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**Bishop John Shelby Spong:**

“Glad to see that you are still proclaiming the Gospel. The UMC nationally is in danger of being an embarrassment. I hope you are successful.”

**Linda Prendergast:**

“Pinole United Methodist Church voted yesterday after church to be a co-submitter of the resolution to annual conference. We had 53 who remained after church to vote, with 52 ayes and 1 abstention. (Including all the boards and committees on church council...) ”

Thanks so much for putting this together. It was extremely well thought-through and crafted.

I am hoping that even the more conservative folks will see--as our conservative contingent at PUMC saw--that the Discipline indeed contradicts itself, and that all pastors, whether progressive or conservative are in a no-win situation the way the Discipline currently stands.”

**Frank Shaefer:**

“Thank you so much for your awesome work on this resolution. This is exactly what I wanted to argue before the trial court and was not permitted by the presiding officer "bc/ the Discipline is not on trial, the respondent is." ”

Thank you and blessings on you.”

**Bishop Roy Sano:**

“I appreciate the petition calling attention to the contradictions in the Discipline...”

**Gilbert Caldwell:**

(Gil was a classmate at Boston University School of Theology, who became a major civil rights leader in our country. He co-founded Black Methodists for Church Renewal and United Methodists of Color for an Inclusive Church. He is on the PFLAG National Board of Directors. I appreciate his continued activism and commitment and want to share with you his words relating what is happening now with the civil rights struggles of the past.)

“The resolution on "Conflicting Mandates" addresses those who limit the meaning of Jesus by their interpretations of "Christian teaching". I have found a quotation from writer Barbara Ehrenreich helpful. She was interviewed in The New York Times Magazine of March 30th. The interviewer asks if she continues to be an atheist and Ehrenreich responds, **"My younger sister (and I) are hard-line atheists"**. But, here is what she said about Jesus;

**"I've spent so many years talking about poverty and economic justice, I'm strongly tempted to get biblical. Jesus's teaching are so radical, they're just insanely generous and apocalyptic. Christians become more fascinated by the dead Jesus. They don't like the living Jesus".** (My underlining)

The Resolution on **"Conflicting Mandates"** is about much more than issues related to LGBTQ persons, same sex marriage, and UM clergy who are in complete ministry to same sex couples. It is a reminder that now is the time for the United Methodist Church to acknowledge and atone for its history of **"discriminatory mandates of exclusion."**

We foolishly thought that we had learned that our Methodist language and legislation in the Book of Discipline in the past that was anti-women and anti-black violated the

spirit of an inclusive Jesus. But if we had learned that lesson, we would not in 2014 dare to justify anti-gay language and legislation as being reflective of "Christian teaching".