

**STATEMENT BY THE
RECONCILING UNITED METHODISTS
OF EASTERN PENNSYLVANIA
RUM-EPA**

We the member churches and individuals, clergy and laity, of the Reconciling United Methodists of Eastern Pennsylvania (RUM-EPA), bear witness to the continued harm that the United Methodist Church has perpetuated on the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex plus (LGBTQI+) community for over forty years and continues to perpetuate on the LGBTQI+ community through its actions at the recent Special Session of the General Conference of the United Methodist Church.

We repent the harms done to the LGBTQI+ community by silence and inaction. We regret that LGBTQI+ voices have not been prioritized in conversations about the future of the UMC. We are sorry that the full self-hood of LGBTQI+ Christians has been compromised by people seeking their exclusion. And we recognize that the LGBTQI+ community has gifts and graces for ordained ministry and a right to marriage equality.

We, the undersigned member churches, individuals, and allies of the RUM-EPA call for immediate action on the part of ALL UNITED METHODISTS to:

- Resist the implementation of any plan for the future of the United Methodist Church (way forward) that does not treat LGBTQI+ Christians as fully equal to heteronormative Christians.
- Resist the implementation of any way forward that does not recognize the full right of LGBTQI+ Christians to be ordained Elders or Deacons and to fully participate in the life of the United Methodist Church.
- Resist the implementation of any way forward that holds clergy, boards, and committees accountable to discriminatory language in The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church.
- Resist the implementation of any way forward that does not recognize same gender marriages as sacred covenants, worthy of celebration in our churches by our ordained clergy.

We call upon ALL UNITED METHODISTS to join in a movement to resist those forces who seek to restrict the free exercise of Christ's love in an unsettled world. To this end WE THE UNDERSIGNED renew our baptismal vows to resist evil, injustice, and oppression in whatever forms they take in ourselves, in our churches and in the world. Until peace flows like a river.