

A Resolution to Produce a Report on the Science of Human Sexuality

WHEREAS, Scripture enjoins us, “Study to show yourself approved unto God, a workman that need not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” 2nd Timothy 2:15; and

WHEREAS, there have been moments in history when the findings of science and the claims of the Church have clashed, as in the 17th century when the Church first rejected Galileo’s findings that the sun and not the earth was at the center of the universe ; and

WHEREAS, in the 18th century the founders of the Methodist movement called for the uniting of “knowledge and vital piety”(1) and John Wesley urged the study of science so that we might more effectively “imitate the God whose mercy is over all his works.”(2)

WHEREAS, Methodist people have established institutions of learning and inquiry dedicated to the advancement of knowledge about God’s created order; and

WHEREAS, in this second decade of the 21st century the United Methodist Church finds itself in a crisis that involves knowledge of the created order, namely, human sexual orientation ; and

WHEREAS, it is of vital importance that United Methodists live into this time of discernment not only prayerfully, but with the most reliable knowledge of human sexual orientation that is now available through research findings and scholarly articles by medical professionals.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

That the most reliable knowledge about human sexual orientation be available as we seek to discern what God is calling us to be as the Body of Christ in our deliberations; and

That a committee for the Mississippi Annual Conference be established at the direction of the Bishop solely for the purpose of reviewing the most

1- Often quoted line in Charles Wesley’s hymn COME FATHER, SON, AND HOLY GHOST. Both tune and words are in the public domain.

2- See Wesley’s Sermon 60, “General Deliverance,” §III.10, *Works* 2:449

“up-to-date-findings” of medical science on human sexual orientation as reported in research articles by medical professionals and scientists with well-established, nationally recognized expertise in the science of sexual orientation; and

That the Committee not undertake any discussion or issue any statements on the United Methodist Church policy on human sexual orientation; and

That upon completion of the review a report of these findings be supplied to the congregations of the Mississippi United Methodist Annual Conference not later than the beginning of the 2018 Annual Conference.