



Updates on LGBTQ Changes in the United Methodist Church

The Church & Society Committee at Grace has been monitoring proposed changes to the church's position on LGBTQ clergy that were to have been discussed and voted on at the 2020 General Conference. When it was cancelled last year, these proposals were delayed until 2021. This article provides some brief background on the topic, with links to more detailed information about each of the proposed plans. It is our intent to provide several opportunities for members of the church to learn more about the proposals between now and the General Conference at the end of August, so stay tuned!

For the past 47 years, the United Methodist Church has struggled to find consensus with regard to matters of human sexuality - particularly in regarding to gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and queer expressions. In the Special Session of General Conference held in 2019, a resolution called "The Traditional Plan" was passed that caused significant harm to those who have tried to promote changes for many years. Under that plan, the ban against self-avowed practicing homosexual people being ordained as United Methodist clergy continued, as did the prohibition on officiating gay weddings. It also required annual conferences to certify they would "uphold, enforce and maintain the (Book of) Discipline's standards on LGBTQ marriage and ordination" and applied stricter consequences.

In response to that action, a group of clergy and lay leaders began meeting in Summer 2019 to negotiate a way forward that acknowledged there may be no unified approach for the church and that separation of the denomination may be the best path forward. This process resulted in the "Protocol of Reconciliation and Grace". In addition to the Protocol, there are several other proposals that have been made which are still likely to be presented to the General Conference. A great resource for comparing these proposals is a chart that can be found at <https://www.umnews.org/-/media/UMC%20Media/2020/03/24/13/54/General-Conference-UMC-Plans-Chart-V8>

These are the various proposals currently under active consideration that are expected to be presented at the 2021 General Conference:

- "New Denominations of United Methodism" or the Indianapolis Plan - <https://indyplanumc.org/>
- "New Expressions Worldwide" or UM Forward Plan - <https://um-forward.org/new-plan>
- "Next Generation UMC" or UMCNext Plan - <https://umcnext.com/legislation/>
- "The Protocol of Reconciliation and Grace Through Separation" - <https://www.gracethroughseparation.com>

A brief description of each of these will be distributed in future Chimes articles or through the Beyond the Red Doors emails in coming months. An additional step members of Grace can take is to consider updating our inclusion **statement to be consistent with the Reconciling Ministries Network's foundational statement. Our committee will be discussing this in the coming month and will keep you informed as we proceed.**



CHURCH & SOCIETY
General Board of Church and Society
THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



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The people of The United Methodist Church™

GUMC Foundation Report for 2020

Endowment earnings were distributed as follows:

Bolsinger Scholarships	\$	17,034.00
Funaro Scholarship	\$	2,999.00
Burkhead CWU Childrens Clothing Fd.	\$	829.00
GUMC Ad. Council		
Miscellaneous Small Endowments	\$	1,531.00
Glenn Robinson	\$	1,148.00
Gene & Marilyn Leonard	\$	1,340.00
Harold Wilson	\$	1,276.00
Eulleta Popp	\$	1,085.00
Jane Bevington	\$	638.00
Merie Hill	\$	1,404.00
Ruth Biddle	\$	10,081.00
Marjorie Canine	\$	447.00
Larry Hoch	\$	893.00
Operating Budget		
Phyllis Roberts	\$	3,381.00
Betty Blackburn	\$	3,445.00
Building Expenses		
Phyllis Roberts	\$	11,803.00
Music		
Phyllis Roberts	\$	1,659.00
Helen Young Special Music	\$	702.00
Children's Education		
Virginia Haworth	\$	1,276.00
Hospitality		
Art Jones	\$	383.00
Youth Activities		
Bob Young	\$	447.00
Total	\$	63,801.00
Addition to Assets:		
Larry Hoch	\$	20,963.00
Merrill & Betty Blackburn	\$	161,687.00
Total Assets	\$	1,656,923.00

Society Of Grace

If you have included Grace in your estate plans, we would like to add your name to the plaque in the Narthex as an encouragement to others.

John Mechem





Celebrations of Grace

by Rev. Nate Nims, Senior Pastor
natenims@gracedesmoines.org

Dear Grace family,

For the past year, we have all wandered through a kind of wilderness together. This makes preparing for the season of Lent interesting, to say the least. During the season of Lent, we symbolically enter into the wilderness with Jesus, we confront our temptations and seek to be transformed by grace so that we might celebrate the hope of resurrection at Easter. I don't know about you, but this Lent I am not going to stop enjoying chocolate because I need that simple joy in my life and I am betting you do too. What if, this Lent, we spend less time with behavior modification and devoted ourselves to an interior transformation of grace and peace?

There is a moment in the Gospels where Jesus is asked by some religious leaders to give them a sign, to prove to them that Jesus is the Christ and the messiah. Jesus refuses to give them a sign and goes on to say that no sign will be given to them other than the sign of Jonah, but Jesus doesn't say exactly what that sign of Jonah is. That is why, throughout Lent, we are going to explore the book of Jonah, so that we might find this sign, so that we can experience the breadth and depth of God's love as we prepare for Easter.

We are beginning to put plans in place for at home activities and devotions for Lent, similar to what we did for Advent, and we are figuring out what it will look like to have a meaningful, yet virtual, Ash Wednesday service to mark the beginning of Lent. As these plans are finalized, we will let you know.

In regards to worship and moving forward during the pandemic as we await widespread distribution of the vaccines, for the time being we will continue to offer worship online and over the phone. You can join us for worship online on Facebook, YouTube, or our website gracedesmoines.org every Sunday at 10:15 am and if you are not able to join us online, you can listen to worship at any time by calling 515-203-2479. You may have seen in the Des Moines Register that the Iowa Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church is allowing in-person, masked, and socially distanced worship to resume in some congregations, however, those permissions come with the county COVID positivity rate being below 15%. Throughout January, our county has been at, just above, or just below this 15% threshold. Additionally, our county has had more positive cases of COVID than any other county, nearly three times more cases than the second highest county (<https://coronavirus.iowa.gov/pages/case-counts>). As we seek to love our neighbors as we love ourselves, we must protect our neighbors as we protect ourselves.

Thankfully, at the start of January, the Grace Preschool was able to safely reopen and as we move forward, we will continue to find ways to connect with one another and worship together. In the coming months, we will experience various starts and stops as the positivity rate changes and vaccines are made available. I thank you for the patience and understand that you have extend to myself, our staff, and church throughout this pandemic and I look forward to coming back together, when it is safe to do so.

Finally, I want to thank everyone that has pledged for 2021. In a time of uncertainty, it has been a blessing to know that we can count on your support. If you have not pledged yet, you can still pledge online at gracedesmoines.org or you can send us a pledge in the mail by letting us know what your weekly, monthly, or annual pledge is and sending it to Grace at 3700 Cottage Grove, Des Moines, IA, 50311. Everyone that submits a pledge to Grace will receive a coffee mug. As the county COVID positivity rate drops and it is safer to do so, we will organize the 2021 Grace mugging to deliver mugs and thank you for your continued support.

We all know and continue to feel the challenges of the grief of this pandemic, we have lost loved ones, friends, spouses, mentors, and neighbors. Our plans have been canceled and postponed, our hopes and dreams deferred, and yet, we are still Grace. Lent reminds us that we cannot avoid the wilderness, but Lent also gives us the hope that insists the wilderness will not get the last word. One way or another, Easter is still coming and we will still be a people called Grace.

grace and peace,
Nate

GUMC Financial Report - December 31, 2020

2020

2019

INCOME:

Pledges	\$398,963.00	\$396,840.00
Non Pledged	\$104,271.00	\$98,210.00
Other	<u>\$29,309.00</u>	<u>\$76,409.00</u>
Total	\$532,543.00	\$571,458.00

DISBURSEMENTS:

Payroll	\$312,020.00	\$334,776.00
Administrative Expenses	\$45,451.00	\$39,826.00
Building Expense	\$139,005.00	\$154,187.00
Program Expenses	\$10,712.00	\$18,458.00
Outreach	<u>\$3,000.00</u>	<u>\$3,012.00</u>
	\$510,188.00	\$550,259.00
Conference Support	<u>\$7,810.00</u>	<u>\$2,865.00</u>
Total	\$517,998.00	-\$553,124.00
Net Gain	\$14,545.00	\$18,334.00

Our Mission

Grace United Methodist is a community in Christ where a cross section of metropolitan Des Moines gathers for worship, study and service. At the core of our existence is Christ's vision for the world and the church. We are a servant people striving to live our lives so as to increase the Love for God and neighbor in the world. We are called:

- To tell God's story in fresh new ways through preaching and teaching.
- To practice uncommon hospitality.
- To equip and send servants into the larger community for Service.

Our Welcoming Statement

Each of us is a child of God worthy of God's love. In our diversity, we are created in God's image. In celebration of that good news, everyone is invited to join in worship and fellowship. This invitation is extended to all--people of all races, all ethnic backgrounds, all generations, all physical and mental abilities, all economic conditions, all sexual orientations--honoring the diversity of our faith journeys. We invite you to bless this church with your presence as God's grace is present in all creation.

Lenten Fundraiser for Central Iowa Shelter & Services

In the past, our 3rd Grace Sunday school class has supported the Central Iowa Shelter during Lent, and this year we are encouraging everyone at Grace to support the vital and necessary work of the Central Iowa Shelter. During Lent, we will have collection boxes outside the church office where you can drop off these items:

3 oz. Disposable Cups, Earplugs, Shower Sandals, Aspirin, Antacid, Pain-killer, Cough Drops, Cold/Flu Medications (without alcohol), Tylenol or Ibuprofen, Travel-size Shampoo and Soap, Toothpaste, Toothbrushes, Towels, Razors, Combs, Deodorant, Bus Tokens, Coffee, New Underwear (in various sizes), New Men's Pants (in various sizes), New Men's Shoes (in various sizes), New Bras (in various sizes), Disinfecting Wipes, Sandwich bags, Can Openers, Pots, Pans, Plates, Bowls, Silverware.



Address: 3700 Cottage Grove, Des Moines, IA 50311
Phone: 515-255-2131
Email: info@gracedesmoines.org
Website: www.gracedesmoines.org
Facebook: GraceDesMoines
Twitter: GraceDesMoines
Worship: Sunday—10:15 am on Facebook, YouTube, and GraceDesMoines.com

STAFF LISTING

Senior Minister:
Rev. Nate Nims

Director of Christian Education:
Coreen Witke

Grace Preschool Director:
Kelly Donnelly

Office Manager:
Charlene Hjort

Custodian:
Tyler Caulfield

Director of Music and Organist:
Ann Gerdom

Chancel Choir and Grace Chimers Director:
Michael Gookin

Chapel Choir Director:
Devon Steve

Chorister Choir Director:
Emily Miller

Grace Youth Coordinator:
Nathan DeLange

Grace Youth Assistant Coordinator:
Patty Link

Chimes Deadline

Submit complete articles for the next issue by the 15th of each month. Please send them to Charlene Hjort at charlenehjort@gracedesmoines.org.

View the Chimes on line and in color on our web site at:
www.gracedesmoines.org/newsletter.