**RECONCILING LISTENING GUIDE**

**2020.02.11**

Purpose:

Tonight is about listening to each other. Listen carefully. Avoid the temptation to start composing a response in your head. Note questions or comments for follow up later, and instead stay in the moment.

Ground rules:

1. Be respectful and loving. Each person is speaking from their own experience and their understanding of God.
2. Speak when you have the 2-minute timer. Don’t interrupt or respond to others if you don’t have the timer.
3. Speak for yourself and your own experience. Don’t speak for others.
4. When others are speaking, listen to them instead of thinking about what you are going to say next. Try to understand others’ point of view.
5. Do no harm. Do good. Stay in love with God.

Program:

* Introduction, ground rules, purpose & prayer – Pastor Park
* Sharing and Listening
  + Each person gets one opportunity to speak.
  + Speakers have two minutes (per the sand timer)
    - Introduce yourself with your name and connection to OUMC
    - Share what you need to share – observe the ground rules above!
    - Not sure what to say? You don’t need to speak at all – tonight is as much about listening as talking. But consider the prompts below for ideas.
  + Don’t interrupt or respond to the speaker. Listen, listen, listen!
* Wrap-up & prayer – Pastor Park

Prompts:

1. What are your experiences interacting with people who are different from you – LGBTQ or otherwise?
2. How does proposed full inclusion of LGBTQ people in the church affect you? How might it affect others?
3. What do you hope (or fear) for the future of Onalaska United Methodist Church?
4. What do you think of the current draft of the Reconciling Statement? (see back)

“*Though we cannot think alike, may we not love alike? May we not be of one heart, though we are not of one opinion? Without all doubt, we may. Herein all the children of God may unite, notwithstanding these smaller differences. These remaining as they are, they may forward one another in love and in good works.*”– John Wesley, Sermon on a Catholic (Universal) Spirit

**ONALASKA UMC RECONCILING STATEMENT**

This draft statement has been prepared by the Reconciling Team with input from congregation members and leaders. See other side for the schedule of meetings for feedback, revision, and approval. Your input is encouraged!

1. *At Onalaska United Methodist Church, we believe in the teachings of Jesus: unconditional love, compassion, and justice.*
2. *All persons are created in God’s image and are of sacred worth. We affirm and celebrate persons of all ages, gender identities and expressions, sexual orientations, family structures, abilities, economic statuses, races, ethnicities, national origins, and heritages.*
3. *We honor the unique gifts of All persons including LGBTQ+ individuals and their call to serve according to their spiritual gifts. The body of Christ shares one baptism and God’s table is open to All.*
4. *We support the ordination of LGBTQ+ individuals and welcome them to serve our Church.*
5. *We will open our doors to celebrate the weddings of All prepared couples who seek to commit their lives to one another with the blessing of our creator.*
6. *We are the people of open hearts, open minds, and open doors. In the words of John Wesley, “We can love alike, though we may not think alike.”*

Revised: January 12, 2020

**ONALASKA UMC RECONCILING PROCESS**

This draft Reconciling Statement is the result of many meetings and conversations since March 26, 2019. It is open to revision following feedback. The schedule for meetings and approval is…

*Sunday 2/16 noon Reconciling Team meeting - revision*

*Tuesday 2/28 7:00pm Church Council meeting – feedback*

*Sunday 3/8 noon Reconciling Team meeting – final draft*

*Tuesday 3/24 7:00pm Church Council meeting – review*

*Sunday 3/29 1:00pm Church Conference vote – approval*

All are welcome at any of these meetings. Only OUMC members can vote at the Church Conference; we are seeking a minimum 75% vote for approval. Pastor Park will host a new member meeting March 10, and new members may join Sunday March 15.

Check the Reconciling information table in the lobby for the most current version of the Statement and other information. Feedback forms and a box are located on the table.