



The Messenger

The newsletter of
Leesburg United
Methodist Church

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From Pastor Jim: Prayer for Called General Conference

As most are aware, the Council of Bishops for the United Methodist Church will be leading a called special session of the General Conference of the United Methodist Church, February 23-26, 2019, in St. Louis, Missouri.

The purpose of this four-day special session will be to receive and act on a report from the Commission on a Way Forward¹, with recommendations from the Council of Bishops. The 32-member Commission was authorized by General Conference 2016 and appointed by the Council of Bishops to examine paragraphs in The United Methodist Book of Discipline concerning human sexuality² and explore options to strengthen the unity of the church. For a summary of these paragraphs and statements in our UM Book of Discipline, see <http://www.umc.org/what-we-believe/human-sexuality-backgrounder>.

The Commission's report presents three possible plans for the United Methodist Church moving forward³. These are known as "One-Church Plan," "Connectional Conference Plan," and "Modified Traditional Plan." (see the summary of the plans here in this newsletter; detailed version online³)

Decisions made at this conference will affect our denomination significantly. Thus, in the days leading up to this called General Conference, our Bishops have asked for all United Methodists to pray and fast for the mission and unity of the United Methodist Church. Fasting usually involves going without food, or a particular type of food that is in your regular diet, in order to focus on prayer. For those who cannot fast for health reasons,

giving up a normal activity – TV, video games, etc., - to spend time in prayer is an alternative. In a unique move that underscores the import of this GC, the first day of the GC, Saturday, February 23, will be a time of prayer for all of the delegations to join in, as they seek the discernment of the Holy Spirit. Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday will then be for conducting the business of the GC.

The clergy and laity who comprise our Virginia Conference delegation, including alternates, are listed at the end of this article. Please pray for them specifically and feel free to contact any or all to let them know you are praying for them, and to share your encouragement, your thoughts, etc.

One helpful reminder is to pray each day for four minutes (one minute for each day) at least; from 2:23 to 2:26 PM (or AM), corresponding to the dates for General Conference, 2/23-2/26.

We do not know what the outcome of this General Conference will be. We do know, however, that on February 27, the day after General Conference, 1) God will still be our God, 2) People (including UMs) will still need Jesus, 3) We will still need one another at LUMC, and 4) We will still be called to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world! Our priority as a congregation will still be to reach new people and families for Christ, welcoming all who will come; and our mission will still be focused on making disciples who follow Jesus, love God and others, and who minister to the world.

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Connect

February Worship: Gospel Hospitality

We use the word “hospitality” in our church. What does it mean? Being friendly to one another? Having refreshments after worship? Going out of the way to welcome a visitor? Putting signs outside that say “Welcome!”? Each and all of these comprise hospitality – but there’s more.

When we turn to scripture, we discover a “gospel hospitality” that embodies God’s welcome, a welcome that extends grace in a variety of ways and especially to the stranger. God’s welcome encompasses a welcome into the life of the kingdom of God – what Jesus called, “abundant life” (John 10:10). During the month of February, our Next Level Innovations Task Force on Hospitality, working with Pastor Jim, our Worship Team, Caring Team and others, invite us to wrap our minds around the concept of gospel hospitality as God’s welcome through us to others. In so doing, we will discover, uncover, and recover ways of making God’s welcome our standard of how we welcome others. Gospel hospitality.



Rev.
Jim Wishmyer,
Pastor

Coming in Lent...

Practicing "Gospel Hospitality" in two practical, personal, and simple ways. Watch the Weekly Info and the Head Start email for more details on “How to Pray for Someone Else” and “Holy Communion in Your Home”.

- Feb 3** **Gospel Hospitality - 4 R's; Genesis 18**
*** State of LUMC: 2018 in Review**
Introduction to “gospel hospitality”.
Learning and living the marks of true hospitality.
- Feb 10** **Gospel Hospitality - Welcome Home!; Luke 15**
Scout Sunday
Reflecting on the ways of God’s welcome.
How have you been welcomed home?
- Feb 17** **God’s Welcome Begins with Invitation; Matthew 5:43-48 (The Message)**
*** Taking God’s welcome into Monday-Saturday,**
letting God stretch and expand our capacity.
- Feb 24** **An Invitation to Beat All Others; Luke 14**
*** Rethinking evangelism through the lens of invitations we extend**
and receive. God has invited all to the banquet!

Save the Date: Sunday afternoon. March 10th you are invited to a church wide hospitality training. Time and location TBD.

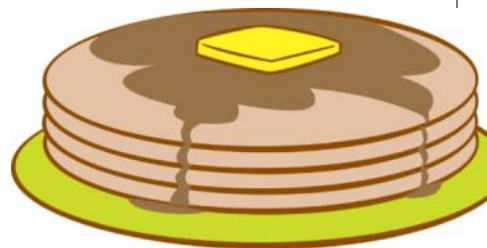
Connect

Connect with our Youth through Fundraisers

Support our Youth and the Youth Summer Mission Trip by supporting their fundraisers.

Super Bowl Sub Sale: Pre-order subs or order in person in Asbury Hall. All proceeds help to offset the \$26,000 cost of the trip.

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper: The Pancake Supper is on Shrove Tuesday, March 5th. Open seating is available in Asbury Hall from 5–7 pm with a buffet of pancakes, sausage, eggs, and fruit.



SHROVE TUESDAY

Prayer Shawl Group Forming

There has been interest in an evening group to "sit and knit" (or crochet), to create shawls for church attendees, friends, and family members in need of the comfort that shawls and coverlets bring. They are made with love and prayers with each stitch.

Please contact Gail Bessom at 703 728 2740 or gourdmom@aol.com



Scout Sunday: Feb 10th



Any and all members of scouts: Boy Scouts of America, Cub Scouts, and Girl Scouts USA, are invited to participate in worship on February 10th. Adult and youth members should attend in uniform and will be recognized during the services.

Please contact worship@leesburgumc.org if you are a scout and would like to serve as usher, greeter, or reader.

Connect

LUMC Pilgrimage Tours: Museum of the Bible, Feb 18th

Save time on your calendars for the next Pilgrimage Trip on Monday February 18th, President's Day holiday to the Museum of the Bible. The current plan is to gather as a group at LUMC parking lot at 8:30am and then drive to the Wiehle-Reston East Metro, Silver Line stop and take it to the Federal Center stop, which should be fun for kids and then take a one block walk west to the Museum, or you can drive downtown, but you will need to park in a pay parking garage and you will have a longer walk. Pre-purchased online prices are as follows: 6 and under free, 7-17 \$9.99, Adults, Seniors, Military \$19.99. Prices are \$5 more at the door. For more details you can email, text, or call Al Ruggles, alrugg@verizon.net or 540-454-8248.



Young Adult Event: Game Night! Feb 21st

All are invited to the next young adult event: game night at Black Hoof Brewery on February 21st at 7pm. For questions, email Nate at nate.rathjen@leesburgumc.org.

92-year-old Preacher

I just read this article, Wayne Reynolds, and thought I'd pass it on as I think it's very inspirational. Written by an unknown source.

While watching a little TV on Sunday instead of going to church, I watched a church in Atlanta, Georgia honoring one of its senior pastors who had been retired many years. He was 92 at that time and I wondered why the church even bother to ask the old gentleman to preach at that age.

After a warm welcome, introduction of this speaker, and as the applause quieted down, he rose from his high back chair and walked slowly, with great effort and a sliding gate to the podium. Without a note or written paper of any kind he placed both hands on the pulpit to steady himself and then quietly and slowly he began to speak.

"When I was asked to come here today to talk to you, your pastor asked me to tell you what was the greatest lesson ever learned in my 50 all the years of preaching. I thought about it for a few days and boiled it down to just one thing that made the most difference in my life and sustain me through all my trials. The one thing that I could always rely on when tears and heartbreak and pain and fear and sorrow paralyzed me... The only thing that would comfort me was this verse:"



Jesus loves me this I know,
for the Bible tells me so.
Little ones to him belong,
we are weak but he is strong...
Yes, Jesus loves me...
The Bible tells me so.

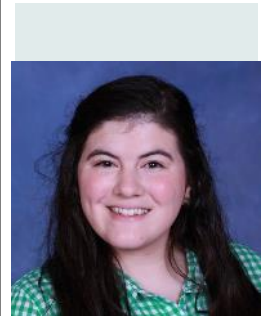
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Connect

Community Office Hours

Wednesdays from 9:00 am—12:30 pm . Resumes January 9th

Stop by the Starbucks off of Edwards Ferry Road in Leesburg on Wednesdays from 9:00—12:30 for Rev. Heather's Community Office Hours. She would love to pray with you, lend a listening ear, and share some coffee. Keep an eye on our Facebook page for updates or changes to the coffee hours: www.facebook.com/LeesburgUMC/

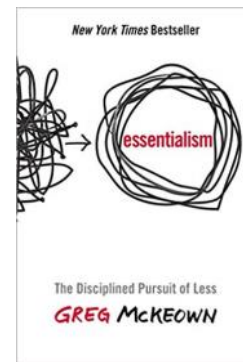


**Rev Heather Wray,
Director of
Connect Ministries**

Virtual Book Club: "Essentialism," Feb 26th

Join Rev. Heather for our second virtual book club, on February 26th at 8:00 pm, where we will discuss Essentialism by Greg Mckeown. This book was a recommended book from our Next Level Innovations. Please read the book prior to our virtual meeting.

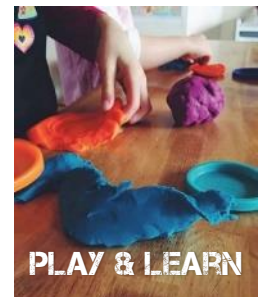
Our meeting will take place in the comfort of your own home and we will connect via Zoom Meeting (a closed online face to face meeting using your own device, smartphone or computer. Whatever device you select it must have video capabilities). If you are interested please contact Rev. Heather at heather.wray@leesburgumc.org.



Play & Learn

Parents and their little ones (infants through 5 years) are invited to be a part of the highly energetic Play and Learn Group. Any family is welcome to attend, so feel free to bring a friend. We meet on Tuesdays, 9:15— 10:30 am in Asbury Hall. The group's purpose is to create a space where both children and adults can encourage one another, learn, grow, and build friendships, .

If you have any questions please email, Rev. Wray at heather.wray@leesburgumc.org



Keeping Up with the Congregation

Condolences

... to the Frazee family (Jeff, Marni, Keffen, and Kira) on the passing of Jeff's father, Rick, on January 29th.

New Members

We've had no new members in the last month. Watch the Weekly Info for information on upcoming membership class opportunities.

February Birthdays

The February birthday list is available on the Just Ask desk.



Grow

Classes & Workshops

Adult Discipleship: One Time Classes & Workshops

Tuesday, February 12, 7–8 pm: Sharing Your Faith

What does it mean to share your faith? What if its more like sharing a cup of sugar than sharing your “testimony” or pulling out a Bible?

We will discuss what faith is and what it means to share it with others. Please sign up in advance.

Contact Angela Becek with questions,
angela@leesburgumc.org



Choose from the options at registration

(<https://leesburgumc.churchcenter.com/registrations/events/188715>)

92-year-old Preacher *(Continued from page 4)*

When he finished, the church was quiet. You actually could hear his footsteps as he shuffled back to his chair. I don't believe I will ever forget it.

A pastor once stated, “ I always noticed that it was the adults who chose the children's him Jesus loves me (for the children of course) during a hymn saying, and it was the adults who sang the loudest because I could see that they knew it the best.”

Senior version of Jesus Loves Me: Here is a new version just for us who have white hair or no hair at all. For us over middle age or even those almost there and all of you others, check out this newest version of Jesus loves me.

Jesus loves me this I know, though my hair is white as snow, though my site is growing dim.
Still he bids me trust in him. Yes, Jesus loves me... Yes, Jesus loves me...

Though my steps are oh so slow, with my hand in His I'll go, on through life, let come what may.
He'll be there to lead the way. *Chorus*

When the nights are dark and long, in my heart he puts a song. Telling me in words so clear
have no fear, for I am near *Chorus*

When my work on earth is done, in life's victories have been won. He will take me home
above, then I'll understand his love. *Chorus*

I love Jesus, does he know? Have I ever told him so? Jesus loves to hear me say, that I love
him every day.



Grow



Angela Becek,
Director of
Discipleship
Ministries

Adult Small Groups

Matthew (Sundays at 6 pm in Wesley Hall)

Journey inside the pages of Scripture to meet a personal God who enters individual lives and begins a creative work from the inside out. Shaped with the individual in mind, Immersion encourages simultaneous engagement both with the Word of God and with the God of the Word to become a new creation in Christ. Immersion, inspired by a fresh translation - the Common English Bible - stands firmly on Scripture and helps readers explore the emotional, spiritual, and intellectual needs of their personal faith. More importantly, they'll be able to discover God's revelation through readings and reflections. The book is \$9, payable through the online registration.

Click Here
TO REGISTER

<https://leesburgumc.churchcenter.com/registrations/events/188649>

Philippians (Thursdays at 9:30 am in Wesley Hall)

The Letter of Philippians talks about how grateful Paul is for their support and encourages them to have joy as Christians regardless of their circumstances. When you read these words think about this: Paul is chained to a Roman soldier, and his letter to the church in Philippi is to remind them of the goodness of a faithful God." The book is \$13, payable through the registration.

Click Here
TO REGISTER

<https://leesburgumc.churchcenter.com/registrations/events/188650>

Following the Narrative Lectionary Reading Plan (11 am in AG or Blue Room)

There are two groups that are following the reading plan which accompanies the sermons series as it follows God's Story of redemption in Scripture. Beginning in January and continuing through Easter, these groups will be focused on the Gospel According to Matthew. The group in the AG is facilitated by Carl Snyder and Steve Chapin. The group in the Blue Room is facilitated by Sue Bourke and Sharon Reith. Materials are free, registration helps leaders know to expect you and prepare materials.

Click Here
TO REGISTER

<https://leesburgumc.churchcenter.com/registrations/events/188680>

Adult Sunday School (9:45 am in the AG)

This group is facilitated by Kim Kadesch and will be studying the books of Ezra and Nehemiah.

Click Here
TO REGISTER

<https://leesburgumc.churchcenter.com/registrations/events/188693>

Parlor Group (9:45 am in the Parlor)

This group is facilitated by David Graves and Bryan Talbot and is managed by Donna Varn. In January, they will continue with the Ray Vander Laan and supplemental materials. Materials are free, registration helps leaders know to expect you and prepare materials.

Click Here
TO REGISTER

<https://leesburgumc.churchcenter.com/registrations/events/188690>

Grow

Children's Ministry

Visit www.leesburgumc.org/kids
for more information

*And let us run with perseverance the
race marked out for us*



VBS: (Vacation Bible School)

June 24—29, 2019

Registration is now OPEN!



[https://leesburgumc.churchcenter.com/
registrations/events/196704](https://leesburgumc.churchcenter.com/registrations/events/196704)



Sunday School: What We're Doing and How You Can Help

Since the Fall, our kids have been following the same Scripture readings as adult worship, youth worship, and some of our small groups.

We have invested in our children's Sunday school opening time and space by working to create a warm and inviting atmosphere for our kids and their families. We currently have sets designed to help them imagine they are walking in the time of Jesus as they explore the Gospel of Matthew.

As kids arrive on Sunday mornings, we seek to engage them and to promote building relationships with activities such as obstacle courses and group games.

We also have incorporated Backpack Buddies into the Sunday school routine, so that kids are participating in this mission project every month as part of their discipleship experience.

**We are often in need of a second pair of hands and eyes,
particularly with our K-1st and our 2nd-3rd grade classrooms.
Join our team and be part of building up the next generation.**

Please contact Angela Becek to get involved! angela@leesburgumc.org

Youth Key Dates

Visit www.leesburgumc.org/ywc for more information and full calendar

- February 3 8:30-1 pm Sub Sale & Souper Bowl of Caring
- February 10 9:45 Gallery
6 pm—7:30 Youth Group
- February 15-18 Winter Retreat
- February 17 No Youth Activities
- February 24 9:45 Gallery
6 pm—7:30 Youth Group



30 Hour Famine: March 15 - 16

The What:

Thirty hours. It's just over one day, but in that short time, more than 7,000 kids will die of hunger-related causes.

The Why:

The question is, will you care enough to let their hunger move you to action? Inspired by the love of God, you can join the fight: to keep kids alive; to give food to all who go hungry; to hunger for justice.

The How:

When you do the 30 Hour Famine, you're opening your eyes to the reality of global poverty. The funds you raise will bring hope to hungry kids: your brothers and sisters in the family of God. After registering, please set-up your fundraising page (see confirmation e-mail).

Click Here
TO **REGISTER**

<https://leesburgumc.churchcenter.com/registrations/events/188745>

We will spend about 24 hours at church doing various poverty-related activities to teach of the conditions faced by millions in the world today. It's a Lock-in, but with purpose and without food.*

We will close with a brief worship service that parents are strongly encouraged to come to, with Communion followed by a light meal.

** We will have juice at regular intervals. Those with medical conditions that prevent them from fasting should bring simple snacks that will be kept in a location removed from the group.*



World Vision 30 HOUR FAMINE

Hunger isn't just. But your hunger can be.

JUST HUNGER.



Grow



Youth Lock-in Report and Thanks

On January 18 and 19th, our youth gathered for their annual Amazing Race and Lock-in.

This is a great time for youth to develop friendships and trust through games and competition, which gets built on over time through other events and gives them strength when they go out and serve together into the community, particularly on the summer mission trip.

Team building is an essential element of youth ministry. Developing a community of courage provides youth with a safe space to struggle with their faith, and social issues and a core group of people to live out the call of discipleship with. Relationships are the foundation of the discipleship process.

Special thanks to Pat & Sue Bourke, Bill & Deb Tripp, Sean & Rebekah Daugherty, Chris Becek, Carl Snyder, and Ian and Heather Bennett-Klein for opening their homes to our teams and spending some time laughing and enjoying the company of our youth.

Also thank you to Cynthia Ginman, Jeannie Boyer, Al Ruggles, Melissa Frescholtz, and Sean Daugherty for providing transportation, and to Carl Snyder for spending the night with us!



There are many ways that you can get involved with our youth ministry. Please contact Angela Becek if you are interested, angela@leesburgumc.org

Reach

REACH Roanoke (a.k.a. U-SPY)

July 6– 12

This year, our youth will be participating in REACH Roanoke instead of SPY for their summer mission trip. Our youth who visited REACH in December dubbed it “U-SPY” for Urban SPY. REACH works much more closely with local agencies to connect with the people who most need help in the community. Students will have the opportunity to work on homes, as they did with SPY, but also to work in the homeless shelter, the local food pantry, and the animal shelter. They would also be given the opportunity, if they chose, to run a VBS for the neighborhood kids.

A couple of things that make REACH very different from SPY are:

- It is year-round. They have groups come on weekends that continue the work all year.
- They have a year-round staff which adds continuity and maintains relationships in the community.
- It is in a different building and a different city.
- It is more urban; groups will not have long drives to their work sites.
- They buy abandoned homes, fix them up, work with the bank and community organizations to make sure deserving families are able to purchase the homes.
- Evening programming takes place out in the community

Click Here
TO REGISTER

<https://leesburgumc.churchcenter.com/registrations/events/196622>



**Please support our Youth and their Mission Trip by:
purchasing subs
on Super Bowl Sunday,
and coming to the
Pancake Supper on March 5.**



Reach

The LUMC Missions Team: For more information or if you have questions about Missions at Leesburg UMC, please contact Missions Chair Margrit Snyder at missions@leesburgumc.org.



Backpack Buddies

Through the LUMC Backpack Buddies program, we provide support to local school children who have been identified as needing additional food over the weekend. During the school year, each child receives a backpack filled with six meals for the weekend. LUMC packs bags of food during the school year on the first Sunday of each month in Asbury Hall after the 9:45 worship service.

Our next packing is January 6th

How You Can Help

- 1) Donate money. Write "Backpack Buddies" on your check memo or offering envelope.
- 2) Donate food items. Please place the listed items in the designated bins in Wesley Hall.
- 3) Donate your time. Help fill the backpacks. It only takes an hour, it's lots of fun, and it's a wonderful way to help serve children in our community. All ages can help, including kids.

Your participation is always greatly appreciated. If you have any questions please contact Barbara Luna at 703-606-1256 after 6:30 pm or email blunalsbrg@aol.com.

Food Items for Backpack Buddies
individual cups of ravioli, beefaroni, or spaghetti; granola bars; cereal (single-serve boxes); instant oatmeal; fruit cups; single-serve applesauce cups, shelf-stable milk (white or chocolate); juice boxes; macaroni and cheese cups; cheese crackers

Packing Dates

- Feb 3**
- Mar 3**
- Apr 7**
- May 5**



LUMC Supports Loudoun Hunger Relief (LHR)

The First Sunday of each month is Food Insecurity Sunday. Please help us support Loudoun Hunger Relief by bringing food and other items to Wesley Hall. If you know you aren't going to be here the first Sunday of the month, you can drop off your donations in Wesley Hall anytime the church is open .

Thank you for your generosity!

Shopping List:

- | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------------------|
| Cereal | Canned green beans |
| 100% juic | Canned corn |
| Canned tuna | Toothpaste |
| Canned chicken | Toothbrushes |
| Peanut Butter | Feminine hygiene products |
| Canned fruit | Diapers |
| Canned peas | |

Super Bowl Sunday—Bring Cash for Loudoun Hunger Relief!

On Super Bowl Sunday, our youth will have soup pots to collect money Loudoun Hunger Relief. All cash and checks placed in the pots will go directly to LHR.

Please note: our youth are passionate about food insecurity and might not realize that you gave already, one trick is to decide how much you're going to give and divide it up into smaller bills so that each time you're approached, you can give.



Great Beginnings Preschool

Hello all! Happy February!

Early Registration for the 2018-2019 school year is now open to LUMC families, current GBP families and GBP alumni. Application forms can be found on our website, greatbeginningsleesburg.com, under FORMS. Early Registration closes on Friday, February 1 in preparation for Open Registration which begins February 4 at 9:45 am via sign-up genius link on our homepage. Email me with any questions, greatbeginningsleesburg@gmail.com.

In February, we will focus on the color pink, the heart shape, the numbers 7 and 14, and the letters P, Q, R, and S. Our themes include dental health, measuring, counting, Valentine's Day, sharing and caring, President's Day, patriotism, and the Olympics. In recognition of Dental Health Month, our friends from Ashburn Pediatric Dental Center will come to GBP and speak to the children about good dental practices.

In Music, our composer of the month is Duke Ellington. I am so excited to share the magic and soul of jazz music with our Sunbeams. Our music term of the month is "conductor" but we will continue to review our other terms: tempo, pitch, fermata, and crescendo.

Our Bible verse for February is found in 1 Corinthians 16:14, "Let all you do be done in love". In Chapel, we will meet the disciples and hear of Jesus' miracles and time on Earth.

Wishing you a February full of Jesus' love!

Heather Gonzalez, Preschool Director
greatbeginningsleesburg@gmail.com



Steward

NLI Update for Jan. 31, 2019

Here's a quick update on what's going on with NLI initiatives:

Vision Team met with our mentor Kirk Nave to review our vision alignment plan and develop a list of priorities for each of the focus groups, to make sure we are putting vision “in the driver’s seat.”

Hospitality Team took advantage of the influx of Christmas guests by experimenting with the 5:00 pm service. All guests attending the 5:00 pm service received a gift thanking them for worshipping with us. As a follow up, guests received a letter and a home delivery of a gift and information on LUMC. As another innovation, attendance sheets were included in the bulletins at all Christmas Eve services. The team also researched hospitality techniques at several other churches and carefully reviewed the Mystery Worshipper reports we received.

Save the Date! Hospitality Training is scheduled for March 10th which ties into the February sermon series on “God’s Welcome.”

Communications Task Force conducted interviews with various members of the congregation, particularly those in a leadership role, to assess our current modes of communicating. In order to get solid congregation feedback on communications, surveys were also included in the weekly bulletin for several weeks. Based on internal LUMC feedback and research of other churches, the Task Force has drafted and submitted their recommendations report to CLT. They are working on the signage plan and securing quotes; submitted a proposed job description for a Web Designer; and are drafting a proposed job description for a Communications Coordinator.

Save the Date! The first Town Hall meeting is scheduled for March 3rd at noon with lunch. More information to come.

Reach Team is developing plans to grow a church wide emphasis on identifying and reaching our neighbors in Leesburg (i.e., individual neighborhoods, downtown Leesburg, civic groups, schools, etc.). Team members are gaining insight from the book *The Art of Neighboring*, which will also be the basis for a sermon series after the Easter season. They also plan to combine prayer-walking with our Lenten disciplines, providing specific tools to help us be effective prayer-walkers.

Connect Team is planning to deepen the Disciple Group experience by showing members how to identify and develop their own stories; practice sharing their stories with the group; discuss possible opportunities for sharing; identify their “circles of influence;” and pray for the Holy Spirit to empower them. Time will also be set aside in worship for members to learn about this process and hear the stories that are coming out of Disciple Groups to celebrate how God is working in our lives. Sharing our stories connect us with God and each other in a profound way.

Save the Date! Sharing Your Faith Workshop (Small Group) is planned for Feb 12th from 7—8 pm.



(Continued on page 15)

(Continued from page 14)

Our breakthrough prayer is being revised to reflect what we as a church are now seeking from God, post NLI approval. We will have one prayer for the whole congregation to be praying together, and a specific prayer for each Task Force.

The Seniors ministry is being revitalized to include intergenerational events such as “pilgrimages” to religious and cultural sites.

Missional Engagement Team met and brainstormed about areas where LUMC can have an impact in our community. In February, the Rev. Joanna Dietz, Braddock Street UMC Deacon, is scheduled to train the team on assessing local needs.

The Master Tracker which provides more detail on the various focus groups’ activities can be accessed from the NLI Documents page on the LUMC website: www.leesburgumc.org/NLI (click the link for “NLI Documents” on the righthand column).

These are exciting days for LUMC!

Please celebrate with each other our accomplishments toward living out our vision:

To be followers of Jesus (witness)

- one with God (worship) and with each other (small groups)

- ministers to all the world (missions/ministry).

Our NEW Breakthrough Prayer:

O God, Awesome and Holy, we praise and adore you!

Thank you, Jesus! for walking with us and calling us to be your church.

Thank you, Holy Spirit! for empowering us to serve, witness, and work according to your will.

Thank you, Father! for helping us to do more than we dreamed.

Forgive us our doubt and stubbornness. Kindle our hearts with hope for the future, love for neighbor, and faith to persevere in doing your will.

Keep breaking through our lives, our church, and our community to bring new partnerships, new life, and new power to do far more than we can even imagine.

May it be, O God! In Jesus’ name. Amen.

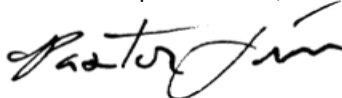
Steward

“Called General Conference” (continued)

(Continued from page 1)

SAVE THE DATE - On the Sunday following General Conference, March 3, we will be having lunch following our morning worship, and will then conduct a town hall style discussion to share the results of General Conference. For those who want to watch the General Conference, February 23-26, the GC will be live-streamed at UMC.org/live.

Grace and peace to all, through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ



Pastor Jim Wishmyer

* The “General Conference” is the top decision-making body of the United Methodist Church, and is comprised of an equal number of clergy and laity (864 total) from the United Methodist Church around the world. The GC normally meets every four years, with the next regularly scheduled GC set for May 5-15, 2020.

- 1 <https://www.wnccumc.org/commissiononawayforwardresources> for information and additional links to the Commission’s work
- 2 <http://www.umc.org/what-we-believe/what-is-the-denominations-position-on-homosexuality>
- 3 <https://www.epaumc.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Plans-Comparison-English.pdf>

For a brief, general overview of what will be happening at General Conference, here is a short video - <https://youtu.be/kK8FrUCerHc>

Additional resources, articles, and more can be found at the “Just Ask” desk in Wesley Hall.

Virginia Conference Delegates to 2019 Called General Conference

Clergy Delegates:

Rev. Thomas Berlin (tberlin@florisumc.org);
 Rev. Meredith McNabb (meredithmcnabb@vaumc.org);
 Rev. Dr. Denise Honeycutt (jdenisehoneycutt@gmail.com);
 Dr. Clarence Brown, Jr. (Cbrown@stlukesyorktown.org);
 Rev. Tammy Estep (tammyestep@vaumc.org);
 Rev. Dr. Ted Smith (RappahannockRiverDS@vaumc.org);
 Rev. Ileana Rosario (ileanarosario@vaumc.org);
 Rev. Peter Moon (petemoon@vaumc.org);
 Dr. Kendall Soulen (kendall.soulen@emory.edu);
 Rev. Mark Ogren (markogren@vaumc.org);
 Rev. Dr. Rob Vaughn (drobvaughn@gmail.com)

Clergy Reserves:

Rev. Seonyoung Kim (seonyoungkim@vaumc.org);
 Rev. Bob Cooper (bobcooper@vaumc.org)

Lay Delegates:

Ms. Martha Stokes (marthaestokes@gmail.com);
 Mr. Warren Harper (wrscharper@gmail.com);
 Ms. Shirley Cauffman (shirley.cauffman@comcast.net);
 Mr. Nathaniel Bishop (nlbishop@jchs.edu);
 Ms. Virginia Greer (vgreer10@su.edu);
 Ms. Darlene Amon (dvamon@aol.com);
 Ms. Joyce Winston (buckrowbeach@gmail.com);
 Mr. Gene Mims (gene.mims@comcast.net);
 Ms. Beth Christian (bethchristian@vaumc.org);
 Ms. Alison Malloy (alisonmalloy@gmail.com);
 Mr. Marshall Bailey (marshall@baileyva.com)

Lay Reserves:

Mr. Lawrence Burian (llburian360@gmail.com);
 Mr. Jacob Paysour (jpaysour@gmail.com)

2019 General Conference

Three Plans Presented by the Commission of the Way Forward

One Church Plan

- removes current language in *The Book of Discipline* that states, “The United Methodist Church does not condone the practice of homosexuality and considers this practice incompatible with Christian teaching.”
- changes the definition of marriage to a monogamous relationship between two adults.
- gives pastors the authority to perform same gender weddings and congregations the right to determine whether same gender weddings can be held in their facilities.
- protects the right of pastors not to conduct same gender weddings.
- protects the right of bishops not to ordain self-avowed practicing homosexuals, “The Jurisdictional College of Bishops shall provide for the ordination, commissioning, and licensing of all persons recommended by the Board of Ordained Ministry and the Clergy Session of the Annual Conference in the bounds of its jurisdiction.” (proposed Amendment to ¶415.6)
- allows the Clergy Session of the Annual Conference to vote on motions by the Board of Ordained Ministry regarding the certification, ordination and appointment of self-avowed homosexuals only once every 30 months, unless agreed to by the presiding bishop.
- requires churches leaving the denomination to contribute money equal to their share of the annual conference’s unfunded pension liability.

Connectional Conference Plan

- maintains a common unified theological core consisting of the proposed *General Book of Discipline* that includes the Articles of Religion, Confession of Faith, the General Rules and other agreed upon items.
- utilizes shared services by the General Board of Pensions and Health Benefits, General Council on Finance and Administration, Archives and History, Publishing House and parts of the General Board of Global Ministries.
- creates three ‘Connectional Conferences’ (Progressive, Unity and Traditional) based on theological perspectives related to accountability, contextualization and justice perspectives.
- allows Central Conferences outside the United States to remain as geographical entities or align with a Connectional Conference.
- gives jurisdictional conferences the authority to determine which Connectional Conference with which to align.
- allows annual conferences, congregations, pastors and bishops to align with another Connectional Conference rather than the one chosen by their jurisdiction or annual conference.
- assigns much of the authority currently given to the General Conference to the Connectional

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Steward

“Three Plans...” (continued)

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Conferences, including matters concerning the election, assignment, funding and accountability of bishops, ordination standards and the writing of the proposed Connectional Conference Book of Discipline.

- redefines and limits the roles of the General Conference, Council of Bishops and Judicial Council.
- requires eight constitutional amendments for implementation.

Traditional Plan

- maintains the United Methodist Church’s current stance that states, “The United Methodist Church does not condone the practice of homosexuality and considers this practice incompatible with Christian teaching,” the definition of marriage as between a woman and man, and the prohibition of self-avowed practicing homosexuals being certified as candidates, ordained as ministers or appointed to serve.
- requires active and retired bishops, annual conferences and Boards of Ordained Ministry to certify that they will uphold, enforce, and maintain disciplinary standards regarding marriage and ordination of self-avowed practicing homosexuals.
- prohibits bishops from consecrating bishops and commissioning or ordaining individuals who are self-avowed practicing homosexuals.
- provides a number of measures, including mandatory actions, to ensure increased accountability by clergy and bishops.
- prohibits annual conferences that fail to certify their willingness to uphold disciplinary standards regarding marriage and ordination of self-avowed practicing homosexuals from using the United Methodist name and logo or receiving any funds from The United Methodist Church beginning in 2021.
- allows annual conferences or any group of 50 congregations to form a self-governing church if they are in “irreconcilable conflict for reasons of conscience with the doctrine or moral teachings and requirements of The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church on the issues of human sexuality.”
- allows local churches that disagree with their annual conference's decision to withdraw and unite with an “autonomous, affiliated, or concordat church.”
- requires churches leaving the denomination to contribute money equal to their share of the annual conference’s unfunded pension liability.

Where can the entire “Commission on a Way Forward Report” be found? http://docs.arumc.org/Way%20Forward/Way_Forward_Report_-_Final_-_ENGLISH.pdf

Inclement Weather Policy

As winter weather approaches, just a reminder that LUMC will be open for worship on Sundays, regardless of the weather, except in very extreme conditions such as a hurricane, 100-year flood, blinding blizzard conditions, etc..

Always use good judgment and err on the side of safety when inclement weather hits the area. Check the church's website when in doubt.



Fragrant Offering

I sometimes dabble with words, and was recently inspired during the Prayers of the People at my "Sunday Church," St. Peter's Episcopal in Purcellville. Is it a poem or merely poetic? I'll let you decide, but in any case I hope you enjoy! -Linda Stoutenburgh, Office Manager

Fragrant Offering

by Linda Stoutenburgh

The leader stands and reads
the words of prayer.

Prayer from us, for us,
prayer to Holy God in heaven,
far yet near, here but not.

The words flow forth,
old words, new words,
ancient petitions in modern phrase.

We listen, we hear.

Those with softened heart
can sense the change:
change in the air,
change in the mood.

The leader reads
but more than words flow forth.

The barest curl of smoke,
translucent, glimmering,
accompanies the words.

The faint tendril curls lazily,
moving gently in the light-filled air.

It extends and reaches,
out, out, and outward still.

Out over the people, among the people,
wreathing and enveloping
as it flows, grows.

The leader reads
and billows form!

Clouds of prayer hang in the air,
now rising also from the pews,
from those who've joined the leader's words
though silently, silently.

The leader reads,
but wait!

What's that sweet smell?
That delicious aroma in the air?
Incense!

Not merely smoke but fragrance, too,
the cloud of prayer has sweetened,
somehow thickened.

The soul delights in this new atmosphere
of prayer made real, tangible.

A taste of heaven,
our words are now incarnate, too.

The leader reads
and God receives our fragrant offering.
He smiles.



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The March Newsletter is scheduled to be published on Friday, February 22nd. All items are due to the office by 9 am on Monday, January 18th. Thank you!

Super Bowl Sunday—Bring Cash for Loudoun Hunger Relief!

On Super Bowl Sunday, our youth will have soup pots to collect money Loudoun Hunger Relief. All cash and checks placed in the pots will go directly to LHR.

Please note: our youth are passionate about food insecurity and might not realize that you gave already, one trick is to decide how much you're going to give and divide it up into smaller bills so that each time you're approached, you can give.



General Conference Prayer Challenge

All United Methodists are urged to pray daily for four minutes, corresponding to the four days of our called General Conference in February. Since the beginning date is 2/23, for some the time, 2:23 PM (or AM), may be a helpful reminder to pray.

In addition to prayer, all United Methodists who are physically able to do so, are encouraged to fast on Fridays through breakfast and lunch, and to use the time for prayer. For those who cannot fast from food, other options might be to fast from social media, or something else where the time normally spent could be used prayer.

