

Our Mennonite Confession of Hope

What we at the St. Paul Mennonite Fellowship hope for from the Mennonite Church (CDC, MCUSA), regarding recognition and inclusion of LGBTQ people within the Mennonite Church – June 7, 2015

That MCUSA will return to our roots as a church of justice:

Just as some previous church leaders came to recognize that Scripture doesn't really support racial segregation or the subjugation of women, we hope contemporary church leaders will make our church inclusive for all whose faith makes them members of the community of believers.

- MCUSA will recognize the humanity and spirituality of LGBTQ people as full members within MCUSA, including welcoming, promoting and supporting them in roles of leadership and ministry.
- MCUSA will not only make things tolerable for LGBTQ people, but will make things just:
 - This includes reparations to LGBTQ people within MCUSA as restitution for past injustices. An example of reparations would be scholarships for LGBTQ applicants to Mennonite colleges & seminaries.
 - MCUSA will promote the full participation of LGBTQ people in seminary, as governing members, administrators, teachers, students and graduates.
 - Mennonite leaders will shepherd their congregations to accept and embrace LGBTQ people as the whole people God made them to be, and to wholly welcome LGBTQ members into the church in every way.

That MCUSA will become more theologically Anabaptist, regarding LGBTQ ordination and ministry:

- Congregational autonomy will be respected, so that decisions regarding LGBTQ issues will be made at the congregational level.
- MCUSA will practice and respect the Priesthood of ALL Believers.

That CDC and MCUSA leaders will:

- Reframe sexuality as a way to experience the divine, instead of as an entry point to sin.
- Base policy and practice regarding sexuality on scientific facts, rather than on historical traditions of discrimination.
- Develop and adopt a statement regarding the welcoming and acceptance of sexual diversity within the church.

That LGBTQ allies will take concrete actions to move the church toward justice:

- LGBTQ allies will not work for agencies or organizations that discriminate against LGBTQ people in any way.
- Our hope is that churches of welcome will give priority in hiring to LGBTQ pastors.
- Our hope is that current ministers of welcoming congregations might feel called to continue their important work as emissaries to congregations exploring welcome, opening up positions for qualified LGBTQ clergy and that Mennonite leadership will support LGBTQ allies through denominational blessing, financial support and logistical aid, to go forth as emissaries for opening the hearts and minds of Mennonite congregations exploring welcome, with the goal of fostering justice within our church.