

Called Together

A Guided Conversation on Courage, Calling, and Mutuality

An Awaken Formation Resource

About This Resource

Awaken exists to support and partner with the Church as women and men discern God's call and lead together according to gifts and grace. This facilitator guide is designed to help churches cultivate spaces where **mutuality is practiced**, not debated—where courage grows quietly through obedience, listening, and shared discernment.

This resource is not a curriculum to master or a problem to solve. It is a **formation practice**—an invitation to slow down, listen well, and attend to the Spirit's work among us.

Purpose

To create a hospitable, prayerful space where men and women: - Share stories of calling and courage - Listen across difference with humility and grace - Discern how God may be inviting the community toward deeper mutuality

Intended Context

- Mixed-gender groups (8–20 participants)
- Leadership teams, ministry teams, or intentional small groups
- Churches seeking to cultivate equity, trust, and shared leadership over time

Recommended Time: 75–90 minutes (adaptable to 60)

The Role of the Facilitator

Facilitators are not teachers or referees. They are **keepers of the space**.

Your role is to: - Set a tone of curiosity and humility - Protect the voices in the room - Hold silence without rushing resolution - Trust the Spirit's work in unfinished conversations

Whenever possible, Awaken encourages **co-facilitation by a woman and a man**, modeling shared leadership and mutual trust.

Preparing the Space

Prepare Your Own Posture

Before the gathering, spend time in prayer: - Ask God for attentiveness rather than outcomes - Release the need to manage agreement or consensus - Pray for courage shaped by love, not urgency

Prepare the Room

- Arrange seating in a circle or around tables where everyone can be seen
- Avoid podiums or hierarchical placement
- Consider a simple center: an open Bible, a candle, or printed Scripture

Opening the Gathering (10 minutes)

Welcome & Framing

Read aloud or paraphrase:

“Tonight is not about arriving at conclusions or solving questions about leadership. It is about listening—listening to God and to one another—as we seek to grow in mutuality marked by equity and grace.”

Establish a Shared Covenant

Invite the group to agree to these practices:

- Speak from personal experience (use *I* statements)
- Listen without interruption or correction
- Honor stories without needing consensus
- Leave space for silence
- Trust God’s work in ongoing formation

Pause and invite visible or verbal agreement.

Guiding the Conversation

Movement 1: Remembering the Call (15 minutes)

Formation Focus: Story before structure

Invite participants to respond to: - *Where did you first sense God’s invitation to lead or serve?* - *What did courage look like in that season?*

Facilitator Notes: - Encourage brief sharing (1–2 minutes) - Gently redirect if someone begins teaching or generalizing - Affirm stories without evaluating them

Movement 2: Naming What Shapes Courage (15 minutes)

Formation Focus: Honoring complexity

Invite reflection on: - *What has helped your courage grow over time?* - *What has made responding to God's call more difficult or complex?*

Optional prompt: - *How have gender expectations—spoken or unspoken—shaped your experience of calling?*

Facilitator Notes: - Normalize tension and mixed emotions - If pain or exclusion is shared, acknowledge it without explaining or defending - Thank participants for their trust

Movement 3: Listening for God Together (15 minutes)

Formation Focus: Communal discernment

Invite the group to consider: - *Where have we seen God at work when men and women lead together well?* - *What practices help us discern faithfully as a community?*

Gently shift the group from individual experience to shared noticing.

Holding the Space Well

When Tension Emerges

- Pause the conversation
- Invite a breath or moment of silence
- Re-center on shared desire for faithfulness

When One Voice Dominates

Say kindly:

“Let's pause and hear from a few voices we haven't heard yet.”

When Silence Feels Heavy

Trust it. Silence is often where discernment deepens.

Closing the Gathering (10–15 minutes)

Reflection

Invite participants to sit quietly with: - *Where might God be inviting me—or us—to deeper trust and shared courage?*

Closing Prayer or Blessing

Offer a prayer that names: - Wisdom without haste - Courage without coercion - Mutuality shaped by grace and love

End by thanking the group for their presence and attentiveness.

After the Conversation

Awaken encourages facilitators to: - Debrief with co-facilitators - Notice themes without rushing to action steps - Share insights with leadership **without naming individuals**

Mutuality is formed over time through faithful listening and shared obedience.

Awaken partners with the Church to empower, equip, and engage women for leadership—cultivating communities where women and men lead together according to gifts and calling.