



## General Conference votes for Traditional Plan

As you probably know, the United Methodist Church held a called General Conference on February 23rd – 26th to vote on one of the three plans for moving forward as a denomination with regard to the LGBTQ issue. The following comes from a United Methodist News report by Kathy L. Gilbert.

<https://www.umnews.org/en/news/gc2019-daily-feb-26>

February 26, 2019

After hours of delaying tactics by opponents, the United Methodist General Conference 2019 delegates passed The Traditional Plan 438 to 384.

A last-ditch effort to bring the One Church Plan back was defeated (449 - 374) in the morning and was followed by efforts to amend the Traditional Plan to address constitutionality issues raised by the Judicial Council, the church's top court.

The Rev. Tim McClendon, South Carolina, called for a vote on the entire Traditional plan, which affirms the church's current bans on ordaining LGBTQ clergy and officiating at or hosting same-sex marriage.

When the vote was announced and flashed on the screen, the room erupted in singing, "This is My Story" from observers. Some delegates gathered in a circle and joined in with the singing. The delegates on the floor and people in the bleachers went into a call and response, chanting in protest of the vote.

A handful of observers unhappy with the day's legislative results tried to gain

*continued*

## *From Pastor Todd, continued*

entrance to the plenary floor, but security officers blocked them and eventually moved them through turnstiles farther away from the doors. The protesters continued to chant their demand to be admitted.

Bishop Scott Jones of the Texas Conference said the vote resolves a long-standing debate about how the church “can best accomplish our mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. “This decision is consistent with our denomination’s historic stance on human sexuality, outlined in the Book of Discipline since 1972,” Jones said.

“We will continue to welcome lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered and queer persons to our churches and affirm their sacred worth. I pray we, as a denomination, can now move forward, working with each other in the spirit of Christian love and joining together as one. We are stronger together in serving God’s mission as a diverse body of Christ,” Jones said.

One strategy opponents of the Traditional Plan embraced was to essentially “run out the clock” with amendments. The Rev. Mark Holland, a Great Plains delegate, waved a stack of amendment forms and said, “We’re gonna amend until the monster trucks roll in,” referring to the conference’s need to stop business by 6:30 p.m. and evacuate the facility for a truck rally. Holland leads Mainstream UMC, which lobbied hard for the One Church Plan.

Many opponents’ amendments took the stance that, biblically speaking, any pastoral or episcopal candidate who is divorced or remarried is as ineligible as one who is a “self-avowed practicing homosexual.”

Several issues concerning constitutional issues were not addressed before the vote on the Traditional Plan was taken.

In the morning, after passionate speeches, prayers and tears, the “one, last shot” for the One Church Plan was defeated by a vote of 449-374. The plan was defeated the day before in the first vote.

The Rev. Tom Berlin, Virginia Conference, spoke for a minority report for the One Church Plan that was submitted Feb. 25. A minority report is a substitution for the report of the legislative committee. “I have a love of the church that sometimes I do not even understand,” he said in presenting the report to the denomination’s top lawmaking assembly. “Sometimes I get emotional when I talk about it because I catch a glimpse of what we can be with God’s help.”

Berlin told delegates that approving the One Church Plan did not force any pastor or church to perform same-sex marriages, nor did it force anyone to change what they believe about the Bible. But the plan would allow conferences to ordain LGBTQ pastors, as well as allowing churches to host and pastors to officiate at same-sex marriages.

“If the Traditional Plan is voted in, it will be a virus that will make the American church very sick,” he said. “Many pastors are going to leave, many annual conference will leave. ... There will be trials, and they will be on the news. The only news about the church will be about people we don’t serve.”

*continued*

*From Pastor Todd, continued*

And he warned the virus would cross oceans and make the whole church sick.

However, other delegates stood to talk about following God's "true word." Nancy Denardo, Western Pennsylvania, cited Scriptures in her argument against the One Church Plan. "Friends, please stop sowing seeds of deceit," she said. "I'm truly sorry if the truth of the Gospel hurts anyone; I love you and I love you enough to tell the truth."

The Rev. Jerry Kulah, a Liberia delegate and leader of the Africa Initiative coalition, argued for the Traditional Plan. "The Traditional Plan is not only traditional but biblical, it ensures God's word remains foundational to the life and growth of the UMC. I submit we love our LGBTQ friends," he said.

Lyndsey Stearns, West Ohio, a young person who described herself as a future pastor, spoke in favor of the One Church Plan and told the body in the past 24 hours, 15,529 young people had signed a statement in support of unity. The statement says young people are not all of the same mind about LGBTQ people.

"And yet through working together, sharing stories, and worshipping side by side, we have seen each other's gifts and fruits for ministry! We have witnessed the incredible ways that God is working through each of us in our own unique contexts." Stearns said.

Aislinn Deviney, Rio Texas, who described herself as a young evangelical delegate, said many young people "fiercely believe marriage is between one man and one woman."

"We are here at the table because of our dedication, not because we demand a place because of our age," she said. "We speak for ourselves. We all have family and friends who are LGBTQ that we love and value."

Rey Hernandez, Philippines, said cultures are not the same around the world but the One Church Plan is "beautiful in our unity." "With the help of the gifts of Holy Spirit, I believe what we are trying to agree on is to spread the Gospel," he said.

Before the vote, Berlin once again told delegates to follow the Golden Rule of Jesus. "Be consistent, and modify the *Book of Discipline* to eliminate all the divorced, all those who cohabit before marriage and apply those standards to yourself first," he said. "There are clergy and bishops who would have to surrender their credentials for violating those Scriptures, he added. "But I don't think that's the church you want."

The Rev. Joe Harris, chair of the legislative committee, addressed the delegates. "After all the passionate debate, all I can say is God is with us and God will be with us and the Holy Spirit will guide us. Continue to do what you said you wanted to do yesterday, reject One Church Plan and continue on Traditional Plan."

---

Please be sensitive to those around you who may not share your perspectives on this issue or this vote. There are strong feelings surrounding all this and we want to remember to speak gracefully and "do no harm."

~Pastor Todd

# March Birthdays

- 8 Mitch Weber
- 9 Ken Nunley
- 15 Emily Stulce
- 17 Art McDonald
- 20 Mary Bert Hamrick
- 27 Martha Bramlett
- 28 Tom Lynch

# March Anniversaries

- 18 Steve & Jean Wortham
- 22 Ken & Mary Ann Scoggins



# April Birthdays

- |                       |                    |
|-----------------------|--------------------|
| 1 Judy Teague         | 18 Jean Johnson    |
| 2 Robert Wood         | 20 Jim Adams       |
| Kevin Jones           | 24 Jim Gram        |
| 4 April Mikeal Messer | 25 Frank Mulkey    |
| Felicia Kingrea       | 26 Carla Anderson  |
| 10 Jean Wortham       | Fay Daughtrey      |
| 14 Carlos Wilson      | 28 Suzanne Parrott |
| 17 Hannah Lynch       |                    |



## From the Finance Committee Chairman:

Thanks to the stewardship and financial support for the congregation, Soddy United Methodist Church finished 2018 with a budget surplus. We experienced unexpected expenses due to the flood and extra maintenance costs but we were able to cover all budget items. Speaking for the Finance Committee, I would like to thank everyone who helped to make 2018 a very good year. —Alan



# Thank You

I'd like to express my appreciation to everyone who donated during January for the Ghana Outreach Orphanage. We collected \$545.00! This was wired to Pastor Anthony to purchase clothing for the children. *Thank you again for your generosity and compassion!* —Pastor Todd

# DO YOU WANT TO FAST THIS LENT?

*In the words of Pope Francis*

- Fast from hurting words and say kind words.
- Fast from sadness and be filled with gratitude.
- Fast from anger and be filled with patience.
- Fast from pessimism and be filled with hope.
- Fast from worries and have trust in God.
- Fast from complaints and contemplate simplicity.
- Fast from pressures and be prayerful.
- Fast from bitterness and fill your hearts with joy.
- Fast from selfishness and be compassionate to others.
- Fast from grudges and be reconciled.
- Fast from words and be silent so you can listen.

# Congratulations



**We'd like to extend our congratulations to Joseph Hendrix on the one-year anniversary of his successful organ transplant.**

*Heal me, LORD,  
and I will be healed;  
save me and I will be saved,  
for you are the one I praise.  
Jeremiah 17:14 (NIV)*

*Praise the Lord  
for his mercy, healing  
and blessing!*

*Welcome!* **to our newest members!**

**Art & Marylu McDonald**

—joined by Transfer of Membership—

January 20, 2019

**Thomas & Barbara Hendren**

—joined as Affiliate Members—

February 10th, 2019

*"If you think you've blown God's plan for your life,  
rest in this. You, my friend, are not that powerful!"*

*~ Lisa Bevere*

# I met God in the Morning

This poem was written by Dr. Ralph Spaulding Cushman, a Methodist Bishop in the early 1900's.

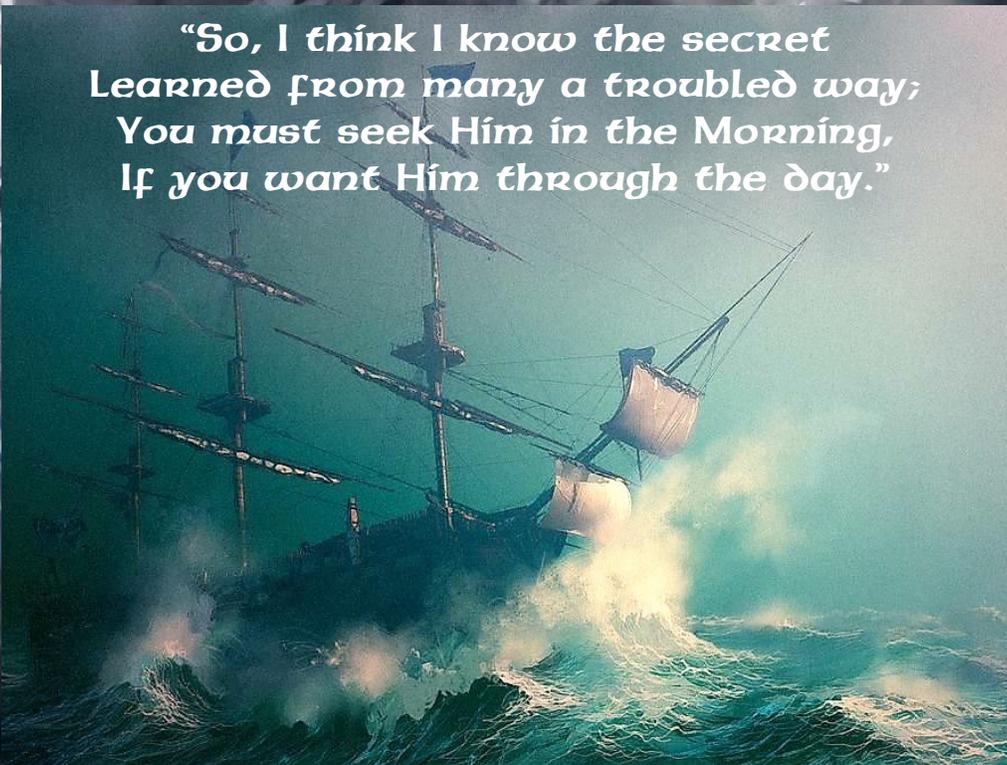
*"I met God in the Morning  
When the day was at its best,  
And His Presence came like sunrise;  
Like a glory in my feast"*

*"All day long the Presence lingered,  
All day long He stayed with me,  
And we sailed with perfect calmness  
O'r a very troubled sea."*

*"Other ships were blown and battered,  
Other ships were sore distressed,  
But the winds that seemed to drive them  
Brought to us a peace and rest."*

*"Then I thought of other mornings,  
with a keen remorse of mind,  
When, I, too had loosed the moorings,  
With the Presence left behind."*

*"So, I think I know the secret  
Learned from many a troubled way;  
You must seek Him in the Morning,  
If you want Him through the day."*





# Community Easter Egg Hunt

**Saturday, April 20th 2:00 PM**

*We are in need of the following donations:*

- **COOKIES** for the reception
- **INDIVIDUALLY-WRAPPED CANDY** (chocolate and non-chocolate)
- **NEW PLASTIC EGGS** (to replace some of the old ones)



*Leave your donations in the fellowship hall. **Contact Kathryn Mullins if you have any questions.***

**THANK YOU!**



Our Nurture Team visited our shut-ins during Valentine's week and took them candy and flowers. The shut-ins are always happy to see someone from the church, and they ask questions about so many of you. Keep them in your prayers, and maybe send a card or pay them a visit. If anyone needs a list of the shut-ins with their addresses, please call me. *Thank you!*

~ Jimmie Lou Mulkey, Nurture Team Chair



**Sunday, March 3rd**

*"Thriving Or Surviving?"*

**General Conference response meeting — St. John UMC 3:00 PM**

**Tuesday, March 5th**

Girl Scouts; **JUDGES** Bible study

**Wednesday, March 6th**

Fellowship dinner; **ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE**

**Sunday, March 10th**

**LENTEN SERMON SERIES: WITNESSES**

*"Mary Magdalene: From Darkness To Light"*

**Tuesday, March 12th**

Marthas & Marys; Girl Scouts;

**JUDGES** Bible study

**Wednesday, March 13th**

Fellowship dinner; Choir practice; Youth

**Sunday, March 17th**

**LENTEN SERMON SERIES: WITNESSES**

**"SIMON THE CYRENE:**

**FROM OBSERVER TO PARTICIPANT"**

**Tuesday, March 19th**

Marthas & Marys; AARP meeting

**JUDGES** Bible study

**Wednesday, March 20th**

Fellowship dinner; Choir practice; Youth

**Thursday, March 21st**.....*NO United Methodist Women meeting*

**Sunday, March 24th**

**LENTEN SERMON SERIES: WITNESSES**

**"Caiaphas: From Power To Persecution"**

**Tuesday, March 26th**

Marthas & Marys; Girl Scouts

**JUDGES** Bible study

**Wednesday, March 27th**

Choir practice; Youth

**Sunday, March 31st**

**LENTEN SERMON SERIES: WITNESSES**

**"Joseph Of Arimathea:**

**From Religion To Relationship"**



**Tuesday, April 2nd**

Marthas & Marys Bible study; Girl Scouts;  
**JUDGES** Bible study

**Wednesday, April 3rd**

Fellowship dinner; Choir practice; Youth

**Saturday, April 6th**

Girl Scouts

**Sunday, April 7th**

**LENTEN SERMON SERIES: WITNESSES**  
**"THE PENITENT THIEF: FROM DEATH TO ETERNAL LIFE"**  
The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper

**Tuesday, April 9th**

Marthas & Marys Bible study; Girl Scouts;  
**JUDGES** Bible study

**Wednesday, April 10th**

Fellowship dinner; Choir practice; Youth

**Sunday, April 14th**



**PALM SUNDAY**  
**LENTEN SERMON SERIES: WITNESSES**  
"Mary: From The Cradle To The Cross"

**Tuesday, April 16th**

Marthas & Marys Bible study; Girl Scouts;  
**JUDGES** Bible study

**Wednesday, April 17th**

Fellowship dinner; Choir practice; Youth

**Thursday, April 18th**

**MAUNDY THURSDAY SERVICE**

**Saturday, April 20th**

**easter egg hunt**



**Sunday, April 21st**



**EASTER SUNDAY**  
*Choir Easter cantata*

**Tuesday, April 23rd**

Marthas & Marys Bible study; Girl Scouts

**Wednesday, April 24th**

Fellowship dinner; Youth

**Sunday, April 28th**

*"The Sermon I Would Preach On Sunday  
If I Knew I Would Die On Monday"*

**Tuesday, April 30th**

Marthas & Marys Bible study; Girl Scouts