



**Fairmount Avenue United Methodist Church**

1523 Fairmount Avenue

St. Paul, MN 55105

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*Our hearts, our minds,  
and our doors  
are always open*

Dear Beloved Community,

Let us begin with a word of lament. The community of Fairmount Avenue United Methodist Church is deeply saddened by the actions taken at the Special Session of the General Conference of the United Methodist Church. We are grieved for all of those who have been harmed by the hurtful decisions, especially for those in the LGBTQ community. We will continue to advocate for the full inclusion of all people in the church, and we will not rest until the work is complete.

As the global United Methodist Church has chosen the Traditionalist Plan, our status as a Reconciling Congregation is even more important and needed! We advocate not just for ourselves, as a reconciling congregation, but we advocate for the young people in non-affirming churches who need a champion, we advocate for our neighbors who have walked away from a church that has hurt them, we advocate for our children and grandchildren so that they might grow into the people they have been created and called to be.

Please know that even with the disappointing outcomes of the Special Session, the work of the General Conference is not done. The votes were divided by a thin margin. And although it would seem that there will likely be a new organizing of our denomination, I do believe that there will be a Methodist movement that allows for full equality of all people, regardless of sexual or gender identity.

So what's next...

We can reach out. Reach out to those in your life, community, and church who may be deeply hurt by this decision.

We can stand firm. We are called to hold ground. Stand up and be vocal about God's love for all people. We will keep building bridges of inclusion.

We practice our faith. By continuing to be a life-giving community, we invest in our youth, our faith formation, our worship, and our public service. We keep offering as much good as possible in the world. We renew our covenants to one another taken at membership and baptism and we provide a place for all people to encounter God and develop their spiritual-selves.

We can stay informed. In the coming months there will be information coming out about the way forward from our conference and district leadership.

Please know that I am with you in this grief. My heart is truly broken for the current state of the United Methodist Church. But I still believe that God is not done with this church and we have a unique voice and practice that is needed in this world. We will not be moved from our calling. We will continue to be a joyful, welcoming community; igniting hearts and minds for God's work.

Holding It All In Prayer,  
Pastor Shawna

**Fairmount Avenue Vision Statement:**

*To be a welcoming, joyful community igniting hearts and minds for God's work.*