

## R-5 A COMMITMENT TO GRACE IN THE INDIANA CONFERENCE Rule of Law Request

In accordance with Paragraphs 51 and 2609.6 of the United Methodist Book of Discipline (Discipline) and considering Judicial Council Decisions (JCD) # 886, 1201, 1292, 1340, 1343, 1344, and 1435; I respectfully ask and request a bishop's decision of law on the following questions regarding Resolution R-5 "A COMMITMENT TO GRACE IN THE INDIANA CONFERENCE", just adopted by the 2022 session of the Indiana Annual Conference:

1. Does any part of this resolution impermissibly discourage the enforcement of church law, or otherwise encourage or express support for actions that negate, ignore, or violate our church law, particularly church law prohibiting "self-avowed, practicing homosexual" clergy (Discipline ¶¶ 304.3, 2702.1.b) and "ceremonies which celebrate homosexual unions" (Discipline ¶¶ 341.6, 2702.1.b)? If so, is this resolution null, void, and without effect, in whole or in part?
2. Does this resolution authorize, permit, or encourage clergy in our conference to conduct or local churches in our conference to host "ceremonies which celebrate homosexual unions" or "same-sex wedding ceremonies"? If so, is all or part of this resolution null, void, and without effect, considering Discipline ¶¶ 341.6 and 2702.1.b?
3. Does this resolution prohibit, restrict, or discourage complaints from being filed, processed, valid bills of charges from being certified, or such complaints and charges potentially resulting in a church trial (after an unsuccessful effort for just resolution) and penalty for clergy who commit the chargeable offense of "performing same-sex wedding ceremonies" (Discipline ¶ 2702.1.b)? If so, is this resolution null, void, and without effect, in whole or in part?
4. Does this resolution discourage or prevent district committees on ministry or the board of ordained ministry, or the clergy session from making "the full examination and thorough inquiry into the person's fitness" (particularly Discipline ¶ 304.3) as a candidate for: (1) annual election as local pastor; (2) election to associate membership; (3) election to provisional membership; or (4) election to full conference membership in light of Discipline ¶¶ 635.2.h, 304.2, 304.3, 305, 306, 310 and JCD # 1343, 1344 or does the resolution discourage disapprovals of ministry candidates who may be otherwise qualified but who clearly do not meet the standards of Discipline ¶ 304.3? If so, is this resolution null, void, and without effect, in whole or in part?
5. Does this resolution encourage district committees on ministry or the board of ordained ministry, or the clergy session to approve ministry candidates who do NOT meet the requirement of Discipline ¶ 304.3 prohibiting the approval of any candidate who "openly acknowledges to a bishop, district superintendent, district committee of ordained ministry, Board of Ordained Ministry, or clergy session that the person is a practicing homosexual; or is living in a same-sex marriage, domestic partnership or civil union, or is a person who publicly states she or he is a practicing homosexual" in light of JCD #702, 708, 722, 725, 764, 844, 984, 1020, 1341? If so, is this resolution null, void, and without effect, in whole or in part?

6. Does this resolution in any way limit or restrict the rights or obligations of the bishop, district superintendents, counsels for the church, committees on investigation, trial courts, boards of ordained ministry, or district committees on ministry in our annual conference to fully comply with and uphold Discipline ¶¶ 304.1-3, 341.6, 362, 635, 2701, 2702, 2704, 2706, and 2711? If so, is any section of the resolution null, void, and without effect?

Submitted by: Christopher S. Gadlage; Elder in Full Connection

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Christopher S Gadlage

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Date