

More Light Presbyterians' Response to Overture OVT-044

The board and staff of More Light Presbyterians offer this response with deep concern and unwavering commitment to the full dignity and flourishing of LGBTQIA+ people in the life of the church.

This overture, in seeking to mandate monogamy as a requirement for ordained leadership, raises significant theological, pastoral, and justice concerns. While framed in the language of faithfulness, it risks reinforcing narrow and culturally bound definitions of relationship that have historically been used to exclude, police, and harm queer bodies and lives.

We recognize that non-monogamous relationships are not unique to queer communities and have long existed across cultures, histories, and within heterosexual and heteronormative contexts as well. Yet within the life of the church, policies like this do not function neutrally. Because LGBTQIA+ people have so often been subjected to disproportionate scrutiny regarding our bodies, relationships, intimacy, and fitness for leadership, this overture will inevitably be experienced and enacted as an attack on queerness.

Within the Presbyterian Church (USA), we have already discerned that God calls people of diverse sexual orientations and gender identities into ministry. That discernment was not merely about access, but about trusting that the Holy Spirit is at work in the lives, relationships, and callings of LGBTQIA+ people as they are—not as they are reshaped to fit restrictive norms.

This overture represents a step backward.

It centers a single model of relationship as the only faithful expression of Christian life, ignoring both the breadth of biblical witness and the lived realities of many faithful people. Scripture speaks richly about covenant, mutuality, justice, and love but does not prescribe one uniform relational structure across all contexts. Faithfulness cannot be reduced to form alone; it is revealed in how we love, how we honor one another, and how we embody God's justice in relationship.

We are especially concerned that this overture disproportionately targets queer communities. For many LGBTQIA+ people, the church has already functioned as a site of scrutiny and control over our bodies, our relationships, and our worthiness. Even when policies are written in ostensibly universal language, they often operate selectively in practice, reinscribing suspicion toward queer lives rather than trust.

As a community rooted in the good news that the stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone, we affirm that those once marginalized are not problems to be regulated but gifts to be received.

We believe:

- That God's call is not contingent upon conformity to narrow relational expectations
- That ethical relationships are defined by consent, mutual care, accountability, and justice
- That the church is called to accompany people in discerning faithful living, not to impose rigid and universalized standards

In a time when the church is invited into deeper authenticity, healing, and repair, this overture moves us away from that work.

More Light Presbyterians urges commissioners to reject this overture and instead continue the work of cultivating a church marked by expansive love, justice, and Spirit-led discernment. We also urge our network communities to take action; here are some ways you can do so:

- Check out the polyamorous **resources list** on our website;
- Attend our **May 11th More Light Monday discussion at 7pm EDT**, where two polyamorous Christians will offer non-monogamy 101 and share from their own experiences of the good fruit polyamory can bring to the Body of Christ;
- Attend our June 8th More Light Monday discussion at 7pm EDT, where we'll be discussing various issues for this year's General Assembly;

- Host your own conversations — both formal and informal, in newsletters and over lunch, in Sunday School classrooms and from the pulpit;
- Engage in the long-term work of explicitly affirming and materially supporting the polyamorous members of your community (yes, they *are* there, even if they haven't disclosed this aspect of themselves to you!);
- Encourage your Commissioners to GA to vote against Overture 044 and pray for wisdom and discernment for members of the denomination in positions of power on these issues.
- Invite MLP Staff or Board members to help facilitate a conversation with your congregation or ministry. Email hello@mlp.org for more information.

In grace and peace,

The Board of Directors and Staff of More Light Presbyterians