

July/August 2019

United Church Newsletter

No matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey,
you are welcome here.

A United Church of Christ, a United Methodist Church &
an LGBTQIA Welcoming Congregation
in University Place, Washington



July 20th
9-1pm



Here is a picture of just a few items which will be coming to our UCUP Flea Market on July 20th. Surely someone will need a John Deere sprinkler! Hopefully everyone is going through their things for items that you no longer need but know that someone else will be anxious to have! The sign-up sheet is on the table in the narthex, so please sign up for your own table or share a table. We will also need volunteers who can fill in while sellers take a break or to step in and give a hand during busy times. The "rule" is bring your stuff and set it up by 9 am and take home anything that doesn't sell by 1 pm. *We will be accepting only cash or checks made out to UCUP*, so it might be a good idea to bring some change, too. And remember, the idea is to raise money for our church, have fun, and build community with our neighbors.

August 11th at 10am Blessing of the Animals & worship

Held in the Curran Apple Orchard with a potluck picnic to follow

Bring your pets - large and small to receive a hands-on blessing.

This is a great opportunity to invite your friends to gather with us for worship. A potluck picnic will follow in the church courtyard outside the Fellowship Hall.



Forum held on events of General Conference 2019 and PNWUMC Annual Conference

25 people joined after worship on June 30 to hear the reflections of those who attended Annual Conference, including Vic Bode, Jim & Nancy Davis, Rosemary Jones, and Leslie Ann Knight. A lively discussion followed. Read below for some reflections on what is happening in the UMC.



ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2019 Reflection by Patrick Scriven (Communications Director)

Almost half of the petitions passed this year were responses to the current crisis of Methodism. Resistance to the forced discrimination created by the passage of the “Traditionalist Plan” at General Conference (GC) 2019 was a constant theme from the stage and the floor of the session. The body passed 14 petitions to provide guide rails for how the PNWAC will respond if the restrictive and punitive new rules become unavoidable, including the possibility of creating a whole new entity.

Inclusive Values were Named - The Pacific Northwest Annual Conference declared that it will:

- Reaffirm and continue its commitment to Non-Compliance with United Methodist and governmental actions that hinder full participation for members of LGBTQIA+ communities.
- Affirm and celebrate sexual/gender identities of all members of the LGBTQIA+ communities.
- Live into the statements of the PNW BOM, the WJ’s Leadership Team, and Cabinet, as it seeks to become a truly inclusive Church [leaders have previously stated they do not consider sexual orientation or gender identity as disqualifying candidates for ministry].

A Need for Repentance

The PNWAC called on the cabinet leadership of the Greater Northwest Episcopal Area to create a time during annual conference meeting in 2020 where they can formally repent of their participation in systems that cause harm to members of the LGBTQIA+ communities.

Plans were made for Resistance - With the passage of the “Traditionalist Plan” and its punitive measures against LGBTQIA+ people and those who fully minister to them, a significant uptick in formal complaints against out clergy and those performing weddings for same-gender couples is expected. The investigations, arbitrations, and (God forbid) church trials stemming from the expected flood of complaints could very well overwhelm the administrative capacities of the conference, in addition to the great harm they will cause to LGBTQIA+ people.

Multiple petitions created teams that will take on various aspects of navigating the unknowns in this time of denominational crisis. The denomination is in de facto schism. Several conservative UM activists created a separate incorporated entity named the Wesleyan Covenant Association (WCA) in 2016, which has the legal standing to hold a new denomination if needed. Inclusive-minded UMs have not advocated for schism or invested in similar structures. The PNWAC approved a task force that will ensure a new legal entity will be formed that can be used to start a new expression of Methodism.

In a separate piece of legislation, the PNWAC directed its leadership to form a study committee for disaffiliation from The United Methodist Church. The new group will have the authority to develop a plan of exit of the entire annual conference from The UMC, maximizing the retention of the “annual conference’s financial, property, and other resources” and study the financial implications of doing so.

Recommendations to General Conference

The PNWAC adopted a petition from Seattle 1st UMC directing its Conference Secretary to file petitions to GC 2020 that would start the process of amending the UMC’s constitution to make the US or North America a Central Conference. In the event that only a small number of Methodists defect to the WCA, this could be a valuable way to preserve and build healthier international relationships.

The proposed amendments would dismantle some of the colonialist aspects of our systems of governance, but similar efforts have been blocked by conservatives unwilling to let US delegates vote on LGBTQIA+ inclusion independently. Central Conferences are allowed to make adaptations to portions of the Book of Discipline to fit their cultural context. Official United Methodist stances are presumed to be US-centric even as the number of UMs outside the US nears parity with those within.

New Ways of Being Church

The PNWAC seeks to explore new ways of decision-making that are more relational, respectful, and productive. The PNW Board of Ordained Ministry has been using a modified consensus process for decision-making; now the conference plans to explore new procedures.

RESOLVED, that the Pacific Northwest Annual Conference develop new ways of governing and decision-making, that make meaningful space at the table, and provide adequate time, for engaging the stories, joys and sorrows, and leadership gifts of lay and clergy persons on the margins, including, but not limited to people of color, LGBTQIA+ people, people with disabilities, youth and young adults, and people experiencing economic insecurity.

PNWAC took a tentative step toward this goal before it even had the chance to vote on the legislation. In addition to the typical Robert's Rules governed focus sessions, conference members were given the opportunity to gather in areas of interest for collaborative work. Three of the most significant petitions approved by the full conference plenary had their origins in these break-out groups. Good steps toward a lofty goal of new modes of governance.

The PNWAC is resisting the turmoil, moving forward into God's new future together.



Inclusive Methodists secure Jurisdictional Conference majorities – Where do we go from here? By Rev. Jeremy Smith, Pastor of Seattle 1st UMC

The Traditionalist claim that they have a majority at General Conference is deceptive and ultimately irrelevant to the future of The United Methodist Church .

Annual Conference Referendum on the WCA

The phrase “all politics is local” means that politicians may be nationally recognized but their re-election depends on connecting with their constituents. The election of waves of progressive/centrist delegates to General Conference and the passage of resolution after resolution against the Traditional Plan has revealed that the denomination-devastating policies that are popular at General Conference do not play well at home. Many conferences saw the Wesleyan Covenant Association-endorsed candidates for delegates barely break 30% of the votes. Entire slates of progressives and centrists were elected in many conferences, completely shutting out the WCA Traditionalists. In the first election since the WCA began, they lost in droves.

WCA Leadership Council Leaders who were delegates in 2016 and 2019 were not voted in for 2020, with one losing to a queer clergywoman, and the former WCA Chairperson failed to make the delegations again. In addition, the WCA President retired so is not on the delegation. Other Confessing Movement delegates in 2016/2019 will not attend in 2020 as well.

Traditionalists: “We didn’t lose, we actually won!”

In order to stem the tide of bad news, the VP of the Good News movement and submitter of the Traditional Plan Rev. Thomas Lambrecht wrote an article: “Traditionalists Secure General Conference Majority.” It’s a mixture of fact and fiction; but I will focus on just a few points.

First, Lambrecht claims that the laity held strong, claiming “all of the loss of traditionalist delegates fell on the clergy side.” That’s not the case. Iowa’s delegation was led in 2016 by a WCA laywoman who didn’t make the alternates for the Jurisdictional delegation in 2020—they flipped 6. Total sweeps in VA, FL, NC, Central TX, and AK yielded new progressive laity seats. While it is true that overall the WCA-endorsed laity did better than clergy (41% of laity are WCA slates, compared to 17% of the clergy), there isn’t as wide a gulf as alleged.

Second, Lambrecht laments the loss of the delegates who are Traditionalist fixtures and worries that the lack of experience will be a detriment. But the reality is that many of those organizing the slates were intentional to promote young people, people of color and queer delegates, people who reflect the values of inclusion and diversity. This is the future of the church .

Lambrecht laments the loss of straight white voices while the rest of the world celebrates the most diverse delegation in history (one entire delegation is queer [OR-ID] and one entire clergy delegation is queer [New England] with some SEJ queer delegates for the first time).

But wait: are the Traditionalists right?

WCA claims that “traditionalists have a majority at General Conference”: Enough U.S. traditionalist delegates have been elected that, together with conservative delegates from Africa, the Philippines, and Eastern Europe, the traditional position should have the majority at General Conference 2020. Two points.

1. First, those central conference delegations haven’t even been elected from those regions yet. WCA is assuming that they would be conservative or Traditionalist.
2. If those central conference delegations vote uniformly Traditionalist, WCA does have a slim majority. Less than 30% of the American delegates were supported by Traditionalists, only 10 annual conferences out of 54 are Traditionalist majorities, but that is enough to maintain a majority when combined with the central conference traditional pattern of voting.
3. Traditionalists are spinning this devastating loss of credibility and numbers as a win because they are able to eek out a 1-2% majority, down *significantly from previous years*.

Big Picture – Jurisdictional Leadership

The WCA doubled down on punitive measures and the United Methodists in the US have said NO. Ordinations of gay clergy in 6 conferences—one in the South! Progressives swept delegations. And this wave means that the hardline goal of the WCA—progressive expulsion and control/liquidation of UMC assets—will no longer be in reach.

It will no longer be in reach because of the Jurisdictional structure, which was ironically created to preserve Traditionalist values by keeping Northern bishops from serving in the South. Each jurisdiction is over 60% progressive/centrist. That means no matter what General Conference does, the jurisdictions will be able to:

1. Elect a slew of progressive bishops—at least 12—who will keep accountability in their regions and can block prosecutions if they band together. It’s an impossible task for WCA delegates in any jurisdiction be able to mobilize support for a Candidate needing 60% of the vote when they only have 23-35% of the available votes. It’s a lock if progressives choose good candidates.
2. Boards and agencies will receive an influx of bright new progressive board members, creative thinkers, and people suspicious of the straight white power structure to dismantle.

The Traditionalists have a slim majority at General Conference. Progressives, for the first time since 1988, will represent and lead all five US jurisdictions. So the governance of the UMC for the next four years is in much more stable hands than the reactionary forces of the past few quadrennium's. That's good. But that's also bad.

The Warning: Don’t pour this blessing into Old Wineskins.

So much of the above is about control and influence in the old wineskin of the UMC as it is known now. But unless there is structural change in 2020, it will just be a flash in a pan. I would encourage progressives to see that they have an opportunity to reshape Methodism into something new. They might be tempted because of the influence they will have in the current system. They can take the bait of influence in the old wineskin, or they can truly lead the denomination (in ways the Bishops and the Way Forward Commission have failed) into a new wineskin. Their episcopal candidates will lead annual conferences. Their delegates will lead boards and agencies. Any plan of unity or disaffiliation or dissolution will be in their control after General Conference 2020 so they will be able to implement the particulars of a new structure.



Bishop Elaine Stanovsky delivers her episcopal address on the first morning of the 2019 Pacific Northwest Annual Conference.

Reflections from PNWUMC Annual Conference by PNWUMC LAY LEADER Nancy Davis

I have always loved the slogan, “open doors, open hearts and open minds.” I am paraphrasing the words of another: Our doors are not only opened, we have removed them, and the hinges as well. The Pacific Northwest Conference has taken the bold steps I had hoped. It is an empty slogan no more.

At our annual conference this weekend we voted overwhelmingly to not follow the decision of General Conference 2019, to openly welcome, support, encourage and fully accept LGBTQIA+ as members, Clergy and Bishops, to provide no funding for church trials of such, to sever from the United Methodist Church and create our own definition of Methodism that accepts all people as children of God. We are now about the business of defining a new Methodism that encourages partnership of clergy and laity to live into what we believe is Gods Call.

I give thanks to the courage of the Alaska Missional Conference for being the first of our triad of conferences in this Episcopal Area to step out boldly. You gave us courage and hope.

As I listened to the many deep conversations of conference attendees I began to see the swell of a movement here. These conversations were powerful, respectful and filled with courage. This was holy conferencing. Many people talked of taking a wait and see stance as we are in a rapidly changing environment. Perhaps we will see changes as more annual conferences are held. Perhaps General Conference 2020 will give us more insight. I listened, struggled, and came to the conclusion that “wait and see” is a luxury of the privileged. While it might provide greater insight, it also lengthens the time when full inclusion can happen. It’s clear that I am taking no personal risk with a wait and see strategy. But LGBTQIA people will continue to feel excluded, will continue to pay the price and face more years of being “invisible and disposable”. This is a price I am unwilling to pay.

My other awareness is that if we allow it, if we remain silent and voiceless, this would only be the beginning. Once we ban LGBTQIA+ persons then who will be next? Will we change our mind on women clergy, sharing our faith with all people of color, race and ethnicity? Perhaps we’ll turn out the poor that are unable to tithe, or the homeless who are not worthy of Gods love. It is time to stop and loudly pronounce “NO”. If we really believe the ALL are children of God, that everyone is entitled to God’s love, then how can we rewrite God’s plan and limit the church to “only people like us”.

I accept and understand that people feel differently, and as strongly as I do. Yes, this is deeply painful, and it is time to part ways. We have different paths to follow. I cannot abide yours and you cannot abide mine. I am at peace with that.

Now we have work to do to redesign how our Methodism will support our faith.

THE “UNITED” METHODIST DILEMMA submitted by Pat Mail

The World Church is experiencing a major divide about who should be allowed to pastor our churches and who should be able to be married in our churches. These issues have generated major discussions at General Conference that meets every 4 years. It got so heated that a special conference was held in St. Paul earlier this year to try and resolve this issue. Solutions recommended included 1) allowing individual conferences to decide for themselves and removing the restrictive language from the Book of Discipline (BoD) and 2) making the rules as promulgated in the Book of Discipline more stringent by demanding GLBT pastors be immediately defrocked and making no allowance for LGBT marriages in the church. Sadly, the strict traditionalists prevailed, and their directive to make the BoD were supported.

The Western Jurisdiction of the United States declared that they would prefer to follow Jesus’s dictates than the BoD. Since the Special Called Session of General Conference 2019, there have been two follow-on smaller meetings. And in June, the Pacific NW Conference reiterated its openness to all God’s children (along with other conferences in the Western Jurisdiction). And we have seen clergy from outside the western conferences transfer their membership by seeking Safe Harbor within our conference so they may continue to honor their call to ministry. The Pacific Northwest Conference has even established a Safe Harbor Fund to help these individuals relocate.

Please pray for sanity and inclusion within the UMC.

Questions? See Rosemary Jones, Pat Mail, Leslie Ann Knight, Vic Bode, and Jim and Nancy Tam Davis



Pat Mail at Annual Conference Jamma Letu booth with Kay Shaben's poster



Quilt made by Joyce Demarest delivered to Annual Conference

JULY BIRTHDAYS

3 - Michael Marcoe
11 - Jeremiah Bodie -
10 yrs old
31 - Bob Rudolph



AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

4 - Dave Higby
Stuart Lane
7 - JoAn Walston
10 - Cathi Cline
Cathy Dimmerman
11 - Heidi Adams – 19
13 - Brendan Powell
24 - Lou Lehmann
25 - Pat Rudolph
27 - Amber Powell
29 - Pamela Maddess

July 2019

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
14 Worship 10am	15	16 6:30 Men's Group	17 12pm Brown Baggers	18	19	20 9-1pm Church Parking Lot Sale
21 Worship 10am	22	23 6:30pm SPRC	24 12pm Brown Baggers	25	26	27 10-12:30pm UCUP is volunteering at My Sister's Pantry
28 Worship 10am	29	30	31 12pm Brown Baggers	<p>My Sister's Pantry Item of the Month: Tuna Bring your cans in any Sunday in July!</p> 		

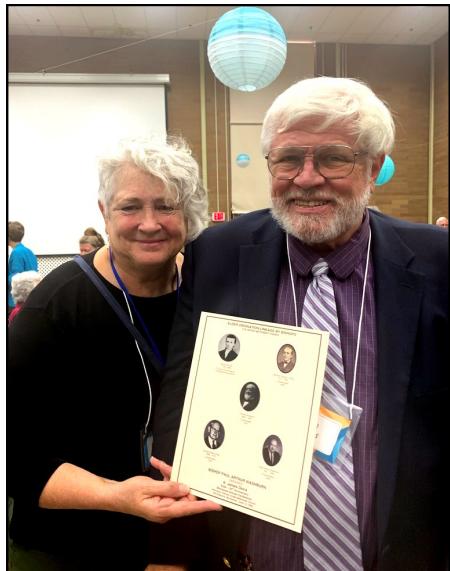
Joys & Concerns



We can all be thankful that Pastor Cathy wasn't hurt more seriously when she hit the pavement, after flying over the hood of the car that turned in front of her on Friday, June 21st...and be thankful that like all serious bikers she was wearing her helmet! That's not to say she wasn't hurt, she was wearing an inch thick bandage on her lower right arm and hand and had her left arm in a sling on Sunday, the 23rd as she was leading worship —she's now in a cast.

Our sympathy to the family of Joan Martin, who passed away recently, especially her daughter Annette and granddaughter Heather. Please keep them in your prayers...and Ruth Cannon whose brother died in California earlier in the month...Mary Jones, spending time in Cottesmore in Gig Harbor...Shirley Paulson, whose back pain has kept her from being with us on Sundays and the Rudolph's son John, as his cancer has returned.

There's been a lot to celebrate in June: Jim Davis' 50th anniversary as an Methodist minister and that he was able to be in church on the 23rd for the first time since his knee surgery...on Sunday, the 16th we celebrated Jimmy Bodie's 'moving up' from Skyline to Truman Jr High... Jeff and the choir were at their BEST on the 16th, the bad news, it was their last Sunday before their summer break – the good news is they will be back in September.



It seems that almost everything ends up on someone's camera these days, SO where were the cameras on the 7th of June when Tanya Sorenson, Robert Brown, Cathi Cline and Wes and Emma Berry were showing us their different ways of the doing a happy dance??!!



Blessing for Cecelia Schilling following her graduation from PLU.

Remembering Joan Martin Reflections by Sharon Britcher & Pat Mail

Joan and I met soon after I joined United Church in 1990. She and her husband, Melvin (Mel) were members for some years before. Her daughter, Annette Melton and granddaughter attended and were part of our church family for a number of years, as well. She was a runner and had participated (along with other UCUP members) in a number of different events including Pierce County Hunger Walk for a number of years. On a number of occasions when she ran, she received medals as recognition of her participation. A few of which are shared here. Joan was also our church family's photographer for many years.



Check out our updated website!
Find sermons, newsletters and upcoming events.

ucup.org



Volunteer SIGN-UP



Saturday, July 27, UCUP will have a turn volunteering at My Sister's Pantry.

We are only needed from 10 -12:30. Look for the sign-up sheet in the Narthex. For more information, see Ruth Cannon.

UCUP is co-sponsoring and opening our facility for University Place for Arts' Chili Cook-off and Concert Fundraiser on:



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Thursday, August 22

- 5 pm - 6:45 pm — Chili cook-off
- 6:30 - 8 pm —Concert in the Orchard

We need volunteers to help with dinner and ticket sales.

Please contact Marilyn Thompson to sign-up:

marilynht@outlook.com



Kelly's Summer Office Hours

.....

Tues, Wed, Thurs
9 am - 1 pm

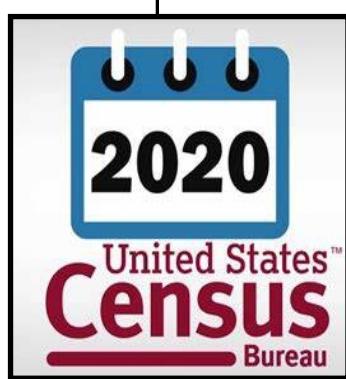
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For more information call:
1-855-562-2020





On June 1st, we celebrated the life of Allen Munn, on a beautiful day overlooking Puget Sound at Allen & Kathy's home. Allen was a charter member of both Mayflower UCC in the 1960's & UCUP during the merger in 1970. Allen worked in the dairy industry, and in retirement enjoyed trips to the beach, supporting his grandchildren's endeavors, and making bi-weekly trips from UCUP to My Sister's Pantry, dropping off donated goods. Over 100 people (including about 25 folks from UCUP) joined in celebrating Allen's life with clams and chowder and decadent dessert. We're grateful Pat Mail was able to bring Win Bjarke. We will miss your servant leadership and dry sense of humor, Allen. Kathy, our hearts and prayers continue to be with you. (Not pictured: Laura Giddings & Kathy Munn).

**“It’s not easy
being green.”**

—Kermit the Frog



The Greening Activity Group has been Active! Greening held a meeting after services on June 16. The Group was represented at the celebration of Tacoma’s Tidal Flats’ Salt Marsh, and the funding of another 18 months towards its restoration. This area is located not far from where a proposed liquified natural gas (LNG) production, storage, and distribution facility is planned, which several people in the congregation have resisted by writing to legislators and also in response to the 2018

Comment Period for the LNG Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement. At the Salt Marsh gathering on the 15th, 350Tacoma.org organization committed to a future Fourth Sunday Forum discussing the status of the LNG proposal.

A separate Fourth Sunday Forum was presented June 23rd by Earth Ministry, including a 90-minute video discussing the hazards that have already affected us from chemicals such as Teflon. Our church makes annual contributions to Earth Ministry, and they have made previous presentations at Fourth Sunday Forums.

At the meeting on the 16th, Greening also reflected on programs we had supported through writing efforts, especially stopping coal trains from going into Cherry Point to our north, the ethanol plant on the Tide Flats that preceded the LNG project, and subsequent efforts south of us. Recently, Gov. Inslee has either stopped these projects and others to our south or has indicated he no longer supports them. We recently discovered a new plan to double the number of oil-tanker cars a train can haul at one time along the shoreline through Steilacoom and University Place, and Greenies have been informed of that issue, also. Related to that, North Dakota has filed a complaint to stop the states of Washington and Oregon to require fracked Bakken oil to be degassed of flammable compounds before the oil is sent in those same, proposed double-long trains through our towns. We invite members and guests to contact responsible government entities if they feel something is wrong here, and we should be providing good contact addresses soon.

Finally, for the future: we will immediately be trying out some new paper cups in UCUP, made from environmentally friendly materials and compostable in home composters. Also, plan on joining others in UCUP in participating in the International Coastal Cleanup Day in September. We are coordinating with Point Defiance Park to join their beach cleanup on the third Saturday (Sep 21), from 9:00 to noon. Kids are invited to participate! It’s not easy bein’ green all the time, but it can be worthwhile!

There are large print bulletins available for anyone who might find that helpful during Sunday worship.



My Sister's Pantry Item for August: Bath Soap

This month My Sister's Pantry is Bath Soap. Bring your soap bars in on any Sunday in August!



August 2019

Every Sunday—10am Worship Service
10:15am Elementary Sunday School

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
				1	2	3
4 Worship 10am	5	6 10am Congregational Care Mtg	7 12pm Brown Baggers 5:30pm Finance Mtg	8	9	10
11 Blessing of the Animals & Worship at 10am in Curran Apple	12 6:30pm Board Mtg	13 6:30pm Men's Group Youth Wing	14 12pm Brown Baggers	15	16	17
18 Worship 10am	19	20	21 12pm Brown Baggers	22 Art in UP Chili Cook-off 5pm-6:45pm	23	24
25 Worship 10am	26	27	28 12pm Brown Baggers	29	30	31

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 Nursery Attendant: Addy Harding
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No matter **who** you are,
or **where** you are on life's journey, you're
welcome here.

Newsletter

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**United Church In
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Weekly

Sundays

10am Worship Service
With Rev. Cathlynn Law

10:15am Elementary Sunday
School (5yrs to 11yrs)

Wednesdays

Noon-2pm Brown Baggers
Luncheon & Bible Study Group

Thursdays

7:30pm-9pm Choir Practice
(Sept—May)

***We are United with God,
United to Love,
and United to Serve Others***

Monthly

1st Sunday of the month
Communion during worship

1st Tuesday of the month
1pm Alzheimer's Support Group

3rd Tuesday of the month
6:30-8pm Men's Group:
"Concerns in Our Hearts & Souls"

4th Sunday of the month
11:45am 4th Sunday Forum



God is still speaking,
**UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST** 