“CAN WE TALK?
THE BIBLE & SAME-SEX MARRIAGE”

A Conversation with United Methodist Pastors

Wednesday, December 3, 2014
McCleary Chapel
University of Indianapolis
Schwitzer Student Center
1400 E. Hanna Avenue
Indianapolis, IN 46227
AN INVITATION TO UNITED METHODIST PASTORS

John Wesley famously refuted his critics on more than one occasion by saying that the General Rules of the United Societies were not set in stone. Indeed, Mr. Wesley wanted it to be known far and wide that the people called Methodists were “willing to be wiser than they were before,” particularly when they became convinced by the Holy Spirit to change their minds.

Wesley understood the practices of “searching the Scriptures” and “Christian conference” to be means of grace that were interrelated and mutually supportive. Too often, however, contemporary United Methodists are not having the kinds of searching conversations with one another about how to read scripture.

Instead, debates over issues such as same-sex marriage have gotten “locked down”—a phrase more than one pastor has used to describe the situation in the congregations they serve. Indeed, many United Methodist clergy and laity aren’t talking with each other about these issues, much less what the witness of scripture may be in such matters. But we need not resign ourselves to being stuck in this way. One place to start is for United Methodist pastors to come together for a day of searching conversation around the biblical witness.

Mark Achtemeier’s book on the topic of same-sex marriage tells an uncommon story of how careful study of Christian scripture can lead a pastor to change his mind. Dr. Achtemeier is an ordained minister in the Presbyterian Church USA. He is also a Protestant evangelical with high regard for the authority of scripture. Even so, after years of careful study, Achtemeier has come to believe that the traditional prohibition of homosexuality is problematic for reasons that have everything to do with patterns of misinterpretation of Scripture. Even more striking, he now believes that a biblical case can be made to support same-sex marriage. His book invites further dialogue.

Dr. Mark Achtemeier is a Presbyterian writer, minister and theologian living in Dubuque, Iowa. After starting out as a conservative church activist, he has played a prominent role in recent years in helping the Presbyterian Church (USA) become more open and accepting toward LGBT Christians. He is author of a recently-released book, titled The Bible’s Yes to Same-Sex Marriage: An Evangelical’s Change of Heart, published by Westminster John Knox Press. Dr. Achtemeier has served as an official representative of the Presbyterian Church (USA) in both ecumenical and interfaith dialogues. He taught Theology and Ethics for fifteen years on the faculty of the University of Dubuque Theological Seminary, and has served pastorates in Virginia, North Carolina, and Iowa. Dr. Achtemeier holds degrees from Harvard College, Union Presbyterian Seminary, and Duke University.

Please Note: Indiana United Methodist clergy participants may be able to get up to 1.0 CEU for participating in this event provided that they read the book The Bible’s Yes to Same-Sex Marriage: An Evangelical’s Change of Heart. Please check with conference office about details.

To register, go to: http://goo.gl/kH1aG6
— Cost: $40.00 (includes boxed lunch)
— Registration will be limited to the first 125 registrants.

Questions?
Contact Michael G. Cartwright at (317) 788-3233 or email at mcartwright@uindy.edu.

For more information visit http://eip.uindy.edu

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Wednesday December 3, 2014

9 a.m. Registration/Gathering for Refreshments
McCleary Chapel

10 a.m. Session I: "The Bible’s ‘Yes’ to Same-Sex Marriage?"
McCleary Chapel
Presentation:
Mark Achtemeier, Presbyterian minister, Independent Scholar
Response:
Perry Kea, Associate Professor of Philosophy & Religion, UIndy
Response:
Michael G. Cartwright, Dean, Ecumenical & Interfaith Programs, UIndy

11:20 a.m. Discussion

11:55 a.m. Session Adjourns

12–1 p.m. Buffet Lunch at UIndy (for registered participants)
SC 013

1 p.m. Session II: "UM Pastoral Perspectives on the Bible and Same-Sex Marriage"
Panel discussion with UM Pastors from around the state of Indiana:
Tony Alstott, Senior Pastor, Wesley Chapel, New Albany, IN
Toni Carmer, Pastor, Senior Pastor, First UMC, Warsaw, IN
Darren Cushman Wood, Senior Pastor, North UMC, Indianapolis
Lisa Schubert Nowling, Senior Pastor, College Avenue UMC, Muncie, IN
Jacob Williams, Senior Pastor, First UMC, Valparaiso, IN

Moderator:
Brian K. White, Lead Pastor, St. Mark’s UMC, Carmel, IN

2:30 p.m. Discussion

3 p.m. Break for Refreshments

3:15 p.m. Mark Achtemeier’s Response

3:30 p.m. Closing Remarks

3:45 p.m. Adjourn

*While the morning session is free and open to the public, the afternoon session is only for registered participants in this event. For information about how to register for the event, see the adjacent panel of this brochure.