

Engage: Active Resistance & Intentional Welcoming

Are you ready to *do something*? Here is a broad list of ideas that will hopefully inspire further creativity for those seeking to resist the Traditional Plan adopted at General Conference 2019.

Worship

- Each church can **host acts of repentance** in worship. Lift up the inclusive official statements and policies your church has adopted. Be creative in making a statement. (For example, one church in the GNW burned pages of the Book of Discipline.)
- Ask your pastor to **invite LGBTQIA+, people of color, and/or young guest preachers**.
- Use **worship materials produced by marginalized people** and credit them.
 - **Enfleshed.com** is a great source for these materials.
- **Honor significant LGBTQIA+ dates** such as Pride Month, Trans Day of Remembrance, World AIDS Day, National Coming Out Day, Trans Day of Visibility, etc. (in worship and social media.)

Local Church Hospitality

- **Add welcoming signals** that to your church affirms LGBTQIA+ children of God:
 - **Include personal pronouns** on church name tags and in Sunday morning introductions.
 - **Designate a gender-neutral bathroom** and reference it during your welcome orientation to the building at the beginning of worship.
- **Host a youth night** to talk about what's going on in the UMC right now. Make sure they have enough information to participate fully in the conversation and include them.

Education

- **Expand your vocabulary** related to sexual orientation and gender identity, then teach others.
 - This blog written by UMC clergywoman Ann Lock is a good starting point for vocabulary: <https://www.pnwumc.org/news/lgbtq-and-you/>.
- **Learn about intersectionality** (“overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage,” according to *Oxford English Dictionary*).
 - **Refer** to this Collaboration Guide from Our Movement Forward: <https://um-forward.org/collaboration-guide>. In particular, see the reading list for allies.
 - **Learn** about the origins of the word “intersectionality” from its originator, Kimberlé Crenshaw: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=akOe5-UsQ2o>
 - **Learn more** here: <https://rmnetwork.org/intersectionaljustice/>.
 - **Work** to end racism, sexism, ageism, heterosexism, ableism, classism, bourgeois feminism, colonialism, oppression rooted in imperialism, etc.
- **Raise your awareness of implicit bias**. Start with these online tests: <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/selectatest.html>.

Networking with Others

- **Gather people who are passionate** about inclusion rather than only looking to the usual committee chairs, the youth, or other people assumed to be allies.
 - Then readily **include** those who want to participate, welcoming them as they are.
- **Record 10-20 second videos** of your church members saying why inclusion matters to them or what inclusion looks like at your church.
 - **Post** individual videos or edited compilations on social media with **#SacredWorth**.
 - **Coordinate** your efforts with your annual conference communications staff person.

- **Join Reconciling Ministries Network (RMN).** It's free, helpful, and something individuals can do as well as churches. More than 5,000 people have joined RMN since GC2019.
 - **Form a Reconciling small group** or encourage one that already exists to join RMN and work for inclusion. Churches, individuals, and small groups (Sunday school classes, committees, etc.) can officially join RMN.
 - **Begin or further conversations** about being fully inclusive with resources from RMN: www.rmnetwork.org.
 - **Connect** with your Annual Conference's RMN Chapter. Contact Joanne Carlson Brown at Des Moines UMC
- Begin an **active relationship with youth shelters** in your community. (LGBTQIA+ youth are especially vulnerable to homelessness.)
- **Reach out to PFLAG or ecumenical LGBTQ+ advocacy groups** to see how an individual or congregation can be helpful.
- **Donate to the Safe Harbor Fund** in the Greater Northwest Area by texting "SAFEHARBOR" to 44321. This fund allows the annual conferences of the GNW to receive clergy into annual conference membership here so their credentials are not removed by hostile annual conferences.
- Participate in your local **Pride parade** and other Pride festivities. (Find local events across the US here: <https://www.gaypridecalendar.com/calendar>.)
- **Write letters** of support to Bishop Karen Oliveto and the Mountain Sky cabinet. (Mail: 6110 Greenwood Plaza Blvd., Greenwood Village, CO 80111-4803. Email: bishop@mtnskyumc.org.)

Policy & Institutional Efforts

- **Create a policy welcoming LGBTQIA+ couples to be married in your church building.** If the pastor at your church cannot preside at those weddings, you or another lay person can offer to become licensed (by state or online) to officiate.
- The church or administrative council can **adopt an official public statement** making it clear they will resist exclusionary policies and welcome LGBTQIA+ clergy in future appointments.
- **Write legislation** for General Conference 2020, due in September 2019. (Find details and exact timeline here: <http://www.umc.org/events/detail/2020-general-conference>.)