

The Circuit Writer

Feeding the Spirit, Mind and Body

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER | MMUMC |
FEBRUARY 2019 – VOLUME 13

From the Pastor's heart...

On February 23-26 a special called General Conference Session is being held in St. Louis, MO. The purpose will be to act on a report from the Council of Bishops based on the recommendations of the Commission on a Way Forward. The 32-member Commission was appointed to examine paragraphs in *The Book of Discipline* concerning human sexuality and exploring options to strengthen the unity of the church. This committee was formed immediately following the 2016 General Conference Session which had become embroiled in the discussion about human sexuality. Historically, the debate over human sexuality is not new to our denomination, but the experience of the 2016 General Conference made it very clear that more time was needed for this conversation than time would allow within the normal constraints of the daily GC (General Conference) agenda.

This Commission on the Way Forward has worked diligently and exhaustively since January 2017 seeking to bring a resolution to this debate in a way that honors Scripture, Tradition, Reason and Experience. It has been a daunting task on many levels.

In nine meetings over 17 months, 32 United Methodists from around the world engaged in conferencing to offer the church a way forward from its theological impasse over human sexuality. The Commission brought together persons deeply committed to the future(s) of The United Methodist Church, with an openness to developing new relationships with each other and exploring the potential future(s) of our denomination in light of General

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Church Events

- 1/31 Trustee Meeting
6:30 pm (Office Workroom)
- 2/3 Evangelism Committee
11:30 am (Social Hall)
- 2/7 Choir Practice
6:30 pm (Social Hall)
- 2/11 Church Council Meeting
6:30 pm (Social Hall)
- 2/12 West End Alliance
6:30 pm (Social Hall)
- 2/14 NO Choir Practice
- 2/21 Choir Practice
6:30 pm (Social Hall)
- 2/26 Social Hall in Use by
Member
- 2/28 Choir Practice
6:30 pm (Social Hall)
- Food Pantry (every Wednesday)
at 9 am

Conference and subsequent annual, jurisdictional and central conference actions. We have a profound hope and confidence in the Triune God, and yet we acknowledge that we do this work in a climate of skepticism and distrust, from a human point of view. Made up of 21 Clergy and 11 Laity, the members of the Commission on the Way Forward represent 10 different nations as well as the broad spectrum of our United States of America. (taken from the purpose of the COWF)

The Commission is offering three recommendations to this session of General Conference: The One Church Plan summary (OCP), the Connectional Conference Plan summary (CCP), and the Traditional Plan summary (TP). The majority of persons on the Commission along with the majority of the Council of Bishops recommend the One Church Plan. The OCP proposes an adaptable, “generous unity” without disbanding the “connectional nature” that makes global mission possible. It pledges the least disruption to United Methodist ministries, creating space for both traditionalists and progressives by providing space, freedom, flexibility and missional vitality through contextualized ministry.

The One Church Plan redefines marriage, removes restrictive language related to same-sex marriage and the ordination of LGBTQI people and adds language protecting the religious freedom of pastors, bishops and conferences who as a matter of conscience do not support these practices. No one is required to “act contrary to their convictions.” For those who want change, it creates space for ministry without violating the Discipline. It also reinforces the existing freedom of:

- local churches to set wedding policies,
- pastors to decide whom to marry,
- and bishops and annual conference boards of ordained ministry and clergy sessions to discern, recommend and credential those called to and suited for ordained ministry.

Churches may choose but will not be required to host same-sex weddings. Pastors are neither required to nor prohibited from performing same-sex marriage, union or blessing ceremonies. Local congregations, conferences and pastors are not required to vote. It puts an end to the threat of church trials on charges related to ministry by, with and for LGBTQI people and maintains the current leadership structure of the church. General boards and agencies continue their service and work. Affiliated institutions can remain connected. Wespath would continue to provide pension services to clergy. It also calls for jurisdictional conferences and episcopal areas in the United States to provide the financial support for bishops and their offices, while maintaining the current general church support of the episcopacy in central conferences. Any who cannot remain in connection may depart with grace following current Book of Discipline (BOD) processes.

The Connectional Conference Plan (CCP) values remaining in relationship (unified mission and witness) while respecting different views. It navigates the conflict and theological impasses around LGBTQI marriage and ordination through a restructuring of The UMC’s connectional life by replacing jurisdictional conferences in the United States with “connectional conferences.” In the United States, three new values-based connectional conferences (CCs) – progressive, traditional and unity – will be created to align by convictions and not geography. These three missional “spaces” represent faithful but differing readings of scripture and the culturally specific needs of the contexts they serve. Central conferences can remain in their current configuration (with a new CC name), join one of the new U.S. CCs (making it a global conference) or form new CCs attuned to regional and missional commitments.

The Traditional Plan seeks to support the decision-making work of General Conference in 2019. It also promises ways to navigate theological impasses around same-gender marriage and LGBTQI ordination while fulfilling the missional and contextual needs of a global church.

The TP reflects a commitment to:

- Disciplinary accountability, clear consequences and enforced penalties for violating proposed broadened language on human sexuality in The Book of Discipline (BOD);
- Missional unity and alignment with the global church's stance on human sexuality without the distraction of trials and conflict resolution processes;
- An approach to contextuality that resolves the impasse over differing views of faithfulness related to human sexuality with intentional and strategic division into separate Wesleyan denominations.

Calling for greater accountability from bishops, clergy, credentialing bodies and conferences, the Traditional Plan promises space, freedom, flexibility and missional vitality by reinforcing the current definition of marriage and global United Methodist teaching on human sexuality. It offers greater contextuality through "one unified moral stance on the issues of marriage and sexuality." The TP respects "different theological understandings" by redefining our current connectional life, creating separate spaces for authentic, contextual ministry with people with differing views.

The TP broadens the definition of "self-avowed practicing homosexuals" and provides for stipulated, "gracious" separation for those who cannot conform and be accountable to revised disciplinary language defining human sexuality and the qualifying rules governing the candidacy and ordination of clergy. It offers an extensive new plan (proposed 2801 "Implementing Gracious Accountability") for the creation of self-governing churches outside The United Methodist Church with a "new connectional status" and autonomy to engage in contextualized ministry with LGBTQI people – people who are also welcome to remain, worship and become members of The UMC.

All of this information above and much more is available on the General Conference website: <http://www.umc.org/topics/general-conference-2019-special-session>. Our Virginia Conference website also provides numerous resources. Simply log on to the website: www.vaumc.org. Under "quick links" you will find 2019 General Conference. Clicking on that link will bring you to more information than you ever wanted to read!! You can also access a live stream presentation featuring our Bishop Lewis, Rev. Tom Berlin and Layperson, Martha Stokes.

While every pastor in our Virginia Conference has been urged to address the upcoming special General Conference either in a sermon, newsletter article or hosting a live presentation, I have pretty much avoided any and all conversations about this upcoming potentially life changing conference of our denomination. There are many reasons why I have remained silent on this topic. I will share the top motivations for me to keep silent.

In my 20+ years as a United Methodist, I have never found such conversations to be productive. The conversations quickly become divisive, either side becoming defensive and angry leaving the conversation with nothing resolved except for people to express their opinions.

I firmly believe the Adversary is using human sexuality to distract us from the real mission of the church. When our energies and monies are tied up in supporting our point of view, more people go hungry, are naked, lonely and thirsty.

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I learned a very long time ago that it is not my job to judge but to love. There are 37 “Best” Bible verses on judging others, probably the most familiar comes from Matthew 7:1-5:

“Do not judge, or you too will be judged. For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you. “Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother’s eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? How can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother’s eye.”

Regardless the outcome of General Conference 2019, I plan to continue to treat all persons as children of God and in need of God’s saving grace regardless of the color of their skin, ethnicity, or sexual preference. Consequently I do not anticipate my ministry with all of you and the community surrounding Marquis to change.

Having presented you with all of this in my effort to keep you in the Connectional “loop,” I also do not foresee that anything will change as a result of the 2019 called General Conference. Because of this, I have been reluctant to focus my time and energy with this conversation. I will be more than happy to continue this discussion with any one of you, should you need further clarification.

You are loved, Pastor Tizzy

Therefore, as God’s choice, holy and loved, put on compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. Be tolerant with each other and, if someone has a complaint against anyone, forgive each other. As the Lord forgave you, so also forgive each other. And over all these things put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity.

Colossians 3:12-14 (CEB)

MISSION

For the month of February the Food Pantry is in need of anything that you can bring. Due to the government shutdown, many of our clients are concerned about how they will feed their families in the coming months. Anything that you can provide will be a tremendous help. To get through the cold months we will continue to collect soup and crackers.

The warmth tree has been set up in the Social Hall. In an effort to help keep our food pantry clients, (many whom walk daily) warm we are seeking gloves, hats, scarves, coats, etc.

To achieve our goal of 100 health kits by June, we will continue to collect hand towels and wash-cloths through the month of February. There is an updated list of product descriptions on the table in the Social Hall. Please review the list before purchasing items, some item restrictions have changed. Finally, in the past we have used mission money to cover the cost of toothpaste and shipping, this year we will be asking for monetary donations to offset this cost.

Thank you for all that you do to support the Food Pantry and our mission efforts at Marquis.

PRAYER REQUESTS

Sandy Allen
Peggy Barkley
Betty Barnhardt
Scott Baugher
Louise Bennett
Dave Botkin
Kelly Botkin
Matt Brown
Alex Caldwell
Melinda Campbell
Phil Carletti
Charles Chenault
John Clatterbaugh
Carmen Collins
Rodney Davis
Jonathan Gillette
Bruce Hardeman
Rhonda Harley
Jerry Harman

Mark Harman
Wendy Harman
Butch Hartless
Scott Hearn
Lynn Hunter
Peggy Knowles
Marcella Landram
William Lawhorne
Carrie Lotts
Skip Low
Teresa McFarling
Danielle McPherson
Dana Moore
Fern Moran
Elizabeth Poe
Penny Walker Reen
Billy Rischol
Kim Rohr
George Sanderson

Paul Sandridge
Ina Mae Sheets
Katherine Sheets
Leta Wimer
Haley Wisman
Tommy Wood
Family of John Rexrode
also...
Those in the Armed
Services
The United Methodist
Church
Our Local United
Methodist Churches
Our Community
Our Nation

In an effort to keep our prayer concerns up to date, we need help determining the status of the persons included on our weekly prayer list. Please contact the church office by January 31st with an update if you would like a name to remain on the list. The names of those we do not receive an update for will be removed.

IN MEMORIAM

John Herbert Rexrode

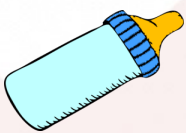
March 9, 1944 - January 11, 2019

Joined Marquis Memorial UMC on December 13, 1955

ANNIVERSARY

Congratulations to Jim & Peggy Rohr who will celebrate their 62nd wedding anniversary on February 22nd.

BABY BOTTLE CAMPAIGN



Just as milk gives nourishment to a baby to grow and thrive, the money you place in a ComfortCare baby bottle helps nourish the souls of women who come through their clinic doors. One bottle may not seem like much, but when they add up all the change in the 3,000 bottles distributed to local churches this year, it adds up. In fact, this campaign raises nearly \$50,000 to serve women and men who are facing difficult pregnancy decisions. So, let's do our part. Let's partner with ComfortCare in carrying out God's ministry. Pick up a bottle today, fill it with change, cash or checks and return to the church office by February 17th.

BIRTHDAYS

- 1 Carol Ergenbright
John Stover Jr.
- 3 Harry Simmons, Jr
- 4 Donald McCauley
Rachael Ross
Helen Swats
- 5 Joe Baugher
- 7 Stephanie Lane
- 10 Wayne Barkley
- 12 Harold Sellers
Bob Sharp
- 13 Cole Heizer
- 17 Mike Barkley
Jane Sellers
- 22 Kayla Landes
- 23 Riley Campbell
- 28 Marion Gough
Jonathan Morris
Lisa Perry
Tim Snyder

THANK YOU

Thank you to our church family and choir for the gifts and the cards we received for Christmas. We appreciate your love and support throughout the year.

Love and Blessings, Debbie and Kathy

I would like to thank everyone for the cards and wishes for my birthday as well as for Christmas. I would also like to thank Pastor Tizzy for the visit and the bag of goodies from the church family. Hope everyone has a wonderful 2019. ~ Ann Perry

Dear Friends, On behalf of our team at Valley Mission, I wish to extend our warmest thanks and appreciation to Marquis Memorial UMC for allowing us to use your fellowship hall to prep/wrap Christmas presents for our shelter residents. We were able to more effectively prepare for Christmas this year. We hope there are ways we can work together in the coming year. Please let us know whenever we can help out as well! Blessings to the congregation of Marquis Memorial UMC! ~ Greg Beam

Thank you for the cards and gifts I received for Christmas. They were very much appreciated. ~ Levin Coulbourn

Rev. Elizabeth Walker, I sure did enjoy your visit. Come again soon. Also, thanks for the goodies, really could use these surprises, made Christmas. Happy New Year. Sincerely, Phyllis Pilson

EVANGELISM

The Evangelism Committee is meeting after church on Sunday, February 3rd. Please feel free to join us with ideas on ways you think that we (the church) can share God's love in this New Year.

BIBLE READING PLAN

In 2019 we'll be reading the Bible from start to finish, from Genesis to Revelation.

Fri, 2/1	Leviticus 1-4
Sat, 2/2	Leviticus 5-7
Sun, 2/3	Leviticus 8-10
Mon, 2/4	Leviticus 11-13
Tue, 2/5	Leviticus 14-15
Wed, 2/6	Leviticus 16-18
Thu, 2/7	Leviticus 19-21
Fri, 2/8	Leviticus 22-23
Sat, 2/9	Leviticus 24-25
Sun, 2/10	Leviticus 26-27
Mon, 2/11	Numbers 1-2
Tue, 2/12	Numbers 3-4
Wed, 2/13	Numbers 5-6
Thu, 2/14	Numbers 7
Fri, 2/15	Numbers 8-10
Sat, 2/16	Numbers 11-13
Sun, 2/17	Numbers 14-15
Mon, 2/18	Numbers 16-17
Tue, 2/19	Numbers 18-20
Wed, 2/20	Numbers 21-22
Thu, 2/21	Numbers 23-25
Fri, 2/22	Numbers 26-27
Sat, 2/23	Numbers 28-30
Sun, 2/24	Numbers 31-32
Mon, 2/25	Numbers 33-34
Tue, 2/26	Numbers 35-36
Wed, 2/27	Deuteronomy 1-2
Thu, 2/28	Deuteronomy 3-4