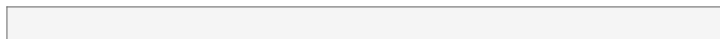


Bishop Hope Morgan Ward on Supreme Court Decision





From The Bishop

JUNE 27, 2015

Grace and peace to each of you in the name of Jesus
Christ.□□

As you may know, the Supreme Court of the United States rendered a decision on June 26 that makes same-sex marriage legal in every state. Same-sex marriage has been legal in North Carolina since October 13, 2014.

The polity of the United Methodist Church did not change as a result of the decision of the Supreme Court. The Book of Discipline, in paragraph 341.6, states that same-sex unions will not be celebrated in our churches nor conducted by our clergy. The only body that can change the Book of Discipline is the General Conference, which will meet in 2016.

We continue to live together as citizens even as we live within the polity and discipline of the United Methodist Church.

Therefore, let us pray together.

God of Grace,

□Lead us, as your people, in our journey toward you and toward one another as we become fully who we are in Christ.□□

Guide us, as your church, to faithful discernment while embodying love, justice and hope.□□

Surround us, as citizens, as we recognize and live in respect for changes in civil law.□□ Help us, as Christians, to glorify you in all that we do as we live in alignment with God's will.□□

Strengthen us, as United Methodist people, to live in unity amid our diversity of opinion on this and other matters.□□

Together, we trust your providence and power in all things. We humbly ask that you help us to navigate faithfully this time in our lives and to embody the love of Christ in all that we say and do.

We offer this prayer trusting in the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Sincerely,

Bishop Hope Morgan Ward

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