

Special Congregation Meeting

Vote on
Proposed ONA Covenant



Call to Order & Opening Prayer

Gayle Haun, Vice-Moderator



Agenda

1. Motion for Approval of Minutes **5 min.**
 - Annual Meeting, Jan. 28, 2018
2. Motion for Approval:
Proposed ONA Covenant.
 - Presentation, Pr. Craig **10 min.**
 - Discussion and Vote **50 min.**
3. Adjourn



Proposed ONA Covenant

- What is Open and Affirming?
- Why now?
- Where is the Congregation?
- What will follow?



What is Open and Affirming?

Open and Affirming is the United Church of Christ's **designation** for congregations, campus ministries, and other bodies in the UCC which make a public covenant of welcome into their full life and ministry to persons of all sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions.



What is Open and Affirming?

At the 1985 National meeting of our General Synod, an ONA resolution was adopted. While the National UCC speaks *to* local congregations, it does not speak *for* them. The resolution encouraged congregations and other ministry settings to adopt ONA covenants through their own processes of discernment.



What is Open and Affirming?

ONA Designation:

- Official designation for Search and Call.
- Listing on UCC ONA Coalition website for people looking for ONA UCC congregation.
- Congregation covenants to work on openness and affirmation of people who have learned that *All are Welcome* does not include them.



Why Now?

ONA Process

- **Fall, 2017:** Kim Fuller, Audra Bailey, Mary Newcomb, & Pr. Craig met to talk about ONA.
- **Jan 2018:** Out-going Council voted to support ONA program **during Lent 2018**, but required incoming Council to vote to support this decision.



Why Now?

ONA Process:

- February:** Incoming Council voted to support decision to move forward with ONA program during Lent.



Why Now?

Church Calendar

- **Jan-Feb:** Budget, new Council and Boards, Leadership Retreat.
- **March:** Lent (ONA).
- **April:** Easter.
- **May:** End of Year (Sunday School, Choir, Brunch) and Centennial Celebration.
- **June-August:** Summer
- **Fall:** Mission and Vision, Building Initiatives.



Why Now?

Our Journey: 3 Informational Meetings

1. ONA Process: Pr. Craig (Include Tradition, Reason)
2. Scripture: Dr. Eric Stewart,
3. Experience: 3 Panelists

Congregational Vote



Why Now?

Our Journey: Covenant Writing Committee

Wednesday Covenant Writing Group Met for 3 Weeks

Barb Guss

Katy Härle

Marcia Renaud

Kristi Bailey

Mary Newcomb

Jeff Newcomb

Emilia Deem

Michael Dyer

Kim Fuller

Audra Bailey



Why Now?

Attention:

Emphasize and Diversify Communication

To Congregation:

Congregational letters; Bridge (paper and digital), voice calls, texts, Facebook & Instagram posts, website, Tower (paper, digital).

ONA Covenant posted, e-mailed, mailed in advance.



Why Now?

**Attention:
Emphasize and Diversify Communication**

With Congregation:

Confidential e-mail address: ona@fccmoline.org

Email group: onagroup@fccmoline.org

Covenant Group: onacovenant@fccmoline.org

Question and Answer: Information Meetings



What is your sense of the Congregation?

- 1. Leadership:** Flash, straw poll, Mon. 3/12: 24 in Favor, 0 Opposed.
- 2. Congregation:** Broad Support.
- 3. Concerns:**
 - Process should have taken 3-6 months.
 - Unless we are sure of near consensus, the vote should not be taken (potential for damage).
 - Paper ballots (confidential).
 - Anonymous letter sent to some members using the church address as the return address.



What is your sense of the Congregation?

Council, Covenant Writing Committee

- On Tuesday, March 13th, both voted to proceed with the vote on the ONA Covenant.
- Think that we are late in making this official decision, but that the congregation is already supportive.
- Vote is a to recognize something already true of us.



What is your sense of the Congregation?

Council, Covenant Writing Committee

- Constitution: Simple Majority
- Agreement: 60% Approval to Pass
- Agreement: Hope for 75% or Higher



What happens next?

Covenant: Promise to go together no matter what (like marriage).

Percentage of Vote: What happens next will be shaped by the congregation.



What happens next?

Nothing will suddenly change, but we can all pray that we will be open to the ways the Holy Spirit calls us to share God's love, without condemnation, as we continue to travel this faith journey together.



What happens next?

Current LGTB Members will be affirmed.

Form a committee to begin process of learning how to be Open and Affirming to guest who come expecting to be warmly embraced by our congregation.



What happens next?

Other QCA Congregations

- UCC Churches will initiate ONA processes.
- Other non-UCC churches?



What happens next?

We *may* lose members because of ONA.

We *will* add members because of ONA.



ONA Covenant

Discussion & Vote

- 1. State Name**
 - 2. Identify Purpose:**
 - A. Asking a **question**.
 - B. Speaking in **support** of the motion.
 - C. Speaking in **opposition** to the motion.
- 2 Minutes per Speaker**
- No one speaks twice until everyone has spoken once.**

Balloting: Counting: Reporting

Adjourn

2018 Annual Meeting

Vote on
Proposed ONA Covenant

