

Messenger

July 2022

Stay The Course Until Otherwise Thwarted

Pastor Joe's perspective on the impending split of the United Methodist Church

Hello Church—

I've had a very few people over the last few months ask me about the denominational situation and the 'impending' split of the United Methodist Church over the issues of same-sex marriages and the ordination of homosexual persons. The current conversation in the denomination is leading us toward the following: The new Global Methodist Church will be for those who hold firm in rejecting such ordinations and same-sex marriage. The current United Methodist Church will seek to change the language in our Book of Discipline to allow (not require) such ordinations and same-sex marriages. I thought I'd share some personal thoughts here for those who are interested. (continued on page 2)



NOTHING HAS HAPPENED YET, BUT.....

First, from the UMC's perspective, nothing official has happened and will not happen until at least the next General Conference to be held in 2024. Therefore, from my viewpoint, there isn't anything to immediately address. We stay the course. We do Jesus stuff like we are Called to do. We invite, welcome, inspire, teach and care for others..... 'to make disciples of Jesus Christ'. For those who know anything about my ministry, keep the circle going. The Discipleship Pathway at First UMC is my primary focus. This is because I believe it reflects the ministry of Jesus in the most focused way possible. For some of you, **you can stop reading here and be okay. Nothing is changing now.**

Second, I know the split is coming and, in some ways, is already here. Although it is a complicated process, the Global Methodist Church is waiting with open arms for those congregations choosing to move from the United Methodist Church. I am fully prepared to help lead any discussion, equipping the church to make any tough decisions regarding any prospective changes.

The reaction from those in the pews is varied. For a few, this is a divisive issue that will dictate the future of staying with or leaving from their current home church. For most, this issue will not be an all-or-nothing outcome, but a negotiated discussion

that helps us move on. Then we will heal and then we invite, welcome, inspire, teach and care for others.... 'to make disciples of Jesus Christ'..... as we are doing now.

WHERE I CURRENTLY STAND

I don't like labels (though I fear I use them nonetheless). When people ask me if I'm a conservative or a progressive I get a little irritated. Why do I have to choose? These labels are stacked with political, social and theological inuendo. I am none of them entirely, but neither am I void of any of them.

I have no strong stance on the human sexuality issue either way. I have always seen my Call as helping the church sort through the messiness of life in order to follow Jesus with as much clarity as possible, knowing that we won't be perfect. I have served politically and theologically diverse congregations for at least the last 20 years. I have done so successfully because I refuse to accept labels. We have disagreed about much in Bible Studies and Church Council meetings and informal talks in the church kitchen. When our disagreeable conversations were over, however, we went together to worship or to feed the poor or to lead a community outreach event. Honestly, that is what makes me feel most fulfilled---leading diverse people into doing Jesus stuff together.

The thought of not being together

breaks my heart, especially over an issue that isn't about church doctrine. We aren't arguing the validity of the Trinity or whether the resurrection actually happened. We aren't debating the divinity of Christ or existence of the Holy Spirit or the list of spiritual disciplines. This issue of human sexuality is not a doctrinal issue, yet it seems to be treated as such.

If I left the denomination every time I disagreed with one particular, non-doctrinal stance, I would never find a church home. I would never feel a part of a community. While the GMC and the UMC will perhaps find peace on one issue, the struggle will not end. The human condition will always try to thwart us from God's purpose.... 'to make disciples of Jesus Christ'. Another issue will arise just as slavery, women's suffrage, divorce, war, abortion, ordination of women, etc; did. Denominational splits simply don't solve the struggle. Jesus and His abundant grace inevitably do, however.

THE SCRIPTURAL ARGUMENT

I have gone on record with this many times, but let me do so again. The issue is also about how we treat Scripture mixed with a lot of hypocrisy. One may want to quote the immorality of homosexuality, but don't want to quote other laws that no one wants to view as relevant (do you have a parapet on your house?). Neither is there any talk about stoning homosexuals to death which is a requirement by

Biblical law. Yes, even the staunchest theological conservative will allow room for debate around the relevance of certain Scriptures that don't fit their ideology.

Another may want to talk about how Jesus loves everyone and we just need to bathe the world in unconditional love just like God loves us and accept people for who they are. This is great until the human condition rises up. The Church has its fair share of financial scandals; marital infidelity; selfish agendas; and discriminations of various sorts. The reality is that the church needs rules and structure and accountability. Yes, even the staunchest theological progressive will allow room for debate around the relevance of certain Scriptures that don't fit their ideology.

And then there is all the gray area which is where I and many other pastors find themselves. How do we lead a conversation that allows for disagreement but doesn't compromise the unified purpose God has for His church? How do we love unconditionally, but also stay firm to the pursuit of perfection that John Wesley so adamantly suggested? This is the messiness to which I feel Called. This is the messiness that I am willing to lead the church through because I love the Church.

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH WILL REMAIN DIVERSE

Make no mistake, the debate between the GMC and the UMC is not an either/or dilemma. There will be many conservatives who remain in the UMC for various reasons. Those who believe there is room in the pews for both viewpoints will remain in the UMC. Conservatives and progressives alike will continue to converse and disagree. When the conversation is over, we will go worship together; feed the poor together; and participate in community outreach together..... just like the Jewish-Christians and the Gentile-Christians did so long ago.

SOME FALSE CLAIMS

Some who argue for the Global Methodist Church try to make this about more than just human sexuality--- that the UMC is somehow losing its way from its traditions and roots and foundation in the spiritual disciplines. This is far from the truth. Indeed, I take great exception to this!

We still study Scripture in various contexts (Sunday School, Bible Studies, Small Groups, etc). We still are in ardent prayer. We still administer and celebrate the Sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion. We hold fast to the creeds; belt out 'How Great Thou Art' and the tone and tune of my sermons are not going to change one iota. These things are

not going away. Disciple-making will continue even when things stay messy.

ONE SIMPLE REALITY

The reality of our division is clearly about one issue and one issue only: human sexuality. Namely, the ordination of LGBTQ individuals and same-sex marriages. I don't want to minimize this issue. For some, this is a very real and painful issue that has affected many households in the church (more than you realize). People are looking for peace in this. Some are looking for hope. I intend to lead the church to continue offering peace and hope to the people in the pews. Together we will continue to find our way and, when we can't, rely on God's grace to help us through.

PLEASE REACH OUT TO ME

I am always open to conversation. Whether you are one that sees this issue with passion and determination, or one who simply doesn't understand all the noise: I am always willing to talk with you. I am not here to judge your position. I am here to understand you and help you understand one another even amid disagreement.

Passionate Worship

Worship in-person and online!

- Saturdays– 5:30 pm—casual
- Sundays– 9:00 am
- Sundays– 10:30 am
- Sundays– 10:30 am live stream

Live Stream options:

YouTube channel:

<https://youtube.com/channel/UC87AzcdD-88Lr8e39HBKEFW>

Facebook Live:

<https://www.facebook.com/First-United-Methodist-Church-of-Springboro-202709196426644>

Missed worship on Sunday?

Find the worship videos on our Facebook page or YouTube channel.

Online giving link:

www.fumcofspringboro.org/online-giving/

Thank you for your continued financial support in person, through the mail or online!

Worship Services

There is always a need for ushers, liturgists, tech help, special music, and greeters. Call the church office if interested in volunteering.

Mission First Endowment

The endowment is a financial investment that will allow FUMC to stay missional through all the ups and downs of church life. You can give to this cause through our website, weekend offerings or mail.

Current amount = \$14,705

Endowment Committee members – Chuck Novak, Beth Wenzel, Wayne Bishop and Harry Hall.

Pastor Amy Haines Visiting

As the 3rd installment of our Bicentennial Sermon Series, Pastor Amy will be leading worship July 16/17. There will be a dinner after the Sat. 5:30 service. All are invited to join.

Youth Leading Worship

The Youth will be leading worship on July 30 and July 31.

Compassionate Care

Compassionate Care Ministry

There is a weekly prayer request email sent out every Monday morning. Feel free to use this list to reach out to your FUMC family. Phone calls, texts, emails, cards and even visits are welcome. Email Kerri and she will gladly add you to the list.

Karen's Card Shop

Pick up a card for any occasion, outside the church office, for only \$2!

Service for Tom Swartzel

A service for Tom Swartzel will be held at the church on Saturday, July 30th at 10:30 am. There will be a meal following the service.

Church News

Safe Sanctuary Training

The training for safe sanctuary needs to be completed. The following groups or individuals are required to take place in the training:

- Youth Group Leaders
- Sunday School Teachers
- Preschool Teachers
- Medical Drivers
- Care Team
- Stephen Ministry
- Anyone interested

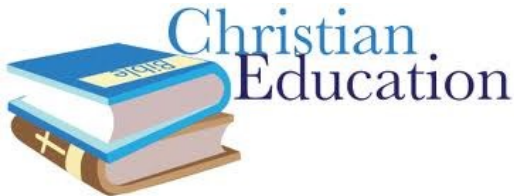
Training for the preschool and anyone who missed the first session will be August 29 at 10:00 am.

Bicentennial Church Items On Sale!

Be on the lookout for special items you can purchase to celebrate 200 years of ministry at FUMC! You can order before and after services or call the church office to order.

T-shirts unisex sm-2x—\$15.00
 T-shirts unisex 3x and 4x—\$20.00
 T-shirts women's sm-XL—\$15.00
 T-shirts youth sm—lg—\$15.00
 Sweatshirts sm-2x—\$25.00
 Sweatshirts 3x and 4x—\$30.00
 Travel mugs 20 oz—\$20.00
 Travel mugs 22 oz—\$20.00
 Coffee mugs—\$10.00

Faith-Forming Relationships



Lunch With Pastor Joe on Facebook

Starting July 11th, Pastor Joe's Monday devotion time is changing to 12:00. So....if you happen to be on your lunch break at work and want a 10-minute devotion, this is an opportunity for you!

Online Devotions

Facebook Live at 9:30am with Thursday's with David Finney.

Tuesday Bible Study

We are taking a break in July. We will start again Tuesday, August 2nd at 10:00.

Cornerstone Class

The Cornerstone class meets on Sunday's at 9:00 am in the Conference Room. Contact is Bev Haun.

United Methodist Men

The United Methodist Men meet the first Sunday for each month at 8 am in the Fellowship Hall. Contact is David Finney.

Calling all FUMC Cooks and Bakers!

The Women in Faith are doing a cookbook full of all our special recipes. Send recipes to Mary Zieher—mazeih45@gmail.com. There will also be a basket in the sanctuary if you would rather provide a paper copy. Please include all detailed steps in your recipes. Include any additional notes about origin of the recipe, why it is special to you or your family, etc.

We can use main dishes, vegetable recipes, breads, desserts, etc. All questions please call Mary Zeiher at 937-321-7305.

Risk-Taking Outreach/Missions

Medical Driving Ministry

The Medical Driving Ministry provides transportation to medical appointments for our members and their families who are unable to drive themselves.

For rides please contact Harold Masteller at 937-885-7481.

The Gathering Mission Project

We are scheduled to bring lunch on the 3rd Sunday of the month and feed 60 people at The Gathering in Middletown. Contact Kim Crosen if you are interested in helping provide food.

SCAC and The Pantry

Donate food, toiletries or funds to purchase in bulk. Canned goods and toiletries can be dropped off in the shopping cart at church!

Kroger Rewards Program

Register our church as your Kroger recipient. NPO: RX797

Dorothy Lane Market

Complete a Good Neighbors Form and designate our church. ID# 815.
Please remember your yearly renewal.

Rummage Sale

The Youth Group's annual rummage sale will be held on Friday, **August 5** and Saturday, **August 6 from 8 am—12 pm each day**. So now is the time to start cleaning out your closets and basements to help provide donations for the sale. We will be accepting donations on Friday, July 25 through August 3. If pickups are needed contact Brian to schedule.

Children and Youth



Kids Who Care: K—2nd grades
God Squad: 3rd & 4th grades
Mission 56: 5th & 6th grades

Contact: Kim Crosen
kimfumc@gmail.com,
937-748-2612

Look for emails from Kim.



Junior High Youth (7-8)
Senior High Youth (9-12)

Contact: Brian Schlise
Brianschlise@habeggercorp.com
937-748-9711

Look for texts from Brian.

Supplies Needed for VBS

We are in need of several supplies for VBS. If you would like to donate please drop off at the church office.

- 4000 large popsicle sticks
- 350 Dixie cups
- 350 clear dessert plates
- Mod podge (we need lots)
- 350 paper coffee cups with lids
- 350 pieces of 5 x 7 sandpaper
- 350 toilet paper/paper towel rolls
- 350 brown paper lunch bags

VBS Schedule

- **July 12**-Tuesday 1-3- TEEN/PRE-TEEN volunteer training
 - **July 12** -Tuesday 6:00-7:30- Overview and dinner- ALL INVITED. *Dinner is being provided. If you would like to help prepare or serve let the church office know.*
 - **July 13**-Wednesday 1-4pm- VBS Decorating prep
 - **July 17**- Sunday- 12-4- VBS set-up day- LUNCH included!
 - **July 18-22**- 5:30- WEEK OF EVENING VBS
 - **July 25-29**- 8:30- WEEK OF MORNING VBS
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Office News

Staff Contacts

Please do not hesitate to reach out to your staff!

Kerri Dome, Office Manager
fumcspringboro@gmail.com
officemanager@fumcspringboro.org
937-748-2612

Pastor Joe
pastor@fumcspringboro.org
513-463-7378

Doug Dean, Pastor Emeritus
revdhd23@gmail.com

Kim Crosen, Christian Education and Mission 56
kimfumc@gmail.com

Brian Schlise, Senior and Junior High
BrianSchlise@habeggercorp.com

Church Office

The church office is open from 9 am—noon. Kerri is also available by phone or email.

If you are not receiving the weekly email and would like to do so, please let Kerri know.

Pastor Joe's Vacation

Joe will be on vacation July 16th-23rd. You can call the church office with any emergencies. Or you can contact Pastor Doug Dean (513-649-5187) or David Finney (937-572-2130).

July Birthdays

3: David Wrazen
6: Mariel Pesavento
10: Pat Mastellar
11: Sharon Smithson, Katelyn Spellman
13: Leslie Haines, Hope Royer
14: Bev Thomas, Jean Stanley
17: Diana Best
18: Mike Hampton
19: Bryce Crosen
20: Stephanie Roeder, Jack Poff
21: Barbara Files, Jackie Winzeler
23: Becca Perry
24: Landon Thelen, Sophia Ingalls
25: Keith Stafford, Kerry Brown
29: Kelly Ronyak
30: Morgan Winzeler
31: Clara McLemore



July Anniversaries

8: Jason & Sara Beth Frye
13: Jim & Darlene Scott
20: Bryan & Andrea Miller

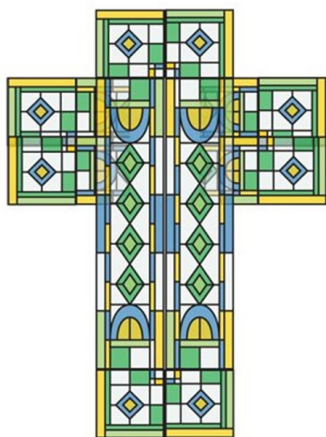


FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
60 EAST NORTH STREET
SPRINGBORO, OH 45066

937-748-2612

fumcofspringboro.org

fumcspringboro@gmail.com



Go now in peace, never be afraid
God will go with you each hour of every day
Go now in faith, steadfast, strong and true
Know He will guide you in all you do
Go now in love, and show you believe
Reach out to others so all the world can see
God will be there watching from above
Go now in peace, in faith, and in love
Amen
