
MEADVILLE MESSENGER

From the Pastor's Desk:

Psalm 37:3-7a... "Trust the Lord and do good; live in the land, and farm faithfulness. 4 Enjoy the LORD, and he will give what your heart asks. 5 Commit your way to the LORD! Trust him! He will act 6 and will make your righteousness shine like the dawn, your justice like high noon. 7 Be still before the LORD, and wait for him..." (CEB)

In a conversation with a colleague in ministry a few months ago, the colleague commented that "the essential thing for the Methodist church in this day of great struggle and division over sexual issues is that we not lose sight of our call and our mission. The colleague stated the call was "to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ and our mission was to live out our call and ministries we are given by God without being distracted by these issues which have been forced upon us and consume us in our life and work in the church. I could not disagree with the colleague on this thought because, especially to those outside the inner circles of the American Methodists, it appears that we are focused only on this issue and on those who hold opposing views to ours on this issue.

The truth is, the Judicial Council and the work of the "Commission on the Way Forward" (with the Council of Bishops given oversight by the 2016 General Conference) were the ones who were to be focused on this issue. The reason they were to be focused on this issue is so that a way can be found for the people called Methodists to find a way to remain one church despite our differences. The rest of us should have been to carry on the business of church life as usual. I do not mean simply muddling or "trifling" (as Wesley would instruct his preachers to refrain from) through life and church but to remain focused on what Bishop Robert Morgan used to call the "main thing." The "main thing" is the call and mission for which we are tasked by Jesus to fulfill in the church, to "go...and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." (Matthew 28:19) This is not a new mandate. The following text is from "Our Doctrinal History" from the Book of Discipline and describes the foundational context for the life of Methodists throughout their existence.

"In John Wesley's words, theirs was 'the old religion, the religion of the Bible, the religion...of the whole church in the purest ages.' Their gospel was grounded in the biblical message of God's self-giving love revealed in Jesus Christ." (For Wesley, the spiritual pilgrimage of the Methodists was portrayed in "the scripture way of salvation" as a model for the Christian experience.) "The early Methodists assumed and insisted upon the integrity of basic Christian truth and emphasized its practical application in the lives of believers.

United Methodists recognize the right of Christians to disagree on matters such as forms of worship, structures of church government, modes of Baptism, or theological explorations. Methodists believe such differences do not break the bond of fellowship that ties Christians together in Jesus Christ. Wesley's familiar dictum was, 'As to all opinions which do not strike at the root of Christianity, we think and let think.'"

The early Methodists, “were equally as confident that there is a ‘marrow’ of Christian truth that can be identified and that must be conserved. This living core, as they believed, stands in revealed Scripture, illumined by tradition, vivified in personal and corporate experience, and confirmed by reason.

Beyond the essentials of vital religion, United Methodists respect diversity of opinions held by conscientious persons of faith. Wesley followed a time-tested approach: ‘In essentials, unity; in non-essentials, liberty; and in all things, charity.’ The spirit of charity takes into consideration the limitations of human understanding. ‘To be ignorant in many things and to be mistaken in some,’ Wesley observed, ‘is the necessary condition of humanity.’ The crucial matter in religion is steadfast love for God and neighbor, empowered by the redeeming and sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit.” (Book of Discipline 2012, par. 103 sect. 2, p. 54-55)

The Way Forward Report is now before us and from the initial reactions of Methodists near to us, it is not very agreeable and does not bode well if it were to be adopted as it is presented for the United Methodist Church as we know her. The Way Forward Report as presented would make all forms of homosexual practice as acceptable and eliminate one man and one woman matrimony as the norm. It would also permit homosexual unions in our churches and would allow for ordination and thus consecration as bishops those who are of the multi-varieties of homosexual.

As this note is being crafted, some of those we love in Mississippi Methodism are examining where they need to be in this struggle and the actions they need to take. The special called General Conference on February 23-26, 2019 in St. Louis will be especially crucial in charting the course of what the United Methodist Church and especially Meadville UMC will become. However, what is more crucial is to fulfill what Wesley expected his preachers and church to do in his time which was to be what God had called them to be and do what God had called them to do. It is also the exact thing that the psalmist declares to us, “Trust in the Lord and do good....Commit your way to the Lord! Trust him!” This is our call and our mission. Now may we “be still before the Lord, and wait for Him!” He will lead us if we will let him. The struggle is real and the way is hard. May we commit to trust God and to guide our hearts to his will. The Methodist always get it right. We pray it will not take 150 years for us to do so.

Peace and Joy and Love
Rex Wilburn, pastor

If you would like to view the Report on the Way Forward, you can visit the link below: Scroll past Bishop Ken Carter and click on the English version that reads in red, “Here is the link in English”. Bro. Rex has checked the link and arrived at the page. It is the shortest link available. Bro. Rex has a .pdf file if you would rather receive it. <http://www.umc.org/who-we-are/way-forward-report-released-in-all-four-official-languages-of-general-confe>

Worship Matters!

Pat Jones

This appeared in my email recently:

"Latest News report is that there are 5 terrorist groups that have invaded our churches: "Bin Sleepin", "Bin Arguin", "Bin Fightin", "Bin Complainin", and "Bin Missin". However, you can help destroy these cells by joining the anti-terrorism groups of: "Bin Prayin", "Bin Fastin" and "Bin Servin". For more info, please see The Holy Bible for details!"

Funny, but with a ring of truth to it, right? Here is a verse that came to mind:

"They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer." Acts 2:42

It is amazing to come into worship some Sunday mornings in a worried, exhausted, anxious state of mind. Then, the fellowship of church friends, the hymns, the praise, the message, and even our time of giving, leads us to a higher plane and better attitude!

Bro. Rex asked for a brief time of soft music at the beginning of the prayer in the service to sort of "settle" us and get us focused on speaking to, and listening to, the Lord. For the first few weeks, I played an old standby Cokesbury hymn that Doris Jean and I played many times. "Grant Us Thy Peace" might not be familiar to you, but some of the lyrics are, "Savior, again in Thy dear name we raise, with one accord our parting hymn of praise. We stand to bless Thee ere our worship cease, Then, lowly kneeling, wait Thy word of peace."

Lately, I've been using another Cokesbury hymn: "An Evening Prayer". I love these lyrics and the prayer being offered.

"If I have wounded any soul today, If I have caused one foot to go astray,
If I have walked in my own willful way, Dear Lord, forgive!
Forgive the sins I have confessed to Thee; Forgive the secret sins I do not see;
O guide me, love me, and my keeper be, Amen, Amen."

It's nice to see the altar being used at the end of the service, and I pray that we will humble ourselves and fall on our knees more and more in these unsettling times. Come on down, we'll sing and play until you and God get your business done! :) And if you need someone to pray with you, just bring them, too.

See you at the grace place!





Sunday
 9:45 - Sunday School
 11:00 - Morning Worship
 4:00 - Intercessors
 5:00 - Choir Rehearsal

Thursday
 4:00 - Prison Ministry

Friday
 6:00 - Sewing Ministry



SEPTEMBER

Twenty eight

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	10:00 A.M. Jolly Elders	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

RISE UP & PRAY.
 LUKE 22 : 46

September Birthdays

September 04	Todd Spring	September 15	Dacey Sivils
September 04	Gail Hopkins	September 16	Liesl Holt
September 04	Connor Wallace	September 16	Marcaline Temple
September 05	Bo Gabbert	September 17	Russell Clement
September 08	Graham Cowart	September 22	Chuck Freeman
September 08	Connor Sivils	September 22	Vana Hurst
September 09	Cam Wallace	September 24	Aiden Jeffus
September 13	Karen King	September 28	D.J. Furlow
September 15	Jean Peterson		

COLEMANISM:

No man knows his true character until he has run out of gas, purchased something on the installment plan and raised an adolescent.

“ NOT ONLY SO, BUT WE ALSO GLORY IN OUR SUFFERINGS, BECAUSE WE KNOW THAT SUFFERING PRODUCES PERSEVERANCE; PERSEVERANCE, CHARACTER; AND CHARACTER, HOPE. AND HOPE DOES NOT PUT US TO SHAME, BECAUSE GOD’S LOVE HAS BEEN POURED OUT INTO OUR HEARTS THROUGH THE HOLY SPIRIT, WHO HAS BEEN GIVEN TO US. ROMANS 5:3-5 ”

Be on the Lookout!



We are looking for the HDMI cable that goes with the church’s projector. When last seen it was in the case with the projector. The cable allows us to use the projector with almost any computer. If it has been re-purposed or lost, please help us get it returned or replaced. See Gary Hurst with questions.

MUMC Staff



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Fix your thoughts on what is true, and honorable, and right, and pure, and lovely, and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise. Philippians 4:8



MUMC's beautiful flower beds are loved on and tended to by Mrs. Delores Martin. Thank you, Delores, for your continued service to our church body.

Chosen by God to Proclaim Christ through Worship, Study, and Service

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