



To: The President of the Republic of Belarus  
The Honorable Aleksandr Grigorievich Lukashenko

26 December 2018

Dear President Lukashenko:

We write to you as a Bishop of Metropolitan Community Churches and Director of the Global Justice Institute, and Director of Relational and Family Affairs for the Institute, respectively. We write to express our concern over the increasing religiously-instigated animosity directed against the LGBTQI population of Belarus.

We want to express our deep dismay that anyone professing the Christian faith would seek to condone condemnation of or harm to the LGBTQI children of God. We are a global community of faith in Metropolitan Community Churches, with congregations and ministries in 40 countries that seek to create safe space for all human beings and the inclusion of and protection of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex people within the Church and within society.

We are aware that in April of 2018 the International Festival of Queer History DOTYK was held in Minsk, and that several evangelical pastors wrote to you criticizing that celebration and its presentations. We want to make sure you understand that such gatherings do not “promote homosexuality,” but rather understanding and honesty, as well as the safety and equality of all of God’s children.

We understand that many religious organizations promote a concept of family that is exclusive of God’s LGBTQI children, and implore you to understand that that perspective does not represent all Christian churches or our teachings. In fact, a wide array of denominations instead promote acceptance and inclusion, as we hope you will do in leading Belarus and its citizenry.

All families deserve to be recognized and protected equally under the law. All children, all youth, all adults, including those who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or intersex must be guaranteed full citizenship protections and rights. Anything less is undeserving of the name of the followers of Christ.

With deep respect,

Bishop Pat Bumgardner  
Executive Director  
Global Justice Institute  
Metropolitan Community Churches

The Rev. Dr. Jim Merritt  
Director of Family and Relational Affairs  
Global Justice Institute  
Metropolitan Community Churches