



Steeple Chimes

Monthly Publication by Stockton United Methodist Church, Stockton, Mo.



Pastor's Paragraph

As many of you know, February 23-26, 2019 are the dates for the special called session of the UMC General Conference. The General Conference (GC) is the top legislative body for United Methodism. It generally meets every four years. In 1972, four years after the UMC was formed in 1968, the church began grappling with the issues of homosexuality and LGBTQ+ inclusion in marriage and ordination. This came to a head in the 2016 GC when the Commission on a Way Forward was established by the Bishops to help keep the United Methodist Church together and break the impasse. The called GC this month will only deal with this issue. Bishop Farr clarified for us recently that the goal of the Commission On the Way Forward was NOT to resolve the issue of homosexuality in the church, but to find a way to keep the UMC from schism.

Three "paths" will be presented at GC as alternative ways forward. In addition, 78 petitions have been submitted and already approved as in harmony with the purpose of the meeting. Here are the plans:

The Council of Bishops considered three plans developed by the Commission on a Way Forward. The Council of Bishops has indicated its majority recommendation for the One Church Plan, which could allow for different approaches in different places. Their report to the special called 2019 General Conference will also include information about the other two plans.

One Church Plan (recommended): The one-church model would allow different United Methodists in different places to make different decisions regarding ministry with or by LGBTQ persons rather

than maintaining a single standard that operates everywhere throughout the worldwide church. This plan would remove restrictive language from the Book of Discipline and give conferences, churches and pastors the flexibility to "uniquely reach their missional context in relation to human sexuality without changing the connectional nature of The United Methodist Church."

United Methodists in central conferences in Africa, Asia and Europe would retain the authority to adapt the Book of Discipline and could continue to include their traditional language and values.

This plan would also protect the rights of United Methodists whose theological convictions will not allow them to perform same-sex weddings or ordain LGBTQ people.

Traditionalist Plan: This plan would affirm the current language about homosexuality in the Book of Discipline and seek to strengthen enforcement for violations of church law.

Connectional-Conference Plan: This plan would create three connectional conferences based on theology or perspective, each having clearly defined values (accountability, contextualization and justice). The three connectional conferences would function throughout the worldwide church and the five existing U.S. jurisdictions would be abolished.

Adaptations to the Book of Discipline would be allowed by each connectional conference. Annual conferences would determine their affiliation with a connectional conference. Local churches who choose a branch other than the one chosen by their annual conference could vote to join another conference. This plan would require multiple amendments to the denomination's constitution.

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Announcements

January 20 Church Council Highlights

Marvin Manring, for Recording Secretary Linda Hall

Financial: 2018 final report shows contributions of \$39,286.73 over budget. This doesn't include pass-through or special contributions for HVAC or parking lot. Motion to approve (Ted/Liz) carried.

Construction: The porte-cochere is progressing well, waiting on steel to match the sanctuary roof. The footings are in place and the construction company reinforced the original version to anchor it better than the original plan. Rock from the old sanctuary will complete the pillars.

Endowment: Dwain Hammons reported that \$2,020.11 is available for 2019 from an existing balance of about \$45,000.00. The church has used a total of \$4,356.00 from November 2017 to the present. Dwain recommends holding off on any use of the current available funds to allow the fund to grow in the coming years.

Trustees: Oversight of the construction continues with running electricity for lighting. The original blueprints have been reviewed and will be adjusted. Trustees will work with the construction company to match existing exterior lighting.

Discipleship: Mitch and Jim discussed the formation of 2019 small group studies. New Sunday school classes are always encouraged, and space is available within the old education wing and the library/prayer room of the sanctuary building.

Ministry Team: Pastor Jim led a meeting January 14 to review the year's calendar of activities and discuss new outreach opportunities. Jim and Tebbly are working on a *Journey to the Cross* event prior to Holy Week.

Pastor Jim closed the meeting with prayer. The next meeting of the Church Council will be Sunday, February 17, following the morning service.



February: Souper Bowl Month

Again this year, SAMA Souper Bowl is more than one Sunday. A friendly community competition will run all month. Then the church, school or civic organization donating the most soup in relation to total membership will win a traveling trophy and photo in *Cedar County Republican*. Greatest needs: tomato, chicken noodle, cream of mushroom. Place donations in the south hall collection bin.

February 10: Scout Sunday

Cub Scouts and Webelos worship with us as we honor the anniversary of scouting in America. Join us as we welcome Pack 69 and leaders Pat and Linda Holdeman, John and Jaime Dowdy, and Tiffany Nolting. Pack 69 also celebrates scouting's anniversary at their annual Blue and Gold Banquet February 9, in the Family Life Center.

New Series: "Transformed: Living a Fruitful Life"

On February 3 Pastor Jim will begin a new sermon series: "Transformed: Living a Fruitful Life." These messages, based on fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5:22-26, will explore these nine Spirit-enabled behaviors which will help us as Christ-followers live beyond ourselves and move toward becoming the person God wants us to be.

"The nine-fold fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5 is a gift of God, but don't forget: it also represents nine decisions on our part. Those decisions will affect you every day; they will transform you into a person of character who fulfills your God-given potential and inspires others to do the same." (David Jeremiah) Join us as we move toward transformational discipleship.



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The 2019 General Conference will receive the report and legislation and make decisions about whether or how to change our current connectional relationships.

I think it is up in the air whether any decision can be reached at all. If not, we will remain under the provisions of the current Book of Discipline. Whatever happens, we need to be in prayer for our Church, our Conference delegates to GC, and the delegates from all over the world who will be in St. Louis this month. There are two articles on the bulletin board by the office. One is by Brian Hammons, one of our GC delegates from *The Missouri Methodists*. The other is from Bishop Gary Mueller of the Arkansas Conference. I would encourage you to read them. I think the following word from Bishop Mueller is timely:

“While I have no idea what the outcome will be this coming February, I am absolutely convinced of five things that will remain true on February 27, the day after General Conference ends: 1) God still is God; 2) People still need Jesus; 3) We still need each other; 4) God still is not done with us yet; and 5) We still are called to create vital congregations that make disciples of Jesus Christ, who make disciples equipped to transform lives, communities and the world.”

Blessings!

Pastor Jim



6th Dead Electronics and Appliances Recycling Drive, April 27

Janice Dunne, *Go Green Team*

The Christmas season has ended. The decorations are packed away for another year. Many have made resolutions for the New Year, maybe even broken one or two of them. The Go Green Team would like to encourage each of you to add at least one resolution in the New Year that helps to preserve and protect God’s good creation. As the world population continues to expand, it becomes increasingly more important to choose lifestyles that leave a much smaller human footprint for those who come after us.

For the sixth year, our Go Green Team is hosting a community-wide Dead Electronics and Appliances Recycling Drive, Saturday, April 27, 8:30-11:30 a.m., in our SUMC parking lot. We are thankful Meredith Recycling agreed to return again this year. They will collect electronics and many kinds of appliances, from refrigerators to toasters, for recycling, reuse, or other responsible disposal. Mark your calendar and watch for a complete list in the next issue of *Steeple Chimes*.

Our Go Green Team, the mission-oriented component of our Creation Care Ministry, is committed to helping our community reduce the amount of trash we send to the landfill by providing convenient opportunities for responsible recycling.

KIDZ Connection



Grades 1-6 kids in our after-school program began making valentines in January, anticipating a February 12 church bus trip to Lake Stockton Healthcare Facility. There they will present their hand-made Valentines to residents and staff.

Chew on These Quotes

Mitch Ross, *Discipleship Ministries Coordinator*

During the time between Christmas and New Year's Day each year, I carve time out to power-read as much as I can and review my favorites. I encourage you also to read and reflect to strengthen your faith. Wesley encouraged Methodists to read and said, "You wrong yourself greatly by omitting this." Do you have quotes that stick with you? The quotes below spoke to me at a time and for a purpose.

"The world in front of you is nothing like the world behind you."

Tod Bolsinger, "Canoeing the Mountains—Christian Leadership in Uncharted Territory"

"...discipling is not the equivalent of merely installing information in the heads of members. Rather, discipleship is a lifelong process of faith formation. Discipling is not simply mastering scriptural texts or deciphering creeds, worthy as those pursuits are. Rather, Christian discipleship shapes a person's identity, an identity fashioned, ultimately, not by what one knows but by whom one loves."

John W. Stewart, "Envisioning the Congregation Practicing the Gospel"

"It is remarkable that in all of his writings, Paul's prayers for his friends contain no appeals for changes in their circumstances."

Tim Keller, "Prayer: Experiencing Awe and Intimacy with God"

"A leader is a dealer in hope."

Napoleon, "Napoleon: In His Own Words"

"Nothing has a greater impact on spiritual growth than reflection on Scripture. If churches could do only one thing to help people at all levels of spiritual maturity grow in their relationship with Christ, their choice is clear. They would inspire, encourage, and equip their people to read the Bible—specifically, to reflect on Scripture for meaning in their lives."

Greg Hawkins, "Move: What 1,000 Churches Reveal about Spiritual Growth"

"We can't understand God. A God we could understand would be an idol, one we could stuff in our back pocket, one we could dial in to do favors for us, like some kind of cosmic do-boy or genie in a lamp. One thing I teach our sixth-grade confirmands at church as a sort of responsive reading is this: I say, 'If you understand it ...' and they all repeat, 'it is not God!' We are quoting from a sermon by St. Augustine."

Bishop William Willimon, "Trinity—The God We Don't Know"

"We Christians can be so smugly certain that we know the truth, and that those who don't agree are not only wrong, but damned. However, right here at the beginning of the gospel story we find God doing something that messes with our theology....this story might teach us, at the very least, to treat those of other faiths the way God honored the magi. Or perhaps we might learn to treat those of other faiths with respect and honor, as the magi did the Jews in bringing their gifts to the newborn king."

Adam Hamilton, "Faithful: Christmas through the Eyes of Joseph"

"....there are persons who habitually ask, 'Lord, what is your will in this matter? In my life, in my church?' For such persons, discernment is a way of life and an unconscious process. They do not look for special times to listen for God's voice; they simply listen, trust and obey. These persons see all experiences, ordinary and extraordinary, as conveying God's presence and message. They are aware of another Presence speaking and guiding."

Rueben P. Job, "A Guide to Prayer for All Who Seek God"

"...the Holy Spirit enables us truly to encounter Christ in our reading of Scripture. The Holy Spirit produces Scripture, enlightens our reading and hearing of Scripture, and enables us to perform Scripture. Miraculously, when we read Scripture,

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Disciples Choose to Practice Shamar, Refuse Single-Use Cups

Cheryl Y. Marcum, *Creation Care Ministry*

I grew up with the King James Bible. From a tender age, I fondly remember my Mama, Eva Marcum, praying Aaron’s blessing on me, “The Lord bless thee, and keep thee; the Lord make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee; the Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.” (Numbers 6:24-26) My Daddy died when I was 14, and the words of this blessing made me feel completely safe in the arms of Jesus. Years later, I learned the full meaning of “keep” from the Hebrew word, shamar. It means guard, protect, preserve, keep watch, have charge of. But, shamar is not just about our Lord keeping us, humankind.

The second creation story in Genesis 2:15 says, “The Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it.” Shamar in this context still means guard, protect, preserve, keep watch, have charge of; except here, God delegated us—humankind, the responsibility of tending, nurturing, keeping the earth, God’s good creation. That means our primary vocation is to take care of—to keep—what belongs to God for the mutual flourishing of all life. This word, shamar, reverberates deep in my soul. We disciples ask our Lord to keep us, humankind, and in turn, our Lord delegated us to keep our Lord’s garden, the earth.

“People who are baptized ought to live differently than those who aren’t, ought to live on a higher plane.” (quote from Pastor Jim’s January 13 sermon) That made me think about the disposable cups we set out for coffee that morning, and every Sunday morning. It made me think about single-use plastic water bottles and shopping bags that we use for a few minutes, then mindlessly “throw away,” as if they had some useful place to go. Single-use disposable plastic and foam products like those are made from petroleum derivatives, more recently, mostly from fracked methane gas.

If we dispose of them in the landfill, they languish there for centuries and may leach into the water table. If we toss them out the window, they eventually photo-degrade into miniscule bits dispersed across the earth by wind and water. As fossil fuel derivatives, the bits absorb other toxins along the way. Animals, birds, and fish ingest them and die. Why? Because we placed a higher priority on our culture’s focus on convenience than on the primary vocation God delegated to us, to take care of—to keep—what belongs to God for the mutual flourishing of all life on earth.

Those single-use coffee cups are a symbol that we disciples choose culturally acceptable, environmentally irresponsible choices, instead of creation-respecting choices that reflect our dedication by God to keep God’s good creation. Changing lifestyle choices is difficult. To nudge all of us to practice the simple creation-respecting choice of reusable coffee cups, our Sunday morning barista stopped setting out disposable cups and glasses Sunday morning, January 20. We invite you practice shamar by selecting reusable cups and glasses at our coffee bar. Dump unconsumed liquid in the marked container and deposit the empty in the marked tub. Rejoice in choosing to practice shamar, one tiny step to keep God’s good creation. Amen!



Cheryl apologizes for accidentally submitting the 2017 prayer walk story, published in the last issue, instead of the story about the 2018 event, below.

Go Green Team Picked Up Trash While Praying for City Residents

Cheryl Y. Marcum, *Creation Care Ministry*

Some residents of neighborhoods all over Stockton noticed pairs of Go Green stewards walking through their neighborhoods Saturday morning, December 1, picking up trash and praying for God's blessings on residents. Participating in this third community prayer walk, including those who prayed from home, is an act of faith—of love for our neighbors shining forth in action.

Prayer walkers were impressed with how little trash they found on most streets. However, in less than two hours, eight walkers collected three bags of comingled plastic bottles, tin cans, paper, corrugated cardboard, and glass, recycled at the city recycling center; one-half bag of aluminum cans recycled at our United Methodist Men's bins in the parking lot; and over four trash bags of waste headed for the landfill.

Afterward, prayer walkers enjoyed lunch at the church while sharing their experiences. Walkers commented how satisfying it was to see members of our community where they live, pray for them, clean up our community, and see immediate results.

Our Go Green Team exists to take all kinds of actions to help renew God's good creation. Please join us as we strive to live out our faith as good stewards of this "pale blue dot" we call home. All are welcome.



Joyful prayer walkers captured in our first ever "selfie-collage." Rear from left: Susan Holt, Cheryl Marcum, Sharon Cross, Kim Jasper, Diedre Senecal. Front from left: Janice Dunne, Kathryn Lackey, Mary Anne Manring (selfie credit)



Stockton United Methodist Church

February 2019 Calendar of Events

FEBRUARY

Current as of Jan. 28. For updates visit www.stocktonumc.org/calendar

Sunday Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday Saturday

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 Pastor's Personal Day Office Closed	2 10 AM Newell Netsch Visitation 11 AM Newell Netsch Memorial Service 7-9 PM/Rm 100*
	Key FLC – Family Life Center S – Sanctuary LSHF – Lake Stockton Healthcare Facility WA – Welcome Area					
3 <i>February: Souper Bowl Month</i> 8:45-9:30 AM Choir Rehearsal 9:45-10:30 AM Sunday School 10:45 AM Worship Celebration/S 11:45 AM Bell Choir Rehearsal	4 11:30 AM Go Green Team Social/Cheryl's Home 6:30-8 PM Cubs/Rm 100 & FLC	5 3:30 PM Jail Ministry (Willinger, Stevens) 4-6 PM KIDZ Connection	6 7-9 PM/Rm 100*	7 6:30-8:30 PM/FLC*	8 Pastor's Personal Day Office Closed	9 Noon Pack 69 Blue and Gold Banquet/FLC 7-9 PM/Rm 100* 
10 <i>Scout Sunday</i> 8:45-9:30 AM Choir Rehearsal 9:45-10:30 AM Sunday School 10:45 AM Worship Celebration/S 11:45 AM Bell Choir Rehearsal	11 9:30-11:30 AM Comforter Project/Rm 100 4:30 PM Lead Prayer/City Council Mtg 6:30-8 PM Cubs/Rm 100 & FLC	12 3:30 PM Jail Ministry (Johnston, Anthony) 4-6 PM KIDZ Connection to LSHF (Valentines)	13 5 PM Choir Rehearsal/S 6 PM Bell Choir Rehearsal/S 7-9 PM/Rm 100*	14 6:30-8:30 PM/FLC*	15 Pastor's Personal Day Office Closed	16 7:30am-9am UMM Mtg/Rm 100 7-9 PM/Rm 100*
17 8:45-9:30 AM Choir Rehearsal 9:45-10:30 AM Sunday School 10:45 AM Worship Celebration/S 11:45 AM Church Council Mtg/Rm 203	18 6:30-8 PM Cubs/Rm 100 & FLC	19 3:30 PM Jail Ministry (Ballenger, Beck, Jarvis) 4-6 PM KIDZ Connection	20 10 AM-1 PM Quilters/Rm 100* 7-9 PM/Rm 100*	21 6:30-8:30 PM/FLC*	22 Pastor's Personal Day Office Closed	23 <i>Special UMC Conference/St. Louis</i> 7-9 PM/Rm 100*
24 <i>Special UMC Conference/St. Louis</i> <i>Noisy Offering for Bus Ministry</i> <i>Gideons Report</i> 8:45-9:30 AM Choir Rehearsal 9:45-10:30 AM Sunday School 10:45 AM Worship Celebration/S 11:45 AM Bell Choir***	25 <i>Special UMC Conference/St. Louis</i> 9:30-11:30 AM Comforter Project/Rm 100 4:30 PM Lead Prayer/City Council Mtg 6:30-8 PM Cubs/Rm 100 & FLC	26 <i>Special UMC Conference/St. Louis</i> 3:30 PM Jail Ministry (Trudell, Sullivan) 4-6 PM KIDZ Connection	27 7-9 PM/Rm 100*	28		



Stockton United Methodist Church

Calendar of Special Events

FEBRUARY Current as Jan. 28. For updates, visit www.stocktonumc.org/calendar

Special Events

- ★ **February** (Every Sunday) 10:45 a.m. **SAMA Souper Bowl Month**/*South Hall Collection Bin*
Place soup in the south hall collection bin. One community, church, or nonprofit wins the traveling trophy for most soup per membership.
- ★ **February 9** (Saturday) noon **Pack 69 Blue and Gold Banquet**/*Family Life Center*
Pack 69 celebrates the 109th anniversary of scouting in America.
- ★ **February 10** (Sunday) 10:45 a.m. **Scout Sunday**/*Sanctuary*
Today we honor Pack 69 Cub Scouts, Webelos, and their leaders.
- ★ **February 12** (Tuesday) 4-6 p.m. **KIDZ Connection Valentine Trip**/*Lake Stockton Healthcare*
KIDZ present handmade valentines to nursing home residents.
- ★ **February 24** (Sunday) 10:45 a.m. **Gideons International Presentation**/*Sanctuary*
Missouri Gideons state president Larry Vangilder shares his vision for Gideons ministries.

Mark Your Calendar Beyond February. . .

- ★ **March 6** (Wednesday) 7 p.m. **Ash Wednesday Worship**/*Sanctuary*
- ★ **April 12** (Friday) **“Journey to the Cross” Community Family Ministry Event**/*SUMC All*
An interactive dramatization of the life of Jesus, birth to Resurrection, from the perspective of an unknown shepherd.
- ★ **April 14** (Sunday) 10:45 a.m. **Palm Sunday**/*Sanctuary*
- ★ **April 21** (Sunday) 10:45 a.m. **Easter**/*Sanctuary*
- ★ **April 27** (Saturday) 8:30-11:30 a.m. **6th Dead Appliances and Electronics Recycling Drive**/
Parking Lot

Prayer for Our Pastor

Jesus, give my pastor your wisdom. Help Jim know the way to go even when the way is not clear. Grant him discernment to know good from evil, even when evil is dressed as good. Strengthen him to apply your Word to even the most confusing situations. Give him ears to hear your voice, eyes to see a clear vision and a voice to proclaim the gospel even in challenging times and places.
(Numbers 12:6) AMEN. —contributed

Chew on These Quotes

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Christ stands among us, present through our reading and hearing of mere words."

Bishop William Willimon, "United Methodist Beliefs – A Brief Introduction"

“Individually the disciple and friend of Jesus who has learned to work shoulder to shoulder with his or her Lord stands in this world as a point of contact between heaven and earth, a kind of Jacob’s ladder by which the angels of God may ascend from and descend into human life. Thus, the disciple stands as an envoy or a receiver by which the kingdom of God is conveyed into every quarter of human affairs.”

Dallas Willard, “Hearing God: Developing a Conversational Relationship with God”

“This is what the LORD Almighty said: ‘Administer true justice; show mercy and compassion to one another. Do not oppress the widow or the fatherless, the foreigner or the poor. Do not plot evil against each other.’”

Zechariah, “Zoderdan NIV Study Bible”
Zechariah 7:9-10

The Mailbox



Thank you for your recent gift designated for the Missouri State University Choral Endowment. I appreciate your generous donation and wanted to personally thank you for your investment in and support of Missouri State University.

Brent Dunn
Executive Director

Church council and PPR Committee,
Thank you very much for the end-of-year bonus Christmas gift. I appreciate your kindness and generosity, and am honored to be employed in the church office.

Sara Criswell
Administrative Assistant



FEBRUARY Birthdays and Anniversaries

Happy Birthday! Blessed Anniversary!

- | | |
|---------------------------|----------------------|
| 2 Shirley Potts | 21 Brenda Woodrell |
| 4 Susan Mize | 22 Trevor Skelton |
| 7 Liz Manring | 23 Geneva Kimmi |
| 10 Jeff and Terra Gregory | 24 Marvin Emmons |
| 11 Nancy Ayers | 25 Kaitlyn Hedrick |
| Howard Coambes | 26 John Morris |
| 12 Travis Feild | 27 Barbara Patterson |
| Jonah Stewart | Stewart and Angela |
| 13 Mary Scott | Thomson |
| 14 Susan Holt | 28 Dorothy Allison |
| 15 Shirley McElroy | Jeanette Helter |
| 19 Jerry and Mabel Bryant | Mitch Ross |



SAMA Food Pantry **Souper Bowl Month**: chicken noodle, cream of mushroom, tomato. Place donations in the south hall collection bin.

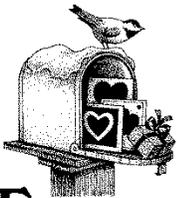
February Servants

Liturgist: Harold Beck
Sunday Morning Greeters:
Harold and Norma Beck
Bill and Sharon Linnartz
Gail Williams



People
Connecting with **Jesus Christ**

STOCKTON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



FEBRUARY
Steeple Chimes

Stockton United Methodist Church

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Permit No. 11
Stockton, MO 65785

Worship 10:45 a.m. **Sunday School** 9:45-10:30 a.m.

Jim Coffer, Pastor

Rose Mary Owens, *Director of Music*

Jacky Vincent, *Organist*

Mary Anne Manring, *Pianist*

Return Service Requested