

Question: What are the signs, trends, or indicators of where the church is that tend to push you toward HOPE about our long-run unity?

Biblical Reference - Faith in God	Times Repeated 1	We can do it	Times Repeated 2	Personal Experience	Times Repeated 3	History of Church	Times Repeated 4	Generational Comments	Times Repeated 5	Reference to This Meeting	Times Repeated 6	General Conference	Times Repeated 7
God is in charge/control	11	Agree to disagree-compromise	4	Reconciling Ministry Network - Visible Sign	6	That is why we are called United	5	Younger folks are usually more tolerant	5	Dialogue is happening/openness	23	Hope make wise decisions and follow God's will	1
Trust in Jesus	6	The church is praying (serious)	4	Hope in local congregation	5	Global church involvement	5	Youth	3	Tonight!/Circles of Grace	23	Hope to say I am a United Methodist and not be ashamed	1
We serve a gracious God & power of the Holy Spirit	6	Work Through It	1	More and more churches are being inclusive	5	Questions in the past being navigated	5	The young people do not care what choice or who you are	3	Success of meetings like this	15	Bill Brownson	1
By the Grace of God	4	Everyone will Understand and Unify	1	Open Mindedness	4	We are called to undergird the current reality with transformative prayer	4	Younger Families are more open to change	2	Number of people who came together to talk	13	Supreme Court Ruling (Oberfeld?) opening minds of the Global Members of General Conference	1
Faith in God	4	We will continue to discuss until we find right	1	Churches are becoming more welcoming	4	The church may be one after a split / not a bad thing/they happen	4	Younger Families need to be involved	1	hope & discussion is possible if we keep talking	8	Clergy to Gen Conf were Centrist (agreed on unity of denomination & move toward equality)	1
Jesus Christ's Church will go on	4	Church is people who work it out	1	Unity keeps coming up in conversation	4	UMC in other countries is more traditional and growing	4	Younger Families will fight for justice more	1	We can all be strengthened through discussion like this	8	People at GC running with goal of keeping us united	1
Jesus Reigns	4	People who are tired of the topic and let church move on	1	Not alone in our struggles	3	Overcame divisions around women and slavery	3	Families need to have this discussion	1	Opportunity for traditional viewpoint to be heard	6		
God will get us through it	3	I love the church, we have a close knit family	1	Seen Acceptance	2	Presbyterian split but are growing	2	Innocence of children understanding because of a LGBT family member	1	Good that we began with scripture and prayer and dialogue	5		
Bible verse to encourage each other, tolerate others	3	Anything can happen	1	People evolving	2	Hope to change the discipline	2	Multigenerational	1	We can be civil - did not throw stones	5		
Spirit leads the church	2	As Christians we always have hope	1	What used to be black and white is now grey	2	Hopeful that the UMC will take a stand and preach the truth	2	Younger generation more dedicated to unity - in observation	1	Making themselves vulnerable - sharing personal stories	3		
God is bigger than our feeble attempts to sort this out	2	All people have worth	1	Growing number of people seeking middle ground	2	The Pope/Grace	2	LGBTQ children leading adults to change quietly	1	open dialogue is helpful to keep issue educational	3		
Holy Spirit may speak to all of us	2	We can do ministry without worrying about this	1	Encouraged by leadership at local church	2	Being a Wesleyan - We have survived many terrible crisis	2	The future is coming with more freedom	1	Worldwide Church not discussed	3		
with God all things are possible	2	We need to love for the kingdom	1	Fasting and prayer on FRIDAY'S	2	We have survived schism before	1	Younger generational experiences	1	Honesty in sharing	3		
God is love - no hate in love	2	All need to be a family of one	1	LGBT have joined the Church	2	Staying faithful to covenants	1	Social transformation as a whole, young generation much more accepting	1	Number of people present on both sides	2		
Much agreement on Biblical Truth	1	People will have a conscience about people being left out of the church	1	The church is progressing	2	We can always have home church	1	That the older community will grow as they are exposed to people of the LGBT Community	1	Healthy conversations are increasing	2		
Bible shows conflict resolved	1	It is just a threat	1	Many is not most LGBT want diversity in Church as well as life	2	That the local church will still exist to make disciples for the transformation of the world	1	Tide of time	1	Love and respect are present	2		
Hope Rests In Christ	1	Connection is Strong	1	Openly Gay man nearly got ordained!	2	We'll get more people if we change	1	Some will just die off	1	we are listening to each other	2		

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Stand firm with God and discern his will	1	There is always hope	1	More people are exposed to positive LGBT experiences	2	Now sit next to divorced people without hesitation	1	Younger generations are engaging and helping to shift the focus	1	willingness to talk about the issues	2		
Nothing less than Jesus Blood and Righteousness	1	Have been talking about it for 40 years and haven't split yet!	1	Understanding Sex/Sin	1	We do not have a plan for schism as a Denomination	1	Growing number of parents looking for a church who accepts	1	Invited speakers locally	2		
Remain victorious	1	Hope I'm wrong	1	Everyone can come to the table	1	If Anglo and Korean Church can merge then hope for diversity	1	Next Gen doesn't care	1	Bishop is making great strides	1		
God gives us endurance	1	Half full is 50%full	1	Openly Gay leaders in the local church	1	Church did not fall apart when we became Reconciling Congregations	1	Younger Generation want sot change the world and the church if denomination can hold on	1	Pastor's digging into scriptures	1		
Jesus Christ - the church is one foundation	1	Why is this an issue?	1	Ability to put bias aside	1	Lutheran and Episcopal churches have worked through this - we can learn from them	1	Young People, urban diverse communities	1	small seeds can be planted/ get people thinking	1		
God has worked miracles before	1	God has given us the ability to choose	1	My church is very non-judgmental	1	Both sides are acting out of a sense of Faith and Theological understanding	1			Circles of Grace , when people are invited and are willing to talk	1		
God will turn all things for good	1			We are trying to find a way to work it out	1	Revival in Africa and Asia and America	1			clarifying interpretation	1		
Helps us understand God is our common bond	1			Always happen for a reason	1	The promise that the Church is greater than the Denomination	1			People are being heard and pain shared	1		
God + Jesus + Trinity = hope	1			the apathetic will follow wherever the majority lean toward the source of most pressure	1	History of change in Love and Integrity	1			Stopping to pray when tension was high	1		
Repentance, change of heart and minds through Jesus	1			DS Attitude	1					Answers to the polling questions	1		
God will surprise us	1			Inclusive language in services	1					Diversity of conversations	1		
Church Sticks to Bible	1			Increased Conversation	1					Do this in my small group bible study - listening	1		
Only one word matters Love	1			More people are sharing experiences	1					empathy towards others	1		
God is in this we are not alone	1			Gay Marriage in Church	1					Good Mentors in leadership	1		
God is powerful	1			Folks who are openly positive	1					Hearing stories of God's faithfulness	1		
Deeper Spirituality - biblical honoring	1			Seeking a third way	1					Hopefulness we saw as people shared	1		
Jesus Christ is Lord of this church	1			Baptism of baby of same sex couple	1					Intentionally affirming group	1		
The tomb is still empty	1			Fewer church trial more reconciliation	1					lack of denomination - as people get to know each other	1		
Romans 15:5-7	1			LGBT staying in church regardless	1					Now having dialogue - People pushing agenda aside	1		

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Scripture Reference	Times Repeated	Schism	Times Repeated 2	Personal Experience	Times Repeated 3	Happening in the Church	Times Repeated 4	Generational Comments	Times Repeated 5	Reference to This Meeting	Times Repeated 6	Conference	Times Repeated 8	Polarization	Times Repeated 7
Don't like pick and choose scripture	4	Talk of schism	10	Feel things unraveling - conform to the world, When someone forces me to go somewhere I am not ready to go yet, Acceptance of world culture over kingdom culture, Prevalence of acceptance of gender diverse behavior	12	Taking us away from the work of the church	9	The older generation - hard to change	2	The need for this conversation	7	At AC big discussion over proposal to examine relationship & Clergy Credentials	6	Polarization - without common denominators	5
How do we reconcile scripture interpretation & be united	4	Issue is so divisive not sure unity is possible	9	People will leave	9	Pastors who break covenant and perform marriages; bishops who do not hold them accountable	7	Age Difference	2	Everyone at table felt short changed on conversation too much instruction on unity.	7	On going discussion at conference with no change	6	Polarization of the two positions in the Denomination	5
Disagreement on sinfulness of homosexuality	4	People planning for it! Blog post encouraging schism. Clergy promoting split in UMC.	4	Flogging the issue/weariness in battling the issue	7	40 years this has been cast as winners vs. losers now about institution survival.	7	Church is getting older	2	Entrenchment between groups, my group is right , not willing to dialogue honestly	6	AC discussion to end discussion very divided and appalling	4	Polarization at the social level on social media	5
People use the Bible as a weapon	2	Comments like if the church goes ahead with gay marriage I am out of here!	4	Will never come to agreement as a world Denomination	7	Churches that withdrew because of treasurer, Pastor leaves because of Bill Brownson, 50/50 vote around Bill Brownson	6	Older members more rigid	1	Allowing Extremes to control	6	Talked about at General Conference	4	polarization - lack of discussion	4
Where is the Christ-like part?	2	Split is likely but not wanted	2	Supreme court action	5	Lack of discussion in Local Church - secrecy	6	Where will the younger generation worship when they see this as a non-issue.	1	Too busy being right vs. accepting diversity	5	There seems to be a lack of people who are willing to listen (Annual Conference and in general)	4	Polarization in culture, society & church digging their heels, stirring up hate	4
Lack of discussion with scripture	2	Doesn't seem to be a compromise position for ordination or marriage	2	Inaction on part of Christians, not be silent, stand for what is right & wrong.	5	Must worry about Africa - against this issue	6	Fear of losing members - young people	1	Unwillingness to budge on both sides	5	An Agenda at Conference like the Bishop picking speakers	4	Clergy	1
Church's disregard for scripture which disapproves, which discredits scripture	1	Threat to withdraw	2	People already leaving	4	Gay pastor is kicked out of church, pastors kicked out for gay marriages.	5	Not enough young people here	1	number of progressives	3	The politics of Annual Conference that we see winners and losers in our votes	3	Annual Conference	1
Reminds me of Sodom and Gomorrah worried about judgementalism	1	Members have said if the Book of Discipline changes we are leaving. (full inclusion)	2	That my local church will no longer be able to serve the poor and Christ's mission	4	Congregations finding it necessary to identify as Reconciling - should not be necessary	5	Will Millennia's want to be a part of us?	1	Lack of dialogue - taking stands that are militant	3	Annual Conference - clergy seem disconnected from members	2	dramatic dissension - polarization	1
Theological Lacking in Discussion	1	Schism being used as a threat	2	social change is hard	3	See splits in other denominations/negative impact on churches	5	Teenage suicide	1	Silence - unwilling to talk to each other	3	Seems like we cannot even talk about it a Conference	2	Black & White divisiveness	1
Don't do what Bible says	1	Fear of schism in church	2	In the minority don't want gay preacher	3	Withholding apportionments and being moved involuntarily	4	Challenge of creating a safe welcoming church for younger generation	1	Ugliness in discussing LGBT issues	3	Annual Conference Division	2	media showing pastors refusing to officiate same sex marriages	1

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We need to have a very deep Bible study about sin & what it actually says about Homosexuality- we need language, context and translation studies.	1	If we need to split its ok	2	Lack of grace shown by believers, Misunderstandings and narrow mindedness	3	Thought is that Urban Churches are progressive, rural churches will not have a voice	4	Fear that the youth are being led astray	1	People wont share publicly	2	Council of Bishops fear - lack of leadership	2		
Scripture is loved by both sides but we are stiff necked	1	This will definitely cause a division in the church	2	Lack of dialogue in local church	3	Lacking strong leadership in making a decision/change/interpretation	3	It's a matter of time	1	Difficulty finding a middle ground	2	Inability to agree to disagree by AC and GC	2		
Strong differences in Biblical understanding	1	Church is conservative - will split	2	Local Church if denomination changes stance people will leave	3	UMC as Global church around this issue	2	We are seen as counter cultural	1	We have not talked enough	2	West Ohio Conference	1		
Not looking at scripture	1	Move to exit denomination if my viewpoint as a congregation is not honored	1	People like cake bakers and Kim Davis that refuse to do business with LGBT people. Interpret the law, 1st amendment violation	3	The sentence in the Discipline about this, feel damned in own church	2	Not enough young people here how do we get their views?	1	Last minute notice of the meeting	2	Irrational behavior at AC	1		
Change will be difficult for those trained to see LGBT Community as sin.	1	Evangelical negative speak	1	Silence at the congregational level	3	Pastors that on trial for performing marriages.	2			Expected more people here	2	Annual Conference; how divided we are or delegations	1		
Church has turned away from Bible	1	When people think separation is the only answer	1	Do not hear it from the pulpit, not talking about it, not preaching the truth.	3	Decreased attendance/membership	2			worried about the lack of discussion and ability to move forward	2	News from Conference is despairing	1		
Impugning of character because I hold the scriptures as authoritative	1	What other choice besides splitting the church	1	Either way people will be hurt - there is no win win solution	3	Abuse of Christians in other countries because of this issue.	2			lack of investment in conversation	2	National Leaders calling for Division	1		
Lessening of adherence to Word of God (bible)	1	Denomination split or Local Church Split	1	Leaving denomination on this issue	2	Hamilton/Slaughter and 3rd Way.	2			Some shut down conversation	2	Wording in Discipline and GC resistance to change	1		
The assumption that support of LGBT is a betrayal of scripture	1	Articles on Schism	1	Judgementalism on this issue has spread to other issues	2	Potential ministers in UMC turning toward UCC for ordainment	1			really did not probe the real questions on people's hearts	2	People vote down phrase "Agree to disagree in Love"	1		
Downplay of authority of Scripture	1	Division is inevitable	1	Marriage in the church	2	Church restructuring to diminish power of African and Asian Conferences	1			progressives asking traditionalist to give up too much	2	Lack of explicit leadership from the bishop and cabinet in this issue & process	1		
Unwillingness to dive deeper into scriptures	1	Pastors I have spoken with seem to assume we will split	1	Divisions among friends and family	2	That we are afraid of people leaving so we will not talk from Pulpit.	1			passionate answers made it impossible for everyone to participate	1	Discussion around election of CFO	1		
division on what biblical obedience really is "acceptance vs. accountability"	1	Church split division because of the allowance of Gay leaders in the church. Presbyterian church	1	One step down for the church on a slippery slope/downfall of the church	2	Public defiance by clergy in order to make a protest against the Discipline	1			Opposition to any differences	1	AC & GC don't do these conversations	1		
All people have worth	1	We will not stay united because of compromise	1	Passion and conviction coming only from those against LGBT	2	People leaving church without conversation	1			So many people here, shows how big the problem is	1	GC - There is not a political way of changing/addressing this	1		

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Lack of Biblical clarity	1	Feeling that this will divide the church	1	Lack of understanding	2	How have other trends of Call to Ministry shifted with social acceptance (race, gender, divorce)?	1			Divisions amongst those trying to dialogue	1	Plan for GC Demonstration that will have a bad effect	1		
Not reading the bible	1	Threat of Schism at GC	1	Church in decline and now people threaten to leave	2	Global church is a problem	1			People get hung up on the word practice	1	Harsh judgementalism at AC from top - both sides	1		
Authority of scripture is trumping Tradition, experience and reason	1	Caucus groups are planning split	1	Culture shifts - is it God or social pressure?	2	Geography	1			Traditional people not here	1	Couldn't acknowledge that there is a different opinion at General Conference	1		
Biblical Interpretation - literalism makes it hard to find common ground	1	Legislation and Discipline will not fix this	1	Can go to another church to get married but not UMC	2	Concerned Gay ordination will be a stumbling block.	1			Refusal to be educated	1	Opinions might take away from AC	1		
The Discipline and Bible should not be changed	1	Schism over scriptural views	1	Few will change mind, entrenchment	2	Can LGBT lay people be leaders?	1			Heard despair in some stories	1	GC Legislation	1		
Scripture has been described as black and white and it isn't always (Saul and woman)	1	Groups are being formed for division	1	People reject what they do not understand	1	If Book of Discipline changes it will effect the way pastor preaches (bigots)	1			Conversation locked already decided	1	Lack of Holy Conferencing around Biblical truth on all things not just homosexuality.	1		
	1	Pastor is LGBT - Church will split	1	Ordination	1	Church having less influence in the world	1			Not a true representation of the WOC (young and old)	1				
		Half the church saying they will leave	1	Acceptance and tolerance are different but people push acceptance	1	Pastors that are more traditional	1			People who aren't here, who won't come to the table	1				
				Don't want a new understanding - change	1	Unwillingness of administrative structure to allow churches to choose.	1			Doesn't seem to be a place where we came together, we seem condemning. Common ground is a long way away.	1				
				Parochial	1	There are secret parking lot conversations at church	1			Focusing on feelings not fact	1				
				Beyond the walls of the church people are hurting each other	1	Removal of pastor who married their partner	1			Lose intimacy and understanding in votes	1				
				Pastor cannot reconcile personal beliefs with church's official position	1	Publicized persecution/prosecution of pastors supportive of LGBT community	1			Continue to use the word issue.	1				
				How can you invite people into the church and then condemn	1	Pastor who have been removed for positions	1			Unity at any cost non judgmental voices not heard	1				
				Do not think that it is fair that we come to one judgment or position.	1	Number of churches who have left UMC	1			Two extremes are not at the table	1				

