

ONA May 8, 2008  
Minutes

Present: Gail Hall, Tim Dostie, Wendy Ware, Katie Hoffman-Fulda, Michael Bower, Bob Inderbitzen, Ron Robbins, Bill Hoffman, Pat Howland, Stephanie Heneghan, Tom Rolfe, Laurel Cole and Steve Smith.

Absent: Mary Dean

The meeting opened at 7:34 with prayer led by Tim.

Minutes from April 22 were adopted and will be posted.

Pat did a debrief on the Wayne Rollins program evaluations. There were 7 non-committee member evaluations. Everyone was very positive about the 2<sup>nd</sup> hour. 4 people wanted him back for a future second hour. Suggestion for a second hour showing the DVD when ready. Gail said that she'd heard not as positive comments from a couple of people. One was that he came across as partisan rather than scholarly, the other that he didn't handle Chuck Lexius's question very well.

Debrief on input from Boards and Committees on the ONA process.

**Diaconate:** discussed the process and had some ideas on how we should conduct the process. Some felt flat out that we should end now and bring it to a vote. Others were concerned about getting more participation.

**Trustees:** think that we are doing a good job communicating. Everyone on the Board spoke. Lots of people use the web site to stay up to date. It was felt that we are reaching the people who care. Also there is a feeling that there isn't a way to bring in people who don't want to participate.

**Missions:** Michael also talked to people in the Bell Choir before speaking on Missions. Generally supporting, we should not have an anonymous vote on an ONA resolution when the time for a vote comes. Missions thought we were doing a good job and that we are communicating well. Attendance at second hours is good. One person thought that we'd also gone through the process years ago. Someone said that they'd already left a Church because of ONA not being supported and that they were getting too old to leave another Church.

**ONA Advisory:** Marveled at the great turn out that we are getting. The issue of Church members who don't want to participate was discussed. This is seen as a pattern in this Church going back to at least the 1990s. We shouldn't take that burden on ourselves to solve this. For those who did not want to have their name conveyed to the committee and who did not want to discuss things with the Committee, Jonathan and Donna offered a pastoral channel for them to use. It was suggested that committee members who are approached should ask if they are willing to have their name revealed to the committee and, if not, then to Jonathan or Donna.

**Inreach:** Discussion went on for some time to talk to people who were new to the committee. Committee members have been attending the second hours.

Congregational Feedback. One of the outstanding questions is how to present both sides of the issue. Donna and Jonathan suggested "Confessing Christ Movement" has a little different twist on the Biblical subject.

Where do we go from here?

1. Bill thought that we should keep moving. We should develop a one-time communication on the lines of "this is what we are doing and how we are sharing information... we understand that people may not be comfortable verbally participating in the process... here are some other ideas on how to get you involved with the process." We should maybe also send out a mailing on this telling people how we'd really like them to participate and that there are additional mechanisms to participate for them to use.
2. Tom wondered whether maybe we are ready to move on... maybe we need to move on to the next issue which is how the change might effect my Church, what does it mean to be Gay, etc. We need to stop flogging ourselves about not getting people who don't choose to participate involved in the process.
3. Ron thinks that we are still very early in the process and that we should give the process enough time to allow the congregation to get comfortable or at least familiar with ONA and allow them time to change their minds. After being raised with one set of values, it will take some people a long time to feel comfortable with where we are going. We need to show people things that they haven't seen or felt before and allow them to take the time to get comfortable with it.
4. Bring Wayne back for another second hour?
5. Show the DVDs from second hours to small groups?
6. Have other movies/DVD's on the subject like "For the Bible tells me" for small groups with no structured discussion afterward. Do this in a low key manner over the summer.
7. More non-structured small group discussions perhaps with a speaker who talks about what it means to be gay, or grow up gay in a Church.
8. Dick Allen's prolific study groups. Invite people in to help educate ourselves.

Consensus of the group to proceed with the above steps 4-8 over the summer after a final communication is made from the committee on getting people to participate or at least communicate. In the fall we will start to concentrate on what it means to be gay, how ONA will effect my Church, and continue discussing the Bible.

Communication steps during May:

1. Answering where we are on the questions in a mailing or Church Mouse article.
2. Create a message on the communications process, i.e. here's what we have for ways to communicate and if you can't use them, please contact Donna or Jonathan to get your views known.
3. New web page segment on questions showing "researching" for those that haven't been answered. Use Gail's document as the base.

Next meeting May 20<sup>th</sup>. Opening prayer Laurel, closing Michael.

Meeting adjourned at 9 pm after prayer led by Bob.