

October 30, 2014

Bishop Larry M. Goodpaster  
Western North Carolina Conference of the United Methodist Church  
P.O Box 18005  
Charlotte, NC 28218

Re: Cover Letter

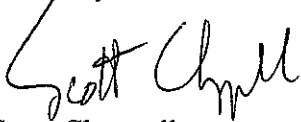
Dear Bishop,

Thank you for hosting us recently at Christ United Methodist Church in Greensboro, NC and for allowing my fiancé and me to share a part of our story. It was a remarkable beginning to what I hope will be ongoing and productive dialogue across our denomination.

Full and equal rights for LGBTQ individuals within our church is a civil rights issue. Sadly, our beloved UMC has been slow to respond to the changes that are necessary for our church to flourish and grow. My fiancé, who happens to be black, has described the actions of the United Methodist Church and language in the Book of Discipline as discriminatory, reminding him of our segregated past and opening spiritual wounds that have never fully healed. It is time for our church to draw people toward the God we love rather than drive people away from the sanctuary of Christ's embrace. Are we to have one altar for all, or continue to relegate some church members to a diminished status, in effect maintaining an altar for heterosexual people and a separate but *unequal* altar for others?

With this in mind, I have attached a formal complaint levelled at our pastor, Reverend Kelly Carpenter. This is a painful action for my partner and me to take; however, we feel that this is a necessary action at this time. Please understand that we take this complaint very seriously and that we intend to speak with the media about the ongoing discriminatory practices of the United Methodist Church.

Sincerely,



Scott Chappell  
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Winston-Salem, NC 27104  
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FullyCompatible@gmail.com

October 30, 2014

Bishop Larry M. Goodpaster  
Western North Carolina Conference of the United Methodist Church  
P.O Box 18005  
Charlotte, NC 28218

**Re: Formal charges of Reverend Kelly Carpenter**

Dear Bishop Goodpaster,

My fiancé and I are members of Green Street United Methodist Church, served by Reverend Kelly Carpenter and under your episcopacy. We became engaged during a recent Sunday morning service and our lives were greatly enriched by sharing this moment with our church family. We are active members, faithfully tithing, each singing in the choir, and participating in various church activities. My fiancé is the current chair of the Leadership Council and often leads the praise and worship portion of the service. On October 26, 2014 we asked Reverend Carpenter to officiate at our wedding and he has refused to do so, citing church rules from the United Methodist Church Book of Discipline that forbids pastors from celebrating homosexual unions or performing same-sex wedding ceremonies. **Reverend Carpenter's refusal to perform our wedding violates our rights as members of his church and my fiancé and I wish to charge him for this offense.**

God's grace is available to all and so should the pastoral ministry. We are people of sacred worth but we are being denied the covenant of marriage. My fiancé and I have pledged to each other our love, mutual support, personal commitment, and shared fidelity. I have taken these words directly from the statement regarding marriage from the United Methodist Church, acknowledging that the statement goes on to say that marriage is between one man and one woman. Reverend Carpenter, and the United Methodist Church at large, has denied us participation in this holy action. This violates the Book of Discipline, paragraph 2702.1, which states that a local pastor may be charged with the offense of "failure to perform the work of the ministry." My fiancé and I are members of this church, having pledged to uphold the work of the church through our prayers, presence, gifts and service. Reverend Carpenter has accepted the call to be our pastor, accepted the call to be in ministry to all people, and accepted our membership in the church, but is refusing to "perform the work of the ministry." **This is the first offense on which we wish to charge Reverend Carpenter.**

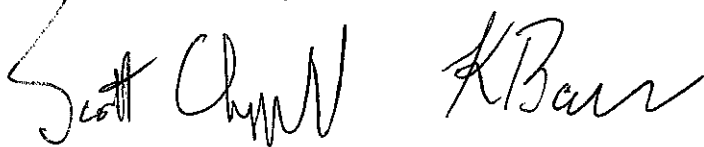
Secondly, the United Methodist Church Book of Discipline, paragraph 2702.1 states that it is a chargeable offense to commit "racial or gender discrimination." Reverend Carpenter is committing sex/gender discrimination by refusing to marry two men, an offense that is currently being committed across the entire denomination. **Gender discrimination is the second offense on which we wish to charge Reverend Carpenter.**

The discriminatory and offensive language in the United Methodist Church Book of Discipline and Reverend Carpenter's refusal to marry my fiancé and me has caused great spiritual harm to us both. My fiancé and I are forced to marry in a civil ceremony at the Forsyth County Courthouse, which to us reinforces the fact that we are in effect estranged from our church. We work diligently to uphold our vows to our church; however, at this point in our church's history, we are considered second class citizens, being denied the sanctity of marriage and the opportunity to pledge our commitment to one another in the context of our faith before Almighty God, whom we love dearly. Reverend Carpenter is a perpetrator of this discriminatory practice, perhaps not through his beliefs but through his actions, which are undoubtedly driven by his love for the church and the vows he made at ordination. That said, **my fiancé and I have been victimized by Reverend Carpenter's adherence to United Methodist Church rules, which is a chargeable offense per our Book of Discipline.**

The United Methodist Church Book of Discipline prohibits a pastor from performing same-sex weddings. The Book of Discipline also prohibits a pastor from refusing to perform the work of the ministry and to discriminate on the basis of sex/gender. **Bishop, you cannot permit actions counter to the Book of Discipline. Which of these rules will you uphold and which of these rules will you ignore?**

We look forward to your response.

Your brothers in Christ,

The image shows two handwritten signatures in black ink. The signature on the left is 'Scott Chappell' and the signature on the right is 'K Barner'. Both are written in a cursive, flowing style.

Scott Chappell and Kenneth Barner  
FullyCompatible2014@gmail.com

Cc: Reverend Kelly Carpenter  
Green Street UMC Leadership Council  
Media