



**NON-PROFIT
ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
PERMIT #29
CLEBURNE, TEXAS**

Our book club is starting back up for the new year. We'd love to have you join us the fourth Monday of the month in Room 101 (Bride's Room) at First United Methodist Church. We are very informal - come check us out even if you haven't read the book!

- January - Prayers For Sale by Sandra Dallas
- February - The Dovekeepers by Alice Hoffman
- March - The Disciple's Wife by Marilyn Malcolm
- April - Breakfast With Buddha by Roland Merullo.
- May - The Lutheran Ladies' Circle: Plucking One String by Kris Knorr.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to give Roanna Timmins a call at 817-454-8669.

TREND SUMMARY

Worship Trends:

Worship Attendance: YTD: 337

Professions of Faith: YTD: 4

Financial Trends: Through 12/31/2019

2019 Giving: \$ 780,000.58

2019 Expenses: \$ 754,229.37

General Fund Balance	\$ 84,317.75
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Jan 2020

FIRST NEWS

IT'S THAT SIMPLE

SIMPLY ACT
SIMPLY LOVE
SIMPLY WALK

In Worship This January

IN THIS ISSUE

- **Page 2 - Continuation of a Note from Pastor Daniel from Page 1 and “A Walk Outside” by Pastor Melissa.**
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NOTE FROM PASTOR DANIEL



*Making deeply committed disciples of Jesus Christ for
the transformation of the world, one life at a time.*

On Friday January 3, I got up and prepared to finish my drive home from the Sugar Bowl. As I began to load the car, my phone buzzed. I had a new news alert from Apple News. Normally these alerts don't move me to action, but this one did. Rather than alerting me to the newest piece of drama from Washington DC, this alert told me that my beloved United Methodist Church had split. I knew in my head that it logistically couldn't be true, but it was still a strong kick in the gut.

I don't know how you first encountered the news, but I know it prompted strong feelings in many. In the days that have followed I have received a number of questions, and concerned comments, so I want to take a moment to tell you what we know, where you can go for more information (see resource list at the end of this article), and what our call remains.

The United Methodist Church is not of one mind.

As we discussed in advance of the special Called General Conference of 2019, the United Methodist Church is a diverse global church in which there is theological disagreement regarding the full inclusion of the LGBTQ+ community into the life of the church. This is a conversation that the UMC has been having since 1972. It is one that has dominated much of the time and energy of the last several General Conferences. Specifically, our place of theological disagreement lies in our understandings of human sexuality related to marriage and ordination.

Please Note: *This global conversation is NOT about FUMC Cleburne's commitment to love, include, worship with, minister with, serve and be in community with LGBTQ+ persons. **ALL** are welcome, wanted and loved in the Body of Christ, and especially in The United Methodist Church.*

The denomination did NOT split on January 3 as a number of headlines read.

On January 3, a group of leaders from within all of the major caucus groups within the church worked together with the help of a mediator to come to produce the "Protocol of Reconciliation & Grace Through Separation" agreement. While many of the media headlines about the "Protocol of Reconciliation & Grace Through Separation" agreement indicated that the United Methodist Church had agreed to split, this is simply not the case. Only General Conference can make such decisions for the denomination and General Conference will not meet again until this May 5-15 in Minneapolis, Minn.

(continued on page 2)

A Walk Outside

It’s a new year, a new decade and on the podcast that means Pastor Daniel, Pastor Melissa, and just Kiefer are experiencing what it means to live in someone else’s shoes for a week. If you’ve been around the church since the turn of the clock ringing in 2020 then you know that the three of us have committed to do something outside of our comfort zones – Marvel Movies for Pastor Daniel, live sports for Pastor Melissa, and a 5 am wake up time for just Kiefer.

And as I (Pastor Melissa) begin my week of sports with trepidation, it got me thinking where are the places and spaces that I live comfortably?

The wind blows strong, yet gentle across my face as I breath in deep the smell of cedar, the light dusty smell of the limestone under my feet, and just a touch of sweat. I am most comfortable in nature. I connect deeply to God our Creator in these spaces whether switch-backing up a mountain, or toes dipped in sand and seawater, or taking in the cedar trail outside of my house. In nature I come to be overwhelmed by the beauty of the grandeur of it all or the details in the smallest bug busying itself with the tasks of her day.

So, as we enter in with intention or just ease to this new season of life, I wonder, where are you most comfortable in life? In these comfort spaces where do you connect to God? When you answer these questions for yourself will you take a moment to pause and give gratitude to God for the places you connect comfortably to with God on earth.

If you find God in creation, I have an invitation for you, will you come to our next hike on January 25th at Cleburne State Park at 8:30am?

If you don’t find God in creation, I have an invitation for you, will you stretch yourself outside of your comfort zone to chance to find God there at our next hike on January 25th at Cleburne State Park at 8:30am?

May you keep finding God in familiar places and new places this year.

Grace and peace, Pastor Melissa



WESLEYAN WANDERERS

A Note From Pastor Daniel, Continued

The “Protocol of Reconciliation & Grace Through Separation” agreement is just one of several possibilities being considered.

At General Conference there will be a number of significant proposals considered. If you would like to see a downloadable comparison of all the major proposals that have been published find the link below.

More information is coming.

As a member of the delegation from the Central Texas Conference, I will attend a gathering in late February that will provide additional information on some of the proposals that are being considered. I will brief the church on these in the upcoming weeks.

Most importantly this is a time for love, focus and prayer.

In this season of unrest within our denomination, our call at FUMC Cleburne remains the same, we are to love deeply all people (Matthew 22:36-40), focus on our mission (Matthew 28:16-20) and pray (James 5:13-16).

Please know that my office is always open to you if you have questions or concerns. Please call the office and set up an appointment time 817-645-6392.

Pastor Daniel

Links to more information:

For more info on the “Protocol of Reconciliation & Grace Through Separation” agreement:

https://www.ctcumc.org/TheProtocol_FAQ

Chart of published plans:

<https://www.resourceumc.org/en/content/gc2020-proposed-plans>.

Links for additional information:

<https://www.ctcumc.org/bishops-blog>

<https://www.umnews.org>

To view my words in worship go to the 61 minute mark of <https://bit.ly/3a7Pb8s>

Snapshots of December



Nacho Average Caroling



Staff on Christmas Eve



Christmas Parade



Children’s Christmas Pageant



Christmas Candlelighting



Christmas Cantata

Student Ministry

Wednesday Midweeks



In this series, we want to help students see that in order to truly chase after Jesus, we have to stop chasing some other things along the way so we can fully make a connection with God and see transformation in others.

Student Sunday School Hour

During Sunday school we stay on topic with what we are doing during mid-week. I intentionally stay on this topic to dive deeper into conversations we may have missed on Wednesday.

Upcoming events: Souper Bowl Party, 2/2, 4:30pm in the Youth Center.

Thoughts from Dylan:

As 2020 kicks off I'm excited to see what's in store this year for the youth. I'm excited that I get to lead this group of students in a faith journey that will challenge their faith in new way and answer those burning questions they have about God. I'm super excited that YOU as a church family selected me to lead these young adults in there faith walk with Christ and I cannot wait to see what unfolds this year.

Midweeks begin at 6:00 pm on Wednesday in the Youth Center following the Community Meal. Sunday School on Sunday begins at 9:45am in the Youth Center.

Children’s Ministry



Wednesday Midweeks

Happy New Year! All our Wednesday mid-weeks will be focused on “Christian Resolutions.”

Kidscore Sunday School

Our first rotation for the new year will be focusing on Epiphany. Were they kings? Wisemen? Magi?

After that, we will be focusing on...(drum roll, please) LENT!!! Can you believe it?

A note from Bev:

There are days that I wake up and can’t believe God has blessed me with all these children. Growing up, I would pray that God would give me a big family, and He did. Thank you for sharing your most precious of gifts with me.

Midweeks begin at 6:00pm on Wednesdays in the Family Center following the Community Meal. Kidscore begins at 9:45am on Sundays in the Family Center.