

Proposed Resolution

Submitted by Sandy Rowland Binotto, the Rev. Mark W. Flynn, Rachel M. Fulton, the Rev. Dr. Robert Fulton, the Rev. James P. Gray, Darol Kendrick, Katrina Napier, the Rev. Cindy Skinner

Regarding the Preaching and Teaching of United Methodist Doctrine

WHEREAS, those who are ordained and received as full clergy members in the United Methodist Church are required to answer certain questions which have been asked since the days of John Wesley;

WHEREAS, these questions include the following: “After full examination, do you believe that our doctrines are in harmony with the Holy Scriptures?” and “Will you preach and maintain them?”; and

WHEREAS, many thousands of the women and men who answered these questions in the affirmative are currently serving as pastors, district superintendents, bishops, college professors, or seminary professors;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: that the West Virginia Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church, calls upon all of these women and men, within the West Virginia Annual Conference and throughout the connection, to live up to their promise to faithfully preach and teach doctrine which is consistent with The Confession of Faith which we inherited from The Evangelical United Brethren Church, The Articles of Religion which we inherited from The Methodist Church, and the Holy Scriptures themselves.

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Resolution Regarding Faithfulness to *The Book of Discipline*

WHEREAS, those who are ordained and received as full clergy members in the United Methodist Church are required to answer certain questions which have been asked since the days of John Wesley; and

WHEREAS, these questions include the following: “Do you approve our Church government and polity?” and “Will you support and maintain them?”; and

WHEREAS, those currently serving as pastors and those currently serving as bishops answered these questions; and

WHEREAS, in its resolution titled “Queer Delegates’ Call to Center Justice and Empowerment for LGBTQIA+ People in the UMC,” the 2022 Northeastern Jurisdictional Conference implored its member Conferences (including the W.Va. Annual Conference) to “either not pursue or resolve in an appropriately timely fashion through a non-punitive, just resolution process any complaints against clergy regarding their sexual orientation or clergy who officiate weddings of LGBTQIA+ persons;”¹ and

WHEREAS, in this same resolution, the jurisdictional conference also urged the jurisdiction to disregard the *Book of Discipline* in the same way with regard to “complaints against Bishops regarding their sexual orientation or those who officiate weddings of LGBTQ+ persons;”² and

WHEREAS, on May 9, 2000, the Judicial Council ruled in Decision 886 that “The Discipline is the law of the Church which regulates every phase of the life and work of the Church,” and that “annual conferences may not legally negate, ignore, or violate provisions of the *Discipline* with which they disagree, even when the disagreements are based upon conscientious objections to those provisions;”³ and

WHEREAS, on April 25, 2023, the Judicial Council found in Decision 1483 that encouraging the abeyance of charges “encourages and expresses support for an action that runs counter to Church law;”⁴

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the West Virginia Annual Conference calls upon all its clergy members to keep their promise to support our polity and to abide by the *Book of Discipline*, including the portions which the jurisdictional conference has urged us to disregard;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we call upon the bishops of the Northeastern Jurisdiction to keep their promise to support and maintain our polity and to abide by *The Book of Discipline*, including the portions which the jurisdictional conference has urged them to disregard;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we call upon the College of Bishops of the Northeastern Jurisdiction to hold its members accountable for keeping their promise to support and maintain our polity and to abide by *The Book of Discipline*, including the portions which the jurisdictional conference has urged them to disregard.

¹ The website of The Northeastern Jurisdiction

² *Ibid.*

³ The website of the Judicial Council of The United Methodist Church

⁴ *Ibid.*