

To the LGBTQ+ Community:

In late February, The United Methodist Church gathered for a global General Conference to debate our denomination's policies regarding same-gender weddings and openly Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual clergy.

Many North Texas Methodists worked hard to make the church a more welcoming place for ministry with people who identify on the LGBTQ+ spectrum. 564 delegates from around the world, however, narrowly approved a plan that continues our denomination's prohibitions.

We cannot speak for our denomination, but we can speak to what we believe as a result of the values instilled in us by our interpretation of scripture and Methodist tradition:

We are sorry.

We recognize the harm done through speeches, headlines, insensitive statements and continued policies that reduce our LGBTQ+ siblings to "issues" and "other." We are sorry for the untold pain that churches bring to LGBTQ+ persons, intentionally and unintentionally.

We welcome, celebrate and embrace you.

While we continue to work for greater inclusion within our larger denomination, we are committed to working with you to create and sustain communities here in North Texas that recognize LGBTQ+ persons as beloved children of God—something that should never be in question.

You shouldn't have to choose between your sexual orientation or true gender identity and your relationship with God and the church.

It is a blessing when LGBTQ+ members of our community are part of the churches we serve. Some of us identify on the LGBTQ+ spectrum. Some of us have been in ministry with the LGBTQ+ community for decades. Others are just now experiencing a change of heart. All of us will make mistakes. We'd like to ask for your help in crafting a new future for the churches and communities that reflects the inclusive and expansive love of Jesus.

With love,

- Rev. Alexandria Robinson, Willow Hill UMC
- Rev. Allen Lutes, Arlington Heights UMC
- Rev. Allison Paxton, Genesis UMC, Fort Worth
- Rev. Andrew Flaxer, Center for Mission Outreach, First UMC, Dallas
- Rev. Dr. Andy Stoker, First UMC, Dallas
- Rev. Ann Willet, First UMC, Dallas
- Rev. Anna Hosemann Butler, Bedford, NTAC
- Rev. Beth Evers, University UMC, Fort Worth
- Rev. Dr. Bill Boyd, Elder Park UMC, Fort Worth
- Rev. Bill Eason, Edgewood Park Church
- Rev. Dr. Bill La Barr, Plover Park UMC
- Rev. Bill Mauldin, Holy Covenant UMC
- Rev. Billy Echols Richter, Grace Avenue UMC
- Rev. Blair Thompson White, Arapahoe UMC
- Rev. Brian Dierolf, Presbyterian Campus Ministries, TAMU C
- Rev. Brian McPherson, Good Shepherd UMC
- Rev. Cammy Gayson, Center for Leadership Development
- Rev. Derek Jacobs, The Village UMC
- Rev. Ed Vailie, Oak Woods UMC
- Rev. Eric Folkerth, Bedford, NTAC
- Rev. Esten Williams, First UMC, Dallas
- Rev. Evan Jones, First UMC, Dallas
- Rev. Frank Drenner, Grace UMC, Sherman
- Rev. Frank Esham, First UMC, Dallas
- Rev. Geoffrey Mouser, Knox Park UMC, Mesquite
- Rev. Georgia Harrison, First UMC, Rockwall, TX
- Rev. Dr. Gregory S. Neal, First UMC, Fort Worth
- Rev. Glenda Whitehead, Journey of Faith UMC
- Rev. Gregg Alan Smith, Oak Lawn UMC
- Rev. Holly Handel, First UMC, Dallas
- Rev. J.D. Allen, First UMC, Fort Worth
- Rev. Jamie Nelson, Agape Memorial UMC, Bedford, NTAC
- Rev. Jane Woodward, Bedford, NTAC
- Rev. Jeff Hall, Cartesian Chapel UMC
- Rev. Jeff Smith, Welcoming UMC, Georgetown
- Rev. Joe Stubbough, Grace Temple UMC
- Rev. John Fleming, Church, Ministry of Christy
- Rev. Johnathan Grace, CitySquare
- Rev. Jon Anderson, First UMC, Richardson
- Rev. Justin Hancock, Methodist Union, Richardson
- Rev. Kay Ash, Kessler Park UMC
- Rev. Kay G. Johnson, Bedford, NTAC
- Rev. Kerry Smith, Beyond Faith UMC
- Rev. Larry James, CitySquare
- Rev. Laura Echols Richter, Grace Avenue UMC
- Rev. Linda McDermott, First UMC, Fort Worth
- Rev. Marcus Womack, Grace Avenue UMC
- Rev. Dr. Mark Stamm, Perkins School of Theology
- Rev. Matt Noyes, Northaven UMC
- Rev. Mary Ingridin, Arlington Heights UMC
- Rev. Matt Gaston, First UMC, Fort Worth
- Rev. Michael J. Baughman, Union Coffee
- Rev. Dr. Michael J. Bowler, Jr., St. Luke's Community UMC
- Rev. Michael Rowe, Peace Land UMC & Lutheran UMC
- Rev. Mike Marshall, First UMC, Fort Worth
- Rev. Mitchell Boone, White Rock UMC
- Rev. Nancy Fremson, First UMC, Fort Worth
- Rev. Patrick Littlefield, Lakewood UMC
- Rev. Paul Rasmussen, Highland Park UMC
- Rev. Phyllis Barron, First UMC, Fort Worth
- Rev. Rachel Griffin Baughman, Oak Lawn UMC
- Rev. Ricky Harrison, Peace St. Mission, Denton
- Rev. Rob Spencer, First UMC, Paris
- Rev. Sandy Londa, St. Barbara's UMC, Arlington
- Rev. Stacey Pirakhan, Miriam UMC
- Rev. Dr. Stanley R. Copeland, Love's Lane UMC
- Rev. Stephanie Evelyn McKeller, Methodist Union, Richardson
- Rev. Stephen Fleming, Bedford, Littleton, TX
- Rev. Tag Green, St. Barbara's UMC, Arlington
- Rev. Thane Arthur, Elder Park UMC
- Rev. Tim Bruster, First UMC, Fort Worth
- Rev. Tom McDermott, First UMC, Fort Worth
- Rev. Dr. Tom Waitachies, UMC of Preston Hollow
- Rev. Dr. Tommy Brummett, First UMC, McKinney
- Rev. Dr. Wes Magruder, Kessler Park UMC
- Rev. Jane Graner, Oak Lawn UMC
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- Rev. Rufus Whitfield, Rev. Sara Harloway, Rev. Sarah Marsalis-Lugbill, Rev. Scott Gilliland, Rev. Stacy Lugbill
- Rev. Dr. Sharon E. Patterson, Rev. Sonya Shahan, Rev. Steve Langford, Rev. Susan Bryan, Rev. Suzanne R. Cate, Rev. Taylor Smith
- Rev. Thomas E. Palmer, Rev. Thomas Hodges, Rev. Todd Harris, Rev. Tom Fable, Rev. Travis Franklin, Rev. Valerie Englett
- Rev. Virginia O. Bonford, Ph.D., Rev. Zach Landis, Rev. Susan Robb, Rev. Liz Stone, Rev. Adam White

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