



Resolution on the Issue of Homosexuality

Introduction

1. Our history as a church shows we have had significant disagreements over interpretations of faith and practice. Examples include: participation in secret societies, purchase of war bonds, participation in military service, divorce and remarriage, pregnancy outside of marriage, charismatic expressions, ordination of women, and modes of baptism.
2. While our forebears have left us with many positive examples of how to deal with difficult issues, our history also reveals that at times we have dealt with these differences in unchristian ways. The problem has often been faulty process, ranging from hasty decisions to indecision. This has resulted in needless pain, loss of faith, and the fragmentation of the Body of Christ. Past experience teaches us that careful process is necessary when discussing disagreements in the church.
3. The CMC recognizes an issue that is causing division among us. Some congregations understand that God has called them to invite and include gay and lesbian believers into church membership, whereas other congregations understand that God has called them to resist the acceptance of homosexuality within its churches and in society.
4. In approaching this issue, we desire to learn from both positive and negative experiences of the past. As we discern God's will for the community of faith, we say "yes" to procedures that promote redemption, restoration and peace, and we say "no" to procedures that demonstrate condemnation and rejection. Our goal is to work in a context of patient discernment, so that the church may be faithful to "the way, the truth, and the life" revealed in Jesus Christ and the Scriptures.

Assumptions

1. The CMC accepts the Bible as God's word written, and as its guide for faith and life.
2. The CMC accepts the statement, "Vision: Healing and Hope" as a

guiding vision for its mission.

3. The CMC accepts the Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective as a statement of its convictions, and notes the following articles as particularly applicable to the present issues: “Scripture” (Art.4), “The Church of Jesus Christ” (Art.9), “Church Discipline” (Art.14) and “Marriage, Family, and Singleness” (Art. 19).
4. The CMC accepts the “Resolution on Human Sexuality,” a statement of the General Conference Mennonite Church (1986) and the Mennonite Church (1987), as its current understanding of God’s will regarding human sexuality.
5. On the matter of obligations between congregations and conferences, the CMC follows its current Constitution and Bylaws which states the following: “Individual congregations shall retain full privileges of self-determination in their own program. However, membership in the Conference implies the responsible support of resolutions and programs developed together” (Sec.III).

Resolution: Moved by the CMC General Board

1. that we renew our common commitment of faithfulness to our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, according to the light that God has given us in the Scriptures and through the Holy Spirit, and that we call for and acknowledge the integrity of the same commitment on the part of those who disagree with us;
2. that we re-affirm our convictions as stated in “Vision: Healing and Hope,” Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective, and “Resolution on Human Sexuality” as our understandings of God’s will for us;
3. that we encourage one another to become “communities of grace, joy and peace, so that God’s healing and hope flow through us to the world,” not excluding those whose sexual orientation is homosexual;
4. that we encourage one another to uphold the Biblical call to faithfulness, chastity and self-discipline in all sexual relationships; and that we encourage the sexually and relationally broken to healing and wholeness in Christ;
5. that we continue to dialogue on those matters wherein we disagree, and that we call upon the leaders of the CMC to facilitate and lead in this dialogue; and
6. that we urge congregations and conferences, when they make decisions and take actions, to strive to enhance rather than hinder their relationship with congregations and conferences of the CMC.

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