



Messenger

A PUBLICATION OF FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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What's a Special Called General Conference?

At the end of this month the United Methodist Church will do something unique. We will hold a special Called Session of the General Conference in St. Louis, Missouri on February 23-26.

General Conference is the primary decision-making body of the United Methodist Church, and it is the only group that can officially speak on behalf of the entire United Methodist Church. Not even a bishop can do that!

It's composed of delegates elected from every Annual Conference worldwide, not just the U.S. And part of what they do is put together our official doctrine and organization as found in the Book of Discipline, our book of church law.

Normally, General Conference meets once every four years. The last one was held in May 2016, and the next one is scheduled for May 2020. So, one might wonder: Why are we holding a special Called General Conference in 2019?

For the last few decades we have had a growing difference of opinion over matters of human sexuality in the United Methodist Church. Should we ordain open, practicing homosexuals as pastors? Should pastors be able to preside over same-sex weddings? What about transgender pastors? These are just a few of the questions the church is wrestling with, and the difference of opinion has grown so sharp that it's hard to find a consensus.

So, the 2016 General Conference asked our Council of Bishops to help form a committee called the Commission on a Way Forward, which would explore possible legislative solutions that might be able to bridge this gap and bring us together.

That's the purpose of this Called General Conference in 2019. Elected delegates from all over the world, including Africa and the Philippines, will gather in St. Louis to consider the three official legislative options from the Commission as well as several other unofficial ones.

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THIS WEEKS CALENDAR

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 3

- 9:00 a.m. Come AZ U R Service
- 9:50 a.m. Sunday School
- 10:00 a.m. Information Session - Sanctuary
- 11:00 a.m. Traditional Service
- 5:00 p.m. Planet 456
- 6:00 p.m. Snack Supper

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 4

- 9-12 noon Methodist Market

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 5

- 6:00 p.m. Ladies Bible Study/Millie's

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 6

- 3:00-4:15 p.m. Hiskidz Choir Gr. 1-6
- 3-4:30 p.m. Confirmation Class
- 5:30 p.m. In the Hands of God/Prayer Meeting
- 6:00 p.m. Chancel Choir
- 6:00 p.m. Follow-up Q & A - Chapel
- 6:15 p.m. Youth Small Group

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 9

- 9-12 noon Methodist Market



This Hiskidz Choir, grades 1-6 will resume Wednesday, February 6, from 3-4:15 p.m. We are excited to have the children come together again for singing, fellowship and fun!



- 3. Bonnie Holmes, Katherine Phillips
- 4. Shirley Simmons, Lisa Haynes
- 5. Bill Summers
- 8. Mary Russell Perry, Jim Roberts

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

- 4. Mr. & Mrs. Gray Goodman
- 9. Mr. & Mrs. Harry Simmons



Marvin Terrell

Ted & Sarah Webb



Solid Ground Youth

This week in Sunday school our lesson is titled “*Giving It All.*” The scripture passage comes from the book of Mark, chapter 10. This is an all too familiar story about the Rich Young Ruler. This lesson teaches us about discipleship and what it truly means. As we hear and study this story, we must all take a good look at our own life. How can we become better disciples for Jesus?

Sunday Night Youth

Solid Ground will not meet this Sunday night. We will pick back up with our regular Bible Study next Sunday night with supper at 6:00 p.m. followed by group time.

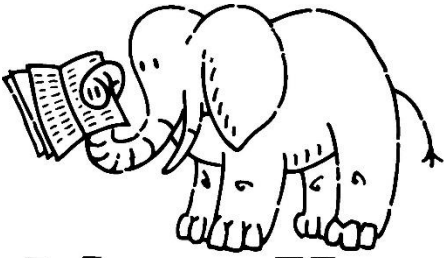
Wednesday Night Small Group

Wednesday night small group will be discussing a new series called *Counter Culture*. In the first lesson of this series we look at how our culture seems to promote division. Everywhere we look today, we see how people seem to “hate” or have a skewed opinion of someone because they don’t agree with others. This is not how we as Christians should be. We are called to love one another. We do not have to agree with everyone, but we should love them.

M28 Summer Camp

The M28 Camp dates have been released. We will be returning to Lake Junaluska for Summer Camp the Week of July 2-7. If you are interested in going and need information, or you need to sign up, please contact Tera Smith. The cost for this trip is \$225 per person. This includes 5 nights stay, all meals while at the camp, and White Water rafting.

Children's Page



Memory Verse

"Love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your strength."

Deuteronomy 6:5



This week in Sunday School we will hear from the Old Testament. Teachings from the Old Testament are important, and they offer wisdom. This week's lesson is the Old Testament teaching called the *Shema*. *Shema* is the Hebrew word for hear or listen. When Moses spoke the words of the *Shema* to the Israelites, he explained that they were very important. Even Jesus, in the New Testament, referred to the words of the *Shema*. Hope to see you Sunday as we study this important lesson.



Bible study will not meet this week. We will resume next Sunday night, February 10, at our regular meeting time.

Branson Trip - The dates have been set for our Branson trip. Planet 456 will be attending the Sights and Sounds production of **Samson** the weekend of April 5-7. Please contact Mrs. Tera as soon as possible if your child is planning on attending. We need a head count in order to get our tickets.



Confirmation classes for 6th graders began on Wednesday, January 23rd. We will continue to meet after school until 4:30 p.m. These classes will meet throughout the month of February.

Volunteers serving Sunday, February 3, 2019

Greeters	Archie & Angie Edgar/Hubert & Pam Hatfield
Acolytes	Mattie Burton/Caroline Swafford
Worship Leader	Rich Knox
Scripture	Hebrews 4:14-16
Sermon	“Means of Grace & the Sacraments”
Communion Assistants	Tera Smith/Owen & Mary Lou Richards
Security	Albert Vandevere/Chip Heidel
Flowers	Hubert & Pam Hatfield

Attendance, January 27, 2019

Worship Services	204
Sunday School	139

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DAILY BIBLE READINGS

FEBRUARY

3. Rejected!	Luke 4:21-30
4. A prayer for renewal	Psalm 51:1-10
5. Now is the time!	2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10
6. “Whom shall I send?”	Isaiah 6:1-8(9-13)
7. Being like God	Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7
8. Surrounded by steadfast love	Psalm 32
9. The gift of life	Romans 5:12-19

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As we draw closer to this gathering, I invite you first to keep these delegates in your prayers. They have an enormous task before them, and we need to lift them up to God in prayer each day. Second, I invite you to an **Information Session** this **Sunday, February 3, at 10 a.m.** in the sanctuary to learn more about General Conference and how it works. If you have any questions, there will be a **Follow-Up Question & Answer** time on Wednesday, February 6, at 6 p.m. in the Chapel.

Brother Lauren