

General Assembly Action

223rd General Assembly (2018) PC(USA)

On Recommendation (On Celebrating the Gifts of People of Diverse Sexual Orientations and Gender Identities in the Life of the Church), the General Assembly acted as follows:

Approve as Amended

Final text:

Amend the recommendation section as follows: [Text to be added is shown with brackets and with an underline.]

“The Presbytery of New Castle overtures the 223rd General Assembly (2018) to approve the following resolution:

“1. Celebrating the expansive embrace of the gospel of Jesus Christ and the breadth of our mission to serve a world in need, the 223rd General Assembly (2018) affirms the gifts of LGBTQ[IA]+ people for ministry and celebrates their service in the church and in the world.”

“2. The assembly celebrates that over the years, LGBTQ[IA]+ people have faithfully, lovingly, and courageously served in every kind of service to which Christian disciples are called—notwithstanding the church’s efforts to exclude them from particular types of service.”

“3. The assembly laments the ways that the policies and actions of the PC(USA) have caused gifted, faithful, LGBTQ[IA]+ Christians to leave the Presbyterian church so that they could find a more welcoming place to serve, as they have been gifted and called by the Spirit.”

“4. At the same time, the assembly gives thanks for the LGBTQ[IA]+ pioneers of the faith who have persisted in relationship with the Presbyterian church, at great personal cost and sacrifice, together with the whole of the LGBTQ[IA]+ community, moving the church toward a more generous, loving, and just understanding of God’s grace.”

“5. The assembly also gives thanks for those who continue to seek deeper understanding, and more authentic welcome, even amid discomfort or uncertainty about how best to show hospitality, in the spirit of continuing Reformation.”

“6. Today, openly LGBTQ[IA]+ people are leading churches, preaching the gospel, serving those in need, and otherwise using their gifts for ministry in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).”

7. With an eye toward the future, the assembly affirms God’s presence and call in the lives of all God’s people and commits to seeking justice, equality, and inclusion for all in church and society.

8. The assembly calls on the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly, the Presbyterian Mission Agency (through its Office of Public Witness), and all who represent the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to actively work for the protection of human and civil rights, both in the United States and around the world, especially the rights of marginalized and oppressed groups, including people facing discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity.

9. The assembly calls upon mission co-workers and ecumenical representatives to advocate for justice and equality for all God’s people in ways appropriate to their cultural and ecclesiastical context.

10. The assembly encourages all congregations and councils of the PCUSA continually to seek to expand their welcome so that all might know the Good News of Jesus Christ and encourages all other communions to do the same.