



San Marco Church Statement of Affirmation and Reconciliation

June 2022

We believe in the divine manifestation of Love in every human being, including and especially in members of the LGBTQ+ community. Your identities and experiences create unique and valuable perspectives and connections with God. San Marco Church celebrates all because God delights in our full humanity, present and welcome in God's sanctuary and family. Empowered by the Holy Spirit, we will champion the Inclusive Gospel of Jesus Christ so that all people know the love of God in this world.

Some may already know about the harm that was done at the 2022 Florida Annual Conference. If you are not familiar with the details there was a slate of 16 pastoral candidates rejected for provisional membership at the clergy session due to some candidates being openly queer. In order for pastoral candidates to be ordained they must receive 75 percent of the vote; the vote at this year's conference was 72 percent affirming to 28 percent opposing. Before the conclusion of the annual conference, a resolution was passed that offered apologies and support to the slate of 16 pastoral candidates impacted by the vote. If you have questions please feel free to ask Pastor Ben Richards or Derrick Scott III, Operations Team Chair.

The statement at the beginning of this was written by a group of individuals passionate and intentional about crafting a statement centering on the beauty and value that "otherness" can bring to a congregation and community. It rang true for our congregation when it was adopted during Pride Month in June 2020, and still does today in the wake of the 2022 Florida Annual Conference. We are grateful and love that our statement of affirmation is not a statement of trauma but a statement of grace, love, and beauty. Since being at San Marco Church, we have never felt the need to leave any part of who we are outside of the sanctuary or church walls. Instead we have been embraced and encouraged to live into our authentic selves which leads to a deeper and fuller connection with Jesus and the Church.

There is still work to be done to make sure that there is room at the table for all of us that includes our otherness as well as those who will follow us. We know that for some, this is work that includes families on opposite sides of the same issue, fear and sadness over unrecognized callings, or the task of finding a church to call home and live out one's servant calling. The work continues and we will move closer to the holy vision of togetherness as we keep on this steady journey.