

What's Your Political Story?

Think about your own political preferences, beliefs, and leanings (not your family's or community's) and place an X on the line below where you think you generally land.

VERY LIBERAL LIBERAL MODERATE CONSERVATIVE VERY CONSERVATIVE

Now look around at your peers in class. Write a sentence stating where you think the class *on average* is on this political spectrum relative to you—i.e. more conservative, more liberal, about the same, etc.—and why.

.....

What's Your Political Story?

Where do our political beliefs come from? Do we inherit them from our parents or our faith communities? As we think about where we stand on certain issues and how we relate to others, it is important to recognize that our perspectives are often influenced—positively or negatively—by our life stories and circumstances. The following questions are intended to help you reflect on these influences.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- What are your earliest memories related to politics or a public decision? What emotions do you associate with those memories?
- In what ways do you think your family has influenced your views and postures in relation to politics and civic engagement?
- In what ways do you think your church or faith community has influenced your views and postures in relation to politics and civic engagement?
- Is there a political decision or issue that you have come to change your mind about? What helped you change your mind?
- Is there a particular experience or relationship that has impacted your political views or postures?

- Can you think of occasions when your own reaction to political differences has leaned toward hit, hug, handshake, or heal? What has influenced that response?

JOURNAL

Write a page or so describing your own most frequent posture toward political issues and political differences with others and what you think have been the main influences on it. Are there ways in which you would like it to change? If so, how?