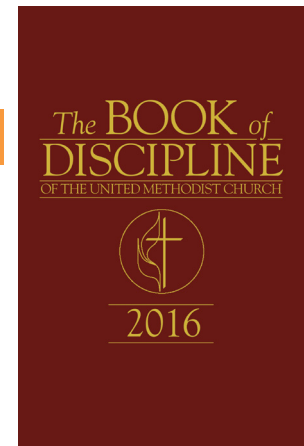


CHANGES TO THE BOOK OF DISCIPLINE REGARDING:

MARRIAGE



The ban on same-sex marriage was removed from the Book of Discipline.

Officiating any wedding continues to be at the discretion of the pastor and the church.

There is no prohibition from performing any marriage and no penalty for refusing.

Actual Changes

Amended ¶ 341.6 as follows:

- ▶ **Deleted** - Ceremonies that celebrate homosexual unions shall not be conducted by our ministers and shall not be conducted in our churches.

Added new subparagraphs after ¶ 340.2(a)(3)(a):

- ▶ 3. No clergy at any time may be required to provide for or compelled to perform, or prohibited from performing, any marriage, union, or blessing. All clergy have the right to exercise and preserve their conscience when requested to perform any marriage, union, or blessing.

Added new subparagraphs after ¶ 416.7:

- ▶ The bishop shall not penalize any clergy for performing, or refraining from performing, a same-sex marriage service.

Added new subparagraphs after ¶ 419.12:

- ▶ The superintendent shall not penalize any clergy for performing, or refraining from performing, a same-sex marriage service.

Amended ¶ 2711.3 as follows:

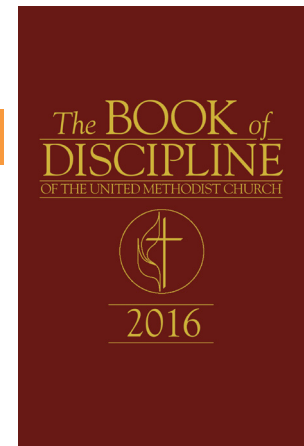
- ▶ **3. Penalties** - If the Trial Results in Conviction—Further testimony may be heard...
- ▶ **Deleted** - However, where the conviction is for conducting ceremonies that celebrate homosexual unions or performing same-sex wedding ceremonies under ¶ 2702.1(b) or (d), the trial court does not have the power to and
- ▶ **Deleted** - may not fix a penalty less than the following:
- ▶ **Deleted** - a) First (1st) offense – One (1) year’s suspension without pay.
- ▶ **Deleted** - b) Second (2nd) offense – Not less than termination of conference membership and revocation of credentials of licensing, ordination, or consecration.

*The penalty fixed by the trial court shall take effect immediately unless otherwise indicated by the trial court.*

*See Also Chargeable Offenses.*

CHANGES TO THE BOOK OF DISCIPLINE REGARDING:

# WEDDING CEREMONIES



The ban on same-sex marriage was removed from the Book of Discipline.

A local church can set their own policies related to this matter.

As before, a local church can set their own policies related to weddings performed on their property.

## Actual Changes

Amended ¶ 341.6 as follows:

- ▶ **Deleted** - Ceremonies that celebrate homosexual unions shall not be conducted by our ministers and shall not be conducted in our churches.

**Add new subparagraphs after ¶ 416.7:**

- ▶ 9. The bishop shall neither require any local church to hold or prohibit a local church from holding a same-sex marriage service on property owned by a local church.

**Add new subparagraphs after ¶ 419.12:**

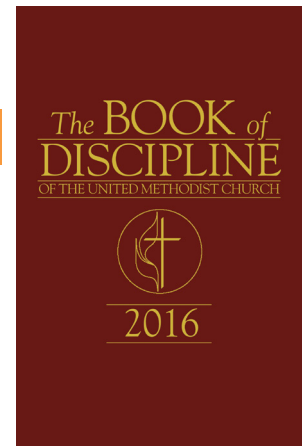
- ▶ 14. The superintendent shall neither require any local church to hold or prohibit a local church from holding a same-sex marriage service on property owned by a local church.

In [Decision 1503](#), the church court said nothing in the Book of Discipline's Paragraph 2533 "prevents the Board of Trustees of a local church from adopting policies prohibiting the conduct of worship services that include same-sex marriage ceremonies."

Effective: May 2024

CHANGES TO THE BOOK OF DISCIPLINE REGARDING:

# REGIONALIZATION & MARRIAGE CONTEXTUALIZATION



**While World-Wide Regionalization itself requires a constitutional amendment...**

**Other provisions were added that continue to affirm the ability of a central conference to set standards and policy for marriages according to the laws of their country.**

**This allows the UMC in a country in which same sex marriage is against the law to set their own policies that reflect their laws, like adding a ban on the practice.**

## Actual Changes

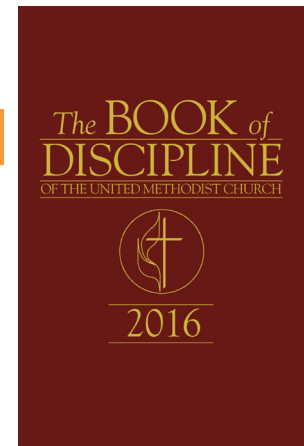
### Added new paragraph ¶ 543.15

- ▶ A central conference shall have authority to set the standards and policy for rites and ceremonies for the solemnization of marriage, taking into consideration the laws of the country or countries within its jurisdiction and provided that such policy and standards are not contrary to the Doctrinal Standards, the Constitution, the General Rules of The United Methodist Church, and provided that the spirit of connectional relationship is kept between the local and the general church. The central conference may delegate the same authority to each of the annual conferences within its boundaries.

**Effective: January 1, 2025**

CHANGES TO THE BOOK OF DISCIPLINE REGARDING:

# ORDINATION OF LGBTQ CLERGY



The language prohibiting the ordination of self-avowed practicing homosexuals was removed from the Book of Discipline.

Allows central conferences to set standards for ordination and the license for pastoral ministry within its jurisdiction.

The language, added in 1984, has prevented LGBTQ clergy from being accepted as candidates, ordained as ministers, and appointed to serve in the UMC.

## Actual Changes

Amended ¶ 304.3.

- ▶ **Deleted** - While persons set apart by the Church for ordained ministry are subject to all the frailties of the human condition and the pressures of society, they are required to maintain the highest standards of holy living in the world. The practice of homosexuality is incompatible with Christian teaching. Therefore self-avowed practicing homosexuals are not to be certified as candidates, ordained as ministers, or appointed to serve in The United Methodist Church.
- ▶ **Deleted footnote** - "Self-avowed practicing homosexual" is understood to mean that a person openly acknowledges to a bishop, district superintendent, district committee of ordained ministry, Board of Ordained Ministry, or clergy session that the person is a practicing homosexual; or is living in a same-sex marriage, domestic partnership or civil union, or is a person who publicly states she or he is a practicing homosexual. See Judicial Council Decisions 702, 708, 722, 725, 764, 844, 984, 1020, 1341.

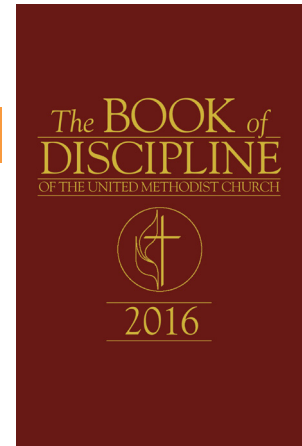
## Added new paragraph ¶ 543.16

- ▶ A central conference shall have authority to set standards for ordination and the license for pastoral ministry within its jurisdiction, provided that such standards are not contrary to the Doctrinal Standards, the Constitution, the General Rules of The United Methodist Church, and provided that the spirit of connectional relationship is kept between the local and the general church. The central conference may delegate the same authority to each of the annual conferences within its boundaries.

See Also Chargeable Offenses.

**CHANGES TO THE BOOK OF DISCIPLINE REGARDING:**

# APPOINTMENTS OF LGBTQ CLERGY



**Allows for all clergy in good standing to be appointed across annual conference lines when their bishop can't locate an appointment in their conference.**

**Protects LGBTQ clergy if they cannot be guaranteed a safe appointment in their home conferences.**

**Brings The Book of Discipline back to a neutral place where one group is not singled out or discriminated against.**

## Actual Changes

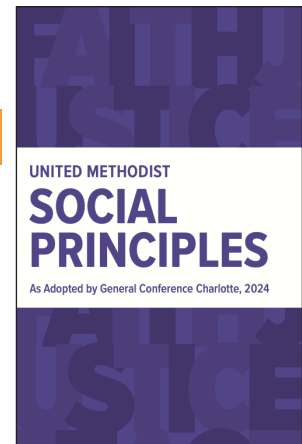
Amended ¶ 425.

### Added to 2.

- ▶ Elders who identify as LGBTQ in good standing may be appointed across annual conference lines and within the jurisdiction when the presiding bishop cannot locate an appointment within their annual conference, for reasons of the safety and well-being of the elder.

**Effective: May 2024**

# THE NEW SOCIAL PRINCIPLES



Work begun in 2012 led to this revision of the Social Principles in their entirety.

They are now theologically grounded, succinct, and reflect the world-wide nature of the church.

See the full text of the Revised Social Principles at [www.umcjustice.org](http://www.umcjustice.org)

## Actual Changes

The Social Principles have been completely rewritten into a new format that integrates theological grounding throughout the text. Each of the four sections begins with a relevant excerpt from John Wesley's writings and scriptural references.

The six previous sections have been condensed into four and rearranged as follows. The topics have also been reduced from 76 to 51:

1. **Community of All Creation**
  - a. Creation in Peril
  - b. Stewardship of Creation
2. **The Economic Community**
  - a. Economic Challenges
  - b. Economic Justice
3. **The Social Community**
  - a. The Nurturing Community
  - b. Other Social Issues
4. **The Political Community**
  - a. Government Responsibilities
  - b. Basic Rights and Freedoms

The Social Principles speak to our world-wide context and address the concerns of United Methodists across the globe. For example:

- **Community of All Creation: Adding language about indigenous peoples and affirming science and traditional wisdom**

- **Political Community: new language on extrajudicial killings and colonialism**
- **Economic Community: adding new language that rejects prosperity gospel teaching about the accumulation of wealth.**
- **Social Community: including language about inheritance rights and widows, as well as addressing polygamy.**

While the Social Principles previously affirmed the dignity and worth of all people regardless of sexual orientation or identity, the Revised Social Principles does not also include language that "the practice of homosexuality is incompatible with Christian teaching." Likewise, the section on marriage now includes a definition that speaks to the diversity of perspectives across our connection: "Within the church, we affirm marriage as a sacred lifelong covenant that brings two people of faith, an adult man and woman of consenting age, or two adult persons of consenting age into union with one another." This was the only amendment made to the Revised Social Principles at General Conference.