



**Free Methodist Church USA
39th General Conference
RESOLUTION**

INSTRUCTIONS:

Complete requested information, adding additional pages as necessary. Save and e-mail completed form to your Annual Conference office.

INTRODUCED BY: Rev. Derik Heumann

ANNUAL CONFERENCE NAME: _____

Southern Michigan Conference

WRITTEN BY:

Rev. Derik Heumann; Lead Pastor, Evergreen Church

General Conference Secretary - OFFICE USE ONLY

Resolution No. 304

Received Date: 12/19/2022

Resolution Committee Grade: _____

BOA Consideration: _____

GC Consideration: _____

RELATED TO PARAGRAPH ¶3215

Referred to Ministry Team Number:

SUBJECT OR TITLE:

Updating Language Regarding Sexual Intimacy

Final Vote: Yes No

WHEREAS:

WHEREAS the Free Methodist Church maintains a historic and orthodox position on God's intentions for sexual intimacy being in the context of a covenanted marital relationship between one man and one woman in BOD ¶3215, and

WHEREAS the language we use to communicate our theology and ethics grounded in Scripture, reason, tradition, and experience need to continue speak across cultures and generations effectively, and

WHEREAS we want to maintain our prophetic witness as a Church and demonstrate the love of Christ with all of God's children who are created in His image, and

WHEREAS theological progressives argue the word "homosexual" was added to translations of the Bible in the 20th century and does not refer to committed monogamous relationships between same sex couples, yet

WHEREAS there is no redemptive movement throughout Scripture lifting these prohibitions referring to same sex behavior, within or outside a monogamous relationship, and

WHEREAS Bible translation committees are seeking to modernize and adapt new language in order for people to best understand the meaning of the original texts, and

WHEREAS the term "ἀρσενοκοίτης" in the New Testament (1 Cor. 6:9; 1 Tim. 1:9-10) and Greek Septuagint (Lev. 18:22, 20:13) which is translated "homosexual," was at one time an appropriate way to describe the prohibition on same-sex behavior, and

WHEREAS the term "homosexual" is no longer the best word to use in communicating what Scripture says to all of God's children.

Therefore, BE IT RESOLVED:

To change the language of “homosexual” to “same sex” in the three places within BOD ¶3215 Sexual Intimacy so that it will read:

Sexual intimacy is a gift from God for marital union. As such it creates a bond that scripture describes as one flesh (Genesis 2:24; 1 Corinthians 6:16). When expressed within marriage, sexual intimacy is a great blessing and source of fulfillment. The sanctity of marriage between one man and one woman is to be protected against all manner of immoral conduct (Exodus 22:16-17; Deuteronomy 22:23-28; Leviticus 20:10-16).

Pre-marital intimacy robs the marital union of the exclusive bond that sexual intimacy is given to create. Fornication is listed along with other forms of immorality. (Galatians 5:19-21).

Extra-marital intimacy, which Scripture describes as adultery, transgresses the moral law and betrays the marriage bond.

Adultery is a degrading and destructive force. It undermines trust and contaminates the exclusive bond of marriage (Exodus 20:14).

Post-marital intimacy which occurs after divorce, or the loss of a spouse debases the biblical design of sexual intimacy (1 Corinthians 7:8-9).

Homosexual Same sex intimacy is regarded by the Scriptures as immoral because it is a distortion of God’s created order. The Scriptures speak explicitly against **homosexual** same sex intimacy (Leviticus 18:22; 20:13; Romans 1:26, 27; 1 Timothy 1:8-10). All persons are accountable to God for their thoughts, words and deeds (Romans 14:12; 1 Corinthians 6:9, 10). For those who have fallen, the grace of God is available and completely adequate to forgive and deliver (1 John 1:9; Hebrews 7:25; Luke 4:18; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11). Because the sexual desire is so powerful, counseling is recommended as a part of the church’s pastoral care. The church has a corporate responsibility to be God’s agent of transformation to persons as they learn to live a Christian life that is wholesome and pure. We oppose cultural mores and laws that legitimize adultery, pre-marital, post-marital and **homosexual** same-sex intimacy

Annual Conference Resolutions Committee Worksheet:

Mission: To love God, love people and make disciples.

Vision: To bring wholeness to the world through healthy biblical communities of holy people multiplying disciples, leaders, groups and churches.

1. Does the resolution have a direct relationship to the vision and mission of the Free Methodist Church?

Yes

2. How will the proposed change help us accomplish our vision and mission?

The use of language, which continually evolves, impacts how people interpret our statements contained within our BoD. Therefore, a simple update of language on the existing paragraph on human sexual is being recommended for adoption.

3. The Resolutions Committee rates this resolution as:

(A) Support - recommend adoption

Other Comments: