation

Emerging Trails

- Engagement strategy ???? pullout point (??)
- Coming together for solutions focus on impact
- More ??? on strategy
- Flexible strategizing
- Real relationships
- Building trust
- More transparency
- Divestment does not equal disengagement
- Invest wisely + justly
- Understanding shared perspectives
- Create deeper awareness of Social Principles
- Central conference allies to increase familiarization of investment process
- GC 2028 majority shifts
- Inclusion of organized central conference delegates
- Amenable timeline to divest
- Conversation + engagement
- Consensus on some revisions to 717
- Positive use of power for good
- Jesus
- Wesley
- Justice
- Joy
- Relationships
- Holy conferencing
- Collaboration
- Acceptance of differences
- Big tent approach
- New ways of talking
- Should someone else be leading this conversation
- Have ecumenical or interfaith partners already done this? What can we learn?
- Building together
- Seeing eye-to-eye through conversation!
- Social media campaigning
- Intentional education
- Let's talk about what we are gaining, not losing
- Inviting more voices, greater collaboration + consensus