



We are working to make our church a welcoming place for ALL people!

Our Towson UMC Welcome Statement embraces diversity and affirms our congregation's commitment to the belief that "All are welcome here." Together, we can now join the many UMC faith communities that have taken steps toward becoming a Reconciling Congregation. Here are the facts about this potential "next step" in our church life.

What is a Reconciling Church? A reconciling church:

- Welcomes and affirms, without exception, all persons who seek to follow the example of Jesus and live out the Christian gospel in their lives
- Affirms our belief that our lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) brothers and sisters in Christ, their marriages and their families are acceptable to God
- Affirms that any church law that discriminates against persons on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity is harmful and inconsistent with Jesus' message of inclusive love for all people
- Affirms that sexual orientation should not be a bar to those who are called to ministry

What are the steps to becoming a Reconciling Church?

Through prayer and honest conversation with one another, we will seek to discern how the spirit may be guiding us at this critical moment in the life of our congregation and denomination. [more →](#)

Following this period of discernment, a preliminary congregational vote will be taken to determine if we are ready to affirm that we are a Reconciling Congregation. If such vote indicates we are ready, then a final vote will be scheduled.

If we vote to become a Reconciling Church, does that mean we will no longer be United Methodists? Will the Conference take away our church property?

No (and no). Becoming a Reconciling Church does **not** mean that we have severed (or intend to sever) our connection to the United Methodist Church. The Conference will **not** take away our church property.

Are we putting our clergy at risk of having their credentials revoked?

No. Our pastors will not be expected or encouraged to officiate at same gender marriages in violation of church law. This is, and will, remain a matter of individual choice and conscience.

Why is this such an important issue? How is it related to our church mission?

Our mission is to make disciples of all of God's people – not just some of them. Our exclusionary church policies, which are so hurtful to our LGBT brothers and sisters, impede our ability to effectively minister to them, to their families and to all who believe in Jesus' inclusive love for all people.

Who may I speak with about this topic?

Please contact Pastor Mark Johnson at 410.823.6511 or Kevin Gralley at kevin.gralley@gmail.com.

How can I show support for this next step in our church?

You are invited to wear a button to show support for making Towson United Methodist Church a Reconciling Church and welcoming place for ALL people.

