

*A Third Way Youth Writing Contest:
Exploring Solutions for Difficult Problems*
Guidelines



There are many times in our culture that we hear of only have two solutions for a problem. Either you go with option A or option B. But when option A is enacted, people who liked option B are angered or frustrated and vice versa. But we are proposing that is a way to step past these polarized issues and find “A Third Way” or another option that can bring people together and help solve the problem. We are asking the middle school, high school and college students of The Peoples Church to help us find these ways by submitting an essay or piece of narrative writing.

The essay contest is divided into categories for middle school, high school, and college students. Essays and narratives, which draw on your own experiences, must be the original unpublished work of the young person submitting it to the contest.

Structure your essay or narrative using these five questions:

- 1) What is the problem as you see it?
- 2) What consequences of the problem do you see if not resolved?
- 3) What is your proposed solution? Please reflect on the fruits of the spirit as found in Galatians 5:22-23.
 - a. How can one embody one of the fruits of the spirit to solve this problem?
- 4) What are the costs and benefits of your proposed solution? (Costs might entail time, change in attitude or behavior, work effort, physical space, and so on, and not just money.)
- 5) How can people be confident that your solution would work? What would you say to respectfully address the concerns of people who disagreed with you?

Length and Prizes		1 st	2 nd	3 rd
Middle school:	600-800 words	\$50	\$30	\$20
High School:	800-1000 words	\$100	\$50	\$25
College:	1000-1500 words	\$200	\$100	\$50

Submission should be sent to fruitofagape@gmail.com via a Word document. The deadline is January 28, 2018.

A Third Way Youth Writing Contest is co-sponsored with the Fruit of Agape Community Transformation and The Peoples Church of East Lansing.

Essay objectives applied to any format would be as follows:

- 1) Because human beings need to resist a tendency to focus only on problems, the solution needs to make up *at least* half of the content of the essays submitted for this contest.
- 2) The writer will seek to establish common ground to bring people together. For example, while people have different ideas about how to address childhood poverty, every reasonable person can be expected to agree that no child should go to bed hungry.
- 3) The bottom line measure for evaluating solutions is as follows: The best solutions bring about the most benefits to the most people for the least costs. Because many problems are complicated, they require multiple solutions. By proposing our ideas and listening openly to those proposed by other people, we encourage the best thinking to resolve difficult challenges we face in our world today.