

June 26, 2020

**Statement of Aspiration from the Administrative Council of Chelsea First United Methodist Church**

The people of Chelsea First United Methodist Church trust the promise that God's grace extends to all people and all people are of sacred worth to God. We affirm that all people are created in the image of God and that as beloved children of God, all are worthy of love, grace and belonging. We welcome the full inclusion of all people in the life and ministry of Chelsea First United Methodist Church.

The global United Methodist Church is likely to separate due to disagreement on issues related to human sexuality. Specifically, the denomination's current Book of Discipline states that "the practice of homosexuality is incompatible with Christian teaching." Further, current rules forbid United Methodist pastors and churches from performing same-gender marriages, and prohibit gay men and women from being ordained unless they vow to be celibate.

The Administrative Council of Chelsea First United Methodist Church rejects this current language in the Book of Discipline. We aspire to be part of a renewed United Methodist Church in which sexual and gender identity are no barrier to full participation in all aspects of church life, including marriage and ordination. We are hopeful that meaningful changes will be adopted by the decision-making body of the United Methodist Church at the General Conference, now set for September 2021. In the meantime, while mindful of our obligations to church authority, we strive to make our aspirations a present reality within our congregation.