

1 **R-5 “A COMMITMENT TO GRACE IN THE INDIANA CONFERENCE”**  
2 **(Dicken)**

3  
4 **Resolution:**

5 Whereas ¶122 of the Book of Discipline reminds us that we make disciples as we continue  
6 the mission of seeking, welcoming, and gathering persons into the community of the  
7 body of Christ;

8  
9 And whereas in the Indiana Conference this work includes people of all ages, races,  
10 abilities, gender identities, and sexual orientations;

11  
12 Therefore, be it resolved that we shall support every church and clergyperson in our  
13 conference who is seeking to faithfully serve God and their communities to the best of  
14 their abilities and in accordance with their deeply held, God-given convictions. We shall  
15 strive to honor and trust contextual expressions of ministry, including the decisions of  
16 clergy to choose which weddings they officiate and congregations to choose which  
17 weddings they host, so long as they are between two consenting, committed adults. We  
18 shall also embrace and encourage God's call to ministry in diverse persons and will seek  
19 to not restrict God's calling solely on the basis of a candidate's sexual orientation or  
20 gender identity. Further, we shall respect the decisions of any who feel they cannot  
21 remain a part of the Indiana Conference in light of these commitments.

22  
23 **Rationale:**

24 We are called to do no harm.

25 With the postponement of the General Conference until 2024, we cannot wait to respond  
26 faithfully to the Gospel call of inclusion. In recent years, LGBTQ+ persons have heard a  
27 repeated refrain of, “Just hold on a little while longer, until General Conference in 2020.”  
28 Then “... until General Conference in 2022.” Continuing this pattern with more calls to  
29 wait for delayed inclusion and justice perpetuates harm against marginalized persons in  
30 our United Methodist Church, as well as does harm to our shared ministry and witness.  
31 Our current state is not sustainable. We must move forward in faithful, inclusive ministry  
32 now.

33  
34 We are called to do all the good we can.

35 Since the Global Methodist Church announced its intent to launch in May 2022, and  
36 Bishop Trimble stated, in response to this news, his intent to work graciously with those who  
37 feel compelled to leave The United Methodist Church, we must also take intentional steps  
38 to shape our ministry in the Indiana Conference to do good in the wake of these  
39 developments. Just as we are making room for people of good faith and conviction to  
40 join another denomination, we must also graciously make room in our conference for  
41 those who have been historically and contemporarily excluded from full participation in  
42 the life of the church, so that we may be the church Christ calls us to be now and in the  
43 future.

44  
45 We are called to stay in love with God.

46 Our primary focus as a church should be our mission to make disciples of Jesus Christ for  
47 the transformation of the world. The fractious history of our denomination on questions of

1 LGBTQ+ inclusion over the past half-century has greatly impaired our ability to stay in love  
2 with God together. For the sake of our mission, we must move forward in ministry in a way  
3 that allows for all people to respond fully and faithfully to God's call on their lives.

4

5 **Financial Implications:** No

6

7 **Groups to Forward/Affirm:**

8 This resolution should be forwarded to all members and leaders of the Indiana  
9 Conference via the Conference Journal and other standard communications used to  
10 report actions of the Annual Conference body

11

12 Mary R. W. Dicken

13 812-589-9640

14 Mary.dicken@inumc.org