

# **SUGGESTED PROCEDURE**

## **For**

### **Study and Response to Annual Conference Document**

### **“Implementing the Call”**

*Explanation:* The four-page document, “Implementing the Call of the Social Principles: Ministering with and for Homosexual Persons,” was adopted by the 2005 Session of the Pacific Northwest Annual Conference. The following Suggested Procedure has been developed by members of the Reconciling Ministries Network, drawing upon the experiences of persons and congregations where such work has been implemented .

1. *Form a Leadership Team* which is widely representative of the congregation, particularly on the “liberal-conservative” spectrum. This team will become acquainted with the document through its own study process before proceeding to develop its plan for engaging the whole congregation.
2. *Develop a study/response plan for the congregation* with particular attention to engaging as many members as possible. Suggestions include:
  - a. Provide for a variety of small-group experiences which will maximize individual participation
  - b. Provide a “safe” and trusting setting where deep honesty is encouraged, welcomed, and respected.
  - c. Encourage all questions and responses, but discourage argumentative discussion; seek to provide full and accurate answers to questions and concerns.
  - d. Focus the discussion on “I” rather than “You” or “They” messages, strongly encouraging persons to speak for themselves rather than for anonymous “others.”
  - e. Encourage expression of fears and negative feelings, and help people explore the character and roots of those feelings.
3. *Broaden the process* by moving to larger decision-making meetings *only* as a substantial portion of the congregation has become familiar and comfortable with the issues, and adjusting the process, as needed, in order for that familiarity to develop—perhaps through a series of widening circles of participants.
4. *Move toward specific action to implement the call of the Social Principles*, encouraging ministries/responses which fulfill the intent of the Social Principles.
5. *Present proposed actions to the Administrative Council/Board and or Charge Conference* for authorization and implementation.
6. *Report the process and the outcomes* to the Annual Conference, and to other groups such as the Reconciling Ministries Network, including any “wisdom” and “breakthroughs” which could be helpful to others.

For assistance and resources from the Reconciling Ministries Network, contact:

Vince Hart, Co-Convener, PNW-RMN  
253-564-6312

[vincehart@fumtacom.org](mailto:vincehart@fumtacom.org)

Tom Martin, Co-Convener, PNW-RMN  
253-759-41-56

[tomrtoy@aol.com](mailto:tomrtoy@aol.com)

Greetings!

We appreciate your initiative in getting the document “Implementing the Call” into your congregation for study and follow-through.

Enclosed are twelve copies, along with “Suggested Procedure” for working with the material.

Use the material in any way that seems best for your situation.

We would very much appreciate your feedback on using the material and how it was received in the congregation.

If we can be of any further help, please contact me. One possibility is to have one or more persons from a Reconciling Congregation visit with your congregation to share experiences and ideas.

PNW Reconciling Ministries Network  
Vince Hart, Co-Convener  
253-564-6312 (University Place)  
[vincehart@fumctacoma.org](mailto:vincehart@fumctacoma.org)