

Monthly Update

October 2020

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

This edition of the Monthly Update has more of the news from what is happening in the United Methodist Church, to include reports from some of the annual conferences (again, for the complete report, go to our website or request a hard copy from us). In the last two Updates we included information on Covid19 and how to treat it. As we had said before, we are concerned about some of the people who receive our information and wanted to make sure they received what we believe is an effective way to treat it, if they should contract it. Another issue that which we have highlighted is the part that the charge of “racism” takes and that is played out in the “Black Lives Matter” movement (BLM) and “Antifa”; we would again suggest that you especially pay attention to actions by church employees, who are financed by apportionments supported by your money. As you read the material contained here, please note also the increased activism by the “Reconciling Ministries” group as it steps up its efforts to spread the homosexual ideology in our church. We need to be alert to their increased activity, but not let it surprise us.

With the BLM movement, when I heard of calls to “defund the police” alarm bells went off in my head triggered by my over-40 years of study of Marxist-Leninist theory and practice. Attacks on the law enforcement of a country are one of their main tactics they use: remove protection for the people, create chaos, engineer social collapse, and move in to seize power. This is very effective, unfortunately. When Russia collapsed, less than 1% of the people were Bolsheviks – yet they had succeeded in overthrowing that country. We in Concerned Methodists have traced money given to BLM from forces outside of our country. Some may criticize our efforts in examining so much of what is happening in civil society, but it is necessary. Renewal will be useless in the United Methodist Church if our society experiences instability or even collapses. It is important to know what is happening and be aware of how it will affect our country.

This past Saturday hundreds of thousands of people assembled on the Washington Mall to pray for the nation. One of the many things that was interesting is that about forty people from the BLM and Antifa groups had assembled and were shouting obscenities at the people gathered there. As some of the Christians turned to the forty people and started to pray for them, a leader of the BLM/Antifa group shouted, “Don’t let them touch you and try to pray for you!” The group then turned around and ran away as fast as they could. This was amazing with their actions of panic – but then again, not so much. I think this points up to something that we often overlook: so much of what we are engaged in is not dealing with “flesh and blood” people but involves spiritual warfare.

Thank you for partnering with us through your gifts and your prayers. They are so much appreciated and encouraging, but please continue to pray.

In His service,

Allen O. Morris,
Executive Director

+ + + +

October 2020 Update

Bits and Pieces from across the United Methodist Church

Discernment is God's call to intercession, never to fault finding. ~ Oswald Chambers

* * * * *

The Good Stuff

+ *Happy to be pastor to the police.*

GALVESTON, Texas – The Rev. Heather Gates has found fulfillment serving as full-time chaplain of the Galveston Police Department. When burdened officers need to talk, she's there to listen. She's available to officiate at their weddings, too. – Lindsay Peyton, Texas Conference, as reported in United Methodist News Weekly Digest; Sep 18, 2020

+ *Care packages spread love – not germs.*

STATESBORO, Ga. – For Georgia Southern University students, a knock on the door can mean the campus' Wesley Foundation has deposited a COVID Care Package on their doorstep. The packages are a way to show care for students under quarantine, said the ministry's director.

– Kara Witherow, South Georgia Conference, as reported in UM News Weekly Digest; Sep 18, 2020.

Of Interest.

+

Date: Aug 22, 2020 11:03

AM

I am over 60 years old and after paying federal income tax along with paying into my/our Social Security fund for many consecutive years. I've worked hard all my life. I made my reputation, I didn't inherit my job or my income, and I worked hard to get where I am. I juggled being a spouse and parent, made many sacrifices up front to secure a life for my family. It wasn't always easy and still isn't but I did it all, while maintaining my integrity and my principles. I've never put anyone beneath myself or denied help to anyone. I have friends of every walk of life and if you're in my circle, it should be understood that I don't have to remind you of what I'd be willing to do for you, or to someone else for you. However....

I'm tired of being told that I have to "spread the wealth" to people who don't have my work ethic. People that have sacrificed nothing.

I'm tired of being told the government will take the money I earned, by force if necessary, and give it to people too lazy to earn it.

I'm tired of being told I must lower my living standard to fight global warming, which, no one is allowed to debate.

I'm tired of hearing wealthy athletes, entertainers and politicians of all parties talk like their opinions matter to the common man. I'm tired of any of them even pretending they can relate to the life and [the] little bank account I have.

I'm tired of people with a sense of entitlement, rich or poor.

I'm upset that I'm labeled as a racist because I am white and am proud of my faith and trust in Jesus Christ as my Savior.

I'm tired of being told I need to accept the latest fad or politically correct stupidity or befriending a group that's intent in killing me because I won't convert to their point of view.

I'm really tired of people who don't take responsibility for their lives and actions. Especially the ones that want me to fund it. I'm tired of hearing them blame the government, or discrimination, or big-whatever for their problems.

Yes, I'm really tired. But, I'm also glad to be in the second half of my life. Because, mostly, I'm not going to have to see the world these people are creating. I thank God I'm on the way out and not on the way in. I just hate knowing my children and my grandchildren will have to face this screwed up world.

There is no way these thoughts will be widely publicized, unless each of us sends it on! Surely, the politically correct police censors will try to quiet us. If you're "tired" too, feel free to copy and paste.

Oh yeah...Good afternoon & GOD BLESS AMERICA!!! Love this land.

– Gary Auen, Facebook post. *Post by Gary Auen.* [He is retired Army, and past teacher at Fayetteville Christian School. – AOM]

+ ***“LBJ’s Big Switch from Intimidation to Entitlement to control minority voters”***. Lyndon Johnson’s Great Society Welfare State provided more money to a household if the father was not present in the home. This adversely affected the strong church-centered black families and neighborhoods. Robert Rector and Rachel Sheffield, writing for The Heritage Foundation, stated in “Backgrounder #2955 on Poverty and Inequality” that prior to LBJ’s “War on Poverty,” less than 2 percent of the Federal Budget was on welfare spending. Fifty years later, spending on anti-poverty programs mushroomed to 27 percent of the Federal Budget, costing \$22 trillion (adjusted for inflation), three times the cost of all U.S. military wars since the Revolution, yet the percentage of people in poverty has not improved. Before LBJ’s “War on Poverty,” less than 5 percent of children were born to unmarried parents. 50 year later it has skyrocketed to 40 percent. Before LBJ’s “War on Poverty,” less than 10 percent of U.S. children lived in single parent households. 50 years later that number has exploded to 33 percent, with the poverty rate of single female parent households growing to 37.1 percent. In 1965, Labor Department sociologist Daniel Patrick Moynihan reported that 25 percent of all black children were born illegitimately. In 2015, that number had grown to 72 percent.

African-American economist Walter E. Williams, a Distinguished Professor of Economics at George Mason University, wrote in “The Welfare State’s Legacy” (9/20/17): “In 1960, just 22 percent of black children were raised in single-parent families. Fifty years later, more than 70 percent of black children were raised in single-parent families. Here’s my question: Was the increase in single-parent black families after 1960 a legacy of slavery, or might it be a legacy of the welfare state ushered in by the War on Poverty?”

Tim Goeglein, Deputy Director of the White House Office of Public Liaison 2001-2008, writing for *Focus on the Family Citizen Magazine* (2016), stated: “This is perhaps the most dismal legacy of the Johnson years, and a sad testament to the vision of social planners who believed more government would mean stronger families and marriages.”

African American Republican Rep. J.C. Watts, Jr., stated February 5, 1997: “For the past 30 years our nation’s spent \$5 trillion trying to erase poverty, and the result, as you know, is that we didn’t get rid of it at all. In fact, we spread it. We destroyed the self-esteem of millions of people, grinding them down in a welfare system that penalizes moms for wanting to marry the father of their children, and penalizes moms for wanting to save money. Friends, that’s not right.”

Well renown Pediatric Neurosurgeon Dr. Ben Carson was appointed Secretary of Housing & Urban Development. He stated: “My mother worked as a domestic, two, sometimes three jobs at a time because she didn’t want to be on welfare. She felt very strongly that if she gave up and went on welfare, that she would give up control of her life and of our lives, and I think she was probably correct about that ...But, one thing that she provided us was a tremendous example of what hard work is like.” Dr. Carson added: “The more solid the family foundation, the more likely you are to be able to resist peer pressure. Human beings are social creatures. We all want to belong, we all have that desire, and we will belong, one way or another. If the family doesn’t provide that, the peers will, or a gang will, or you will find something to belong to. That’s why it becomes so critical for families with young children to understand what a critical anchor they are.”

Beginning in the 1960s, educational emphasis transitioned from academic achievement to behavior modification. Basic public morality has been replaced with situation ethics, abortion, unrestrained sexual agendas, and the inciting of racial tensions for political advancement. More recently, “racism” has been redefined to mean anyone opposing big government dependency welfare programs. In politics, this is called “seizing the moral high ground,” where those pushing a cause want to appear before the public as more altruistic and caring, while portraying those opposing them as selfish and less caring. A classic use of “seizing the moral high ground” is when casinos want to move into an area. Opponents may cite an increase in crime, drugs, prostitution, bankruptcies, broken homes and child sex-trafficking, but if the casinos donate some of their profits to schools, they can “seize the moral high ground” by claiming to care more about children while

portraying their opponents as hating children. In a tragic irony, dependency on government entitlements is reminiscent of the dependency on Southern plantations, where slaves waited for handouts from their masters. This similarity has been pointed out by many black leaders. Star Parker, founder of CURE (Center for Urban Renewal) wrote *Uncle Sam's Plantation: How Big Government Enslaves America's Poor and What We Can Do About It*. Rev. Bill Owens is the founder of the Coalition of African American Pastors. His wife, Dr. Deborah Owens, leads "Education for All." Bishop E.W. Jackson is the founder of S.T.A.N.D. and The Awakening Radio Show.

Saul Alinsky wrote in *Rules for Radicals*: "The organizer's first job is to create the issues or problems ...The organizer must first rub raw the resentments of the people of the community ..."The organizer ... polarizes the issue ... and helps to lead his forces into conflict ... An organizer must stir up dissatisfaction and discontent ...Fan the latent hostilities of many of the people to the point of overt expression ...He must search out controversy and issues, rather than avoid them ... for unless there is controversy people are not concerned enough to act.

This was observed by Republican Booker T. Washington, who had written in *My Larger Education-Being Chapters from My Experience* (1911, ch. V: The Intellectuals and the Boston Mob, p. 118): "There is another class of colored people who make a business of keeping the troubles, the wrongs, and the hardships of the Negro race before the public. Having learned that they are able to make a living out of their troubles, they have grown into the settled habit of advertising their wrongs -- partly because they want sympathy and partly because it pays. Some of these people do not want the Negro to lose his grievances, because they do not want to lose their jobs ..." Washington further stated: "There is a certain class of race-problem solvers who do not want the patient to get well, because as long as the disease holds out they have not only an easy means of making a living, but also an easy medium through which to make themselves prominent before the public."

Rep. J.C. Watts, Jr., stated February 5, 1997: "Too often when we talk about racial healing, we make the old assumption that government can heal the racial divide...Republicans and Democrats - red, yellow, black and white - have to understand that we must individually, all of us, accept our share of responsibility ... It does not happen by dividing us into racial groups. It does not happen by trying to turn rich against poor or by using the politics of fear. It does not happen by reducing our values to the lowest common denominator. And friends, it does not happen by asking Americans to accept what's immoral and wrong in the name of tolerance ..." Watts continued: "We must be a people who dare, dare to take responsibility for our hatred and fears and ask God to heal us from within. And we must be a people of prayer, a people who pray as if the strength of our nation depended on it, because it does ..." J.C. Watts concluded: "I've often told the story of a boy and his father. The father was trying to get some work done, and the boy wanted the daddy's attention, but the father was busy at his desk with so much to do. To occupy the boy, this father ... remembered that he had seen a picture of the world in this magazine. In what he thought was a stroke of genius, the father tore out the picture and tore it into 20 different pieces, and he said, 'Here son. Go put the world back together.' ... And you know what happened? Five minutes later the little Michelangelo was back, saying, 'Daddy, look what I've done.' The father looked, and he said, 'Son, how did you do it so quickly? How did you put the world back together so quickly?' And the little boy answered, 'Dad, it was easy. There was a picture of a man on the back of the map, on the back of the world. And once I put the man back together, the world fell into place.' And friends, this is our agenda: to put our men and women back together, and, in that way, get our country back together."

– Bill Federer, *American Minute*; Jul 28, 2020.

+ ***The Key to Defeating COVID-19 Already Exists. We Need to Start Using It.*** Dr. Harvey Risch.

[Note: This is another article about hydroxychloroquine. We think this can be key to overcoming COVID-19. – AOM]

As professor of epidemiology at Yale School of Public Health, I have authored over 300 peer-reviewed publications and currently hold senior positions on the editorial boards of several leading journals. I am usually accustomed to advocating for positions within the mainstream of medicine, so have been flummoxed to find that, in the midst of a crisis, I am fighting for a treatment that the data fully support but which, for reasons having nothing to do with a correct understanding of the science, has been pushed to the sidelines. As a result, tens of thousands of patients with COVID-19 are dying unnecessarily. Fortunately, the situation can be reversed

easily and quickly. I am referring, of course, to the medication hydroxychloroquine (HCQ). When this inexpensive oral medication is given very early in the course of illness, before the virus has had time to multiply beyond control, it has shown to be highly effective, especially when given in combination with the antibiotics azithromycin or doxycycline and the nutritional supplement zinc.

On May 27, I published an article in the American Journal of Epidemiology (AJE) entitled, “Early Outpatient Treatment of Symptomatic, High-Risk COVID-19 Patients that Should be Ramped-Up Immediately as Key to the Pandemic Crisis.” That article, published in the world’s leading epidemiology journal, analyzed five studies, demonstrating clear-cut and significant benefits to treated patients, plus other very large studies that showed the medication safety. Physicians who have been using these medications in the face of widespread skepticism have been truly heroic. They have done what the science shows is best for their patients, often at great personal risk. I myself know of two doctors who have saved the lives of hundreds of patients with these medications, but are now fighting state medical boards to save their licenses and reputations. The cases against them are completely without scientific merit.

Since publication of my May 27 article, seven more studies have demonstrated similar benefit. In a lengthy follow-up letter, also published by AJE, I discuss these seven studies and renew my call for the immediate early use of HCQ in high-risk patients. These seven studies include: an additional 400 high-risk patients treated by Dr. Vladimir Zelenko, with zero deaths; four studies totaling almost 500 high-risk patients treated in nursing homes and clinics across the U.S., with no deaths; a controlled trial of more than 700 high-risk patients in Brazil, with significantly reduced risk of hospitalization and two deaths among 334 patients treated with HCQ; and another study of 398 matched patients in France, also with significantly reduced hospitalization risk. Since my letter was published, even more doctors have reported to me their completely successful use. My original article in the AJE is available free online, and I encourage readers – especially physicians, nurses, physician assistants and associates, and respiratory therapists – to search the title and read it. My follow-up letter is linked there to the original paper. Beyond these studies of individual patients, we have seen what happens in large populations when these drugs are used. These have been “natural experiments.” In the northern Brazil state of Pará, COVID-19 deaths were increasing exponentially. On April 6, the public hospital network purchased 75,000 doses of azithromycin and 90,000 doses of HCQ. Over the next few weeks, authorities began distributing these medications to infected individuals. Even though new cases continued to occur, on May 22 the death rate started to plummet and is now about one-eighth what it was at the peak. A reverse natural experiment happened in Switzerland. On May 27, the Swiss national government banned outpatient use of HCQ for COVID-19. Around June 10, COVID-19 deaths increased four-fold and remained elevated. On June 11, the Swiss government revoked the ban, and on June 23 the death rate reverted to what it had been beforehand. People who die from COVID-19 live about three to five weeks from the start of symptoms, which makes the evidence of a causal relation in these experiments strong. Both episodes suggest that a combination of HCQ and its companion medications reduces mortality and should be immediately adopted as the new standard of care in high-risk patients.

Why has HCQ been disregarded? First, as all know, the medication has become highly politicized. For many, it is viewed as a marker of political identity, on both sides of the political spectrum. Nobody needs me to remind them that this is not how medicine should proceed. We must judge this medication strictly on the science. When doctors graduate from medical school, they formally promise to make the health and life of the patient their first consideration, without biases of race, religion, nationality, social standing – or political affiliation. Lives must come first. Second, the drug has not been used properly in many studies. HCQ has shown major success when used early in high-risk people but, as one would expect for an antiviral, much less success when used late in the disease course. Even so, it has demonstrated significant benefit in large hospital studies in Michigan and New York City when started within the first 24 to 48 hours after admission. In fact, as inexpensive, oral and widely available medications, and a nutritional supplement, the combination of HCQ, azithromycin or doxycycline, and zinc are well-suited for early treatment in the outpatient setting. The combination should be prescribed in high-risk patients immediately upon clinical suspicion of COVID-19 disease, without waiting for results of testing. Delays in waiting before starting the medications can reduce their efficacy. Third, concerns have been raised by the FDA and others about risks of cardiac arrhythmia, especially when HCQ is given in combination with azithromycin. The FDA based its comments on data in its FDA

Adverse Event Reporting System. This reporting system captured up to a thousand cases of arrhythmias attributed to HCQ use. In fact, the number is likely higher than that, since the reporting system, which requires physicians or patients to initiate contact with the FDA, appreciably undercounts drug side effects. But what the FDA did not announce is that these adverse events were generated from tens of millions of patient uses of HCQ for long periods of time, often for the chronic treatment of lupus or rheumatoid arthritis. Even if the true rates of arrhythmia are ten-fold higher than those reported, the harms would be minuscule compared to the mortality occurring right now in inadequately treated high-risk COVID-19 patients. This fact is proven by an Oxford University study of more than 320,000 older patients taking both HCQ and azithromycin, who had arrhythmia excess death rates of less than 9/100,000 users, as I discuss in my May 27 paper cited above. A new paper in the *American Journal of Medicine* by established cardiologists around the world fully agrees with this.

In the future, I believe this misbegotten episode regarding HCQ will be studied by sociologists of medicine as a classic example of how extra-scientific factors overrode clear-cut medical evidence. But for now, reality demands a clear, scientific eye on the evidence and where it points. For the sake of high-risk patients, for the sake of our parents and grandparents, for the sake of the unemployed, for our economy and for our polity, especially those disproportionately affected, we must start treating immediately.

Harvey A. Risch, MD, PhD, is professor of epidemiology at Yale School of Public Health.

– Facebook post, referenced on The Rush Limbaugh Show; Jul 27, 2020.

+ ***Publishing House plans remote work permanently.***

NASHVILLE, Tenn. – The United Methodist Publishing House’s board of directors has approved moving to a permanent remote work arrangement for staff, who have worked remotely since mid-March, when shutdowns for the coronavirus began. – As reported in UM News Weekly Digest; Aug 21, 2020.

+ ***Black Lives Matter Co-founder admits who they are.*** Black Lives Matter Co-founder Admits: “We Are Trained Marxists” In a 2015 interview, Black Lives Matter co-founder Patrisse Cullors stated that she and many of those within the movement consider themselves to be “trained Marxists.” The interview at one point questioned whether BLM has a specific core ideology. Countering the notion that the movement is lacking one, Cullors said BLM does “have an ideological frame.” Cullors responded that BLM does have an ideology – Marxism. “The first thing, I think, is that we actually do have an ideological frame,” she said. “Myself and [fellow BLM co-founder] Alicia [Garza] in particular are trained organizers. We are trained Marxists. We are super-versed on, sort of, ideological theories.” BLM’s philosophy and tactics are pure Marx. They replace the Communist Manifesto author’s class struggle with a race-based one, turning the proletariat vs. bourgeoisie dynamic into non-white versus white. But the end is the same: Create a statist government with full control over the means of production and all aspects of the people’s lives. The way of getting there is also largely the same: Sow social discord, create anarchy, take over the social institutions that can be infiltrated and destroy the ones that can’t. And just as Marxism and its derivatives have always had an overarching anti-Christian agenda, Black Lives Matter is at last showing its face as having the aim of dismantling of western civilization’s Christian heritage. Far-left activist and Black Lives Matter supporter Shaun King on [June 22, 2020] said that, as the movement continues its rampage against historical statues, it should likewise target monuments of Jesus because they are a form of “white supremacy.” (“Yes, I think the statues of the white European they claim is Jesus should also come down. They are a form of white supremacy. Tear them down.” – Shaun King) [Note: These are standard Marxist tactics. Notice how BLM issues are supported later by various entities within the United Methodist Church. – AOM]

– From a report received on September 18, 2020

Homosexuality.

+ ***Advocacy group launches new campaign.*** Reconciling Ministries Network Issues Call...

CHICAGO, IL – In this time between the delayed and rescheduled General Conference, Reconciling Ministries Network (RMN) has announced a comprehensive campaign for the next season of the Reconciling movement. Rooted & Rising refocuses the organization’s efforts on its grassroots organizing with a deep commitment to intersectional LGBTQ justice. The campaign calls the Reconciling movement to be the Church, no matter what

the denomination decides when the General Conference meets. The launch of the campaign will last from September 14 to September 18, 2020, and the campaign will continue through 2021. Rooted & Rising calls upon over 40,000 Reconciling United Methodists and over 1,300 Reconciling Churches and Communities around the world to more explicitly champion justice for all LGBTQ people in The UMC. Says RMN Executive Director Jan Lawrence, “RMN is ready to go deeper in our commitments and wider in our reach. The Reconciling movement has grown exponentially in the last year, and this is the right time for us to recommit to our roots and ask how we can have the most meaningful impact for LGBTQ people.” The campaign seeks to reach existing and new Reconciling United Methodists with new opportunities to increase the presence of Reconciling ministries around the world.

Statement: Living into its shared baptismal covenant, Reconciling Ministries Network (RMN) equips and mobilizes United Methodists to resist evil, injustice, and oppression as we seek justice for people of all sexual orientations and gender identities.

– Ophelia Hu Kinney, Director of Communications, Reconciling Ministries Network, Chicago, IL 60602; Sep. 15, 2020

+ **ROOTED & RISING IS A CALL** to the Reconciling movement for the next season of our collective work for LGBTQ justice and inclusion in the Church. It represents our vision for a Church that thirsts for justice and that searches for living water, no matter what the denomination decides when the General Conference meets. On this page, you’ll find the strategies that will make this vision possible. First, here are the two foundational pillars of those strategies.

RMN’S COMMITMENT TO CENTER INTERSECTIONAL JUSTICE AND EQUITY. Racism and colonialism pervade our Church and society, and RMN laments its participation and complicity in these spiritual and systemic ills. RMN is a faith-based, justice-seeking organization. As such, we believe that this process, rooted in truth-telling and honest assessment, must begin with us. Therefore, we elected to begin with a thorough, full-staff examination of the ways in which whiteness has been and continues to be at work within RMN. We expect this process to bear fruit, resulting in recognition, repentance, and change. Subjects of investigation can include the following elements common to nonprofit organizations: mission, vision, values, leadership structures, hiring and training policies, paid holidays, access to health insurance, daily work routines, communications norms, decision-making processes, complaint procedures, and more.

A RENEWED FOCUS ON AND STRATEGIC APPROACH TO OUR GRASSROOTS WORK.

For 36 years, Reconciling United Methodists (RUMs) have been building a network of Reconciling Churches, Communities, and Campus Ministries (RCs) across the United States and now globally. This network has played a central role in shifting the conversation about LGBTQ justice and inclusion in The UMC, and we are extremely grateful. While we remain fully engaged in General Conference-level work, we are now called to renew our focus on you: on the boundless potential of the grassroots. RMN can be most effective for LGBTQ justice by prioritizing collaboration with teams in each Annual Conference to multiply the number of affirming, Reconciling ministries around the world.

– Information taken from the Reconciling Ministries Network website.

United Methodist Commission on Religion and Race. Panelists urge action on race issues.

[Note: They refuse to admit BLM’s responsibility in rioting or the group’s origin; they are supported by UM money. Please read what they say; they are out of touch with reality. The riots in Portland were marked by burning Bibles, profanity, and chants of “_____ Jesus Christ.” Note what these folks say versus what your eyes see on TV. – AOM]

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (UM News) – Four veteran activists compared Black Lives Matter with the 1960s civil rights movement and urged more activism against racism during a virtual discussion. The internet broadcast was part of a series of United Methodist town hall meetings on race. United Methodists need to “get off the sidewalks” and engage directly in the campaign for racial equality, said Bishop Joel N. Martinez, during the second of several virtual panel discussions on racism. The Aug. 19 broadcast on the United Methodist Communications website and Facebook page was part of a series of denominational town hall meetings held to

discuss eradicating racism. Also taking part were retired United Methodist pastor and civil rights leader the Rev. James Lawson; Sue Thrasher, co-founder of the Southern Student Organizing Committee; and Clara Ester, a deaconess and vice president of the United Methodist Women Board of Directors. The panelists agreed that Black Lives Matter is a continuation of the 1960s civil rights movement. “There have been over 700 cities in which there have been nonviolent demonstrations in the year 2020,” Lawson said. “These have been by-and-large nonviolent and actively engaged.” Violence during recent protests in Portland, Oregon, Seattle and other cities was the product of police and federal law enforcement agents “actively engaged in provocative behavior hidden underneath a movement” and not the fault of the Black Lives Matter movement, he said. [Note: Emphasis added. – AOM]

The panel was moderated by Erin Hawkins, outgoing top executive of the United Methodist Commission on Religion and Race, the denominational agency that cultivates racial inclusion and the full participation of all people into the work, witness, and life of The United Methodist Church. – By Jim Patterson, UM News, Aug. 19, 2020.

World Council of Churches. *Helping churches show solidarity for Korean peace.*

GENEVA – A new collection of resources from the World Council of Churches, “The Light of Peace: Churches in Solidarity with the Korean Peninsula,” is designed to help churches recognize 70 years of unresolved conflict on the Korean Peninsula during 2020. [Note: There are two dramatically forms of government and society, on free and the other the most brutal dictatorship on earth. The Bible states, “...what does light have to do with darkness?” – AOM]

– UMNS, as reported in UM News Weekly Digest; Aug 21, 2020.

* * * * *

Never live for the rare moments, they are surprises. God will give us touches of inspiration when He sees we are not in danger of being led away by them. ~ Oswald Chambers

Annual Conference Reports

Alaska Annual Conference. Bishop Elaine Stanovsky, presiding from her office in Seattle, welcomed 60 attendees virtually. Efforts in dismantling systemic racism, with important discussions of race and justice, have been taking place in churches as they have been at the fore of national news. The number of members is 2,967, down 186.

– Jim Doepken, director of communications for the Alaska Conference, as reported in UM News Weekly Digest; Sep 18, 2020

Iowa Annual Conference. Bishop Laurie Haller officiated all five sessions of the annual conference that were held virtually. Membership is 150,732, down 3%.

– Liz Winders, director of communications, as reported in UM News Weekly Digest; Sep 18, 2020

Minnesota Annual Conference. Bishop Bruce R. Ough presided over the virtual conference with 500 attendees. The number of members is 56,632, down 3% from the previous year.

– Christa Meland, Director of Communications, Minnesota Conference, as reported in UM News Weekly Digest; Sep 18, 2020

North Georgia Annual Conference. Bishop Sue Hauptert-Johnson presided over the historic session that utilized a secure meeting and voting platform with nearly 2,000 North Georgia United Methodists gathered for a beloved time of conferencing in a new way. Membership in 346,840, a net loss of 6,270 members or a decrease of 1.8%.

– As reported in UM News Weekly Digest - Sep 18, 2020

Northwest Texas Annual Conference. The Northwest Texas Conference held its annual meeting at The Overton Hotel in Lubbock with Bishop Earl Bledsoe presiding. Membership is 50,130, down 2,207.

– Jaime Montgomery, director of communications, as reported in UM News Weekly Digest; Sep 18, 2020

Red Bird Missionary Annual Conference. The 52nd session of the Red Bird Missionary Conference was convened by Bishop Leonard Fairley on Sept. 12 virtually. Thousandsticks United Methodist Church in Kentucky, hosted the meeting. – The Rev. Robert Amundsen, conference secretary, reported in UM News Weekly Digest; Sep 18, 2020

Texas Annual Conference. The 51st Texas Annual Conference, attendees tuned into a livestream presentation for the virtual session that was watched by 1,548 participants on Zoom, with Bishop Scott J. Jones presiding. – Lindsay Peyton, as reported in UM News Weekly Digest; Sep 18, 2020

* * * * *

You leave out God, and you substitute the devil. ~Winston Churchill