

Congregational Survey

A Measured Response to Issues Raised By General Conference 2019

In February of 2018, The General Conference of the United Methodist Church voted to retain traditional language in the Discipline which forbids any United Methodist clergy to perform same sex unions, and which prohibits the ordination of “self avowed practicing homosexuals.” This action, though affirming policies already in place, has proven highly divisive and controversial in our denomination.

In addition, the General Conference passed legislation making it possible for churches to disaffiliate from the United Methodist Church for reasons on conscience surrounding the denomination’s stand on homosexuality. In order to take such an action, a church would need to make application to its Annual Conference requesting disaffiliation before December of 2024.

It is not the desire of our current church leadership to disconnect from the United Methodist Church. However, we feel it would be irresponsible leadership to allow this “window” of opportunity to expire without seeking prayerful input from the congregation as a whole.

In March of 2019, we convened a group to talk about the General Conference actions and to hear concerns the people of our congregation may have surrounding this issue. The gathering was a meaningful and informative to those who attended, but we realize that it did not include everyone who deserves a voice in this conversation.

The poll on the reverse side of this paper is our attempt to hear from you as we seek to craft a statement of values that we as a local church believe need to be honored as we deal with this issue.

We want to develop a written statement that reflects what our church believes and intends to do. We will then present that statement to the denomination for their response. This statement will be prepared in open meetings and with input from the entire congregation inasmuch as it is possible to do so.

PLEASE don’t surrender your voice in this matter!

Take a moment to respond to this survey, and remain aware of the ongoing opportunities we will provide for your participation.

Please think of a time when you felt most proud to be a member of this church. Which of the following best describes that moment for you?

- The church was reaching out to meet the needs of others in our community or in the world.
- The church was displaying a radical acceptance of people of all types
- The church “came together” to display Christ’s love to one of its members
- The church was helping its members (perhaps especially its children and/or youth) to grow in faithfulness as Christians.
- Other (describe:): _____

Affirm the following statements on a scale from 0-10, 10 being highest:

- I believe our local church should remain united, even if we disagree on theological issues such as homosexuality.
- I believe the church should be a place of open, Godly, and respectful dialogue about this and other difficult issues.
- I believe the church’s response to this issue should be based on a thorough and nuanced understanding of what the Bible says on the subject.
- I believe that all of God’s Children should be welcome and included in the life of our church.
- I believe that the church should do all it can to recognize and affirm God’s call to service in the lives of its members.
- I believe that the church’s members and leaders should display a Christ-like witness to the world around them.

How would you describe your stance on the practice of celebrating same-sex unions in the church? (Circle One)

extremely opposed, mildly opposed, neutral, mildly open, extremely open

How would you describe your stance on the practice of ordaining homosexual clergy? (Circle One)

extremely opposed, mildly opposed, neutral, mildly open, extremely open

Church Status: Member Regular Attender Absentee Member

Age (Circle One): 0-14 15-19 20-29 30-39 40-49 50-59 60-69 70-79 80+