

LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR COALITION

For immediate Release:

March 26, 2020

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AN OPEN LETTER FROM LYNC TO THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Beloved, as we grapple with the realities of the COVID-19 pandemic, The Love Your Neighbor Coalition calls on United Methodists and people everywhere to pick up the mantle of justice and speak out against oppression in all forms but especially the oppression of the most marginalized and at-risk in our world.

The outcomes of this pandemic will be far-reaching, and now more than ever we must find ways to change the ways we show up to speak out and rise in solidarity with those most at risk. Political statements which call Covid 19 the “Chinese virus” spread racism. Civic leaders who suggest that “grandparents” should sacrifice their lives for the economy put us all at risk. And, when in our denomination, we obsess on protecting our institutions while tolerating entrenched bigotry, we mirror society rather than provide a witness.

As United Methodists, our witness is global. Injustice is a plague and we can already see the outcome. Soap is hard to find in Uganda and hand sanitizer is being price gouged. The Philippines is being hard hit. Onsets in Europe are surging. Palestinians are trapped in walled sectors such as Gaza where high concentrations of people make isolation impossible. Refugees in Syria, Turkey, the US-Mexican border and across the world have no place to turn. Children are still in cages and the massive incarceration of African descent and Latinx people in the US turns prisons into concentration camps with dire results. Always, those on the margins are hit hard.

The postponement of the UMC General Conference not only impacts LGBTQIA people who will have to live under the harmful policies of the Traditional Plan, but it puts at high risk all vulnerable communities who rely upon denominational funding for their work and witness.

The United Methodist Church is gifted with a global network. We are united in Christ, even as we note and sometimes appreciate our differences. This crisis requires that we work together.

We urge the entire United Methodist Church to take action. Here are some ideas:

Action 1: Use the Wesleyan class system to cluster your members in online groups to support each other, pray for each other, read the news together, and organize for possible actions.

Action 2: Write to your bishop and conference BOOM to urge them to announce a moratorium on trials against LGBTQIA people and allies.

Action 3: Organize letter writing campaigns, op-eds, and social media actions when you see harm being done and “someone should say something.”

Action 4: Give to and engage with groups that are implementing advocacy and service in this era of lockdown. To this end, LYNC will give a donation to UMCOR as it addresses the pandemic and ongoing global emergencies. Join us in supporting UMCOR by following this link <https://www.umcmision.org/umcor/give>

Action 5: Send notes to clergy member friends thanking them for leading us in new and different ways of being church and supporting those who are most vulnerable.

Action 6: Share additional ideas with LYNC on how to be proactive in challenging oppression and supporting vulnerable populations while staying healthy.

The Love Your Neighbor Coalition is a partnership of [14 United Methodist Church related Caucus groups](#) working for a just, inclusive and grace-filled denomination. For generations, member groups have named God’s grace for all of God’s children and cried out for justice. [We call on the denomination to end harm](#) in every place where the Gospel of love is preached. We commit to love each other and stay in relationship with the global Body of Christ

MEMBER GROUPS

Affirmation United Methodists

Black Methodists for Church Renewal (BMCR)

Fossil Free UMC

MARCHA: Metodistas Asociados Representando la Causa Hispano-Americanos

Methodist Federation for Social Action (MFSA)

Methodists in New Directions (MIND)

National Federation of Asian American United Methodists (NFAAUM)

Native American International Caucus (NAIC)

Pacific Islanders Caucus of United Methodists (PINCUM)

Reconciling Ministries Network (RMN)

United Methodist Association of Ministers with Disabilities

[United Methodists for Kairos Response \(UMKR\)](#)

United Methodist Queer Clergy Caucus

Western Methodist Justice Movement (WMJM)