



DUTILH CHURCH

A Loving Community

Date: March 29, 2023

To: The Dutilh Church Family

From: The Dutilh Church Leadership Board

Subject: Update on The United Methodist Church

The Leadership Board is aware that some churches in Western Pennsylvania are disaffiliating from The United Methodist Church (UMC). The reasons for disaffiliation vary from church to church, but the primary reason is because some parts of the UMC are not following *The United Methodist Book of Discipline* relative to the ordination and marriage of LGBT persons. The current teaching of the *Discipline* affirms that all people are of sacred worth and welcome in the church, while also prohibiting same-gender weddings and LGBT persons from being ordained/credentialed as clergy.

The General Conference of the UMC is the only body that can change these teachings. It has not met since 2019 and has taken no action to change the current teachings of the UMC. Dutilh Church, along with United Methodists in Western Pennsylvania, continues to conduct ministry in accordance with the current teaching of the *Discipline*. The General Conference will meet in 2024 and will consider multiple proposals for changing the *Discipline* on these matters.

The Leadership Board believes that it is best for Dutilh Church to remain focused on our mission of making disciples who love God, love others, and love to serve. We do not yet know what the General Conference will or will not do, and we do not want to become distracted by fruitless speculation. The Leadership Board's position is that we should wait until the General Conference meets in 2024 before determining any course of action. If a change in the *Discipline* is adopted, then we owe the congregation the opportunity to be informed and to discern how our church should respond.

We will continue to monitor developments in the UMC at each of our Board meetings and will communicate any pertinent updates. Thank you for your prayers, patience, and faithfulness as we await more clarity from the denomination. Should you have any questions or concerns about this matter, please feel free to reach out to Pastor Tom at tparkinson@dutilhumc.org.

Members of the 2023 Leadership Board:

Brittaney Lucas (Chair), Lori Sedlak (Vice-Chair), Garrick Barnett, Susan Boddy, Jill Easterling, Dale Gold, Kristy Harrison, Ben Murray, Veronica Runyan

Ex Officio Board Members:

Pastor Tom Parkinson, Pastor Bud Fickley

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Love God, Love Others, Love to Serve