

## HEALTHY RECONCILIATION TASK GROUP REPORT TO THE BOARD

June 20, 2016

This task group was created by the Board and given two missions. The first was to determine an appropriate course of action leading to healthy reconciliation. The second was to implement improved congregational communications.

Originally titled the *Congregational Health and Reconciliation Committee* it has since become known as the *Healthy Reconciliation Task Group*. The original composition of the group included two board members, Richard Miller and Loraine Andersen, and congregants Gail Trill and Linda Fletcher. Permission was granted to add additional board members as needed. Kay Sturgeon and Joan Sheard joined the group and Gail Trill resigned.

Based on reconciliation theory and practice demonstrated by Tutu, Mandela and others it was determined that perhaps the best way to resolve our issues may be to begin by individually hearing all who wish to speak. Based on the premise that being heard and having feelings and perspectives valued is a basic human need, an active listening program — not to be confused with a therapy or counseling model — was designed. The following 3 questions will be targeted in the listening sessions:

- 1) Are there issues and concerns that caused you discomfort?
- 2) What emotion(s) were provoked in you?
- 3) How can it be resolved/made right?

Anonymity and confidentiality of the responders are guaranteed. Concern for the greater good of the congregation and good listening skills are assumed listener requirements. Individual appointments will be made by initiating contact directly by the responder to his/her chosen listener. It is hoped that all listening sessions will be completed by early September.

Results will be collected by the Task Force and presented to the Board along with recommendations regarding action.

IMPORTANT POINTS:

- 1) In an effort to gain the widest perspective possible, the invitation to be heard will be extended to all active congregants and friends and to those who have separated and still wish to speak.
- 2) The written record of the listening session will be reviewed by both parties to insure the intended communication is accurately reflected.
- 3) The confidential and anonymous session responses will be available to all members of the congregation on an individual basis by request.

Lastly, the charge to recommend improved congregational communications is under consideration and being deferred until the recent and multiple changes in governance and committees are finalized.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Fletcher, chair

Healthy Reconciliation Task Group