

Monthly Update

June 2012

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Last year's May Update had discussed the importance of amendments that would separate our denomination here in the United States from our overseas church. We believed this to be one of the most important issues in our United Methodist Church, and had asked you to inform yourselves and others as to the reality of these amendments – and pray for their defeat. The bishops finally declared the results. The few that did pass included one we had supported XIX (19) and others that are of relatively minor importance. We thank you for your prayers & your work, and also say a hearty “thank you” to our brothers & sisters in Africa. As previously mentioned, the way we chose to fight this “David and Goliath” battle was to send information across the UM connection in the United States and across the world, but also to saturate the African conferences with the truth. Their favorable vote was almost 100%. This vote has forestalled homosexual legitimization in the UMC.

This Monthly Update also spends a good amount of time on “immigration reform” as advocates term it. Once again, when you read those pleasant-sounding words by our church employees – remind yourselves that this term does not give the complete truth. What is being discussed is in reality dealing with illegal immigration, not the harmless-sounding stories designed to tug at your heart. The immigrants are not always the harmless, families depicted in so many of the stories portrayed by church employees. If people are willing to break one law (getting into a country illegally) they often break other laws as well. In reality this reflected in our country's prisons where a disproportionately high percentage of these folks (usually men) are illegal aliens. More information has come to us that there are approximately 2000 murders each year committed by illegal immigrants in addition to the rapes, violence, trespassing, endangerment, etc. they perpetrate. Our country is a nation of laws – and we flout those laws at our own peril!

As is always the case, focus on the truthfulness of what you are being told: is it the truth, the complete truth, and nothing but the truth? As one dedicated man of God, Richard Wurmbrand, has said, “Any half truth is a full lie.” Even if this is coming from an official, layman, or clergy member of our United Methodist Church.

May I ask you to continue praying for our country? I believe that we are in a time of danger not only internally but as our place as a sovereign nation in an increasingly hostile world. The ultimate hope – and solution – is Jesus Christ. If millions of Americans came to a life-changing relationship with Him, our once-great church and our once-great nation would be transformed. We could then shine His light to the entire world.

In His service,

Allen O. Morris,
Executive Director

June 2010 Update

Bits and Pieces from across the United Methodist Church

God made a lot of days so you wouldn't try to do every thing at once.

– *Seriously, Life is a Laughing Matter*, by Tom Mullen, p. 38.

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The Good Stuff

+ *Franklin Graham prays outside Pentagon*

WASHINGTON - Evangelist Franklin Graham prayed on a sidewalk outside the Pentagon Thursday after his invitation to a prayer service inside was withdrawn because of comments that insulted people of other religions. Graham's invitation to attend an event inside the Defense Department for national prayer day was withdrawn two weeks ago.

But he arrived in the Pentagon parking lot just before 8 a.m. EDT -- his party of a half dozen people forming a circle on the sidewalk and praying with heads bowed for about five minutes.

Graham once called Islam evil. He told an impromptu press conference Thursday outside the Pentagon that he prayed for the men and women of the armed forces and that he doesn't feel his statements about other religions have been offensive.

– <http://www.onenewsnow.com:80/Headlines/Default.aspx?id=1002854>

+ *Retired Bishop Muzorewa dies in Zimbabwe*

Retired United Methodist Bishop Abel Muzorewa, who helped lead Zimbabwe to majority rule in the late 1970s, has died. He was 84. The bishop died April 8 in his home in Borrowdale, a suburb of Harare, Zimbabwe. He had been battling cancer.

Muzorewa was a trailblazer as one of the first African United Methodist bishops, and he emerged as a national leader during his country's struggle toward full independence. Ordained an elder, he joined the denomination's former Rhodesia Conference in 1956. He was elected bishop in 1968 and assigned to the Zimbabwe Area by the Africa Central Conference.

Muzorewa became a leading figure in Zimbabwe's struggle for majority rule, serving as the head of the United African National Council. He was elected prime minister of Zimbabwe-Rhodesia in 1979, but it was a role he held for less than a year; civil war raged in the country, and new elections were held in 1980 as the result of peace negotiations.

Robert Mugabe emerged as the victor in those elections and has retained power ever since. In 1983 Muzorewa was detained for 10 months without trial by the government, but later said he had forgiven those responsible. He described his experiences and Zimbabwe's journey to independence in his autobiography, *Rise Up and Walk*.

The bishop retired in 1992. The Bishop A.T. Muzorewa Evangelism Foundation was launched in 2005 in Old Mutare, at a celebration of the bishop's 60 years in ministry.

Muzorewa "was one of the 20th century's great champions for the liberation of people in Africa, especially his homeland of Zimbabwe," said Thomas Kemper, top staff executive of the United Methodist General Board of Global Ministries. "His struggle to loose the chains of colonialism distinguishes him in a special way," Mr. Kemper said. "He served both the church and his emerging nation with a sense of purpose and determination at a time of transition and uncertainty. . . . I pray that the spirit of the struggle for freedom he embodied will remain alive in Zimbabwe."

[Note: I cannot help but observe that both our denominational UM church leaders and ecumenical (NCC and WCC) church leaders supported Mugabe's leadership in the ensuing struggle over Zimbabwe's leadership. Why would leaders of an ostensibly Christian church support the claim of a Marxist leader over one of its own bishops is difficult to understand. Could it be that they are confused as to what constitutes responsible leadership? I personally knew Bishop Muzorewa to be a solidly orthodox Christian leader (although I had difficulty pronouncing his name) – and a credit to the Methodist Church. – AOM]

– United Methodist News Service (UMNS), April 19, 2010

Of Interest

+ *Methodists Reject Structure Changes, Inclusive Membership*

The United Methodist Church rejected a number of amendments to the church's constitution, including one on the inclusiveness of church membership. The amendment stating, "All persons shall be eligible to attend its worship services, participate in its programs, receive the sacraments, and upon baptism be admitted as baptized members," did not receive a majority of votes to be ratified, the Council of Bishops announced Tuesday. Some had feared the amendment would challenge the United Methodist Church's current position that homosexual practice is incompatible with Christian teaching.

– By Audrey Barrick, *Christian Post* Reporter. This summary is as contained on the website:
<http://www.christianpost.com/article/20100505/methodists-reject-structure-changes-inclusive-membership/index.html>

+ Council of Bishops Announces Constitutional Amendments Voting Results

Columbus, Ohio. - The United Methodist Council of Bishops announced today that only five* of 32 amendments to the church's constitution passed by the 2008 General Conference have been ratified by the annual conferences. The ratified amendments will become effective immediately.

The process for amending the Constitution of The United Methodist Church requires a two-thirds majority vote of General Conference delegates. Annual conferences must then ratify the amendments by a two-thirds affirmative vote. The results of the voting are reported to the Council on Bishops, where they are verified and counted. The results are then reviewed and certified by the Council of Bishops.

The vote counts for each of the amendments were as follows:

Passed

Amendment VIII, adds “gender” to the list of categories ensuring the rights of membership regardless of race or status: passed 41,434 yes; 7,712 no

Amendment IX, which ensures every jurisdictional conference have at least 100 delegates: passed 39,333 yes; 9,122 no

Amendment XVII, which allows laity on the committee on investigation to vote on matters of ordination, character and conference relations of clergy: passed 33,810 yes; 14,712 no

Amendment XIX, which allows all clergy members of annual conference to vote to elect clergy delegates to general, jurisdictional or central conferences: passed 38,604 yes 10,432 no

Amendment XXII, which recognizes Bermuda congregations as part of the Baltimore-Washington Annual Conference: passed 43,049 yes; 5,539 no

Failed

Amendment I, which clarifies all people are eligible to attend worship services and receive the sacraments: 23,614 yes; 25,764 no

Amendment II*, which requires all United Methodist organizations to adopt ethics and conflict of interest policies for members and employees: 32,413 yes; 16,596 no

Amendment III, which allows the General Conference to create similar structures for the worldwide church: 21,126 yes; 28,218 no

Amendment IV, which allows the General Conference to create similar structures for the worldwide church: 19,219 yes; 30,178 no

Amendment V, which allows the General Conference to create similar structures for the worldwide church: 20,768 yes; 28,486 no

Amendment VI, allows newly established conferences be represented on a non-proportional basis for two quadrennia: 25,969 yes; 22,990 no

Amendment VII, which allows the General Conference to create similar structures for the worldwide church: 20,840 yes; 28,588 no

Amendment X, which allows the General Conference to create similar structures for the worldwide church: 19,386 yes; 29,920 no

Amendment XI, which allows the General Conference to create similar structures for the worldwide church: 20,711 yes; 28,539 no

Amendment XII, which allows the General Conference to create similar structures for the worldwide church: 20,825 yes; 28,568 no

Amendment XIII, which allows the General Conference to create similar structures for the worldwide church: 19,566 yes; 29,819 no

Amendment XIV, which allows the General Conference to create similar structures for the worldwide church: 20,851 yes; 28,505 no

Amendment XV, which allows definition of the lay and clergy membership of the annual conference by the General Conference without going through the constitutional amendment process; 31,233 yes; 17,218 no

Amendment XVI, which allows the General Conference to create similar structures for the worldwide church: 20,823 yes; 28,586 no

Amendment XVIII, which allows the General Conference to create similar structures for the worldwide church: 20,856 yes; 28,546 no

Amendment XX, which allows the General Conference to create similar structures for the worldwide church: 20,639 yes; 28,653 no

Amendment XXI, which allows the General Conference to create similar structures for the worldwide church: 20,921 yes; 28,425 no

Amendment XXIII, which allows the General Conference to create similar structures for the worldwide church: 19,184 yes; 30,185 no

Amendment XXIV, which allows the General Conference to create similar structures for the worldwide church: 20,575 yes; 28,853 no

Amendment XXV, which allows the General Conference to create similar structures for the worldwide church: 20,581 yes; 28,688 no

Amendment XXVI, which allows the General Conference to create similar structures for the worldwide church: 19,277 yes; 30,061 no

Amendment XXVII, which allows the General Conference to create similar structures for the worldwide church: 20,711 yes; 28,657 no

Amendment XXVIII, which allows the General Conference to create similar structures for the worldwide church: 20,588 yes; 28,656 no

Amendment XXIX, which allows the General Conference to create similar structures for the worldwide church: 20,652 yes; 28,703 no

Amendment XXX, which allows the General Conference to create similar structures for the worldwide church: 20,584 yes; 28,703 no

Amendment XXXI, which allows the General Conference to create similar structures for the worldwide church: 20,658 yes; 28,685 no

Amendment XXXII, which allows the General Conference to create similar structures for the worldwide church: 20,698 yes; 28,591 no

*Bishop Gregory Palmer, council president, announced May 5 that Amendment II (2) did not pass.

Report issued by the Council of Bishops of The United Methodist Church, Bishop Neil Irons, Executive Secretary, 100 Maryland Ave. NE, Washington, D.C. 20002

– By Diane Degnan, UMNS; May 4, 2010 (Rev. May 5, 2010). As contained on UMNS website:

<http://www.umc.org:80/site/apps/nlnet/content.aspx?c=IwL4KnN1LtH&b=5847611&ct=8260509¬oc=1>

+ ***“Global Segregation” and Membership Amendments Defeated in United Methodist Church***

“United Methodists have overwhelmingly rejected the U.S. bishops’ attempts to divide the U.S. church from growing, conservative African churches.” – Mark Tooley, IRD President

Washington, DC—The United Methodist Church’s Council of Bishops officially announced today that the 11 million member denomination has rejected several constitutional amendments they had proposed that would have divided the 7.9 million U.S. church from the 3 million member, mostly African, overseas church. Critics had alleged that this “global segregation plan” would have potentially allowed the more liberal U.S. church to follow other U.S. oldline denominations towards accepting same-sex unions and homosexual clergy, without interference from more conservative African church members. Also defeated was a bishops’ approved amendment mandating open church membership that critics warned was another potential effort to bypass the church’s traditional teachings about sexual ethics.

According to the United Methodist News Service, the proposals for restructuring the church drew more than 28,000 votes against and about 21,000 votes in favor. Preliminary figures indicate that African churches most strongly opposed the restructure, by as many as 4,900 against out of 5,165 votes cast. In the U.S., the proposed changes were most soundly defeated in the relatively more conservative Southeastern Jurisdiction, while the declining and most liberal Western Jurisdiction was the most supportive.

IRD President Mark Tooley commented: “United Methodists have overwhelmingly rejected the U.S. bishops’ attempts to divide the U.S. church from growing, conservative African churches. They also rejected a politically correct demand that church membership become virtually automatic for all applicants. “Revealingly, Africans voted against these liberal initiatives by over 90 percent. Their strong voice for orthodoxy within the governance of the church portends a new and bright future for United Methodism, whose U.S. membership continues to plummet. “Uniquely among U.S.-based Mainline denominations, Africans are now one third of United Methodism and likely will soon be more than half.”

– Press release by Walton, The Institute on Religion and Democracy, Washington, DC

+ ***How did the UMC come to define health care as a ‘right’?***

As the U.S. House of Representatives approached a vote last week on H.R. 3962, legislation that would vastly expand the federal government’s role over the U.S. health-care system, the United Methodist General Board of Church and Society (GBCS) asked Methodists to “contact your member of the U.S. House of Representatives this week and urge them to support H.R. 3962.” In pushing for passage of the House bill, and for approval of health-care legislation in U.S. Senate, GBCS has made a point of quoting a portion of ¶162V of the United Methodist Book of Discipline: “Health care is a basic human right.” UM pastor and blogger Donald Sensing has argued that the concept of health care as a “human right” is difficult to sustain logically, unless one alters the traditional definition of what is meant by “rights.” Even so, the assertion of a “right” to health care is part of the Social Principles of the United Methodist Discipline.

How did it come to be there?

Language asserting that health care is a right was first added to the Book of Discipline by the 1996 General Conference.

That language was reaffirmed (and expanded) by the General Conference in 2008. However, in neither instance (1996 nor 2008) was the matter actually discussed on the floor of the conference.

1996: Two years after the Clinton Administration's health-care plan failed to achieve congressional passage, the General Board of Church and Society submitted a petition asserting a "right to health care" to the 1996 General Conference. (In other words, GBCS authored the assertion it now quotes in support of its lobbying on the health care issue.)

The GBCS petition was approved by the 1996 Church and Society legislative committee and sent to the full General Conference with a recommendation for "concurrence." The committee-approved petition did not come to the floor as a separate item, however. Instead, it was bundled with several unrelated items as part of a "consent calendar," a parliamentary vehicle aimed at speeding the business of a legislative assembly by packaging several "noncontroversial" items as one and having them adopted in a single vote. The GBCS language describing health care as a right was included as part of Consent Calendar A02 (PDF), which was moved on the floor of the conference and approved with no discussion (or verbal description of the 109 items included) on April 22, 1996. At that point, or at least when the language was subsequently included in the 1996 Book of Discipline, the United Methodist Church officially endorsed the concept of a right to health care.

2008: Last year, the General Conference reaffirmed the "right" to health care, again without any floor debate. In a manner somewhat similar to 1996, the legislative petition was bundled with other items, although this time the bundled items — three in all — related to the same topic: health care. In addition to the petition (submitted by GBCS) reasserting a right to health care (and further expanding the language in that section of the Discipline), the bundled items included a petition from GBCS General Secretary Jim Winkler strongly advocating a "single-payer" (i.e. government-managed) system for health care in the U.S. A third item — a petition from the Norway Annual Conference's Board of Discipleship/Church and Society — simply declared: "We believe it is a governmental responsibility to provide all citizens with health care." (Norway has a compulsory, tax-funded health-care system.) All three of these health-care-related petitions came to the floor of the General Conference after 9 p.m. on the conference's final night —

May 2, 2008. Rushing to conclude legislative business (approximately 50 items were on the legislative calendar for that evening), the conference dealt with all three health-care items as one, following the recommendation of presenter Frederick Brewington, who represented the Church and Society 2 legislative committee.

The General Conference quickly approved the items — with no debate — by a vote of 690-114.

As is common when legislative assemblies are up against a deadline, floor debate was generally in short supply that evening. Delegates had apparently taken to heart the advice of Bishop William Hutchinson (Louisiana Conference), who was serving as chair on that final night. Near the beginning of the session, he had reminded delegates of the "significant amount of work" yet to be done and urged them to "keep moving in the voting process."

About a half-hour before the health items were presented, with 40 calendar items still remaining and the deadline for adjournment drawing nearer, a delegate from the Oklahoma Conference moved to "suspend the rules and limit debate" so that items could be dealt with even more quickly. With delegates keenly aware of the press of time, the motion to limit debate drew only minimal objection and was passed handily.

The presentation of the three health-care items began at approximately 9:10 p.m. and the vote occurred less than four minutes later. As noted above, the 1996 petition asserting a right to health care was submitted by the General Board of Church and Society, as were two of the three health-care petitions passed in 2008. Once such items are approved by the General Conference, GBCS is empowered to promote them as official church policy, even to the point of lobbying for specific congressional legislation that would seem to advance those policy aims. Although competing solutions to particular...problems may exist, GBCS often lobbies for a specific approach, hence its strong support of H.R. 3962.

The text of the Book of Discipline's ¶162V ("Right to Health Care"), as approved by the 2008 General Conference late on Friday evening, May 2, is here. The resolution, "Health Care for All," submitted by GBCS General Secretary Jim Winkler and approved as part of that same Friday night vote, is now included in the UM Book of Resolutions.

In the section on Blogs – On November 11, 2009 at 10:36 pm Mark posted:

Despite their pretense of humility, the leaders of the GBCS frequently behave arrogantly. Like most modern leftists, they think they “know better” and are therefore justified in doing just about anything to forward their agenda, even if it means bending the rules. Their actions with respect to getting the health-care language in the Discipline reminds me of the beauty contestant who bribes the judge and then acts surprised when she “wins.”

And what is the GBCS agenda regarding the health-care debate? It’s simple: to invoke the “health-care-is-a-right” argument to push for greater and greater government control over our lives. Their faith in government appears to be as great as their faith in God.

But back to the basic question: Is health care a right?

Here are some interesting observations on the subject of rights by Ayn Rand:

“Right is a moral principle defining and sanctioning a man’s freedom of action in a social context. There is only one fundamental right (all the others are its consequences or corollaries): a man’s right to his own life. Life is a process of self-sustaining and self-generated action; the right to life means the right to engage in self-sustaining and self-generated action – which means: the freedom to take all the actions required by the nature of a rational being for the support, the furtherance, the fulfillment and the enjoyment of his own life. (Such is the meaning of the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.)

The concept of a “right” pertains only to action – specifically, to freedom of action. It means freedom from physical compulsion, coercion or interference by other men. Thus, for every individual, a right is the moral sanction of a positive – of his freedom to act on his own judgment, for his own goals, by his own voluntary, uncoerced choice. As to his neighbors, his rights impose no obligations on them except of a negative kind: to abstain from violating his rights.

The right to life is the source of all rights – and the right to property is their only implementation. Without property rights, no other rights are possible. Since man has to sustain his life by his own effort, the man who has no right to the product of his effort has no means to sustain his life. The man who produces while others dispose of his product, is a slave.

– By the MethodistThinker; November 11, 2009. <http://methodistthinker.com>

+ *Religiously Marching for Immigration*

Overshadowed by the Obamacare vote, tens of thousands marched on the National Mall on Sunday March 21 for "Comprehensive Immigration Reform (CIR)," including numerous religious groups. Called the "March for America," sponsors included immigrants groups and labor unions, as well as ACORN, CodePink, National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, the National Council of Churches, and the National Association of Evangelicals.

Essentially the marchers want a rehash of the failed 2007 legislation creating a pathway to citizenship for illegal immigrants, which critics call "amnesty," as well as increased visa quotas, a guest worker program, and enhanced family reunification. New York Senator Chuck Schumer is pushing a Senate version, while Rep. Luis Gutierrez of Illinois is pushing the U.S. House version.

Oldline Protestant liberals naturally were prominent in the march, and the United Methodist Building on Capitol Hill served as a staging area for demonstrators. "We saw the integrity of law enforced, but the integrity of individuals and persons forgotten," exclaimed Phoenix-area United Methodist Bishop Minerva Carcano at a pre-march religious rally. (You can read my assistant Connor Ewing's article here.) She was bemoaning a 2008 Iowa immigration raid. Officials of her denomination oppose any substantive enforcement of current immigration law and resist the imposition of new law. Carcano denounced "that despicable wall" along America's border with Mexico that has "brought a shadow upon this country as dark as night."

Does national sovereignty serve any providential role for the Religious Left? Apparently not. Bishop Carcano seems to oppose any kind of border protections. "As people of faith, we knew it was coming because the God we serve won't let walls of oppression and separation stand," she enthused about a bureaucratic slow-down in completing the long-discussed southern border fence. "The sea had refused to let those pillars stand," Carcano rejoiced over the destruction of a coastal border fence by waves. "If the waters of the sea could do that to the pillars, what could we Christians do if we let the waters of our baptism...topple the pillars of injustice?"

Apparently the Lord wants anyone to be able to walk across the U.S. border unimpeded. Carcano insisted that CIR's critics are opposing "the reign of God." It's not clear if the Religious Left believes the Almighty opposes national boundaries for any nation, or just for the United States. Either way, many of these religious activists assert that Christian compassion requires that all of U.S. citizenship's benefits should automatically be available to everyone of the world's over 6 billion people. It is a sweeping claim.

+ *Clergy urge illegals to break the law*

PHOENIX - The National Coalition of Latino Clergy and Christian Leaders is urging illegal immigrants not to fill out the U.S. Census forms that are starting to arrive in mailboxes. The coalition's chairman, the Reverend Miguel Rivera, says illegal immigrants should boycott the census unless comprehensive immigration reform offers them a path to citizenship.

The census attempts to count everyone -- regardless of legal status -- so that more government money can flow to areas with large populations. The Census Bureau says residents are required by law to participate, and insists that the information it collects is confidential. But Rivera doesn't trust those assurances, and says more than 3 million members of his coalition's 20,000 churches plan to boycott this year's census. He says 38 percent of the church members and one-sixth of their pastors are illegal immigrants.

– *OneNewsNow*, a news service ministry of the American Family Association; 3/16/2010 7:55:00 AM

+ *BISHOP CARCAÑO JOINS OTHER FAITH LEADERS TO OPPOSE ARIZONA LAW*

[Note in this official release by the United Methodist News Service uses flowery words by a UM bishop – yet covers up the reality that this is a complex issue that requires thoughtful, balanced action. It would seem that the bishop could better utilize her time in addressing problems in her conference & jurisdiction that has a long history of decline. – AOM]

Phoenix Area Bishop Minerva Carcaño joined other faith leaders to oppose an Arizona law that many believe will result in racial profiling in order to reduce illegal immigration. "This bill does nothing to address any border security concerns," said the bishop. "The passage of SB1070 demonstrates why America needs comprehensive immigration reform. Frustration with our broken immigration system is driving Arizona to make inappropriate and self-defeating efforts in this area. We want our broken immigration system to be healed through a just transformation of the law at the appropriate federal level of jurisdiction, which makes it possible to meet the labor needs of American business while making our border secure."

– United Methodist News Service.

+ *Liberal Church Elites Attack Backers of New Arizona Immigration Law*

Washington, DC—Calling attempts by state and local authorities to address illegal immigration “misguided and divisive,” liberal religious elites are slamming the supporters of a new immigration enforcement law in Arizona. The law instructs police to check the immigration status of individuals whom they detain and who give reason to believe they might be in the country illegally. Arizona Episcopal Bishop Kirk Smith declared: “With the Governor's signing of SB 1070, it seems that for now the advocates of fear and hatred have won over those of charity and love.”

Evangelical Left Sojourners chief Jim Walls, president of the liberal Christian group Sojourners, referred to the law as “a social and racial sin” as well as “mean-spirited.” National Council of Churches relief arm Church World Service chief John McCullough derided the legislation as “reactionary and hateful” while National Hispanic Christian Leadership Conference President Samuel Rodriguez used the term “xenophobic” and called for a “multi-ethnic firewall against the extremists in our nation.”

IRD President Mark Tooley commented: “Instead of thoughtfully critiquing the law, these religious elites instead disparage the law’s supporters. “If they bothered to survey members of their own churches, religious officials would discover a wide spectrum of belief about immigration policy with many thoughtful and legitimate concerns. Instead, some church elites would rather condescendingly lecture down to those they caricature as advocating ‘fear and hatred’. “These church leaders are unclear, or unconcerned, about how liberalized immigration and eventual amnesty might affect America’s unemployed, legal immigrants, law enforcement, or how a virtually open border only undermines attempts at economic and political reforms south of America’s borders.

“Traditional Christian and Jewish teaching does not specifically offer an immigration policy for nations. Divine commands for fairness and justice do not automatically equal liberalized immigration, any more than they equate to socialized medicine, global warming alarmism, or American disarmament. Instead of thoughtfully critiquing the law, these religious elites instead disparage the law’s supporters,” Mark Tooley went on to comment.

– Press release by Walton, The Institute on Religion and Democracy, Washington, DC

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(UM) Men *A list of ten*

At the National Association of Conference Presidents of UM Men, I was inducted as the new general secretary. I was asked to say a few words, and I talked for a few minutes about my leadership style. I told them, I was not sure what they expected, but here are 10 things from me that they can count on. A video clip of part of this is on the commission website, but here is the list:

I will begin every day in the Bible and reading the Upper Room Disciplines, I invite you to join me. Knowing you are doing that will keep me on track. Knowing I am doing it might keep you on track.

I was brought up a Methodist, but I could have changed if I wanted to... I did not, I will not. Wesleyan theology, when expressed by our membership will revive the UMC. Wesley talked of a balance between spiritual holiness and social holiness. The notion that we grow in our spiritual disciplines (prayer, fasting, worship, study of the scriptures) so that we can act in the world, that Christian Action. I will strive for that balance, and I invite you to do the same.

I am in a small accountability group that meets every week, I hope you are too.

I support this ministry with my time, talent, gifts, service and witness, I hope you will too. That ministry includes the Upper Room prayer ministries, the Society of St. Andrew, scouting, and UMCOR.

I will continue to do mission projects in this community and around the world; I hope you will do that as well in person or by gifting someone else to go in your place.

The church that holds my membership is a chartered UM Men unit. I will see that it always is, even if I have to pay for it myself. I am sure you feel the same way.

I am a legacy builder, because I believe that is a way to build this ministry, so I ask you to join me. You can't sell something you won't buy.

I carry a copy of Strength for Service for God and Country every time I travel. God usually makes His plan plain to me as to whom I will give it. I hope you will buy those devotional books so you can give them away.

I will balance my work with my family, I hope you will too.

I will be open to new ways of serving Him; I hope you will join me in the great adventure God has prepared for us.

During that meeting we had over 100 Upper Room Disciplines available, and they sold out immediately. For more information about the book, contact Sherry Elliott at selliott@gbod.org.

– By Gil Hanke; E-mail received from the United Methodist Men <gcumm@gcumm.org>

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No man is obliged to do as much as he can do; a man has to have part of his life to himself.

– *Seriously, Life is a Laughing Matter*, by Tom Mullen, p. 39.