



Dear Friends and Colleagues,

The work of the United Methodist Church and its members has left an indelible and positive imprint on our communities, state, nation, and world. Included in that legacy here in Ohio is the very existence and development of our five institutions. Through the dedication and faith of our founders, and generations of faculty, staff, students, alumni and friends, we have grown and prospered together to now serve nearly 13,000 students.

Throughout our histories, our five colleges and universities have served Ohio and the nation in the education of underserved and marginalized groups. We pride ourselves on being inclusive communities that understand our role in a democratic society is to ensure that all students feel welcomed and supported on our campuses.

It is for this reason that we are disappointed at the conclusion of the recent conference of the United Methodist Church, where a majority of delegates voted to expand the prohibition against LGBTQ+ persons' full participation in the life of the Church. This decision lies in deep contrast to the values of our five institutions.

We know that we are not alone, as 47% of the delegates at the conference also opposed the proposal and yearned for a truly inclusive Church. There is much still unsettled about the true future direction of the United Methodist Church and we will use what influence we have to bring it closer to our values. In the meantime, the United Methodist affiliated colleges and universities in Ohio jointly affirm our continued commitment to inclusivity.

Our campus policies and practices, including the ability of all our students, faculty, administration, and staff to participate fully in our religious and spiritual development programs, will not change.

Our institutions were founded and developed by Church members to improve our communities and world. We will continue unabated in this work.

Robert C. Helmer, Ph.D., President Baldwin Wallace University

W. Richard Merriman Jr., Ph.D., President University of Mount Union

Daniel A. DiBiasio, Ph.D., President Ohio Northern University

Rock F. Jones, Ph.D., President Ohio Wesleyan University

John L. Comerford, Ph.D., President Otterbein University