

A WAY FORWARD FOR ST. PAUL'S: THE COLLECTIVE WISDOM OF SEVENTY-FIVE

Attachment 3: Evaluation

Saturday, May 19, 2018

Evaluation Questions: (Totals are not consistent because some participants did not vote "yes" or "no" on some questions and some did not vote at all.)

| | <u>Yes</u> | <u>No</u> |
|---|------------|-----------|
| "The discussion topics were what I expected" | 50 | 5 |
| "The format of the gathering was appropriate for the topics being discussed" | 56 | 0 |
| "The format was sensitive to involving all voices and opinions" | 51 | 3 |
| "The gathering was longer than it really needed to be" (Several participants had to leave before the end, so a full "yes" count might have been larger than reported.) | 17 | 36 |
| "The gathering helped prepare us for making decisions at St. Paul's" | 51 | 1 |
| "I would like to stay informed about what happens in these issues in the greater church" | 56 | 0 |

Written Evaluation Comments:

- Meeting format/preparation
 - The first exercise (where people moved around) might have been repeated in the last one to add more energy to the tough topics.
 - The facilitator per table was very helpful.
 - Appreciate the dedication, hard work, and presentation of the important sensitive subject.
 - I would have liked to have more open discussion at the tables.
 - Overall it was well-run, on time, and clear. Thanks for putting this together.
 - 3 hours would have been sufficient- more people would have come!

- I was originally skeptical about the lack of personal opinion, but I liked the fact that belief was put aside and decisions were made impartially. Thank you for making sure that youth were encouraged to attend, I really appreciated that.
 - Gathering was extremely well thought out and organized. Not a moment wasted!
 - Great facilitators. It was a bit cold in the room. We have some audio issues - need more speakers, wireless microphones.
 - Thank you for setting a very respectful tone for all the participants to emulate. I think the process allowed all voices to speak comfortably.
 - This was a great forum for exploring viewpoints and brainstorming next steps - not only in making decisions but in continuing discussions and other ways to approach the process/topics. I was nervous about approaching today without sharing personal opinions but appreciate the approach and the outcome. It allowed valuable discussion without personalization. Excellent!
 - A well planned and executed program. Thank you to all who were involved.
 - This was not the method of discussion I expected, but that's ok.
- Other logistical comments
- The food was a nice touch and tasty too
 - Thank you for a tasty lunch. Enjoyed spending time with friends.
- Feedback on topics
- Bill (and Emily) - great job!! I think we got good ideas, but also primed the pump for talking about this issue. Thank you!
 - Thank you for taking the lead and getting us to the front of the discussion! Very important!
 - This was informative and an important topic.
 - There needed to be a better understanding around the vocabulary of LGBTQ+ . We also needed to pay more attention to gender identity.
 - The idea that this conversation today was supposed to be nonpersonal, when everyone is connected to St. Paul's in some fashion. So these ideas and our beliefs are personal.
 - The need for explanation of a special charge conference for a vote.
- Opinions about next steps at St. Paul's.

- People are still unclear about the polity and other rules for making decisions, a reminder from the pulpit about how this would work, mostly related to what a charge conference is and how it runs.
 - May be a helpful thing to have some smaller group meetings, where people can respectfully and sensitively share their more personal beliefs about sexuality and the church, and end with a time of prayer.
 - The wording of the final vote should be clear and concise. The wording of the final vote should NOT be in a negative format.
 - Define “bodies: that could make decisions about any issue voted on.
 - I think reminding the congregation of how this church has dealt with changes and potential conflicts in the past over different topics is an important aspect in preparing the congregation for the process.
 - I would like everyone to be accepted in our church because no one should be turned down. Someone shouldn't feel helpless because of how they think and affiliate. If you were feeling alone you could come to the church. So why can't they? We can't call ourselves inclusive or loving or kind or welcoming if we sit here and say these things without hearing from them. Then we are just hypocrites with a team. We can't say we are one hearted if we don't try. Are you going to deny someone from becoming a member because they still don't know how they identify? Will you take someone's membership because they come out? That's just selfish. Everything that we are doing right now abide [sic] the Bible and if you don't think that then let's have debate because I'm not going to be selfish and I'll fight about it. We can't continue to sit here and be quiet when people need help. We should hear from people. We should learn about how others feel. We could also use more ideas and resources of how it is in our church now, because I am 14, I'm not in high school, and I only got baptized last year. So I know almost nothing. And as I ask people at 40, 50, 60, 25, 30, and more, no one knows how to answer my questions. I also want to say that I honestly don't feel welcomed at the church because I might decide later in life that I am LGBTQ and so something needs to be done to hear their voices. (Nothing like that has been done.) And, we could hear from people who don't believe we should be inclusive. Because being informed is important. Too many people are not represented who should be. Youth should be included because if they (we) are not included, then how will the future change? We need to have a way to hear voices from the LGBTQ community! How can I as a youth be more involved? And/or treated like an adult?
- Opinions about direction of the denomination
- Hope the UMC will be reflected of our changing times