

First Things

Issue No. 3

A weekly publication of First United Methodist Church, Oak Ridge, Tennessee

January 19, 2020

Developments in the UMC

As most are aware, the United Methodist Church has been increasingly divided over the issues of same-sex marriage and the ordination of LGBTQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer) persons for the past 50 years. Decisions reached at the last few General Conferences have increasingly polarized the denomination. The one thing most General Conference delegates now agree upon is that the UMC will not find a solution to this situation by relying on legislative actions.

On January 2, a 16-member group representing various advocacy groups within the denomination, announced unanimous agreement for a new proposal they now offer to the UMC for consideration. Their plan would leave The United Methodist Church as a denomination and allow more conservative congregations to form a new denomination without financial penalties. Their proposal requires approval (after what will likely be many amendments) at the next General Conference in May, 2020. However, since that 16-member group represented bishops from around the world and influential leaders who are often sharply at odds over theology, most people feel their proposal has the potential to end the denomination's struggle over LGBTQ inclusion. Drafting the specific legislation for the proposal is now underway. Their nine-page overview, "Protocol of Reconciliation & Grace Through Separation" is available at <https://cdnsc.umc.org/-/media/umc-media/2020/01/03/15/48/Protocol-of-Reconciliation-and-Grace-through-Separation>.

Here are some of highlights of their proposal:

The conservative churches separating from the UMC to form a new denomination would give up legal claim on shared UMC assets (such as camps, offices buildings, general agency assets, etc.); receive \$25 million in funds to help form their new denomination; and be allowed to keep their local church properties.

The remaining UMC would be restructured into regional groups, which would then be allowed to adapt church policies (such as LGBTQ inclusion) to fit their context.

To support communities historically marginalized by racism, the UMC would allocate \$39 million over eight years to strengthen Asian, Black, Hispanic-Latino, Native American and Pacific Islander ministries. Of that total, \$13 million would come from funds the separating traditionalist denomination chose to forgo.

After the May 2020 General Conference, special General Conferences will be called for those remaining in the UMC to create regional conferences and remove the current prohibitions against LGBTQ persons. Likewise, the newly-forming, more conservative denomination will have a special General Conference to officially organize itself.

The UMC's regional groups (called annual conferences in the US and central conferences outside the US) will be able to choose the denomination with which they desire to affiliate. Likewise, local churches will be able to choose the denomination with which they desire to affiliate and will keep their land, assets, and liabilities.

The pension plans of The United Methodist Church would remain in place for all current clergy and lay employees, even if they affiliate with another Methodist denomination under the protocol.

For more information, go to umnews.org.

The Nursery is on the Move!

Our nursery will be moving upstairs to Room 206 beginning January 19. We are excited to move to this central location of the church and will be easy to find for our parents. We are also welcoming two new Childcare Staff. Autumn Doolin and Mary Flynn will be joining us and look forward to taking excellent care of all the kiddos! Autumn has been teaching 1st grade in West Virginia for two years but is excited to be back home in Tennessee. And Mary just finished her bachelor's degree at UT and has a 5 year old son. Welcome!

2020 Budget Update

Our Finance Committee joins you in celebrating that we have received 270 estimates of giving toward our goal of 275 (98%), totaling \$1,139,855 toward our \$1,100,000 (104%)! Thank you to each person/family who made an estimate of giving! Our Finance Committee will be meeting next week to finalize their 2020 budget recommendation to the Church Council. If anyone still desires to make an estimate of giving, we strongly encourage you to do so this weekend so your contribution can be included in their decisions. Again — thank you to all!

Talanga Honduras Trip Needs Help

One of our team members who was going to help with Vacation Bible School has had to drop out. We have a leader for the program but need another team member to assist. The trip is March 15th-22nd. We are already in the planning process so, if you are interested, please contact Liz or Jim Henry. (Liz, 924-4608; Jim, 806-0921)

More Celebrations are in Order!

A few weeks ago, we celebrated all the mission trips FUMCOR has sponsored over the years. That got people thinking about (and wanting to celebrate) all the ministries driven by volunteers which take place regularly in our congregation. We are sure this is an incomplete list, but a big "thank you" to ALL of you whose service enable the following ministries to take place!

All of our Choirs (adult, youth, children, handbells)
Attendance pad collection and upkeep
Christmas Shoppe
Community Meals
Ecumenical Storehouse
Evergreen Movies
Food For Kids
Funeral greeters and meal preparation
History Room
Holy Communion servers
Library Team
Morgan-Scott food ministry
Newsletter folding
Office receptionists
Offering Collection Officers
Offering Counting Teams
Outdoor Worship Volunteers
Scouting groups
Stephen Ministers
Sunday morning greeters, ushers and hospitality teams
Sunday School teachers
Thursday student lunches
Trinity Knitters
United Methodist Women circles
Vacation Bible School
Worship Tech (Audio, Slides, Lights)
XYZ lunches
Youth Band
Youth Counselors

Restroom Door Openers

Merry Christmas and happy new year from FUMCOR Trustees. As we start another year, we are making our church facilities more usable and convenient for members and the public. 2019 closes with a member's request and Trustees concurrence to add powered door openers to the second floor restrooms at an estimated cost of \$5,500. Since this expense is not in our operating budget, payment for the work would normally come from either the Facilities Campaign or Capital Equipment Contingency accounts. But, installing new boilers and dealing with bats greatly reduced those account balances in 2019. The Trustees committee invites FUMCOR members to contribute to the "Facilities Campaign- Restroom Door Openers" to cover this project. Mike Corcoran, our Facilities Director, has already identified a supplier and contractor for this work. Thank you for generously contributing to the upkeep and improvements of First Church. Jerry Van Fossen, Trustees Chair

Memorial Gifts Received Between July 1-Dec. 31, 2019 For:

John Asper	Cathy Lawless
E. Gray Beasley, Jr.	Dorothy McCoig
Carole Bookhart	William Northcutt
Linda Faye Carder	Barbara Parks
Bea Culbertson	Roy Pruett
George (Bud) Dodson	Martha Stewart
Fred Hurst	Roland Terrell
Charlotte Jordan	Kathy Wilson
Wendell (Joe) Kopp	

Planning Ahead for Missions 2020

The FUMC Adult Mission Trip Planning Team has been vigorously at work developing plans for this year. The dates have already been set for three teams, and a fourth team experience is undergoing planning. Two of the trips that have not filled up are:

- Sager Brown Mission Trip – 18 slots have been secured for the November 7th through 14th time frame. As usual, this team will work at the UMCOR World-Wide Disaster Relief Depot in Baldwin, LA. The work there, as in the past, will be as varied as you wish it to be – from kit verification & sewing to service in the community. Contact Maxine Schultz (482-0080 or 719-4304) to ask questions or participate.
- Panama Mission Trip – This will be the second year for this exciting adventure. Services to be offered are expected to be medical, vision and possibly children's oral health. This team will be serving during the Oak Ridge school system fall break, September 26th through October 4th. Contact Jim Michel (483-8849) to express your interest in this adventure.
- NOTE: Disaster Relief Mission Trip – The fourth mission team's activities will focus on disaster relief.

We Are Forming a New Young Families Sunday School Class!

Beginning Sunday morning February 2nd at 10:00 a.m. a new class will begin upstairs in room 305. This class will be geared specifically for families or individuals with younger children and will be taught by Rev. Chris and Julie Black. The group will focus on studying scripture together, being in fellowship inside and outside of church, and supporting one another on our journey of being disciples and parents. If you are interested in this class, or have questions about it, please don't hesitate to call Chris in the church office or email him at cblack@fumcor.org.

It's Scholarship Season at FUMC!

FUMC offers three scholarships each year: the Bruce and Phyllis Jacobson Scholarship (for undergraduates who will be freshmen in the fall), the Rebecca Taylor scholarship (for undergraduates who graduated from ORHS), and the Jeanette Reynolds Scholarship (for students interested in full time ministry in the UMC). Each scholarship has various requirements and qualifications, and is worth looking into! Find applications at fumcor.org/scholarships. The deadline for all three scholarships is April 13, 2020. Additionally, the United Methodist Higher Education Foundation, or UMHEF, is another great resource to find Methodist scholarships.

2019 Financial Overview

Our Finance Committee wants to say "thank you" to all persons who made 2019 a successful financial year for our congregation! Now that our books are NEARLY closed, we want to share some highlights from last year:

Total income from those who made an "estimate of giving" - \$1,082,686

Total income from those who didn't make an "estimate of giving" - \$255,289

Total loose plate offering - \$19,836

Total other income - \$6,175

Total income - \$1,482,807

Total 2019 Approved Expense Budget - \$1,491,136

(what was approved to spend, not what was spent)

Total actually spent - \$1,482,807

Also, remember we replaced two boilers in 2019. We paid for that expense from the Trustees' Contingency Fund and asked church members to prayerfully consider making a gift above and beyond their estimate of giving to replace those funds.

Total cost of boilers, installation, etc. - \$84,660

Total people donated toward boiler above and beyond their budgeted giving - \$17,400

Sites, Sensations, and Sagas of the America West

It may be called "Cowboy Country," but our Native Americans left their indelible mark. Join us for an August 16-23 tour of greater Wyoming and South Dakota through the lands of high mountains and plains. The Tetons, Yellowstone, Bighorn National Forest, the Sioux Nation's territory, and the Lakota's Badlands are some of the sites. You'll learn more about Cody, Calamity Jane, Custer, Crazy Horse, and Hickok, not to slight the Presidents on Mt. Rushmore. It will be the "gold, gambling, gunpowder" culture of Deadwood and the nearby Kevin Costner museum of "Tatanka" where the story of Indians and bison gets told. The tour begins in Jackson Hole, in a valley wilderness gorgeous to behold. This trip is short, only eight days, and the price is \$3,899 which includes transportation to and from TYS, air fare, taxes, hotels and transfers. Pick up a brochure in the church office for more information, then learn even more about the trip from the Collette representative Sawyer Shoates at 4:30 p.m. room 207 on Wednesday, January 29.

Souper Bowl of Caring

This year, the youth group will continue its annual tradition of collecting donations on the day of the Super Bowl. The Souper Bowl of Caring was founded with a goal of tackling hunger while harnessing the energy of game day. Look for our youth in the hallways between services on February 2. They will be holding large soup pots! All donations will go to Tabitha's Table and our own Community Meal. Last year, our church raised \$1,257! Let's keep it going this year!



Join us for the

Martin Luther King Day Parade

Our church will have a group walking (or riding) in the MLK Day Parade in Knoxville on Monday, January 20. We will gather at the Blue Van in the church parking lot at 8:30am. We will join other United Methodists from around the area for the parade. There will be an option to walk or ride in the parade. You can just show up that morning or Email Scott Gillenwaters (dsgillenwaters@bellsouth.net) and let him know you're planning to attend. Let's have a strong presence from our church for this special event.

Trip to Montgomery!

Join the "Joyful Reconcilers" on their April 17-18 Trip to Montgomery! Highlights include a walk/drive across Edmund Pettus Bridge; the Lowndes Interpretive Center; The Legacy Museum; The Rosa Parks Museum; The National Memorial of Peace and Justice; The Freedom Rides Museum; and The Civil Rights Memorial Center. The estimated cost for bus and legacy museum tour is \$85-90 per person. Additional cost should be less than \$150, including food and lodging (each booking in a block of rooms at a special price). Minimum deposit of \$50 is due by Friday, March 13. For a complete itinerary or if you have questions, contact Mary Palmer, MPalmerC@comcast.net.

Snow Policy

Please remember that FUMC follows Oak Ridge Schools' snow policy. If they are closed or delayed a few hours, then FUMC will be closed or delayed for the same amount of time. Remember, if we close, ALL events scheduled for that day will be canceled. If you are not sure as to whether we are open, please watch for a closed notice on our website at www.fumcor.org.

Grief Support Group Offered

The next Grief Support Group will be held on Mondays from 5-6:30 pm starting on Feb. 3-March 23. Call the office, 483-4357 to register.

Congratulations to

Amy and Matt McCarty in the birth of their daughter, Dorothy Jane "Dottie" McCarty, on January 8, 2020. Grandparents are Lucretia and Richard Pack.

Worship for January 19

8:45 & 11 am Traditional Service

Sermon: "It is 'Easier' to Worship God in Creation Than in the Church"

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 3:1-9

Rev. Mark Flynn, lead pastor

11 am Contemporary Service

Sermon: "It is 'Easier' to Worship God in Creation Than in the Church"

Scripture: Psalm 96

Rev. Chris Black, associate pastor

What Does Our Church Council Do?

Because our church leaders believe it is best for all to know how our congregation functions, we will highlight a different administrative group each month of 2020. Today we feature our Church Council. Composed of 24 persons, our Council is the primary oversight and decision-making group of the congregation. They meet monthly to hear reports from the staff and major committees, who collectively oversee the bulk of our ministries. Those reports keep the Council members abreast of our ongoing programs. Because we have a healthy Council and strong committees working with them (such as Trustees, Finance, Staff-Parish Relations Committee, etc.), the Council rarely amends decisions arising in those groups. More often, those administrative committees ask the Council to take up the more difficult or controversial decisions which need to be made. All are welcome to attend Council meetings, which take place monthly, usually on the fourth Tuesday evening at 6:30 pm in the fellowship hall. A listing of persons on the Council and all other committees is available on the church website fumcor.org/leaders.

In Loving Memory

Sue Shults

who joined FUMC on April 7, 1968 and died on January 13, 2020. We extend love and sympathy to her husband, Dub, son, Steve, and grandchildren, Spencer and Sydney.



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Our Prayers:

MMC: Janis Kopp

Discharged: Dianne Wilson,
Mary Lawless

Our Gifts

Offering this Week \$32,378
2020 Year to Date \$83,189
2019 Year to Date \$68,884
Mission Special Offering \$820

To my church family,
Thank you for all your cards, gifts,
and visits during my recent stay in
the hospital and Oak Ridge NHC.
Most meaningful were your loving
thoughts and prayers.
—Elizabeth Rea

Our Christmas Eve Cookie Ministry

It was a success! Following the Christmas Eve services, attendees handed out 150 boxes of your homemade cookies to persons in our community who were working on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day. We've heard several stories of grateful grocery store clerks, fast food workers, healthcare providers and convenient store workers. Do you have a story to tell? Would you like to make this part of our Christmas Eve tradition? Let Social Concerns or Megan Alden, Director of Children and Family Ministry know. And, as always, thank you Church for your over whelming and generous support.

Still Wrapping up the Christmas Shoppe

Wow! What an amazing response to this year's Christmas Shoppe. Because of your prayers, presence, gifts, service and witness, our Church was able to serve 43 families and 56 children. Hams were also provided for the community meal, a Domestic Violence Shelter, personal care packages and supplies to the Blessing Box, adult gifts for an area nursing home, assisted living facility and Keystone, Christmas toys, clothes and coats to a 3 year old who was just placed into his Grandmother's custody, gifts for 3 boys ages 2,6 and 8 who were placed into foster care the following day, more gifts and clothes to 7 children in the MIST (Mothers and Infants Sober Together) program, supplies and personal journal supplies for the adults participating in the MIST program, Christmas books and stuffed animals at the Community meal and socks and underwear at the following Community meal. And, it still goes on. We will be using the hotdogs at our Jan. 29th Community Meal. Thank you to everyone and mark your calendars for next year's Christmas Shoppe: Saturday, Dec. 5, 2020— Breakfast with Santa!

Schedule for January 18 - January 25, 2019

Saturday, January 18

5:30 Youth Monthly Movie

Sunday, January 19

8:45 Traditional Service, Sanc.

10:00 Sunday School

10:15 Abiding Worship, Chapel

11:00 Traditional Service, Sanc.

11:00 Contemporary Serv, MPR

Monday, January 20

MLK Holiday, Building Closed

7:00 MLK Day Parade

Tuesday, January 21

8:15 Weekly Communion, Chpl

9:00 Staff Mtg, 207

12:00 Centering Prayer, Chpl

5:30 Finance Meeting, 207

6:00 Connecting w/God, 203

6:00 Stephen Minister
Training, FH

6:30 Ballroom Dancing, MPR

Wednesday, January 22

9:00 Small Group, 202

9:30 SET, 204

10:30 First Things Folders, 207

1:00 Connecting w/God, 203

3:30 Sisters in Spirit, 202

5:15 Junior Choir, 106

5:15 iStudy Torah, FH

5:30 Community Meal, MPR

5:45 Wonderful Wednesdays

6:00 Youth Choir, 106

6:00 Chrismon Class, 204

6:15 Nonviolence Study, 207

6:15 iStudy Torah, FH

7:00 Youth Group, Loft

7:00 Adult Choir, 106

Thursday, January 23

11:20 Thursday Lunch, MPR

10:00 iStudy Old Testament, FH

6:00 First Steps Staff Mtg, FH

6:15 Basketball, MPR

Friday, January 24

8:00 Women's Small Grp, 202

Saturday, January 25

No activities scheduled

Keystone & First Steps—M-F