

The Process Followed at First United Methodist Church West Lafayette Leading to the Welcoming Statement Vote August 26, 2018

Activities and Events	Communication to the Congregation
<i>Summer 2016</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First planning meeting to hold a Sunday School class on this issue 	Announcement in Bulletin
<i>Fall 2016</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Sunday School class met every Sunday for education, conversation, and activity planning. The class began and ended with prayer as we sought God’s guidance in our church; invited and learned from representatives from other United Methodist congregations who had gone through similar processes, and studied the welcome statements of other congregations. • Class members conducted one-on-one meetings with people in the congregation, to listen to their views and concerns. • As an embodiment of the commitment to welcoming all, class members volunteered to staff the Welcome Table as an outreach and service mission for the congregation. 	<p>Announcements about Sunday School in Bulletin, Prevue</p> <p>Article in the Prevue: “Everyone Means Everyone” Class Gathering Input” (November)</p> <p>Announcements in the Bulletin about Welcome Table; Ribbons</p>
<i>Winter/Spring 2017</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Sunday School class continued to meet each Sunday, adopted a welcoming statement and joined the Reconciling Ministries Network. • Class members purchased diverse dolls for the nursery, as an action step to promote a more inclusive church. • All Congregation Lunch: Class members prepared lunch March 5, and facilitated discussions around tables to share stories, dreams, and concerns related to LGBTQ+ inclusion. About 50 people attended. • Met with the youth Sunday School class to understand their perspectives and share the process. • Sought and received recognition by the Governing Board to be an official “Exploratory Task Force”. From this point forward, the process was led by the <i>Task Force</i> rather than a Sunday School class. • All Congregation Lunch: Class members prepared lunch May 7. Three people from the congregation spoke about their experiences, followed by facilitated discussions around tables. About 50 people attended. 	<p>Article in the Prevue (February)</p> <p>Article in the Prevue</p> <p>Article in the Prevue, Bulletin, Weekly E-vents</p> <p>Article in the Prevue, Bulletin, Weekly E-vents</p> <p>Article in the Prevue, Bulletin, Weekly E-vents</p>
<i>Summer 2017</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Task Force planned two All Congregation Sunday Schools in July and August. Six speakers (or couples) shared a story of their experience with the LGBTQ+ community and thoughts and prayers for FUMCWL. Attendance 45 people. 	Article in the Prevue, Bulletin, e-News

Fall 2017

- The Task Force continued to meet each Sunday. They continued individual conversations in the congregation, communication efforts, and outreach. Video invitation to Sunday School class (shown in worship services)
 - Continued to staff the church's Welcome Table as much as possible.
 - **All Congregation Lunch:** Rev. Dan Gangler, former communication officer of the Indiana United Methodist Conference, spoke about the issue and moving forward within the global United Methodist Church. Other United Methodist congregations in the Greater Lafayette area were also invited. Attendance about 75 people. The talk was recorded and posted on the church's web site. Article in the Prevue, Bulletin, Weekly E-vents
 - Planned a "Longest Night" service of comfort and healing on December 20, with special focus on those who are marginalized, and invitations to the local LGBTQ+ community. Article in the Prevue, Bulletin, Weekly E-vents
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Winter/Spring 2018

- Drafted the Welcome Statement. Based it on themes from FUMCWL Core Values and Vision. Gathered feedback from a larger group. March Prevue article: How I Came to Care.
 - Developed a plan for conducting an Exploratory Survey to gauge congregation support. The plan included getting permission from the Governing Board, and strategies for ensuring that everyone in the congregation would have multiple opportunities to participate in the survey. Article in the Prevue, Bulletin, Weekly E-vents
 - Invited all congregation members to a discussion May 6 in Sunday School. Attendance was 5 people in addition to the Task Force members. Article in the Prevue, Bulletin, Weekly E-vents
 - **All Congregation Lunch:** All were invited to hear Alex Shanks, Regional Organizer for Reconciling Ministries Network, and also to discuss inclusion at FUMCWL at tables. About 60 attended.
 - Conducted the Exploratory Survey April 19 to May 13. It was distributed as a Bulletin insert two Sundays, included in the Prevue for those who may not attend services those two Sundays, and also provided online.
 - Results 81% positive. Developed an overview of Exploratory Survey results for distribution to everyone interested.
 - Asked the Governing Board for approval to hold the Congregation Vote. The Board selected August 26 as the date.
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Summer 2018

- Distributed the overview of Exploratory Survey results in the August Prevue
 - Held a Question and Answer session August 12, 2018. About 50 people attended.
 - Vote August 26, 2018.
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