



March 28, 2019

Update on Response to General Conference 2019

On Feb. 26 the United Methodist Church voted to keep its ban on same-sex marriage and the ordination of LGBT clergy while increasing penalties for those who break the rules. This decision, made by delegates from 40 countries to a special General Conference, has been discussed at length by people of faith and covered by secular media.

Many in our congregation have added their name to a statement in support of inclusion of the LGBTQ community. If you would like to view this letter, you can find it here:

<https://www.minnesotamethodists.org/> A similar letter from clergy of the Minnesota Conference was released earlier and can be viewed here: <https://www.minnesotamethodists.org/clergyletter>

The United Methodist News Service is covering the movement on the part of annual conferences in the US and around the world to speak out against the decision of the General Conference:

<https://www.umnews.org/en/news/resistance-to-gc2019-spreads> Other organizations are covering the aftermath of the conference vote from a variety of perspectives, including:

<http://wesleyan covenant.org/2019/03/20/wca-statement-in-light-of-reactions-to-the-special-general-conference>

<https://mainstreamumc.com/blog/key-african-leader-calls-for-split-in-umc/>

<https://unitingmethodists.com/unity/an-open-book-process/>

Examples of thorough reporting from secular media include:

<https://www.latimes.com/nation/la-na-united-methodist-church-breakup-lgbt-20190226-story.html>

https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2019/03/07/yes-methodist-church-voted-against-lgbtq-inclusion-theres-more-story/?utm_term=.7593b41326b3

While there is a diversity of opinion within our congregation about the General Conference decision, the pastoral and lay leadership of White Bear Lake United Methodist Church has made it clear that all are welcome to participation at all levels of our church and our life together. Jesus calls us to love God with our heart, soul, mind and strength, and to love our neighbor as we love ourselves. Eugene Peterson, known for his contemporary translation of the Bible called *The Message*, puts it this way: love the Lord God with all your passion and prayer and intelligence and energy....and Love others as well as you love yourself. Let us act on our conscience with passion, pray for guidance, stay informed, and not lose heart – and most of all, let us aspire to the kind of love Jesus shows us.

Grace and peace,

Pastor Bill Eaves