



Understanding The Issue

God's beloveds include people of all gender identities and sexual orientations. Unfortunately, The United Methodist Church has never affirmed this basic reality. In 1972, the Study Commission on Social Principles brought language to the General Conference to say, "Homosexuals no less than heterosexuals are persons of sacred worth..." However, this was amended from the floor to add what has become known as "the incompatibility clause." The clause stated, "The practice of homosexuality is incompatible with Christian teaching."

Fifty-two years later, despite the immeasurable harm it has caused, the incompatibility clause remains, and its impact has only broadened. Today, discrimination against God's beloveds who are LGBTQIA+ impacts ordination, marriage, chargeable offenses, and the use of General Church funds.

It is time to remove the harmful language. No one is incompatible with God's love. To love is never incompatible with answering the Spirit's call to follow Christ and live out our baptismal vows.

Values

- Suicide prevention
- Reducing physical, emotional, and spiritual harm
- Making space for God's calls in the lives of people who are LGBTQIA+
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- Celebrating love
- Using church funds for ministry, not trials

Removal of Discriminatory Language

Multiple legislative petitions deal with removing language that discriminates against LGBTQIA+ people and have been assigned to several legislative committees. Deleting this discriminatory language will move the United Methodist Church to a neutral stance, neither affirming nor legislatively discriminating against LGBTQIA+ people.

Explicit condemnations and prohibitions in the Book of Discipline have caused harm to LGBTQIA+ siblings in and beyond the church. These prohibitions have harmed the church as LGBTQ+ people have not been able to bring their authentic and full selves to ministry, or have had to hide a part of their lives from their faith community. God's beloveds have been excluded, condemned, and attacked because of the church's stances. Suicides have increased because people were taught that their lives were incompatible with Christian teaching. Young people avoid membership because the church excludes them and their LGBTQIA+ friends. Our current language and practice prevent the proclamation of the Good News of Jesus Christ. Where any of God's beloveds are excluded, God's inclusive love cannot be heard.

Analysis

The position of the Methodist Federation for Social Action (MFSA), and the other 14 members of the Love Your Neighbor Coalition (LYNC) is that discriminatory and restrictive language regarding "homosexuality" and LGBTQIA+ persons should be removed from the Book of Discipline.

Resources

- Reconciling Ministries Network: www.rmnetwork.org
- UMC News article [“What is the Denomination’s Position on Homosexuality?”](#)
- Barna Report [What Millennial Want When They Visit Church/](#) “Millennials who don’t go to church say they see Christians as ... hypocritical (85%), anti-homosexual (91%) and insensitive to others (70%).

Recommended Actions

Remove Harmful Language in the Social Principles (Church and Society)

- **Vote YES on “The Revised Social Principles”** as proposed by the General Board of Church and Society global study group. The Revised Social Principles allow the church to speak about issues in a coherent, globally relevant way, and remove problematic language . **Petition numbers: 20727-CA page 158 ADCA, 20728-CA page 159 ADCA, 20729-CA page 160 ADCA, 20730-CB page 208 ADCA, 20731-CA page 166 ADCA, 20732-CC page 263 ACDA**
 - **Vote NO** on any attempts to reintroduce the “incompatibility clause” to the Revised Social Principles.
 - *If “The Revised Social Principles” are not passed, VOTE YES Petition 20030-CB page 203 ADCA and 20026-C page 202 ADCA* to expand the definition of marriage and remove the incompatibility clause.

Remove the Funding Ban (Financial Administration)

These will restore the church’s authority to fund and resource ministry:

- **Vote YES on Petition 20181-FA page 504 ADCA** “A Fully Inclusive Way Forward-Part 6 of 8”
- **Vote YES on Petition 20190-FA page 508 ADCA** “A Fully Inclusive Way Forward-Part 7 of 8”

Remove Language Blocking LGBTQIA+ Clergy (Faith and Order)

- **Vote YES on Petition 20177-FO page 624 ADCA** “A Simple Plan #3”
- **Vote YES on Petition 20176-FO page 625 ADCA** “Next Generation UMC #6—Amend Qualifications for Ordination 304.5”

Open the Option of Marriage for All (Ordained Ministry)

- **Vote YES on Petition 20420-OM page 1022 ADCA** “A Simple Plan #4”
- **Vote YES on Petition 20469-OM page 1041 ADCA** “A Simple Plan #5”
- **Vote YES on Petition 20500-OM page 1051 ADCA** “All Belong: Restoring Wesleyan Accountability to Just Resolutions”

Remove Specific Chargeable Offenses and Reverse Impacts of “Traditional Plan” (Judicial Administration)

- **Vote YES on Petition 20364-JA page 924 ADCA** “A Simple Plan #8”
- **Vote YES on Petitions 20359-JA page 918 ADCA**, “All Belong: Restoring Trust in Our Judicial Process”, **20381-JA page 931 ADCA** “All Belong: Restoring Wesleyan Accountability to Complaint Processes”, **20387-JA page 933 ADCA** “Next Generation UMC #22 - Penalties”, **20397-JA page 937 ADCA** “Next Generation UMC #22- Church Appeals Procedures”

Restore mutuality in accountability processes (Higher Education/Superintendency)

- **Vote YES on Petition 20300-HS page 976 ADCA** “All Belong: Restoring Integrity to Episcopal Just Resolution Processes”
- **Vote Yes on Petition 20304-HS page 977 ADCA**” Next Generation UMC #11—Amend Episcopal Responsibilities”

This document was prepared in collaboration with Reconciling Ministries Network (RMN), Affirmation, Queer Clergy Caucus (UMQCC), and Resist Harm. MFSA, RMN, Affirmation, and UMQCC are members of the Love Your Neighbor Coalition. Learn more www.lyncolalition.org.