

Letter from Bishop C. Joseph Sprague

Following is the text of a letter, originally on United Methodist Church, Northern Illinois Conference stationary and signed by Bishop C. Joseph Sprague:

October 12, 1998

The Judicial Council ruled in August 1998 that Paragraph 65.c of The 1996 Book of Discipline, namely, "Ceremonies that celebrate homosexual unions shall not be conducted by our ministers and shall not be conducted in our churches," has the effect of church law, notwithstanding its placement in Paragraph 65.c and, therefore, governs the conduct of the ministerial office.

Therefore, when on September 19, 1998, The [Reverend Gregory R. Dell](#) conducted a Union Service for two men at Broadway United Methodist Church, 3344 North Broadway, Chicago, Illinois, he did knowingly, as a stated act of conscience and pastoral ministry, fail to uphold the Order and The Discipline of The United Methodist Church.

This act is a chargeable offense, which subjects The Reverend Gregory R Dell to the process of a formal complaint being filed against him. Therefore, despite my high regard for the Reverend Dell, as a person of integrity, who possesses an enviable record of pastoral faithfulness and effectiveness, my evaluation of The Reverend Dell as an exceptional pastor, and my own theological and pastoral disagreement with this component of church law, I do hereby file a formal complaint against The Reverend Gregory R. Dell for an act of disobedience to the Order and The Discipline of The United Methodist Church under Paragraph 2624 of *The 1996 Book of Discipline*.

This Judicial complaint is filed on October 12, 1998.

Complainant: Bishop C. Joseph Sprague
Resident Bishop of the Chicago area
The Northern Illinois Conference
The United Methodist Church

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