

Statement on Remaining with MC USA

The Ohio Conference Leadership Team has come to the decision that Ohio Conference will remain a part of MC USA so that we can continue to give counsel to and receive counsel from the denomination.

This does not preclude challenging one another, and in fact demands it. As scriptures demonstrate at the Jerusalem Council in Acts, there are appropriate times to openly confront each other on disagreements. Ohio Conference is choosing to remain a part of MC USA in order to articulate to the denomination our perceptions of differences in doctrine and practice. Certainly we all know a primary presenting issue of disagreement relates to issues with regard to the LGBTQ community, but other issues include the understanding of the Gospel, and issues of biblical interpretation. Ohio Conference does not presume to have all the answers and does not want to appear self-righteous. We invite MC USA (any and all entities that make up the denomination) to examine us, critique us, admonish us and hold us accountable.

With this decision to remain we also wish to convey some boundaries around events which would trigger a discernment process of Ohio Conference to leave MC USA:

- substantive changes to the 1995 Confession of Faith
- substantive change to the Membership Guidelines
- any denominational requirement that Ohio Conference recognize the credentials of individuals licensed or ordained in other conferences

Even while retaining our connection with MC USA, concerns expressed from within Ohio Conference, prompt us to communicate that:

- We will encourage member congregations to attend MEA institutions that teach and practice what we believe as interpreted by the Confession of Faith
- We will encourage all member congregations to carefully and prayerfully ensure that all teaching materials used in our churches agree with our understanding of the scriptures as interpreted by the Confession of Faith
- We will encourage congregations to direct funds towards aspects of the denomination with which we are in agreement as interpreted by the Confession of Faith

In order for Ohio Conference to substantively engage in communication with MC USA we will be:

- Asking that Ohio Conference be represented on denominational boards
- Using the opportunities available to articulate our differences clearly at CLC