

Mid-Week Reflections

June 13, 2018

Thoughts About Us

First let me say how much I enjoyed facilitating worship with our Guatemala Team last Sunday. Thank you, Bob, Kem, Christi, Jon, Cecelia and Bob R. It was wonderful that Danny and Tricie from First UMC came to be with us as well. I do hope you are pondering attending the meeting on June 20th at 7:00 at FUMC to discuss the June 2019 trip. Just come to listen and be open to the possibility. No commitments are needed yet. The details on the cost estimate will be available and we may be able to offer some financial assistance to those who are able to make the trip. Maybe we can get creative...

By the time you read this, it is likely I will be in Wichita for the Great Plains UMC 2018 Annual Conference. Much of Annual Conference is like our yearly Church Conference but on a much larger scale. There are close to 1,000 voting delegates. You have 2: the pastor and the lay delegate. Again, this year Bob Resnik is our lay delegate and will be paying careful attention to the business and voting on your behalf. It does not look like anything of huge importance will be decided this year. We will listen to reports and approve the budget, remember those who died since we last gathered, celebrate the good work of those who are retiring and ordain the newly approved clergy. There will be several workshops focusing on "evangelism" so we will share any nuggets we learn when Bob and I return.

The only "big thing" is the not yet knowing about "The Way Forward," the special commission formed by the 2016 General Conference to address the different understanding of homosexuality in our denomination. Bob and I will be attending a "listening session" prior to the official start of the conference this afternoon (Wednesday). Again, we will let you know what we learn as we all anticipate the report or recommendation we are to receive in early July from the Council of Bishops in preparation for the February 2019 Special General Conference.

With that in mind, and understanding it is always good to come together to listen and learn from one another, I decided to offer a "hot topic" class in the heat of the summer and in the midst of our denominations "heat." The study will be based on a book titled, "God and the Gay Christian." The author is Matthew Vines, a young man from Wichita who grew up in the Baptist church and remains a committed Christian. The story focuses on his "coming out" to his family and his church. We do not all need to be of like minds to imagine the pain and confusion and courage it took for him to claim his authentic self.

I am planning to lead a group starting on Monday, July 9th in the evening. If there is enough interest, I would be willing to also facilitate a morning or mid-day group as well. We will meet four times. July 9 and 16...July 30 and Aug. 6th.

I have ordered 6 books from Amazon and they will arrive later this week. I can and will order more if needed. If you would like one, email me and I will save one for you. Funding of these books comes from the Evangelism/Discipleship Team. I am giving you a bit of a heads up so anyone interested will have time to read and ponder and pray before we begin meeting together.

A Few More Thoughts

Trustees have approved a few more improvements that will be starting in the next few days to weeks. The north wall of the gym and the doors and door frames will be painted this week. The sidewalk that runs parallel to our building will be torn out and replaced from the SHUMC sidewalk/entrance to the HOL sidewalk/entrance in July. New flooring, paid for by the "First Breakfast" funds will be installed in the youth room and the parlor.

Additionally, our new custodian was terminated last Friday. We have resumed the search for someone who will be able to manage the daily cleaning of HOL and weekly cleaning of the remainder of our facility. Meanwhile we invited AJ, Gavin and Devin Hendricks to do the work for us. They understand it is a temporary job but incredibly important to all of us.

Monday, June 18th: Children and Youth Ministry Team meets at SHUMC with Big Springs folks to continue discussion and plans about join ministry summer activities. Everyone interested is invited. We will meet at 7:00 in the Aldersgate Room or Wesley Suites if that space is large enough.

Wednesday, June 20th : 2019 Guatemala Mission Trip Planning. 7:00 @ FUMC

Echoes Deadline for July is next Wednesday, June 20th.

Blessings and peace,
Do Two Things.
Barb