



## MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Board of Directors of WBLUMC met Tuesday night, March 5, for a special session to consider the impact of the recent General Conference decision on our church. If you have not read or heard about this decision, briefly, General Conference (the global governing body for the United Methodist Church) voted by a margin of 53 percent to 47 percent to retain the current language in the United Methodist Book of Discipline which declares that a homosexual lifestyle is incompatible with Christian teaching. General Conference also reaffirmed the ban on ordaining LGBT persons and on performing same-sex marriages.

Many hoped and expected that this General Conference would have endorsed an option for greater inclusion for LGBT+ persons in the life of the church.

Here at WBLUMC, the eight members of your Board of Directors are united in their dismay at the General Conference vote, believing it to be hurtful to our gay and lesbian brothers and sisters in the church, and not in keeping with either Christian or United Methodist traditions. We have also heard from many of you, the members and friends of WBLUMC, that you are upset and angry about the decision, and want our church to take some prompt action in response.

The Board of Directors has therefore agreed to these preliminary steps in response to the General Conference decision: First and foremost, we reiterate the wholehearted welcome of LGBT+ persons by our own congregation. We see them as persons of sacred worth, no less than our own selves.

Second, together with other United Methodist churches in our Minnesota Annual Conference and elsewhere, we will do all possible to push back on this unfortunate General Conference decision, striving for the outcome to be changed so that LGBT+ persons may be admitted to the full life of the United Methodist church, including marriage for same-sex couples and the ordination of LGBT+ persons.

There is much that is unknown about the way forward and it will take some time for like-minded churches to come together in action. In the meantime, however, you will see our church take some steps to begin the process of sharing our support for and affirmation of LGBT+ persons. Signage on our church doors, new words of welcome in our Sunday bulletins and other church publications, and ads in the local papers to make our support of LGBT+ persons clear to our broader community are some of the actions being taken immediately.

We will keep you informed of the discussions that take place and any outcomes or actions that are decided. The Board of Directors also earnestly wishes to hear from our members on this issue. Please call, write or talk to any members of the Board to express your thoughts, concerns, or hopes.

### **WBLUMC Board of Directors**

Sheila Bennett, chair  
Karen Flynn  
Bonnie Greenleaf  
Loren Jacot  
Jeff Lantto  
Julie Perreira  
Amy Swanson  
Pastor Bill Eaves



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