

“As we discern our call as followers of Jesus Christ, all members of Calvary Baptist Church have full and equal access to all pastoral services and opportunities for leadership.”

This statement was adopted by the Diaconate at our planning session in February and endorsed by the Church Council at its meeting the following week. In our February meeting, the Diaconate expressed its sense that the church wants to be a welcoming and inclusive community for all people. Members of the Diaconate also agreed that within our church family there are a variety of opinions on the more specific question of homosexuality and our faith. With full awareness and appreciation for the rich opportunity our differing perspectives offer us, the Diaconate feels it's important at this time to affirm together where we feel God is leading us and how we resolve to express that leadership in practice.

In recent weeks, we have held several events as opportunities for our church community to study and discuss how we can be welcoming to the GLBT (gay, lesbian, bi-sexual and transgender) community. These events included the movie “For the Bible Tells Me So,” Pastor Amy’s preaching on this issue, a talk-back session following Amy’s sermon, and an adult Sunday School class.

After prayerful discussion, a smaller group came up with the statement listed above. We felt this statement captures the spirit of our church at this time, that all members of Calvary are welcome to participate in the life of the church as the Spirit moves them, including as members of boards or in other leadership opportunities. In addition, we agreed that all members of our church should have full access to all pastoral services.

Acknowledging and cherishing the diversity of opinion that makes Calvary such a unique community of faith, the Diaconate further would like to extend an invitation to anyone who feels they have not had sufficient opportunity to discuss this issue or would prefer not to discuss it in a group setting. Please meet with Pastor Amy or talk with any member of the Diaconate or our church staff if you have additional questions or concerns. We would also be happy to receive any written comments or questions you may have. As we continue to listen for the voice of God, as we discern our call as followers of Jesus Christ, as we continue to be led by the Spirit, we welcome your participation in this on-going conversation.

The statement set forth above will be presented to the congregation at our Quarterly meeting. At that time, we will ask the congregation to affirm this statement and the leadership of the Diaconate.

Carol Blythe  
Chair, Diaconate