

1 **1Petition to the 2008 Western Jurisdiction**

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3 **TITLE: Western Jurisdiction as a Reconciling and Welcoming Jurisdiction**

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5 **Submitted by:** Carolyn Waters, Rocky Mountain; Ryan Russell, Pacific Northwest;

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7 **FINANCIAL IMPACT:** None

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9 In the spirit of "We Will Not Be Silent" adopted by the 2000 and 2004 sessions of the Western  
10 Jurisdiction in Casper, Wyoming we continue our witness to the denomination and challenge the  
11 wisdom of recent decisions made at General Conference 2008 in Fort Worth, Texas.

12  
13 We stand with our gay/lesbian/bisexual/transgender (glt) brothers and sisters, both lay and  
14 clergy, who have been shunned by the United Methodist Church in polity and in deed. We stand  
15 with our leaders who must hide an essential part of who they are in order to serve the church.  
16 We stand with hope, not for the future, but for our ministry in this time, in our places where  
17 people long to be welcomed and included in our communities of faith, long to be recognized in  
18 their relationships, and long to be a part of the church at large.

19  
20 We, the Western Jurisdiction of the United Methodist Church name and claim our ministries as  
21 welcoming and reconciling throughout the jurisdiction. We open our doors to all persons  
22 regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity, we open our hearts to those who have been  
23 shunned, we open our minds to radical obedience to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, even when at  
24 odds with The Book of Discipline, in order to further the work of God's justice and the creation  
25 of the beloved community.

26  
27 As a Welcoming and Reconciling Jurisdiction we will take steps of inclusion in the sacred trust  
28 of marriage, ordination, and leadership roles for all.

29  
30 Knowing that we are not all alike, but that we do intend to love alike, we recognize that this  
31 statement is made of courage, not agreement; this statement is made on faith, not law; and this  
32 action is taken to further the witness of The United Methodist Church, not to disregard its  
33 importance.