



LAKE OSWEGO
UNITED
METHODIST CHURCH

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Beloved LOUMC Congregation,

Shaped by our baptism, our mission, and our tradition, we, the LOUMC Board, believe it is time that we consider whether we are called to more boldly embrace our hospitality for all of God's children. It is time to consider whether the Spirit is leading LOUMC to become a Reconciling Congregation.

At our baptism, we commit ourselves to "accept the freedom and power God gives us to resist evil, injustice and oppression in whatever forms they present themselves." We are called to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. Our Wesleyan heritage gives us a clear rule of life: Do no harm; Do good; Stay in love with God.

For more than a decade, our Welcoming Statement has proclaimed that "We commit ourselves to be in ministry for and with all persons, regardless of age, race, ethnicity, faith, sexual orientation, gender identity, economic condition, marital status, or abilities. We welcome all persons who seek God's love through Jesus Christ and who desire to journey together toward greater understanding and mutual respect."

The United Methodist Church made significant, faithful strides in 2024 when our General Conference removed the harmful language in our Book of Discipline that restricted who may serve as ordained clergy, and who may be married in our churches. The removal of this language signified a change in our denomination's stance toward members of the LGBTQ+ Community.

Why would we consider becoming a Reconciling Congregation now that the Book of Discipline has changed? Why make a public declaration that seems to echo a decision already made by the General Conference?

There are many reasons.

The work of the Reconciling Ministries Network is no longer focused on changing our denominational stance. Their work is now in creating a truly welcoming Church for all of God's people.

As our denomination has embraced a more welcoming stance, our nation is becoming more hostile toward our LGBTQ+ siblings, often misusing Christian language to justify bigotry and hatred. It is important that marginalized neighbors know that we are a truly safe place.

The practice of gracious hospitality is more than just writing a meaningful statement or placing a sign on the front door - it is a commitment to learning and growing as an act of faith, and a commitment to living out the values we profess about welcoming everyone.

For these reasons - and especially because we have felt the Spirit's push - the LOUMC Board is supporting a congregational process and conversation about becoming a Reconciling Congregation.

We know that transparency, graciousness and kindness are vitally important as we enter into this conversation. We commit to being clear and direct about the process and the end results. Our prayer - and our belief - is that we can engage in a robust and even difficult conversation and end in a place of love and mutual respect, even though we may not all agree on the decision we make.

We share our intention with you as part of that commitment to transparency. We also want you to know what the timeline may look like for the conversation and any decisions we make.

- Now through March 2026 - Begin 1:1 discussions
- Post Easter - Education and Town Halls
- Summer 2026 - Vote

If you have questions, please reach out to Alaina Kuehn, Deb Gice, Bev Cramer or Pastor Clay.

Signed:

Lake Oswego United Methodist Board and Pastor Clay Andrew

Bev Cramer
DEB GICE
Judith A. Johnson
Anna Johnson

Alaina Kuehn
Cynthia G. Wood
Kay Lutze



Rev. Clay Andrew

A place to connect to God, to each other, and to the world