

METHODIST LAITY REFORM MOVEMENT

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NEWS RELEASE

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IOWA METHODIST LAITY REFORM MOVEMENT URGES UNITED METHODIST CHURCH TO WORK FOR MARRIAGE PROTECTION AMENDMENT TO IOWA CONSTITUTION

MUSCATINE, IA.-- Methodist Laity Reform Movement has strongly affirmed the United Methodist Church's stand "for marriage as a union of one man and one woman" and is urging the Iowa United Methodist Church to work for the Marriage Protection Amendment to the Iowa Constitution. The Reform Movement's pro-marriage statement was adopted by its Board of Directors and by the annual meeting of its members; both votes were unanimous.

Methodist Laity Reform Movement is an association of more than 2,500 Iowa United Methodists working for Christian faithfulness and reform within the United Methodist Church.

The Reform Movement statement says, "The Iowa Constitution should be amended as soon as possible to define marriage as a union of one man and one woman. We ask our Iowa Church and individual Iowa United Methodists to work for this Marriage Protection Amendment.

"A Constitutional Amendment is the only law that can restore the meaning of marriage in Iowa and reverse the recent Iowa Supreme Court decision."

The Reform Movement statement strongly affirms the United Methodist Church's official position on marriage, including: "We support laws in civil society that define marriage as the union of one man and one woman. ... sexual relations are affirmed only with the covenant of monogamous, heterosexual marriage. ... fidelity in marriage and celibacy in singleness ... Ceremonies that celebrate homosexual unions shall not be conducted by our ministers and shall not be conducted in our churches."

"We support the Marriage Protection Amendment because of what we are **for**, not what we are against. We are **for** God's loving plan for man, woman, and marriage as revealed in the Bible. We are **for** one-man-one-woman marriage as an essential foundation for a strong, stable society. A huge and growing amount of empirical research proves that children benefit greatly when they have a married mother and father, and marriage benefits the community, state, nation, and world."

The Methodist Laity Reform Movement Board includes 30 Directors, all active in the United Methodist Church: Allen Anneberg, M.D., Carroll; Dennis G. Bell (Co-Chair), Denison; Judi Berger, Muscatine; Doris Carstensen, Clinton; Judge Lawrence D. Carstensen, Clinton; Mike Cormack, Massena; Mavis Diment, Marcus; Ronald Fulton, Urbandale; Gaylen Goettsch, Washta; June Goldman, Okoboji; Richard Hofmeyer, Fayette; James W. Hudson, Pocahontas; Noreen Kahler-Miller (Co-Chair), McGregor; Harry Knutsen, Walcott; William Lux, Manchester; Jimmy

Morrison, Muscatine; Norma Morrison, Muscatine; Robert G. Morrison, Muscatine; Carol A. Needham, Greene; Darrell Needham, Greene; Anne Nygaard, Wesley; Christian A. Nygaard, Wesley; Juanita O'Tool, Coon Rapids; Tom Pitts, Hampton; Mike Salter, Davenport; Craig Scott, Chariton; Greg Shine, Conrad; James A. Smith, New Sharon; David M. Stanley (Co-Chair), Muscatine; and Jean Leu Stanley, Muscatine. Methodist Laity Reform Movement also has a 29-member Advisory Council, all active Iowa United Methodists.

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TEXT OF THE MARRIAGE STATEMENT BY METHODIST LAITY REFORM MOVEMENT:

Methodist Laity Reform Movement supports The United Methodist Church's strong stand for marriage as a union of one man and one woman. We strongly affirm our Church's policies and principles on marriage, including these statements in the United Methodist *Book of Discipline*:

- "We affirm the sanctity of the marriage covenant that is expressed in love, mutual support, personal commitment, and shared fidelity between a man and a woman." (Paragraph 161B.)
- "We support laws in civil society that define marriage as the union of one man and one woman." (Paragraph 161B.)
- "Although all persons are sexual beings whether or not they are married, sexual relations are affirmed only with the covenant of monogamous, heterosexual marriage." (Paragraph 161F.)
- "Fidelity in marriage and celibacy in singleness." (Paragraph 304.2.)
- "Ceremonies that celebrate homosexual unions shall not be conducted by our ministers and shall not be conducted in our churches". (Paragraph 341.6.)

The Iowa Constitution should be amended as soon as possible to define marriage as a union of one man and one woman. We ask our Iowa Church and individual Iowa United Methodists to work for this Marriage Protection Amendment. *Methodist Laity Reform Movement* is not a lobbying organization, but we will act on our beliefs through education, information, and prayer.

A Constitutional Amendment is the only law that can restore the meaning of marriage in Iowa and reverse the recent Iowa Supreme Court decision.

We support the Marriage Protection Amendment because of what we are **for**, not what we are against. We are **for** God's loving plan for man, woman, and marriage as revealed in the Bible. Jesus strongly defended, and the Bible as a whole strongly affirms, marriage as a God-ordained lifelong covenant between one man and one woman.

We are **for** one-man-one-woman marriage as an essential foundation for a strong, stable society. There are strong secular reasons to protect marriage as a union of one man and one woman. A huge and growing amount of empirical research proves that children benefit greatly when they have a married mother and father, and marriage benefits the community, state, nation, and world.