

To the Redlands Unified School District Board,

We are a collective of pastors whose churches represent a wide and beautiful variety of worship styles, interpretations of scripture, traditions, demographics, and understandings of Jesus Christ. Our churches have served the community of Redlands for as long as 138 years, but also include recently founded church congregations who also love the people, the life, and the city of Redlands. While we have our differences, we consider ourselves to be one in the Body of Christ, working side-by-side to bring the Gospel into tangible action today.

Together, the eight of us pastors stand in the conviction that all people are created in the image of God and that the Gospel of Jesus Christ is good news for all people. We are committed to the full welcome, affirmation, and inclusion of transgender people, people who identify as gender non-binary, people of all gender identities, and people of queer sexual orientations within the full life of the church and the world, which includes the Redlands Unified School District.

Today, we stand for the right of people of all gender identities to live free from discrimination, violence, and every form of injustice in our schools.

While we know not every Christian in Redlands believes the same as our churches, the eight of us are deeply troubled by how the name of Jesus Christ is being used to discriminate, punish, and condemn queer students for simply being the person God created them to be. We firmly believe that if Jesus walked in the flesh among us today, then He would stand on the behalf of these students, affirm their humanity, and celebrate their inclusion in every facet of life.

At the very most, we want to encourage the school board to stand boldly in favor of programs and services which affirm the inherent goodness and existence of students of all genders and orientations in their district.

At the very least, we hope the school board can recognize that a large number of Christians and churches in Redlands strongly oppose using the name of Jesus Christ to sideline queer students.

God's love is unconditional for each one of us. Our work as ministers is to remind everyone we encounter that we are all God's children, and every one of us is worthy of love.

We want to thank each one of you on the school board for all the hard work you are doing to provide the best educational experience for our children.

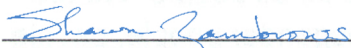
We want to let you know we are praying for your wisdom, discernment, and compassion during this contentious season.

And we want to remind all of our Christian siblings that we are called not to judge one another, but to love one another in prolific ways in the name of Jesus Christ.

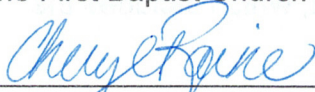
Sincerely,



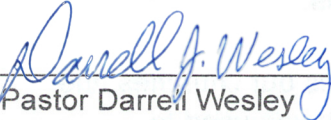
The Reverend Bill Dunn
Trinity Episcopal Church, est. 1886



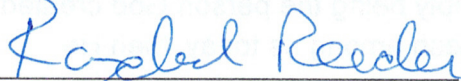
Pastor Shawn Zambrows
The First Baptist Church of Redlands, est. 1887



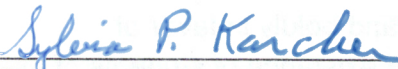
Pastor Cheryl Raine
First Presbyterian Church of Redlands, est. 1887



Pastor Darrell Wesley
Redlands First United Methodist Church, est. 1888



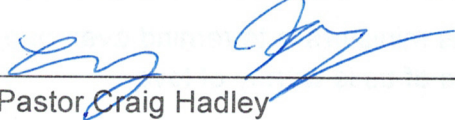
Pastor Rachel Reeder
First Lutheran Church of Redlands, est. 1901



Pastor Sylvia Karcher
Community Presbyterian Church, Redlands, est. 1913



Pastor Joe Zarro
Redlands United Church of Christ, est. 1975



Pastor Craig Hadley
Paradox Church, est. 2016