

Monthly Update

February 2021

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

While we have a lot of information on General Conference 2021 and the possibility of its going virtual, it is more important to cover the events in our nation. Fellow Christian Tony Perkins:

A Biblical Response to the Crisis at the Capitol

Dear Allen,

This country has seen some dark days. Now the events of January 6 in Washington, D.C. have shaken the nation. There have been moments of unbelievable despair, like we witnessed at the U.S. Capitol, when everything seems to come apart at the seams. Those are the hours when the hopelessness we see looks nothing like the nation we thought we knew. Yet, in almost 250 years, even the worst of times have never defined us. And we can't afford to let this one either. We are not a bitter, desolate, violent people.

It's true that we are a hurting people, a frustrated and divided people. But we are not a people broken beyond repair. I know that, because the vast majority of men and women at the rally earlier in the day weren't there to shatter windows or trash offices. They came as peaceful, law-abiding citizens – to air their grievances and ask for justice. Unfortunately, both will be harder to come by now.

The day after the appalling, stunning events transpired, our Executive Vice President General Jerry Boykin and I spoke on FRC's national Washington Watch radio program. General Boykin spent 36 years in the U.S. Army faithfully serving our nation. He urged us all not to deflect or look away, but to consider the human fallout from that tragic day. Local authorities here in Washington, D.C. later reported that 56 officers sustained injuries from rioters. One Capitol Police officer later succumbed to severe injuries and died. "These officers were just there doing their jobs," General Boykin told me on-air. "They are our sons and daughters, our brothers and sisters. And what happened to them was wrong." He went on. "We don't yet know the identity of every rabble rouser," said Boykin. "But it appears some people angry and frustrated with what they've seen happening in this country were the ones perpetrating this. There's never a justification for taking on officers like that." It's a sobering and important point. The ongoing investigation of those who breached the Capitol has (so far) resulted in more than 90 arrests. Photo evidence indicates most had attended the rally hours before. General Boykin clarified how to assess these tragic events. "I condemn absolutely no one at that rally who remained peaceful," he said. "I condemn everybody who went inside the Capitol and took part in the violence that occurred, because that was wrong. It was not only a breach of the Capitol, but a breach of the public trust."

When a three-star general delivers a hard word, we should take his wisdom to heart. News accounts of this crisis have not reflected his careful discernment... and, in claims being shared on social media, you won't likely hear that level of blunt honesty either.

Now is the time for Christians to hold fast to truth rather than partisanship.

In the days after the attack on the Capitol Building, I've heard from pastors all across the country and from countless people who participate in their worship services. Many people feel like they've been robbed--and, in some places, perhaps rightly so.

From a biblical worldview, we need to galvanize ourselves in light of what's happened. That doesn't mean we shrink away... and it doesn't ever mean we pick up a brick. As believers, we go to our knees in prayer. We seek the Lord more intently and earnestly than ever before, because our children and grandchildren are watching our actions to know how to live.

One bedrock biblical principle we live by is to uphold the value of every life. And no one can resist the spirit of death when they are possessed by the spirit of death.

I thank you for joining me in praying for our nation.

Tony Perkins, Family Research Council

Thank you for partnering with us and your encouraging notes. One lady wrote, “yours is the best newsletter” [in your Updates]. While I appreciate her kind words, she was overly generous. We do the best that God has called us to do. We thank you – and ask you to earnestly pray for our church and our country.

Allen O. Morris
Executive Director

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February 2021 Update

Bits and Pieces from across the United Methodist Church

Whenever events occur that make us feel unsafe and insecure, God urges us to ask Him to intervene.

He alone is both our safety and our security.

~ Dr. Charles Stanley, *Life Principles Daily Bible*, commentary on Psalm 12:5, p. 95.

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The Good Stuff

+ **My greeting for the new year.** In looking back, I hope you all have had a good Christmas and are looking forward to a good new year in 2021. One thing I would ask you all to do is something that I have aggressively done for the last several months. I have a copy with me of Psalm 91. On a daily basis, I pray that out loud a hedge of protection around the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic, visible and hidden. Then I pray that the Lord would expose the hidden enemies, and for all of them, turn their evil deeds back on themselves. I am asking for grace and mercy for our country, that God will give us another chance. May I ask you all to do something like that?

Also, I received this message from one of “my kids” & what she believes had been passed on to her: “Usually I have a word that I focus on or that becomes apparent at the end of the year. This year tho, 3 words came to mind, and not for me but for the nation. Safety, transparency, and peace.”

One of the ladies that I encounter regularly at the post office where we take our bulk mailings for Concerned Methodists offered me a new insight. I had mentioned that, “Under the circumstances, this has been a challenging year.”

She turned, looked at me, and said, “Under the circumstances? And you’re a Christian?” That really convicted me. As Christians when we have God as our Heavenly Father, we can rest assured that in the final analysis we are never “under the circumstances”; we are victors in His power.

In looking back, I hope you all have had a good Christmas and are looking forward to a good new year in 2021.

One thing I would ask you all to do is something that I have aggressively done for the last several months. I have a copy with me of Psalm 91. On a daily basis, I pray that out loud a hedge of protection around our nation.

Please pray forcefully for our country during this new year. —

AOM

+ **The “old days”:** I grew up in Fayetteville, North Carolina, during a time when mostly everyone treated each other like family. Our neighbors parents disciplined us like their own. We didn’t eat fast food....We drank Kool-aid or Tang, ate peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, and had dinner as a family each night. Stores were not open on Sundays so we went to church, had dinner at Grandma’s or home and watched football, basketball and baseball. We went outside to played the sport we were watching at halftime or during commercials and after the games. When it got dark we played flashlight tag and kick the can with the neighborhood friends. In daytime we played hide and seek, kickball, dodgeball, had water or pine cone fights, played football, basketball baseball, wiffleball for hours and raced against each other down the street on our bikes or Big Wheels. If it snowed we found hills and went sledding and played snow football at the local church or bank. In the summer we hung out at local pool and played shark for hours and played basketball, volleyball or tennis during break. There was no bottled water. We drank out of the green garden hose. No cable TV. No cell phones!

Before school each morning we would trade ball cards. We would then remove a layer of aluminum foil from our sandwiches to form a ball and got our day started up playing flip football, pass notes and talk about what we did the day before. We watched cartoons on Saturday morning, went outside, and played until dark. We would ride our bikes, jump ramps, and play bicycle tag without helmets for hours, all without a cell phone or electronic games. We went to the library for books. We weren’t afraid of ANYTHING except our parents. You LEARNED from your parents and grandparents instead of disrespecting them and treating them as if they

knew nothing. What they said might as well have been the gospel. If someone had a fight, that's what it was...a fist fight and you were back to being friends. Kids didn't have guns and never thought of taking a life, especially not their own. You better be close enough to home to hear your mom or dad yell or whistle for you to get home!

School was MANDATORY. We had God, The Pledge of Allegiance, and we placed our hand over our heart!!! We watched what we said around our elders because we knew if we DISRESPECTED any grown up we would get our behinds busted; it wasn't called abuse, it was discipline! You didn't hear curse words on the radio or TV, and IF you cursed you did it away from the public or you got your mouth washed out with soap. "Please" and "Thank you" were part of our daily dialogue!

– By Meredith Lynn Reilly, one of "my kids" in the church youth group ;
AOM

+ **Martha Raye.** It was well recognized that Martha Raye endured less comfort and more danger than any other Vietnam entertainer. It is sad that her shows were not taped. I saw one of the USO shows when I was in Southeast Asia during that conflict. The GIs especially appreciated the women from, including Ann Margaret & Joey Heatherton; it was an immense morale booster for our troops in past wars to just see a reminder of "the girl they left behind" and remember life back home. Most of the old-time entertainers were made of a lot sterner stuff than today's crop of "activists" and would-be change-makers. The following is from an Army Aviator who took a trip down memory lane:

"It was just before Thanksgiving '67 and we were ferrying dead and wounded from a large GRF west of Pleiku. We had run out of body bags by noon, so the Hook (CH-47 CHINOOK) was pretty rough in the back (to see the dead troops). All of a sudden, we heard a 'take-charge' woman's voice in the rear. There was the singer and actress, Martha Raye, with a Special Forces beret and jungle fatigues, with subdued markings, helping the wounded into the Chinook, and carrying the dead aboard. 'Maggie' had been visiting her SF 'heroes' out 'west'. We took off, short of fuel, and headed to the USAF hospital pad at Pleiku. As we all started unloading our sad pax's, a 'Smart Mouth' USAF Captain said to Martha.... "Ms Ray, with all these dead and wounded to process, there would not be time for your show!"

"To all of our surprise, she pulled on her right collar and said "Captain, see this eagle? I am a full 'Bird' [Colonel] in the US Army Reserve, and on this is a 'Caduceus' which means I am a Nurse, with a surgical specialty....now, take me to your wounded!" He said, "Yes ma'am.... follow me."

"Several times at the Army Field Hospital in Pleiku, she would 'cover' a surgical shift, giving a nurse a well-deserved break."

Martha is the only woman buried in the Special Forces cemetery at Ft Bragg.

– Date: Nov 25, 2020 9:01 PM

+ **Prosperity.** If you are fearful that the new generation of voters don't get it, read this article written by Alyssa Ahlgren. I think her analysis of why they think the way they do is exactly correct. This is printed as it was written.

"I'm sitting in a small coffee shop near Nokomis trying to think of what to write about. I scroll through my newsfeed on my phone looking at the latest headlines of Democratic candidates calling for policies to "fix" the so-called injustices of capitalism. I put my phone down and continue to look around. I see people talking freely, working on their MacBook's, ordering food they get in an instant, seeing cars go by outside, and it dawned on me. We live in the most privileged time in the most prosperous nation and we've become completely blind to it. Vehicles, food, technology, freedom to associate with whom we choose. These things are so ingrained in our American way of life we don't give them a second thought. We are so well off here in the United States that our poverty line begins 31 times above the global average. Thirty. One. Times. Virtually no one in the United States is considered poor by global standards. Yet, in a time where we can order a product off Amazon with one click and have it at our doorstep the next day, we are unappreciative, unsatisfied, and ungrateful. Our unappreciation is evident as the popularity of socialist policies among my generation continues to grow. Democratic Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez recently said to Newsweek talking about the millennial generation,

“An entire generation, which is now becoming one of the largest electorates in America, came of age and never saw American prosperity.”

“Never saw American prosperity.” Let that sink in. When I first read that statement, I thought to myself, that was quite literally the most entitled and factually illiterate thing I’ve ever heard in my 26 years on this earth. Now, I’m not attributing Miss Ocasio-Cortez’s words to outright dishonesty. I do think she whole-heartedly believes the words she said to be true. Many young people agree with her, which is entirely misguided. My generation is being indoctrinated by a mainstream narrative to actually believe we have never seen prosperity.

I know this first hand, I went to college, let’s just say I didn’t have the popular opinion, but I digress.

Let me lay down some universal truths really quick. The United States of America has lifted more people out of abject poverty, spread more freedom and democracy, and has created more innovation in technology and medicine than any other nation in human history. Not only that but our citizenry continually breaks world records with charitable donations, the rags to riches story is not only possible in America but not uncommon, we have the strongest purchasing power on earth, and we encompass 25% of the world’s GDP. The list goes on. However, these universal truths don’t matter. We are told that income inequality is an existential crisis (even though this is not an indicator of prosperity, some of the poorest countries in the world have low-income inequality), we are told that we are oppressed by capitalism (even though it’s brought about more freedom and wealth to the most people than any other system in world history), we are told that the only way we will acquire the benefits of true prosperity is through socialism and centralization of federal power (even though history has proven time and again this only brings tyranny and suffering).

Why then, with all of the overwhelming evidence around us, evidence that I can even see sitting at a coffee shop, do we not view this as prosperity? We have people who are dying to get into our country. People around the world destitute and truly impoverished. Yet, we have a young generation convinced they’ve never seen prosperity, and as a result, elect politicians dead set on taking steps towards abolishing capitalism. Why? The answer is this, my generation has ONLY seen prosperity. We have no contrast. We didn’t live in the great depression, or live through two world wars, or see the rise and fall of socialism and communism. We don’t know what it’s like not to live without the internet, without cars, without smartphones. We don’t have a lack of prosperity problem. We have an entitlement problem, an ungratefulness problem, and it’s spreading like a plague. With the current political climate giving rise to the misguided idea of a socialist utopia, will we see the light? Or will we have to lose it all to realize that what we have now is true prosperity? Destroying the free market will undo what millions of people have died to achieve.

My generation is becoming the largest voting bloc in the country. We have an opportunity to continue to propel us forward with the gifts capitalism and democracy has given us. The other option is that we can fall into the trap of entitlement and relapse into restrictive socialist destitution. The choice doesn’t seem too hard, does it?” Amen and Amen

– Alyssa Ahlgren

Of Interest

+ *America in The Balance*

[Note: The condition for being able to reprint this is that we must do it in its entirety. My commentary on the article itself is that, as we all know, in the senatorial elections in Georgia both Democratic candidates won. As you read Dr. James Dobson’s letter, remember that it was actually composed in late December. – AOM]

Dear Friends,

As I write in late December 2020, America faces the possibility of catastrophic change. By the time you receive this letter, you will know what I can only speculate about today. Everything depends on two legal developments. The first is whether or not the U.S. Supreme Court addresses the contested presidential election in the next few weeks. The second depends on the outcome of two senatorial runoff elections in Georgia, scheduled for January 5th. On these two turning points hangs the future of our great nation, and eventually, the world. You probably know what is at stake, but let me give you my perspective.

For me, the issue goes back to a significant day in my childhood when I was in the fourth grade. My public school teacher was Miss Eunice Harris. She was a 60-year-old, never-married “school marm” who really knew

her stuff. I was 10 years old, and I remember vividly what happened that afternoon. My desk was in the middle of the room, and we had just returned from lunch. Miss Harris walked to a large blackboard and wrote three words in chalk, “Executive, Legislative, Judicial.” Then she told us that these are the three branches of the United States government. She explained that the executive branch carries out the laws of the land, the legislature makes the laws, and the judiciary interprets the laws, according to the U.S. Constitution.

Miss Harris explained briefly what the Constitution is and told us that it’s where the three branches of government originated. She talked about the founding fathers who wrote it, and how most of them were godly men who knew that mankind is flawed by sin. (Miss Harris was herself a strong Christian.) Even great men, she said, cannot be trusted with unlimited power. Therefore, our designers set up a system of “checks and balances.” Miss Harris then described how each branch limits what the other two can do on their own. They have to work together to get anything done.

Finally, Miss Harris said that the ultimate power belongs to the American people, not to the three branches of government. I don’t remember if she quoted from Abraham Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address, but if she didn’t, she could have. Our 16th President concluded his immortal speech with these words, “We here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain – that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom – that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.”¹

Reading Lincoln’s passionate address at Gettysburg moistens my eyes today. Within his words lie the genius of our Constitutional republic. There has never been anything like it in human history. Sadly, our government appears to be about to abandon this system in the next month. If that occurs, government of the people, by the people, and for the people may well perish from the earth. This moment is that significant! If the awesome power of government can function, dictate, demand, tax, and penalize its citizens without accountability, democracy will have ceased to exist. How is that possible? I believe this is what the far left has in store for us if Democrats win two additional senatorial seats in the upcoming Georgia runoff. Very quickly, that will mean the demolishing of checks and balances – and America’s greatness could be lost. Lord Acton said it best, “Power corrupts, and absolute power corrupts absolutely.” That is invariably true.

In essence, one party could hold power in the White House, the U.S. House of Representatives, and the U.S. Senate. All that remains to make that power absolute is to gain control of the judiciary. They can do that first by appointing liberal judges who have been nominated by the President. The next step would be to create two new states, Washington, D.C., and Puerto Rico, which would give them four more senatorial seats. With that majority they could “pack” the Supreme Court by creating three to five new justices. An independent judiciary, representing the third branch of government, would be within their grasp. The Democrats’ hold on power would then be consolidated.

Even that would not satisfy the new rulers. The next step would be to end the filibuster rule in the Senate, which presently gives the minority the ability to block measures put forward by the majority. Without a filibuster, those in the minority would be “power-less.” Every piece of legislation put forward by the Democrats would sail through to passage.

But there is one final avenue to a virtual dictatorship. It would be to eliminate the Electoral College, which would then allow the most populated states to determine the outcome of all future elections. Bingo! That would end accountability to the people in smaller states. If that happens, Democrats would have run the table on power. From there, they could eliminate or rewrite the Constitution or pass any legislation they dream up. There would be no stopping them. Checks and balances would be eradicated for the first time since the adoption of the Constitution on September 17, 1787.

With this consolidation of power, the federal government would become rather like California today, where Democrats dominate the affairs of State in perpetuity. Their laws are designed to guarantee that they will never lose another election. Year after year, power is held by Democrat governors and the heads of the various departments. They need not negotiate or compromise. What they want is what they get. The result is certifiable craziness. As a Californian for nearly 40 years, I watched one-party rule “up close and personal.” It is a form of tyranny. Based on what radicals have already told us about their plans, this is what we can anticipate if checks and balances are eliminated. First, an oligarchy (defined as a small group of ultra-powerful politicians) will control every dimension of our massive government, which will include an entire federal bureaucracy, and from

there unrestrained power over the economy, commerce, public education, higher education, the military, medicine, taxation, the IRS, labor, federal lands, water, agriculture, international affairs, the family, and the church. The cherished freedoms guaranteed in the Bill of Rights could easily be compromised or overridden. And from there, we would have...socialism.

To get a further taste of what is to come within this scenario, consider what Joe Biden has already told us. He said that on his first day in office, he will cancel every executive order enacted by President Donald Trump. That means the excesses and restrictions of the Obama administration will be restored in one fell swoop. All of the regulations that paralyzed the country for eight years will again be in place.

A draconian measure at the top of Biden's agenda is passage of the Equality Act.² Brace yourself, America. This could be coming your way. Here are just a few of the provisions of this egregious act:

- It would force people of faith to violate their consciences in regard to human sexuality and gender.
- It would also spell an end to sex-specific locker rooms and other private spaces, putting women and girls at risk.
- It would allow biological men to compete in women's sports.
- It would gut the Religious Freedom Restoration Act, which was passed in 1993 by a unanimous U.S. House and a nearly unanimous U.S. Senate.
- Children in our overloaded child welfare systems could be left without homes, if faith-based providers are forced to choose between abandoning their beliefs or closing their doors to children.
- Doctors, nurses, and other healthcare providers could be forced to participate in abortions or radical "gender transition" procedures. If they refuse, they could lose their licenses to practice.

Religious liberties would be assaulted. That is already operational in many states. As you know, many churches are shuttered, while bars, casinos, and abortion clinics are exempt as "essential services." This is just the beginning of the harassment and persecution to come.

Biden has also said he wants to "transgenderize" the military. Who knows where that will eventually lead? On and on the revolution will rumble. Another anticipated measure includes a return to partial-birth abortion, the Nazi-esque procedure whereby babies are murdered without anesthesia while in the process of delivery. Yes, that is what it means to allow babies to be dismembered through nine months of pregnancy.

Biden will have plenty of help in turning this country leftward. The current Senate Minority Leader, Chuck Schumer, who may become the next Majority Leader, said he intends to "fundamentally change the Senate and the nation."³ Where have you heard that before? Remember that former President Barack Obama promised repeatedly to "fundamentally change" the nation. Here we go again.

Kamala Harris, Biden's running mate, has said that she hopes that prostitution will be decriminalized throughout the nation.⁴

Of all these disturbing plans laid out for America if Georgia elects two more Democrat senators, I am most concerned about what will be done to the nation's children. The LGBTQ ideology, which already predominates in thousands of our nation's schools, will become even more radicalized. Parents will not be allowed to "opt out" their own flesh and blood, leaving millions of boys and girls to be taught a godless curriculum. Parents, does this worry you? An entire generation of young Americans is at risk as we speak.

Well, we have to ask, "Is there any good news in the road ahead?" Yes, what I have described today is a "worst case" projection for the future. It may not come to pass. I pray that it won't. [It did.] I don't claim to be a prophet. The courts or the runoff election could change our circumstances. Also, as Christians know, God is in control. He still cares about this great nation. I believe that repentance for sins and a return to righteousness are our only hope. Remember that ancient Nineveh was under divine judgment, but the people heeded the warnings of Jonah and turned from their wicked ways. The Bible tells us that Nineveh was spared and prospered for another 100 years because of their repentance. It is not too late for America, but the days are short.

There is another scriptural reference that is comforting when God may not appear to be paying attention to our troubles. I included that passage in my book, *When God Doesn't Make Sense*, as follows:

You'll remember the story of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego reported in the third chapter of Daniel. They incurred the wrath of Nebuchadnezzar by refusing to fall down and worship the idol he had set up. He

made it clear that if they again refused to obey his command, they would be thrown into a “burning fiery furnace.” Their response to that murderous threat is one of the most inspiring passages in Scripture. These godly young men said in reply:

“The God we serve is able to save us from it, and He will rescue us from your hand, O king. But even if He does not, we want you to know, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold you have set up.” (Daniel 3:17-18)

What courage these men showed in the face of a horrible death! What conviction! What faith! “God can save us,” they said, “but if not, we’ll serve Him anyway.” That is the biblical prescription in its simplest terms. He can heal the disease that grips my body—but if not, my faith will survive. He can correct my child’s disability, or save my bankrupt business, or bring my son home safely from the war. But if not, I will continue trusting in Him. That’s what Job meant when he said, “Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him.” (Job 13:15, NKJV).

This is where we are in January 2021. America is looking disaster squarely in the face at this moment in history. The runoff senatorial election in Georgia is breathtaking in its significance. Millions of believers are calling on the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob to save them from those who would destroy the nation we love. I believe He will answer our fervent prayers and preserve this Constitutional republic. “But if not,” we will continue to serve Him, knowing that His purposes are superior to our own. We can trust Him even when we can’t track Him.

Keep the faith, dear brothers and sisters. Continue praying for our beloved nation during this time of crisis. He will see us through.

Sincerely,

Dr. James Dobson’s
Signature

1 Lincoln, President Abraham, “Historic Documents: The Gettysburg Address,” UShistory.org, November 19, 1863, <https://www.ushistory.org/documents/gettysburg.htm>

2 Anderson, Ph.D., Ryan T., Nancy Pelosi’s “Equality Act” Would Undo Trump’s Most Significant Achievements, The Heritage Foundation, May 7, 2019, <https://www.heritage.org/gender/commentary/nancy-pelosis-equality-act-would-undo-trumps-most-significant-achievements>

3 Phillips, Morgan, Schumer: ‘Now we take Georgia, then we change the world’, FoxNews.com, November 7, 2020, <https://www.foxnews.com/politics/schumer-now-we-take-georgia-then-we-change-the-world>

4 Freiburger, Calvin, 2020 Democrat Kamala Harris endorses decriminalizing of prostitution after outcry from sex-work activists, Life Site News, February 27, 2019, <https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/2020-democrat-kamala-harris-endorses-decriminalizing-prostitution-after-outcry-from-sex-work-activists>

– Dr. James Dobson, Dr. James Dobson’s Family Talk ministry, 540 Elkton Drive, Suite 201 Colorado Springs, CO 80907. ©2020 Family Talk. International Copyright Secured. Permission granted. Family Talk is a ministry of the James Dobson Family Institute.

+ My post on Facebook on the march; Jan 14, 2021. Good march today in Washington DC, although it was a bit cold. Going in we saw a poster that just talked about “gun-toting fascists” – a complete lie. Saw a lot of red white and blue, all types of people peacefully praying and walking, very positive, people representing so many different nationalities: families with kids in strollers, China, Vietnam Poland, Iran, Taiwan, et. al. I talked with a guy with 2 dogs who was retired from the New York City police department, told him of my interactions with them, and how much I admired them. He told me that it was different now, that they had gotten rid of the good guys and put in “a different type” now. So sad!

A couple of our guys did personally witness the assault that happened in front of the capitol with one of our guys trying to help capture the perpetrator. Glenn said when he looked into his eyes he saw that he was dressed as a Trump supporter, but was definitely Antifa by his demeanor. I am so sorry to know of the violence that has happened. There is absolutely no question in my mind that this was from Antifa and those who wanted to do all they could to disrupt and discredit the march.

This was posted by Jeanne Sewell, “After living in DC, someone dropped the ball...capital police are no one to mess with usually. But interesting is the original intruders were also photographed at BLM in Minnesota and other protests.”

We need to support, most importantly our country, 2nd the Integrity of elections, and 3rd President Donald Trump. I have been to Washington DC many times for the Right-to-Life marches, but never have I seen as many police and never any National Guard, nor so many streets blocked off by big trucks (snow plows, et. al.) as this time. The DC mayor wanted to portray that we posed such a great “threat” – but why did she not call out any forces (even a fraction of the ones she had for us) to quell the riots she had several months ago that did so much damage? Such hypocrisy!

Please be in prayer for our country. As I have shared before, one thing I like to do is to open my bible in the morning and read Psalm 91 out loud. Then I pray that a hedge of protection around the United States against all enemies foreign and domestic, then a hedge of protection around President Trump [since he is our president] against physical and spiritual harm, and against all enemies. I’m really so sad to learn of some of the things that happened today.

[Note: This was my post and represents just my perspective, not that of Concerned Methodists. – AOM]’

+ Methodist Pastor Addresses U.S. Capitol “Desecration”: By the Rev. Andrew C. Thompson

Dear Church family,

“...with liberty and justice for all.” That is the way our Pledge of Allegiance to the flag ends: “with liberty and justice for all.” They are important words. In order for us to live in a nation where liberty and justice exist for all people, we must be a nation that abides by the rule of law and respects our democratic process of government. Prior to moving to Springdale in 2015, my family and I lived in the city of Marion—the county seat of Crittenden County. On the façade of the courthouse in Marion reads the statement, “Obedience to the Law is Liberty.” I always loved to read that sentence when I would drive by the courthouse, and I think it speaks to a deep truth. Without the rule of law, we will end up with the rule of tyranny. And the way that we would get there is through chaos, disorder, and violence.

What we witnessed in our nation’s capital yesterday almost defies belief. As I watched and prayed for our country throughout the afternoon, I found myself gripped by a strange mixture of emotions: anger, fear, and sadness. At one point, I saw an image of a rioter who had broken into the chamber of the U.S. Senate and was lounging in the vice president’s chair taking pictures with his phone. I have been in that chamber myself, and it is hallowed ground for our Republic. The disrespect that was shown in that moment, and the desecration shown to the Capitol building throughout the afternoon, are outrageous.

Following the conclusion of the Constitutional Convention in 1787, a woman supposedly asked Benjamin Franklin, “Well doctor, what have we got – a republic, or a monarchy?” Franklin replied, “A republic, if you can keep it.”

I believe the events of the past seven months or so have shown us how fragile our Republic can be given where we are in our history and culture right now. Last July, left-wing agitators repeatedly attacked and tried to burn the federal courthouse in Portland, Oregon. Yesterday, right-wing rioters broke into and vandalized the U.S. Capitol...

Comment on this post by Allen Morris on January 13, 2021 at 4:15 pm: I was disappointed when the pastor wrote: “Yesterday, right-wing rioters broke into and vandalized the U.S. Capitol.” If you were to check carefully, I believe that you would find that members of Antifa and others were there who came determined to create violence. In fact, some of those “right-wing” [people] tried to stop those who were causing damage.

When one guy smashed a window, a guy who was there to show support for President Trump tried to hold him and keep him from doing more damage; the rioter broke away from him and ran by a guy whom I knew. Glenn shouldered the guy in an attempt to push him to the ground, but as Glenn said afterwards, he looked into the guy's face that was filled with rage and thought, "He is not one of us."

A policeman standing nearby asked, "Why are you fighting yourselves?" Glenn replied, "He is not one of us. He is Antifa!" Then the policeman responded, "Oh. I understand now."

Sadly, it does appear that some pro-Trump marchers may have followed those bent on causing a disturbance – but the overwhelming pro-Trump marchers were peaceful, positive, and wanted to show support for him: families with children in strollers, Polish, Hispanic, Chinese, Iranians, "Blacks for Trump" – and many others.

I would ask that you be more careful in your statements before you make unfounded allegations that do not reflect the objective reality of what happened. That tarnishes your credibility.

– UMVoices on January 8, 2021. Editor's note: Today's UM Voices contributor is the Rev. Andrew C. Thompson, an ordained elder in the Arkansas Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church serving as senior pastor of First Church Springdale. 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.

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Just because you do not take an interest in politics doesn't mean politics won't take an interest in you!
~ Pericles (430 B.C.)

Global Outlook

If you think health care is expensive now, wait until you see what it costs when it's free! ~ P. J. O'Rourke

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Congo. Church marks end of measles, Ebola outbreaks.

KINDU, Congo (UM News) – As Congo continues to battle COVID-19, The United Methodist Church is celebrating two wins: the end of both a second Ebola outbreak this year and a measles epidemic that killed more than 7,000 children.

– Chadrack Tambwe Londe reports, as reported in the United Methodist News Weekly Digest; Nov. 20, 2020.

Liberia. Liberian pastors preach about drug abuse.

MONROVIA, Liberia (UM News) – The United Methodist Church is taking aim at substance abuse in rural parts of the country. As part of a new campaign, pastors in the Gbarnga District will spend about five minutes during every sermon talking about drug and alcohol addiction.

– E Julu Swen reports, as reported in the UM News Weekly Digest; Nov. 20, 2020.

Zimbabwe. Church cares for Deaf community amid pandemic.

HARARE, Zimbabwe (UM News) – Deaf church members in Zimbabwe and Liberia have adequate resources and information to fight the coronavirus thanks to United Methodist ministries.

– Eveline Chikwanah and E Julu Swen, as reported in the UM News Weekly Digest; Nov. 20, 2020.

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I don't make jokes. I just watch the government and report the facts. ~ Will Rogers