

RESOLUTION #2016 – 14 (Tabled until General Conference acts)

Resolution: Relating to Full Inclusion of LGBTQ Persons in The United Methodist Church: Marriage Equality

Presented by Arch St. UMC, Calvary UMC First UMC of Germantown, Historic St. George's UMC, First UMC of Media, Drexel Hill UMC, Swarthmore UMC, St. Luke UMC of Bryn Mawr, Penns Park UMC, Grandview UMC Lancaster, Chestnut Hill United Church, and Union UMC of Havertown.

WHEREAS, in John 14 (NRSV) we read these words, “Do not let your hearts be troubled, believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father’s house there are many dwelling places.” and “If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, to be with you forever. This is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, because he abides with you and he will be in you.”

WHEREAS, in Matthew 12 (NRSV) we read these words, “Whoever speaks against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven either in this age or in the age to come.”

WHEREAS, in Mark 10 (NRSV), we read these words, “Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it.”

WHEREAS, in Luke 10 (NRSV), we read these words, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself.”

WHEREAS, in John 4 (NRSV), we read, “When was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you? And the king will answer them, Truly, I tell you, just as you did it to one of least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.”

WHEREAS, in the passages above, Jesus proclaims that his household has room for all who seek to follow the Great Commandment and seek to accept the gift of the Holy Spirit.

WHEREAS, in the passages above, in welcoming strangers, children and social outcasts, Jesus proclaims the Good News that no one is without the potential, promise, and permission to praise God to proclaim the truth and to practice the faith. So when Jesus announces “I am the way and the truth and the life.” In John 14 (NRSV), he calls forth the

sacred name of God “I AM, Who I Am,” the name that includes the sacred being of us all.

WHEREAS, LGBTQ persons have a dwelling place in the company of Jesus and hold claim to great gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Therefore Be It Resolved that the Eastern Pennsylvania Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church supports the right of lesbian and gay persons to marry each other in civil and religious ceremonies.

Be it further resolved that the Conference supports the decision of the clergy and congregations of the Eastern Pennsylvania Annual Conference who perform or hold such ceremonies; and the Eastern Pennsylvania Annual Conference supports the decision of clergy and congregations who do not perform or hold such ceremonies.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the Eastern Pennsylvania Annual Conference encourages its bishop to resolve complaints or charges about same-sex weddings through the Supervisory Response (363.1 ¶b)) -- especially by means of a Just Resolution process (363.1¶c)) -- and avoid moving the same to Church Trials.

Person responsible for presenting the motion: Rev. Sukja Bang