

Commission on a Way Forward

St. Paul will have a study related to the Commission's work during the Lenten season next spring.

The United Methodist Church has been called to prayer as we deal with a crucial social issue once again. St. Paul is requested to pray on September 7 for the Way Forward.

Every generation of the church has been challenged on how faithful Christians should respond to the social issues of their day. In the United Methodist Church in America in the 19th century the hot-button issue was slavery. As the 19th closed out and the 20th century opened the demanding issue for church and society was a woman's right to vote. In the 1950's and 1960's the church needed to express the love of Christ regarding how civil rights applied to all citizens. The current issue the church needs to address with the love of Christ is human sexuality and church policies regarding our LGBT brothers and sisters. A **Commission on a Way Forward** was appointed by the Council of Bishops at the 2016 General Conference of the United Methodist Church to assist all of us in discerning a way forward. We have been asked to pray as the Commission does its work.

The [Commission on a Way Forward](#) convened in Chicago on July 19-21 to continue its work concerning human sexuality and exploring options for the future of The United Methodist Church on the issue. This was the fourth meeting of the 32-member Commission. After the last meeting in April in Washington, D.C., members indicated they were leaning toward a simpler structure with clearer processes for decision-making and accountability for the UMC in its mission to make disciples of Jesus Christ. Conversations at that meeting showed a commitment to finding a way forward that honors the complexity of the global denomination and the unity of a shared faith in Christ.

Since that time, the Commission members have received input from several advocacy and renewal groups who have strong interest in the outcome and from general boards and agencies of the church. Members of the commission have also received survey results from constituents such as large-church pastors and seminary students.

The commission's ultimate assignment is to present its report to the Council of Bishops for action at the Special Session of General Conference set for Feb. 23-26, 2019, in St. Louis. Please keep the Commission in your prayers as they seek to provide guidance for all of us who are disciples of Christ within the United Methodist Church. For further information search **Commission on a Way Forward- United Methodist Church** on the internet.