



# MARCH

## 2019

MAY YOUR TROUBLES  
☘ BE LESS ☘  
and your  
*Blessings*  
.....be MORE.....

AND NOTHING BUT  
**HAPPINESS**  
come through your  
☘ >>> *door*

☘ IRISH BLESSING

# **WHAT'S HAPPENING AT SUMC**

## **March**

- 06      Ash Wednesday Service 7:00pm**
- 07      Lenten Studies 10:00am; 7:00pm**
- 09      Second Saturday Gathering 10:00**
- 14      Lenten Studies 10:00am; 7:00pm**
- 21      Lenten Studies 10:00am; 7:00pm**
- 23      Church Clean-up 9:00am to Noon**
- 27      GNG Planning Meeting 5:30pm**
- 28      Lenten Studies 10:00am; 7:00pm**

## **April**

- 04      Lenten Studies 10:00am; 7:00pm**
- 18      Maundy Thursday Service 7:00pm**
- 21      Easter! Sunrise 7:00 am; Sunday 10:30 am**  
**Easter Egg Hunt**
- 24      GNG Planning Meeting 5:30pm**

## Good Neighbor Give Away Update

The items in your house that no longer give you JOY, maybe just the items to donate to our Good Neighbor Give Away to spread some JOY. Please continue to put the treasures aside for the upcoming Good Neighbor Give Away, Saturday, June 1st. Please store your treasures until the Tuesday before the event. The GNG committee has had 2 meetings so far and the next scheduled meeting will be Wednesday March 27, at 5:30 PM. Thank you so much for making the 2017 and 2018 event wonderful.

Since we can not predict the weather, we would like to make a list of individuals who would be willing to loan a (or more than 1) canopy for the day. Hopefully, we will not have to worry about snow falling. Please let Alicia or Janelle know.

This is a whole church event so mark you calendars for that week. May 28<sup>th</sup> through June 1. Everyone is needed. It's fun but it does take many helping hands. It is not too early to be praying that the event will be a blessing to our neighbors.

Good Neighbor Give Away Committee





**The following pages are all about the changes , challenges ahead for our church family. How will you view it?**

We have had four Church Chats regarding our Financial Picture. We held two last August, one this last February, and then our most recent was held Sunday, March 3. After much research and adjustments to our financial numbers, Andy presented the following information and (I have included input ) from the last church chat.

## **1. Today's meeting not what we'd said (February Church Chat)**

### **2. • Not taking a vote about selling rental house:**

- We no longer recommend selling at this time.
- District Superintendent says (and we agree):  
It's the church leadership's job to decide what to do, in consultation with congregation. Very few decisions should be made by all-church vote.
- Not taking a vote about church continuing operations
- We are going to continue. (Of course!)
- Financial situation is tough, but better than we said two weeks ago.

### **New math: increased income**

- Tithes and offerings: assumed \$55,000. But 2018 was \$68,000, which is \$13,000 more. Reasonable to assume we'll do at least as well this year.
- Rental house rent: increase by \$250/month (25%!). Adds \$3,000 per year.
- Possibility of renting church to Fijian 7th-day Adventists one Saturday afternoon per month for \$300. Adds \$3600 per year.
- Total: \$19,600 per year improvement.

## **New math: expense reduction**

- 2019 budget includes \$11,000 for maintenance and repair at our 3 buildings. Historically, good chance we'll spend only \$6,000. So a \$5,000 "reduction" compared to budget.
- Pest control for all 3 buildings costs about \$2,000 per year. We can do it ourselves. \$2,000 per year savings.
- Research indicates our heating oil supplier charges nearly 20% more than some competitors. Should be able to save \$500 per year.
- Combined oil and electricity bill is about \$5500, which must mostly be for heating. Low-cost improvements to windows and in attic, and in usage patterns, should be able to reduce that by \$1,000 per year.
- Total: \$7,500 per year improvement.

## **New math: summary**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Improvement</b>
Tithes and offerings	\$13,000
Rental house	\$3,000
SDA rental	\$3,600
Maintenance & repair	\$5,000
Pest control	\$2,000
Reduced oil price	\$500
Lower oil and electricity use	\$1,000
Total improvement	\$28,100

**Old deficit estimate: \$34,000**

**Less improvement -\$28,100**

**Revised 2019 deficit: \$ 5,900**

# \$5,900 (What does it mean)

- \$114 per week
- \$3 per person per week
- 9% of 2018's giving.
- 4 new members giving \$30 per week each.

**Let's see if we can do it.**

## **Moving forward: "Open the doors"**

- There are more "SUMC people" out there.
- How can we give people an idea of what's in here?
- Good Neighbor Giveaway
- Website, Facebook, "social media". Not just a site – content!
- Banners, sign
- Car wash
- Healing service?
- Free coffee and donuts summer Saturday mornings?
- (Other Suggestions from congregation)

Patricia: KCMS Invite

Anna: Instagram (she offered to help)

Gayle: Willing to pay for a banner

Alicia: A musical concert highlighting our pianist and praise team



## **Moving forward:**

### **new income from serving the community**

- Pre-school seems a good fit – fills a need, uses the building when it's otherwise idle.
- Need to know:
- Building requirements – how much do we need to spend up front?
- Economics – what could we realistically make?
- Operations – probably a Co-op that “runs itself” and pays us rent.
- Need to deal with non-profit and educational
- (Other Suggestions from congregation)

Sandre: Talk with Cedar Cross Church; explore the resource, how it impacts

Craig: Familiar with Haller Lake pre-school

### **Moving forward: ongoing commitment**

- Pastor
- Lay leadership
- Members

Energy, ideas, skills, time, money.

For the long haul.

Lent – perfect timing!

- (Other Suggestions from congregation)

Manny: Reasons for being optimistic about this church



The next few articles are included in this newsletter to keep you informed on important issues that affect our church.

First: Quick Notes on what was Approved at General Conference:

Traditionalist Plan: tightens rules and adds stiff penalties. Goes into effect January 1, 2020.

- ♦ 438 votes for: 53%    384 votes against: 47%
- ♦ Estimated 1/3 “yes” votes from the U.S. 2/3 “yes” votes from outside the U.S.
- ♦ LGBTQ persons as 2nd class Christians, who God cannot call into ministry or a covenantal relationship.

Some of the changes:

- ♦ New and clearer defining of what constitutes being a self-avowed practicing homosexual: includes being married in a domestic partnership, and disclosure on social media.
- ♦ Members of the Board of Ordained Ministry must agree to uphold the discipline in its entirety. Every AC shall certify that the bishop has nominated only those persons who will uphold, enforce and maintain the Book of Discipline. Failure to do so results in withholding all funds (how bishops get paid, grants, etc.) to the Annual Conference and withdrawing the Conference’s right to use the cross and flame logo.
- ♦ Boards of Ordained Ministries shall conduct an examination to ascertain whether an individual is a practicing homosexual, shall certify that such examination was done, and not recommend such persons to the clergy session.
- ♦ Similarly, bishops shall not ordain.
- ♦ Minimum penalty for performing a same sex wedding is a 1-year, unpaid suspension. The penalty for a 2nd Offense is termination of conference membership, revocation of credentials of licensing, ordination or consecration.

## Disaffiliation (gracious exit) Plan

- ♦ Church has until 2023 to leave based on disagreement with stance on inclusion
- ♦ Outlines an orderly process for the church and conference to follow
- ♦ The church can retain its property (real and personal)
- ♦ They must pay apportionments for the 12 months prior and 12 months post
- ♦ They must pay pension liabilities and debts owed.
- ♦ Disaffiliation (leaving) requires 2/3 majority vote of professing members present at the charge conference and 2/3 majority vote of approval by the Annual Conference.

Much of the legislation has been referred to the Judicial Council (our “Supreme Court” for review.) They meet in April and we should know in early May. We believe that at least some of it will be retained.

## **What does NOT Change in the Book of Discipline:**

- ♦ All persons are of sacred worth
- ♦ We insist that all persons are entitled to have their human rights ensured
- ♦ We implore families and churches not to reject or condemn their lesbian and gay members and friends.

## **Be Aware:**

- ♦ Homosexuality accounts for an estimated 7% of the population but...
- ♦ 40% of homeless youth identify as LGBTQ and report being rejected by their parents.
- ♦ Suicide is the 2nd leading cause of death for young persons between ages 10-24. LGBTQ youth are 3-7 times (statistics vary) of LGBTQIA persons report having attempted suicide at least once.

# From Bishop Stanovsky

## Ashes of Sorrow and Resistance

To the People of God in The United Methodist Church,

*“Spare your people, O LORD, and do not make your heritage a mockery, a byword among the nations. Why should it be said among the peoples, ‘Where is their God?’” – Joel 2:17b*

This past week, the special session of the General Conference of our church gathered in search of a way forward out of a decades-old conflict over attitudes toward homosexuals and LGBTQIA people. Rather than finding a way forward, the church chose to turn back the clock and to intensify its exclusion.

The conference did not create space for United Methodists with different perspectives to live together. Rather, the church reaffirmed its assertion that “The United Methodist Church does not condone the practice of homosexuality and considers this practice incompatible with Christian teaching,” (*UM Book of Discipline, 2016, ¶ 161.G*). It intensified standards and punishments for bishops who ordain and appoint gay clergy, and for clergy who perform marriages for same-sex couples.

The outcome was devastating for LGBTQIA people, whose very self-worth was debated, and for all persons in the church who believe Jesus models and invites us to become a radically inclusive community of faith.

To LGBTQIA persons in our churches and other ministry settings, I say,

*I thank my God every time I remember you, constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you, because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now. I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ” – Philippians 1:3-6*

I appeal to every pastor, member, and attendee, to be tender and merciful as you extend care to LGBTQIA persons in your care, and their families, and to continue to create opportunities to promote understanding and justice within the church and society.

I join many of you who feel abandoned by your Church home. I am ashamed that the Church has turned its back on so many people who Jesus has loved and called. I cannot abide by or enforce the new rules in conscience. My soul cries out to God, “do not make your heritage a mockery. Why should it be said among the people, ‘Where is their God?’” And I know that many of you also find yourselves adrift. I hear questions like, Is our Church redeemable? Or, is it time to leave the church that has left us and form a new expression of Church that opens doors and affirm people, rather than closing doors and denying or punishing them.

Let me offer you some reassurances. First, none of the actions of the General Conference take effect until January 1, 2020. Practices of candidacy, ordination and weddings will continue unchanged for the time being. Challenges to the constitutionality of some of the new provisions are underway that may overturn them. Regardless of how that turns out, as your bishop, I don't intend to lead us backward. We have come too far together to turn back now.

Pastors and people from large and small churches across the United States are looking for an expression of Church that affirms LGBTQ persons and recognizes them as full members and leaders. Coalitions of individuals and groups who will not submit to the recent actions are forming to develop plans for full inclusion, either inside or outside the existing UMC. We do know that a majority of the North American delegates to the recent General Conference opposed the actions taken. If you are among them, please indicate your interest in being part of this movement at: [OneChurch4All.org](http://OneChurch4All.org)

At the same time, I strongly believe that the Church should and must be a place where people who love Jesus, but don't see eye to eye, are in fellowship, prayer, study, and conversation with one another. I don't want to be in a church that does not welcome and honor people who hold different opinions from mine. I hope that our love of Jesus, and the people Jesus loves and asks us to love, is stronger than our differences of opinion. I believe we must stay together in charity, if we can. For, as Paul wrote to the church in Ephesus,

*"There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of our calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all." (Ephesians 4:4-6)*

With trust in God, who will lead us even if the Church wanders away and loses itself.

Your bishop and friend in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Elaine JW Stanovsky". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Elaine JW Stanovsky  
Resident Bishop

## **From our District Superintendent:**

### **To the Saints of the Seattle Tacoma District,**

Keep calm. That's the best wisdom and discernment I can give. The shameful embarrassment of our General Conference will not be the final word. In a nutshell what we have come up against are (at least) two very different experiences of the God of Jesus Christ. This shouldn't be shocking as the Bible itself is not consistent and presents various characteristics of God. We United Methodists of the PNW like to focus on God as loving and compassionate benevolence, but the Biblical God is also the one in Exodus who plans to kill Moses but is saved by Zipporah who basically invents male circumcision as a way to calm God down (Exodus 4:24-26). And of course there are multitudes of other angry God texts. The point being that the historical Church has never enslaved itself to a one interpretative fundamentalism of the text. We are not literalists. The historical Church has always combined scripture with reason, tradition, experience and a bias towards compassion. It is our plight to be in a global battle with those who confuse God with Superman or Rambo .... and they are winning the consciousness battle. It's happened before: the fundamentalists have enforced slavery, the subjugation of women, racism, ethnic cleansing, white supremacy, patriarchy (etc.), and each time a reformation has occurred to exorcise the demonic spirit of crusading and domination from the Body of Christ. We are in one of those moments. The presenting issue might be sexuality, but the real issues are, as they always have been, what is the character of God and how specifically and practically do we who follow Jesus embracing redemptive, restorative love through our attitudes and actions?

We lost the global battle but not the spiritual war. And that's why I ask that you "keep calm". We aren't going backwards. We're not saying no to those whom we have celebrated with an enthusiastic yes. We're not helpless and hopeless nor are we powerless victims. We have agency, creativity and courage. And we certainly have the power of the ever present "minority spirit" that keeps appearing in Church history to undermine evil, and triumph over neglect.

We're going to be alright. We're going to re-form. We're going to re-imagine. We're going to resurrect. Not some day in the far off future but step-by-step it has already begun. The future of our Conference will shift and joy will emerge. Positively speaking this can be a moment of spiritual spring-cleaning. Maybe we can toss out some unnecessary junk, clean up and turn on the lights in a few darkened spaces, and re-design what our house can actually look like.

Friends, I encourage you to lift up thine eyes, straighten your backbone, and with confidence keep on caring, keep on treating others with kindness, keep on with acts of justice, and the creative imagination that embodies the ways of peace. In the words of mystic Julian, "all shall be well, and all shall be well, and all manner of things shall be well." Let us live in this Christ-like faith.

Rich

## **Do you want to know more about this topic?**

What comes after GC2019?

The special session of General Conference is now in the rearview mirror, even if there remains some serious questions about the constitutionality of its actions. While those questions work their way through the denominational process, many United Methodists are expressing curiosity and deep concern regarding the impacts upon mission and ministry as it is practiced here.

In the Pacific Northwest Conference, and across the rest of the Greater Northwest Area, we will be holding discussion groups called **Table Talks 3.0**.

- ♦ **District Conference Table Talks**: How does the GC vote affects us? Do you understand what happened or need clarification? The districts are offering a format where we can find open discussions.

Sunday, March 10, Bothell UMC (7:00 PM)

Saturday, March 16, Des Moines UMC (9:00 AM)

## **There will be more discussions ahead:**

Conversations will also continue when Western Jurisdiction leaders meet in Portland in March, and at our 2019 PNW Annual Conference Session, June 7-9 in Puyallup, Washington.



**DID YOU REMEMBER?**