

Amendment #2: Paragraph 4, Article IV Ratification

- **Why is this important?** The General Commission on the Status and Role of Women shares reports from across the worldwide United Methodist connection of women who have been denied access and membership to our churches, such as divorced women. [Source](#).
- **How will this help us make disciples?** This ensures equal access to participation and membership in the UMC for both males and females and persons who are differently abled.
- **How do we define gender; does gender include transgender or other identities included in LGBTQIA+?** The proposed change is an effort to ensure women equal rights as men in participation in the church, including membership, baptism, and receiving the sacraments. While gender is not explicitly defined in The Book of Discipline, the word gender is used over 60 times and is usually used in reference to inclusivity: race, gender, age, economic status, etc.
- **Is there data or quantifiable information to support this amendment?** While there is not quantifiable data provided, the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women shares reports from across the worldwide United Methodist connection of women who have been denied access and membership to our churches, such as divorced women. [Source](#)
- **What issues have motivated this change?** For over 30 years, the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women (GCSRW) has led the effort to explicitly include gender as a category protected to participate in the life of the church, including receiving the sacraments. The amendment received overwhelming support at the 2020/2024 General Conference, with 90% of General Conference delegates voting for the change. Also, see: [Source](#)
- **Why have a long list of inclusive words and not just use the word “all”?** “It can be easy to become complacent in being intentionally welcoming to all. Naming specific groups, demographics and dimensions of diversity helps us consider who might not be present in our churches and to be intentional about welcoming all.” [Source](#)
- **Can this be amended by regions to fit their cultural context?** No; the constitution is in a part of The Book of Discipline that cannot be amended by central conferences (or by regional conferences should amendment 1 pass).
- **Is this a second attempt at a former amendment around gender that failed previously; what is different this time?** For at least the past six General Conferences, the Commission on the Status and Role of Women (COSROW) “has advocated and challenged the church to refine the vision of inclusiveness by including ‘gender’ in the list of conditions and circumstances that define our denomination’s inclusiveness. Yet, for differing reasons and circumstances—political and cultural—each recent quadrennial General Conference has failed to approve the addition of gender as a protected category or a condition by which the denomination may not discriminate.” [Source](#)
- **What is the opposition to this?** Some opposed to this amendment believe that “all” is sufficient.
- **Haven’t we been doing this already? Why is this change needed?** Many have; enshrining this protection into our constitution ensures discrimination will not occur and provides a course of action for those who experience discrimination.