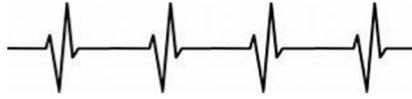


Pulse



Pulse is a new monthly publication from The Confessing Movement designed to keep you informed of the current state of our beloved church. Please continue to pray for renewal - particularly a renewed obedience to Scripture.

UM LEADERS TRY TO RE-DEFINE MARRIAGE

The UM Connectional Table (CT), the 58-member administrative council for our denomination, recently proposed that the General Conference of May, 2016 change the definition of marriage, articulated by Jesus in Matthew 19:5-6 as a covenant between a man and a woman. The CT is proposing that marriage be re-defined as a covenant between “two people.” The CT is also proposing that UM ministers be allowed to preside at same-sex weddings and that annual conferences have the right to ordain openly homosexual candidates for ministry.

The vote for re-defining marriage was 26 to 10 (with one abstention). Twelve bishops currently serve on the CT with voice and vote.

Mt. Bethel UMC Holds Bishops and Pastors

The Administrative Council of the Mt. Bethel UMC voted unanimously to escrow its apportionments in 2015. Mt. Bethel is the largest UM church east of the Mississippi River, with nearly 10,000 members. The church operates three campuses in the Marietta, Georgia area. Mt. Bethel is widely known for its local, national and global mission programs, for its K-12 Christian Academy, Day Care and Older Adult ministries.

“The Ad Council’s decision was unanimous,” said Ferrell Coppedge, Lay Leader of Mt. Bethel. The Council of Bishops was formally presented the “Integrity and Unity Statement,” published by 120 leading pastors and theologians, and endorsed by nearly 8,500 clergy and laity across the UM connection, and basically chose to ignore it.

“We thought the silence from the Council, es-

pecially after some pastors and even a bishop openly broke their vows, was inexplicable, unhealthy and unwise. Their lack of response to the ‘Integrity and Unity Statement’ was wholly unsatisfactory given the gravity of the issues it addressed and the reputation of the leading pastors and theologians who present it.”

How long will the church escrow its apportionments? “The apportionments will be released when the rogue bishops and pastors are held accountable to the Book of Discipline and its enforcement,” according to Fred Godbee, chairman of the Administrative Council.



Representation at GC 2016

864 delegates will vote at the 2016 General Conference, determining the future of the UMC. While the formula has been changed, the disparity of delegates continues. Examples include:

Europe

60,073 total members

40 total delegates

1,502 members per delegate

Western Jurisdiction

343,894 total members

30 total delegates

11,463 members per delegate

South Central Jurisdiction

1,715,834 total members

108 total delegates

15,877 members per delegate

Congo

2,600,987 total members

138 total delegates

18,848 members per delegate

Number of United Methodists in:

USA 7.3 million

Africa 5.2 million

Philippines 227,000

Europe 54,000

Elections of bishops occur at Jurisdictional Conferences shortly after General Conference. Of the 45 areas of U.S. bishops, it appears at least 12 new bishops will be elected.

“What one generation tolerates, the next generation will embrace.”

John Wesley



Economist Says UMC is in Crisis

The UMC has only 15 years to reverse its decline in the U.S. if it is to have a sustainable future, an economist warned church leaders. “By 2030, the denomination in the U.S. will either have found a way to turn around, meaning it is growing, or its turnaround in the U.S. is not possible,” Donald R. House, Sr. told the May 19 combined meeting of the Connectional Table and the General Council on Finance and Administration board. “By 2050, the connection will have collapsed.” In other words, he predicted that unless things change soon, the denomination in coming decades will not have enough U.S. churches to pay for its connectional structures. Such structures include conferences, bishops, agencies, missions and international disaster response.

(From an article by Heather Hahn, dated May 20, United Methodist News Service.)

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