

Dear Chalmers Friends,

Your Reference Team met again on Thursday, March 11, our now regular meeting day. Bill Bickle and Bruce Shenk provided a framework for our conversation as we continue to learn how to offer opinions and thoughts to each other and hone our listening skills in an atmosphere of mutual respect and consideration. With their guidance and encouragement, we are well on the way to discerning what we as a congregation believe are important topics to address in the near future. There will be many opportunities for our congregation to engage, participate, and be heard.

Listening circles, with carefully designed questions about the topic of discussion, will provide opportunities for people to express thoughts, ideas, and feelings in a safe environment. Using their long experience, Bill and Bruce will prepare us for and guide us in these conversations. We believe that as we learn and use the restorative process, people will find mutual understanding, bases of interest and agreement, and begin to define a direction for Chalmers. At the next Reference Team meeting we will identify an issue that we believe would be a good starting point so that facilitated discussions can begin.

As we continue to define issues for discussion, we will be asking for your wise input on conversations you would like to participate in. Our email addresses are below. Please give this your careful consideration.

Once again, we thank you for your generous messages of good will and encouragement, and for your patience. We will continue to update you.

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