

THE WAY FORWARD

Question and Answer Session with Rev. Brian Adkins

Saturday, February 16, 2019 — 6-8 PM

St. Mark's United Methodist Church

2391 St. Marks Way,
Sacramento CA 95864



Greetings my Rainbow Brothers and Sisters in Christ!

My name is Eliseo Paniagua, and I am the Music Director at Fair Oaks United Methodist Church and a proud openly gay Methodist. I send this letter to you in hopes that it finds you healthy and happy this New Year! May your year be filled with bountiful blessings! With the beginning of a new year, comes also a new chapter in our lives and our church history. In a few weeks, the special-called 2019 General Conference, set for February 23-26 in St. Louis, Missouri, will focus on moving our denomination past its decades-long struggle with issues surrounding homosexuality with proposed plans offering a way to stay together as one church or ways to split.

Currently, our Book of Discipline reads:

“All persons without regard to race, color, national origin, status, or economic condition shall be eligible to attend its worship services, participate in programs, receive the sacraments...” ¶ **4. Article IV.**

Inclusiveness of the Church

“The practice of homosexuality is incompatible with Christian teaching. Therefore, self-avowed practicing homosexuals are not to be certified as candidates, ordained as ministers, or appointed to serve in The United Methodist Church.” ¶ **304.3 Qualifications for Ordination**

As it stands, many churches across our nation are discriminating against our brothers and sisters solely based on who they love. They use their interpretation of the Book of Discipline to exclude them from being loved and accepted as all children of Christ should.

So, what does the decision of the General Conference mean for all of our Brothers and Sisters across the world on February 27th? What does it mean for you or those you love?

At Fair Oaks United Methodist Church, we are starting a Rainbow Methodists Group (RMG) where members of the LGBTQ community and allies will come together and work as one loving family to ensure that all rainbow children of Christ are loved and accepted in our surrounding area. One of our first events to help start our group is a question and answer session with Brian Adkins, a member of The Way Forward committee which was tasked with recommending options for the 2019 General Conference.

We would love for you to please join us on Saturday February 16th, from 6–8 pm at St. Mark's United Methodist Church (2391 St. Marks Way, Sacramento CA 95864) to hear what exactly has been recommended, what the possible outcomes may be and ask any questions you may want answered! Refreshments afterwards will be provided by St. Mark's United Methodist Church.

When the morning of February 27th arrives, we must remember, no matter the outcome, “God is Love and whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in them” (1 John 4:16). Our Rainbow love is no different than that of any other person and will always be present within it.

We hope to see you on Saturday February 16th for an opportunity to have your questions answered and come together as a Rainbow family!

Rainbow Love in Christ,

Eliseo Paniagua

Eliseo Paniagua, Music Director
Fair Oaks United Methodist Church