

March 6, 2019

Dear Horizons Life-Changers,

## The Results

The United Methodist "Special" General Conference to make decisions regarding the marrying and ordaining of LGBTQ persons in the United Methodist Church concluded last Tuesday, the 26<sup>th</sup>. By a narrow margin (53.3% to 46.7%) this global body voted to maintain its current policy, continuing the stance that LGBTQ persons cannot be married or ordained. Measures to enhance enforcement of this policy were also approved. This vote must still pass through legislation in April, which may still alter the final outcome.

## We Recognize

We know that Horizons, like the UMC, is a body comprised of people from many walks of life who are experiencing a variety of reactions to this. Our heart goes out to those who have been hurt by this vote, especially if you or a family member identifies as LGBTQ. We know others of you feel relieved that our denomination has maintained its views on marriage as the church has defined it for centuries.

Ultimately, we grieve the further crumbling of our Christian faith brought about by these divisions from within. This division only makes our primary mission to make life-changers in Jesus who transform the world for His good more difficult. **Nevertheless, our primary focus at Horizons will be to maintain the unity of our community centered around our mission.**

## What Now

At this point, we believe Jesus calls us to be in conversation and listen to each other. We invite you to join us for a short address from pastor Jason followed by a time to ask questions on **April 7, at 1:00 pm**. If you have any questions you hope to have addressed, **please email them to [listening@horizonschurch.org](mailto:listening@horizonschurch.org) in advance**. We will keep questions anonymous and speak to as many as we are able.

## At the End of the Day

In the midst of all this, please know that while Horizons is by tradition a United Methodist Church, our ultimate identity is in God's Word and in our pursuit of Jesus above all other pursuits. Horizons does not and will not affirm any intentions within this vote to cause harm, to practice discrimination or dominance over any minority, or to "other" people who differ from the majority. We only affirm the efforts behind this vote to live with integrity in honoring Christ and His teachings.

We insist that while the church may not be able to offer all services to some individuals in our community, it does not mean we are not welcoming of all people or that we are standing in hate or exclusion of anyone. The same care for all people and honor of Jesus' teachings that Horizons has demonstrated since our beginning is the same care and honor we will continue to live by henceforth. **We will continue our mission to change lives in Christ!**

We hope to see you for our conversation on **Sunday April 7<sup>th</sup>** and ask that you continue to trust that the ministry at Horizons you have come to know, love, and support will continue to do good in the world for the glory of God.

Sincerely in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "JK", followed by a horizontal line extending to the right.

Pastor Jason Kennedy & the Members of the 2019 Horizons Steering Team:

(Amy Lehnert (Chair), Jim Peters (Vice Chair), Lisa Butler (Secretary), Tom Oerter (Treasurer), TJ Schirmer, Dannee Sengdara, Ken Smith, Terri McKinney, Derek Steinacher (ex-officio), Jason Kennedy (ex-officio))