

# East Ohio Evangelical Fellowship

Chairperson: Betty Wilson  
Treasurer: Tom Snyder

Vice Chair: Jeff Gindlesberger  
Past Chairperson: Doug Beggs

**April 2019**

## **Chairperson's Word**

Greetings in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ:

General Conference, 2019 has come and gone and we are still trying to evaluate what happened and how we will continue to be united when we are so far apart in our beliefs and interpretation of scripture. When the Traditional Plan passed by 54 votes, the reaction by the One Church Plan supporters was surprise and anger. I feel in my heart and spirit that this conference being bathed in prayer brought about this result of the Traditional being passed. We prayed earnestly for God's will in this and that prayer never fails. I can't remember a General Conference being undergirded and covered in prayer as this General Conference. Thank you for praying. Praise God! He answers prayer!

If you attended one of Bishop Malone's information meetings on the March 9 or 10 or watched the simulcast and felt left out as a sincere traditionalist, let me encourage you by saying that God does not leave us out and never leaves us alone. This is His church and we will love and support it through our service, gifts, love and presence. Hang in there! We serve a mighty God! He is always faithful.

Now! The work continues as well as the prayers. We expect the Judicial Council to rule the Traditional Plan constitutional minus the parts we could not correct at General Conference when they meet in April. Prayers for Judicial Council as they meet. Also for Annual Conference when we meet at Lakeside in June. We will be electing delegates to 2020 General Conference and EOEf will have a list of delegates we are supporting who line up with our viewpoint and interpretation of the Word. This list will be out before Annual Conference and we need to get the word out to support these delegates. We are trusting you to help us. It is very important that we elect delegates who will stand on the Word and vote as God leads. There may be an effort to bring the One Church Plan back for a vote. We need to settle this once and for all or separate.

There is information in this newsletter about the EOEf banquet which will be on Monday at noon at Annual Conference off the Lakeside Grounds in Marblehead. We will be discussing strategy for voting and hopefully introducing delegates as well as receiving reports from 2019 Delegates. Please plan to attend.

This is a time to continue to fight for our church through prayer and witness and NEVER, NEVER, NEVER GIVE UP! May God bless our service and the ministry to which He has called us.

Betty L, Wilson, Chairperson

## **General Conference Reflections - Contending for the Faith**

Over the last year a number of Orthodox pastors and leaders have turned to the book of Jude as a parallel of what is occurring among us now. It is a short book with only one chapter. Using just 28 verses it has a lot to say to the church today. After the introduction, Jude writes these words in verse 3: "Dear friends, although I was very eager to write to you about the salvation we share, I felt compelled to write and urge you to contend for the faith that was once for all entrusted to God's holy people (NIV)." Then Jude immediately shares 2 issues in verse 4: 1] Grace is used as a license for immorality; and 2] there is a denial that Jesus Christ is our only Sovereign and Lord. If you would add: scriptural authority - and an unwillingness to hold true to covenants made before God and men, we would have covered many of the challenges we face in the United Methodist Church today.

We are a church with orthodox, moderate, and liberal Christians. These different understandings of faith and practice are not new for the Methodist Church. They have been present since the mid 1800's (see The Rise of Theological Liberalism and the Decline of American Methodism by James V. Heidinger II). Our division

## **General Conference Reflections - Contending for the Faith (continued)**

over our understanding of homosexuality is indicative of the greater theological divide between theologically orthodox and theologically liberal Christians. I want to look at these two groups.

The Orthodox wing of the church believes in the primacy of scripture. For many of us, scriptural authority is so important that we would be hard-pressed to be a part of a church that veers from its truth. We believe that Jesus was born of a virgin, performed miracles, died for our sins on a Roman cross, and that He bodily rose from the dead. We believe that Jesus is The Way, The Truth, and The Life and that the only way to the Father is through Him (John 14:6). We take seriously the covenants we made at ordination and consecration. It goes against our nature to break our vows to make a political or social statement. We earnestly desire to live into the Wesleyan balance of vital piety and social holiness.

Conservatives tend to be afraid to say it out loud or in print. We know, however, that theological liberals (progressives) live out their faith differently than we do. Progressives do not all believe the same, but here are some places they often veer from the Orthodox understanding of faith. Progressives may or may not believe in the Virgin birth, miracles, or the atonement. Some Progressives see Jesus as one way among many ways to God. Jesus' physical resurrection may or may not be important to their understanding of faith. Progressives may or may not believe in the primacy of scripture. Progressives often interpret scriptures through the lens of social and political changes. Progressives see themselves as the advocates for those changes. Progressives are deeply committed to their causes. Often they seek positions of conference and general church leadership to further those causes. Progressives have made it clear that the Traditional Plan and those who advocate for it stand in the way of equality and social justice.

It is no wonder that General Conference 2019 was so painful. These two diametrically opposed understandings of Christianity clashed in St. Louis in front of the whole world. The liberal [Progressive] One Church Plan before the General Conference had been rejected in various forms in the last several General Conferences. These recycled ideas were unlikely to bring a new and universally accepted solution. Even if the vote had gone the other way, the more honest proponents of the One Church Plan admitted that this was not a destination, but a stop on the road to full inclusion.

Because of last minute changes, I was the Clergy 1st reserve delegate. Reserve delegates and observers sat in the stands of a huge indoor football stadium. The voting delegates were seated on the field (floor). Observers were asked to show decorum and not applaud or disrupt the proceedings. Disruptions happened again and again with no consequences to the offenders. I watched the threats, name calling, and angry speeches by liberal delegates - often to thunderous applause by the observing crowds. I watched a protest whose participants included delegates on the floor responsively yelling to protesters in the stands. Parliamentary procedure was manipulated - [even bent] to the breaking point. Some people left angry and hurt because they did not achieve the change they desired. I went to St Louis expecting to be vilified for holding a traditional view of marriage and leadership. Therefore, I was disappointed, but not surprised when speakers and leaders repeatedly said that I do not love, because I do not share their views. I don't know anyone who was a part of the 2019 General Conference who left unscathed by the process of Holy Conferencing. I was deeply honored to be a part of the East Ohio delegation. I was truly glad, however, when this General Conference was over. I have a few things that I hope you will consider in the aftermath of this specially called General Conference.

First, we are still the same church today we were last year - and as well as for the last 47 years. We stand on the Orthodox understanding of marriage between one man and one woman. We continue to see the sacred worth of all people - while maintaining a biblical standard about homosexual practice and leadership. We have added some accountability around these issues. In addition, we have added a gracious exit clause. The legislation will be reviewed by the Judicial Council [April 23-26]. It is likely many positive things will take effect in January of 2020. (If you want a full description of what was done, there are great write-ups by Good News and the WCA.) Whether the Bishops, Boards of Ordained Ministry, and Jurisdictions will abide by these changes remains to be seen. (Some have already said they will not.)

Second, please don't buy into the narrative that you are unloving because you believe in the traditional Christian understanding of marriage and leadership. The truth is just the opposite. Be the person and the church who loves people right where they are. Then through your words and example, point them to holiness and a full life in Christ.

Third, to share an idea from Billy Abraham, seek to be a non-anxious presence. Be gracious to those who disagree. Show compassion to those who are hurting because of the decisions made at General Conference. We have a lot for which to be thankful! It is always best to show grace by choosing to take the high road.

Fourth, we will be voting for delegates to the 2020 General Conference this June. There will likely be a campaign to elect delegates who will reverse the decisions made in St. Louis. Please encourage your pastors and lay delegates to Annual Conference to vote for Orthodox candidates. We have a list of those persons whom we are endorsing in this newsletter. Please pass this list on to likeminded friends. Lastly, invite the Holy Spirit to be at work among us. Please pray for the United Methodist Church. May we never forget that every generation must contend for the faith that has been entrusted to it (James 1:3). May we never grow weary of contending for the faith or of doing good.

Blessings in Christ. Mike Grant EOEf Secretary

## CAMPS

### Senior High CYF—Christian Youth Fellowship

Sunday, June 16 – Saturday, June 22 Malone University—Canton, Ohio

For Students entering 9th grade through Graduating Seniors in 2019

Each summer, for one incredible week, teenagers come together at Malone University to join together in creative worship, intense prayer, passionate service, lifelong relationship-building, and compelling Bible study: in short, authentic Christian community. The theme for CYF '19 is "The Gospel: REMIX". Through our bible-based classes and small groups, as well as morning and evening worship services, we will be examining how in Christ we are invited to join in God's continuing work to bring new and renewed life to all the world. We expect between 100-120 students, in addition to the approximately 30 adult counselors and leaders. God is moving powerfully to break chains, to bring healing and new life, and to sanctify us all.

Check it out for yourself at [www.mycyf.com](http://www.mycyf.com).

Need more information? Contact Rev. Joe Burkhardt, Executive Director of CYF, Senior Pastor of Wedgewood UMC (Akron): [jb Burkhardt1976@gmail.org](mailto:jb Burkhardt1976@gmail.org) or 330-733-8707.

### Youth on the Way Leadership Academy

June 9-14, 2019 Malone University—Canton, Ohio

The Youth on the Way Leadership Academy will help high school students to deepen their understanding of vocation and calling, to explore ministry careers, and to develop as Christian leaders.

The six-day on-campus summer experience will include leadership training activities, intensive teaching of the story of Scripture, field trips to explore the intersection of faith and work, theological reflection, and worship to encourage deep consideration of God's calling.

In addition, the academy will not end with the on-campus experience. Once students leave, they will work with a leader in their home church to develop a ministry project that will both serve the local community and hone the student's leadership skills. At the conclusion of the service project, students will report on their activities and lessons learned, and these stories will be featured in Malone's *Youth on the Way* magazine.

Find out more by visiting the website at: <http://www.malone.edu/youthontheway>

### REV. ROBERT D. SNYDER MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP FOR SEMINARIANS

Established in memory of the contributions made to the East Ohio Annual Conference and East Ohio Evangelical Fellowship by the Rev. Robert D. Snyder.

The Scholarship Committee is seeking applicants for the fund that are entering or attending Seminary, on an Elder's track, with a heart to tell the world about the good news of Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. It is assumed that the intent of scholarship recipients is to make and mature disciples of Jesus Christ in the East Ohio Conference of the United Methodist Church. Applications can be downloaded from the EOEf website at <https://eoeffboard.wordpress.com> in DOC or PDF format. Information is available there, and questions will be answered at [snyderschol@zoominternet.net](mailto:snyderschol@zoominternet.net).

To make contributions or application information: Contact: Pastor Thomas D. Snyder  
1738 State Route 60 Ashland, OH 44805-9375 [revtds@zoominternet.net](mailto:revtds@zoominternet.net)



There are two fascinating lines of conversation I keep having with supporters of the One Church Plan. First, their disdain and disregard for the Traditional Plan. Second, a firm belief that only one third of the USA delegates voted in support of the Traditional Plan.

My response to the first reaction is simply to remind them the core of the Traditional Plan is currently part of our Discipline. WCA sought to strengthen the current Disciplinary paragraph regarding human sexuality in such a way as to assure adherence. Secondly, the belief only one third of the USA delegates voted for the Traditional Plan simply cannot be proven. It is an assumption. Time for assumptions have come to an end.

The opportunity has arrived for the traditionalist/evangelicals/conservatives to take a positive and proactive step to assure that at the next General Conference our delegation will truly represent the membership of the conference as well as the entire USA. The delegates we elect this year to General Conference will decide the future of the United Methodist Church. The East Ohio Evangelical Fellowship has prepared a list of highly qualified evangelical candidates for your consideration. I caution you not to vote for a person because they have more face time at our annual conference or hold a position of authority in our conference. We need a delegation that firmly believes in the authority and inspiration of the Bible. We need a delegation that respects and represents the vast number of conservative churches and laity throughout the world.

In addition, I want to encourage laity, ministers, and churches to join the Wesleyan Covenant Association. We need a voice of solidarity to make the denominational leadership aware of the conservative nature of the UMC. (<https://wesleyancovenant.org>) Take a few minutes and visit the webpage. Membership procedure is outlined for you. Churches will need to make the decision to join through Administrative or Council vote. Our East Ohio Wesleyan Covenant Association Facebook page is an excellent way to keep posted on what is happening in our conference.

I have maintained two realities that have helped keep me centered during this crisis of clashing worldviews. First, my high view of Scriptures preempts any and all emotional reasoning. Second, the awareness the LGBTQI political machine will not relent until the Simple Plan is adopted. I give our denomination under the One Church Plan eight years after the next General Conference before the entire denomination is one accord with the LGBTQI agenda. They will not relent until the entire denomination is compliant to their worldview. When you listen to our Bishop's 'prophetic' pronouncements one cannot deny the direction she will navigate the conference and denomination.

The issue before us presents a challenge that requires a response. Silence or denial will cripple the future of the Wesleyan movement. We have invested too many resources on this issue. It is time to step forward by voting for declared evangelicals as delegates to General Conference and join the WCA.

All for the Kingdom  
Chet Harris, East Ohio Regional Director of the WCA

### **Anti-Pornography Initiative**

*The East Ohio Evangelical fellowship is offering an Anti-Pornography Workshop for churches, church leaders and small groups. What are some of the effects on society and the individual human brain and soul when pornography takes hold? How widespread is the problem? What resources are there that we can share with those who are addicted to viewing porn? This session will answer these questions and more through video testimony, sharing by the presenters, and a resource guide. Pornography has become more widespread than any of us ever imagined it would, and homes and lives are being torn apart by its effects. But the church can respond in constructive ways, and point people trapped in this problem to healing and help that is found in Jesus. If you want to schedule a workshop, contact Pastor Harley Wheeler, 330-868-4940 or [revharleywheeler@hotmail.com](mailto:revharleywheeler@hotmail.com)*

# **E. O. E. F. Banquet**

East Ohio Evangelical Fellowship

## **NOTE TIME AND VENUE CHANGE!!!!**

The EOEF Banquet/Annual Meeting  
will be held in St. Joseph Catholic Church,  
822 Barclay St., Marblehead, Ohio,  
Monday, June 10<sup>th</sup>, at the lunch break after the morning  
service.

\$10.00

Beef, Turkey or Ham on Croissant  
Tossed or Pasta Salad,  
Cookies  
Beverage

Our Guest Speaker will be Rev. Keith Boyette,  
Wesleyan Covenant Association President

Please order tickets in advance by contacting:  
Pastor Tom Snyder, [revtds@zoominternet.net](mailto:revtds@zoominternet.net)  
419-632-4570 cell or 419-685-9166 home

Payment can be mailed to:

Pastor Tom Snyder, 1738 State Route 60, Ashland, OH 44805  
or made at 345 Central in Lakeside or at the door at banquet time.

## EAST OHIO EVANGELICAL FELLOWSHIP

204 N. Main Street  
Minerva, Ohio 44657

Non-Profit Organ.

U.S. Postage

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**THE WESLEYAN COVENANT ASSOCIATION INFORMATION INSIDE**

### **Delegates to the 2020 General Conference of the United Methodist Church**

The EAST OHIO EVANGELICAL FELLOWSHIP supports these persons as Delegates to represent the East Ohio Conference at the 2020 General Conference of the UMC. If you are a voting Delegate this year, please prayerfully consider supporting these brothers and sisters. Ask your church delegate to consider giving them their support.

#### **Clergy**

Scott Walsh  
Tom Snyder  
Angela Lewis  
Doug Beggs  
Erin Porter  
Byron Bufkin  
Steve Sullivan

Mike Grant  
Jon George  
Clint Quillen  
Quincy Wheeler  
Harley Wheeler  
Jerry Ernst

#### **Laity**

*Holly Grant*  
*Don Burdsall*  
*Lucinda Starr*  
*Bob Wagner*  
*Tom Abraham*  
*Olivia Sowers*

*Kathy Palmer*  
*Betty Wilson*  
*Ellen Burrows*  
*Rick Corder*  
*Jason Nies*  
*Byron Rock*

We recommend that you sign up for Up-to-Date Voting Information (via text) during Annual Conference. You may do so now by sending your phone number to Doug Beggs at [louisvillepeaceumc@gmail.com](mailto:louisvillepeaceumc@gmail.com)