

# Pulse



Pulse is a new monthly publication from The Confessing Movement designed to keep you informed of the current state of our beloved church. Please continue to pray for renewal - particularly a renewed obedience to Scripture.

## Bishop Dorff Effectively Endorses LGBTQ Agenda

In a statement at the Rio Texas Annual Conference, Bishop James Dorff was faced with protests likely stemming from his 2013 ruling that upheld church law not allowing the ordination of a practicing homosexual person. His words of welcome sounded more like an endorsement of the LGBTQ agenda than a general greeting.

"God wants an inclusive church. We must have an inclusive church. It must be fully inclusive. It has been very difficult to get to this point. The journey is far from over. I want you to know that I want to be a part of the journey. I want you to know that there are many bishops who wish to be a part of the journey to have a fully inclusive church."

Although it was not a call to directly disobey the *Book of Discipline*, it certainly suggests he would likely support such action. How can our leaders faithfully serve when they openly denounce the official position of the church they represent?

---

Legislation is being proposed for GC 2016 supporting greater accountability for bishops. Several boards and agencies are participating in the effort to provide a better mechanism for handling complaints and charges that will be both more effective and less costly to the denomination. These include the Association of An-

nual Conference Lay Leaders, the General Council of Finance and Administration, and the United Methodist Board of Higher Education and Ministry. The deadline for general boards and agencies to submit legislation is September 1. Proposals by other United Methodists are due by October 13.

---

In the Illinois Great Rivers Conference, Ohio Chapel, Grand Chain, Illinois, declared independence from the UMC in March 2015, but stayed in the building. Now the conference trustees are suing the breakaway congregation under the Discipline's trust clause claiming the congregation has no rights to the building.

---

Please join us and other United Methodists in praying *The Lord's Prayer* at 12:00 noon each day for the UMC and the 2016 General Conference.



---

August 2015



Rev. Blake Deibler, Pastor  
of Wesley Church in  
Quarryville, Pennsylvania.

---

## Eastern Pennsylvania Conference Offers a “Way Out” for Fast Growing Church

According to the UMC *Book of Discipline* trust clause, local church property is held in trust for the denomination and is not owned by the local church body. Bishop Peggy Johnson was faced with a difficult decision when Wesley UMC in Quarryville, PA recently made the decision to leave the UMC. The fast growing church voted 441 to 5 to leave due to what they saw as an increasing disregard for Scriptural authority and a lack of accountability for those who defy the *Book of Discipline*. If the trust clause were invoked, the annual conference would be responsible for the \$4 million mortgage on the property, a location unlikely to be a good fit for planting a new church due to its rural setting. As a result, a negotiated settlement was reached in which the former Wesley UMC (Now Wesley Church) would contribute \$100,000 to the annual conference over five years along with apportionment dollars retained during its discernment process.

You may recall that Eastern Pennsylvania was home to 2 high profile disciplinary cases regarding violation of church law by clergy in reference to the church’s official position on issues of human sexuality. In 2004 Rev. Beth Stroud was defrocked after acknowledging she was living with her same sex partner. However, the church hired her back immediately, leaving many frustrated with the lack of accountability. Rev. Frank Schaefer was defrocked in 2013 after officiating at his son’s same sex wedding. His credentials were eventually restored and he continues to serve as a UM pastor in California.

The blatant disregard for the *Discipline* may cause more churches to consider leaving the denomination. Although Bishop Johnson said the agreement with Wesley Church is not setting a precedent, the true effect on the connection is yet to be seen.

Rev. Pam Hawkins, the associate pastor of Belmont United Methodist Church in Nashville, Tennessee, agreed to a 90 day suspension without pay for performing a same sex wedding in March of this year. Bishop William McAlilly held Rev. Hawkins to greater accountability than many of his fellow bishops who have found themselves in similar situations in recent months. However, in this “just resolution” has anything truly been resolved?

---

## Contact Us

The Confessing Movement  
7995 E 21st Street  
Indianapolis, IN 46219  
(317) 356-9729  
[cm@confessingumc.org](mailto:cm@confessingumc.org)

Visit us on the web:  
[www.confessingumc.org](http://www.confessingumc.org)