

Dear Friends in Christ:

We, your clerks, heard on Sunday a wide range of visions for the future of Newberg Friends Church. We see in the congregation evidence that positions are hardening, and groups are readying to take unilateral action which may lead to a bitter split, with relationships broken and both sides left in a precarious condition on multiple levels.

Because we believe such an outcome would grieve the Holy Spirit and gravely mar the Church's witness in Newberg, the Pacific Northwest, and around the world, we are committed to working persistently to help the congregation find a path in keeping with the Spirit's leading, allowing us to maintain loving relationships and Christian ministry whether as one congregation, two congregations, or whatever other outcome God may have for us.

**We do not feel clear to call another congregational meeting at this time. Instead, we ask each of the emerging congregations to send five people to a meeting as soon as possible to discuss together the possible ways forward.**

At this point we see this as a one-time meeting, facilitated by the two of us as congregational clerks, to explore the range of options the congregation might have, and to assess the prospects for working together to reach the best possible outcome. Whether the group will have other meetings will emerge from the group's discernment of the Spirit's leading.

We do not expect this meeting to reach clarity about the outcome. What we are hoping for is clarity about the next steps: what people can do, what they are willing to do, what is possible.

We would like this meeting to occur as soon as possible. To that end, we call the meeting for Saturday morning, May 13 from 10-12. We will meet in one of the Barclay rooms.

As for whom to send, we leave that to your group's discernment of the Spirit's leading. We think thoughtful people representative of the diversity

of opinion and experience in your group, and who have the respect of the rest of your group's members, would be the most likely candidates. We expect the meeting will not be easy, so people who are not too daunted by tensions might be candidates. But these are our human thoughts; send whomever the Spirit seems to favor.

We ask for five people from each group to keep the meeting balanced and personal.

One or both of us can come to your group's meeting Wednesday or Thursday evening to answer your questions if you like. We are also happy to answer questions via email.

We pray for all of you, and that our work as clerks, including this letter, can be a tool for God's grace in all our lives.

In Christ,

Mark Ankeny  
Presiding Clerk

Ron Mock  
Co-Assistant Clerk

PS: This effort is not intended to replace the transition team which we are also forming to help manage the logistics of transitions facing us no matter what choices we make about the future of our congregation. It is ok - in fact, it might be good -- to send your two representatives to the Transition Team to this meeting as part of your delegation.