



Sally Dyck
Bishop

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The United Methodist Church

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SAVE THE DATE SEPTEMBER 9, 2014

Date: July 9, 2014
To: All NIC Clergy
From: Bishop Sally Dyck
Re: "What We Can Do"

You are invited to a conversation on "what we can do," given Illinois' legalization of same-gender marriage. So much of the talk around our denomination is about what we *can't* do, but there is much we *can* do and in fact, what we are *required* to do in relation to LGBTQ persons and families in our churches, families and communities.

On **September 9, 2014 from 9:30 until 3**, all clergy are invited to a gathering for the purpose of the following:

- To hear from me about what clergy can do without threat of a processed complaint in responding pastorally to same-gender marriage for LGBTQ persons and families.
- To learn and grow in our capacity as clergy to provide pastoral care in general for LGBTQ persons and families.

Our day together will be framed by prayer, Bible study, and worship, ending with communion. Participants will be asked to dedicate the entire time, not coming and going, so as to be fully engaged. Rules of engagement will be given at the time of registration (to begin in August). We will learn from case studies provided by clergy in our conference (i.e. YOU!). In August an electronic survey will be sent out that will ask general questions, such as what you have experienced as the most difficult pastoral situation you've faced in light of LGBTQ persons and families. Scenarios will be drawn from them and utilized in an anonymous way to guide our best interaction and thinking together.

Chaplains—clergy who are not members of our annual conference but live in our annual conference bounds—will provide pastoral care if needed during the day.

This will not be a time for discussion on human sexuality and definitely not a debate about it, even though it is my every desire that clergy of all perspectives will attend and also provide various scenarios for us to use. We all need to be equipped to deal with a wide spectrum of pastoral concerns because one thing that is required of us is to be in ministry to all people.

Who is invited? We will be limited in our space accommodations so the priority will be to anyone appointed to a local church (elders, deacons, local pastors; retirees who are appointed to a church are welcome to register) and deacons whether appointed to a church or not. In the last few days of registration, those who are retired but not appointed to a local church are welcome to register if there is still space (the registration will be cut off when we meet our maximum capacity for the space).

Please plan on attending. We don't know yet where this event will be but we are working on it and will let you know as soon as we find a location that can accommodate us. **SAVE THE DATE!**

Thank you for planning on attending and please keep our annual conference in your prayers as we prepare for this event on **WHAT WE CAN DO!**

Your Sister in Christ,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Sally Dyck', with a stylized, cursive script.

Bishop Sally Dyck