

WESLEYAN DISTRICT WITNESS

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A MESSAGE FROM YOUR DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT

Pastors and Laity:

I am sharing this with you because this is one of the most effective revivals my churches and I have ever put together. You can use this model or perhaps this will give you some ideas of some things you can do in your churches and community. God bless all of you as we work together to lead our churches into disciple-making ministries!

Rev. Mary Ellen Finegan, DS

A New Kind of Revival

1. We began on Sunday morning, with the pastor preaching a sermon calling all members to reach out to the unchurched, the lost, those who do not yet know Christ as Lord and Savior.
Operation Andrew and Andy papers were handed out. (the Operation Andy was handed out in Sunday School Classes for the children). The teachers taught that lesson that morning to all the children's and youth classes. The children were encouraged to bring a friend who doesn't come to church with them for the CHILDREN'S AFTERNOON REVIVAL. This began at 3:00 p.m.
This Children's Revival met in the Fellowship Hall and we had a clown ministry team come from Buckhannon to share Jesus with the children. There were several activities during this time the clowns did with the children. It was exciting. This lasted until 5 p.m. At 5 p.m....
2. There was Pizza and refreshment time. This was done at this time because it was close to supper time, and the youth would be having their YOUTH REVIVAL at 6 p.m. So, after the Children's Revival and before the Youth Revival, there was a time of sharing food and fellowship together. Anyone, parents included could come for this time. At 6 p.m....
3. YOUTH REVIVAL BEGAN. We invited an exciting pastor who was really good with youth (7th to 12th graders). There was a praise band who was invited from another neighboring church who played

upbeat, exciting music that the teens would enjoy. The preacher preached, sang, and even had the teens dancing. He showed some clips from some popular movies where young people had to make a decision that would change their lives forever. **SEVERAL TEENAGERS GAVE THEIR LIVES TO CHRIST AT THIS ONE DAY YOUTH REVIVAL EVENT!** The youth revival was the largest attended, because they were so excited about it that they brought their friends from school with them. We probably had about 100 youth that evening. One note of caution: **NO PARENTS WERE ALLOWED AT THIS EVENT.** They could eat leftover Pizza in the fellowship hall, or leave and come back later to pick them up. (of course, there were adults there besides the ministers).

Now, it is just Sunday and we have already had 3 Revival Events, with results from both the children's and youth revivals of people giving their hearts to Christ.

4. **MONDAY NIGHT—MEN'S REVIVAL.** (Men only). That's right, ladies, wives, girlfriends, you can't come. We had a special speaker that night that spoke to men and the importance of men to join in the harvest of other men for Christ. We had a praise band to start the service, time of prayer and seeking God's presence, and then the preacher integrated preaching and teaching in the sermon. This revival was to revive the men of the church to go out and make a difference. We weren't really expecting anyone to come to Christ Jesus, but they did anyway! (The reason I say this is that this was meant to revive the men who were already in the church). Men were also given opportunities throughout the sermon preaching/teaching moments to share with one another and learn how to witness, so that when the revival meeting was over, the revived men of the church would continue to share their witness with the people they work with or in their families, among their friends who are yet unbelievers. About 75 attended.
5. **TUESDAY NIGHT—LADIES REVIVAL.** (Women only). Again, we began with a praise band and prayer seeking God's presence and Spirit of revival and renewal, and then I preached and taught (about the same thing that was taught to the men, but from a woman's point of view). I should point out that the women shared best with other women, especially if the topic was personal. The same thing happened with the men: it was simply easier for a man to share with another man, without women witnessing their vulnerability. Of course, the same thing goes with the teenagers. The minister gave opportunity for people to share their witness with one another in various forms, so that people would get used to sharing their faith as easily as they do football or basketball or movies discussions. There were about 80 women present on Women's night.

That was it! Now it was time to send them out to make a difference in the world by being confident faith-sharers.

Testimonials kept coming weeks later of people reaching out when they saw someone hurting, someone suffering, a work associate in the hospital, etc. One lady from our church excitedly told me about how she witnessed to her faith to a lady she found crying in the bathroom at work. "I did it, Mary Ellen! I never thought I could, but I just couldn't walk away from that poor lady after I learned what I did at the revival! I just had to go up to her and say, "Honey, what's wrong? What can I do to help?" And she listened to her story, and then she said, "Do you want me to pray for you and with you right now, and let's commit this whole thing to the Lord?" "And we did! Right there in the bathroom at work! God is so good!"

Dare to make a difference in your community, Church! Dare to reach out and share the love of Christ with everyone you know and meet along life's way!

The Peace of Christ be with you and go with you as you witness for Him!

Birthdays and Anniversaries for MAY

1	K Almond	B	22	Martin Wind	B
3	Eliana McCutcheon (Ch)	B	23	George & Cheryl Bramble	A
5	Mike Hinkle	B		Jackie & Sam Chambers	A
6	Bob Carr	B	23	Jeffrey Kanode	B
7	Beverly Warner	B	24	Kenneth Kendall	B
	Brian & Sandra Boley	A	26	Jeff & Lynelle Zickefoose	A
11	Jack Bohman	B		Verl Simmons	B
12	Clarice Jenkins	B	27	Wilma McKee	B
	Dan Kimble	B		David & Gloria Fisher	A
14	Calvin McCutcheon	B		Susan Seders	B
15	Jim Short	B		Michaela Weaver	B
16	Jim Murphy	B	28	Bob & Adele Cole	A
18	Pam Ritchie	B		Dwayne & Elizabeth Brown	A
	Brian Plum	B		Elizabeth Brown	B
21	Rex Tenney	B	29	Judy Warner	B
	Vicki Bowen	B		Bonnie & Michael Starkey	A
	Jeff Zickefoose	B	30	Ted Bessey	B
			31	Carolyn Merrill	B
				Josie Tenney	B



Birthdays and Anniversaries for JUNE

2	Dallas & Brenda Forren	A	17	Ben & Sue Guido	A
	Kelly Kanode	B	19	Hugh & Judy Murphy	A
3	Bill Carr	B		Jerry & Kathy Boyce	A
4	Sandra McCutcheon	B		Doug Smailes	B
	Thomas Merrill	B		Bill & Rebecca Calhoun	A
7	Vaughn James	B	20	Don & Glenda Fitzwater	A
8	Thelma Carr	B	23	Alvie Loyd	B
9	Hugh Murphy	B	24	Paul Thompson	B
12	Dixie & Rodger McCormick	A	25	Steve & Martha Meadows	A
13	David Bowen	B		Gage Rewerts	B
14	Roger McKee	B	26	Greg & Lisa Godwin	A
16	Cliff & Mary Ann Schell	A	27	Ken & Charlea Ramsey	A
	Mark & Winnie Smith	A		Effie Simmers	B
16	Cindy Bohman	B	28	Betty Miller	B
17	Dixie McCormick	B	30	Mark Smith	B



Upcoming Dates in District

May 10	CLM Module II 6:30 -9:30 p.m., Broad Street, Session 1
May 15	CLM – Module II 6:30 – 9 p.m. Broad Street, Session 2
May 15	6:30 Quiet Dell – Health Care Seminar MonValley & Wesleyan
May 19	CLM – Module II, 9-3, bring sack lunch or eat out. Broad Street Session 3
May 19-20	Saturday 12-4 p.m. West Milford Community Center Terry Teykl Sunday West Milford UMC 10 a.m. Terry Teykl
May 21-23	Cabinet D.S.
May 25	Friday, Summer Hours begin for Dist. Office. 8:30 a.m. – Noon each Friday
May 28	Holiday, office closed, Memorial Day
May 31	WVWC Substance Use Conference by WVCC. 10-3:30. Regis. On-line. \$15
June 3	Jerry Run Upshur Parish Pentecost Sing; Picnic 5:00 p.m.
June 4-10	Cabinet and Annual Conference – WVWC
June 5	Cabinet Picnic – Sherrie Walsh’s Home
June 7-8	Jo Criss, Vacation
June 7-10	Annual Conference – WVWC Register on-line

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| June 8 | Wesleyan – Bar-B-Que Wesley Chapel Lawn, Bring chairs, no cost. Bring family and Friends. Music, message and food. |
| June 14-15 | Post Conference Cabinet meeting at Charleston |
| June 21-22 | Move Out Day June 21; Move In Day June 22 for pastors |
| July 1 | New Pastors start their new appointments |
| July 4 | Office Closed for July 4th – Enjoy your day! |
| July 12-15 | Rally on the Mountain at Winterplace. Register early |
| July 19-21 | Mission u at WWC sponsored by UM Woman. Register on-line. |
| July 20-21 | Candidacy Retreat at John XXIII Charleston |

Additional Dates in District

Hot Dogs, Strawberry Shortcake, Homemade Ice Cream, Sugar Cookies, Thursday-Saturday, May 17-19, 10:30 a.m.-closing, Chapel Hill UMC

Strawberry Pancakes, Friday-Saturday, May 18-19, 7-11 a.m., First UMC (Buckhannon).



Remember these from our district in prayer. Mary Ellen's brother, Bill Welch. Prayer of thanks that he is really doing so much better. Cliff and Mary Ann Schell; Sam and Nancy Cale III; Mitch and Mary Ann Griffin; Mary Ann is undergoing chemo treatments every other week in Morgantown. Pat Mick, widow of Roy Mick. She has had health problems and is adjusting to life without Roy. Very difficult for her. Please remember Doug Smailes and his family in the passing of his son J.D. David Thompson and Jane Thompson. Jerry Boyce who has continuing problems and kidneys were not operating as they should. Chris Stadelman, Paul's son; Remember Helen Oates and all of Paul's family since his passing. Josie Tenney; George Hamrick having continuing health problems; Janis Hensley's passing and her husband Basil and their family. Jimmie Joe Johnson with Cancer; Curtis and Virginia Saville, Ann Bailey and her family after Dallas' passing. Don Coleman; Alvie Loyd at Big Otter Nursing Home; Dorcas Conrad,. Remember Doris Baker (widow) who has some spots on lung which are being diagnosed. Prayers for Karen Mitchell, wife of Randy Mitchell. Also, Randy had recent surgery and is recovering. Remember Destry Daniels as he is at UHC having testing and possible upcoming surgery. Sarah Carr having surgery to remove stint after previous surgery.

Don and Glenna Fitzwater. Remember the family of Howard Keener in his passing on February 22, 2018 and especially his wife, Beverly. Thomas Woodson's family after his passing. Calvin McCutcheon as he recovers from a minor car accident recently. Thanks for Calvin's service of 55 years as he retires fully from the UMC. Helen Oates and Stadelman family in the passing of Chris Stadelman, Paul's son.

Pray for our churches and also for our country and all our officials. We also remember our foreign countries as they deal with terrorism in so many places. Pray for peace in our world.

Pray for our Cabinet and Bishop as they meet making appointments for our pastors. May God guide them to make good matches between charges and Pastors. Pray for our pastors starting CLM, Module 2, so they may be qualified as Certified Lay Ministers. Thanks for a successful COME at Quiet Dell on Saturday and then a great, inspirational District Conference at Chapel Hill on Sunday. Pray for the Council of Bishops as they meet and make plans for the February 2019 General Conference in St. Louis. Pray for an amicable solution to our differences within the UMC.

ANNOUNCEMENTS!

WESLEYAN DISTRICT'S NEW WEBSITE!!

Please visit us at: www.wesleyandistrictumc.org



MEF for 2017 and 2018

Our District goal for the 2018 Educational Fund is \$11,751. Please try to meet our goal for 2018, which has been assessed by the Conference. **There has been a change.** The Memo on the check should say “**Educational Funds**” and be made to Wesleyan District. Please mail to us at P.O. Box 230, Buckhannon, WV 26201. We appreciate your stewardship in meeting these goals for the District and the Conference. Since our goal is higher than last year, we ask that smaller churches pay no less than \$50 even though they have received a smaller amount on the Fair Share sheet. Thanks so much for your help. **PLEASE GIVE THIS TO TREASURERS! The conference has said that if you wish to receive credit for your individual churches, you may mail the check to them made out to the Conference Treasurer. The money may also be added to your Fair Share checks that you send.**

PROMO FUND 2017

Appreciate your help with keeping your church/charge up to date on their funds. Our payout was **92.10%**. Checks are to be sent to the **Wesleyan District Office, P.O. Box 230, Buckhannon, WV 26201, made out to Wesleyan District.** Thanks for your good work in supporting our District. We have already had 8-10 churches send promotional fund monies for 2018 to the Conference Treasurer. If you wish to have credit on your individual churches you may send the money on your Fair Share slip made out to the Conference Treasurer. I have spoken with the Treasurer's office and they will accept the money either way. We receive a check for your funds paid to the Conference Treasurer once a month.

FAIR SHARE 2018

Our year of 2017 is finished and our District paid out at over 91.10% which was a little less than the 92.74% in 2016. Let's strive to meet a goal of 100% payout in 2018. Each year our churches should strive to pay as much as possible towards 100%. We thank those of you who met the 100% goal this year. We give thanks for those of you who raised your efforts from the previous year towards that goal.

OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS!!

West Milford UMC is having a prayer encounter seminar with Terry Teykl on Saturday, May 19 from Noon till 4 p.m.

It will be held at the West Milford Community Center. For more information call West Milford UMC at 304-745-4257 or Pastor Jim Murphy at 919-412-1044. Please help support them in this community effort. Terry Teykl will also be at a 10 a.m. service on Sunday morning.

MESSAGE FROM CONFERENCE TREASURER

The new rate for travel allowance is: 54.5 cents per mile. Please give this message to your treasurers.

Meeting of Wesleyan District and MonValley District

IMPORTANT!!

Jim Berner will be presenting the newest changes in the Conference Health Care Plan and anyone on Conference Health Care should attend and also persons from their church. Any interested laypersons like treasurers, financial committee, PPRC, are to attend, along with your pastor. This will be held at Quiet Dell UMC on May 15 at 6:30 p.m.

Certified Lay Minister Classes

Certified Lay Ministers will be having the Module 2 classes at Broad Street UMC on May 10, 14, and 19. Keep these persons in prayer as this will take most of them from AS to Certified Lay Minister. Jim Minutelli is the teacher for these sessions. There are 4 Modules and the Module 3 and 4 will be taught later on this year or first of next year, so they may be fully certified by Conference of 2019.

United Methodist Women Schedule for 2018

July 19-21	Mission u held at WVWC on Embracing Wholeness
Sept 15, 2018	Fall District Meeting at St. Matthew UMC in Weston Registration 9-10 (Otterbein UMC) Coffee Hour (Orlena and Johnstown UMC)
Nov 3, 2018	Day Apart at Salem UMC Registration: Wayside UMC East Elkins Charge Coffee Hour: Trinity (Glenville)



COME

Quiet Dell UMC hosted a successful Celebration of Mission Event on May 5, 2018 at their church. A total of \$5,411.89 was collected at the event. At District Conference on May 6 a total offering of \$797 was given. An additional check for \$500 was also sent to Charleston. Thus far Wesleyan District has given \$6,708.89. In addition, if any churches have sent money to the Conference Treasurer, it will be added to the above amount. Remember, you can send money from any projects you have at any time during the year.

Apportionment Payout for 2018

The following churches have paid 100% thus far this year:

Alton; Bridgeport UMC; Bristol UMC; Crawford UMC; Elijahs Chapel UMC; Fairview UMC (Lewis); Ireland UMC; Macedonia UMC; Mt. Union UMC; Mt. Zion UMC (Newlon); Pine Grove UMC; Tanner UMC; Valley Bend UMC; Waldeck UMC.

The following churches are on track or have paid more thus far this year:

Bealls Mill; Bendale; Berry Chapel; Beverly; Big Isaac; Bridgeport; Bristol; Broad Street; Calvary (Clarksburg); Center Chapel; Churchville; Coffman Chapel; Corley; Doyle Chapel; Duff Street; Fall Run; First (Clarksburg); First (Elkins); First (Jane Lew); Freemansburg; French Creek; Frenchtown; Hampton; Heaston (Hodgesville); Heaters; Highland Park; Horner; Hurst Chapel; Israel; Jerry's Run; Jerusalem; Kanawha Run; Kynette; Laurel Fork; Mace; McWhorter; Meadow Valley; Mercy Chapel; Miles Chapel; Morrison; Mt. Clare; Mt. Hermon; Mt. Hope; Mt. Morris; Mt. Nebo; Mt. Rupert; Nay Chapel; New Bethel; Orlena; Pleasant Hill (Good Hope; Quiet Dell; Reger Chapel; Rock Cave; Rockford; Rocky Ford; Rowan Memorial; St. Matthew; Stone Coal; Stone Run; Straight Fork; Temple; Tennerton; Tichenal; Trinity (Glennville); Trinity (Smith Chapel-Trinity); Troy; Valley Chapel (Mill Creek); Valley Chapel (Waldeck); Vandalia; Vincent Memorial; Waterloo; Wayside; West Milford.

The following churches have paid less than 33.33% thus far this year:

Berlin; Broad Oaks; Burnsville; Christ (Clarksburg); Clover Fork; Coplin; Coxs Mill; Cutlipville; East View; First (Buckhannon); Flatwoods; Gassaway; Gee Lick; Harmony; Liberty; Lost Creek; Lyda Chapel; Mill Creek; Monroe Chapel; Mt. Earnest; Mt. Hebron (Jane Lew); Mt. Hebron (North Sutton); Mt. Olive (South Buckhannon); North View; Oak Grove; Oil Creek; Orlando; Otterbein (Elkins); Phillips Chapel; Queens Chapel (Volga); Queens; Reger (Hodgesville); Salem (Salem); Smith Chapel; South Chestnut; Stealey; Upper Ellis; Woodford Memorial.

The following churches have paid Zero thus far this year:

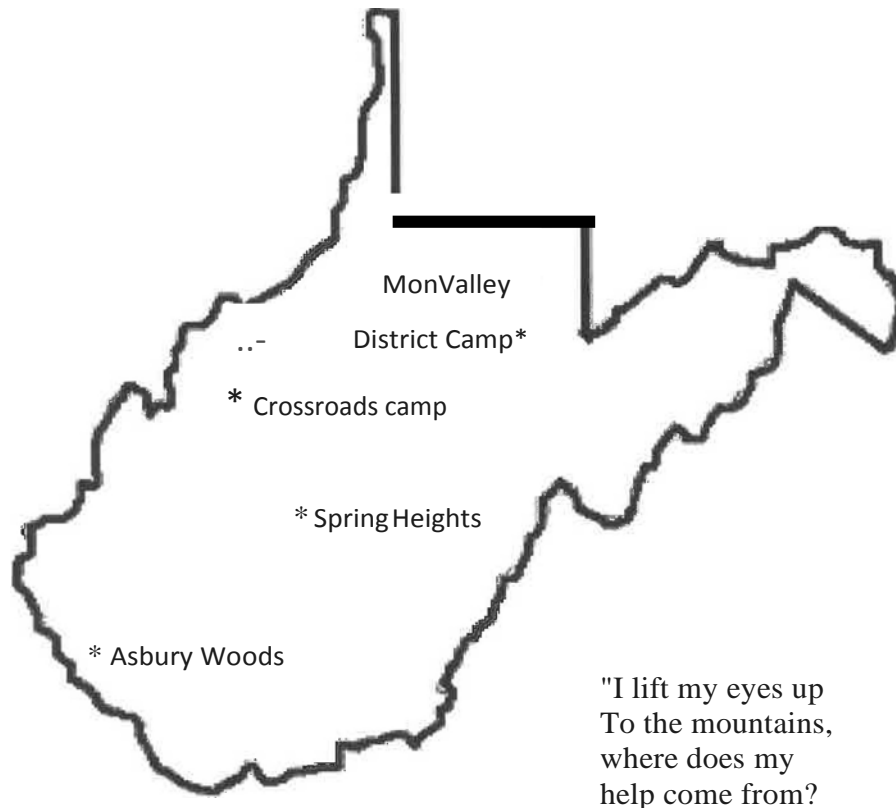
Bethel (Volga); Blackburn; Boulder (Volga); Camden; Cassity; Centralia; Chapel Hill; Copen; Fairview (Braxton); Fairview (Ellamore); Fairview (Waldeck); Hacker Valley; Hammond; Heaston (Wilsontown); Indian Camp; Johnstown; Kesling; Lloydsville; Lorentz; McCanns Run; Mount Olive (Jarvisville); Mt. Carmel; Mt. Lebanon; Mt. Olive (Tallmansville); Mt. Zion (Hacker Valley); Otterbein (Glennville); Pleasant Hill (Burnsville); Pleasant Valley (Hodgesville); Pleasant Valley (Jarvisville); Reed Chapel; Richmond Chapel; Right Hand Fork; Salem (Wilsontown); Spruce Lick; Stouts Chapel; Sycamore; Ten Mile; West Buckhannon; Wilson Chapel.

For those who have not paid anything on their Apportionment this year, we are already in the 5th month of the year and it will be hard to catch up. Please start paying something each month and speak to your finance committee to see how this can be handled.

If you have already paid the entire amount for 2018, thanks so much for doing this early in the year. We appreciate the efforts of every church in our District toward meeting their goal of 100% in 2018.

CAMPING OPPORTUNITIES

The members of the Commission on Camping and Outdoor Ministries are working to ensure that every member of the West Virginia Annual Conference knows the camping opportunities available to children and youth and importance of these experiences in the lives of campers.



"I lift my eyes up
To the mountains,
where does my
help come from?"

SPRING HEIGHTS (SPENCER, WV)

Camps for ages 5 through 18

Eight weeks of camp programming beginning June 10 For additional info, visit springheights.org

CROSSROADS (PARKERSBURG AREA)

Grade School Camp, July 15-17 Middle and High School Camp, July 7-12

For additional info, call Lisa Withee at 304-991-8184

Asbury Woods (Huntington Area) High

School Camp, July 15-20 Middle School Camp, July 8-13

Younger Elementary Camp, July 2-4 (K through 2nd grade)

Older Elementary Camp, July 1-4 (3rd through 5th grade) For additional info, visit asburywoodswv.org

MonValley District Camp (Camp Muffly) Junior

Camp, July 22-25 (3rd through 6th grade) Youth Camp,, July 25-28 (7th through 12th grade)

For additional info, call Codi Richards at 304-657-2013

Prayer Encounter Seminar to take local churches “Back to the Basics”

Posted April 23, 2018

By Jim Minutelli

(WEST MILFORD, WV) – Renowned author and teacher Dr. Terry Teykl, with such books to his credit as *A Blueprint for the House of Prayer* & *The Presence Based Church*, will be the guest of the West Milford United Methodist Charge churches as they get “back to the basics” with their upcoming, open & free to the public, “Prayer Encounter” seminar. Any and all area churches are invited to attend.

This hands-on, interactive event will be held on **Saturday, May 19th, from noon until 4:00 pm**, at the **West Milford Community Center, 925 Liberty Street**, where Terry will bring his unique blend of worship, teaching, ministry, prayer, humor, and fellowship to the northcentral WV area, showing participants how prayer and evangelism together can positively affect change in each of their churches, no matter in what denomination or walk of life a church or individual finds themselves.

Teykl says, “After studying the prayer lives of hundreds of churches, I am convinced that the house of prayer and worship starts with a blueprint,” and “many churches raise up prayer with little or no planning.” His goal for his seminar is to equip churches with a set of blueprints from which to build their house of prayer.

Pastor Jim Murphy of the West Milford UM Church says that the idea for the seminar comes out of the strategic planning the church started in January for the 2018 year. “We discussed the need to get back to the basics, so to speak, and look honestly at our church mission, how we serve those around us, and where we want the church to go. The consensus of our team was that intentional prayer needed to be a focus.”

Teykl will then return on Sunday, May 20th, to the West Milford church to minister during a special 10:00am Worship service.

For more information, please contact the West Milford UMC at 304-745-4257.



Mission u

July 19-21, 2018 at WVWC

Calling All United Methodist Women and Pastors and Children and Youth (Grades 1-12)

THEME: THE POWER OF IDENTITY

TEACHERS: Adult – Rev. Janet Harman Rev. Ken Peters Sue Owens

Children – Grades 1-4: Justus Robinson Hannah Willey

Grades 5-8: Katelyn Lewis Kasey Akens Youth – Grades 9-12: Gail Boykin

Song Leader – Gayle Lesure

Pianist – Kathy Upton

MISSION u

WHEN: JULY 19 – 21, 2018

WHERE: WEST VIRGINIA WESLEYAN COLLEGE 59 College Ave., Buckhannon, WV

STUDIES: ADULT – *Embracing Wholeness: An Earth Perspective for Covenantal Living *

What About Our Money?

CHILDREN – Money Matters

YOUTH – Is it Just Money?

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2018 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Follow this link to register for the West Virginia Conference 2018 Annual Conference Session:

[Registration and Conference Information HERE](#)

The West Virginia Annual Conference will meet June 7-10, 2018

on the campus of West Virginia Wesleyan College in Buckhannon.

Follow the above link for agenda, worship information, housing information, the pre-conference Workbook, Children's Conference and more!

When you reach the page that says “Print Record” your registration is complete.

You will receive a confirmation email. If you have not received the email within 24 hours, please contact Judi Kenaston, jkenaston@wvumc.org

Download the Conference Workbook (pdf) by [following this link.](#)

May 4, 2018

From: Bishop Steiner Ball

As Bishops of The United Methodist Church, we affirm that WE ARE OF ONE HEART in our desire to discern the mind and will of Jesus Christ for our leadership and the church. In the Northeastern Jurisdiction and around the world we experience great diversity of thought and practice within The United Methodist Church. In partnership with Bishops from around the world, we will continue to lead collectively and individually to value and provide room for our diversity as United Methodists.

-The Northeastern Jurisdiction College of Bishops

Dear Friends of the West Virginia Conference,

This week, the Council of Bishops met in Chicago to receive the final report from the Commission on a Way Forward and discern the recommendation that would be sent to the special session of General Conference to be held in St. Louis, MO in February of 2019. This meeting was bathed in prayer, dependent on the movement of God's Holy Spirit, and marked by caring and honest conversation.

At the request of the 2016 General Conference, a 32-member Commission was appointed by the Council of Bishops to assist the bishops in their charge to lead the church forward amid the impasse related to homosexuality. The Commission on a Way Forward was asked to explore, design, and recommend a way for being Church that maximizes the presence of a United Methodist witness around the globe, allows for as much contextual differentiation as possible, and creates as much unity as possible. The work and report of the Commission was based upon the [Vision, Mission, and Scope](#) that was given to the Commission to guide its work and included three possible models for moving the church forward.

Following intense prayer, discussion, deep discernment and with deep appreciation for the work of the Commission, the Council of Bishops made and affirmed the following motion.

Motion

Having received and considered the extensive work of the Commission on a Way Forward, the Council of Bishops will submit a report to the special session of the General Conference in 2019 that includes:

- **All three plans (The Traditionalist Plan, The One Church Plan and the Connectional Conference Plan) for a way forward considered by the Commission and the Council.**
- **The Council's recommendation of the One Church Plan.**
- **A historical narrative of the Council's discernment process regarding all three plans.**

Rationale:

In order to invite the church to go deeper into the journey the Council and Commission has been on, the Council makes all the information considered by the Commission and the Council of Bishops available to the delegates of the General Conference and acknowledges there is support for each of the three plans within the Council. The values of our global church are reflected in all three plans. The majority of the Council recommends the One Church Plan as the best way forward for The United Methodist Church.

The Council's discernment process was guided by the over-arching desire to strategically help the General Conference do its work and to honor the General Conference's request for the Council to help the church find a way forward. Therefore, while the Council of Bishops made a recommendation for the One Church Plan, the Council felt it was very important to include all three models worked on by the Commission on a way Forward as a part of the report to the February 2019 called session of General Conference.

The report will go through a final process of perfection and revision that will take several weeks. Following this process and before the report can be publicly released, it must be translated into the official languages of the General Conference. Therefore, the full report will be made public no later than July 8.

Following the date of release, the members of the West Virginia Delegation will be working to set up gatherings in our Districts for continued conversation and prayer. Ultimately the decision on this matter lies with the 800+ clergy and lay delegates from around the world who will convene at the General Conference in St. Louis in February 23-26, 2019.

These are indeed critical and anxious days for our beloved United Methodist Church. Yet, let us remember Jesus is Lord of the Church, the mission of the Church is clear, and our calling and opportunity to use the gifts of God's Holy Spirit remain. Indeed, God's promises endure: God will be with us; God will protect us; and God will bless us! We can trust in these promises!

Let us pray and not be paralyzed, let us hope in the midst of our uncertainty, let us care for one another in the midst of hurt, anxiety or confusion, and let us love one another in the midst of disagreement. Additionally, may God inspire us and bless us as we continue to be the church, a church which effectively, and fruitfully brings hope to the world, while continuing to fulfill the Great Commandment and the Great Commission to make disciples of Jesus Christ who work together with one another in ministry that is empowered by God to transform this world into the likeness of Christ.

May it be so. I look forward to continuing our ministry and mission together and to celebrating how God is working through the West Virginia Conference clergy and laity to bring hope, healing, and life to the world.

Bishop Sandra Steiner Ball

Constitutional Amendment #1 to be revisited

Posted May 11, 2018

By Deborah Coble

Earlier this week, a [press release](#) announced the results of the 2016 constitutional amendments that had been approved at the 2016 General Conference and were sent to the annual conferences around our global connection for a vote. A 2/3 aggregate vote of all the annual conferences was needed for approval. Constitutional amendments #3, #4, and #5 were approved, but amendments #1 and #2 were not approved.

Late yesterday, Rev. Gary Graves, Secretary of the General Conference, announced that an error in the wording of constitutional amendment #1 had been discovered. A new ballot will be prepared for voting in every annual conferences at their next meeting. Read the announcement below:

Commission on the General Conference

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 10, 2018

Des Moines, Iowa: The Rev. Gary W. Graves, Secretary of the General Conference, announced today that an error was made in the text of a proposed Constitutional amendment as it was presented for voting, and which subsequently failed to pass. Amendment #1 of the five constitutional amendments that were approved by the 2016 General Conference—and which narrowly failed to be ratified—included a sentence which had been removed by the legislative body.

Graves, who became secretary on December 1, 2016, said he was made aware of the error today and immediately began to take corrective action. Graves expressed regret that the mistake occurred and said it was simply a matter of human error. “A new ballot is being prepared for voting by annual conferences at their next meeting; however, some conferences will not meet again until 2019,” said Graves.

The proposed amendments were sent via email to bishops and annual conference secretaries by the former secretary of the General Conference, the Rev. Gere Reist, who also voiced his apologies.

The sentence that should not have been included in the amendment was removed by a vote of 746-56, but was inadvertently included in the version that was distributed. That sentence reads as follows: “The United Methodist Church recognizes it is contrary to Scripture and to logic to say that God is male or female, as maleness and femaleness are characteristics of human bodies and cultures, not characteristics of the divine.”

The text as approved by the General Conference should have read: “As the Holy Scripture reveals, both men and women are made in the image of God and, therefore, men and women are of equal value in the eyes of God. The United Methodist Church acknowledges the long history of discrimination against women and girls. The United Methodist Church shall confront and seek to eliminate discrimination against women and girls, whether in organizations or in individuals, in every facet of its life and in society at large. The United Methodist Church shall work collaboratively with others to address concerns that threaten the cause of women’s and girl’s equality and well-being.”

The proposed Constitutional amendment, which would have created a new paragraph focused on gender justice, was approved by 31,304 voters (66.5%), as opposed to 15,753 “no” votes. A two-thirds majority is required for passage.

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