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## Momentous Changes Coming

*By Steve Stalnak*

Coming up this month is a Special Session of the United Methodist Church’s highest governing body, the General Conference. The reason for this unusual Special Session is to help our denomination deal with what could be the most momentous change to the United Methodist Church since Wesley founded it.

For several years, there’s been a movement within the denomination to remove or modify certain articles in our governing document, *The Book of Discipline*. These clauses set out how this denomination deals with the ordination of openly homosexual clergy and the performance of same sex marriages – grouped together under “human sexuality.”

This is an enormously complicated undertaking. A cogent description of what’s been proposed and what the implications are for our churches would far exceed the space available in the *Twig Bender*.

In addition to resolving differences in interpretation of Scripture, there are implications for clergy pensions and benefits, church property ownership, support of overseas missionaries and compatibility with overseas elements of our denomination.

*(Continued on page 8)*

### In This Issue

From the Pastor ..... 2  
 One Man’s Trash..... 3  
 Special Session 2019..... 4  
 February Food..... 4  
 Westview’s New Director . 5  
 MLK Day at Hermitage..... 5  
 Winter Driving Tips ..... 6  
 Sun. Sch. Supt. .... 7  
 Women’s Circles ..... 8  
 Bible Quiz..... 11  
 Food Donation Conn..... 11  
 Calendar..... 14  
 Mark Your Calendars ..... 15



**2019 General Conference**  
**United Methodists Seeking a Way Forward**



*From the Pastor*

## General Conference Special Session

This month a Special Session of the General Conference (GC) will meet. General Conference usually only meets once every four years, but the last one in 2016 was unable to complete its business. So, GC 2016 established this month's Special Conference to consider the business it felt needed more consideration and input from the people in the pews.



Ever since the establishment of the denomination, the church has been evolving in theology and practice. On very rare occasions, the church has split over huge issues. There are also several small Methodist denominations throughout the world that developed out of the Wesley tradition but who disagreed with the main branch on certain aspects of practice or theology. In the 1930's and again in the 1960's, the largest of the American denominations united, working out some of these differences and making room for others and bringing the "United" into the church name. An article in last August's *Twig Bender* provides a detailed history.

Throughout the history of our denomination, our mission has been to make disciples of Jesus Christ throughout the world. To facilitate our mission, the church sent missionaries to the four corners of the world and everywhere in between, making disciples, planting churches, building ministries. Today, our denomination is world-wide with the fastest growing segments of our denomination in Asia and on the African continent.

*(Continued on page 9)*

*Our February Communion  
Offering Goes to:*

*Heart Havens*



# One Man's Trash ...

by Linda Walker

... Is another man's treasure!

A big "Thank You" goes to the ladies' circles at Greenwood for collecting items from church members and delivering them to various charities. Here's what we are collecting this year:



- **Aluminum pull tabs** from cans. We collect the tabs rather than cans because they take up less storage space and there is no beverage residue mess to clean up. For many people, especially children, it's fun to see the number of tabs piling up in their collection containers like pennies in a piggy bank. Our tabs are taken to the Ronald McDonald House in Richmond, which provides a "home-away-from-home" for families with children receiving care at local medical facilities. You can bring your tabs to the Just Friends Class room.
- **Box Tops for Education** from products you know and love, like General Mills cereals, Ziploc bags, Pillsbury refrigerated cookies and Paper Mate office supplies. You can pick up a list of participating products in the Just Friends Class room when you drop off box tops. The box tops go to Longdale Elementary School who will turn them in for books, playground equipment and other items to help the children.
- **Cancelled stamps**, which go to the Red Bird Mission in Kentucky who sells them to stamp collectors for funds to provide ministries in isolated, rural distressed areas of the Appalachian Mountains. Red Bird provides opportunities for education, health and wellness, community outreach and community housing improvement. You can leave the stamps in the Just Friends Class room.

(Continued on page 12)

## School Supplies Drive 2019

Our collection of your donated school supplies for at-risk pupils at Longdale Elementary School continues through Sunday, Feb. 3. Thanks to all for your generous donations.



## Special Session 2019

The UMC Council of Bishops has called a Special Session of the General Conference of The United Methodist Church to be held February 23-26 in St. Louis, MO.

The purpose will be to receive and act on a report from the Commission on a Way Forward based on the recommendations of the Council of Bishops. The 32-member Commission was authorized by General Conference 2016 and appointed by the Council of Bishops to examine paragraphs in *The Book of Discipline* concerning human sexuality and exploring options to strengthen the unity of the church.

Virginia Conference Bishop Sharma D. Lewis has sent a letter to the conference churches outlining issues facing the United Methodist Church and providing resources she believes will be helpful in starting conversations or answering questions as United Methodists approach this Special Session. Readers can find the letter on line at our web site: [www.gumcva.org](http://www.gumcva.org) or find it posted in our narthex. If you'd like a copy of your own and are not able to download it, call the church office at 804-266-5341 and request a copy.

Readers can find resources online at <https://www.vaumc.org/GC2019>.

The UMC General Conference is the church's top policy-making body. The General Conference 2020 is set for May 5-15, 2020, in Minneapolis, MN.



2019 SPECIAL SESSION  
OF THE GENERAL CONFERENCE

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## February Food



**Fellowship Dinner:** Wednesday, Feb. 13, at 6:30 p.m. Menu: Potato soup, grilled cheese sandwich, lemon cake — \$7 per plate. Please make your dinner reservations by Sunday, Feb. 10, using the form in the bulletin, call the church office at 804-266-5341 or email [admin@gumcva.org](mailto:admin@gumcva.org).

**FunRaisers Bag Lunches:** Pick up after worship services on Feb. 24. Menu: Barbecue sandwich, baked beans, slaw, chips and lemon bar — \$7 each. Sign up in the narthex.

# Westview Hires New Camp Director

The Westview Board of Stewards recently announced that Bobby Boyd has been hired as Westview's next Camp Director.

Joining Westview on Feb. 4, Bobby says he is excited to work with the staff to promote Westview's mission of "creating a place apart to grow with God in every season."

Bobby earned a B.S. in Business Management from Asbury College and a M.A. in Christian Formation in Ministry from Wheaton College. His experience includes serving in a variety of leadership roles at churches and church-related camps, most recently as the Director of Waukaway Springs Christian Retreat Center in Vossburg, MS.

The new Westview Camp Director says he is looking forward to Westview's exciting 2019 retreat and summer camp season. He replaces former Executive Director Pete Albert, who stepped down due to health issues in November 2018. Bobby and



*(Continued on page 9)*

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# MLK Day at The Hermitage

*By Arline Shafer, Hermitage Representative*

Jan. 21 was the birthday of a special American: Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Hermitage Richmond held a commemoration for him.

Staff and volunteers read excerpts from King's 1963 "I Have a Dream" speech. This was a message for everyone, not just one segment of society, but all who love freedom and dignity. Musical selections by Chaplain Denise, other staff, and Hermitage Chorus (I was part of that) were included. Dr. Gregory Williams, senior pastor at Morning Star Church, Petersburg, spoke of King's life and the turmoil of the Civil Rights movement, a difficult time for all of us.

Dr. King continues to impact **all** Americans as our nation works toward more opportunities for all. May we remember his influence as new ethnic groups come to us, and we honor the folks already here before Jamestown was established.



# Winter Driving Tips

Winter driving safety starts long before you get behind the wheel. The choices you make when preparing for winter road conditions can help prevent an accident. Here are some safety precautions you should take before you drive:

- **Fill up your gas tank.** Keep your gas tank at least half-full to avoid your gas line freezing. If you can afford it, fill up your tank completely; the extra weight in your car can help prevent sliding.
- **Make sure your tires are properly inflated.** Under- or over-inflated tires will not grip the road properly, which makes driving on ideal road conditions dangerous, let alone on ice or snow. Find the proper tire pressure for your car's tires in your owner's manual or inside the driver's side door.
- **If you use winter tires,** make sure you use them for all four wheels. If you mount winter tires on just your front two wheels because you have front-wheel drive, your car will be prone to spinning out on slick roads. If you mount winter tires on just the back two tires because you have rear-wheel drive, your car will have difficulty turning in snow and be more likely to spin out on dry roads. Winter tires should only be driven on snow- or ice-covered roads, not dry roads.
- **Know when to stay off the roads.** Check radio, TV and online for local winter weather warnings and advisories. Check the weather not just for where you live, but also for where you're headed.
- **Pack emergency supplies.** Be prepared for an emergency. Always carry a first aid kit, bottled water, flashlight with spare batteries, jumper cables and reflector triangles in your trunk. During winter, add a couple of thick blankets, an extra coat, and extra gloves and hats. If you're stuck in subzero temperatures, use layers of clothing and blankets to keep warm until help arrives.



- **Clean all snow and ice off your vehicle.** Many drivers only clean the ice and snow off their front and rear windshields. That's not enough. Make sure

*(Continued on page 12)*

## Help Wanted: Sunday School Superintendent

Greenwood is looking for someone to serve as the church’s Sunday School Superintendent. The goal of this officer is to help every member of our congregation to grow and develop as a disciple of Jesus Christ.

If you would be willing to serve, please see Lewis Daniel or Pastor Barbara. The Sunday School Superintendent works with the pastor and the education team and is responsible for:

- Keeping records of weekly attendance and giving for each Sunday School class.
- Consulting with each Sunday School leader to make sure literature is ordered as needed.
- Reporting to the pastor on blessings and concerns related to Sunday School.



## Be Prepared — Read the Scriptures

### February Lectionary Readings

Feb. 3	Jeremiah 1:4-10; Psalm 71:1-6; 1 Corinthians 13:1-13; Luke 4:21-30
Feb. 10	Isaiah 6:1-8 (9-13); Psalm 138; 1 Corinthians 15:1-11; Luke 5:1-11
Feb. 17	Jeremiah 17:5-10; Psalm 1; 1 Corinthians 15:12-20; Luke 6:17-26
Feb. 24	Genesis 45:3-11, 15; Psalm 37:1-11, 39-40; 1 Corinthians 15:35-38, 42-50; Luke 6:27-38

# UMC Facing Choices

*(Continued from page 1)*

It's impossible to simplify this. The source documents – referenced in Bishop Lewis' letter (see story on page 4) – are full of mind-numbing language that's harder to grasp than the fine print on an insurance policy.



Outlines and details of the three plans being put forward — the One Church Plan, the Connectional Conference Plan and the Traditional Plan — can be found on the Virginia Conference website at: <https://www.vaumc.org/GC2019>.

Possibly to the surprise of our readers, I will keep my opinions to myself about these emotionally charged issues, because, at the end of the day, each of us is going to have to deal with these issues and changes in his or her own way.

I urge each of you to look up the references, read the background and proposed plans, and make up your own mind. Then let your designated delegates to the Special Session know how you feel. You can find a list of our representatives at the conference website mentioned above. If you don't feel comfortable going online to read about these issues, contact the church office and we'll print out what you need.

Pray for discernment and guidance for the delegates, pray for our denomination.



## Society of St. Andrew

GLEANNING AMERICA'S FIELDS ~ FEEDING AMERICA'S HUNGRY

### Greenwood Women's Circles

**The Ruth Circle** will meet Wednesday, Feb. 6 at 7:00 p.m. in the home of Agnes Dalton. We will continue with our Bible study and be making plans for making our chocolate Easter eggs.

**The Willing Workers Circle** will meet Thursday, Feb. 7 at 5:30 p.m. in the Greenwood choir room.



## Upcoming Special Session



*(Continued from page 2)*

Each conference in our denomination sends delegates to the General Conference based on their membership relative to all the other conferences. While two of the largest conferences in all the denomination are in the southeastern United States (Virginia and Georgia), 41.7% of the 864 delegates come from outside the U.S., with the largest percentage of them being from Africa. Delegates to our conferences are always equally divided between lay and clergy.

People, especially in my generation and many younger, in the U.S. have a tendency to think the world revolves around us. Some also seem to think that because of our size, our resources and our military strength, that the world should bend to our way of doing things or our preferences. It doesn't always work that way.

The United Methodist Church is a global church. Many of our churches outside the U.S. are much more conservative socially and theologically than those in parts of

*(Continued on page 10)*

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## *Westview Hires New Camp Director*

*(Continued from page 5)*

his wife Jenny have two beautiful daughters; the family will reside at Westview.

Westview's Board Chair Paige Bell says, "We believe that in hiring Bobby, we have found an experienced Camp Director with a passion for outdoor ministry, to provide leadership and direction for the camp and assure that Westview achieves its Vision of 'Playing outdoors. Building community. Transforming lives.'"

Westview on the James is a Christian camp and retreat located in Goochland County and supported by the Charlottesville, Fredericksburg and Richmond Districts of the Virginia Conference of the UMC. Read more about Westview online at <http://www.westviewonthejames.org>. The camp is located at 1231 West View Road, Goochland, VA 23063.

# Special Session this Month

*(Continued from page 9)*

America. As a global church, we must listen to our brothers and sisters' concerns, beliefs, challenges and ideas. What works in one locale does not always work in another.

While none of us knows what will happen at this conference, we do know not everyone will be happy. No matter which plan is adopted, things within our denomination will never be quite the same. We will not be as united as before. Members from some countries want a Discipline that more closely matches the laws of their land. Members from some U.S. conferences and other places want more autonomy, more freedom, more latitude in living out the practice of their faith. The issues being dealt with at this conference, while centered on what appears to be one set of issues, also have very deep and underlying issues that go beyond theology.

Our leaders have called on us to pray. We are to pray for our church as a denomination, for our individual congregations, our leadership, our delegates to the General Conference, for the decisions they will be making, for patience and tolerance with one another, for our mission within the world and for those who for one reason or another feel excluded from our church.

As Methodists, we love order and rules! So, we have a plan for praying (see [UMCPRAYS.ORG](http://UMCPRAYS.ORG) for one plan). But we also have an order for what may happen following General Conference. Depending on which plan may be approved, some of the next steps are included. Others will be voted on at our next General Conference in 2020. Even the changes to the Discipline will take some time to go to print and be distributed. Our Bishops and our delegates to the General Conference all ask us to be in prayer every day, now through the General Conference and beyond.

Grace and peace,

*Barbara*



Open Hearts. Open Minds. Open Doors.

**The people of The United Methodist Church®**

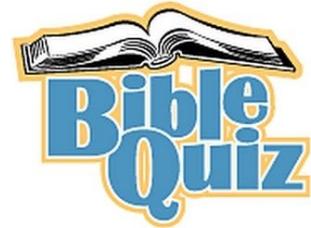
## Bible Quiz

### Famous Children in the Bible

Children are an important part of many of the stories in the Bible. Each month we will post information about a child mentioned in God's Word. See if you can guess the identity of the child and the Bible reference. Here's the child for February:

**This boy was left to die in the desert.**

The answer will appear in the March *Twig Bender*.



## Congratulations

... to Christopher Andrews, grandson of Riley and Adamarye Patteson, on graduating from East Carolina University in December. He earned a B.S. in biochemistry and a minor in math and chemistry. He will be leaving in April to serve two years in the Peace Corps.

## Food Donation Connection

### *February Pick Up Rotation*

Wednesday, Jan. 30: Jean Mowatt and William Gibbs; Thursday, Jan. 31: Lewis Daniel;  
Friday, Feb. 1: Brenda and Harry Shuler.

Wednesday, Feb. 6: Cindy Jo Daniel; Thursday, Feb. 7: Lewis Daniel; Friday, Feb. 8:  
Carolyn and Ray Smith.

Wednesday, Feb. 13: Betty and Raymond Ritchie; Thursday, Feb. 14: Lewis Daniel;  
Friday, Feb. 15: Adamarye Patteson.

Wednesday, Feb. 20: Jean Mowatt and William Gibbs; Thursday,  
Feb. 21: Lewis Daniel; Friday, Feb. 22: Brenda and Harry  
Shuler.

Wednesday, Feb. 27: Cindy Jo Daniel; Thursday, Feb. 28: Lewis  
Daniel; Friday, March 1: Carolyn and Ray Smith.



# Winter Driving Tips

*(Continued from page 6)*

all of your windows are unobstructed, as well as your side view mirrors. Clean the roof, hood and trunk completely to avoid loose snow or ice falling off as the car warms up—a hazard not just for you, but for the drivers behind you.

- **Wear your seat belt.** Obviously, you should never operate your vehicle without wearing your seatbelt. This is even more important in winter weather conditions. You may only be driving around the corner, but that doesn't mean an accident isn't possible.

Even if you follow all of these steps—and this is by no means an exhaustive list—you still need to be alert and cautious when driving on snow or ice.



*Article courtesy of AAA.*

# Trash Versus Treasure

*(Continued from page 3)*

- **Empty plastic pill bottles**, with the labels removed — collected by the Ruth Circle.

The bottles will be sent to the Matthew 25 Ministries in Ohio. They gather them for inclusion in shipments of medical supplies to the poorest of the poor and disaster victims in the U. S. and all around the world. There is a collection box for bottles in the narthex.



- **Paper grocery bags** with handles and egg cartons that hold a dozen eggs. These will be delivered to the LAMB's Basket food pantry to help package food provided to needy families in Henrico County. You can leave these items in the narthex.
- **Food Donation Connection Supplies:** we also need paper and plastic grocery bags, as well as quart and gallon size zipper style storage bags, for the food we distribute each Friday afternoon. These can be left in the Fellowship Hall.



# Greenwood Church Family Birthdays

Gay Stapleton .....	2/1	Jordan Stapleton .....	2/20
Teresa Coleman .....	2/1	Alison Smith .....	2/22
Lorrie Bowie .....	2/7	Joseph Stanley .....	2/22
Brenda Shuler .....	2/18	Harry Shuler .....	2/28
Riley Patteson .....	2/19		

*Don't see your birthday or wedding anniversary in The Twig Bender and would like to have us publish it? Send your dates to [admin@gumcva.org](mailto:admin@gumcva.org) or call the church office at 804-266-5341; likewise, let us know if you'd like your birthday or anniversary removed.*

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# Greenwood UMC — February 2019

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 6 p.m. Free Food	2 Groundhog Day Eat Ice Cream for Breakfast Day 8 a.m. Men's Breakfast &
3 Communion Sunday LAMB's Basket Sunday 11 a.m. Worship 2 p.m. Richmond Dist. Conference & Training School Supplies	4 Thank a Mailman Day 	5 Chinese New Year 6:30 p.m. Pack 744 	6 7 p.m. Ruth Circle	7 5:30 p.m. Willing Workers 6:30 p.m. Choir Practice	8 Boy Scout Day 6 p.m. Free Food 	9 National Pizza Day 
10 Scout Sunday 11 a.m. Worship 	11 Clean Out Your Computer Day 7 p.m. Finance Committee Meets	12 6:30 p.m. Pack 744	13 6:30 p.m. Fellowship Dinner 	14 St. Valentine's Day 6:30 p.m. Choir Practice 7 p.m. Richmond Beekeepers Meet 	15 6 p.m. Free Food	16 <div style="border: 2px solid blue; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">Friendship Quilters</div>
17 11 a.m. Worship	18 Washington's Birthday (obs.) 	19 6:30 p.m. Pack 744	20 Cherry Pie Day 	21 6:30 p.m. Choir Practice	22 <i>Twig Bender</i> Deadline 10:30 a.m. Hidden Treasures at The Hermitage 6 p.m. Free Food	23 UMC General Conference Special Session 2019 Convenes.
24 11 a.m. Worship FunRaisers Bag Lunches	25 Pistol Patent Day 	26 6:30 p.m. Pack 744	27 Polar Bear Day 	28 National Tooth Fairy Day 6:30 p.m. Choir Practice		

# Mark Your Calendars

March 5.....	Church Administrative Council Meets
March 6.....	Ash Wednesday
April 14 .....	Palm Sunday
April 20 .....	Annual Neighborhood Easter Egg Hunt
April 21 .....	Easter Sunday
May 12.....	Mother's Day
May 27 .....	Memorial Day (Obs.)

