



**PETITION
to the
2019 MOUNTAIN SKY CONFERENCE**

TITLE: All Are Welcome

ACTION TO BE VOTED ON:

- 1 Whereas, The Mountain Sky Conference of The United Methodist Church and its antecedent bodies have been
2 intentionally inclusive, purposefully collaborative, creatively experimental, boldly diverse, and outwardly
3 focused for more than 100 years;
- 4 Whereas, we encourage diverse ministry settings, a gracious approach to contextual ministry, and a rich theological
5 dialogue;
- 6 Whereas, following the wisdom of 1 John, we choose to love well and trust that perfect love casts out fear;
- 7 Whereas, we are convinced it is not necessary to think alike in order to love alike;
- 8 Whereas, we have been ordaining the people of God into representative ministry without regard for sexual
9 orientation since 1982;
- 10 Whereas, we have been blessed by the leadership of Bishop Karen Oliveto, the first openly lesbian bishop in the
11 United Methodist connection; and
- 12 Whereas, we find the punitive and prohibitive language of the Traditional Plan adopted at the 2019 General
13 Conference not in keeping with Christian teaching; now, therefore, be it
- 14 *Resolved*, That we, the members of the Mountain Sky Conference of The United Methodist Church, cannot and will
15 not comply with the strict requirements of the Traditional Plan adopted at the 2019 General Conference;
- 16 *Resolved*, That we reject and will not enforce the punitive and exclusionary policies in The Book of Discipline
17 focused against gay and lesbian persons, their partners, allies, or their friends as a faithful, biblical witness to
18 the love of God revealed in Jesus Christ;
- 19 *Resolved*, That we will welcome all persons into the full life of our congregations and annual conference, regardless
20 of gender identity, sexual orientation, or where they are on their faith journey;
- 21 *Resolved*, That we will support the clergy of the Mountain Sky Conference who, as a matter of Christian conscience
22 and pastoral faithfulness, choose to conduct same-sex unions and that we will take no disciplinary action
23 against them on this matter;
- 24 *Resolved*, That we will affirm calls to ministry based solely on the discernment of the gifts and graces necessary to
25 fulfill that call;
- 26 *Resolved*, That we will work to build God's Beloved Community, a connection that has room for all and
27 condemnation for none, among persons of good will that the Reign of God may come upon the earth; and
- 28 *Resolved*, That we will commit ourselves to robust and thorough dialogues of life and faith, and to building bridges
29 of understanding and trust between persons who have been divided on this issue, that our common love of
30 God in Christ may be affirmed, lived out, and witnessed to the world.
- 31

RATIONALE (Not debatable):

1 As the Mountain Sky Conference, we are committed to being accountable to the triune God, to our
2 communities of faith, and to each other. We are intentionally inclusive, purposefully collaborative and in
3 partnership with one another, creatively on the experimental edge of ministry, and an outwardly focused church.
4 We are committed to welcoming people of all gender identities and sexual orientations as “persons of sacred worth”
5 into the life of The United Methodist Church.

6 Our annual conference is united by a history of people who gave everything so that God’s grace might be
7 known across our ministry settings. We remember and honor the legacy of Methodists who partnered to build
8 hospitals, schools, and new faith communities. We remember and honor the legacies of William Wesley Van
9 Orsdel, his friend John Wesley Iliff, and so many others who worked to create space where all might know the love
10 of God. We remember the legacy of theological education and the commitment to inclusive ministry that has helped
11 to define our annual conference.

12 We are deeply grieved by the passage of the Traditional Plan at the 2019 General Conference. This plan
13 will continue and amplify the harm done to our LGBTQ+ siblings and nullify our witness to Christ’s love for all. To
14 embrace or accept the policy of exclusion and punitive penalties embedded in the Traditional Plan would be to
15 betray the best parts of our legacy and tradition. We reject the division and vitriol of the Traditional Plan. These
16 restrictive regulations will forcibly exclude so many of God’s children who are LGBTQ+. When we baptize
17 children, we vow to be a community of love and grace. To uphold the Traditional Plan would require that we
18 abandon our vows to generations of LGBTQ+ Methodists. The Traditional Plan has and will continue to define the
19 United Methodist presence in the world by exclusion and hate rather than by Christ’s love and God’s grace.

20 In contrast, both the Simple Plan and One Church Plans, which were presented at the 2019 General
21 Conference, enable us to follow our mission as United Methodists with open hearts, open minds, and open doors.
22 John Wesley stated that the First Rule of the United Societies was “Do No Harm.” Already we are doing this in
23 many of our churches. The Administrative Council of Columbia Falls United Methodist Church adopted the Simple
24 Plan for its mode of operation. In this way we can lead by example, embrace Bishop Karen Oliveto, and support the
25 clergy and laity in all of our churches.

26 The Mountain Sky Conference is defined through our diverse ministry settings and a gracious approach to
27 contextual ministry. It is through our distinctive ministries and rich theological dialogue that we fulfill Wesley’s
28 call to love alike even though we may not think alike. Our commitment to Christ’s call and our connection is
29 imperative for the health of the church now and into the future. We are decidedly better, more faithful, and more
30 effective together. As such, we will continue to devote our best efforts and energy to a connection that has room for
31 all and condemnation for none. We will stand in solidarity with the leadership of the Western Jurisdiction in stating
32 our intention to not comply with the exclusionary provisions of the Traditional Plan passed by the 2019 General
33 Conference.

34

EVALUATION (Not debatable):

1 When all decisions, actions, and policies of the Mountain Sky Conference are consistent with the love of God
2 revealed in Jesus Christ, this petition will have accomplished its purpose.

3

ATTACHMENTS (Additional Information / Not Debatable)

None.

PETITION DETAILS

This petition is a

Binding Action

Non-Binding Resolution

Effective Date: July 1, 2019

Termination Date: Permanent

PETITION ADVOCATE:

Name: Rev. Jasper Peters
 Address: 1615 Ogden St.
 City, State, Zip: Denver, Colorado 80218
 Email: jasper@belongchurch.org
 Phone: (720) 261-2492
 Phone @ Conference: (720) 261-2492

Name: Rev. Sharon Langfeldt
 Address: Christ Church United Methodist, 690 Colorado Blvd.
 City, State, Zip: Denver, Colorado 80206
 Email: SLangfeldt@ChristChurchColorado.org
 Phone: (303) 322-0784
 Phone @ Conference: (303) 324-8028

Name: Nancy Flint
 Address: 125 Lewis Ln.
 City, State, Zip: Columbia Falls, Montana 59912
 Email: neflint@gmail.com
 Phone: (406) 249-6114
 Phone @ Conference: (406) 249-6114

PETITION SUPPORTERS:

Mark Feldmeir	Clergy	St. Andrew UMC, Highlands Ranch, Colorado
Pat Callbeck Harper	Laity	St. Paul's UMC, Helena, Montana
Ashley Hawkins	Clergy	Highlands UMC, Denver, Colorado
Calvin Hill	Clergy	Blackfeet UM Parish, Browning, Montana
Valerie Jackson	Clergy	University Park UMC, Denver, Colorado
Ann Lantz	Clergy	Ecumenical Social Ministries, Colorado Springs, Colorado
Patrick Lewis	Clergy	Palisade & Fruita UMCs, Palisade & Fruita, Colorado
Angie Kotzmoyer	Clergy	Park Hill UMC, Denver, Colorado
Melissa Martin	Laity	Grace UMC, Cheyenne, Wyoming
Amber Mitts	Clergy	First UMC, Alamosa, Colorado
Wendy Ochs	Clergy	Evangelical UMC, Billings, Montana

Jasper Peters	Clergy	Belong Church, Denver, Colorado
Ben Roe	Laity	Arvada UMC, Arvada, Colorado
Maggie Roe	Clergy	Chaplain, Mountain Sky Conference
Melanie Rosa	Clergy	First UMC, Fort Collins, Colorado
Charles Stevens	Clergy	First UMC, Colorado Springs, Colorado
Marv Vose	Clergy	District Superintendent for Utah / Western Colorado
Barry Welliver	Laity	Hilltop UMC, Sandy, Utah

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

Will there be any identifiable financial impact to the Conference?

Yes

No