

# Onalaska UMC Reconciling Survey Analysis

*Results compiled by Kelly Dunn, July 2019*

In May and June of 2019, members of Onalaska UMC were invited to complete a seventeen question survey to get an indication of their views on beliefs related to the inclusion of LGBTQI+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning and intersex) persons in the life of our Church. One hundred and nine surveys were returned which represents a strong response. 90% of respondents were over the age of 35, which is representative sample of the OUMC membership.

Here is a summary of some key findings from among the members who were responded:

- 100% agreed that all people are of sacred worth and should be welcomed in the Church.
- Over 75% disagree with the statement from the UMC Book of Discipline that says Homosexuality is incompatible with Christian teaching.
- Less than 50% feel they understand scripture that either supports LGBTQ+ inclusion in the Church or condemns homosexuality.
- Over 90% agree that including LGBTQ+ persons would support our mission and vision.
- Over 90% know family members, friends or neighbors who are LGBTQ+ persons, but only 50% know of LGBTQ+ persons who are members of this Church.
- Over 90% responded that they are familiar with the struggles faced by LGBTQ+ persons that lead to increased risk of depression, anxiety, suicide, self-harm, homelessness and addiction.

Respondents wanted the process to include a wide variety of programs and activities. The strongest interest was for sermons, God moments, printed resources and discussions. Survey results have been reviewed with the Reconciling Process Team to assist them with planning future programs.

The survey questions and the aggregated responses for each question are described in the following section. Responses in Bold represent a high level of agreement.

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**Confidential Onalaska UMC Reconciling Survey** (with results from 109 responses)

Recently, Onalaska UMC's Church Council voted 14-0 (one abstention) to begin the process of becoming a Reconciling church. The Reconciling Ministries Network (<http://rmnetwork.org>) consists of United Methodist Churches which have carefully studied the issue of LGBTQ+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer) inclusion and have formally adopted statements welcoming LGBTQ+ people in the life of the church.

The process invites congregation members to participate in several months of education and discussion, including sermons, small groups, book studies, etc. At the conclusion of the process, a church conference will be held so that all members can vote on the reconciling statement.

As our church begins this inquiry, please complete this survey to help us discern what educational and discussion opportunities will be helpful.

*CIRCLE the response that reflects your agreement with each statement:*

- Agree & somewhat agree
- Disagree & somewhat disagree
- Undecided

- A. All people are of sacred worth and should be welcomed in the church, as stated in The United Methodist Church's guiding Book of Discipline.  
a. **100% agree**      0% disagree      0% undecided
- B. Homosexuality is incompatible with Christian teaching, and the church should prohibit same-sex weddings and homosexual clergy, as also stated in the Book of Discipline.  
a. 16% agree      **77% disagree**      7% undecided
- C. I understand which bible verses are used to support full LGBTQ+ inclusion in church (as members, leaders, clergy, and marriage) and different ways they are interpreted.  
a. 43% agree      27% disagree      30% undecided
- D. I understand which bible verses are used to condemn homosexuality, and different ways they are interpreted.  
a. 40% agree      33% disagree      26% undecided
- E. The mission of Onalaska UMC to "make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world" could be accomplished better if we include LGBTQ+ people.  
a. **91% agree**      7% disagree      2% undecided
- F. Including LGBTQ+ would help us fulfill our vision to "love unconditionally; prepare our hearts, minds & hands; serve in all the ways we can; and celebrate God in all we do."  
a. **93% agree**      5% disagree      2% undecided
- G. I am currently aware of or personally know LGBTQ+ people who are members of Onalaska UMC.

- a. 50% agree            31% disagree    9% undecided
  
- H. I am currently aware of or personally know family members, neighbors, or friends who are LGBTQ+.
  - a. **91% agree**            7% disagree    2% undecided
  
- I. I understand the language of this discussion (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, cisgender) and the use of preferred personal pronouns such as he/she/they.
  - a. **80% agree**            17% disagree    3% undecided
  
- J. I understand changes in the general culture of America both in favor of and against LGBTQ+ people.
  - a. **88% agree**            4% disagree    8% undecided
  
- K. I understand current scientific knowledge and research on sexuality and gender identity.
  - a. 71% agree            12% disagree    17% undecided
  
- L. I am familiar with the struggles faced by LGBTQ+ youth and adults, including increased risk of depression, anxiety, suicide, self-harm, homelessness, and addiction.
  - a. **93% agree**            2% disagree    5% undecided
  
- M. I am interested in learning more about this topic and would participate in opportunities to educate myself and engage in discussion with other OUMC members.
  - a. 62% agree            12% disagree    26% undecided
  
- N. My thoughts, beliefs, or opinions on the inclusion or exclusion of LGBTQ+ people at OUMC are open to change if I learn new information or ways of interpreting scripture.
  - a. 49% agree            32% disagree    19% undecided

I would make use of these educational opportunities (circle all that apply)

- |                 |            |                   |            |
|-----------------|------------|-------------------|------------|
| • Sermons       | <b>53%</b> | • Discussions     | <b>50%</b> |
| • God Moments   | <b>52%</b> | • Videos          | 29%        |
| • 1 & Dones     | 34%        | • Print Resources | <b>50%</b> |
| • Bible Studies | 27%        | • Wes Resources   | 24%        |
| • Book Studies  | 20%        |                   |            |

- O. I can be a member of a congregation that does not completely agree with my beliefs about God, interpretation of scripture, preferences for worship, or leadership priorities.
  - a. 56% agree            23% disagree            21% undecided
  
- P. I would leave Onalaska UMC if the majority of congregation members decided to "reconcile" and welcome LGBTQ+ neighbors as members and leaders.

a. 10% agree                    **87% disagree**                    3% undecided

***OPTIONAL anonymous demographic data to help us interpret results:***

**MEMBERSHIP:**

- Member            93%
- Regular            7%
- Guest               0%

**AGE GROUP:**

- 0-18                3%
- 19-35               6%
- 36-65               44%
- 66 and Up         46%

**GENDER:**

- Male                33%
- Female              66%
- Other                1%

**Attraction**

- Heterosexual            99%
- Homosexual
- Pansexual
- Asexual
- Other                    1%

**Relationship:**

- Single                    21%
- Married                  79%
- Committed but unmarried

***PLEASE place completed survey in box by the office. Thank you!***