

# A Way Forward



Western North Carolina Conference  
United Methodist Women

**INFORMING YOU & EMPOWERING YOU**



## A Way Forward

for the United Methodist Church

### What is the Commission on A Way Forward?

The Commission on a Way Forward was proposed by the Council of Bishops and approved by the 2016 General Conference to do a complete examination and possible revision of every paragraph of the Book of Discipline concerning human sexuality and explore options that help to maintain and strengthen the unity of the church.

### Why are United Methodist Women Involved?

As United Methodist Women, we aim to educate for the transformation of the world. Our goal for you is to:

- Be Informed about the Special Session of GC in 2019 and the work of the Commission on a Way Forward
- Clarify our thinking on what holds us together as a Church
- Develop confidence to share our views with other church members, including with our Annual Conference leaders and General Conference delegates around the unity of the Church

### A Message from Harriett Olson, General Secretary, United Methodist Women

The Commission on a Way Forward has been engaging in a conversation as it prepares a report to come to the Special Session of General Conference in 2019. Between now we will also be engaging in conversations as United Methodist Women.

Differences of belief and opinion about how The United Methodist Church should include, minister to and treat our LGBTQ members have been a source of conflict since the first language addressing homosexuality was added to The Book of Discipline in 1972.

Sisters, you have wisdom and experience to share that is born of working together amidst differences for many years. You have seen conflicts resolved well and conflicts resolved poorly. You have families that have stayed close and families that have pulled apart. The church needs your prayers, your wisdom and your willingness to engage.

Excerpts from Responsively Yours, *response magazine*, January 2018

Visit our website  
for links to  
information &  
resources:

[wnccumw.org](http://wnccumw.org)



Preparing for  
Holy Conversations

### 1) Ponder the following:

- a. What makes us United Methodist?

What is the shared Mission or Purpose that unites us as The United Methodist Church?

- b. Can you Imagine? A creative design of a Church: That includes people with different perspectives; That allows all members to flourish in Christ; And furthers the church's mission and ministry?

### 2) Resources for Further Study

- a. [umc.org/who-we-are/commission-on-a-way-forward](http://umc.org/who-we-are/commission-on-a-way-forward)
- b. [facebook.com/umcforward/](https://facebook.com/umcforward/)
- c. [unitedmethodistwomen.org](http://unitedmethodistwomen.org)

## A Way Forward for The United Methodist Church - Resources for Further Study:

- Commission on a Way Forward Report to 2019 Special Session of the General Conference (In English, French, Portuguese & Swahili): <http://www.umc.org/topics/general-conference-2019-special-session>
- UMNS Article: Court Docket details proposed plans for UMC: <https://www.umnews.org/en/news/court-docket-details-proposed-plans-for-umc>
- Commission on a Way Forward Resources on [www.wnccumc.org](http://www.wnccumc.org): (Link at top left of homepage) <https://www.wnccumc.org/commissiononawayforwardresources>  
Includes Health Conversations resources, and links to UMC.org resources, and COWF videos and resources
- Video: Remarks on "A Commission on a Way Forward" - Bishop Ken Carter | Western North Carolina Annual Conference 2018 - <https://www.wnccumc.org/bishopcarterremarks>
- Videos from Commission on a Way Forward: <http://www.umc.org/who-we-are/commission-on-a-way-forward-releases-final-videos-for-2019-general-conference>
- News updates from Commission on a Way Forward: <http://www.umc.org/who-we-are/commission-on-a-way-forward-news-and-updates>
- Ongoing news updates from The United Methodist Church: [www.umc.org](http://www.umc.org)
- TED Talk Video: The Danger of a Single Story - Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie: [https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda\\_adichie\\_the\\_danger\\_of\\_a\\_single\\_story](https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story)
- TED Talk Video: 10 Ways to have a Better Conversation – Celeste Headlee: [https://www.ted.com/talks/celeste\\_headlee\\_10\\_ways\\_to\\_have\\_a\\_better\\_conversation](https://www.ted.com/talks/celeste_headlee_10_ways_to_have_a_better_conversation)
- Praying Our Way Forward: A Prayer Community for The United Methodist Church: [www.umcprays.org](http://www.umcprays.org)
- Decision 2019: One with Christ, One with Each Other, One in Ministry to all the World (August / September / October 2018 Special Issue of Circuit Rider: [https://www.ministrymatters.com/circuit\\_rider/139/decision-2019-one-with-christ-one-with-each-other-one-in-ministry-to-all-the-world-augsepoct-2018](https://www.ministrymatters.com/circuit_rider/139/decision-2019-one-with-christ-one-with-each-other-one-in-ministry-to-all-the-world-augsepoct-2018)
- Other videos from various annual conference presentations that are available online
- Point of View (POV) resources from the Florida Conference (resources on Empathy)

### What You Can Do:

- **Be in Prayer.** Pray for The United Methodist Church, the Council of Bishops, the Commission on a Way Forward, the Commission on General Conference, the work of the General Conference, laity and clergy delegates to General Conference, and the many others providing resourcing & assistance for this work. Pray for our global connection, local congregations, and our clergy & laity members around the world. Join in Praying our Way Forward with other United Methodists around the world using the prayer resources at [www.umcprays.org](http://www.umcprays.org). Be in Prayer.
- **Be informed.** Follow the news & information coming out as we move toward General Conference. Use the resources above and others that will be shared over the next seven months. Be informed.
- **Join in Holy Conversation.** Be a part of conversations in your district, and in your congregation. Use the Healthy Conversations resources available on our conference website. Intentionally find ways to be in holy conversation, listening and sharing in love, with persons with whom you may not agree. Join in Holy Conversation.

**Ephesians 4:1-6:** *I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.*

### Western North Carolina Conference General Conference 2019 Delegation:

**Laity:** Jennifer Davis, Jennifer Burton, Lynne Gilbert, Coley Hooker, Jr., Amy Johnson, Shannon Sherfey, Sandy Hieronymus, Henry Dozier, Jr., Robert Upchurch, Tonya Lanier

**Clergy:** Kim Ingram, Amy Coles, David Christy, Ashley Crowder Stanley, In-Yong Lee, James Howell, Jeremy Troxler, Sam Moore, John Boggs, Jeff Patterson