

**September 7, 2014** - Members of Leadership Team convened a congregational meeting, and solicited input (via email) from all church members as to the topics that would be discussed in the upcoming meeting.

**September 28, 2014** - Based on recommendations from the church, Leadership Team presented three possible focal points for church conversation in the coming year: (1) gender and sexuality, (2) the location and mission of MMC, (3) the theological rationale for - and practice of - taking communion at MMC.

During the meeting, the congregation decided to go forward with a discussion on gender and sexuality. This decision appeared to be unanimous; nobody objected.

**October, 2014** - Members of the Christian Education Team and Leadership Team met at church, outside of church, and via email to determine the format for the MMC's gender and sexuality discussion. These teams (1) decided that the best way to conduct the discussion was on Sundays after worship, during Adult CE time; (2) asked Ray Gingerich and Matt Morin to facilitate the Adult CE discussions.

**October 26, 2014** - The church held another congregational meeting to announce the plans for Adult CE and to solicit feedback from members of the congregation with respect to those plans.

All in attendance seemed pleased with the plans; nobody objected.

**November 30, 2014 - March 1, 2015** - The church engaged in a careful discussion over the course of three months of Adult CE. We read testimonies, perspectives, and theological commentaries from a range of authors. We conducted these conversations with a high degree of respect for each others' differing viewpoints. And thanks in large part to Ray, who brought a wealth of wisdom and experience as a facilitator, the conversations ran smoothly.

**March 21, 2015** - We met at Lisa Gingerich's house for a congregational meeting. The purpose of this meeting was to (1) remind those in attendance about our congregational decision-making process-- particularly with respect to the difference between [unanimous agreement and consensus](#), (2) to gain input from the congregation about what steps we should take next.

**April 12, 2015** - Leadership Team judged it appropriate to have a follow-up meeting to the one on March 21st. The purpose of this congregational meeting was to clarify all that we thought we heard in the previous meeting. In this meeting, we asked people to prepare a brief statement regarding the church's next steps.

**May 8, 2015** - Taking into consideration all that had been stated throughout the course of Adult CE, in private conversations with Leadership Team, and during congregational meetings-- particularly the meeting on April 12-- LT sent a survey to the church, outlining several potential courses of action and congregational statements. 30 people completed the survey.

**May, 2015 - June, 2015** - After hearing from people at congregational meetings and analyzing the results of the survey, it seemed clear to Leadership Team that the overwhelming majority of the church wanted to take the following actions:

- 1) Publicly affiliate with Pink Menno
- 2) Publicly affiliate with Supportive Congregations Network
- 3) a) Welcome all people into *full participation* in Milwaukee Mennonite Church, without respect to the questions of gender or sexual identity  
b) Make a public statement to that effect

During these months, members of Leadership Team met with several individuals who offered private feedback, or expressed opposition to the majority viewpoint. Three individuals stated that they could not support the actions as outlined above. In particular, one individual expressed deep concern over the notion that Milwaukee Mennonite Church might one day bless a marriage between same-sex partners.

Given the differing perspectives represented in the church, it seemed clear to Leadership Team that MMC was not going to achieve a unanimous decision regarding next steps. However, all three of the people who dissented from the majority view stated that they would not stand in the way of the larger group's decision. Though some people expressed opposition-- even, at times, strong opposition-- none decided to block consensus.

Thus, Leadership Team judged it appropriate to present the following recommendations at the congregational meeting on June 28: That MMC affiliate with Pink Menno, affiliate with SCN, welcome all people into full participation in the church (including marriage) without respect to the question of gender or sexual identity, make a public statement to that effect, and include a thorough description of our discernment and consensus-building process, so as to truthfully describe the various perspectives currently represented in our church.

**June 28, 2015** - Leadership Team presented the following statement for the congregation's consideration:

**God's love is for all people. Milwaukee Mennonite Church welcomes all, without qualification, into full participation of church life, worship, and ministry, as we endeavor to walk closer to Jesus.**

After about 50 minutes of discussion, the church decided to affirm the statement as recommended by Leadership Team, and to include a link to this document with the statement. The church further decided to affiliate with Pink Menno, using the same statement, and indicating that acceptance of the statement was not unanimous. The church also decided to affiliate with Supportive Congregations Network.

There were 24 people in attendance.

18 people indicated full support for the recommendations with no caveat.

4 people indicated support for the recommendations with minor reservations.

2 people indicated opposition to the recommendations-- but not strong enough opposition to prevent the church from proceeding.

In sum: All in attendance agreed that the church had reached a consensus decision to:

- 1) Publicly affiliate with Pink Menno
- 2) Publicly affiliate with Supportive Congregations Network
- 3 a) Welcome all people into *full participation* in Milwaukee Mennonite Church, without respect to the questions of gender or sexual identity
- b) Make a public statement to that effect



