



EMORY
CANDLER
SCHOOL OF
THEOLOGY

September 19, 2013

Dear Members of the Candler Community,

I have heard a number of concerns expressed about Candler School of Theology presenting a Distinguished Alumni Award to the Rev. Dr. H. Eddie Fox 62T. The concerns stem from the Rev Fox's support of the official position of The United Methodist Church (UMC) on human sexuality, which he has vigorously defended while serving in various governing bodies of the denomination. The Fact Sheet below describes the official United Methodist policy.

I was honored and privileged to meet with members of Sacred Worth, representatives from Candler's student government organization, and a few others about this matter for 2.5 hours on Friday, September 13, 2013. I was joined by two associate deans and one assistant dean of Candler. We had a full, rich, heartfelt, frank, and very civil discussion. Specifically, some participants asked me to:

1. Reiterate Candler's commitment to access, inclusion, and equity
2. Evaluate the membership of the Candler Alumni Board, which voted to recommend the award
3. Rewrite the criteria for the Distinguished Alumni Award
4. Retract the Distinguished Alumni Award to be presented to the Rev. Fox.

Because of the importance of these issues, I would like to share my response to these requests not only with the individual students concerned but also with the entire Candler community.

Candler not only adheres to all Emory University policies on inclusion but we also fully welcome lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) persons into our community as we do any other students, staff, and faculty. In addition to welcoming LGBT persons into the larger community, Candler provides support for student, staff, and alumni groups that are organized specifically to create community for LGBT persons, and initiates dialogue on LGBT concerns within classrooms and co-curricular activities. Candler promotes and celebrates the fullness of community we seek to cultivate for all people.

The Candler Alumni Board (CAB) represents Candler's very diverse graduates. Board membership includes women and men, persons from various racial and ethnic backgrounds, and representatives from a range of Christian denominations and

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theological perspectives. Some are strong advocates for the concerns and perspectives of the LGBT community. In the past, Distinguished Alumni Awards have been conferred on a similarly diverse range of outstanding leaders, including LGBT advocates.

I will convey the concerns expressed about this particular award to CAB. Last spring the group began an evaluation of the Distinguished Alumni Award categories, criteria, and nomination and selection processes. The conversations I have had in recent days about this matter will be among the items they consider as they deliberate any changes.


After careful consideration, I have decided to confer the award on the Rev. Fox. He inspires many in the Wesleyan family around the world with his deep dedication to proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ. He has repeatedly demonstrated his capacity to be a moving and truly evangelical preacher. His work to bring various denominations within the Wesleyan tradition together across national and cultural boundaries has few equals in recent generations. His love of Candler runs deep. These characteristics were among the reasons he was recommended for this award and why I believe he should receive it.

Due to his travels, the Rev. Fox will not be present at the ceremonies where the other two recipients, the Rev. Diane Moseley 73T and the Rev. Brian Combs 06T, receive their awards. At his request some months ago, the Rev. Fox will receive his award at a time when he can gather with friends and family.

The Fact Sheet below provides more detailed information on various topics related to this matter. I hope you find it useful.

Candler is dedicated to vigorous and thoughtful dialogue as a means of understanding ourselves, our faith, and each other. I look forward to further productive conversations about Candler's commitment to inclusion and to the process of engaging deeply held differences within the Christian family, both of which are instruments for accomplishing our mission of educating faithful and creative leaders for the church's ministries in the world.

Grace and peace,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jan Love". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the typed name.

Jan Love
Dean and Professor of Christianity
and World Politics



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FACT SHEET: Candler School of Theology and the LGBT Community

September 19, 2013

What is Candler's commitment to full inclusion?

Candler School of Theology fully supports and is grateful for Emory University being a welcoming, diverse, and inclusive campus, including for the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered (LGBT) community. Moreover, Candler enthusiastically adheres to the spirit, practice, and letter of Emory's Equal Opportunity and Discriminatory Harassment Policy and its statement that: "Emory University is dedicated to providing equal opportunities to all individuals regardless of race, color, religion, ethnic or national origin, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, veteran's status, or any factor that is a prohibited consideration under applicable law. Emory University is a welcoming, diverse, and inclusive campus."

Candler not only adheres to all Emory University policies on inclusion but we also fully welcome LGBT persons into our community as we do all students, staff, and faculty. In addition to welcoming LGBT persons into the larger community, Candler provides support for student, staff, and alumni groups that are organized specifically to create community for LGBT persons, and initiates dialogue on LGBT concerns within classrooms and co-curricular activities. Candler promotes and celebrates the fullness of community that Candler and Emory seek to cultivate for all people.

What is the relationship of Candler School of Theology to The United Methodist Church (UMC)?

Candler is one of 13 official seminaries of The United Methodist Church.

How large is the UMC and where are its members?

The United Methodist Church has approximately 11 million members, making it one of the largest Protestant denominations in the world. About 7.5 million members live in the United States, and the remaining 3.5 million live in various parts of Africa and Europe, and in the Philippines. The UMC is growing outside the United States and declining inside.

What is the UMC position on homosexuality?

As with most Christian denominations in the United States, few subjects are more volatile within The United Methodist Church (UMC) than that of human sexuality. The UMC has debated the topic at every General Conference since 1972. The General Conference, which meets once every four years, is

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the highest decision-making body in the UMC and the only one that can speak for the entire denomination. The actions taken by this legislative body result in a revision of the Book of Discipline, which is the denomination's book of law, and the Book of Resolutions, which outlines policies of the denomination on current social issues.

The UMC formally affirms that “all persons are individuals of sacred worth, created in the image of God.” The UMC is dedicated to be in ministry with “persons of all sexual orientations,” supporting efforts to end “violence and other forms of coercion against all persons, regardless of sexual orientation.” The UMC also supports human rights and civil liberties for all, “regardless of sexual orientation.”

At the same time, the UMC declares that homosexuality is “incompatible with Christian teaching.” The UMC prohibits its clergy from presiding at LGBT marriages or commitment ceremonies and bars “self-avowed practicing homosexual” persons from being ordained or serving as clergy. The UMC expects its clergy to be “celibate in singleness” or “faithful in a heterosexual marriage.” *

*Source: *The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church*, The United Methodist Publishing House, 2012; *The Book of Resolutions of The United Methodist Church*, The United Methodist Publishing House, 2012

What is the Candler Alumni Board (CAB)?

The mission of the Candler Alumni Board is to work collaboratively with Candler’s administration, faculty, staff, students, and alumni to assist strategic efforts of the school in the areas of development, recruitment, lifelong learning, student programming, and leadership formation; to prayerfully and financially support Candler’s mission to educate faithful and creative leaders for the church’s ministries in the world; and to provide a representative alumni body that will advise the Candler Alumni Association.

CAB members are nominated by alumni, faculty, staff, church leaders, and other friends of Candler to serve a two-year term, with the option of serving additional terms. Board members are appointed by the Dean of Candler School of Theology, at the recommendation of the Director of Alumni Relations, Assistant Dean of Development and Alumni Relations, and/or the Chair of the Candler Alumni Board. Currently 21 members serve on the Board.

What is the Candler Distinguished Alumni Award?

Candler School of Theology annually recognizes graduates of the School whose service is noteworthy. There are three award categories: Service to Community, Service to Candler, and Service to Church.

Nominations may be submitted by faculty, staff, students, alumni, and friends of Candler School of Theology. The Candler Alumni Board reviews all nominations annually and recommends recipients to the Dean of Candler School of Theology.

Why did the Rev. Dr. H. Eddie Fox receive this award?

H. Eddie Fox 62T was chosen by the Candler Alumni Board to receive a 2013 Distinguished Alumni Award for Service to Church. During his long career, the Rev. Fox has worked to bring the word of Jesus Christ to people throughout the world—serving for the past 23 years as World Director of World Methodist Evangelism for The World Methodist Council, and as Executive Director of the World Methodist Evangelism Institute. He preaches and works with communities in more than 155 countries to develop holistic models of evangelism ministry of word, deed and sign so that the world may know Jesus Christ. The Rev. Fox genuinely connects with the people with whom he is ministering, and his relationships across the globe run deep. Through the World Methodist Evangelism Institute and his involvement in evangelism seminars each year, the Rev. Fox meaningfully engages with Candler students.

What is the World Methodist Council?

The World Methodist Council is a worldwide association of 77 Methodist, Wesleyan and related Uniting and United Churches representing more than 80 million people. It engages, empowers and serves its member churches by encouraging Methodist unity in witness, facilitating mission in the world, and fostering ecumenical and inter-religious activities. It promotes obedience to the Great Commandment of Jesus Christ to love God and neighbor and to fulfill the Great Commission to make disciples through vibrant evangelism, a prophetic voice, cooperative programs, faithful worship and mutual learning.

What is the World Methodist Evangelism Institute?

The World Methodist Evangelism Institute (WMEI) is a joint program of the Candler School of Theology and the World Methodist Council. Since its founding in 1982, the WMEI has sponsored 59 major seminars in more than 121 countries around the world. More than 6,000 lay persons, seminary students, and clergy have participated in one or more of the events led by WMEI faculty and staff.

Working alongside regional leaders, the WMEI seeks to develop clergy and lay leaders in the worldwide Methodist/Wesleyan movements who will fulfill this vision by:

- Training and resourcing leaders in evangelism
- Connecting and mobilizing leaders in evangelism
- Providing cross-cultural experiences