



# THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

## Dakotas-Minnesota Area

Resident Bishop  
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Friends in Christ,

*Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever! Hebrews 13:8, CEB*

Since 1808, The United Methodist Church and its predecessor denominations, have upheld the Doctrinal Standards and Articles of Religion. As stated in Article I, we believe that “There is but one living and true God, everlasting, without body or parts, of infinite power, wisdom, and goodness; the maker and preserver of all things, both visible and invisible. And in unity of this Godhead there are three persons, of one substance, power, and eternity—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.” ¶104, 2016 *Book of Discipline*.

There are rumors abounding that we are changing our Articles of Religion and Doctrinal Standards—confession of faith. That is not true. Read our Articles of Religion and other foundational documents at this link: [United Methodist Foundational Documents \(umc.org\)](https://www.umc.org/fundamentals).

The 2020 General Conference, held in 2024, voted to remove exclusionary language. This honors our love for God, scripture, and each other. To be clear, the removal of exclusionary language brings us back to a neutral place, where we were in 1968. A place where one single group is not discriminated against. It holds space for differing opinions within The United Methodist Church by avoiding broad mandates. It recognizes the *imago Dei* - image of God - in all of God’s beloved children. The United Methodist Church continues to be a place where everyone finds room to live out their faith and convictions.

General Conference voted by an overwhelming majority to remove from the Book of Discipline, exclusionary language and the bans related to ministry by, with, and for “self-avowed practicing” gay and lesbian people.

Nothing passed by General Conference or under consideration would require churches to receive an LGBTQ pastor. The right and responsibility to officiate weddings continues to be the decision of each clergy person. Furthermore, each church’s ability to determine how to utilize their facilities for worship and weddings remains.

Let us remember that our love for Christ binds us together as beloved children of God. We stand on the promise that Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever!

Yours in Christ,

*Bishop Lanette Plambeck*

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