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Subject: April 25 Response to Don, Janie, Lisa

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Cc: Janiespahr@tamfs.org

RB

Hello Everyone -

Thanks for your comments. I have been reading everything and am still pleased to have been a part of our original "On Not Being Weary" statement. What a fine peace of spirit-led work, I believe it is.

Don, I feel strongly, too, that there is integrity in everyone's choices. If that's who we are, a community that seeks to support the integrity of each person's choices as they follow God's call, then that may be enough to say, with just a few additions. Something like:

We respect and support those who will find hospitality and a welcoming in their communities/presbyteries as a result of using G-6.0108, whether through affirmation of the PUP or independently, as the constitution currently provides.

Secondly, we avoid the strategic and vote counting approach of striking to remove G-6.0106b at exactly the right time, since we cannot accept any statement, overture, authoritative interpretation, of definitive guidance that suggest we should wait in removing G-6.0106b. Therefore, we strongly support passage of the Heartland Overture at GA 217 and will continue to support any such overtures without wavering until G-6.0106b is removed from the Book of Order.

Additionally, we refer folks to a broader statement of our position by their reading the "On Not Being Weary" statement.

You know, I remember growing up and into my adulthood as a Roman Catholic, and beyond - hearing the words "We love you, but we hate your sin." When we are asked to wait, I hear those same words: "We love you, but we just need you to wait a while longer," usually coupled with references to women's ordination and civil rights timelines. Two things happen for me in those moments, a funny sort of response goes off inside as a gay man being told in the nicest of ways that there's just not a place for me at the table, just yet - because and only because I am gay. In that response is a responsibility I believe I have for the voices who cannot speak for themselves. The second thing I ponder is whether we always need to follow the same timelines as other groups who have gone before us seeking their inclusion. I usually respond with the question, "Do we really need to put our hands on the oven doors at Auschwitz to remember we have already learned that lesson?"

I can't in good conscience offer any support for anything that calls for a delay. I can support those on their journey, however they find their calls. If we can marry these two things together as TAMFS, mabe we'd have something we could all live with.

I am very grateful to all of you and to be a part of this group. I am especially hopeful that the new thing God is doing will become evident at GA in ways we have yet to imagine.

Love,
Ray