

## Summary of the Book of Discipline Changes 1972-2020 re: Human Sexuality

- 1972 – “We do not condone the practice of homosexuality and consider it incompatible with Christian teaching” & “We do not recommend marriage between two persons of the same sex.”
- 1976 – add 3 statements banning the use of church funds to promote homosexuality
- 1980 – 1972 and 1976 positions were left intact.
- 1984 – Adopted as the standard for ordained clergy, commitment to “fidelity in marriage and celibacy in singleness” and “self-avowed practicing homosexuals are not to be accepted as candidates, ordained as ministers, or appointed to serve in The United Methodist Church.”
- 1988 – Added “... we affirm that God’s grace is available to all. We commit ourselves to be in ministry for and with all persons.”
- 1992 – Delegates voted to retain the church’s stand.
- 1996 – Added a definition of “self-avowed practicing homosexual,” and a declaration that ceremonies to celebrate homosexual unions shall not be conducted by United Methodist clergy or in United Methodist churches.
- 2000 – added “We implore families and churches not to reject or condemn their lesbian and gay members and friends.”
- 2004 – Delegates agreed to a statement of unity: “As United Methodists, we remain in covenant with one another, even in the midst of disagreement, and affirm our commitment to work together for the common mission of making disciples throughout the world.” Delegates reaffirmed the denominational position.
- 2008 – Delegates approved a new resolution to oppose homophobia and heterosexism.
- 2012 – Two items stating Christians have different opinions about homosexuality were not approved, leaving the current language intact.
- 2016 - The General Conference deferred all votes on human sexuality and referred this entire subject to a new Commission on a Way Forward, named by the Council of Bishops, to develop a complete examination and possible revision of every paragraph in our Book of Discipline regarding human sexuality.
- 2019 – At a specially-called session of the General Conference, the Commission on a Way Forward presented its report to General Conference in the form of four plans.
  - The Traditional Plan, the most conservative plan, won by 54 votes.
  - From umc.org:  
**LGBTQIA people have not been banned by The United Methodist Church.** Paragraph 4 of the *Book of Discipline* has not been changed. It still reads, “The United Methodist Church acknowledges that all persons are of sacred worth. All persons without regard to race, color, national origin, status, or economic condition, shall be eligible to attend its worship services, participate in its programs, receive the sacraments, upon baptism be admitted as baptized members, and upon taking vows declaring the Christian faith, become professing members in any local church in the connection.”  
>>>We acknowledge, however, that many LGBTQIA people, their loved ones and allies were hurt by the speeches, rhetoric and decisions of the General Conference. We pray for healing and forgiveness.
  - New proposed plans have been submitted to General Conference 2020 to be held in Minneapolis, May 5-15.