

1 **MARRIAGE EQUALITY RESOLUTION (revised)**

2
3 **WHEREAS**, the recent SCOTUS ruling makes Marriage Equality legal in California,
4 and,

5
6 **WHEREAS**, Our Annual Conference consists of part of California, and

7
8 **WHEREAS**, the continuing denial of full access to all the rights and privileges in the
9 United Methodist Church is causing deep spiritual harm to our LGBT brothers and sisters
10 and is a threat to us all; and

11
12 **WHEREAS**, our membership vows call us “to resist evil, injustice and oppression in
13 whatever forms they present themselves”; and

14
15 **WHEREAS**, we are called to be obedient to the whole of church law which calls the
16 church to be in ministry with all people, including lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and
17 queer (LGBTQ) persons.

18
19 **WHEREAS**, the opening section of *The Book of Discipline*, which reminds us of serious
20 flaws and shortcomings manifest in the larger history of Methodism. Shortcomings
21 specifically listed include our previous accommodation of racial segregation by
22 establishing a race-based Central Jurisdiction, and our extended denial of ordination
23 rights and prominent leadership roles for women, and

24
25 **WHEREAS**, the “Social Principles” of The United Methodist Church (Part IV) strongly
26 endorses the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* with emphasis on respect for the
27 inherent dignity of all persons. Explicitly cited are the full rights of racial, ethnic, and
28 religious minorities; and the rights of children, young people, the aging, women, men,
29 immigrants, and persons with disabilities. The list concludes by declaring the full human
30 rights of all persons without regard to their sexual orientations, a reference that suggests
31 rational and experiential grounds for endorsing the rights of same-sex couples to marry,
32 and

33
34 **WHEREAS** It is in the context of these traditions that we must address current
35 shortcomings in United Methodist polity, in particular, forty-one years of prejudicial
36 language portraying the life practices of gay and lesbian persons as “incompatible with
37 Christian teaching,” a standard that has excluded them from ordination, from marriage,
38 and in some cases even from church membership (Judicial Council Ruling 1032). These
39 exclusionary principles are prominent components of the “chargeable offenses” assigned
40 to the “Judicial Administration” (chapter 7, par. 2702). Such unjust rules, combined with
41 the prosecution of clergy who refuse to uphold them, are themselves incompatible with
42 United Methodist visions of inclusiveness, which call of “Open Hearts, Open Minds, and
43 Open Doors.”

44
45 **WHEREAS**, The Desert Southwest Annual Conference is part of the Larger Western
46 Jurisdiction, which adopted the “Statement of Gospel Obedience” that states the
47 denomination is in error in its stance on the practice of homosexuality and urged United
48 Methodists to operate as if that position does not exist.

49
50

51 **WHEREAS**, at last year's Annual Conference we resolved that the Desert Southwest
52 Conference reaffirm its commitment to and work for the full civil and ecclesiastical rights
53 and privileges of all persons including LGBT persons and that the Desert Southwest
54 Conference of the United Methodist Church work together to build a fully inclusive
55 church. We commit to be in ministry with all people, regardless of their economic status,
56 race, age, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, disability, or immigration status, therefore let it be
57

58 **RESOLVED** that the Desert Southwest Annual Conference and the United Methodist
59 Churches of the Desert Southwest Annual Conference make a public statement
60 supporting and upholding Marriage Equality. Let it further be
61

62 **RESOLVED** that the Desert Southwest Annual Conference and the United Methodist
63 Churches of the Desert Southwest Annual Conference will support our clergy who take
64 the bold and faithful stand to minister to all equally and include all in the life of the
65 church, which includes but is not limited to, conducting ceremonies which celebrate
66 homosexual unions; or performing same-sex wedding ceremonies where it is civically
67 legal to do so. Let it further be
68

69 **RESOLVED**, that the Desert Southwest Annual Conference and the United Methodist
70 Churches of the Desert Southwest Annual Conference, will support (spiritually,
71 emotionally, and prayerfully) clergy who are brought up on charges for conducting
72 ceremonies which celebrate homosexual unions; or performing same-sex wedding
73 ceremonies.
74

75 Welcoming and Reconciling Committee