

Open and Affirming Committee Meeting
Minutes
November 1, 2007

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

Absent and missed was Laurel Cole.

Gail brought the meeting to order at 7:30 with a prayer

Gail reported on the ONA Advisory Committee meeting which she'd attended on Tuesday night.

She said that the Committee had recommended an open meeting policy. The group then talked about open meetings and setting ground rules for those attending. It was the consensus of the group that meetings would be open, but participation would be limited. Attendees may listen to the dialogue, but if someone wanted to speak to the group, they need to speak to one of us to put them on the agenda.

On Civil Unions, the ONA Advisory Committee strongly conveyed the message that the decision should not be object of any discussion by this committee. The ONA Advisory Committee decided that the Diaconate should take up the issue by making a public statement that the civil union decision is not the subject of the ONA committee and that the Diaconate will address this subject outside of the ONA process. A statement will come out of the Diaconate on this subject after their meeting next Tuesday.

The Committee decided to stick with the language in the Charter as drafted and sent out with the last set of Committee Minutes. The Committee decided to amend the October 23 Minutes to add a sentence on the Diaconate fact sheet being available for handout at the first meeting and being available on the web.

Gail also reported that the Advisory Committee recommended that we sign the Charter. The Committee decided that was a good idea.

The Committee then turned to planning for the November 11th second hour.

In outline, the process will be:

1. Deb Copes will make an introduction and will
2. Turn the meeting over to Gail to facilitate.
3. Gail will present the Charter as well as the charge to the Committee from the Diaconate.

4. Copies of the Charter will be handed out to individuals as they arrive at the meeting.
5. Other materials, including the Diaconate Fact Sheet, will be available at the close of the meeting.
6. A flip chart will be prepared prior to the meeting for people to see as they enter the Chapel. The flip chart will have the committee charge on it to start and will have subsequent pages which will be flipped over after the start of the meeting with a few sample questions and suggestions to help the attendees settle into the process. Paper and pencils will be handed out to be used to get people to think about what questions they would like answered. Our starter questions basically revolve around:
 1. What are your questions?
 2. What kinds of information do you need?
 3. A couple of "prime the pump" questions will be listed on the board. These are:
What does the Bible say about gay and lesbian people?
What does Open and Affirming mean?
 4. Which ways would you participate? Watch a video, participate in discussion group, website?

Various assignments in preparation for the meeting were made:

Mary: creation of 2 suggestion boxes and flip chart

Steve: all written materials

Bob: environment

Stephanie: distribute paper and pencils, and collect after meeting

Wendy and Katie: hand out materials

Mary and Katie: man the flip charts to capture participant suggestions

The Committee added a December meeting for December 11th.

Prayer volunteers for the next meeting on November 13 were Bill and Michael.

Stephanie led the closing prayer.

The meeting adjourned at 9:13 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Steve Smith