



The Un-Uniting of the Methodist Church

If you haven't heard, the UMC, the 2nd largest Protestant church in the United States, announced a plan to facilitate the splitting of the denomination.

The visible fissure in the denomination revolves around human sexuality. In February 23-26, 2019, a special session of the General Conference (delegates from 4 continents consisting of clergy and laymen were in attendance) affirmed The Traditional Plan, which maintained the UMC's current statements concerning human sexuality which state,

We affirm that sexuality is God's good gift to all persons. We call everyone to responsible stewardship of this sacred gift.

*Although all persons are sexual beings whether or not they are married, **sexual relations are affirmed only with the covenant of monogamous, heterosexual marriage...***

We affirm that all persons are individuals of sacred worth, created in the image of God. All persons need the ministry of the Church in their struggles for human fulfillment, as well as the spiritual and emotional care of a fellowship that enables reconciling relationships with God, with others, and with self. The United Methodist Church does not condone the practice of homosexuality and considers this practice incompatible with Christian teaching. We affirm that God's grace is available to all. We will seek to live together in Christian community, welcoming, forgiving, and loving one another, as Christ has loved and accepted us. We implore families and churches not to reject or condemn lesbian and gay members and friends. We commit ourselves to be in ministry for and with all persons.

This affirmation of sacred worth of all people and a biblical understanding of human sexuality has led to cheers and jeers. Regardless of where one stands on the issue, it was very apparent that the "United" in United Methodist Church is an epitaph.

This past month, a mediation group announced a plan to move forward that was surprising to many observers. Under the proposed protocol, Annual Conferences (regional group of churches) and individual congregations are able to leave the UMC while retaining their property, pensions, and also receive some money to start a new denomination. The most surprising thing about this agreement is that it is the Traditional Plan supporters who would leave.

In Jesus' prayer found in John 17, He prays to the Father and four times in this short prayer, Jesus prays that His followers would be one. Jesus' desire is that we would be one. When we see division and rancor with the church, what we are really seeing is our broken and twisted sinfulness at work. Jesus' church is under constant attack, and this attack doesn't always come from the outside. The division of a denomination and of local churches ought to cause the people of God to mourn.

You can listen to our sermons on our website!

Orlckirkland.org

If you can't listen to us online, contact us and we can send you a disc of the sermon.

The purpose of Our Redeemer Lutheran Church is to worship God in a Bible-based, Christ-centered ministry, evangelizing, discipling, nurturing and equipping people for the spiritual well-being of every life.

Pastor Schultz



The Christian Connection

Volunteer Schedule

Please mark your calendars and if there are any conflicts with your schedule, please find someone to fill your spot and let Kristine Dootson know of the substitution. If you are unable to find someone to switch with you, call Kristine Dootson @425-753-2020.

Date	Nursery	Lay Reader	Flowers	Coffee
2/2	Christina Malone	Cheri Sorenson	Open	WMF Celebration Sunday
2/9	Kristine Dootson	Patti Prue	Olsen Family	Open
2/16	Lesley Wiedner	Joe Bottem	Open	Open
2/23	Danelle Hall	Kristine Dootson	Open	Open

Congratulations to our 2020 Council and Committee Members!

President- Betty Halvorsen

Vice President- Sue Malone

Secretary- Kristine Dootson

Treasurer- Melissa Douthit

Deacons- Shane Hall

Pastor Rieth

Ryan Douthit

Deaconess- Helen Long

Eva Leach

Diana Daum

Sue Rosebrook

Patti Prue

Christian Ed- Leslie Weidner

Nancy Ostlund

Melissa Douthit

Worship & Music- Diana Daum

Miriam Schultz

Seiko Werts

Trustees- Dave Weidner

Harlan Ostlund

Doug Werts

Audit- Dave Weidner

Dayna Hall

Jeff Coy

Nominating- Kristine Dootson

Diana Daum

Lee Crum

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The good news is that though we are sometimes the cause of schism and disunity within the congregation of believers, if we confess our sins, Jesus is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from our unrighteousness. In this way, though there is discord and disunity, the one holy Church is to remain forever.

Not to be lost in all of the discussion about what is going on in the UMC, it is important to note that the main divide is not simply human sexuality. The human sexuality controversy is the fruit of the root issue. **The root issue in the current controversy in the UMC comes down to biblical authority.**

When one realizes this is the core issue, it becomes clear that this is not a new controversy. In 1517, a debate over the authority of the scriptures and the Papacy broke out in Germany which led to the birth of the Evangelical Reformation led by Martin Luther. In 1962, the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations was formed because of the issue of the authority of God's Word as it relates to the congregation. In 1972, Seminex, a schism within the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod, revolved around the authority of God's Word and the Lutheran Confessions.

In all of these controversies the root issue is pretty simple, is the Bible authoritative? Is it, as the Lutheran Confessions state, the only rule and norm according to which all teachings, together with all teachers, should be evaluated and judged? In the UMC, the question is the same. Is the Bible, the Word of God, authoritative? Is it the source of truth? Is it the standard and rule for the church? If all Christians everywhere could answer this question the same, there would be far less division within the church.

According to Scripture, God's Word does have authority, not because we grant it authority, but because God does.

“All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness,” (2 Timothy 3:16, ESV)

“And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.” (Matthew 28:18, ESV)

“Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth.” (John 17:17, ESV)

Unfortunately, not all Christians view the Scriptures in the way the Scriptures describe themselves.

And so we ought to weep, look to God's Word, and repent of our sins. We ought to place our trust in Him, who is faithful and true, to continue to reveal himself to us through His Word. My prayer is that I will be faithful to do this same thing that was done for me for the congregation that God has called me to serve. God's Word is truth. It is the only source, rule, and norm for the faith.

As someone raised in the UMC and a former member, I have always watched the news concerning the denomination. It was there where I first heard that Jesus Christ had died for my sins and that I was washed by the waters of Baptism. My faith was fostered in Church, Sunday School, Vacation Bible School, Youth Group, and in Summer Camps. My wife and I were married by a good friend who is a UMC pastor who proclaimed the Gospel at our wedding. The UMC is not my church anymore, but I still love many of the people I came to know when I was younger.

My prayer for Our Redeemer and the UMC is the same prayer contained in one of my favorite hymns I have grown to love as a Lutheran, *Lord Keep Us Steadfast in Thy Word*:

*Lord, keep us steadfast in thy Word
Curb those who would by faint or sword
Would wrest the kingdom from Thy Son
And set at naught all He hath done.*

Yes! Amen.

**FAMILY VALENTINE
PASTA POT LUCK
SATURDAY, FEB 15th
5:00 PM**

COME...JOIN THE FELLOWSHIP

BRING A PASTA DISH TO SHARE

COMMINMETNS AND SALAD

WILL BE PROVIDED

A free-will donation for the kitchen remodel
fund will be collected.

Welcome to our new members:

Lee & Christy Crum

Robert (BJ)& Joy Coy and their children Selah, Jaxen, &
Joslyn

Jeff & Shannon Coy and their children Jasmine, Jordyn,
Isaiah, Silas, and Madison

**Join us for a reception for our new members on
February 2nd after our church service.**

The *Christian Connection* is edited and published for ORLC . It is also available on our website
www.orkirkland.org . If you do not want to receive it in your inbox, please let us know by calling
(425)821-2424 or emailing orkirkland@hotmail.com.

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