Friends,

This issue of the Marion Methodist while arriving in your hands 10 days after the conclusion of the specially called General Conference of the United Methodist Church called to deal with the issues in our church regarding holy sexuality, it was written as I experienced it, so be some “raw” parts, but I discerned it appropriate there to submit this as it came from my heart.

Day 1 - Saturday, February 23

The General Conference was called specially (out of the normal 4-year cycle) to decide a way forward on matters relating to ordination, holy sexuality and marriage. It is a gray day, drizzle covering St. Louis as the 864 delegates and several thousand observers file into the Dome at America’s Center, our home for these days of Holy Conferencing.

Several North American bishops led us in some liturgical moments, followed by the bishops from the 16 countries in Eurasia who asked for prayers for the ministries in their countries. We sang Wesleyan Hymns in Finnish, Russian and German. The bishops from Korea asked us to pray and PRAY LOUDLY each in our own language which we did. For this one moment, the gathered church sounded a lot like I think it might have at the first Pentecost. Prayers were offered by African bishops in the various languages of the continent, each of these reminding us what a great and awesome God we serve.

The day ended sadly on the street outside. On one corner was a group from “that” church (?) in Kansas casting judgment through a bullhorn on the United Methodist Church, we can be “chaplain to a media driven culture or unimpressed by these efforts, so today may be the day the shape of our United Methodist Church changes.

One Marion Methodist Monday note - today I saw a gentleman from Nigeria wearing one of my stocking caps which made me look around to see many warm weather living folks wearing your old (the Hawkeye and Cyclone stuff were huge clues) or new coats, hats, gloves, mittens and scarves. On behalf of them, I thank you.

Day 4 - Tuesday, February 26

The day of worship and prayer, and a day of organization is behind us. The voting devices and interpretation systems have all been determined “bug free” so the work of dealing with the issues of holy sexuality around marriage, ordination and the opportunity to exit the denomination, if a congregation chooses, should be the work of these two days. Lots of politicking and some intimidation put on our Central Conference delegations to vote for the One Church Plan or lose their funding. The delegates from Philippines, Eurasia and Africa seem to be unimpressed by these efforts, so today may be the day the shape of our United Methodist Church changes.

Bishop Gregory Palmer guided the assembly through two petitions regarding pastoral pensions and then the matter of this most important day came before us. As is our practice, first the minority report came forward moving to replace the “Traditional” plan with the “One Church Plan.” After discussion and debate on the floor, the One Church Plan was voted down 46 to 54%, the same percentages it had received in the previous days. This raised the “Traditional Plan” to be the main motion of the conference. Prior to General Conference, the Judicial Council had encouraged the support of the delegates. Votes were taken and the agenda set, then a chair, vice chair and secretary were elected and our work began with dealing with the petitions regarding pension funds.

For any information needing to be published in the Marion Methodist newsletter, please contact the church office. (info@marionmethodist.org)
Director of Choral Music

Marion Methodist is seeking a Director of Choral Music to begin working with the church June 1. Our need emerges due to the retirement of Director Peggy Rosenkranz. The main responsibility of Director of Choral Music is to lead and direct the Chancel Choir, a robust and talented group that averages 30 or so adult singers. The Director of Choral Music is a part-time position and the job description is available here: www.MarionMethodist.org/available-positions. Interested candidates are invited to call Simon Campbell, Director of Worship at 319.377.4856 or email their letter of interest and appropriate resume to jerry@marionmethodist.org by April 1, 2019.

Watch LIVE
at 10:15 AM

Go to our YouTube channel or online at MarionMethodist.org/watch-live

Registration is open
Summer Games University is a Christian Summer Camp for students who have completed 6-12 grades. This one-week camp is an experiential, relationship-focused camp where students will have the opportunity to learn more about who Jesus is and build relationships with other Christian students.

July 8-12, 2019 at Grinnell College Register at www.sgu.camp

TV Broadcast
Marion Methodist worship services are typically rebroadcasted on Mediacom or ImOn Channel 4 at 7:00 PM on Monday evenings. There is a multweek delay between when a sermon is preached and when it airs on TV.

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reviewed all the plans and found each needing amendments to make them constitutional. Monday in our legislative committee these amendments were going to be submitted one by one to bring the plan in line with the church constitution, but, in a deft political move, supporters of one of the other plans called the question and the plan was passed in a faulted format to the legislative session.

So, as Bishop Cynthia Harvey took the chair, the Constitutionally faulted Traditional Plan was before the body. Again, speakers began to amend the plan but to no avail. Led emotionally by mega church pastor Adam Hamilton, one speaker after another supporting other plans rose to amend the document adding sentences in contradiction or that were frivolous in nature. At one point a preacher from Nebraska stood with a stack of amendment sheets announcing to the supporters of the Traditional Plan that they had 20 left to submit. The stall and block strategy effectively ended the opportunity the Conference had to submit a way forward.

With an hour remaining (set up for a Monster Truck rally in the dome required us to leave), Bishop Harvey moved us through votes on all of the petitions. The same Traditional Plan that will be found unconstitutional by Judicial Council was passed. Then pandemonium ensued. While the St. Louis Police prevented hundreds of the several thousand observers from storming the floor of the conference, nothing could be done to stop the shouting of “No No No” from the balconies of the former home of the St. Louis Rams from then until the end of the conference. Nothing could be done to stop the singing of hymns with new lyrics, nothing could stop the banners from unfurling that called the United Methodist Church haters of people in the LGBTQ+ community.

Votes were taken on the remaining items with little discussion, even the disaffiliation legislation (that allows churches to exit the UMC with their properties after meeting some apportionments and pension requirements) was passed – though it too will likely be found Unconstitutional for the same reasons listed above. A song sung, a prayer said, at 6:30 PM CST the Conference was adjourned.

Today was my saddest as a United Methodist. On full display was the extreme brokenness of the body of Christ, United Methodist. The Church spent roughly $7,000,000 of Apportionments on this conference and the Commission on the Way Forward and here we are, worse in fact than when we started. Friendships fractured, venom spilled, more protests being planned, God weeps.

Most of my ministry I have been a hardcore Methodist and for all of it I committed Wesleyan Christian. More and more it becomes apparent that we may need to consider what one of my African friends proclaimed at breakfast one day, “It may be better to be separated on the truth than to stay together in error.” God help us. For today, we remain unapologetically Christian and (while bruised and fatigued) unashamedly United Methodist. Marion Methodist will continue to be a body of Christ that offers hospitality and the love of Christ for all persons. We will speak love and Biblical direction into the hurt of this generation. We will persistently extend opportunities for all to encounter a transformative and life changing relationship with Jesus Christ. We will enthusiastically and generously do all the good we can, so help us God.

You are beloved.

Pastor Mike

Need to reserve a room? Want to set up a table in The Center?
To utilize the building the way that the Building Committee envisioned all rooms and tables are to be reserved by calling the Church Office at 319-377-4856. We have the ability to have 2 tables set up in The Center on a Sunday morning to not disrupt the flow between services. These tables can also be reserved by calling the Church Office.
Marion Methodist is Praying for:

Prayer is a powerful way of caring for each other in our Marion Methodist family. There are several avenues open to everyone – the prayer cards on Sunday morning and the prayer wall which is available 24/7, are two that are used most often. You can have a more active part in entering into prayer for each other. Check out the prayer wall frequently as prayers are submitted there often. Each time you visit, and pray for one of the requests found there, click the “I Prayed For This” tab; more prayers are always better.

As we enter the Holy season of Lent, may we as a people humble ourselves in prayer, seeking to hear God’s voice as we consider those things that set us apart from God. Lord, give us a spirit of confession and repentance so that we may be restored in your sight, and our souls forgiven and reconciled with you. Amen

Meal Schedule:

3/13 - Kettle House
3/20 - Firehouse Subs

Powerhouse meets every Wednesday. From 5:45 pm to 6:15 pm we have a Family Meal (Free Will Offering) and from 6:30 pm to 7:30 pm we have activities for all ages.

Preschoolers: Kids may forget what you say - but they remember what they discover on their own. Get them “Hands On” with God’s Word. (Room E30)

Kindergarten - 5th Grade: Meet a Jesus that is real and relevant in your everyday life! Discover Jesus in you. (Room E10 & E60)

4:12 Youth Group: Junior High Worship 6:30 pm - 7:30 pm (Sanctuary). High School Worship 7:30 pm - 9:00 pm (Sanctuary).

Adult Classes: Come for a midweek boost. Check out classes at www.marionmethodist.org

Nursery: Offered in the Nursery

HYGIENE KITS

Once again, Marion Methodist is collecting items for UMCOR’s Hygiene kits. Last year we sent 100 kits to Marshalltown to aid in their recovery from the tornadoes. As a reminder, here’s the list of requirements for one Hygiene kit, contained in a gallon zip lock bag.

Hygiene Kit Materials

- One hand towel (15x25 - 17x27 inches)
- No kitchen, cleaning, or microfiber towels
- One washcloth
- No kitchen, cleaning, or microfiber towels
- One comb
- Must be sturdy with a least 6 inches of teeth
- No pocket combs or picks
- Rattail and combs must have at least 6 inches of teeth
- One toenail or fingernail clipper
- No emery boards or metal nail files
- Bath-sized soap (3 oz bar or larger)
- No Ivory or Jergen’s soap
- Do not remove from packaging
- 10 adhesive bandages (3/4 by 3 inches)
- Common household bandages acceptable

Thank You

This table of mittens, gloves, scarves, stocking caps and ear muffs greeted the delegations of United Methodists’ arriving from Africa in chilly St. Louis as General Conference was about to begin. Thank you to Marion Methodist for your generosity.

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AED Granted to Marion Methodist

The Safety Team applied for and was granted an AED (Automated External Defibrillator) by Mercy Medical Center. The device will be installed on the east most “post” in our center directly behind the east welcome desk. We are grateful to Mercy Medical Center and ThinkSafe for their generosity.

Rev. Mike Morgan, Craig Liscum Safety Team Captain and Gay Trimble chair of the Board of Trustees receive our AED and signage from Karla Thompson of ThinkSafe and Melissa Cullum of Mercy Medical Center.

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MISSION BREAKFAST

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Our Congregation Shares Its Concern & Christian Love...

DEATHS:

BAPTISMS:

Our Congregation Shares Its...