



2018 NEWSLETTER

A MESSAGE FROM PASTOR SOMMER

A Way Forward

In the local church, we rarely talk about what is going on or what is news worthy through our denominations. As a clergy in the United Methodist Church, I am not just required but by default active in the order, rules, and activities of our denomination. The certificates on the wall in my office stat that first, I am a graduate from a Wesleyan seminary, Asbury Seminary. The others are certificates, one behind the other. The one you see says that I am an Elder, which means that I have been ordained by the bishop to preach, preside over the sacraments, maintain order and lead the local church, and serve in our community and representing the church in all that I say and do in public places. Behind that certificate, is one that says that is am in **“Full Connection.” I am fully connected to our denomination on a district, conference, and denominational level.** My boss is the bishop, my supervisor is the district superintendent, and the CEO is of course God. So, everything that happens in our denomination, happens to me, and I am to share that with all good members of the local United Methodist Church for which I am appointed. This would be heavy if we did not have Jesus onto which we can cast our burdens.

I pray for our denomination daily. I pray for Bishop William McAllilly, our District Superintendent Rev. Donna Parramore and all other clergy in our global connection who are just trying to spread the Gospel as I am each day. I pray for all Methodists that we will stay clear on the path to serving God and serving others in the traditions of John Wesley. I ask that you join me in this prayer.

On Monday, February 12th, I attended a clergy conference that morning and then a District Operations Team meeting that following afternoon with Bishop McAllilly. That evening a few of our Lay Leaders from Homestead and Dorton heard a similar presentation with table discussions. For me, it was a phenomenal visit; a time for real conversations on the future of the church. There are two conversations that I need to make you aware of. First, our conference as it is now, covers the middle Tennessee area. We are knw as the Tennessee Conference. To the very near east of us is the Holston Conference and then to the west is the Memphis Conference. Our Bishop currently leads the Tennessee and Memphis Conferences, both which

Are known as the Nashville Episcopal Area. Our Bishop is leading us to discern a **“coming together” between the two conferences** in this episcopal area. The joining of these two conferences would not happen this year but over the next year and a half. Most other clergy I have spoken with are in favor of this **decision. Although I see where it would be a lot of work, I don't see any reason why these two conferences couldn't merge.** If you have any questions regarding this issue, I welcome conversation.

The other issue is an ongoing discussion for decades now in our denomination regarding homosexual clergy and clergy/churches performing same-sex marriages. Personally, as a clergy person I hold the Bible as authoritative and believe that we are all sinners in need of the grace that Christ gave to us upon His death. I also desire to bear witness and teach others to bear witness to the love of God to all persons who are so lovingly created. I believe our church building should be a haven for all, especially those in need of loving grace. I believe the church, through the teachings of Jesus Christ are required to show love, mercy and care to everyone who God sends into our path. I tow the middle ground, I am accepting of all yet do have personal boundaries where I believe it is biblically necessary. I am very open to having a conversation with anyone on this topic. In the future, we as a church may have the needed opportunity to have a forum to discuss our beliefs and opinion on this matter. This matter has become a major issue for debate within our denomination with many people taking a staunch conservative stance and many others taking a stern liberal stance on this issue. My fear, and the fear of many is that this will divide our denomination.

Some may have heard that at the last General Conference in 2016, a gathering for all elected delegates representing all the different areas of our global denomination, a committee was appointed to discuss what was to be called **“A Way Forward.”** Since then, they have come up with three options for our future that will be presented at a special-called General Conference in 2019.

- Option one—The **“traditional” view and to change nothing** in our Book of Discipline, which will maintain that all clergy must profess a celibate or heterosexual lifestyle and that no

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Trudy's Corner

Trudy Hill

The Cross

When I think of the cross that Jesus hung and died on, I think of the different ideas of atonement theory. **The word "atonement" refers to the means by which Jesus' death on the cross saves us and reconciles us to God.** Was that death a punishment, a sacrifice, and example, or a victory over powers? While there is much to discuss about the atonement it is good to first focus on what the atonement accomplished. Of course we know it accomplished reconciliation between God and mankind but is there anything else? **With Jesus' coming we see the beginning of the new covenant.** When Jesus came, he fulfilled the law, which is the old covenant. Fulfilling the old covenant of the law brought it to an end. Jesus also taught a new way, not of legalism but of grace. By fulfilling the law he was able to bring a new system into practice, **this is the new covenant of grace. Jesus' death and the inauguration of the new covenant are explicitly linked.**

Now go back with me to the thought of Jesus on the cross, **must God's wrath be vindicated before he can offer salvation?** If there is repentance of sin does **God's wrath remain? What is the purpose behind the idea of God's wrath and punishing Jesus for our sin?** What about the idea of God being a God of love? Why would a loving God punish his son for our sins? This is **the idea of "propitiation" a legal substitution wherein, Jesus is allowed to die in our place and offers eternal life in exchange.** This idea came into being around the time of the Great Reformation, while it is not the best theory of atonement we have, it was better than what was believed before that time. In Catholicism it was believed that one must pay penance for sin. This idea grew into the ideal of paying to help shorten a loved **one's time in purgatory, that one could buy indulgences and accomplish this.** After the reformation it was taught that Jesus paid that debt so no one had to worry about paying their own way. They believed that God was vengeful and that his wrath must be vindicated, therefore it was easy to believe that they would be **forgiven if they thought that God's wrath had been expressed, that Jesus "took that bullet for us."** However, I would argue that the message Jesus shared and

granted both before and after his death, was that of the forgiveness of sin. In scripture Jesus forgave sin **before his death. After Jesus' death his message remained the same, the forgiveness of sin.** Therefore my view on the atonement is more expressed in the word **"expiation" which means the seat of mercy. Jesus' death is where mercy is found. The cross of Jesus is the picture of what sinful humanity does to a righteous God, not the picture of what a righteous God does to his own son.** Make no mistake, you and I are responsible for what happened on the cross that day. But thanks be to God who always holds the victory! In the death of Jesus he was able to return to the throne where he sits at the right hand of the Father, sending in his place, the Holy Spirit, who empowers his followers to continue his work, this, dear friends, is the beginning of the new covenant. Sitting down (on the throne) is symbolic of a finished work, **"it is finished"** Jesus said, and he gave up his life for his friends as he continues to give us life!

Sin is a grievous thing, it causes death. Our sin will bring about our death just as it brought about the death of Jesus. Sin is the cause of all our problems, our sickness, and death itself. The ugliness of sin can be seen on the cross. Sin caused separation between humanity and God and the very ground that we came from was cursed because of it. We have weeds and thorns that choke out the good plants that feed us and keep us alive. Jesus was beaten repeatedly; mocked, spit upon, hated and crucified with a crown of the very same thorns that our own sinfulness produced. There **was no other way, for Jesus himself said; "Father, if there is any other way let this cup pass from me, but not my will but yours be done."** **Jesus on the cross—**that is the result of sin, how could anyone who says they love Jesus, hold onto sin if this be the case? Look at the result of sin, take a good long look, see it for what it truly is, nothing about it is right or good so turn **from it and don't look back! Put your trust in Jesus,** the one that does that and receives him will also receive his life and resurrection. Thank you God for your grace, your cleansing, your salvation, save us Lord from our sinful ways and deliver us into your glorious life.

Food Pantry

Thank you to everyone that assisted with the February Food Pantry. I am always amazed that we end up having enough help. When I first arrive there are only a few of us but the closer to 8:00 it gets, the more people come in which enables us to serve all of our clients. Your generosity is a blessing. In February we had 152 families, 14 of which were emergency bags.

I look forward to seeing you on March 10th at 7:30 am!!

Stewardship

Stewardship and the Lenten Season

Easter is coming fast, but first we will experience the season of Lent. During Lent (every day of our lives, really) the church is calling us to live our lives as stewards of God’s gifts. Lent is a time for us to reflect on our relationship with God and others. It is a time to learn how to live a life as a disciple and steward of our God-given gifts - our time, our talent, and our treasure. It is a time when, instead of “giving up” something, we can consider “taking on” something new. Consider these ideas of things to “take on” each day during March, while we prepare for the celebration of Easter.

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consider a Lenten tithe or additional donation to the church 2. Look outside: find something of beauty you had not noticed before 3. Donate five items of clothing to a local thrift store 4. No complaining today 5. Do someone else’s chore 6. Take five minutes of silence at noon 7. Take your own mug to the coffee shop; avoid another throw-away cup 8. Educate yourself about a current event 9. Forgive someone 10. Internet diet 11. Check out the Upper Room 12. Ask for help 13. Tell someone what you are grateful for 14. Introduce yourself to a neighbor or someone new at work, school, or in the congregation | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 15. Read Psalm 121 16. Make something homemade 17. No shopping day (yes, including on-line shopping) 18. Take time to read 19. Light a candle 20. Practice ministry in daily life. 21. Invest in reusable shopping bags 22. Smile a lot 23. Surprise someone by buying them coffee or a treat 24. Read John 8:1-11 25. Encourage a child 26. Support a local charity 27. No sugar day—where else is there sweetness in your life. 28. Learn how to do something new 29. Buy some flowers 30. Pray for peace 31. Decide which of these exercises you will take on for good |
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When taking on something new, at some point, we have to take that step of faith and just do it, whether we think we can do it or not, whether we are afraid or not. The good news is that we do not have to be perfect, and we do not have to do it alone. God promises to be with us in our journey.

Continued from Page 1....

- church or clergy can perform same-sex marriages. Many feel that this is the most biblically accurate. However, others who read the bible from a missional standpoint and believe that this will only cause further harm to those who have already been hurt by the church, may choose to leave our denomination and start their own.
- Option two—This option clears a path for this kind of decision and would divide the denomination into theologically different “branches” all under one denominational polity, rules and vision.
 - Option three—This option is the one that I personally favor is the “contextualized” option which keeps our denomination unified allowing each Annual Conference to decide who can be ordained and each church and clergy allowed to decide if they wish to perform same-sex marriages or not.

Each of these options are just in the beginning stages of discussion and will be revealed in greater detail to the delegates of the special-called General Conference this summer. The special conference on The Way Forward will be held next

February of 2019. At that time, a single option will be decided by vote to bring the General Conference, which meets regularly every four years, in 2020. If you have any questions for the Commission on the Way Forward that currently represents our conference, email them to cowf@numc.org.

I am sure that over the next couple of years, we will have plenty of time to dive deeper into these discussions. Homestead and Dorton UMCs are a beacon of hope to our community today and for many days to come. We will always strive to fight spiritual hunger and poverty with our neighbor. Our mission will not change due to any of these issues. If we share the gospel, love our neighbor and seek to live in peace with one another, we will always be the church! I am always proud and very grateful to serve as your pastor today and in the years to come as long as God calls, and the Bishop allows. No earthly decision can change the greater plan God has for those who love Him. Please join me in praying for our denomination and our leaders. Let us thank God that the future is already known, and Christ will always be victorious.

Your sister in Christ,
Pastor Sommer

The sign on the wall read “Hands to Work—Hearts to God” and as I thought about these meaningful words, the Homestead Food Pantry came to mind, as monthly so many hands come together to encourage each person coming through the line. All persons coming through receive not only needed food and other items available but the smiles and **laughter from the workers**. Then I thought of Homestead’s working hands as the VBS that is being planned, the Seder Meal, the Easter baskets for the March food pantry, for the Wednesday night meal and the Christian study that follows. Homestead is busy with so many programs—we are active doing God’s work. Thus come “Hearts to God” at Homestead.

As I consider all Homestead has to offer I think back to June, 2013 when I first walked through the doors of Homestead. I saw so many welcoming people who made me feel so glad I came. I saw a church with many children which to me meant a growing church. The dance program for children was a part of church worship I had not seen before—awesome! The positives are too many to list but today I am so glad to be a part of worshiping, praying for and with other church members at Homestead. How about you, where do you fit into the “Hearts of God” or “Hands to Work” at Homestead?



Blessings,
The God Hug Lady

This version of “Do It Anyway” was found written on the wall in Mother Teresa's home for children in Calcutta:

**People are often unreasonable, irrational, and self-centered.
Forgive them anyway.**

**If you are kind, people may accuse you of selfish, ulterior motives.
Be kind anyway.**

**If you are successful, you will win some unfaithful friends and some genuine enemies.
Succeed anyway.**

**If you are honest and sincere people may deceive you.
Be honest and sincere anyway.**

**What you spend years creating, others could destroy overnight.
Create anyway.**

**If you find serenity and happiness, some may be jealous.
Be happy anyway.**

**The good you do today, will often be forgotten.
Do good anyway.**

**Give the best you have, and it will never be enough.
Give your best anyway.**

In the final analysis, it is between you and God. It was never between you and them anyway.

Church Office Hours:

Monday 9:00 - 2:00
 Wednesday 9:00 - 2:00
 Thursday 9:00 - 2:00

NOTE: NEW WEDNESDAY HOURS!!

The Bulletin Board

Bread Pudding Tom Szaflarski

Ingredients

pudding:

- Two 1lb loaves of good sourdough bread, crust removed and cut into 1" cubes
- ¾ cups melted butter
- ¾ cups raisins (optional)
- ½ cup packed brown sugar
- ¾ cups sugar
- 4 cups half & half
- 4 whole eggs + 1 egg yolk
- 1 tbl vanilla extract

Sauce:

- 2 packages Werther's soft caramels
- 1/3 cup half & half

Directions

- Butter** a 11X14" baking dish.
- Place bread cubes in dish and drizzle with melted butter. Do not mix.
- Blend the sugars, half & half, eggs and vanilla and pour over bread. *
- If used, sprinkle the raisins over the top.
- Refrigerate, covered for at least an hour (overnight works too if you're making it ahead.)
- Bake in preheated 350° oven for 45 minutes, you can cover it loosely with aluminum foil in the last 15 minutes or so if it's getting too brown.
- While baking, melt caramels in half & half in a double boiler.
- Remove pudding from oven and pour caramel sauce over top.
- Enjoy! Leftovers, if there are any, should be refrigerated but can easily be reheated in a microwave.



WELCOME NEW MEMBERS !!!

Darryl Marcoux
TJ Williams

DO YOU HAVE A FAVORITE RECIPE THAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO SHARE? EMAIL TO JACKIE AT HOMESTEADERSSECRETARY@GMAIL.COM

Dates to Remember!!

- Mar 4 VBS Planning Mtg after church-lunch provided
- Mar 9 Make Easter baskets—10:00 am-HUMC
- Mar 10 Food Pantry
- Mar 10 Daylight Savings Time Begins
- Mar 11 Church Council—Pot luck lunch
- Mar 25 Palm Sunday/Youth Sunday
- Mar 29 Seder Meal—6:30
- Mar 30 Good Friday
- Apr 1 Easter

If we have missed your birthday or anniversary please contact Jackie in the church office.



- Royce & Janie Burgess Mar 3
- Jim & Dinah Goodwin Mar 19
- David & Tracie Corwin Mar 20
- Leonard & Ingrid Perry Mar 26



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| | Vickie VanHoose | Mar 3 |
| | Chase Cole | Mar 7 |
| | Lauren Cole | Mar 7 |
| | Kristie Langley | Mar 13 |
| | Grace Freeland | Mar 13 |
| | Cole Dayton | Mar 17 |
| | Tracie Hamlet | Mar 19 |
| | McKenna Langley | Mar 23 |
| Carol Green | Mar 22 | |
| Jill Honcoop | Mar 25 | |
| Tina Findley | Mar 28 | |
| | Jackie Szaflarski | Mar 27 |
| | Jessica Sherrill | Mar 28 |

March 2018

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
4 VBS Planning Mtg After Church/lunch provided	5 Disciple IV 6:00 at HUMC	6	7 WNL/Dinner 5:00, Class 6:00 Dance 3:00 - 5:00 Disciple I - 5:30 at DUMC	8	9 Easter Basket Prep 10:00 am at HUMC Food Pantry Prep - 5:00 pm	10 Food Pantry Distribution 8:00-10:00 am 7:30 am for helpers
11 Church Council Daylight Savings Time Ends	12 Disciple IV 6:00 at HUMC	13	14 WNL/Dinner 5:00, Class 6:00 Dance 3:00 - 5:00 Disciple I - 5:30 at DUMC	15	16	17
18	19 Disciple IV 6:00 at HUMC	20	21 WNL/Dinner 5:00, Class 6:00 Dance 3:00 - 5:00 Disciple I - 5:30 at DUMC	22	23 No School	24
25 Palm Sunday Youth Sunday	26 Disciple IV 6:00 at HUMC	27	28	29 Seder Meal - 6:30 pm	30 Good Friday	31
	No School	No School	No School	No School	No School	

April 2018

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 Easter	2 Disciple IV 6:00 at HUMC	3	4 WNL/Dinner 5:00,Class 6:00 Dance 3:00 - 5:00 Disciple I - 5:30 at DUMC	5	6	7
8	9 Disciple IV 6:00 at HUMC	10	11 WNL/Dinner 5:00,Class 6:00 Dance 3:00 - 5:00 Disciple I - 5:30 at DUMC	12	13 Food Pantry Prep - 5:00 pm	14 Food Pantry Distribution 8:00-10:00 am 7:30 am for helpers
15	16 Disciple IV 6:00 at HUMC	17	18 WNL/Dinner 5:00,Class 6:00 Dance 3:00 - 5:00 Disciple I - 5:30 at DUMC	19	20	21
22	23 Disciple IV 6:00 at HUMC	24	25 WNL/Dinner 5:00,Class 6:00 Dance 3:00 - 5:00 Disciple I - 5:30 at DUMC	26	27	28
29 Raise the Roof Marlene Sebulime	30 Disciple IV 6:00 at HUMC					