



May Newsletter

Sonora United Methodist Church



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As I am writing this The General Conference, the meeting of United Methodist from around the world, is nearing the half-way point. Council of Bishops President Thomas J. Bickerton has called this a time of seismic shift and a new day for our denomination. There are plans for a greatly reduced budget, and changes in staffing, mission, resource development and advocacy. A large number of churches have left the United Methodist Church. While only about 1% of churches have left in the western states, annual conferences in Texas and Georgia have seen 50% of their churches disaffiliate. The delegates are also voting on changes for a shift to greater regional control of church policies and rules. The battle over the last two decades between the progressive and traditional parts of the Methodist Church had reached an impasse, causing many of the more traditional churches to leave.

John Wesley was passionate about reaching the unchurched, and broke the barriers of class and education that kept many from hearing about Jesus. His ideal was for an inclusive church movement. He famously said, “In things essential unity; in things nonessential liberty; in all things charity.” He knew there would be disagreements about finer points of theological doctrine, interpretation of scripture and stands on social issues. Wesley

believed our core faith would hold us together and we could agree to disagree on the smaller issues. This had not always been the case. The church split over ministry with racial ethnic people, slavery and there were branches of his movement that spoke German while the bigger branch spoke English. It is sad when we break our covenant of being in ministry together.

We see in the news the debates over issues of LGBTQ inclusion. This has clearly been a growing issue between Methodists in western states versus those in the southern states. The breath of theological diversity was stretched to a breaking point between Progressive and Traditional Methodists. All the while those who could agree to disagree have been in the middle of the debate and represent the biggest part of our church connection. The disagreement is not this simple. Issues over how scripture is interpreted were also in play. Methodists believe we understand God's direction for our lives through scripture, tradition, reason and experience. This is called the Quadrilateral. Traditional Methodists have moved toward elevating scripture and a more literal interpretation of scripture. Progressive Methodists believe we need to be open to different insights and perspectives on scripture, realizing we come to the Bible with different life experiences. How we hear God speaking to us through scripture is a very important issue. I believe there's room to discern whether our own biases and prejudices are leading us to come to differing views of what the Bible is saying.

As our denomination undergoes changes and our community is changing, we will have some of the same conversations. It has been my experience that this church family has excelled in charity for one another. It is clear we have moved forward welcoming whoever comes to worship with us. We need to listen to one another to

better understand issues we disagree about, but can still come together over the same love for God and one another that we share.

Shalom,

Pastor Kevin



May 5: "How to Conquer the World"
1 John 5: 1-6

May 12: Mother's Day
"The Power of Love"
John 17: 6-19

May 19: Pentecost
"Getting Church Right"
Acts 2: 1-21

May 26: Trinity Sunday
"In the Presence of God"
Isaiah 6: 1-6



Greetings All,

I hope everyone is enjoying the beautiful spring flowers as much as I am! Mark your calendars for upcoming events.

Saturday May 11th will be our lunch gathering at the **Smoke Cafe** in Jamestown at **11:30**.

Meet at church at 11:15 to carpool. Text or call to let me know by Friday the 10th if you plan to attend.

Saturday the 18th is our next day to **cook for Beans and Rice and Jesus Christ**. We will be doing meat loaf and mashed potatoes. I'll be signing up for donations soon and we will need one more person to help cook.

Sunday the 26th will be our monthly **all church potluck breakfast at 10:00**. Bring a dish to share and come enjoy some fellowship time.

Looking ahead to **June**, a reminder that our **rummage sale** will be on **Saturday the 22nd**.

Donations are starting to come in. If you are doing your spring cleaning and have clean usable items that need a new home, feel free to bring them to church. We will most likely do some **pre-sorting on Saturday the 8th** for our **June lunch meeting**.

Hope to see many of you at these gatherings.

Blessings,

Karla Wasson

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Karla Wasson



NUTS & BOLTS

MAY BIRTHDAYS-

Mary Lou Nuzum 5/12
21

Gail Pollard 5 /

Joyce Frazier 5/26

Lois O'Day 5/12

Nancy Fraleigh 5/18

ANNIVERSARIES

Doug & Nancy Fraleigh 40th 5/19/84

As I sit here, hands poised on the computer keyboard, small terrier at my feet, a slew of new green plants growing on the porch and the area out back...I think about how blessed I am...how blessed we all are. Amidst the terror of TV news, and the bombardment of “new and improved” this or that...we still have our Lord Jesus helping us to find the way. We have been able to continue with His guidance, His everlasting love and by holding onto the hands of our community. We have a wonderful new carpet covering the holes of yesteryear (thank you donors), and new green paint providing a clear and guiding “light upon the hill.”(thank you Billy)

Through our Beans & Rice for Jesus Christ program, we have attracted many new people into our generous basement – to cook, to serve and to eat our readily available dinners on Thursday nights. But as we look around at the faces, we can see that there is more than one way to feed the hungry. A few have even made it to church services and events...and we pray that they will continue to come, and bring others with them.

As we read about the events taking place at General Conference, we can see that ALL really does mean ALL, and we are prepared to welcome our visitors and make them our own. What more would Jesus ask, but to feed and nurture those who venture “up the hill?” I am proud of us...the first church in Sonora. We have enjoyed our busy, prosperous years, and are now managing to stay afloat when the pond has become more quiet. With the likes of Janice Samuels Johnson (Beans & Rice), and Karla Wasson (women’s events & rummage sales) leading the way, there will be no sinking. We will thrive and our numbers will once again fill the pews. Be sure to come early, so you can reserve your seat up front. Wear your name tag, so that your new brothers and sisters will know your name from the start. You can rest easy in the fact that your Lord already knows your name...

Nancy

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WORSHIP  WITH US!



