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## A statement by Rev. Troy Perry on the elevation of Cardinal Ratzinger to the Papacy of the Roman Catholic Church

In 1987, Rev. Elder Nancy Wilson, then vice-moderator of Metropolitan Community Churches, and I met Cardinal Ratzinger at the Bilateral Dialogue held during Pope John Paul II's visit to Columbia, S.C.

At that time, we were filled with hope that the relatively new Pope John Paul II would usher in a new era of openness for God's gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender children. That did not happen.

In recent days, we held out hope that the selection of a new Pope would now bring greater openness and acceptance to the Roman Catholic Church. With [the recent] election, that did not happen.

In fact, over the past three decades, Cardinal Ratzinger has served as the author of many of the Roman Catholic Church's policies that embody overt hostility to LGBT people and preclude women from full participation in

the life of the Church.

We share a deep sadness that one of the world's most homophobic religious leaders has been elevated to the papacy, and regret that his policies will continue to devalue the rich spiritual gifts of LGBT people and women of faith.

My faith teaches that all people can change, so my prayers today are that the eyes of Cardinal Ratzinger — now Pope Benedict XVI — will be opened to the unique giftedness and blessing

that LGBT people can be to the Church. And my prayers today are with my brothers and sisters in the Roman Catholic Church, and those whose lives will be harmed by church policies that treat LGBT people with less than unconditional acceptance and dignity.

— The Reverend Dr. Troy D. Perry,  
Moderator  
Metropolitan Community Churches



Pope Benedict XVI



Rev. Troy Perry



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