

Monthly Update

August 2016

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

This edition of the Monthly Update talks about elections of bishops in the five jurisdictions of the United Methodist Church here in the United States. It contains some very significant information and presents challenges to the work that we do in Concerned Methodists. I am happy that God has fitted us for the battle and called us to “contend for the faith” as we are instructed to do at two separate places in the Bible. Assuredly, we are facing momentous challenges and are at a crucial point in the history of our denomination. We face challenges in our country – and in our United Methodist Church. When I was talking to United Methodists in the North Little Rock Conference in Arkansas many years ago, I had told them that it may be that “we are called for such a time as this” – echoing the words to Esther in the Bible over the pending destruction of the Jewish people. More and more, I believe that advice applies to us today – both in our church and in our country: “we are called for such a time as this”. While preaching a message this past Sunday, I told the people that we may face some tough challenges in our own lives and in our country.

This Update has information on the election of an openly-lesbian pastor as bishop in the Western Jurisdiction: Karen Oliveto. Significantly, she was the pastor of Glide Memorial United Methodist Church in San Francisco, California. I say “Significantly” because this situation reflects the history of that church. It was built with funds provided by Mrs. Lizzie Glide who was a Spirit-filled Christian lady who wanted to further the work of our denomination. Above everything else, she was passionate about doing all she could for the Lord Jesus Christ and trying to bring as many people as possible into a saving faith in Him. She who had deeply-held religious beliefs and used her money to back up her actions in doing all she could for the Methodist Church. She would be appalled at what her namesake church is today – a bastion for those promoting various homosexual practices.

Despite the victories that were won in Portland, Oregon by those United Methodists who represent our orthodox Wesleyan faith, we see open rebellion by some in the more theologically liberal parts of the denomination – most especially in the Western Jurisdiction. We would offer two bits of advice: 1) Do not leave our United Methodist Church but resolve to stay and fight for the truth; and 2) Let your money speak for you. In Concerned Methodists we have long advocated the right for lay people to have the right to ensure their tithe given to the Lord not be used for un-Christian actions – and that our tithe is owed to God and not to any institution – to include the United Methodist Church.

We can still have a bright future. Let us stand firm for the “faith entrusted to the saints.”

Thank you for partnering with us through your gifts and your prayers. We ask that you stay with us as we continue what God has called us to do.

In His service,

Allen O. Morris,
Executive Director

August 2016 Update

Bits and Pieces from across the United Methodist Church

“I think in the short run there will be significant anxiety and negative reaction in many parts of the church. And there will be great celebration in other parts of the church. The election reflects an expression of the division we currently have over matters of human sexuality.”

– Bishop Bruce Ough, Council of Bishops president, on the election of a gay United Methodist bishop.

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The Good Stuff. *City Council Removes Veteran Memorial, So Voters Remove Something of Theirs.* The fallen soldiers’ memorial was to serve as a temporary display until the permanent one could be erected. Cowardly city council members voted to remove a veterans’ memorial after the atheist-minority complained that it was “offensive.” So, voters gathered the very next day and made a decision of their own that has the city council regretting they ever bowed to political correctness. On November 2, the Knoxville City Council of Iowa agreed that they would remove a memorial for fallen soldiers because atheists were outraged that it featured a Christian cross, signifying a headstone. On Tuesday, the very next day, angry voters convened and voted that the officials be removed from their positions.

Nearly 2,000 white crosses were displayed by angry residents protesting the city council’s decision.

Breitbart reports that aside from some 2,000 white crosses erected in yards across the town, citizens had warned the city council that if they voted to remove the display, they would be removed as well – and they were.

– As reported by Chaplain Klingenschmitt and other sources

Of Interest. There are seven central conferences, Africa, Central and Southern Europe, Congo, Germany, Northern Europe, Philippines, and West Africa. They will hold episcopal elections as follows:

Africa Central Conference: Aug. 11-14

Northern Europe and Eurasia Central Conference: Oct. 19-23

Philippines Central Conference: Nov. 28-Dec. 4

West Africa Central Conference: Dec. 13-16

Congo Central Conference: March 6-10, 2017

Central and Southern Europe Central Conference: March 8-12, 2017

Germany Central Conference: March 15-19, 2017

– Kathy L. Gilbert July 16, 2016; UMNS.

(UM) Bishops.

+ *July conferences to elect 15 U.S. bishops.*

[Note: This was taken from the newsfeed before all of the Jurisdictional elections took place. – AOM]

While the U.S. political scene focuses on who is winning red and blue states, many United Methodists are preparing to vote on who will wear the purple. Starting July 13, the five U.S. jurisdictional conferences will elect a total of 15 bishops. The gatherings also will finalize the next assignments for a number of already active episcopal leaders. In addition, two of the meetings will take up proposals on consolidating conference boundaries.

Central conferences – United Methodist regions in Africa, Europe and the Philippines – have elections scheduled later in 2016 and in early 2017. So far, at least 55 clergy in the United States have announced their candidacy for bishop. In some jurisdictions, delegates also can nominate candidates from the floor.

The United Methodists who vote on bishops include General Conference delegates and other church leaders.

Each conference elects twice as many delegates to jurisdictional conferences as they do to the denomination’s top lawmaking body. That means a total of 1,008 delegates will vote in this month’s U.S. bishop elections. The delegates include an equal number of laity and clergy.

All newly elected U.S. bishops will take office Sept. 1.

Here are details about the jurisdictional gatherings: The Southeastern Jurisdiction will elect five bishops when it meets July 13-15 at Lake Junaluska, North Carolina. The North Central Jurisdiction will elect four bishops when it meets July 13-16 in Peoria, Illinois. The meeting also will vote on the plan to join the Detroit and West Michigan conferences into a new Michigan Conference. These conferences already share a bishop. The South Central Jurisdiction will elect three bishops when it meets July 13-16 in Wichita, Kansas. The Northeastern Jurisdiction will elect two bishops when it meets July 11-15 in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. Because of declining membership, the jurisdiction had faced a possible reduction in bishops. However, General Conference 2016 opted to keep the same number of U.S. bishops while the denomination studies denominational borders. The Western Jurisdiction will elect one bishop when it meets July 13-16 in Scottsdale, Arizona. The meeting also will vote on a proposal from the Rocky Mountain and Yellowstone conferences to continue working toward forming one, new conference. As is the case in Michigan, these conferences in the U.S. Mountain West already share a bishop.

– By Heather Hahn, United Methodist News Service (UMNS), July 7, 2016. Hahn is a multimedia news reporter for UMNS.

+ ***Southeastern elects first African-American woman as bishop.*** In a historic election, the Rev. Sharma Lewis of the North Georgia Annual Conference has been elected bishop by the Southeastern Jurisdiction of The UMC; nine states that form the SEJ. She was elected on the first ballot of the 376 delegates at the jurisdiction's quadrennial meeting at Lake Junaluska, North Carolina. Lewis is the first African-American woman elected bishop in the Southeastern Jurisdiction, and the first African-American woman elected as a bishop in the denomination since 2000. Her election was followed those of David Graves (Holston), Leonard Fairley (North Carolina), R. Lawson Bryan (Alabama-West Florida) and Sue Hauptert-Johnson (Florida). Delegates are elected 15 bishops at five U.S. jurisdictional conferences. In summary: Sharma Lewis, David Graves, Leonard Fairley, R. Lawson Bryan, & Sue Hauptert-Johnson.

Thirteen active bishops now lead the 15 annual conferences that form the Southeastern Jurisdiction. Bishops provide oversight and support to The United Methodist Church's mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. They also are charged to work "for the unity of the church" and "be the shepherd of the whole flock." For the bishops elected during these jurisdictional meetings, their four-year term of service begins Sept. 1.

– By Sybil Davidson, July 13, 2016; UMNS Sybil Davidson is conference communicator for the North Georgia Conference of The UMC. News release by the North Carolina Conference of the UMC; July 14, 2016. UMNS.

+ ***Western [Jurisdiction] elects openly gay United Methodist bishop.***

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. (UMNS) – The Rev. Karen Oliveto, senior pastor of Glide Memorial Church in San Francisco, has been elected as the first openly lesbian United Methodist bishop by delegates at the Western Jurisdictional Conference. Oliveto was elected July 15 on the 17th ballot with 88 votes after the remaining two candidates withdrew from the election. As the first out lesbian to be elected a bishop, she is not receiving the same affirmation from across the denomination. Her day started with a press conference where she and Greater Northwest Episcopal Area Bishop Grant Hagiya answered questions about what her election as bishop means, since the denomination forbids ordaining practicing, self-avowed homosexuals. Oliveto has been legally married to Robin Ridenour for more than two years, and they have been in a relationship since they met at a junior-high camp as counselors 17 years ago.

Hagiya said the election of Oliveto was led by the Holy Spirit. He added this election will not derail the General Conference 2016's decision to support the Council of Bishops' plan to appoint a special commission that would address all aspects of human sexuality currently covered in church law.

In a July 16 phone interview, Bishop Bruce Ough, president of the Council of Bishops, agreed with Hagiya that Oliveto's election does not negate the commission's purpose. "I think in the short run there will be significant anxiety and negative reaction in many parts of the church," he said. "And there will be great celebration in other parts of the church. The election reflects an expression of the division we currently have over

matters of human sexuality.” Ough said Oliveto’s election would likely be a main topic of conversation when the Council of Bishops executive committee meets July 19-20 in Chicago.

On the heels of her election, members of the South Central Jurisdiction voted 109-84 late on July 15 to ask the Judicial Council for a declaratory decision regarding gay and lesbian church leaders. The Judicial Council is the denomination's supreme court.

[Note: It is reflective of the confusion in the UMC leadership that Hagiya attributed Oliveto’s election to the “Holy Spirit.” He confuses the spirit of rebellion and other powers with that of the Holy Spirit. This may have been the work of a spirit but, assuredly, it was not the Holy Spirit – and for him to assert such borders on blasphemy. – AOM]

– Kathy L. Gilbert July 16, 2016; UMNS.

+ ***South Central [Jurisdiction] elects Farr, Nunn, Saenz.***

WICHITA, Kan. (UMNS) – The South Central Jurisdictional Conference on July 15 elected the Rev. James “Jimmy” Nunn and the Rev. Robert “Bob” Farr as United Methodist bishops. Farr, from the Missouri Conference, was elected on a record 35th ballot. Nunn, from the Northwest Texas Conference, was elected earlier in the day. The jurisdiction had elected the Rev. Ruben Saenz Jr., Rio Texas Conference, on July 14.

– David Burke reported; UMNS.

+ ***North Central [Jurisdiction] elects three bishops.***

PEORIA, Ill. (UMNS) – Delegates to the North Central Jurisdictional Conference elected three of four new bishops on the conference’s first day. The Revs. Tracy Smith Malone (Northern Illinois) and Frank Beard (Indiana Conference) were elected on the sixth ballot, followed by the Rev. David Bard (Minnesota) on the 10th ballot.

– UMNS.

+ ***Moore-Koikoi elected bishop in Northeastern [Jurisdiction].***

LANCASTER, Pa. (UMNS) – The Rev. Cynthia Moore-Koikoi of the Baltimore-Washington Conference was elected as a bishop in The United Methodist Church on the 11th ballot of the 2016 Northeastern Jurisdictional Conference. The jurisdiction has one more bishop to elect and continues voting on July 14.

– Melissa Lauber and Erik Alsgaard reported; UMNS.

+ ***What bishops do.*** United Methodist bishops do not wear miters or special robes. Their main distinctive garment is a simple purple clergy shirt. While limited in fashion choices, bishops do wear multiple hats, metaphorically speaking. Bishops are elders “set apart for a ministry of servant leadership, general oversight and supervision,” states the Book of Discipline, the denomination’s governing document. UM bishops appoint clergy. They also are the first stop when clergy face complaints under church law. They oversee general church agencies as board members and sometimes agency presidents. They represent the denomination in ecumenical and interfaith relationships. They also frequently represent the church in the wider community and before state and national governments.

Retiring Bishops: Jurisdictional and central conference meetings also will honor retiring bishops. They are:

- From the North Central Jurisdiction: Bishops Michael Coyner, John Hopkins, Bishop Jonathan Keaton, Bishop Deborah Lieder Kiesey
- From the Northeastern Jurisdiction: Bishops Marcus Matthews and Jane Allen Middleton. Middleton previously retired in 2012, but since 2015, she has served as interim bishop in the New York Conference
- From the South Central Jurisdiction: Bishops Robert Hayes Jr. and Janice Riggle Huie
- From the Southeastern Jurisdiction: Bishops Young Jin Cho, Lindsey Davis, Larry Goodpaster, James King and Michael Watson
- From the Western Jurisdiction: Bishop Warner H. Brown Jr.
- From the West Africa Central Conference: Bishop John Innis (Liberia)
- From the Congo Central Conference: Bishops Kainda Katembo (Southern Congo), Nkulu Ntanda Ntambo (North Katanga) and Bishop David Yemba (Central Congo)

- From the Germany Central Conference: Bishop Rosemarie Wenner (Germany)

Impact on sexuality commission. This new class of bishops, at least in the near future, will have an additional task. General Conference 2016 in May gave the Council of Bishops authority to name a special commission that will review and possibly recommend revisions to church teachings related to human sexuality. The lawmaking assembly also voted to hit the pause button on the sexuality debate during the gathering. The bishops are considering calling a special General Conference in 2018 or 2019 to take up the commission's work.

The hope is to keep a deeply divided denomination united. The Book of Discipline, since 1972, has stated that all people are of sacred worth, but the church considers the practice of homosexuality "incompatible with Christian teaching." The church bans pastors from officiating at same-gender weddings and bans the ordination of "self-avowed practicing" gay clergy. However, debate has intensified in recent years, and in the month since General Conference, a number of U.S. conferences have declared that they will not conform to these bans. Three of the U.S. bishop candidates are openly gay. At this point, the Council of Bishops has tasked its 17-member executive committee with developing a process to appoint the human-sexuality commission and creating a timeline for the commission's work. The executive committee is scheduled next to meet the week after jurisdictional conferences.

Newly elected bishops eventually will also have a say in what happens with the bishops' proposed "Way Forward." "This new class of bishops will bring important perspective and experience to the council's work related to implementing the proposal," said Dakotas-Minnesota Area Bishop Bruce Ough, the Council of Bishops president.

[Note: Bishop Ough is correct in that the new class of bishops will bring "important perspective" to the work of the "Way Forward" proposal. Unfortunately, it will be in a negative sense in the damage their perspective will do.

As far as the title of this section "What bishops do" – one thing that bishops do not do is to provide responsible Christian leadership. – AOM]

– By Heather Hahn, United Methodist News Service (UMNS), July 7, 2016.

+ *Southeastern bishops decry 'nonconformity' plans.*

LAKE JUNALUSKA, N.C. (UMNS) – Bishops in the U.S. Southeast denounced as "divisive and disruptive" some conferences' public refusal to conform with church restrictions related to LGBTQ individuals.

Bishops in the U.S. Southeast denounced as "divisive and disruptive" the public refusal by some conferences to conform with church restrictions related to LGBTQ individuals. "We recognize the pain felt both by those advocating for and those opposing change," the Southeastern Jurisdiction College of Bishops said in a pastoral letter. "We also view the acts of nonconformity as a violation of our covenant and as divisive and disruptive." The letter is the most recent move in the debate on how the church ministers with people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning or queer.

The college, which includes active and retired bishops, released the letter the evening of July 12, the eve before United Methodist bishop elections begin in all five U.S. jurisdictions. Three of the U.S. bishop candidates are openly gay.

Nashville (Tennessee) Area Bishop William T. McAllily, president of the college of bishops, said he and his colleagues did not want to be reactive to the potential election of a gay bishop. "We wanted to assure the Southeastern Jurisdiction that we understand the tension in the church, but we also wanted to give them the confidence in our leadership as we uphold the vows we made at our consecration (as bishops)," McAllily told United Methodist News Service. "We also wanted to speak a word to the church before jurisdictional conferences actually began."

The Book of Discipline, the denomination's governing document, states that all people are of sacred worth, but the church considers the practice of homosexuality "incompatible with Christian teaching." The church bans pastors from officiating at same-gender weddings and bans the ordination of "self-avowed practicing" gay clergy. That clergy ban applies to bishops.

Various United Methodist groups have been working to change those prohibitions for decades with no success. In recent years, the debate has intensified as some United Methodists publicly defy these restrictions and others call on the church to consider splitting up.

With rumors of schism in the air, General Conference – the denomination’s top lawmaking body – opted not to vote on any legislation related to how the church ministers with LGBTQ people. Instead, the assembly authorized the Council of Bishops to set up a commission to examine and possibly recommend revisions to each policy related to sexuality.

The Southeastern Jurisdiction bishops pledged they would seek “unity in Christ, including the work the General Conference requested the Council of Bishops do in relation to the Commission on Human Sexuality.” The bishops also committed themselves to the shepherding of all individuals and “administering processes for handling complaints about violations of our Book of Discipline that occur within our episcopal areas.” McAllily said they wanted to focus the church on the mission that unites United Methodists: Making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. The bishops addressed a jurisdiction whose theme for this year’s conference is “Hope and Unity in Christ.”

Current controversy. Outside the Southeastern jurisdiction, multiple conferences have decided they cannot wait for the bishops’ commission. At their annual meetings this summer, the New England, Desert Southwest, California-Pacific, and Pacific-Northwest conferences each passed “non-conformity” resolutions, saying they would not comply with provisions that discriminates against LGBTQ people.” The clergy session of Oregon-Idaho Conference supported a similar resolution. The California-Nevada Conference approved an “aspirational resolution” asking that United Methodists not to follow the Book of Discipline’s restrictions related to LBTQIA individuals. LGBTQIA stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning, intersex and asexual.

The New York conference commissioned or ordained four openly gay clergy.

The Rocky Mountain Conference passed a resolution that sexual orientation and gender identity should not be a bar to election to the episcopacy.

Conferences in the Western Jurisdiction have each endorsed two gay candidates: the Revs. Karen Oliveto and Frank Wulf. Oliveto is married, and Wulf is in a “long-term covenanted relationship.”

The Rev. David Meredith is a candidate for bishop in the North Central Jurisdiction; most of the conferences that have voted to disregard the prohibitions related to gay clergy are in the Western Jurisdiction. Perhaps tellingly, the theme for the Western Jurisdiction’s meeting in Scottsdale, Arizona, is “Crossing Thresholds.”

Reactions to bishops’ letters. “We are in a very fragile space as a denomination right now, and there is great impatience on the extremes, those who want to change the Book of Discipline, for full inclusion, and for those who want to maintain the current standings,” McAllily said. He and others at the Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference meeting said what happens next is unclear. “Is it possible to hold what I call the tension of the opposites long enough for the bishops’ commission to do its work or will we continue to fragment?” McAllily said.

The bishops’ letter offered assurance to at least some delegates. Turner Arant, a lay delegate from the Mississippi Conference, said he was gratified his jurisdiction’s bishops vowed to uphold the Discipline. “If bishops don’t start enforcing the Discipline, it’s going to split the church wide open,” he said. Joyce Moore, a delegate from the Holston Conference, likewise said the letter made her happy. “They are following the Discipline, keeping calm and keeping the covenant with the church and with God,” she said.

The Southeastern Jurisdiction encompasses the states of Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee and Virginia.

– By Heather Hahn, United Methodist News Service (UMNS), July 13, 2016.

+ ***What might happen now?*** The United Methodist Council of Bishops will meet July 19-20 in Chicago and will discuss “A Way Forward,” a proposal adopted by the General Conference 2016 calling for the council to appoint a commission to review all portions of the church’s lawbook dealing with human sexuality.

Council of Bishops President Bruce Ough said he believes there’s a strong commitment on the part of the council and the denomination as a whole to “move in a direction that does not reflect some of the intense

divisiveness that we've seen in fellow mainline denominations." Asked if that meant an exit strategy for churches that wish to leave with their property, Ough said "not necessarily." "I just think we have to be very, very open to innovation," he said. "It's difficult for any organization to be truly open to the spirit and to the imagination of God when we're in the midst of such great anxiety and fear."

What will happen with any challenge to the election, such as the South Central Jurisdiction appeal to the Judicial Council for a declaratory judgment, is unclear. "There are no precise precedents for the drama of this kind of thing where church law specifically says a person in this situation shall not be ordained or appointed and, suddenly, exactly the person described in church law is elected bishop," said the Rev. William Lawrence, a Perkins School of Theology professor of church history and former president of the denomination's Judicial Council. "The bishops, it seems to me, will have to find a way to model a kind of unity in these circumstances if the church has any hope of finding a way to develop a flexible pattern for unity."

– Kathy L. Gilbert July 16, 2016; UMNS.

+ Follow-up to the actions from the Western Jurisdiction – The Wesleyan Covenant Association:

INDIANAPOLIS, IN, July 16, 2016 -- It is with pain and sadness that The Confessing Movement has noted what appears to be the unraveling of The United Methodist Church. Unfortunately, a small number of LGBTQ-rights activists has influenced some of our conferences, our bishops, and some of our leadership to bring planned disobedience to the Doctrine and the Discipline of The United Methodist Church in an attempt to render the church inoperable under its present General Conference, and its doctrine and discipline. Consider:

.... The Western Jurisdiction has elected Rev. Karen Olivetto, an openly gay clergy person as a bishop of the church. As Bishop she is required to respond positively to the vow of consecration which includes these words: You are called to guard the faith, to seek the unity, and to exercise the discipline of the whole Church..." However, she vocally and actively seeks to break that unity, undermine the faith and to violate the exercise of the discipline of the whole church.

.... The New York Conference approved 3 clergy candidates for commissioning and 1 for ordination in violation of the vows, the covenants, and the discipline of the church.

.... At least four conferences have passed resolutions declaring an "Action of Non-Conformity with the General Conference of The United Methodist Church" that they would not comply with the provision of the Discipline that "discriminates against LGBTQ persons.

.... The Oregon-Idaho Board of Ordained Ministry joined with four other Boards of Ministry indicating candidates would be considered for ministry without regard to sexual orientation or gender identification. That conference and four others also defied the actions of the General Conference which legislated that the Church withdraw from the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice (RCRC) by either joining the national organization or regional RCRC organizations.

.... The Cal-Nevada conference passed a resolution saying the Discipline would not be followed as it relates to items concerning LGBTQIA persons (Q is queer or questioning; I is intersex; A is asexual).

These actions come as no surprise as the LGBTQ advocates even before General Conference indicated they intended to close down the church if their demands were not met. In light of these actions numbers of persons and churches have asked what The Confessing Movement, as well as other renewal groups, will do now. Many have urged that we simply declare United Methodist apostate and start a new denomination. Others have urged that there be a withholding of apportionment money. There is the sense that our covenantal relationships have been betrayed.

For the moment we urge patience. We are not yet giving up on The United Methodist Church. But we ask for some time to discern God's will and to engage in Holy Conferencing. With that in mind we offer these statements at the moment:

We will work with other renewal groups and other concerned evangelicals. We have sent out a general invitation for all who wish to defend the doctrine and Discipline of The United Methodist Church to meet with us

on October 7 in Chicago for the forming of an association we are calling the Wesleyan Covenant Association. There is no agenda for this meeting other than to seek God's will for those who are evangelicals in The United Methodist Church.

We wish to give the Commission to be appointed by the bishops to deal with the crisis in the church a chance. This Commission needs to be appointed immediately and it needs to offer workable solutions to the present crisis. The issue at one time was whether there might be some solution that might avoid church division. It is probably too late for that, but any kind of separation or solution should be done with civility and respect for those whom we have considered as brothers and sisters in Christ. In the meantime we call upon the bishops and leaders of the church to follow the Discipline even if this brings the church into conflict with those who are presently denouncing our doctrines and Discipline and our Church.

We intend to be major players in the negotiations for the heart and the soul of The United Methodist Church. We do not consider that we are the "right-wing" or the extremists in the present crisis. We are faithful United Methodists who stand firmly in the mainstream of the message of the Wesleys and the traditions of Methodism. We support the actions of the 2016 General Conference and believe that it accurately reflected the will and convictions of the vast majority of United Methodists. We support our United Methodist Book of Discipline and are pained to hear that some consider it a hateful expression of our Wesleyan tradition.

Furthermore, we do not consider that we are a minority in the church. The eight conferences of the church which have declared themselves in defiance of the General Conference and the Discipline of the church together account for only 643,714 members of a 12 million member denomination. This represents less than 6% of global United Methodism and only 9% of American United Methodism. These same conferences who consider themselves progressives and the future of the church were also responsible for the loss of 17,056 members in 2015, or a decrease of 2.65%.

We believe God still has a plan for The United Methodist Church. – Senator Patricia L. Miller, Confessing Movement

(UM) General Board of Global Ministries (GBGM). *Mission agency continues transition to Atlanta.*

NEW YORK, NY (UMNS) – For now, it's a tale of two cities. As the United Methodist Board of Global Ministries finishes renovation work on its new U.S. headquarters in Atlanta, its New York offices will remain open until the end of October. But the continuing trickle of staff members departing from the Interchurch Center at 475 Riverside Drive – as some move to Atlanta and others retire or take other jobs – is reflected by the fact that the agency has vacated most of the 14th floor there. That's one of several floors it has occupied for decades. Most remaining staff from that floor have been relocated to the third and 15th floors.

Then, there are the other cities: Buenos Aires, where a Latin America regional office was opened in April; and Seoul, Korea, where an Asian regional office is scheduled to open in March 2017. Both offices are a collaboration with Discipleship Ministries' Upper Room devotional guide. Plans for an Africa office are in development.

It's all part of a decision approved by board directors in October 2014 to vacate the Interchurch Center, where the denomination's mission board was an original tenant when the building opened in 1961. Lower costs and the desire to create a more international presence was part of the rationale for the move. The current lease ends on Nov. 1, 2016.

New Atlanta residents. In Atlanta, Global Ministries worked out a partnership with the congregation of Grace United Methodist Church, on the corner of Ponce de Leon Avenue and Charles Allen Drive. A groundbreaking ceremony took place in January. Among the recent transfers to Atlanta is Thomas Kemper, top executive for Global Ministries, who called the staff relocation from New York to Atlanta "an ongoing process" over the coming months. When all staff vacancies are filled, there will be 152 positions for Global Ministries and 28 for the United Methodist Committee on Relief and Global Health, Kemper reported, for a total staff of 180.

Sixty-eight of the current New York executive staff are moving to Atlanta, he told UMNS in June, with 10 already situated there. Another 18 were in the process of moving, including parents who want their school-age

children settled before classes begin in early August. New staff hired since last fall also are working at the Atlanta headquarters, parts of which are still under construction.

A staff reorganization that took effect last April includes two new programs: the Center for Mission Innovation, led by the Rev. J. Denise Honeycutt, and the International Coaching Network, in connection with Africa University in Zimbabwe and led by the Rev. George Howard.

UMCOR is divided into two sections under the reorganization, overseen by Kemper and Roland Fernandes, the mission agency's chief operating officer and general treasurer. Disaster response and disaster risk reduction is led by the Rev. Jack Amick, former head of international disaster response. The other section, where Javed Sheik is the interim leader, includes UMCOR's offices in Africa and Haiti, long-term recovery and development work, WASH (Clean Water, Sanitation and Hygiene) and sustainable agriculture.

Fernandes is the head of finance and administration, which includes The Advance, a voluntary giving program, and other fundraising efforts. Other program areas and their executive directors are Global Health, led by Dr. Olusimbo Ige; Global Mission Connections, led by the Rev. Mande Muyombo; missionary service, led by the Rev. Judy Chung, and communications, led by Mary Andreolli.

Making the transition. In the midst of the transition, Kemper said his staff has been working harder than ever, under sometimes difficult circumstances. "It's challenging to keep everybody on board because they are in so many different places," he noted. When board directors approved the move to Atlanta, they decided not to relocate any of 39 support staff in New York. At least 23 other staff members in New York also did not receive invitations to move. Another 37 or so staff were invited to Atlanta but chose not to go. Two current staff executives will remain in New York – David Wildman, executive secretary for human rights and racial justice, and Jorge Domingues, executive secretary for migration and refugee work. Both will act as liaisons to the mission agency's work with the United Nations, Kemper said. That work includes the commitment to the "Every Woman, Every Child" initiative through its Abundant Health campaign and U.N. programs that focus on Israel/Palestine, global migration, indigenous people and climate justice. Global Ministries also is working with and providing support to the World Council of Churches U.N. office. "I felt it was important to have this presence, and David and George are the right people to do that," he added.

Woodruff Foundation grant. A \$1.5 million grant received this spring from the Robert W. Woodruff Foundation reflects the board's attempt to seek financial support for the move to Atlanta outside of the "enormous support" from church-related organizations. Kemper said he hopes to raise \$3 million in foundation grants by the end of the year.

One way to connect the local and global church in mission is the new Center for Mission Innovation. The plan is to highlight best practices and create new models that adapt to "the changing mission landscapes of the 21st century," the mission agency has stated. Currently, more than 350 United Methodist missionaries serve in 60 countries. Through the center, Global Ministries also will also be able to "offer the space of hospitality for the global church," Kemper said.

– By Linda Bloom, UMNS; July 5, 2016. Bloom is a UMNS multimedia reporter based in New York.

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Special Addendum* on the GBGM (all capital letters in the text were in the original):

[Note: This is included to show the deep concerns we had about the GBGM and previous efforts to move it. The Stegall Report was written many years ago and included in some of our books on UM finances {listed below}, but is instructive for the recent move. Dr. Karl K. Stegall is a past Chairman of the GBGM Finance Committee. – AOM]

**Report to the GBGM Finance Committee
By Dr. Karl K. Stegall
Sheraton Hotel, Stamford, Connecticut**

When the 1988 General Conference authorized a task force of unbiased persons, lay and clergy, to study the feasibility of relocating the General Board of Global Ministries [GBGM] from its current location in New York City, I went back home from St. Louis feeling that the whole process would be handled with integrity. After all,

the 15 persons on the task force were carefully selected by our bishops. There were 3 chosen from each of the 5 jurisdictions within the United States. All were strong church leaders, and I was fully confident that their findings would be those in the best interest of our church. I was also very pleased to learn later that 5 of the 15 persons selected by our bishops for this important task force were either past or present directors of the General Board of Global Ministries, . . . familiar with the present location of the headquarters in New York City.

The Task Force met on numerous occasions over the past four year. They hired the firm of Price Waterhouse to assist them in their study. These highly respected church leaders gave unselfishly hundreds of hours in studying the issue at hand. They spent approximately \$70,000 fulfilling the task that our 1988 General Conference assigned them to do. After they completed their thorough research, the Task Force voted overwhelmingly that it was NOT ONLY FEASIBLE to move the GBGM out of New York City, but they also recommended that IT SHOULD BE MOVED. It is highly significant that 2 of the 3 representatives from the Northeastern Jurisdiction on the task force voted that it should be moved, minimizing the accusation that there was a regional prejudice.

While the General Conference Task Force was making their study, I can assure you that as Chairman of the GBGM Finance Committee, I was prepared to accept whatever recommendation this group of highly qualified and conscientious persons brought forth. However, I learned very quickly that many of my colleagues on the executive staff at 475 Riverside Drive were not nearly as open. I could hardly believe my eyes when I discovered that certain of these staff persons were beginning to mobilize forces to discredit the findings of the Task Force long before the findings were even revealed. I heard arrogant, condescending voices regarding the workings of the Task Force, and I had a hard time correlating the criticisms of the Task Force with the fact that the 15 persons on the Task Force were carefully selected by our bishops and highly qualified. It then became apparent to me that the general Conference Task Force had not been shown the decency of having their report placed in the hands of the directors before there were powerful organized efforts to discredit their recommendation. As I listened and observed all of the unfair treatment directed toward the Task Force and the arrogant disregard of their recommendation, I decided that someone should have the "guts" to stand up and be counted. Be assured that I knew when I chose this course of action that I would have very few supporters among the 178 directors of the GBGM. However, I never dreamed that key executive staff at 475 Riverside Drive would go to such great extremes to mobilize forces against me and question my integrity.

While I continued to observe actions aimed at never giving the Task Force recommendation a fair hearing, I received a telephone call from Mr. Jim Steele, then editor of *The Christian Advocate* serving the Alabama-West Florida and North Alabama Conferences. He asked if I would write an article on "Why the GBGM Should Relocate from New York City." In an effort to off-set what I perceived to be an assassination of the Task Force Committee's report, I chose to write [it] .

No sooner had the ink dried on my article did I become a target of vicious criticism. Just 30 minutes before I left home coming to this meeting, I received in the mail a letter that had been mailed to all directors with the names of the officers of the GBGM listed at the end. The letter blatantly accused me of using inaccurate information in my article. Upon arriving at our GBGM meeting here in Stamford, Connecticut, I was shocked to learn that the very substance of the article was developed by Betty Thompson, staff member of GBGM at 475 Riverside Drive, with the encouragement of Randy Nugent and the assistance of his secretary, Rene Wilbur. After the Cabinet at 475 Riverside Drive had an opportunity to scrutinize the document, it was THEN mailed to the GBGM officers for their editorial revisions. As a matter of record, I want it clearly understood that this letter calling into question my integrity was basically written by a staff employee at 475 Riverside Drive who is totally opposed to relocation, and yet her name does not appear anywhere on the document.

In an effort for truth to reign supremely, I would like for those across the church to hear my side of the story. I challenge the news media (outside of 475 Riverside Drive) or any investigative reporter to check out my responses and allow all of the delegates to the 1992 General Conference to discern for themselves who is telling the truth.

I would like the sunshine of truth to break through on each of. The following issues where I was accused of providing inaccurate information.

I. SEVERANCE PACKAGE FOR PEGGY BILLINGS

In pointing out the wastefulness of the GBGM located in such an expensive environment, I pointed out in my article that “one executive who was terminated with the GBGM was given a severance package of \$500,000 over 5 years.” This one statement has created a storm of protest among the key executives at 475 Riverside Drive, so I hope and pray that the truth of this matter might be made clear to the whole world of United Methodism.

On May 13, 1988, 13 members of the Executive Committee of the World Division met in Denver, Colorado. One of the main issues addressed at that meeting was the fact that Peggy Billings, Deputy General Secretary of the GBGM, was not being re-nominated to her position. The minutes of that meeting in Denver contain these words,

“It was agreed to establish, upon completion of a contract satisfactory to Peggy Billings and the GBGM, an account in the amount of \$300,000, to cover World Division commitment to the funding of the Project on the Church, Society and Ethics, to be paid out in terms of the contract. Source of funds: Collins Funds, in the category of administrative expenses of the World Division, one of the two categories for the use of Collins Funds agreed upon with the Collins family and designated by Directors: missionary retirement benefits and World Division Administration.”

On May 21, 1988, the Executive Session of the Women's Division minutes include the following paragraph.
“Recommended:

1. That “The Church, Ethics, and Society Project Plan” be approved. It was voted.
2. That funding of the above PLAN be in the amount of \$100,000 annually, for a 5 year period, with 40% paid by the Women’s Division and the balance (60%) to be paid by the World Division; and that the source of funds for the Women’s Division share be the Excess Deficit Fund. It was voted.”

The United Methodist Reporter shared an article with its readers that was provided by the United Methodist News Service. It was headlined, “Two Global Ministries Executives Given New Church-Related Projects.” Among other things the article states, “Two high-ranking officials of the United Methodist Church’s General Board of Global Ministries who were not re-nominated to their position last spring will take on new church-related projects.... At its 1988 spring meeting, the board’s personnel and nominating committee, in a closed door session as required by the *Book of Discipline* regarding personnel matters, decided against re-nominating the two executives for another term in the fall.”

Regardless of how one seeks to explain the \$500,000 (one-half million) appropriation over 5 years, the simple truth is that a staff member who was not re-nominated, or in my understanding “terminated” as head of a division was “given” a position that offered a “package” of \$500,000 over 5 years. When I used the word “package,” I also had in mind not only salary, but also pension, insurance, transportation costs, research, seminars, and other...costs pertaining to the project.

Yes, I was present in Denver, Colorado on May 13, 1988 when the initial action was taken. I did speak out at that meeting. I clearly recall that the only matter to be decided at that meeting was whether or not the \$100,000 appropriation per year would be open-ended or limited to five years. The “wheels were greased” for the half-million allocation to support a person AND project, the recipient of which was one who had not been re-nominated as head of a division. One bishop on our Board that I highly respect explained this as a “sweetheart deal”, but I think the whole thing was sour and rotten to the core.

The Church and Society Project is now 3 years old, and I have not heard it mentioned the first time. Where is there a periodic progress report on the Project? How is the project progressing? What will be done with the final report? Will it be publicized for the GBGM to use? What contract was finally agreed upon as acceptable to the author and GBGM? Why was she not re-nominated to her position as Deputy General Secretary of the GBGM?

The overarching question that I would like to raise regarding the whole matter of severance for Peggy Billings and her project is simply this,

“HOW COULD AN APPROPRIATION OF THIS MAGNITUDE (ONE-HALF MILLION DOLLARS OVER 5 YEARS) BE GRANTED WITHOUT EVER BEING PRESENTED TO THE BOARD FINANCE COMMITTEE?”

The officers of the GBGM in their letter to all of the directors falsely allude that I did not raise the issue related to the severance pay and project at the May 13, 1988 meeting in Denver. That is incorrect. I raised the issue then, and I continued to raise the issue throughout the quadrennium.

On May 27, 1989, I received a letter from Harry A. Newman in Atlanta, then Field Representative for Mission Cultivation of the Southeastern Jurisdiction. Dr. Newman wrote, “Rumor has it (and I certainly believe it to be true) that those who have been asked to resign from the GBGM during the past months have uniformly received significant cash settlements... often reported to be in the nature of thousands and thousands of dollars. It seems a bit unusual to me that we are willing to reward those whom we have decided to replace because they are no longer fulfilling the needs of the organization while adopting in my own case a policy which penalizes me rather severely because of the unplanned and actually unavoidable death of my wife. My thinking may not be completely clear, but it seems to me that we are penalizing those who are still performing their duties in a completely satisfactory manner and rewarding those who have not done so.” On June 30, 1989, I wrote a letter to Mr. Steve Brimigion, GBGM treasurer, in which I stated among other things that it was very difficult for me as Chairman of Finance to explain to persons like Harry Newman the allocation of \$500,000, regardless of the source of the funds. I asked Mr. Brimigion in my letter, “Where does the Finance Committee fulfill its responsibilities for the receipt of the funds of the Board when these kinds of decisions are made by other persons or groups?”

I want to go on record once again as saying that no matter how one wants to explain the allocation of \$500,000 to Peggy Billings for her salary, fringe benefits, project, and all related costs, the whole matter has a stench to it and is rotten to the core!

II. COST OF BOARD MEETINGS:

The officers of the Board in their letter to the directors took issue with my figures pertaining to the cost of Board meetings. As we prepare to begin a new quadrennium, I would like to invite the readers of this article to carefully scrutinize the attached financial forms attributed by Mr. Steve Brimigion, GBGM treasurer, three years ago (1989), beginning a new quadrennium. This financial report includes.... \$ figures expended in 1988.

Isn't it interesting that the 1988 spring, fall, and organizational meetings cost \$1,039,000. Now we are saying that the Board will spend only \$700,000 for two meetings in 1992.

Perhaps, a close scrutiny of the 1988 expenditures will shed light on why this kind of unrealistic low figure can be projected. While we spent \$1,039,971 on three meetings in 1988, we had budgeted only \$845,000.

You will also note many other items that greatly exceeded the budget.

The General Secretary's TRAVEL in that one year was \$64,052 with an appropriation of \$50,000. When a member of our Board Finance Committee asked Steve Brimigion how this could happen, his response was, “Who am I to tell Randy that he cannot travel?”

Immediately following the meeting in which these figures were received, one of our new directors at that time, Elizabeth Gionti, wrote a letter to Mr. Steve Brimigion in which she included these words,

“Unless there is accountability at all levels of the organization which contributed to the \$1,000,000 over budget for 1988, we surely are going to witness some mess! Even a quick perusal of the 22 page document of 1989 and 1990 appropriations for Board-wide Priorities, Meetings, General administration, Treasury, and Services shows exorbitant overspending on meetings plus travel and contingencies in just about every office from the General Secretary down. I would have thought that significant overspending in any area would require prior approval of at least the Finance Committee, if not the full Board of Directors.”

As one reflects upon these figures, it is very obvious that United Methodists across the world have every right to be concerned about the budget controls at GBGM.

III. SIZE OF BOARD

The letter from the officers of the GBGM to all our directors makes note of the fact that “the General Conference, not the Board, has determined the size and composition of the GBGM.” While that is true, be assured that our GBGM is a very powerful board with powerful influence at General Conference. If we were really serious about streamlining costs and providing more money for missions, we could easily go on record in support of petitions to General Conference limiting all Boards and Agencies to no more than 75 members. It is absolutely ludicrous that we have 178 members on our Board of Directors, some of which, oftentimes, come from the very same town and very same church.

Our GBGM cannot blame the General Conference for the multitude of committee meetings, duplication of services, and general wastefulness that permeates nearly every aspect of our Board.

IV. COST OF MOVING

The letter from the officers of the GBGM states that I express no concern at the cost of moving which has been estimated at figures from \$9 to \$15 million dollars. One of the significant points that the General Conference Task Force is seeking to make is that no matter what the cost, they are able to present facts and figures showing that the costs will be “recoverable”. When key leaders of GBGM learned that the General Conference Task Force recommended relocation, the arrogance of our Board was once again portrayed. Steps were taken immediately for us to request that GCFA and GCOM conduct an independent study. By our Board’s action, it was decided that if GCFA and GCOM refused to do it, we would go ahead and pay for the \$25,000 study. It should not surprise anyone that GCFA and GCOM refused to do it.

I would like to refresh the memories of all of our directors that the very last speech that Spurgeon Dunnam made on the floor at our October, 1991, meeting, he spoke about the sheer “arrogance” of our Board spending \$25,000 for such a study. He alluded to the negative reaction this would have among our constituencies across the church, spending \$25,000 for such a project while we are saying to the same people that we do not have sufficient funds for other purposes. I think Spurgeon Dunnam was prophetic in his remarks!

Although I, like Spurgeon Dunnam, was strongly opposed to the allocation of \$25,000 for our own study, I asked Steve Brimigion, our treasurer to keep me as Finance Chairman abreast of any action regarding this study. On March 19, 1992, one day before coming to this spring meeting, I received in the mail a letter from Steve Brimigion, informing me that the general counsels of the church had declined the request of the GBGM to conduct a study of relocation costs. He then states in his letter, “We have retained PHH Fantus Company as consultants to accurately estimate the cost of any move GBGM might have to make.”

Who did the treasurer consult prior to hiring this firm? How are we to put any confidence in a \$25,000 study made by a firm selected by persons adamantly opposed to relocation? When will the study be held? What purpose will it serve?

If the main reason for not relocating the GBGM is financial, would you not expect the Treasurer and General Secretary to at least consult the Chairman of the Board Finance Committee regarding our Board’s response to the whole issue? I have never been asked by the Treasurer or General Secretary to be a part of any group chosen to respond to the report of the General Conference Task Force.

V. JURISDICTIONS FROM WHICH STAFF MEMBERS OF GBGM ARE SELECTED

The officers of GBGM take issue with my stating that the majority of the staff of the GBGM comes from the Northeast. I would like for the record to show that the Report of the General Conference Task Force states, “Approximately 70% of the applicants for executive level positions and half of those employed in recent years have come from residents of the Northeastern Jurisdiction.”

VI. “OUT OF TOUCH” WITH SOUTHEAST

The officers of the GBGM attack my statement that the theological and philosophical persuasions of the staff at GBGM are far different or “out of touch” with those of us within the Southeast. Once again, I call to your attention an exact quote from the Task Force report,

“The New York City location is at one edge of the United States membership of the United Methodist Church which compounds the perception that it is theologically and philosophically remote from the mainstream of the United Methodist Church.”

The one great proof of the fact that the GBGM is “out of touch” with the people of the Southeast can be clearly seen in the whole relocation issue. While upwards of 90% of the GBGM directors would probably vote against relocation, I will predict that the delegates from the Southeast will vote strongly in favor of relocation.

Who are the strongest and loudest critics of the GBGM within the Alabama-West Florida Conference? Tragically enough, it is those former missionaries who have served unselfishly for many years under the auspices of the GBGM and now have grave misgivings about the actions of our GBGM.

The fact that the Southeastern Jurisdiction has traditionally been an enthusiastic supporter of missions speaks more of the faithful, generous people called United Methodists in our area fulfilling the mandate of Jesus Christ rather than strong support of the actions of GBGM.

VII. GBGM HOSPITALITY AT GENERAL CONFERENCE

The officers of the GBGM in their report take issue with my reference to “many, many thousands of dollars” that will be expended to “lobby” delegates at General Conference.

The unbelievable “lobbying” efforts on the part of the GBGM forces have already begun with letters having been sent to delegates all over the world. I have attended three previous General Conferences, and I have seen firsthand the powerful political pressure of the GBGM. I only want the “grassroots” of United Methodism to clearly understand in advance of General Conference that when the GBGM plans a huge reception for delegates in one of the most expensive hotels in Louisville, they are creating an “unequal playing field” in an atmosphere where important decisions are to be made. It will be terribly, terribly difficult for particular delegates who are beholden to the GBGM and staff for funding to resist the pressure that the lobbying forces of GBGM will put upon them regarding the relocation issue.

What will be the cost of the reception? What will be the source of these funds?

CLOSING PERSONAL STATEMENT:

I am presently serving in my ninth year as pastor of the First United Methodist Church of Montgomery, Alabama. During those nine years, our church has been recognized by our Conference Board of Missions for having given more money to United Methodist missions through Advance Specials than any of the 720 churches of the Alabama-West Florida Conference. We have

within our church what I feel is the strongest United Methodist Women’s organization of any church within our Conference. I have never served a church that did not pay 100% of its World Service and Conference Benevolences. Within the past few weeks, two GBGM missionaries have spoken from our pulpit where I am privileged to speak each Sunday. On May 24, 1992, Tim and Carol Crawford, GBGM missionaries to Mozambique, will speak in our church. Last week-end, our church hosted the Cuban Shalom Choir that sang in our church on three occasions and spent two nights in the homes of our church members. It was a marvelous experience for us! Our church during the past year has sent Volunteers in Mission teams to Costa Rica and Jamaica. I have been down in the front line trenches as a District Superintendent, strongly encouraging members of local churches to support all of the United Methodist mission programs. I have spoken for our United Methodist Women on a local, district, and conference basis, strongly supporting their gifts to missions.

I have served as President of the Alabama-West Florida Conference Council of Finance and Administration, as well as Chairman of the Council on Finance and Administration for the Southeastern Jurisdiction. Never in all of my life has my integrity been called into question by stating that I provided “inaccurate information.” Since my

integrity has been called into question, I would love for the news media (outside 475 Riverside Drive) to let the light of truth shine upon each of these matters contained in my article.

I must return home tomorrow to officiate at the funeral of one of our most faithful members, Roonie Gentry. I deeply regret that I will be unable to stay for the remainder of our spring board meeting to defend myself from any other attacks upon my truthfulness.

As I come to my final general board meeting after serving on this Board for 8 years, I must confess that it has been a very disillusioning experience. I have experienced a very difficult time as a local pastor seeing widows on fixed income giving sacrificially to the mission programs of our great church while at the same time as chairman of the Board Finance Committee knowing that we appropriated \$500,000 for a person and project when that very person had not been re-nominated as the Deputy General Secretary of the World Division. I have equally been disillusioned by 178 directors spending over \$300,000 for a week's meeting in New York City and the sheer arrogance of appropriating \$25,000 for our own study for relocation that flies in the face of the one authorized by the General Conference.

Although Don Messer and I do not agree on the issue of relocation, I think that he is right on target when he says that as a GBGM, "We can win the battle and lose the war!" I do not know how the final vote will be in Louisville on the matter of relocation. My life and ministry will not be changed one way or the other if the Board does not relocate. However, I want to go on record as saying that if this GBGM continues to arrogantly resist General Conference mandated task force recommendations such as the one regarding relocation, you can rest assured that the World Service dollars will continue to drop all across the world of United Methodism.

Thanks for listening!

* Information in this addendum is taken from taken from these books: *The Church in Bondage*, *Stewardship Report*, *At the Crossroads*, *Stewardship Perspectives – 2007*, and *Jude* all by Allen Morris. Permission granted. Dr. Karl K. Stegall was Chairman, General Board of Global Ministries' Finance Committee, March 22, 1992.

* * * * *

Face the Flag, Son

Face the Flag, Son, and face reality.

Our strengths and our freedoms are based in unity.

The flag is but a symbol, Son, of the world's greatest nation,

And as long as it keeps flying, there's cause for celebration.

So do what you've got to do, but always keep in mind,

A lot of people believe in peace...but there are the other kind.

If we want to keep these freedoms, we may have to fight again.

God forbid, but if we do, let's always fight to win,

For the fate of a loser is futile and it's bare:

No love, no peace...just misery and despair.

Face the Flag, son...and thank God it's still there.

– John Wayne, from his album "America-Why I Love Her, 1977"

Those of us who love Dallas and call it home have had five deaths in the family. [After the ambush of 5 Dallas-area cops]

– Former President George W. Bush, a United Methodist, *UMNS*