

Statement Regarding MCEC Credentialing and Persons Who Identify as LGBTQ*

May 2019

As Mennonite Church Eastern Canada's Leadership Council, we recognize that within our church body there is a diversity of beliefs regarding same-sex marriage and the role of persons who identify as LGBTQ in church leadership. Based on the *Being a Faithful Church* discernment process that led to the resolution passed at the Mennonite Church Canada Assembly in Saskatoon in July 2016, Leadership Council affirms that each MCEC congregation is invited to discern how God is calling it. For some MCEC congregations and their MCEC credentialed pastors this will mean that a traditional understanding of marriage as between one man and one woman is maintained. For other MCEC congregations and their MCEC credentialed pastors this will mean an openness to perform same-sex marriage ceremonies and to call individuals who identify as LGBTQ* to full participation in the life of the congregation, including all levels of paid and unpaid leadership. Leadership Council will respect and support pastors and congregations in their discernment in the spirit of the MC Canada BFC resolution.

* We use "LGBTQ" as an umbrella term, it is not meant to be exclusionary.

The Being a Faithful Church Resolution adopted by the Mennonite Church Canada 2016 Assembly:

- One of our foundations of unity has been the Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective. We recommend that it continue to serve the church in the ways suggested in the Introduction of the Confession itself.
- We call upon our family of Christ to respectfully acknowledge that there are those among us (congregations and individuals) whose careful study of Scripture and prayerful journey of discernment lead them to a different understanding on committed same-sex relationships than is commonly understood by readings of Article 19 in our Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective.
- We recommend that we create space/leave room within our Body to test alternative understandings from that of the larger Body to see if they are a prophetic nudging of the Spirit of God.
- Since continued discernment will be required after Assembly 2016, we recommend that Mennonite Church Canada and Area Churches develop ways of to hear one another around the implementation of this recommendation.