



THE CONNECTION

May 12, 2024

1401 Washington St., Columbia, SC 29201 | 803-256-2417

GENERAL CONFERENCE MAKES HISTORY!

History was made at the postponed 2020/2024 General Conference in Charlotte, NC last week. All of the hard work of the United Methodist leaders paid off and many wonderful changes were made to the United Methodist Book of Discipline, as well as the vote to regionalize the denomination and make hard budget decisions as we move forward.

Below is a FAQ reprinted here to help explain what occurred.

Frequently Asked Questions About Decisions Made At General Conference 2020/2024 Saturday, May 4, 2024



QUESTIONS REGARDING THE REMOVAL OF RESTRICTIVE LANGUAGE RELATED TO LGBTQ+ PEOPLE

Q: What changes were made to the Book of Discipline that relate to human sexuality?

A: The General Conference voted by overwhelming majorities to remove from the United Methodist Book of Discipline discriminatory language and bans related to ministry by, with and for “self-avowed practicing” gay and lesbian people. Actions included:

- Removal of the language that the “practice of homosexuality ... is incompatible with Christian teaching.”
- Removal of the ban on the ordination and appointment of “self-avowed practicing homosexual” clergy.
- Removal of language that made the ordination of “self-avowed practicing homosexual” clergy and the performance of same-sex weddings chargeable offenses.
- Removal of mandatory minimum penalties for clergy holding same-sex weddings.
- Removal of a prohibition against using United Methodist funds to support groups, activities and causes that promote the acceptance of homosexuality.

Rev. Becky Shirley, Dr. Catherine Nance, and Rev. Alston Lippert at the 2020 Postponed Conference/2024 in front of the #BeUMC sign and graffiti board.

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- Removal of the requirement that the General Council on Finance and Administration, the denomination's finance agency, enforce the funding ban. Instead, the provision says the agency should ensure that church funds do not go to anything that rejects LGBTQ persons or limits the response to the HIV epidemic.

- Allowance for all clergy in good standing to be appointed across annual conference lines when their bishop can't locate an appointment in their conference.

These changes bring the Book of Discipline back to a neutral place where one group is not singled out for discrimination. It holds space for differing opinions within The United Methodist Church by avoiding broad mandates.

Q: What does this mean for my local church?

A: It is important to note that nothing passed by the General Conference would compel churches to receive an LGBTQ+ pastor. The legislation approved also explicitly protects the right of clergy and churches not to officiate at or host same-sex weddings. Pastors have the authority to decide when and for whom they will officiate a marriage.

Congregations have the right to determine whether such ceremonies will be held on church property.

At the same time, this legislation means candidates for ministry who are LGBTQ+ will continue to be welcomed.

Some of our churches, if they feel so led, may have same-gender weddings. There is no prohibition against either.

United Methodist churches will have the freedom to respond to God's call to ministry in ways that are best for their contextual and missional communities.

Q: When do these changes take effect?

A: *These changes went into effect at the close of General Conference on Friday, May 3, 2024.*

QUESTIONS REGARDING REGIONALIZATION:

On Thursday, April 25, a day Bishop Thomas Bickerton called "an historic

day," the General Conference delegates voted 586 to 164 for an amendment to the denomination's constitution that will now go before annual conference voters for potential ratification.

Q: What is regionalization?

A: With regionalization, the United States and also each Central Conference outside of the US will become known as Regional Conferences. Each Regional Conference will have the authority and ability to adapt a portion of the Book of Discipline to better align with the missions of their context to continue to make disciples of Jesus Christ.

This change will decentralize the U.S. church, allowing all conferences to have equal partnership in The UMC, while allowing each geographic area the ability to make changes for their local cultural and missional church expressions.

Q: When do these changes take effect?

A: *The votes to approve Regional Conference legislation will not make immediate changes to the Book of Discipline. Because this legislation includes changes to the Constitution, it must be approved by 2/3 aggregate vote of all Annual Conferences.*

Legislation that requires approval at the Annual Conference level must go through an editorial process so that each annual conference around the world can read the legislation and vote accordingly. Thus, most Annual Conferences will most likely vote on this legislation at the meeting of the Annual Conference in 2025.

QUESTIONS REGARDING THE REVISED SOCIAL PRINCIPLES

Q: What changes were made to the Social Principles that relate to human sexuality?

A: General Conference delegates eliminated language stating "the practice of homosexuality ...is incompatible with Christian teaching." ¶161, ¶162 The Social Community

In the same vote, delegates affirmed "marriage as a sacred, lifelong covenant that brings two people of faith (adult man and adult woman of consenting age or two adult persons of consenting age) into a union with one another and into deeper relationship with God and the

religious community."

Below is the adopted Revised Social Principles legislation:

- Part V: Social Principles Preamble
- ¶160 The Community of All

Creation

- ¶163 The Economic Community
- The Political Community
- Part V: Social Principles Preface
- ¶161, ¶162 The Social Community

Q: What does this mean for my local church?

A: The Social Principles, contained in both the Book of Discipline and Book of Resolutions, are statements that reflect official United Methodist teachings on a wide range of topics. They are not church law, and therefore do not have any direct implications for your church, but are intended to inform United Methodist witness on issues of the day with a biblical foundation.

Q: When do these changes take effect?

A: *These changes take effect January 1, 2025.*

QUESTIONS REGARDING SACRAMENTAL RIGHTS FOR DEACONS

Q: What does it mean for Deacons to have sacramental rights?

A: This means deacons can now offer Holy Communion and conduct baptisms where they have been appointed to serve, whether that is a church, outreach ministry or mission.

Q: When does this change take effect?

A: *This takes effect on January 1, 2025.*

You can get more information and a full recap of General Conference on our website at

wsmethodist.org/gc

**SAVE THE DATE!
WSUMC's Wear
Orange DAY IS
June 9th!**

Washington Street Partners with Papa Tank Theatre for Inclusion

Washington Street is excited to partner with Papa Tank Theatre for Inclusion, spearheaded by longtime arts leaders Larry Hembree (longtime WSUMC member) and Bryann Burgess. Papa Tank will be using WSUMC as its rehearsal space as well as performance space for upcoming performances. After receiving funds from Central Carolina Community Foundation, Larry and Bryann were able to make their dream a reality. We are grateful to be a small part of this new theater program in the Midlands.

Larry Hembree, known for his extensive contributions to the Midlands arts community, brings invaluable arts administration experience to the table. Meanwhile, Bryann Burgess, a talented pianist and public speaker born with Down Syndrome, offers unique insight into the community the organization aims to serve.

Inspired by Bryann's grandfather, Papa Tank, a WWII veteran known for his fearless determination and dedication to inclusivity, the organization embodies values of limitless potential and equal opportunity for all.

Since its inception in 2023 as a pilot project supported by the Central Carolina Community Foundation, Papa Tank has blossomed into a self-sustaining entity with a dedicated

13-member board. Partnering with Washington Street United Methodist Church, the organization offers a diverse range of programming, led by Managing Director Tonya Cobb.

Papa Tank's seasonal workshops, guided by professional artists, culminate in captivating theater productions. This year's Spring session features an original production inspired by the profound work of poet and peace ambassador Mattie J.T. Stepanek. Stepanek's "Heartsongs" poems will be artfully brought to life through music, movement, and visual art, showcasing the talents of Papa Tank's teaching artists and cast.

For those eager to participate or support this meaningful initiative, visit www.papatank.org for ticketing and program applications.

The first production, *When the Trees Sing* will be held in Christ Chapel, June 8 & 9, from 3:00-4:00 pm. Tickets are \$10 and are available for purchase at papatank.org.

For more information, contact.



Bryann Burgess & Larry Hembree

Tonya Cobb, Managing Director, Papa Tank Theatre for Inclusion; Phone: 864.344.7401; Email: tonya@papatank.org; or Larry Hembree, Co-Founder, Board of Directors Papa Tank Theatre for Inclusion; Phone: 803.354.3883; Email: larryhembree1@gmail.com.

Deepest Sympathy

Rev. Becky Shirley joins the entire staff
and Washington Street family in
expressing our deepest sympathy and
Christian love to

**Sarah Quinn Jones and her family in the
death of her mother Genie S. Quinn, on
Thursday, May 9, 2024,**



**SALKEHATCHIE
SUMMER SERVICE—
PENN CENTER
JUNE 15-22, 2024**

**REGISTER ONLINE
AT
[UMCSC.ORG/
SALKEHATCHIE](http://UMCSC.ORG/SALKEHATCHIE)**

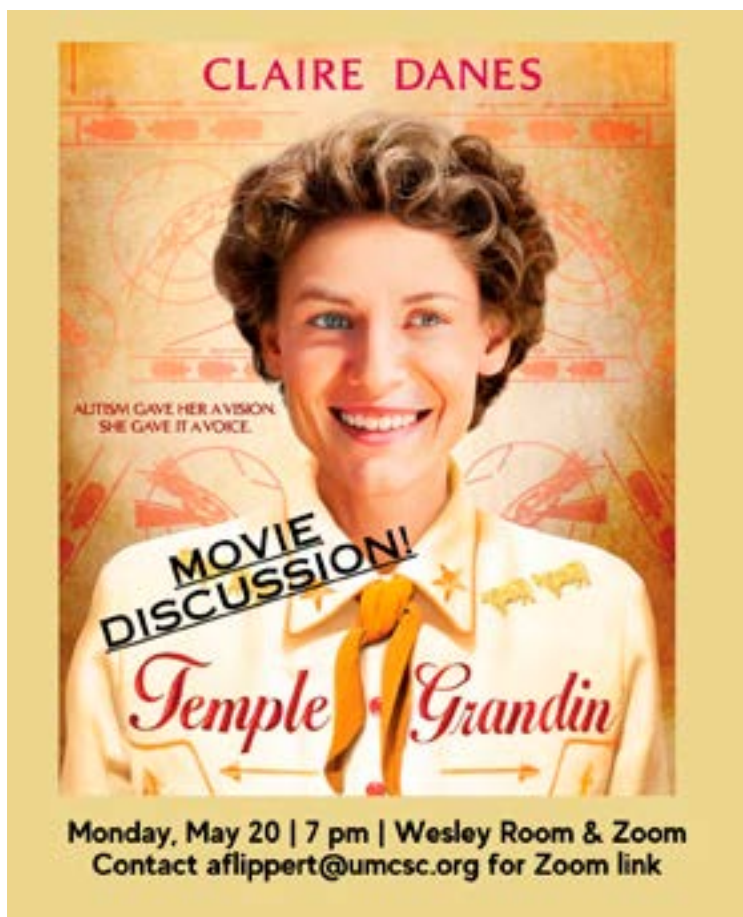




Questions?
Contact Susan Caskey at
turnitbluesue@hotmail.com

Killingsworth Tea Honors Rev. Diana Westerkam as Woman of the Year

On Sunday, April 28, United Women in Faith named Rev. Diana Westerkam as the WSUMC “Woman of the Year” at a Tea held in her honor. Killingsworth Home has a long tradition of providing shelter and care for women in need. With a heart for missions, and being a pioneering female minister, Rev. Westerkam was the perfect person to be honored at this event. Several speakers shared stories of Diana’s work in missions, her work for social justice and inclusion, and her work to benefit the underprivileged and those facing financial and other challenges. Debra Schooler, chair of the UWF presented Diana with the award following a short video presentation.



Gifts

(as of 5-8-24)

IN HONOR OF DEMI GARVIN
to the Ecuador Mission
Given by Chip Williams

**IN MEMORY OF ANNA AND
WILL HALTIWANGER, JR.**
to the Soup Cellar
Given by June Derrick

IN HONOR OF TOM WALL
to the Ecuador Mission
Given by Chip Williams

**IN MEMORY OF
ROBERT "BOB" HANLIN**
to WSUMC
Given by Wendy & Joe Clark

IN HONOR OF ANN JESSUP
to the Ecuador Mission
Given by Chip Williams

In Memory of Ron Quinn
In honor of his May 7
date of birth
to the Soup Cellar
Given by Genie Quinn &
Sarah Quinn Jones

IN HONOR OF CATHERINE NANCE
to the Music Ministry
Given by Chip Williams

IN HONOR OF DIANA WESTERKAM
to Killingsworth
Given by Susan Luthren

IN HONOR OF JANE PETERSON
to WSUMC
Given by Andrea McAtee
& Neal Woods

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!
CLEAN UP DAY
IN THE SOUP CELLAR

HELP US MAKE THE SOUP
CELLAR SPARKLE!
SATURDAY, MAY 25
9 AM-1 PM

Sunday School Updates

• **The Aldersgate Class:** The class is finishing the series *The Chosen: Season One*. May 19–June 23, we will start a series based upon the Adam Hamilton book, *Wrestling with Doubt Finding Faith*. Everyone has doubts. Where is God when bad things happen? Does God hear our prayers? Is there a heaven? How can we know? Often we treat such questions as the enemy of faith. But uncertainty doesn't mean our belief is lacking. Doubt can be a path to a deeper, richer encounter with God. Join us while we study this book and listen to Adam Hamilton discuss this topic by way of a DVD. All are welcome! Join us for coffee and donuts and listen to this exciting series. If you have any questions, please call David A. Anderson at 803-318-8821 or email him at danderson@richardsonplowden.com.

• **The Dawsey Class:** This Sunday, May 12, we will continue our discussion of *The Kingdom, the Power, and the Glory: American Evangelicals in an Age of Extremism*. John Evans will lead a discussion of Chapter Eleven. Next Sunday, May 19, Jim Seigler will teach a lesson on the Lord's Prayer. Class members who join from home use FreeConferenceCall and should call in between 9:50 and 10:00 am. The call-in number is (701) 802-5115. The access code is 7252934. For more information about the class, contact the class president Caroline Seigler at caroline.seigler@gmail.com.

• **The Grace Class:** The class is discussing topics of choice. This Sunday, May 12, Lois Ann Tuell will lead the class. On May 19, the leader will be Cindy Cox. Join us in person on the third floor, or contact Jim Lane at jlane@columbiasec.edu for the Zoom link. We gather Sunday mornings at 9:45 am for fellowship, and at 10:00 am for spiritual reflection.

• **The John Harper Class:** The John Harper class discusses lessons from *Adult Bible Studies* published by Cokesbury. For more information, contact Tracy Powers at tjpowers65@gmail.com or meet with us in the classroom on the first floor by the elevator.

• **The Joy Class:** The Joy Class continues to partner with Solomon's Porch. If interested, please get in touch with Lee Haynes at lelandhaynesjr@gmail.com or Sylvia Stevens at sylviasaudersstevens@gmail.com.

• **The Open Door Class:** The Open Door is currently studying Max Lucado's *In the Footsteps of the Savior*. This series gives the reader glimpses of the Holy Land during Jesus's ministry. Visitors are always welcome! The class meets in person on the third floor and via Zoom each week. For the Zoom link information, contact Ann Jessup at jessup.ann@gmail.com.

• **The Paul Harmon Class:** The class continues lessons with Dr. Mike Broome on "Reflections on Religion and Southern Literature." Some of the writers we will study are Rick Bragg, Bailey White, Fannie Flagg, Flannery O'Connor, Harper Lee, Maya Angelou, William Faulkner, and John Crowe Ransom. Visitors are always welcome. If you have questions, please contact Sally Mings at sallymings@gmail.com.

• **Solomon's Porch:** Solomon's Porch continues with their in-depth study of the Book of Genesis. Anyone interested is welcome to join in. The class meets on the second floor and is led by Rev. Adrienne Fink. For more information, contact Adrienne at ajhamm@umcsc.org.

THE ECUADOR MISSION TEAM NEEDS HYGIENE PRODUCTS
Shampoo, conditioner, deoderant, toothpaste, toothbrushes, bar soap, lotion, body wash, sunglasses, wash cloths

Questions? Contact Mackin Wall at
mackinwall4@gmail.com



Drop off items in Mission Garden or scan
the QR code to shop on Amazon and have it
delivered to the church!

Or scan here to shop
our Amazon wish list
and have it shipped
directly to the church!

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!



Jan Ziegler



Mary Blanton



Ryan, Lachlan &
Roland (Ro) Werner



Erin Johnson

Do you have a 2024 graduate in your midst?

SEND NO LATER THAN MAY 20!

Help us congratulate them! If you have a child or grandchild graduating this year...we want to know! We will recognize them at the May 26th service.

Send us a photo of your grad (high school or college) along with their name; school graduating from, and degree (if applicable).

CALENDAR OF MEETINGS & EVENTS

Subject to change

*denotes non-member event; blue type indicates WSUMC events or meetings. Child Dev. Ctr. events are in bold italic.

Sunday, May 12—Mother's Day

10:00-10:45 am | Sunday School Classes | Campus-wide
11:00 am-12:00 pm | Worship Service | Sanctuary & Live stream
12:00-12:40 pm | Personal Prayer | Christ Chapel
12:00-1:00 pm | Technology Short Class—iPhone | Wesley Room
5:15-7:30 pm | Disciple Group | John Harper Classroom

Monday, May 13

11:30 am-12:30 pm | Soup Cellar Serving | Soup Cellar
1:30-2:30 pm | NA Meeting | Soup Cellar*
6:30-7:30 pm | Circle 9 | Open Door Classroom

Tuesday, May 14

11:30 am-12:30 pm | Soup Cellar Serving | Soup Cellar
1:30-2:30 pm | NA Meeting | Soup Cellar*
6:30-9:00 pm | Palmetto Mastersingers | Choir Room*
6:30-8:00 pm | Private Meeting | Room varies*

Wednesday, May 15

11:30 am-12:30 pm | Soup Cellar Serving | Soup Cellar
12:00-2:00 pm | CDC Allergy & Asthma Training | John Harper
1:30-2:30 pm | NA Meeting | Soup Cellar*
6:30-7:30 pm | Choir Rehearsal | Choir Room

Thursday, May 16

10:30-11:30 am | Tai Chi Class | Joy Classroom*
11:30 am-12:30 pm | Soup Cellar Serving | Soup Cellar
1:30-2:30 pm | NA Meeting | Soup Cellar*
6:15-9:00 pm | Palmetto Chamber Orchestra | Choir Room

Friday, May 17

11:30 am-12:30 pm | Soup Cellar Serving | Soup Cellar
1:30-2:30 pm | NA Meeting | Soup Cellar*

Saturday, May 18

8:00 am-12:00 pm | Sole Mates | Rocky Shoals Spider Lilies

Sunday, May 19

10:00-10:45 am | Sunday School Classes | Campus-wide
11:00 am-12:00 pm | Worship Service | Sanctuary & Live stream
12:00-12:40 pm | Personal Prayer | Christ Chapel
5:15-7:30 pm | Disciple Group | John Harper Classroom

Monday, May 20

11:30 am-12:30 pm | Soup Cellar Serving | Soup Cellar
1:30-2:30 pm | NA Meeting | Soup Cellar*
7:00-8:00 pm | Movie Discussion—*Temple Grandin* | Wesley Room & Zoom

Tuesday, May 21

11:30 am-12:30 pm | Soup Cellar Serving | Soup Cellar
1:30-2:30 pm | NA Meeting | Soup Cellar*
6:30-9:00 pm | Palmetto Mastersingers | Choir Room*
6:30-8:00 pm | Private Meeting | Room varies*

Wednesday, May 22

11:30 am-12:30 pm | Soup Cellar Serving | Soup Cellar
1:30-2:30 pm | NA Meeting | Soup Cellar*
6:30-7:30 pm | Choir Rehearsal | Choir Room

Thursday, May 23

10:30-11:30 am | Tai Chi Class | Joy Classroom*
11:30 am-12:30 pm | Soup Cellar Serving | Soup Cellar
1:30-2:30 pm | NA Meeting | Soup Cellar*
6:15-9:00 pm | Palmetto Chamber Orchestra | Choir Room*

Friday, May 24

11:30 am-12:30 pm | Soup Cellar Serving | Soup Cellar
1:30-2:30 pm | NA Meeting | Soup Cellar*

Prayer List

Ann Bell	Lisa Johnson
John Benfield	Jean Kanes
Ron Bowden	Beverly McClanahan
Carol Breneman	Paul McClanahan
Sue Dillon	Sharon McCullough
Mickey Epting	Ellen Parker
Nancy Epting	Shawn Powers
Carl Evans	Peggy Ward
Pat Griffin	Nancy Williams
Karen Horne	Our homebound

