
The Joyful Noise

ROCK RAPIDS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
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I thought I'd share my thoughts about the recent action of General Conference. I invite you to come and talk to me if you have any questions you'd like to ask or comments you would like to share with me.

As some of you know, a specially-called session of the General Conference of the United Methodist Church met February 23-26 to vote on proposals on how to move forward on the subject of homosexuality and the prohibitions that are currently in our United Methodist Book of Discipline concerning clergy performing unions of same-sex couples, and the ordination of homosexual persons to serve as ministers in our denomination. Although there were 4 plans presented to the General Conference, in the end, there were only two that received enough support to have a chance to pass.

One was the "One Church Plan," which was supported by the majority of Bishops. It proposed removing the restrictive language in the Book of Discipline, but allowed the Central Conferences, made up of United Methodists in countries like Africa, who are in far different cultural settings than those in the U. S., the latitude to choose different rules. It also allowed the more conservative or "traditional" pastors and churches in the U.S. to follow their own conscience as to whether they would choose to perform or host the unions of same-sex couples, and it allowed the Board of Ordained Ministry in individual Conferences in the United States to decide whether or not they would ordain homosexual ministerial candidates. In other words, it was a plan designed to keep the United Methodist Church together by allowing people some leeway in setting their own rules and following their own consciences rather than strictly forcing everyone to comply with one way of doing things.

The other plan was the "Traditional Plan, which was put forth by the group The Wesleyan Covenant Association, (WCA) a conservative group within the United Methodist Church. The Traditional Plan is pretty much the total opposite of the One Church Plan. It not only retained all the restrictive language but also added a number of additional provisions to make sure that everyone must follow the rules without exception or leave the United Methodist Church and form a new "self-governing" Methodist denomination. In my opinion, it was a plan designed to split the church, forcing out everyone who does not agree with the restrictions.

One of the people I respect the most in the United Methodist Church is Adam Hamilton, pastor of The Church of the Resurrection in Leawood, Kansas. He always speaks so plainly, thoughtfully, honestly and intelligently. And, I pretty much always agree with him 100%. I'd like to share the speech he wrote urging people to vote against the Traditional Plan, because it expresses many of my own thoughts. This is from his written text, which is available on his website, so includes even more than he was able to say from the floor in the three minutes allotted each speaker. He wrote the following:

Bishops and delegates of General Conference, I rise to speak against the Traditional Plan that is before us. For those who are discouraged today, I want to offer a reminder of a gospel truth: God has a way of taking our disappointment, our defeats, and God redeems them when we put them in God's hands. Because of that I feel hope today for the United Methodist Church, believing, in the words of Paul, that the same Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead will give life to this Christian body, the United Methodist Church. Last night I looked around my hotel and saw centrists and progressives, some of whom seldom talk, dreaming together about the future of the United Methodist, and there was a surprising amount of hope and excitement about the future.

At this point I'm a bit unclear, however, what the WCA wants. For the last five years, the leaders of this movement have asked for an "amicable separation." I thought you wanted to leave, but now it appears you want the rest of us to leave. Centrists and progressives never wanted a divorce. We were *never* looking for a gracious exit. We were looking for a little space. You wanted to leave because you were tired of fighting about this. But with this you've alienated not only the progressives but also the centrists. Will these churches protest less or more for LGBTQ persons in the future? Those proposing the Traditional Church Plan, you have inspired a lot of people to action at this GC!

I've heard many tell us that this debate is about the authority of the Bible. I'd suggest the debate is not about the authority of the Bible, but about biblical interpretation. Paul says more about the role of women—women keeping silent in the church, women praying with their heads covered, women not teaching men, women submitting to men, women not wearing jewelry—than he says about same-sex acts.

The WCA has said that they support the ordination of women. I'm grateful. But in doing so, you have set aside the clear teaching of Paul: women keep silent in the church. Yes, Paul allowed women to lead, but despite that, he clearly said they must not teach a man and must remain silent in the church. How did you come to set aside the clear teaching of Scripture? You interpreted the Scriptures in the light of their cultural setting and by reasoning theologically in the light of more important themes in Scripture.

On this last Sunday, we began our deliberations, voting on our top priority. Do you remember what we voted for? It was not the Traditional Plan; it was our pensions. That was interesting given that Jesus said, "Don't store up for yourselves treasures on earth," and "Go and sell all you have and give it to the poor." I'd like to invite all of you who want to read the Bible as if "God said it, I believe it, that settles it" to forfeit your pensions to cover the unfunded liabilities of our denomination.

We can interpret Jesus' words about riches and Paul's words about women, but when Paul says that gay and lesbian people are unnatural and shameful, we must take these literally without understanding the cultural context. Who's "picking and choosing" now? And actually, I don't believe that you are picking and choosing; I believe you are interpreting the text, just as those who question Paul's words about people involved in some form of same-sex acts.

But back to the Traditional Plan: I'd like to ask those delegates who supported the One Church or Simple Plans, around the room, please stand. These brothers and sisters supported plans that said to conservatives, Africans, and Russians, "We love you and want you in our church and we're willing to guarantee your rights to hold a more conservative interpretation of Scripture on marriage provided you give us a little latitude." But in the Traditional Plan *you've said to us and to our congregations*, "Accept our interpretation, or leave."

Look around. Again, to those who are standing, it feels as if the Traditional Plan is saying, "Agree with us or leave." But it is not only these delegates and their churches that feel alienated by this plan; there are thousands of our US churches who feel as they do. This includes many of our largest and most dynamic churches. In addition to the thousands of churches who feel they are being pushed out by a plan like this, there are an overwhelming number of young clergy and seminary students who favor fully including LGBTQ persons. Do you really want to tell them we don't want them? Do you really want all of us to go? [You can be seated.]

But it is not just many of the brightest and best young pastors we're pushing away, it is your own children and grandchildren, yours and mine. Three out of four of millennials who live in the US support same-sex marriage and do not want to be a part of a church that makes their friends feel like second-class Christians. Many of you have children and grandchildren who cannot imagine that we're voting this way today. They wonder, *have these people lost their minds?*

For all of these reasons, I'm urging all of our delegates to say "no" to the Modified Traditional Plan. Please do not push our congregations, our young clergy, and our children and grandchildren out of the church we love. It is a plan that will hurt the people and sends the wrong message to our people.

Please vote "no" on this plan.

But, in the end, the Traditional Plan was passed by a vote of 438 to 384. As I said in my sermon on March 3rd, I am heartbroken by this decision. And I'm angry. When I took the time to read the legislation that was passed in its entirety, not just the summary of the plan, I was more and more offended as I read. My feeling is that no matter what your opinion is on the whole subject of homosexuality, what is reflected in the actual legislation of the Traditional Plan is devoid of all of the United Methodist "traditional" values of grace, respect for others who think differently, and the spirit of being able to be the church together regardless of differences of theology or interpretation of scripture. (Which is what John Wesley always believed, and what **United** Methodists have always been about!) The Traditional Plan says to me, you must agree with our way or you must leave the denomination. Which has never been the Methodist way.

I feel like what has been my church for my entire life, and the church of my family for generations before, has just been hijacked by people who refused an option that would have allowed us as a denomination to think (and even practice) differently but stay together, in favor of one that allows them to take over and ask everyone that doesn't agree with them to leave. The group that has been threatening to leave is a minority among United Methodists in the United States. Two-thirds of the General Conference delegates from the U.S. voted against the Traditional Plan. The reason it passed is that General Conference includes delegates from other countries, like 30% from Africa, where homosexuality is still illegal.

The Judicial Council (sort of the Supreme Court of United Methodism) has been asked to review the Traditional Plan that was passed to see if it goes against our United Methodist constitution. (A previous review of the preliminary plan resulted in a number of provisions in it being declared in violation of our Book or Discipline or our constitution.) They will do this at their next meeting in April. If it would be ruled unconstitutional it may not be allowed to stand as approved.

So now we wait to see what will happen. While we're waiting, I encourage to pray. If The Traditional Plan is allowed to be implemented as voted on, there will be difficult decisions to be made by Annual Conferences, local churches and clergy, as to whether each will choose to stay United Methodist or

choose to leave to be a part of a new “self-governing” Methodist Church. I believe it will be the end of the United Methodist Church as we know it. This new United Methodist way sounds like the choice is either "certify" that you will obey what we think is right, even if you can't in good conscience agree with it, or leave, Given that choice, many will leave. Sadly, they can't even take the proud name "United Methodist" with them. They have to leave it behind to be used by the folks that pushed them out. Which is really quite ironic, (and altogether sad) when you think about it.

Pastor Kathy

PLEASE KEEP US INFORMED

If you have recently moved, changed your mailing address, your **email address**, phone number, **or are only using cell phones**, please contact the church office with the current information. **Thank you!**



If you would like to be included in the **Weekly Prayer Partner EMAIL** which includes scripture readings, prayer requests, birthdays, and weekly reminders, please email or call the church; especially if you have not received these lately. If you have email, but do not receive information from the church this way, please give your email address to the office. We may not have it, and it's important that we do going forward so you can stay updated. Thank you.

HOSPITALIZED

Please contact the church office or Pastor Kathy if you know a member has been admitted to the hospital. With the new privacy laws being strictly enforced there are many times we are unaware of hospitalizations. We would rather get ten calls than none at all. Thank you. **Prayer concerns** can be called into the office (472-2324) or emailed to the office at rockrapidsumc@premieronline.net or Pastor Kathy at kathysides@hotmail.com and they will be sent out.



Praise God~

- ☺ Healthy Children
- ☺ Renee- 80th Birthday
- ☺ Answers to prayers and for all who lift prayers for others
- ☺ The Schar family on their new baby girl Kora Louise, born on February 8th weighing 7 lbs 5 oz.
- ☺ Thanks to Heather Stubbe for shampooing carpet in Fellowship Hall and for Low Hanging Fruit Committee for rearranging tables for different traffic pattern.
- ☺ Monte Delfs- feeling better and back to school. Praise the Lord for healing!
- ☺ Wonderful season for Central Lyon girls and boys Basketball and for our Wrestlers.
- ☺ Central Lyon Middle School Swing Choir- received 4th place at their first competition.
- ☺ Thank you to Dave Fields for cleaning the snow for Church.



Prayers~

- ✂ Continued prayers for Dave & Barb Fegan.
- ✂ Nephew's family
- ✂ Flu Season
- ✂ Roger Van Roekel family
- ✂ A family in difficulty
- ✂ Mary Peterson
- ✂ Linda Slack- sister-in-law of Dale & Vicki Slack- breast cancer
- ✂ Sue Vinson is struggling
- ✂ Mae Smid- in Lyon Manor recovering from hip surgery
- ✂ John Wood- (Rock Valley UMC) open heart surgery to replace Heart valve.
- ✂ A young family in crisis
- ✂ Greyson Austin- back at Mayo
- ✂ Prayers for Marty and Melissa (Slack) Sticha on the loss of Marty's Mother, Margaret.



March Birthdays & Anniversaries

- | | | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 01~ Chris Attig | 10~ Luetta Braun | 19~ Evelyn Baldwin |
| 01~ Jeff Parkinson | 10~ Maddix Broesder | 20~ Rick & Pam Attig |
| 01~ Tami Schweitzer | 10~ Brendin Sprock | 22~ Ken Barker |
| 01~ Dylann Van Berkum | 12~ Heather Heimensen | 22~ Bonnie Wilson |
| 02~ Brody Docker | 13~ Brian McIntire | 23~ Dave Warren |
| 02~ Ashlynn Yeakel | 13~ Brent Vande Weerd | 26~ Freda Kammarmeyer |
| 04~ Steve Herman | 14~ Patty Halse | 26~ Jerry Birkey |
| 05~ Jamie Schar | 17~ Jon Arens | 29~ Russ Kiel |
| 08~ Roscoe Pettengill | 17~ Shawn Wibben | 30~ Krista Sprock |
| 08~ Al & Phyllis TeSlaa | 18~ Scott Maxwell | 30~ Sharon Steenblock |
| 09~ Ed & Marlys Brown | 18~ Mike Selken | 31~ Jim DeGooyer |

*We apologize for any omissions or incorrect information. Please contact the office with the correct/missing information. Thank you!

Reminders and Announcements



Community Bingo will be held the 1st Friday of each month at 2 p.m. at the Rock Rapids Health Centre. All are welcome.



Ash Wednesday service:

March 6th @ 7:00 p.m.

March Greeter & Fellowship Schedule

GREETERS



Sunday, March 3

John & Polly McDonald

Sunday, March 10

Tom & Sue Vinson

Sunday, March 17

Brian & Stacey McIntire

Sunday, March 24

Brent & Brenda Vande Weerd

Sunday, March 31

Dave & Kae Warren

FELLOWSHIP



Sunday, March 3

Ed & Marlys Brown

Sunday, March 10

Doug & Michele Baade

Marv & Mary Peterson

Sunday, March 17

NO FELLOWSHIP

Sunday, March 24

Judy Griesse &

Renee Hasche

Sunday, March 31

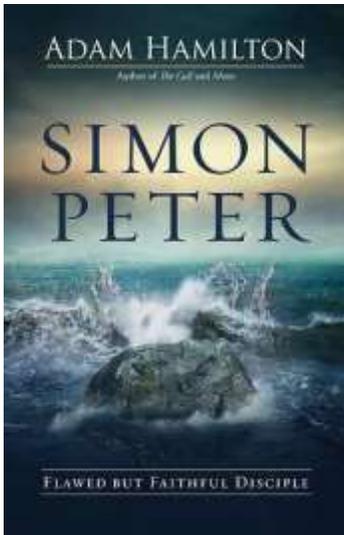
Tom & Sue Vinson

6-week Lenten Study Being Offered

Choose from Sunday Mornings or Wednesday evenings during Lent.

Wednesdays from 6:00-7:00 March 6th through April 10th

Sundays after worship from March 10th through April 14th



He left everything to follow his teacher and possessed a passion that would change the world. That's one way to describe Peter. Here's another: poor, uneducated, quick-tempered, and full of doubts and fears. Doesn't even sound like the same man. And that's the point of *Simon Peter*, a six-week adult Bible study by Adam Hamilton. Peter was just an ordinary guy who heard and followed God's extraordinary call. Discover how you, too, have special gifts, talents, and abilities that God can use to make a difference today.

Chapters Include:

1. The Call of Simon the Fisherman
2. Walking with Jesus in the Storm
3. Bedrock or Stumbling Block?
4. "I Will Not Deny You"
5. From Cowardice to Courage
6. The Rest of the Story

Extra books will be available, so you do not need to have pre-ordered a book to attend.



Where did Methodists come from?

What does it mean to be United Methodist?

What do United Methodists believe?

What do the United Methodist membership vows mean?

Sermon Series Continues through March 31st

If you've ever asked yourself these or other questions about who we are and where we've come from as United Methodists, don't miss the 6-week sermon series on our history and beliefs. Whether you are new to our denomination or have been a Methodist all your life, you may learn something new about what it means to be called a United Methodist.

**2019 ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL
ROCK RAPIDS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**

January 2, 2019 at 6:30 p.m.

Members of Ad. Council: (Names of Absentees underlined)
Randy Waagmeester – chairperson; Sonya Peterson – Recording Secretary/Communications; Shawn Wibben- Treasurer; Rhonda Menning- Evangelism; Evelyn Baldwin- Financial Secretary & Stewardship/Financial; Jackie Austin- Lay Leader to Annual Conference; Judy Griesse- Memorial Committee; Kelli Docker- Missions; Dave Ackerman- SPRC; Kim Waagmeester – Christian Education & SS Superintendent; Lainn Menning- Trustees; Heather Heimensen- Youth; Kathy Van Berkum – Worship; Vicki Slack – UMW President; Kathy Sides – Pastor. Patty Halse- Discipleship Process Team; Roxanne Ackerman- Facilities Team; Ryan Christenson

CALL TO ORDER / PRAYER

Randy called the meeting to order and opened with a word of prayer.

MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

Motion to approve: Patty Halse.

2nd: Lainn Menning.

OLD BUSINESS

Safe sanctuary forms have been given to teachers to complete.

Schedule of committee meetings dates were discussed. Trustees will meet on Sundays as needed. Ad Council will meet the 3rd Monday of each month at 7:00 p.m.; motion made by Randy Waagmeester; seconded by Kelli Docker for Ad Council meetings on the 3rd Monday of each month starting in February.

Thank You's

- Kelli Docker and Sheila Maxwell for the fun and successful Children's Christmas program.
- Heather Heimensen and the Finance Committee for the Ignite the Flame year-end campaign.
- Meal Ministry team/volunteers for the article in the Lyon County Reporter.
- Tom Vinson for SPRC Chairperson in 2018.

REPORTS:

EDUCATION/Kim: Sunday School Christmas party was December 23.

THIRD AVENUE YOUTH UPDATE/Heather: January 20 - Soup and Pie at Immanuel Lutheran Church. February 3 - Youth Sunday at Immanuel Lutheran Church. February 10 - Youth Sunday at UMC.

THIRD AVENUE SQUARED UPDATE/Kathy: Operation Christmas Child boxes were sent to distribution center along with noisy offering to help cover the postage for the boxes.

EVANGELISM & WORSHIP/Rhonda & Kathy: Bread of Life will prepare 200 bags in January. Were short bags in December. Rhythm of Bethlehem Soup Supper was successful. Ice cream social was a success following One Way Up concert. Will talk about welcome bag/package for visitors. Nursery has volunteers present each Sunday.

TREASURER/Shawn: Finance Committee will be sending a thank you to the congregation for the Ignite the Flame campaign success. A thank you will also be sent to the McCormack Foundation donation.

District Asking was \$765. Part of this supports ESL ministries in the district.

Earl will be donating his salary for 2019.

FINANCE SEC/Evelyn: Ignite the Flame campaign was a success.

MEMORIAL/Judy: No report.

MISSION/Kelli: Third Mile Giving and Rainbow Covenant ministry missions were met. A family mission opportunity will be planned in early June through the Center of Hope in downtown Sioux Falls for the Bike to Work Ministry.

SPRC/Dave & Tom: Dave will be 2019 Chairperson for SPRC. Thank you to Tom Vinson for serving as chairperson in 2018.

TRUSTEES/Lainn: Trustees will meet Sunday, January 6, with Facilities Team.

PASTOR/Kathy/Amber:

Patty Halse made a motion to approve additional officers; second Vicki Slack. Revised Officer List is attached.

We will be using microphone for joys and concerns.

The Church of the Resurrection in Leawood, Kansas is offering two workshops April 4-5: "Empowered: A Model of Care" which focuses on empowering volunteers to be partners with the pastor in care ministry, and "The Art of Radical Hospitality," focusing on being a welcoming, outwardly focused church. Pastor Kathy plans on attending the "Empowered" workshop, bringing back the information learned to train others. Lay persons are encouraged to accompany Pastor Kathy and attend either workshop. Please let Pastor Kathy know of any interest as soon as possible so she can check out possible funding sources from the District. More information can be found at: www.sharechurch.com This website also has many great free resources for churches to use in many areas.

Pastor Kathy requested continuing education approval to attend Canoeing the Mountains retreat and Church of the Resurrection workshops. Motion made by Dave Ackerman to approve Pastor Kathy to attend these workshops; second by Patty Halse.

COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE/Sonya: Sound system volunteer list was sent to the office.

UMW: World Day of Prayer will be held Friday, March 1.

DISCIPLESHIP COMMITTEE/Patty: Patty updated the Council on the work of the Discipleship Process team, which includes new Mission and Vision statements, and the organization of our church's ministries and groups into a discipleship process using the headings Believe, Belong, Become, Bless. Sonya has also developed a graphic for the discipleship process. A book is being developed that will encourage people to connect with the church and grow in their discipleship by participating in the various pathways. The new Discipleship Process and book will be introduced to the congregation this fall.

NEW BUSINESS

Pastor Ryan – Be thinking about Ad Council functions and their role as well as reduction of committees. Pastor Ryan will be coaching our congregation through October.

Next Meeting – February 18 at 7:00 p.m.