



St. Paul's United Methodist Church

10401 Armory Avenue • Kensington, Maryland 20895

Phone 301-933-7933 • stpaulsk.org

February 27, 2019

Friends –

The Special Session of General Conference 2019 ended on Tuesday, February 26. Those days in St. Louis were emotional ones, both for the delegates who attended and for all who monitored the proceedings from afar. As pastors our hearts often rejoice with those who rejoice; likewise, as is so for many now, they most assuredly weep with those who weep. Wherever you are across the spectrum of emotions, we stand ready to hear you. Please contact either one of us if you need a sympathetic ear.

Two pieces of legislation were passed that may have a direct impact on St. Paul's and other United Methodist congregations. The first is a version of the "Traditional Plan," which keeps our current language on the practice of homosexuality as "incompatible with Christian teaching" and creates minimum sentencing guidelines for clergy who perform same-sex marriages or who are openly gay and partnered. The second is an "exit plan" that allows churches to leave the United Methodist connection in a more expedited process than the one currently outlined in the Book of Discipline. However, both pieces of legislation contain clauses that our Judicial Council has already ruled unconstitutional. This means that these proposals, or portions of them, may need to be re-written before they can become part of our church polity. Our Judicial Council meets again in April to consider and offer rulings on both items.

St. Paul's will begin the process of discerning our own next steps soon. Informed by the bishop's live-streaming town hall event on March 2, we will host our own information session at noon this Sunday, March 3. This will be held in the Sanctuary after we worship together. We pastors will summarize the events that took place in St. Louis. Marge Higgins (Lay Leader) and John Seabreeze (Church Council Chair) have been working with us to develop steps the whole congregation can take to process the legislation that was passed and to formulate a response that reflects who we collectively are as the body of Christ. Marge and John will outline those steps for us on Sunday when we gather.

Meanwhile, we encourage all to follow the bishop's plea to hold one another in prayer.

Peace,

Rev. Adam B. Snell and Rev. Kate Mackereth Fulton

Rev. Dr. Adam B. Snell
Senior Pastor
absnell@stpaulsk.org

Rev. Kate Mackereth Fulton
Associate Pastor
kfulton@stpaulsk.org

Mr. Micah Smartt
Youth Pastor
msmartt@stpaulsk.org

Mrs. Meg Baker
Director of
Christian Education
mbaker@stpaulsk.org

Mr. N. Thomas Pedersen
Director of Music
tpedersen@stpaulsk.org

Mr. Marvin Mills
Organist
mmills@stpaulsk.org

Dr. Erin Bone Steele
Office Administrator
stpaulsunited@stpaulsk.org

The PURPOSE of St. Paul's United Methodist Church is to invite and welcome all:

- To worship God
- To grow as disciples of Jesus Christ
- To love and support one another
- To do justice and serve compassionately in the world

"You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses."

Acts 1:8a