

HOW CHURCHES ENGAGE IN MORE LIGHT MINISTRY

EDUCATION

Provide adult study classes which explore Biblical, theological, psycho-social issues, personal stories, family experiences, gay/lesbian civil rights.

Provide training, at least every other year, for pastors, elders and deacons in understanding homosexuality, homophobia, HIV/AIDS, lesbian/gay/bisexual concerns.

Explain More Light status to all new members seeking to join the church. When staff is hired, make More Light commitment part of the PNC's charge as they prepare materials and contact candidates.

Provide books in the church library for congregation such as: *Is the Homosexual My Neighbor?. But Lord, They're Gay, Between Two Gardens.*

Plan one Sunday worship a year to focus on homophobia or gay concerns: possibilities include last Sunday in June (traditional gay pride month), Pentecost, Day of Solidarity with Gay/Lesbian/Bisexual Persons (last Sunday in January)

Continue to put a human face on homosexuality. Curiosity about homosexuality is an ally.

COMMUNICATION

Give frequent visible and audible clues to openness by inclusion of gay concerns in sermons, liturgies, social action, notices of special events or group meetings on bulletin boards, reprinting of More Light Statement (or a summary) periodically in the bulletin.

Share your experience with churches in your area, either directly, in coalition with other welcoming churches, or in the Council of Churches through workshops, study programs or discussions.

Include sexual orientation in congregation's social action work such as letter-writing tables on public policy issues, letters to newspapers, and participation in community events.

Get your church services regularly listed in a local gay and lesbian newspaper.

Be warm and attentive to all visitors.

Write *Monday Morning*, *Presbyterian Survey*, *Presbyterian Outlook* or other Presbyterian journals in support of More Light concerns as appropriate.

Stay alert and aware of denominational currents and have input where possible: General Assembly actions, Human Sexuality Task Force, Presbytery programs and policies.

Prepare felt pink triangle lapel pins as “take-aways” at presbytery and community meetings for friends to wear as a sign of solidarity with gay and lesbian Presbyterians. Attach a note of the triangle’s historic use as identification in Nazi German prison camps, now reclaimed as an international symbol of liberation and justice.

MINISTRY

Request session to establish a standing committee to develop ideas for on-going education and ministry within the life of the congregation.

Provide budget money for More Light conferences, subscriptions to resources, and/or support of local and national efforts.

Examine congregation’s personnel policies for employees/staff regarding both sexual orientation and AIDS.

Provide facilities for gay groups to meet (PFLAG, Gay AA, AIDS support, gay parenting groups, gay or lesbian choruses, etc).

Invite gay speakers to talk about their lives and spiritual journeys with church groups (high school class, women’s association, UPM...)

Explore cooperation with local gay support groups (AA, AIDS, etc). If there are none, contact county health department to determine need and form your own.

Include gay, lesbian and bisexual members in full life of the church – Committees, studies, stewardship, worship, and service, not just gay issues.

Involve straight members in More Light work – don’t make it a commitment for gay and lesbian persons or their relatives only.

Keep alive a vision of your dream church so you can take action.

Be in it for the long haul – take care of yourselves and find support, ask for help from other churches, groups, individuals.

Be firm but gracious in relations with governing bodies and others. No manipulation, “grace and acceptance” need to be the style.