STANDING RESOLUTION #7
2019 OREGON-IDAHO ANNUAL CONFERENCE

TITLE: Standing With United Methodists Seeking Love and Justice For All

SPONSORING GROUP OR INDIVIDUAL: Reconciling United Methodists, Methodist Federation for Social Action, The Wesley Foundation at the University of Oregon

SPOKESPERSON: Warren Light, Karen Nelson, Jan Nelson

SPOKESPERSON’S ADDRESS: 2520 Harris Street, Eugene OR 97405

SPOKESPERSON’S E-MAIL: uoweselycenter@gmail.com

SPOKESPERSON’S TELEPHONE: 541-654-8144

This petition is

1. A New Standing Resolution;

Text of the Standing Resolution as it would appear in the Conference Journal:

The Oregon-Idaho Annual Conference affirms our commitment to a fully inclusive church. We affirm that all persons are individuals of sacred worth, created in the image of God, and we also assert and affirm that no human being is “incompatible with Christian teaching.”

We condemn the decision of the 2019 General Conference of the United Methodist Church to pass the Traditional Plan and apologize for the harm that it has caused LGBTQ+ persons, their families, their friends, and the body of Christ.

However, we are beyond a time when simple apologies for the acts of others in our denomination are sufficient. Therefore, we affirm the following, in solidarity with sisters, brothers and all persons in echoing the Pacific Northwest Conference:

We, the people of the Oregon-Idaho United Methodist Church “affirm our commitment to a fully inclusive church:

“The Oregon-Idaho Annual Conference will not conform or comply with provisions of the Discipline which discriminate against LGBTQIA2S+ persons, including but not limited to provisions regarding: marriage (161.B), the incompatibility clause (161.F), ordination and appointments (304.3), homosexual unions (341.6), AC funding ban (613.19), GCFA funding ban (806.9), chargeable offenses pertaining to being “a self-avowed practicing homosexual” or to officiating at weddings for couples regardless of the sex of the partners (2702.1b,d).

“The Oregon-Idaho Annual Conference and its members will not participate in or conduct judicial procedures related to the Discipline’s prohibitions against LGBTQIA2S+ persons.

“The Oregon-Idaho Annual Conference insists that any benefits available to clergy and employees and their families are available to all clergy and employees and their families,
regardless of the sexes or genders of the partners, and requires the District Superintendents to inform all clergy under their supervision of this right.

“The Oregon-Idaho Annual Conference will realign its funding to reflect these commitments, using no reserve funds to pay for judicial procedures related to the Discipline’s prohibitions against LGBTQIA2S+ persons, and instead asking the Connectional Table to lead and fund efforts in cultural competency, anti-racism, anti-sexism, anti-ageism, anti-homophobia, and anti-oppression training at the conference and district levels, as well as for advocacy and implementation efforts related to the same.”

Further, we recognize that a multitude of voices within the United Methodist Church have expressed their hurt, anger, discontent, and outrage over the passage of the Traditional Plan. Some have referred to the very fact the Traditional Plan has been in key parts ruled unconstitutional by the Judicial Council. We find, core issues well-articulated by members of the Great Plains Annual Conference (GPAC):

“WHEREAS, using appropriate, quality biblical scholarship, there is no biblical mandate to discriminate against LGBTQ+ persons and relationships.

“WHEREAS, the United Methodist Church is capable of great nuance in the matter of biblical interpretation as displayed in its treatment of issues such as divorce and the ordination of women, but reverts to simplistic literalism when it comes to the full inclusion of LGBTQ+ persons in its life and ministry.

“WHEREAS, the United Methodist Church has singled out LGBTQ+ persons for special punitive action while ignoring the “clear biblical teaching” on other matters such as pensions (Matthew 6:19-20).

“WHEREAS, much of the Traditional Plan had already been ruled unconstitutional before it was voted upon.

“WHEREAS, the first general rule that John Wesley gave the people called Methodists concerns “doing no harm.”

“WHEREAS, United Methodists promise “to resist evil, injustice, and oppression in whatever forms they present themselves.”

“WHEREAS, by passing the Traditional Plan, the denomination has done great, and perhaps irreparable harm to our LGBTQ+ siblings.

“THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Great Plains Annual Conference (GPAC) condemns the decision of the 2019 General Conference to pass the Traditional Plan and apologizes for the harm that it has caused LGBTQ+ persons, their families, their friends, and the body of Christ.
“We affirm that all persons are individuals of sacred worth, created in the image of God,” but we also assert and affirm that no human being is incompatible with Christian teaching.

“BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, no GPAC funds or monies (either directly through payments or indirectly through the time of employees of the conference) shall be expended for the purpose of background investigations, complaints, just resolutions, or clergy trials pertaining LGBTQ+ ordination and marriage.”

THEREFORE, we recognize that the Oregon-Idaho Annual Conference is not alone in its prayerful resistance of discrimination. We reach out to others who are working to restore the basis on which the Methodist movement was founded: a community of Grace seeking perfection in love.

Lastly, the Oregon-Idaho Annual Conference, while affirming the above through this Statement endorsed as a Standing Resolution, will also seek implementation of the following:

- We will not conform or comply with provisions of the Book of Discipline which discriminate against LGBTQIA persons in matters of ordination or marriage.

- We resolve to work with this Annual Conference and the leadership thereof that no OIAC funds or monies (either directly through payments or indirectly through the time of employees of the conference) shall be expended for the purpose of background investigations, complaints, just resolutions, or clergy trials pertaining to LGBTQ+ ordination or marriage of same-gender couples.

- We call on all within our Annual Conference to see an end to discriminatory practices against any and all LGBTQIA persons whether endorsed by government, religious institutions or our deeply beloved but deeply flawed denomination, the United Methodist Church.

There are no children of God who are unloved by God. None for whom the full ministry of the church of Jesus Christ is not openly available. In Wesleyan theology, threefold Grace is the birthright of all who live and breathe and seek to dwell in the Holy Spirit.

There is no waiting period for the Realm of God.

It is now. It is love.

* LGBTQIA2S+ is an acronym which names identities including Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Questioning, Intersex, Asexual, 2 Spirit and the many other forms of identity related to gender and sexuality. The “2S” indicates ‘two-spirit people,’ and may acknowledge some Native American persons. The " + " covers new, not-yet-stated statuses and persons. Thus, we use the acronym: LGBTQIA2S+
What will this action accomplish? This statement records the connectional aspect of the resistance to the discriminatory path taken by the 2019 General Conference. It is important for all people, including our LGBTQIA members and our local communities, to understand that we do not intend to be the church embodied in the legislation that was passed by that body.

Why is it important? It is not enough to say that we are in solidarity, unless we acknowledge that we are part of the greater movement to find Grace at the heart of our identity.

How will it be carried out? By whom? It is ours to explore at this time. What happens next should start with a coming together of our uniqueness and our similarities. Given that this is a SR, there is no action required of anyone – but we hope the persuasive power of love will cause our leaders to make decisions in line with our values.

How much will it cost? Where will the money come from? It may cost something in our connection. It may cost funds. We may save funds due to the fact we will not engage in humiliating spectacles such as trials for persons who should not be tried. At the time of submission, the office of the Conference Treasurer had not yet estimated either costs or savings.

Please email in Word format to Rev. Ruth Marsh (revruthmarsh@gmail.com) and/or Rev. Adam Briddell (adambriddell@gmail.com) no later than March 19, 2019 for review and publishing.

Late items in Word format will be received up to March 29, 2019 without review.