



December 5, 2019

Dear First Church Members and Friends,

First United Methodist Church of Evanston invites all people to grow in their relationship with God and to live their faith in the world. Church Council, the elected lay leadership of First Church, affirms that no one is excluded from that invitation. All ages, nations, races, cultures, gender identities, sexual orientations, and abilities are welcome at First Church.

In 2014, the First Church congregation voted to become part of the Reconciling Ministries Network. As a Reconciling Congregation, First Church celebrates and welcomes people of all sexual orientations and gender identities. **At our December 2019 meeting, Church Council voted unanimously to reaffirm First Church as a Reconciling Congregation.** We also reaffirm the resolution adopted by Church Council in 2015 to allow the use of First Church buildings and grounds for same-gender weddings.

In addition, Church Council supports our pastors' decision to serve all of God's children, as explained in their November 20th letter of this year. The pastors reaffirm that "marriage equality is primarily an issue of pastoral care", that they will "counsel and officiate weddings for same-gender and opposite-gender couples" and they "welcome all those weddings in our building."

In this time of uncertainty, Church Council will continue to work with our pastors and the lay leadership committees of First Church, as together we discern how to live as faithful disciples of Jesus Christ.

Respectfully yours,

The Church Council of First United Methodist Church of Evanston:

Marion Clemens
Grant Bailey
Steve Betzner
William Borders
Allison Greer
Pam Kendall
Daniel Maerklin
Steve Prout
Constance Williams