

A Response to the Confessing Movement in Arkansas

A Jim Lane Commentary

I received the letter which follows in the mail today from Rev. Norman Carter.

May I make just the following comments about this communication from the Confessing Movement of Arkansas - -

CMA has drawn a line in the sand across the new Arkansas Conference. We can see in their letter who is on one side of the line in the sand - - Carolyn Elias, Karen Millar, Kendall Hunter, Sam Hocutt, and Dr. Ralph Shull. I personally know all of these, except Dr. Shull. All are dedicated Christians who love Jesus Christ and the United Methodist Church. Of that there is no doubt!

The litmus tests seem to be these - -

Supporting the Discipline of The United Methodist Church
Supporting the Statement of Social Principles
Supporting what Wesley would call the essentials of the Christian faith

I will not comment on the inflammatory language of the letter, except to say that there are reasoned and reasonable ways to express disagreement without attacking persons who might hold differing views. I found out a long time ago that not all United Methodists think, talk, or act alike - - but we all are invited to the same table to be fed by the same Savior.

Now as to all of the rest of us on the other side of the line that has been drawn in the sands of Arkansas United Methodism. **I personally do not know a United Methodist in the State of Arkansas who does not pass their litmus test!**

There are many highly qualified and highly competent lay people who have indicated their willingness to serve the United Methodist of Arkansas as members of our 2004 Delegation to the General and Jurisdictional Conferences. Review their record of service and their ability to excite people about being Disciples of Jesus Christ. The United Methodist Church is not about gutter politics - - it is about saving lost souls!

Do not be misled and swayed by inflammatory rhetoric and scare tactics. Those are the tactics of desperate people.

Do be led by your heart and mind and elect a delegation that is fully representative of fine folks who file into a United Methodist Church every Sunday come rain or shine, cold or hot.

Our Lord did not draw lines in the sand - - he erased them!

God is Good - - All The Time!

Jim Lane, Lay Leader
Levy United Methodist Church
May 6, 2003

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The Confessing Movement of Arkansas (CMA)

Dear Delegates to Annual Conference

We are writing to you from the Confessing Movement of Arkansas (CMA), whose mission is to proclaim Jesus Christ as Son, Savior and Lord.

As we approach the historic first meeting of the new Arkansas Conference, you have a great opportunity to make a major difference in Methodism by helping to elect lay people to General and Jurisdictional Conferences who will work to return our great church to her Wesleyan Heritage.

As you probably know the UMC continues to lose members. We believe this to be primarily because many of our denominational leaders, seminaries, and some of our boards and agencies insist on undermining historic Christianity and in defying the Discipline on such issues as homosexuality, same-sex marriages, abortion on demand, and sound doctrine-especially sound doctrine. Some of our bishops and our seminaries openly question orthodox doctrines like the virgin birth of Jesus, His bodily resurrection, and His death on the cross as the atonement for the sins of the world. And what is worse, the rest of the Council of Bishops refuse to speak out against those bishops who preach such apostasy. They do not decry the heresy coming out of the seminaries, and they do not chastise those boards and agencies that continue their bureaucratic subversion of the Discipline. We must do something to correct this. And we can by electing people to General and Jurisdictional Conference who recognize the need for fidelity to Biblical Christianity and the Discipline of the United Methodist Church.

CMA assures you that if you will support Carolyn Elias, Karen Millar, Kendall Hunter, Sam Hocutt, and Dr. Ralph Shull for General and Jurisdictional Conferences, they will work for legislation in keeping with biblical Christianity, and they will work to elect evangelical leaders to the episcopacy who embrace orthodox Christianity

In Christ,

*Maudalene Patterson, Chairperson
Norman Carter, Chaplain*