

UMC To Finally Crack Down on Lesbian Bishop?

The United Methodist Church set an oral hearing date to evaluate if they should defrock Bishop Karen Oliveto, a married lesbian.

The hearing is set for April 25 and is open to the public.

Oliveto was consecrated in July 2016 in the Western Jurisdiction. The UMC received multiple complaints about her role, and *Good News Magazine* urged “faithful” UMC members to renounce her.

“With the election of the Rev. Karen Oliveto as a bishop of the United Methodist Church, a pastor who is married to another woman and therefore unqualified to assume the office, it is clear to most people that the church has reached a crisis point,” *Good News* said in a statement.

“Therefore, we call upon the Council of Bishops to do one of the following: [1] To do all within its power to rectify this breach of our covenant by issuing a strong statement opposing Oliveto’s election, and petitioning the Judicial Council to rule the election null and void. Or [2], expedite the appointment of the members to its ‘Special Commission,’ and to revise the commission’s mandate as follows: the sole purpose of the special commission is to devise an equitable and structured plan of separation of The United Methodist Church, and to present such a plan to a called General Conference to be held no later than October 31, 2018,” the statement continued.

Homosexuality is still against the UMC’s Book of Discipline.

The hearing will determine if Oliveto is fit to serve as a leader given her marital status.

“Specifically, the petition addresses action by the Western Jurisdiction in electing the Rev. Karen Oliveto, reported to be an openly gay clergy member, as a bishop,” wrote Louisiana Area Bishop Cynthia Fierro Harvey, in a letter to Judicial Council. Harvey was chairing the conference session when the motion was passed.

“Accordingly, the petition will directly affect Bishop Oliveto, her qualifications and the efficacy of her election as bishop,” the letter said. “More generally, the petition will affect all jurisdictions and jurisdictional conferences ... who have an interest in the election and appointment of bishops in The United Methodist Church,” Fierro continued.
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