

Monthly Update

January 2019

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

As we welcome in the new year – 2019 – let us remember to thank the Lord for His grace in making it happen. We should recognize that each and every day that we wake up in the morning is a gift from God – and be in thankful prayer to Him daily.

In this January Update we cover insights and positive heart-warming deeds to start off the new year; comment about the “A Way Forward” plans; provide specific pro-life cases in the abortion discussion (to include one that is a bit disturbing); tell of weapons used by people to defend themselves; and have good news from Pakistan.

The chapter entitled “Homosexual Activists’ War against Christianity is included at the end of the “Update” as a supplement because even though we printed it before, this activism continues to permeate our society; these radical activists are doing all they can to silence those of us who oppose them. We need to once again review their overall strategy; focus on the truth of the practice itself; and not allow ourselves to be put on the defensive or distracted by giving in to terms such as “hate” or “homophobia” (a made-up word used to manipulate public discourse to portray Christians as the “bad” guys).

This has been a busy 2018:

- + Publication of our Monthly Update throughout the year – as we regularly do.
- + Attended and reported on the gathering of the Southern Baptist Convention in Dallas, Texas.
- + Disseminated *The Christian Methodist Newsletter* to an estimated 17,996 recipients.
- + Participation in the Right to Life (RTL) March in Washington, DC.
- + Publication of the book *Islam through the Years*.
- + The North Carolina Conference of the UMC, at which we had an exhibit.
- + The National RTL conference in Overland Park, Kansas at which we had an exhibit.
- + Participation in the Aldersgate Renewal Ministries conference at Lake Junaluska, NC.
- + The “high visibility” Values Voter Coalition conference in Washington, DC where our exhibit received a lot of attention from CBN, Japan Public TV, and Al Jazeera (Qatar TV).
- + Spoken to groups of people in other parts of the country.
- + Met with various people about the “A Way Forward” issues before the UMC.
- + Strategized with key people dealing with the “A Way Forward” issue.

I received a letter from Mrs. Marvel Johnson, married to a past Vice President of Concerned Methodists, the late Dr. Calvin Johnson. In it she writes,

“My love and prayers go out to you and all those United Methodists who are fighting for the restoration of the UMC to her scriptural roots. Calvin’s predictions of what would happen to the UMC if she did not turn from the way she was headed seems about to come true.

I pray that the ‘ship has not gone beyond the point of no return’.”

Her concluding words were a reference to the title of Dr. Johnson’s book. We are gratified by her words, prayers – and continuing concern.

In His service,
Allen O. Morris,
Executive Director

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January 2019 Update

Bits and Pieces from across the United Methodist Church

Love grows and multiplies when we divide it with others.

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The Good Stuff.

+ With the start of the new year, it is only appropriate that we share these bits of insight with you:

1. Today, I interviewed my grandmother for part of a research paper I'm working on for my Psychology class. When I asked her to define success in her own words, she said, "Success is when you look back at your life and the memories make you smile."
2. Today, I asked my mentor – a very successful business man in his 70s – what his top 3 tips are for success. He smiled and said, "Read something no one else is reading, think something no one else is thinking, and do something no one else is doing."
3. Today, after a 72 hour shift at the fire station, a woman ran up to me at the grocery store and gave me a hug. When I tensed up, she realized I didn't recognize her. She let go with tears of joy in her eyes and the most sincere smile and said, "On 9-11-2001, you carried me out of the World Trade Center."
4. Today, after I watched my dog get run over by a car, I sat on the side of the road holding him and crying. And just before he died, he licked the tears off my face.
5. Today at 7AM, I woke up feeling ill, but decided I needed the money, so I went into work. At 3PM I got laid off. On my drive home I got a flat tire. When I went into the trunk for the spare, it was flat too. A man in a BMW pulled over, gave me a ride, we chatted, and then he offered me a job. I start tomorrow.
6. Today, as my father, three brothers, and two sisters stood around my mother's hospital bed, my mother uttered her last coherent words before she died. She simply said, "I feel so loved right now. We should have gotten together like this more often."
7. Today, I kissed my dad on the forehead as he passed away in a small hospital bed. About 5 seconds after he passed, I realized it was the first time I had given him a kiss since I was a little boy.
8. Today, in the cutest voice, my 8-year-old daughter asked me to start recycling. I chuckled and asked, "Why?" She replied, "So you can help me save the planet." I chuckled again and asked, "And why do you want to save the planet?" "Because that's where I keep all my stuff," she said.
9. Today, when I witnessed a 27-year-old breast cancer patient laughing hysterically at her 2-year-old daughter's antics, I suddenly realized that I need to stop complaining about my life and start celebrating it again.
10. Today, a boy in a wheelchair saw me desperately struggling on crutches with my broken leg and offered to carry my backpack and books for me. He helped me all the way across campus to my class and as he was leaving he said, "I hope you feel better soon."
11. Today, I was feeling down because the results of a biopsy came back malignant. When I got home, I opened an e-mail that said, "Thinking of you today. If you need me, I'm a phone call away." It was from a high school friend I hadn't seen in 10 years.
12. Today, I was traveling in Kenya and I met a refugee from Zimbabwe. He said he hadn't eaten anything in over 3 days and looked extremely skinny and unhealthy. Then my friend offered him the rest of the sandwich he was eating. The first thing the man said was, "We can share it."

+ ***Persecuted pastor.*** Andrew Brunson is a 50-year-old pastor from Black Mountain, North Carolina, where he grew up. He has been imprisoned in Turkey since 2016 after being falsely accused, and on Wednesday a Turkish court denied the request for his release. That is not good news. I'm thankful to President Donald J. Trump for speaking up in Pastor Brunson's defense. He said, "He has done nothing wrong, and his family needs him!" I completely agree. Please join me in lifting up Pastor Brunson in prayer, that God would protect him and continue to give him boldness in the face of persecution. – As posted by a concerned friend on July 21, 2018. [Note: As of July 25, 2018 he was out

of prison and was under “house arrest” at home. He has subsequently been released and has returned to America. ~ AOM]

+ **Donor match!** Lt. Steven Tenney read on Facebook about a 4-month-old baby girl named Sloan St. James who had stage 4 liver failure and urgently needed a new liver. Lt. Tenney had never had a surgery and hadn’t even been to the doctor in nearly 10 years, but he signed up to be tested and was a donor match! Many people had been praying and God answered! Lt. Tenney stepped up – he sacrificed to help someone else. I think that’s great. The Bible says, “Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.” ~ As posted by Franklin Graham.

+ **Sgt Major Saman Kunan**, a Thai ex-SEAL died when he ran out of oxygen while returning from delivering oxygen tanks to the boys trapped in the cave [in northern Thailand]. He retired from the Thai Navy and volunteered to help. Service knows no bounds of nationality, language, or skin color. People want to help people. Thank you for your service and sacrifice to give these boys a chance. I pray it is not in vain. Saman Kunan – a real hero. All 12 boys and their coach have been successfully rescued from the cave [after the coach went into the cave looking for the boys.]

[Note: This information is several months old but needed to be included to recognize Kunan. – AOM] ~ July 18, 2018.

Of Interest.

+ **Avoid Target: Do your back-to-school shopping elsewhere.**

[Note: We know too much about this problem to not act. Think about your wife or daughter going into a restroom and having a biological man in the stall next to her. There have been cases of assault and “peeping Toms” reported. – AOM]

“Dear Allen,

I’m asking your family to avoid shopping at Target stores...and to warn your friends about the danger Target presents to women and children. Together we are making an unprecedented financial impact on a corporation whose policy is to allow men to use women’s restrooms and dressing rooms. Target’s decision is unacceptable for families, and their dangerous and misguided policy continues to put women and children in harm’s way. We must keep pressure on Target by avoiding their stores during...shopping. Let’s educate Target to the fact that their bathroom policy [are not good.]

Take Action: Target is dependent on a large back-to-school sales season. By spending your money with their competitors, you are sending a strong message to Target that their policy is bad for business.

If you haven’t already, sign the #BoycottTarget pledge. Invite your family and friends to sign the pledge too. Forward this information to friends and family. Invite them to sign the boycott pledge at www.afa.net/target. Call Target headquarters at 612-304-6073 and personally let them know you are boycotting their stores.

Visit www.afa.net/target for more tools and information on the Boycott Target pledge.

Avoid Target: Do your back-to-school shopping elsewhere.”

Tim Wildmon, President, American Family Association
P.O. Drawer 2440 | Tupelo, MS 38803

+ **Gun used to protect wife.** [Note: These three items are offered as information on “2nd Amendment” issues. – AOM] A Texas husband shot a home invasion suspect when the would-be robber and home-invader held his wife at gunpoint.

+ **Dallas Mother Stops Alleged Carjacker...** A recent story out of Dallas showcases a few almost-absolutes: Most criminals are repeat offenders, and most don’t care at all about who they hurt trying to get what they want.

Most moms will do absolutely anything and everything to protect their children.

Good almost always prevails over evil.

Guns in the hands of the right people can help save lives.

Here's what happened: According to CNN [and other news sources], a Texas mother, Michelle Booker, “stopped at [a] gas station’s convenience store on her way to a Fourth of July family gathering. When she came out, she saw a man driving away in her SUV. Booker’s two small children were inside the car.”

That’s when the woman sprang into action – literally. Police indicated that “Booker jumped in the car and told the suspected carjacker to pull over and get out. When he didn’t stop the vehicle, Booker pulled a gun from her glove compartment and shot him once in the head,” as reported in CNN. She told authorities: “I’m not a killer or anything like that, but I do believe in, you know, defending what’s mine.” The suspect, identified as Rickey Wright, had previously “been arrested more than 20 times on a variety of charges – including unauthorized use of a vehicle, possession of marijuana, evading arrest, assault and theft,” according to CBS out of Dallas-Ft. Worth. Wright was arrested and taken to the hospital for treatment. He faces charges of kidnapping and the unauthorized use of a motor vehicle or carjacking.

That same [news source] reported that “police questioned the woman at the scene and then told her she was free to go. Neither she nor her two children – ages 2 and 4 – were hurt during the shooting or crash.”

Thank goodness. But as lucky as this mother was, she didn’t do everything right. She left her two young children alone in the car when she went into the gas station. And although reports don’t indicate whether or not she left the door to her vehicle unlocked and/or the keys inside, the man apparently got into the SUV without much trouble. Still, the important thing is that Booker managed to defend herself and her children successfully.

Just to reiterate: Guns in the hands of the right people can help save lives. Booker was indeed the right person here, and lives were indeed likely saved. Be aware, be alert and fight with everything you have if your life and the lives of those you love depend on it. Take care and stay safe,

~ By Tim Schmidt, USCCA founder.

+ ***Armed Man stops mass shooting.***

Birmingham, AL – An armed citizen stopped a mass shooting at a Birmingham McDonald’s restaurant. The incident occurred at about 10:45 p.m. on Oct. 27 (2018), just as the McDonald’s on Lomb Avenue was closing for the night, although a number of customers remained in the restaurant, AL.com reported. The armed man was there with his kids.

~ October 19, 2018.

A Way Forward.

+ ***Bishop Scott Jones on the UMC’s Way Forward.*** In a series of brief videos, Bishop Scott Jones of the Texas Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church explains the situation the denomination finds itself in, clarifies the essentials of the different main plans [which we in Concerned Methodists have discussed] that will come before the February 2019 General Conference, and gives his opinion on how they will affect the church. We at IRD/UMAction are very grateful for Bishop Jones’s leadership and clear, succinct summaries of the decisions now facing the denomination.

Decisive Turn: Bishop Scott Jones says come February at the special General Conference, the UMC will arrive at a fork in the road, and the adoption of the One Church Plan chooses a path that represents a long-term, and likely permanent “decisive turn” that clearly leads to the destination of “prohibitions against all forms of discrimination” against LGBTQ practices and lifestyles, which “will eventually require clergy and congregations to conform to this new standard” throughout the UMC. He explains that adopting the One Church Plan “will not end the conflicts of the last four decades, but move them to local churches and annual conferences.” The main other road would amount to maintaining the basic outlines of “our current compromise” as a denomination, in which LGBT persons are welcomed into membership and participation in ministry, but we have rules requiring clergy to keep parts of their behavior within the boundaries of traditional Christian sexual morality.

Traditional Plan: Bishop Jones says real community that works together requires accountability to agreed-upon rules and common trust in the Discipline. The Traditional Plan, though imperfect, offers a solution to keep all United Methodist leaders, bishops included, accountable to the church’s standards.

Connectional Conference: In this video, Bishop Jones explains how the UMC’s system of connectionalism has protected jurisdictions from interference as they have gone in different directions on human sexuality. The

Connectional Conference Plan envisions a new form of unity with three branches, each with their own approach to the issue, but there is currently very little energy and support behind this plan.

[Note: As we have stated before, we unapologetically support the Traditional Plan. – AOM]

~ By Dan Moran, video report; November 28, 2018.

+ ***Bishop Lowry Inspires 2018 WCA Global Gathering.*** Bishop Mike Lowry, resident bishop of the Central Texas Conference of The United Methodist Church, delivered the opening keynote address for the Wesleyan Covenant Association's 2018 Global Gathering held at Mt. Bethel United Methodist Church in Marietta, Georgia. He set the tone for the Gathering's "Unashamed" theme. He based his message on Romans 1:16: "I am not ashamed of the Gospel. It is God's own power for salvation to all who have faith in God, to the Jew first and also to the Greek." "We gather this day at the city gate – at the intersection of Christ and culture," Lowry proclaimed. "We are unashamed of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Don't be ashamed of the testimony about the Lord or of us his prisoners. Instead share the suffering for the Good News depending together on God's power." Bishop Lowry observed, "The days of casual Christianity are over. . . . The appropriate response to our confession [of Jesus as Savior and Lord] is not abject surrender to the hedonistically saturated civil society we live in, but rather to be transformers of culture." "We have steadily sacrificed a Wesleyan commitment to sanctification for purposes of cultural acceptance and the result has been that we've been steadily marginalized by that same culture," Lowry feared. He asked, "Is it not past time to declare that the day of cultural accommodation is over?"

Bishop Lowry challenged the more than 2,500 present at Mt. Bethel and 105 simulcast sites to stand for Christ "out of a deeper love and a higher loyalty, instead of leaning casually on the stone pillars of fuzzy indifference disguised as tolerance."

Abortion, Assisted Suicide, Euthanasia & Other Life Issues.

+ A story of three babies.

Baby #1. "UK court: Charlie Gard must be removed from life support" the headlines read a few months back. He was despite the fact that offers were made to fly him to America and the Vatican in Rome, Italy for medical help. Instead, the government posted guards to ensure that he would not be removed from the hospital. He remained. He died there.

Baby #2. "Alfie Evans" – ditto. Alfie is just the latest victim in Europe's culture of death.

Baby #3. "Baby Oliver saved in U.S. after United Kingdom [UK] doctors said his heart couldn't be fixed" the headlines read a bit later. Most parents would readily cross oceans to save their child's life, with no thought as to the cost or distance. But for some children in the UK, like Alfie Evans and Charlie Gard, that simply wasn't an option they were given. Oliver Cameron is one of the fortunate ones, though, and thanks to the tireless efforts of his parents and doctors at Boston Children's Hospital, Oliver is alive and thriving today. When Oliver was born in the United Kingdom, he had a large, non-cancerous tumor in his heart, called a cardiac fibroma. It was so rare that doctors in the UK weren't able to treat it. Only a handful had even seen it. "They couldn't treat the tumor in the U.K. because they didn't have any doctors with the right expertise," his mother, Lydia, said. "They said our only option was a heart transplant, but we thought there must be another route, so we started doing our own research."

Their research led them to Boston Children's Hospital, where another little girl, Francesca, had successfully had her large cardiac tumor removed. Her story was posted on the Boston Children's Hospital Facebook page the day after Oliver was born, which Lydia took as a sign. So she reached out to Francesca's doctors, Dr. Pedro del Nido and Dr. Tal Geva, and sent Oliver's records to them. They responded that he would be a good candidate for the surgery – even though the National Health Service (NHS) [in the UK] doctors were insistent that Oliver's tumor could not be removed. But the difficulties of getting Oliver treatment weren't over yet; the Cameron family now had to find a way to pay for it.

At first, the NHS refused to pay. "Oliver's cardiologist spent hours of his own time trying to get Oliver to Boston – he kept applying and reapplying for the NHS to cover the surgery in the U.S., but with no luck," Lydia said. "So, we started our own fundraising campaign, because we had no other way to get him there." But after they successfully raised most of the money, they got good news: not only would the NHS pay for the surgery, they would also send two cardiologists and a cardiac surgeon to learn from the doctors at Boston Children's.

In November of 2017, Oliver underwent the eight-hour surgery, which went better than expected. “Dr. del Nido warned us...they may not be able to remove the entire tumor because it was so large, but that he would remove as much as possible,” Lydia explained. “So when they told us he had removed all of it, we were so happy we just burst into tears.”

The tumor ended up being one of the largest the doctors had ever seen. After the surgery, Oliver continued to stun doctors by making a rapid recovery, and was able to return home by Christmas. “This experience has shown us how much good there is in the world,” Lydia said. “So many people supported us along the way, from near and far. And without Dr. Geva and Dr. del Nido, we would have lost Oliver. Miracles do happen – and we are grateful to be celebrating ours.”

The Camerons were exceedingly fortunate that they were able to [take] Oliver to the United States to receive treatment. It’s a blessing not given to everyone, denied most notably to toddlers Charlie Gard and Alfie Evans. The parents of both boys were told that treatment was futile and that they should just be allowed to die; when the parents raised money to seek treatment outside of the United Kingdom, hospitals and courts refused to allow it, and forced both boys to be removed from life support. In Oliver’s case, had his parents not fought for him to go to the United States for treatment, he would have needed to wait for a heart transplant – and as infant heart transplants are exceedingly rare, there is a good possibility he would have died waiting. It stands to reason that parents should have the right to seek medical care outside of the United Kingdom for their children, even if the NHS thinks treatment will fail or is futile.

Member of Parliament (MP) Steve Woolfe introduced a bill he called “Alfie’s Law,” which would restore parental rights to prevent injustices like those suffered by Charlie Gard and Alfie Evans from happening again. “The cases of Charlie Gard, Aysha King, and now Alfie Evans, show a dangerous trend of public bodies depriving parents and families of the right to make decisions they believe are in the best interests of their children,” Woolfe said during a press conference. “Parents’ rights should neither be ignored nor dismissed as irrelevant by hospitals and courts, who believe they know best and have the power, money and resources to overwhelm families who simply want to save their child.”

~ By Cassy Fiano-Chesser, as reported by Live Action News; July 15, 2018.

+ ***UM Voices: From an Evangelical United Methodist Student Leader at Liberty University.*** As a faithful member of the United Methodist Church (UMC) and a junior at Liberty University, I’ve noticed some confused faces when introducing myself on and off campus. But let me throw another curve ball at you: I am also the president of the university’s pro-life student club. It’s interesting how of the 15,000 residential students at Liberty, it is a United Methodist who has stepped up to lead the pro-life movement on campus. Despite our church’s shameful past in being complacent or downright supportive of abortion rights, my role in the pro-life movement is not an anomaly in the UMC. In recent years, the UMC has made significant strides in upholding biblical teachings regarding the sanctity of life, and I for one am grateful. This is not an isolated event inside our denomination. In fact, our denomination is becoming increasingly evangelical and I believe we have a bright future on the horizon. Thank God!

The evangelical United Methodist movement is the entire reason a special General Conference has been called. With increasing majorities, the UMC continues to affirm the Bible’s teachings on human sexuality. When the liberal element of our denomination finally realized this was a growing trend, they called for a special conference in a Hail Mary pass to allow some level of acceptance of practicing homosexuality.

Ideally, I would suspend the trust clause for any church who votes with a two-thirds majority that homosexuality is morally permissible. This group, in my opinion, is welcome to depart and take most of the seminaries with them. Church splits are messy. But why continue to associate ourselves with ministries that seem to have so little regard for the basic authority of Scripture?

A Methodist movement centered in Biblical truth and personal holiness will be a force to be reckoned with.

On a side note, young people often look at human sexuality differently than previous generations. Many young Christians I know would be upset if their church compromised their teachings on human sexuality. But at the same time, these young Christians will publically advocate for political rights – including marriage and cultural acceptance —on behalf of LGBTQ persons. While I am opposed to efforts to normalize and celebrate homosexuality within the

church as well as within the wider society, I see this view becoming more prevalent. Another fact about me that you should know is that I was born and raised forty minutes outside of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Much of Western Pennsylvania communities have a declining population. Obviously, this creates some barriers for church growth. I believe one of the major issues the United Methodist Church must face is that our denomination is strongest in areas of the country where populations are declining. Here is what I mean. In Western Pennsylvania, the UMC is by far the largest Protestant denomination. The UMC is a global denomination and the second-largest Protestant denomination in the United States. Meanwhile at Liberty University, many young people have asked me, “What is a Methodist?” Some have never even heard of Methodism before they met me. As our laity and clergy continue to age, I worry that this trend of ignorance about the UMC will continue among younger generations from more urban areas. However, I’d argue this trend can offer two unique opportunities.

Firstly, it gives us an opportunity to evangelize and share our soul-saving faith with individuals who might be skeptical of trendy or prosperity-oriented distortions of Christianity. We can and should focus more energy into church planting in growing urban communities, while remaining faithful to our churches in communities that are declining.

Secondly, it gives us a clean slate with those unfamiliar with our denomination’s inner bickering and public heresies. We have the opportunity to display a faithful Christian witness and share the uncompromised Gospel on behalf of our denomination, giving all glory to God. One notable trend among young people is that they are not fond of traditional labels. Political and religious labels are especially becoming less prevalent, which is why many young Christians at Liberty gravitate towards nondenominational churches. Many of my fellow students describe themselves as nondenominational Christians, even if they attend Baptist, Nazarene, or other churches.

I’m not suggesting that we dilute our tradition Christian beliefs or change our polity to appeal to broader culture. What I am suggesting is that we have an opportunity to overcome past barriers. For example, Methodists have the opportunity to become a more diverse body in the United States. It is 2018 and yet Sunday at 11 o’clock seems to be the most segregated hour of the week. It’s my hope that young people will transcend racial barriers to the point that there will no longer be denominations that are 90 percent white or black. Perhaps in coming years the African Methodist Episcopal Church (AME) and the UMC could merge. Maybe the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church (AMEZ) and the Free Methodists will join us. Perhaps we could form one giant body of Methodism, not defined by our race, but by Christ. If young people continue to be allergic to labels, this type of unification is possible. The future of the evangelical United Methodist movement is a bright one with exciting potential. Imagine United Methodists spearheading the pro-life movement alongside our Catholic brothers and sisters, for example. I believe this is absolutely possible. Even as many conferences face issues related to emigration, there is potential for growth. What it comes down to is faithful United Methodists ensuring the choices their denomination makes are ultimately honoring to God, not culture.

One Response to UM Voices: From an Evangelical United Methodist Student Leader at Liberty University – Scott says:

“Kyle, thank you for this encouraging message of hope, especially among our younger generations. I would like to challenge you on one point. You state that church growth is hard in PA where the population is declining. I have pastored churches in areas that are in decline and impoverished. However a survey of the number of church members in my area, best described as the buckle of the Bible Belt, shows that the majority of people are not functioning Christians and I can bet that the same is true in your hometown. Never worry about how many people are not there, worry about the ones that are (and I am sure there are plenty) there and don’t know Jesus. Thanks for being so encouraging and I look forward to meeting you some day in our Fathers house!

~ Kyle Eisenhuth, a current Liberty University student. UM Voices is a forum for different voices within the United Methodist Church (UMC) on pressing issues of denominational concern. UM Voices contributors represent only themselves and not IRD/UMAction. As published by The Institute on Religion & Democracy, 1023 15th Street NW, Suite 601, Washington, DC 20005; February 23, 2018

+ A pathologist was traumatized after seeing a 3-pound aborted baby with an expression of “horror” on his face.

[Note: This is an ugly statement but we must face up to this reality. We in Concerned Methodists are “proudly pro-life” and often exhibit at the National Right to Life Conference. In my talks and interactions with people I have – not often but on needed occasions – pulled out a picture that I carry with me; it is of the product of a “D & C” abortion. One time when I was speaking at Christ United Methodist Church in Memphis, I used it to show a man in the audience who kept repeating, “It’s a woman’s right to choose” like a broken record. I wanted him to see what we were discussing. Abortion is the killing of unborn children, the most innocent of God’s creations – and deeply offensive to Him. – AOM]

Homosexuality. The last two pages of this Update contain the chapter “The Homosexual Activists’ War against Christianity” extracted from the book *On the Brink*.

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The fight for the right to life is not the cause of a special few, but the cause of every man, woman and child who cares not only about his or her own family, but the whole family of man. ~ Dr. Mildred Jefferson, past President, National RTL

Global Outlook

It is not a problem when you have money; it is a problem when money has you.

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Israel.

+ ***Attack on Israel***. “Over 200 rockets hit southern Israel in the past 24 hours. One hit a synagogue, others hit cars, homes, and other locations. People are wounded. Pray, my friends. This is not good.” ~ Yael Eckstein, July 14, 2018.

+ ***UN’s Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People***. Anne Bayefsky, Director of the Touro Institute on Human Rights and the Holocaust and President of Human Rights Voices, witnessed the event. “I have been watching the UN’s so-called Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People for decades and this was an especially obscene UN moment that reveals the true nature of the anti-Israel and anti-Jewish animus of the modern United Nations.” “CNN commentator and Temple University professor Marc Lamont Hill’s call at the United Nations for the destruction of the Jewish state was not some accident. He didn’t misspeak. He was an invited guest. He was the only person invited to speak as ‘the’ representative of ‘civil society.’ When he ended his extraordinary tirade with ‘Give us a free Palestine from the river to the sea’ his words were met by a round of applause. The only applause for any speaker,” she observed. “The host and Chair of the ‘UN Committee for the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People,’ Senegalese Ambassador Cheikh Niang, thanked him profusely for his ‘elegant words’ & ‘hailed civil society organizations.’ There are no excuses for democratic nations to tolerate, to support and to finance a world organization that has profoundly corrupted its spirit and purpose.” [Note: An analysis of his words does mean the elimination of Israel. It must be noted that the land he cited was given to the Jews by God as stated in the Old Testament. In Middle East actions, Israel is the one that is attacked on a regular basis. – AOM]

~ *Human Rights Voices*, November 28, 2018

Pakistan. ***Asia Bibi***. Three Supreme Court justices filed into an Islamabad courtroom. They were ready to announce their verdict against Asia Bibi, a Christian woman accused of blasphemy in 2009 and sentenced to death. She’d spent 9 and a half years in prison, and the justices were about to rule on her final appeal. Outside, tensions were high. Muslim extremists had threatened to take justice into their own hands and to riot. Within a minute, Chief Justice Mian Saqib Nisar announced the verdict: her appeal was accepted, Asia Bibi was acquitted and she should be freed immediately. Pandemonium ensued. The justices rapidly left the room, and Pakistani security forces rushed in to control the situation.

Protests erupted throughout Pakistan. Muslim radicals blocked traffic. Cellular services and social media networks were affected. According to a VOM worker, reports say radicals plan to take action early Friday morning after the first prayers of the day. Reached by phone in her cell, Asia Bibi told AFP, “I can’t believe what I am hearing, will I

go out now? Will they let me out, really?” Her husband, Ashiq Masih told them, “My wife spent so many years in jail and we hope that we will soon be together in a peaceful place.”

Meanwhile, protests continue. Please continue to pray for Asia Bibi and her family, as well as all Christians in Pakistan who may suffer as a result of the verdict. Thank God the justices did what is right.

~ Voice of the Martyrs report; November 2, 2018.

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In a time of universal deceit telling the truth is a revolutionary act. ~ George Orwell

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Homosexual Activists’ War against Christianity

“The first order of business is desensitization of the American public concerning gays and gay rights. To desensitize the public is to help it view homosexuality with indifference instead of with keen emotion.”¹ – Marshall K. Kirk & Erastes Pill, “The Overhauling of Straight America”

Some may say that things of this nature could not possibly happen. The Christian church has been the main force standing for traditional morality and against alternative interpretations of sexual norms. If we as a denomination become supportive of homosexual practice, who will remain to stand for traditional values? Look at what is already happening in Canada and in some European countries.

The Church Seen as the Main Obstacle Hindering Wholesale Acceptance of the Homosexual Agenda

“All churches who condemn us will be closed.” That was what Michael Swift, a “gay revolutionary,” declared in a February 1987 issue of the *Gay Community News*. “Michael Swift” was a pseudonym, and the first line of the now-infamous homosexual rant -- which was even reprinted in the *Congressional Record* -- claimed that the entire piece was a “cruel fantasy” that explained “how the oppressed desperately dream of being the oppressor.” The “dream” was filled with a nightmare scenario that seemed like something out of a fascist coup d’etat: “All laws banning homosexual activity will be revoked We shall make films about the love between heroic men....The family unit-- spawning ground of lies, betrayals, mediocrity, hypocrisy and violence -- will be abolished All churches who condemn us will be closed.”

As the article found its way into Christian publications, believers were horrified, and homosexual activists tried to make light of its contents, claiming that it was intended merely as a satire. Not many Christians, however, saw the humor in Swift’s sentiments, such as the following: “We shall sodomize your sons We shall seduce them in your schools, in your dormitories, in your gymnasiums, in your locker rooms, in your sports arenas, in your seminaries, in your youth groups, in your movie theater bathrooms, in your army bunkhouses, in your truck stops, in your all-male clubs, in your houses of Congress, wherever men are with men together.”

Identifying the Opponent

Whether or not the ravings of this “gay revolutionary” were intended as satire, what is striking is the remarkable success of the plan found within the article. Who can doubt that the legal system -- especially following the U.S. Supreme Court’s ruling in *Lawrence v. Texas* (2003) striking down sodomy laws -- has been brought to heel by gay activists? Or that Hollywood has freely committed its tremendous resources to the fight for homosexual legitimacy? Or that the family unit will virtually cease to exist in any traditional sense should gay adoption and same-sex “marriage” become legal everywhere?

While they claim to want only equal protection under law, the real agenda of homosexual activists is simple: the complete alteration of American society to fit the homosexual view of human sexuality, marriage and family. This is not an over-exaggeration. Paula Ettelbrick is a former legal director of the Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund and now executive director of the International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission. Ettelbrick stated, “Being queer is more than setting up house, sleeping with a person of the same gender, and seeking state approval for doing so Being queer means pushing the parameters of sex, sexuality, and family, and in the process, transforming the every fabric of society.... We must keep our eyes on the goal... of radically reordering society’s views of reality.”

That is a pretty comprehensive goal, and activists face a daunting task if they hope to accomplish it. They must change the views of a culture that still remains somewhat anchored in the Judeo-Christian tradition, which considers homosexuality unnatural and sinful. For Ettelbrick and her ilk to convince the American people to change their mind on this issue, the foundation of our culture must be shifted to a new way of perceiving reality that rejects the Judeo-Christian view.

However, that leaves one major institution standing in the way: the Church. Christians who still hold to the Judeo-Christian views of human sexuality, marriage and family are called by religious faithfulness to resist the homosexual movement. That makes Christians the enemy. In 1987 Steve Warren, a spokesman for the controversial homosexual group ACT UP, wrote an article for *The Advocate*, a magazine for the gay community. Titled "Warning to the Homophobes," Warren spoke of "the mean-spirited nature of Judeo-Christian morality." Even in 1987, Warren felt that the homosexual movement could not be stopped. And as activists continued to find success, he promised that "we are going to force you [i.e., Christians] to recant everything you have believed or said about sexuality."

Warren said the Bible, especially, would require a face-lift. "Finally, we will in all likelihood want to expunge a number of passages from your Scriptures and rewrite others," he said, "eliminating preferential treatment of marriage and using words that will allow for homosexual interpretations of passages."

Battle Tactics

So a homosexual utopia awaits these activists, if only they can deal with those pesky Christians. But if removing the obstacle of the Church is the strategy, what are the tactics through which this victory might be achieved? That question was answered as far back as 1985, when in their article for *Christopher Street*, a gay magazine, Marshall Kirk and Hunter Madsen caused a sensation with their blueprint to "persuade straight America" to accept homosexuality. Their article was expanded into a book on the subject, the national number-one best seller *After the Ball: How America Will Conquer Its Fear and Hatred of Gays in the '90s*.²

Kirk and Madsen focused the heart of their strategy on using the media as a propaganda tool in persuading the majority of Americans that gay is OK. But they also addressed the question of what to do with the hardened opposition -- that is, at least in institutional terms, those following the "religious authority" of the Church. Gay activists, the authors said, should take a two-pronged approach to neutralizing the threat of a vigorous Christian-led opposition. First, to "confound" what Kirk and Madsen called "the homophobia of true believers," they suggested that gays "muddy the moral waters." This would be accomplished in part by "publicizing support for gays by more moderate churches" and "raising theological objections of our own about conservative interpretations of biblical teachings." This has been done with amazing success in mainline Protestant denominations, such as in the Episcopal Church USA, United Methodist Church, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and the Presbyterian Church USA. Homosexual activists in each of these major denominations have so clouded the issues regarding the biblical view of homosexuality as to threaten each with schism and ruin.

For those churches which resist the siren call to complete moral relativism, Kirk and Madsen submitted a secondary strategy. They suggested that gays "undermine the moral authority of homophobic churches by portraying them as antiquated backwaters, badly out of step with the times" It should come as no surprise, therefore, when Christians see themselves portrayed on countless television shows as self-righteous bigots or hate-filled lunatics who simply refuse to accept the fact that things have changed in America.

Nevertheless, Kirk and Madsen knew that the religious authority of Christian denominations in the U.S. would be difficult to dispel; churches would therefore continue to act as a powerful braking mechanism on any momentum for the acceptance of the homosexual agenda. Kirk and Madsen understood, for example, that simply poking fun of "bigoted Southern ministers drooling with hysterical hatred" would not be enough. Instead, they said, "Against the mighty pull of institutional Religion one must set the mightier draw of Science and Public Opinion (the shield and sword of that accursed 'secular humanism'). Such an unholy alliance has worked well against churches before, on such topics as divorce and abortion."

Thus Christians involved in this theater of the culture war have become accustomed to defending the Judeo-Christian view on sexuality against claims that science has "proven" that homosexuality is genetic. The same is true

of the claim that all major mental health and medical professional groups have declared that being gay or lesbian is as natural as being left-handed. Such “scientific” claims have no doubt been instrumental in the dramatic shifts of American public opinion on this topic.

End Game

But beyond these tactics, Kirk and Madsen said plans must also be drawn up to deal with “the entrenched enemy,” which might persist in resisting even in the face of the preliminary schemes. They said: “At a later stage of the media campaign for gay rights -- long after other gay ads have become commonplace -- it will be time to get tough with remaining opponents. To be blunt, they must be vilified.” Again, astute Christians who are paying attention to what is happening in our culture can already see this occurring. On high school and college campuses, for example, believers who dare to speak up against the homosexual agenda are being ridiculed and smeared. In corporations where they work, some Christians who refuse to acquiesce to the reigning pro-gay environment are reprimanded or fired.

Nor does it require prophetic insight to understand that churches will not be immune from coercion, either. In fact, gay and lesbian activists at the 1986 National March on Washington for Lesbian and Gay Rights made this demand: “Institutions that discriminate against lesbian and gay people should be denied tax-exempt status.” Is it conceivable that in the near future, churches could be threatened with the loss of their tax-exempt status if they refuse to hire a homosexual employee? Some might scoff at such a threat, relying on the Constitutional protection of religion in the U.S. as a shield. But some homosexual activists seem to view religious liberty as an obstacle to be overcome. For example, lesbian lawyer Barbara Findlay predicted that “the legal struggle for queer rights will one day be a showdown between freedom of religion versus sexual orientation.” If sexual orientation is ever enshrined as a protected status in federal and state laws, which right will win that showdown? For the time being, activists can simply attempt to suppress religious free speech whenever the mood hits them. For example, when a church in Boston hosted a 2005 conference with a message that Jesus can free gays and lesbians from that lifestyle, they were harassed and terrorized by hundreds of homosexual activists and sympathizers outside -- while Boston police stood by and did nothing.

Finally, if activists ever achieve their goal of having sexual orientation included in federal hate crime statutes, many pro-family groups fear such a moment will be a beachhead on the way to criminalizing “anti-gay” speech and thought. In his article, Warren’s final warning should cause wise Christians to accurately discern the times in which we live: “We have captured the liberal establishment and the press. We have already beaten you on a number of battlefields. And we have the spirit of the age on our side. You have neither the faith nor the strength to fight us, so you might as well surrender now.”

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Thoughtful comments on this “war”! In addition to our historical perspective, we have in the current news about the many gains made both in public advocacy and with private companies who are encouraged or pressured to support their actions.

Why Is What They’re Pushing So Dangerous?

“You can forget trying to persuade the masses that homosexuality as a good thing. But if only you can get them to think that it is just another thing, with a shrug of their shoulders, then your battle for legal and social rights is virtually won.”

– “The Overhauling of Straight America”

Three Main Principles in activism by those pushing this agenda are:²

1. Normalization through desensitization.
2. Undermining parental moral authority.
3. Equating homosexuality with heterosexuality.

There are some in our church and in society who push these principles. They want to 1) normalize homosexuality and 2) to silence opposition to homosexual practice. They can do this by a process of intimidation by association – portray those who believe in orthodox morality as hating or repressing gays. If they can be compared to the Ku Klux

Klan or the American Nazis, they can neutralize their message. One example of this was when UM bishop Charlene Kammerer sent greetings to the “Hearts on Fire” conference that included words subtly comparing those who objected to homosexual practice with right wing groups.

Any campaign to accomplish the turnaround of public opinion to favor gays needs to:³

1. Talk about gays and gayness as loudly and as often as possible.
2. Portray gays as victims, not as aggressive challengers.
3. Give protectors a “just cause.”
4. Make gays look good.
5. Make the victimizers look bad (i.e. the “victimizers” can be depicted as even those who speak out against the practice on moral and/or spiritual grounds.).
6. Solicit funds.

The Pro-Gay Agenda in Schools³

“Talk about gays and gayness as loudly and as often as possible. “The principle behind this advice is simple: Almost any behavior begins to look normal if you are exposed to enough of it at close quarters and among your acquaintances.” – “The Overhauling of Straight America”

In this quote, “close quarters” can be interpreted to mean the classroom in which a person’s child is educated. “Among your acquaintances” can be interpreted to mean the classmates with whom a person’s child associates.

There is an aggressive campaign to capture the schools that educates our youth. Could this not also be what is happening in our United Methodist Church in the youth program? I think so.

This is important because:

1. This is a battle for the hearts and minds of kids. Remember that the principle of a person or group educating or brainwashing the children, means that their ideology will capture the future. This was recognized and used as a deliberate principle by radicals in Germany in the early 1930s. In addition those students who are going through a time in their lives of gender confusion might be drawn into this practice.
2. With public schools becoming bolder in promoting homosexuality, this provides a hostile environment for Christian students.
3. This activism provides a message of hopelessness for students struggling with unwanted same-sex attractions: “*You can’t change it – you must embrace it.*”

Tactics that are used in the educational system are:

1. Schools are flooded with literature, videos, testimonials advocating the pro-gay perspective in public education. Gay activists attempt to change policies to silence opposing or alternative viewpoints about homosexuality.
2. Teachers are coerced to teach things with which they disagree or know to be untrue. Teachers supportive of this practice may actively indoctrinate students about homosexuality.
3. Students are frequently on the forefront of attempting to effect change in their schools through the Day of Silence, student publications, and other public displays.

Homosexual Activist Strategies:⁴

1. The number 1 tactic is to try to equate “safety” with “acceptance.”
2. Volunteer to educate school officials about the need to pass non-discrimination policies in schools, train teachers to prevent anti-gay name calling and serve as community resources.
3. Activists encourage homosexual teachers to come out of the closet.
4. Activists strive to get as many Gay-Straight Alliances in as many schools as possible.

This is sobering information, but it should not surprise us. This is an area that we need to be much in prayer about.

Also we must not hesitate to “speak the truth in love” – but we must speak the truth.

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Source references: Ed Vitagliano, AgapePress; February 21, 2006. Also referenced in *Defending a Higher Law*, The American Society for the Defense of Tradition Family, and Property (TFP), p. 31 ff. Reprinted from the book *The Issues @ Hand* by Allen Morris. Permission granted.

1. Marshall K. Kirk and Erastes Pill, "The Overhauling of Straight America," Guide magazine, November 1987.
2. The Ministry study guide, p. 18.
3. Ibid.
4. The Ministry study guide, pp. 22, 23.