

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 Anderson, 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) What are the issues and concerns that caused you discomfort, 2) What emotion(s) were provoked in you and 3) How can it be resolved/made right.

Listener characteristics include concern for the greater good of the congregation and good listening skills. Anonymity and confidentiality of the responders are guaranteed. Individual appointments will be made by initiating contact via emailing the chosen listener. It is projected that all listening sessions will be completed by early September.

Results will be analyzed by the task group and presented to the Board along with some recommendations regarding action. Expected results may include healing coming from just being heard, identification of issues that might be resolved with simple and direct Board intervention, recognition of issues requiring professional mediation as well as recognition of irreconcilable differences and of identification of strategies for prevention of recurrence of similar situations.

**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.

