

**A WAY FORWARD FOR ST. PAUL'S:
THE COLLECTIVE WISDOM OF SEVENTY-FIVE
Attachment 2: Detailed Agenda
Saturday, May 19, 2018**

Detailed Agenda

12:00-12:40 Lunch

Adam welcomes the participants.
Micah asks grace
Icebreakers and singing

12:40-1:00 Introduction to the Gathering

Claire opens the gathering with prayer.
Background, objectives, the afternoon's plan, definition of terms (LGBTQ), and courtesy guidelines for speaking and discussing.
Introduction of facilitators

1:00-1:55 Question 1: "As Christians and United Methodists, what do different people at St. Paul's believe about God, the Bible, the Wesleyan tradition of faith, worship, how St. Paul's people should relate to each other, and how St. Paul's people should relate to others who are "different" from us? Among these different beliefs, which ones would all of us at St. Paul's agree on? In other words, what is the shared bedrock of our faith in this congregation?"

"Sticky notes exercise" with three stages:

1st stage (15 minutes): Six sheets are displayed on the walls with six categories of belief written at the top: Beliefs about God's relationship to us; Beliefs about the Bible; Beliefs about the Wesleyan tradition of Faith; Beliefs about Worship; Beliefs about how St. Paul's people should relate to each other; and Beliefs about how St. Paul's people should relate to others "different" from us. Participants at tables write on post-its some different beliefs that they think some people at St. Paul's hold and walk to stick their post-its on the corresponding sheets, depending on the belief category.

2nd stage (15 minutes): The six post-it-covered wall sheets are distributed around to the tables. The participants at each table separate out the post-its on that table's wall sheet, divide them into categories, and draw out one or a couple central themes of the beliefs. The table's "recorder" writes these on a fresh wall sheet for their question category.

3rd stage (25 minutes): The whole group discusses the belief themes, moving from one belief category to the next, through all six wall sheets. The objective of this stage is to identify the core beliefs that everyone at St. Paul's holds.

1:55 -2:05 Comfort break. Singing during the break. After the break, people return to different tables, mixing themselves up into new groups. Facilitators stay put.

2:05-2:45 Question 2: "What concerning human sexuality and our church might members of St. Paul's disagree about?"

"Running list exercise" with two stages:

1st stage (20 minutes): At each table, the facilitator starts a notebook page going around. The first person writes one possible area of disagreement. The next person writes another possible area of disagreement and/or writes a "+1" beside what was already written, to signify that he/she agrees with that point. As the sheet goes around the table, each person can write only one new area of disagreement but can add a "+1" to as many previous areas as he/she wants. When the sheet has gone all the way around the table, it goes around again so the first people get a chance to add a new area of disagreement or add a "+1" to items they hadn't seen before. After this second round, the facilitator scans the sheet and calls out the two disagreement areas that got the most "+1's". The group validates these as their most prominent areas or changes them in discussion.

2nd stage (20 minutes): The whole group discusses the disagreement areas. In a "lightning round," each table facilitator or recorder shouts out its most prominent disagreement area in round-robin fashion. Then the tables go around a second time, shouting out their second most prominent disagreement areas. These are written on wall sheets, using the same "+1" method for disagreement areas that are repeated among the tables. The group discusses and verifies the most prominent disagreement areas.

2:45-3:30 Question 3. “Of the different ways decisions are made at St. Paul’s, what might be a good way to proceed when choices related to human sexuality arise over the next year?”

“Group brainstorming” exercise with three stages:

1st stage (15 minutes): The whole group brainstorms—that is, shouts out!— the different ways decisions are made at St. Paul’s. These are written on wall sheets.

2nd stage (15 minutes): Each table separately discusses the various ways and then does a “thumbs up, down or sideways exercise” to pick the way or ways deemed most appropriate for deciding questions of sexuality and the church. As the facilitator reads off each way, each member at the table gives a thumbs up for “yes, this is a good way,” a “thumbs down for “nope, forget it,” or a thumb sideways for “no opinion.” The table recorder takes down the votes and announces to the table the two most popular decision-making ways.

3rd stage (15 minutes): Each table orally reports to the whole group its two most popular ways, one way per table going through the tables twice. The whole-group recorder writes these on wall sheets, using the “+1” method for repeats. The whole group discusses and confirms the ways that seem to us to be the most appropriate.

3:30-3:45: Wrap-up and Closing

What we’ve done today, next steps in the greater church and at St. Paul’s, and ideas about how to get the word out to the congregation. Claire closes the Gathering with prayer.

3:45-4:00 Evaluation

Participants answer announced evaluation questions with the “thumbs up/down/sideways” method. At each table, the facilitator or recorder jots down the counts of up/down/sideways for each question. The facilitators turn these table tallies in for consolidation and evaluation.

Participants can write other critiques or ideas for the future on provided sheets. Facilitators turn these in for evaluation.

End of Gathering

