

Agree or Disagree?

On February 26, 2019, in St. Louis, a called special session of the UMC General Conference voted to approve a “Traditional Plan” for the denomination that continued to prohibit the ordination or marriage of persons whose gender identity is LGBTQ+. The *UMC Book of Discipline* states that LGBTQ+ persons are welcome, may be members of the church and hold any office as laity, but can neither be married in our churches or by our clergy, nor become candidates for ministry or authorized as clergy. The Traditional Plan also added new measures of accountability and enforcement for these policies.

On April 26, the Judicial Council of the UMC ruled the Traditional Plan to be constitutional. However, it ruled several of its accountability/enforcement elements to be disallowed by our UMC constitution. The portions ruled in order will go into effect January 1, 2020. It also approved a GC2019 process that will be available until Dec 31, 2023, whereby churches that choose to disaffiliate with the UMC over these particular matters may do so.

The FUMC Administrative Council met on Tuesday night May 14, 2019, to share updates with the congregation and engage in a time of Q&A. Several persons expressed to the Council deep concern over the decisions of GC2019. (The GC2019 delegates were divided as well in their vote, 53% to 47%).

The next regular quadrennial meeting of the UMC General Conference will be held in Minneapolis, MN, May 5-15, 2020. This 862 delegate global assembly may decide to reaffirm the Traditional Plan as it was adopted. They could refine it further and enact the policies of enforcement and accountability that were ruled unconstitutional by the Judicial Council. GC2020 could also choose to change course and allow persons who identify as LGBTQ+ to be married and ordained in our denomination. Updates are available at umc.org.

As a local church, we are now in conversation about whether we support or disagree with the decisions of GC2019. Our Council seeks your input. Our Annual Conf. delegates also are listening for your perspectives as they prepare for their meeting (June 20-22 in Roanoke), and their task to elect 22 persons as delegates to the GC2020 event. Please join our conversation:

1. You can return this form in the offering plate or to the office.
2. Call or email our pastor at mkendall@farmvilleumc.org
3. Participate in the Sunday School forums with Ann. Conf. delegates
4. Attend and speak at the Council meeting, Tues. June 18 at 6:30pm

May we embody the grace and peace of Christ in these discussions with each other, and discover the wisdom of the Holy Spirit. Let us listen, honor and affirm each other in all we do, seeking consensus, speaking the truth in love.

Do you agree/disagree with the decisions of GC2019?

I AGREE:_____ I DISAGREE:_____