

Monthly Update

January 2020

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

2020. A new year. A new decade. During the Vietnam War when I was in Southeast Asia and looking ahead to the future, I thought, “2000. Will I even be alive then?” Now we are well past that calendar milestone and into this century. Who would have thought that we would be where we are today – as a country, as a people, as a denomination? We face serious challenges, not only in our United Methodist Church, but also in our country and the world. I know that the future of our country does not depend on what happens in our church, but I do believe that what we decide in our ranks will affect the welfare of the United States, for better or for ill. In the past, Methodist Circuit Riders contributed immeasurably to the civilizing of our country as the frontiers pushed westward; the Methodist Church became known as “America’s Church” since there were so many congregations scattered across this great land of ours. At one time, we had the largest missionary force deployed across the globe telling people about the priceless gift of salvation through trusting in Jesus Christ and teaching the Bible as God’s Word.

Then in the 1900s we got off track. We lost our zeal for telling people about Christ, reading the Bible, and evangelizing those who did not know Him as Savior.

What does the future hold for our United Methodist Church? I believe that we can become an even more powerful channel to reach people with the Good News of Jesus Christ, not only in our nation but also to countries overseas. Concerned Methodists serves as a catalyst for reform so that our church will recapture its heritage, build on it, and use the more efficient tools of communication available today. Indeed, we receive positive affirmation from, not only those in our country, but other parts of the world as well. One lady said, “If it had not been for Concerned Methodists, I would have left the church.” In a letter titled “My Thanks” a lady in Missouri wrote, “I am so concerned for our church and the direction many members and leaders want to take us. Saying that, I so appreciate your organization and the information you gather and send out. If not for your monthly letter I would not be informed or even hear of the actions being taken. Sadly, most of us in the pews are never informed of these actions, and the fight for our heritage. I just want to let you know how very much I look forward to the monthly letter. Please keep up the good work. Thanks and many prayers.” Then she included a donation check in her letter. Indeed, your contributions are the fuel that runs the operation of our ministry, whether through our Monthly Update, books, or publication of *The Christian Methodist Newsletter*. As of now, we are still a little over \$7,000 short of what we need to prepare for GC2020 in Minneapolis. Would you prayerfully consider as to how you might help us close this financial gap for the period between now and May 5th?

I thank you in advance for standing along side us with your gifts and in continuing to pray for us in this battle for our United Methodist Church.

In His service,

Allen O. Morris
Executive Director

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January 2020 Update

Bits and Pieces from across the United Methodist Church

The SON of GOD became man...
The Lord of ALL became a servant...
The Righteous One was made Sin...
The Eternal One tasted death...
The Risen One now lives in men...
The seated One is Coming again!!

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son (Jesus) that whosoever shall believe in Him shall Not perish but have everlasting life. Amen. John 3:16 ~ David Gunn

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The Good Stuff

+ ***Netanyahu sends Christmas greeting to Christians: 'We have no better friends'!***

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Tuesday (December 24th) extended Christmas greetings to Christians in Israel and around the globe celebrating the holiday. In a video released by his office on Christmas Eve, Netanyahu said:

“Merry Christmas to all our Christian friends in Israel and around the world.

“The State of Israel is the culmination of so many prophecies and our deepest held values. We share the common civilization, the Judeo-Christian civilization, that has given the world the values of freedom, individual liberty, the sanctity of life and the belief in one God. We are proud of our traditions. We are proud of our Christian friends.”

“The State of Israel would not have come into being if it weren't for the avid support of Christians in the 19th century, in the 20th century as well and in the 21st century,” Netanyahu continued. “We know that we have no better friends around the world than our Christian friends. So thank you. Thank you all for standing up with Israel, standing up for the truth. Merry Christmas.”

Some 177,000 Christians live in Israel, or roughly two percent of the population, according to figures released this week by the Central Bureau of Statistics. Christmas festivities are prominent in Jesus' childhood hometown of Nazareth in the northern Galilee region, where some 21,900 Christians live alongside an estimated 55,000 Muslim residents.

– By The Times of Israel's Daily Edition staff; Dec 26, 2019, 10:26 AM.

+ ***President Trump: The Cross of Jesus Christ Reminds Us of the True Meaning of Christmas.***

[Note: Regardless of our political views, it is interesting to know that he gave this witness to the birth of Christ.

– AOM]

Here are President Donald Trump's comments from the event held on The Ellipse, Washington, D.C. on December 5th:

“Thank you very much, Secretary Bernhardt....All across our land, Melania and I would like to wish you a very, very Merry Christmas. And now, the First Lady will do the honors of lighting the National Christmas Tree.

“So we'll count from five down to that very special number. Five, four, three, two, one!” (Applause.) “That's great.” (Music plays.) “That's beautiful. Thank you very much. And let us show our appreciation to the incredible workers at the Department of the Interior and the National Park Service, please. Did such an incredible job.” (Applause.) “Thank you very much. And thank you, as well, to the U.S. Marine Corps Band and the Tucson Arizona Boys Choir. You know that. The chorus is fantastic. And thank you very much, Tucson, Arizona. Thank you very much. I also want to thank a special group of young, wonderful people: West Tennessee Youth Chorus. They're here and they're doing beautifully.

“In 1923, President Calvin Coolidge lit the first National Christmas Tree. Later that night, African-American community centers held an outdoor worship service on these grounds. And during that service, the Washington Monument was illuminated with a beautiful cross, a powerful reminder of the meaning of Christmas.

“More than 2,000 years ago, a brilliant star shone in the East. Wise men traveled far, far afield. I mean, they were a long distance away. And they came and they stood with us under the star, where they found the Holy Family in Bethlehem. As the Bible tells us, when the Wise Men “had come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary, his mother, and fell down and worshipped him.” Christians give thanks that the Son of God came into the world to save humanity. Jesus Christ inspires us to love one another with hearts full of generosity and grace.

“Joining us today are David and Sharron Hudson of the Salvation Army. Each year, through their Angel Tree program, the Salvation Army brings new gifts to more than 600,000 children. David and Sharron are an inspiration to us all. And, David and Sharron, thank you very much for being with us. Thank you.” (Applause.)

“Also with us is Sarah Verardo, the wife of a wounded hero and the CEO of Independence Fund, which serves wounded warriors. During the holidays, Sarah gives high-tech wheelchairs to veterans and hosts Christmas celebrations for those in recovery. Does a fantastic job. And, Sarah, thank you very much. You’re uplifting our nation. Thank you very much. Thank you, Sarah.” (Applause.) “Thank you.”

“We’re forever in debt to the brave veterans and service members. We applaud their noble service. There is nobody like them. They are an inspiration to us all. We also salute our incredible police and sheriffs, federal law enforcement, Secret Service, as well as our firefighters, paramedics, and first responders. And thank you all for being here. We have a lot of you here. And again, very, very incredible, special people. Thank you very much for being here.” (Applause.)

“And here tonight is Pastor Obed Jauregui of Bethany Church in Nazarene, in Miami. His congregation serves Thanksgiving meals to families in need, and now they are preparing their annual toy drive. Pastor Obed, thank you very much. And we really do appreciate you being with us. You’re a special man who has done an incredible job. People are talking about you all over our country. What a great job you’ve done. Thank you very much, Pastor.” (Applause.)

“And at Christmas, we remember this eternal truth: Every person is a beloved child of God. As one grateful nation, we praise the joy of family, the blessings of freedom, and the miracle of Christmas.

“On behalf of Melania and our entire family, Merry Christmas and God bless you all. Thank you very much. Merry Christmas, everybody. Thank you.” (Applause.)

– Remarks by President Trump as he and first lady Melania Trump attended the National Christmas Tree lighting ceremony near the White House in Washington, Thursday, Dec. 5, 2019. As reported by CBN News; 12-05-2019.

Of Interest.

+ ***Target stores donating \$100,000 to promote gay lifestyle to school children.*** Target’s website has several pages dedicated to products that promote the LGBT lifestyle. According to LifeSiteNews, Target department stores are not only offering clothing and accessories celebrating the gay lifestyle to adults and children, but the company has also pledged to donate to a nonprofit that trains students and teachers in LGBT politics and advocacy. Target’s website has several pages dedicated to products that promote the LGBT lifestyle, many of which are specifically designed for children. For example, Target offers shirts that declare, “Love my dads,” and another says, “Love my moms.” Others shirts are emblazoned with the rainbow flag bearing the word “pride” superimposed. For adults, there are the “Pride Adult Gender Inclusive Iridescent Five Panel Hat,” “Pride Striped Bisexual Flag Bandana,” “Pride Striped Transgender Flag Bandana,” “Pride Adult Striped Gender Inclusive Jumpsuit,” and a number of other accessories and articles of clothing.

Target is also donating \$100,000 to the Gay, Lesbian Straight Education Network (GLSEN), an organization whose primary focus is on indoctrinating school-aged students into organizing “gay” clubs in public schools across the nation. GLSEN also offers lesson plans for elementary school children on “gender-neutral” pronouns and terminology as part of the Common Core curriculum as well as introducing gender ideology to 3rd-graders.

TAKE ACTION: Call Target head quarter sat 612-304-6073 (option 2) and let them know you are boycotting their stores.

– The American Family Association, P.O. Drawer 2440 Tupelo, Mississippi 38803.

+ **Target treats everyone equal; except women and children!** Target made its dressing rooms and bathrooms transgender. Now predators are taking advantage of the opportunity. For example, transgender “Shauna Patricia Smith” pretended to be a woman. His real name is Sean P. Smith and he took full advantage of Target’s flawed bathroom policy and videotaped a woman in one of the changing rooms. Now Target shoppers – especially girls and children – are at risk and unsafe because men have full access to women's bathrooms and dressing rooms.

Target’s website claims to have “inclusivity” at the core of its belief and celebrates equality and equity while striving to make its guests and team members feel accepted, respected and welcomed. Exactly how does one feel welcomed and respected with a “Peeping Tom” in the dressing room next to you!?

Target boasts that it wants everyone to be treated equally. But in reality Target’s new policy is not family-friendly. The truth is, absolute equality is absolutely unjust, and treating a man like a woman is a fantasy. Allowing men in the women’s dressing rooms and bathrooms is to discriminate against the right women have to modesty and privacy.

Common sense tells us that everyone has a right to privacy when changing clothes or using a bathroom. Target states “everyone deserves to feel like they belong. And you’ll always be accepted, respected and welcomed at Target.” What about respect for a woman’s right to modesty and privacy?

Pledge to boycott Target and take your business elsewhere. When Target brags about allowing men to enter a ladies dressing room or bathroom at will, where do you think sexual predators are going to go?

Here are just a few examples of what has made it into the courts; and these cases will only increase if further immoral policies and laws are implemented.

- Target policy: The attacks on children keep coming <https://afa.net/activism/action-alerts/2019/target-policy-the-attacks-on-children-keep-coming/>
- UNEXPECTED! Transgender Woman Takes Pictures of Actual Women in TARGET <http://www.dailywire.com/news/7423/uh-oh-transgender-woman-arrested-voyeurism-target-james-barrett>
- Purdue police investigate report of man taking photographs in women's restroom <https://news.uns.purdue.edu/x/2008/080331PoliceVPA.html>
- Sexual predator jailed after claiming to be ‘transgender’ to assault women in shelter <https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/sexual-predator-jailed-after-claiming-to-be-transgender-in-order-to-assault>
- Cross-Dressing Man Taped Women at Macy’s // ktla.com/2013/05/14/da-cross-dressing-man-secretly-videotaped-women-in-macys-bathroom/
- Seattle man undresses in women's locker room at local pool to test new transgender bathroom rule <http://www.nydailynews.com/news/national/wa-man-women-bathroom-test-transgender-ruling-article-1.2535150>

• Cross-dressing man sentenced for battery http://www.sptimes.com/News/92599/Pasco/Cross_dressing_man_se.shtml

• Cross-dresser arrested in bathhouse http://www.upi.com/Odd_News/2003/11/27/Cross-dresser-arrested-in-bathhouse/63871069941991/

– Gary J. Isbell, Tradition Family Property (TFP) PO Box 341, Hanover, PA 17331. Note: TFP is a Catholic lay ministry.

+ **Texas church votes to leave denomination.**

One of the Texas Conference’s largest churches has decided to leave The United Methodist Church. By a 96% margin, the congregation of Grace Fellowship United Methodist Church, in the Houston suburb of Katy, voted Dec. 15 to depart. The church plans to join the Indianapolis-based Free Methodist Church denomination. The change requires other actions and will likely take months to complete.

The Rev. Jim Leggett, Grace Fellowship's pastor, and Texas Conference Bishop Scott Jones said in separate interviews that they expect the conference to vote Aug. 15, 2020, on allowing the church to leave. "I am sorry that they are taking this step, and I have made my case why they should remain United Methodist," Jones said. "They believe this really is the best way they can be faithful to Christ. So we have a disagreement in discernment, and yet I am providing a graceful exit for them, given the disagreement."

Leggett said Grace Fellowship had a 40-day period of prayer and fasting before taking its vote at a special called church conference. "The reason for Grace Fellowship's vote to leave the UMC is our conviction that the Free Methodist Church better aligns with our beliefs, especially around the authority and truthfulness of Scripture," Leggett said. He added that church members wanted to remove themselves "from the dysfunctional fighting going on in The United Methodist Church so that we can fully devote our energies to fulfilling the mission and vision that God has given to us."

Grace Fellowship started in 1996 as a church plant of Houston's Chapelwood United Methodist Church. Since then, Grace Fellowship has grown to about 2,800 members, with an average of 3,000 people in worship. Jones called it a "vibrant, healthy, growing church."

The denomination Grace Fellowship seeks to join was formed in 1860 by B.T. Roberts and others who felt the Methodist Episcopal Church should more strongly oppose slavery and not allow pew rentals. These days, the Free Methodist Church emphasizes its commitment to following Scripture. While welcoming all to its churches, the Free Methodist Church holds that the Bible defines marriage as between a man and a woman. "The Free Methodist Church's beliefs on many issues was a factor in our decision, including their view that God deeply loves all LGBTQ persons and including (the Free Methodist Church's) definition of marriage," Leggett said.

The special called 2019 General Conference of The United Methodist Church underscored longstanding internal divisions over how accepting to be of homosexuality. Delegates approved by a 438-384 vote the Traditional Plan, which reinforced bans on same-sex marriage and ordination of "self-avowed practicing homosexuals." Resistance to that vote has been strong among United Methodists in the U.S. and western Europe, and some legislation introduced for the 2020 General Conference calls for a breakup or major restructuring of the denomination.

For a congregation to leave the United Methodist fold with property, it takes more than a simple vote. The United Methodist Church has a trust clause in its Book of Discipline, the church policy book. The clause, which dates to 1797, states that local church properties are held "in trust" for the denomination.

The 2019 General Conference approved adding to the Discipline a new paragraph, 2553, titled "Disaffiliation of Local Churches Over Issues Related to Human Sexuality." It sets forth conditions under which congregations can leave the denomination while keeping their property. But Leggett and Jones said Grace Fellowship is not seeking to leave under 2553. Instead, it's using paragraph 2548.2. That paragraph, Jones said, "has been in the Discipline a long time and it applies to churches that want to join another evangelical denomination. The Free Methodist Church surely meets that qualification." Under 2548.2, an annual conference can, if certain conditions are met, instruct a local church's trustees to deed church property to a denomination in the Pan-Methodist Commission or to "another evangelical denomination."

Jones said the Texas Conference will, at its annual meeting in May, consider policies and procedures for any church wanting to leave the denomination. He said he expects payment of pension liabilities and apportionments to be "part of the (departure) process." Grace Fellowship anticipates paying exit costs, Leggett said.

Jones said he has sent a "save the date" notice for a special called meeting of the conference on Aug. 15, 2020. That meeting's agenda would likely include the vote on Grace Fellowship. "If Grace still persists in their desire to leave, we will give final approval at that time," the bishop said.

– By Sam Hodges, UMNS; Dec. 19, 2019.

+ ***Church reserve funds under a microscope.*** The General Council on Finance and Administration board (GCFA) has formed a new Reserves Task Force to examine just how much general church funds should save for a rainy day. The GCFA has formed a new Reserves Task Force to examine just how much general church funds

should save for a rainy day. Just how much money should United Methodist ministries put aside for a metaphoric rainy day? What the group decides ultimately could affect future denominational budgets. “Our perspective coming into this work is that reserves are good, reserves are necessary, and that we have to be accountable and transparent around what we do,” Christine Dodson, the task force’s chair, told agency treasurers and fellow General Council on Finance and Administration board members at the board’s August meeting. Dodson is the board’s vice president as well as the North Carolina Conference’s treasurer and business manager. In both roles, she said, she often faces questions about either conference or agency reserves.

People see extra money on the balance sheet and wonder what’s up. According to 2016 audits, the denomination’s 10 general church agencies that rely on church giving for operations had a total of \$402.7 million in reserves. Of that amount, more than two-thirds – \$268.9 million – are restricted net assets (donors have directed how and when agencies can use the money such as disaster relief). The rest are unrestricted net assets, which includes what agencies need for continuing operations; also included is \$35.6 million in buildings and other fixed assets not readily convertible to cash.

While individuals receive advice to set aside 3 to 6 months’ living expenses, guidance for nonprofits is not as simple.

Ultimately, the task force will combine its work with the Budget Advisory Team – which includes members of GCFA board and Connectional Table and helps develop the denominational budget.

– By Heather Hahn, UMNS; Sept. 15, 2017 , as reported in the UM News Daily Digest, Nov 20, 2019.

A Way Forward/General Conference 2020 (GC2020).

+ ***Church future under negotiation before GC2020.*** A small group of United Methodist bishops and U.S. traditionalists, centrists and progressives met this week as part of negotiations about the denomination’s future. The Dec. 16-17 meeting in Washington was an outgrowth of discussions that Sierra Leone Bishop John K. Yambasu initiated in July to find consensus on any potential church separation ahead of the 2020 General Conference. Participants, who represent varied perspectives on LGBTQ inclusion, agreed to confidentiality while their delicate conversations proceed. Although they offered few details on the closed-door session, group members struck an optimistic note at the meeting’s conclusion.

“We have completed two days of additional meetings which have been very productive,” the group said in a joint statement. “We are hopeful and prayerful about the direction of these conversations.” Anything the group recommends will need the approval of General Conference, the denomination’s top lawmaking body.

However, the hope is that these meetings will help lead to a less rancorous gathering than the church experienced at the special General Conference in February. By about a 53% vote, the multinational delegates approved legislation that strengthens church prohibitions against same-sex weddings and “self-avowed practicing” gay clergy.

In the months since, some United Methodists have supported the outcome while others have launched plans to resist. Meanwhile, the drumbeat to divide the church along theological lines has only grown louder. Many of the participants were involved in the development of different plans for church separation heading to the 2020 General Conference. Specifically, group discussions have included backers of the New Denominations of United Methodism, better known as the Indianapolis Plan; and the Next Generation UMC, better known as the UMCNext Plan.

Yambasu is upbeat about the discussions. “Our mediation meeting concluded today in a very friendly and peaceful atmosphere,” he told UM News on Dec. 17.

– By Heather Hahn and Sam Hodges, United Methodist News Service (UMNS); Dec. 18, 2019.

+ ***As GC2020 nears, fewer keep to the sidelines.***

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (UM News) – United Methodists across the theological spectrum are taking public stands on the homosexuality debate and strategizing for the coming General Conference. As denominational leaders weigh whether or how to split, more church members are speaking out. Heather Hahn reports.

– As reported in UM News Weekly Digest; Dec 20, 2019.

+ *Living between the radical ends.*

HIGHLAND, Ill. (UM News) – The Rev. Beverly L. Wilkes-Null, directing pastor of Highland Hope United Methodist Church and a delegate to General Conference, said she is not seeking to endorse anyone's 2020 plan for The United Methodist Church. However, she does want to send out a clarion call to all centrists: “Now is the time to stand up, speak up and show up – prayed up and ready to do God’s work at General Conference 2020,” she writes.

– As reported in UM News Weekly Digest; Dec 20, 2019.

+**Resist Harm movement kicks-off to oppose the Traditional Plan.**

[Note: This is presented to show the types of things that those on the other side of this issue verbalize. In actuality, if we believe the Bible in that God views as sin “LGBTQ” practice – or any sexual activity outside of marriage between a man and a woman, then the most loving thing we could do is to help the practitioners understand the consequences of their actions. Note especially the extreme rhetoric that is used in demonizing The Traditional Plan. – AOM]

Resist Harm movement kicks-off, launches web tool for faithful resistance to the “anti-LGBTQ” Traditional Plan. United Methodist Church leaders have come together under the moniker Resist Harm to oppose the discriminatory Traditional Plan through prayer, education, direct action, clergy support, and more, and they are asking others to join them. “The church’s stance against LGBTQ people results in cruelty, discrimination, isolation and spiritual exile,” said Pat Luna, one of the leaders of Resist Harm. “We believe that the call of Christ to the Church is expressed in our baptismal vows to resist evil, injustice and oppression in whatever forms they present themselves, so we are taking a stand.”

The Resist Harm movement has three goals:

- To stand in solidarity against harmful and discriminatory UMC practices and language and in shared witness as a Church committed to justice for and in ministry with all persons.
- To raise the visibility of United Methodists who seek a church that affirms all ages, nations, races, classes, cultures, gender identities, sexual orientations and abilities.
- To support those directly experiencing harm because of the discriminatory and punitive provisions of the Traditional Plan.

The group has launched [a website] to support individuals, local groups and churches who also oppose the church’s anti-LGBTQ stance.groups within the United Methodist Church have signed on to support Resist Harm, including UMCNext, Reconciling Ministries Network, Methodist Federation for Social Action, Mainstream, Uniting Methodists, Western Methodist Justice Movement, UM Scholars, All Belong, Affirmation, and Love your Neighbor Coalition...

– Pat Luna, December 9, 2019; as reported in UM News Weekly Digest; Dec 13, 2019.

Abortion, Assisted Suicide, Euthanasia & Other Life Issues.

[Note: In our increasingly pro-death culture, it is important to know the steps to take in order to protect a loved one – or to instruct others if we find ourselves on the receiving end of this type of medical treatment. – AOM]

Lolita Hanks, R.N. is one of the most delightful people I have ever met. She is dedicated to the principles that affirm human beings as persons; these are the same principles that make supporters of the culture of death shudder. Lolita is a living example of what it means to take your confidence in the dignity of the human person into the public square where good can and does overcome evil. Recently she launched a new outreach to help people choose how they want themselves and their loved ones to be treated when facing serious illness or death. Describing herself as a consumer healthcare consultant, she sets forth a few points she believes will be of great benefit to families. Once you have reviewed them, you are certainly welcome to contact her for further information or if you have questions.

How to Prevent the Euthanasia of a Loved One in a Medical Setting:

1. Pray, pray and pray. Pray for wisdom and guidance in making medical decisions for your loved one.
2. Contact your pastor for spiritual support and your church family so they can also be praying.
3. Be there for your loved one, no matter how hard their condition and/or suffering is for you to experience. Seriously ill and/or dying people are often the most neglected and lonely people. Also, you want to be a presence at the facility to prevent any foul play by staff who may believe they have good intentions, but whose misguided intentions could have deadly consequences.
4. Ingratiate yourself with the staff; make them your allies with your kindness. Ask information about them. This will give you insight into their worldview/belief system. Be helpful in providing care for your loved one and learn how to provide care.
5. Ask a lot of questions.
6. Use the hospital library, which will have a computer, and also ask a librarian questions in order to learn more about medical terms, conditions and/or medications that you do not know about.
7. Keep detailed documentation by using a spiral notebook for each day.
8. DO NOT leave your loved one unattended for any time period, especially at night.
9. Have a log of questions ready when the doctor makes rounds; be aware that they show up whenever they want to.

– By Judie Brown; American Life League is grateful to Lolita for this checklist that we should all become familiar with. Lolita can be reached at her e-mail address: firstdonoharmllc@gmail.com

Homosexuality. *The LGBTQ Revolution Takes No Prisoners: Chick-fil-A.* But next, another headline that indicates

not only the direction of the culture: “Chick-fil-A To Stop Donations To Charities With Anti-LGBT Views.” The reporter, Cameron Sperance wrote, “As Chick-fil-A expands globally and into more liberal parts of the U.S., the chicken chain plans to change which charities it donates to after years of bad press and protests from the LGBT community. Beginning next year, Chick-fil-A will move away from its current philanthropic structure. After donating to more than 300 charitable organizations this year, the Atlanta-based fast food chain will instead focus on three initiatives with one accompanying charity each: education, homelessness and hunger.” [Note: The Salvation Army was effectively engaged in all three areas. – AOM]

Chick-fil-A President and Chief Operating Officer Tim Tassopoulos said in an interview with Bisnow, “There’s no question we know that, as we go into new markets, we need to be clear about who we are. There are lots of articles and newscasts about Chick-fil-A, and we thought we needed to be clear about our message.” Evidently, the clarity in this case meant establishing distance between Chick-fil-A and some of the particularly Christian-based ministries and organizations that the company supported by its charitable contributions in years before, including some this very year. The Bisnow report goes on, “The new initiative will no longer include donating to organizations like the Salvation Army, the Fellowship of Christian Athletes and the Paul Anderson Youth Home, Chick-fil-A says, all of which sparked criticism in the past from the LGBT community due to the organization’s stances on homosexuality.” The article goes on, “The move comes after several U.S. airports rejected the company from concessions deals earlier this year. More recently, the landlord of the first Chick-fil-A in the U.K. announced eight days into its lease the pop-up venue would not be welcome to extend – all because of the company’s perceived anti-LGBT stance.” Bisnow also says that Chick-fil-A is months away from opening its first location in Boston “where the late Mayor Thomas Menino pledged to ban the company from opening within city limits after Chick-fil-A CEO Dan Cathy voiced his opposition to gay marriage in 2012.”

So I mentioned that this news article indicates not only the direction of the culture, but how the culture is directed. The direction of the culture is now towards basically not only marginalizing, but publicly shaming, not only these Christian ministries, just consider the fact that we're talking about an organization such as the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, we're also talking about the Salvation Army. To state the obvious, those are not organizations that were established in order to hold a position on LGBTQ issues at all. But because they are

identified with historic Christianity, they have had to define their position on these issues, and that now puts them at the very center of the target. And the LGBT activist community and others, particularly, who are driving the moral direction of the culture, they put pressure on every single corporation, especially publicly traded corporations. They're now putting incredible pressure even on a business such as Chick-fil-A, or you might say, especially because of a company like Chick-fil-A.

Just consider the power of the precedent that was set in this announcement on Monday. Now, an organization, even a company like Chick-fil-A, can no longer make contributions to historic Christian ministries because that runs afoul of the absolutism of the cultural left, and in particular, of the LGBTQ movement. The moral revolution takes very few prisoners. It just eliminates the opposition.

Tim Tassopoulos, the COO of Chick-fil-A, also said, "When there is a tension, we want to make sure we're being clear. We think this is going to be helpful. It's just the right thing to do: to be clear, caring and supportive, and do it in the community." Now, at the very least, that kind of statement appears to be putting as much distance as possible between Chick-fil-A in the present and any support of Christian ministries in the past, particularly ministries that had related to and supported young people. It can certainly be argued that in corporate terms, Chick-fil-A had no choice, but that really is the point, it's the point we all need to observe. To be in business in the United States of America under the current prevailing conditions, means that we can expect this kind of announcement coming regularly, and if not in this form from this company, then in a slightly different form from some other company or cultural institution.

The reality is that this puts to the lie the confidence of so many conservative Christians in the United States that we are witnessing some kind of revolution that can be rather quickly reversed. That is simply not the case. The fundamentals of the society are changing around us, and when fundamentals change at this basic level, they do not change back quickly. As a matter of fact, there is really no historical precedent for that change to a previous position to be expected at all. Instead, what this announces to those who hold to Christian convictions on these issues is that, increasingly, we are going to experience the marginalization that comes by the fact that no one is going to be able to support our ministries who is not going to stand before the world and be held accountable for the fact that they are supporting our ministries. So Christians, pay attention to the direction of the culture, but also pay attention to how the culture is being directed, and for that matter, who's doing the directing.

– Tony Perkins, Washington Update; November 19, 2019.

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Truth will ultimately prevail where there are pains taken to bring it to light. ~ George Washington