

**For Immediate Release: March 13, 2014**

**Complaints Filed Against Bishop Melvin G. Talbert;  
Supervisory Process Initiated to seek ‘Just Resolution’**

DENVER – Complaints have been filed against Bishop Melvin G. Talbert alleging he has violated the sacred trust of his office. Acting in accordance with United Methodist church law, a supervisory response has been initiated by Bishop Elaine Stanovsky of Denver.

The Council of Bishops requested that complaints be filed against Bishop Talbert, of Nashville, Tenn., after he performed an October wedding for two men in Alabama. The bishop of the region, Debra Wallace-Padgett, had asked him not to perform the ceremony, as did the Executive Committee of the Council of Bishops.

Bishop Stanovsky, president of the Western Jurisdiction College of Bishops, has been assigned to guide the confidential supervisory process according to the provisions of the Church’s *Book of Discipline*. Bishop Talbert is a member of the Western Jurisdiction, where he served before his retirement in 2000. Church law requires that complaints against bishops be heard in the jurisdiction where the bishop is a member.

The supervisory response is a review of the bishop’s ministry which “shall be directed toward a just resolution” of the complaint. The supervisory team consists of two bishops working in consultation with one clergy and one lay member of the jurisdictional committee on episcopacy.

The supervisory team carefully maintains the confidentiality of the supervisory response, as guided by the *Book of Discipline*. “We find that confidentiality protects the integrity of the process and provides the best hope of the parties reaching a just resolution and offering healing to the Church,” Bishop Stanovsky said. “We need the whole Church to respect the supervisory process and uphold it in prayer. Everyone involved takes their role very seriously and is working for a just, healing and faithful outcome.”

For relevant positions of The United Methodist Church go to:

<http://www.rmcumc.org/new/component/content/article/425.html>

<http://www.umc.org/what-we-believe/what-is-the-denominations-position-on-homosexuality1>

<http://www.umc.org/what-we-believe/para-363-complaint-procedures>

<http://www.umc.org/what-we-believe/para-413-complaints-against-bishops>