



La Tijera

United Methodist Church Newsletter

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A Shocking Violation of the Spirit of the Gospel

This is an excerpt from a statement made by *Church and Society, The United Methodist Church*.

“In recent weeks, we have watched with horror at the implementation of policies from the Department of Justice regarding the treatment of people migrating to the United States.” Rev. Dr. Susan Henry-Crowe .

In early May, Attorney General Jeff Sessions announced a “zero tolerance” policy resulting in de facto family separation: children are immediately removed from their parents as they are apprehended after crossing the U.S.-Mexico border. And three days ago, the Attorney General also announced a policy reversing protections for asylum seekers fleeing domestic abuse and gang violence. Neither threat of violence is now considered grounds for asylum.

Furthermore — and in response to the ardent opposition from a wide array of faith communities — the officials responsible for these policies have recently used Christian scripture to justify their actions.

To argue that these policies are con-

sistent with Christian teaching is unsound, a flawed interpretation, and a shocking violation of the spirit of the Gospel.

Administration officials have used the Christian text of Paul’s Letter to the Romans — his first and weightiest epistle — to justify their actions. The ethical teachings of Romans 12-16 describe that consecrated Christian life requires the duties of love and hospitality. The commandment in Chapter 13 to “be subject to the governing authorities” is bracketed by preceding and following passages containing the command to “love.”

We are reminded by Paul that love is the way. Jesus is our way, our truth, our life. The Christ we follow would have no part in ripping children from their mothers’ arms or shunning those fleeing violence. It is unimaginable that faith leaders even have to say that these policies are antithetical to the teachings of Christ.

Christian sacred texts should never be used to justify policies that oppress or harm children and families.

Those using the Bible to justify these horrific policies, should also read the prophet Isaiah:

“Woe to those who make unjust laws, to those who issue oppressive decrees, to deprive the poor of their rights and withhold justice from the oppressed of my people, making widows their prey and robbing the fatherless.” (Isaiah 10: 1-3 NIV)”

During the writing of our newsletter, the policy of separating children from their parents and families was stopped. The UMC news service shared:

“United Methodist leaders expressed relief at President Trump’s executive order ending the separation of parents and children apprehended crossing into the U.S. illegally. But they cautioned that details of any policy shift are important and stressed that the executive order isn’t enough. MARCHA (Methodists Associated Representing the Cause of Hispanic/Latino Americans), expressed gratitude for all who stood against the policy. ‘However, we also believe that the detention of families is still inhumane and unacceptable.’”

“SUMMER AFTERNOON; TO ME THOSE HAVE ALWAYS BEEN THE TWO MOST BEAUTIFUL WORDS IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE.”

- HENRY JAMES

Dates to Remember . . .

07/01 at 9:30 a.m.—Breakfast Church!

07/04—Happy 4th of July

07/08 at 9:30 a.m.—Worship. Communion will be served.

07/08 at 6:30 p.m.—The Gathering

07/13 at 7:00 p.m.—Movie: “Making a Killing: Guns, Greed and the NRA”

07/15 at 9:30 a.m.—Worship

07/16 at 6:30 p.m.—Potluck dinner & small group study, “Short Stories of Jesus”

07/22 at 9:30 a.m.—Worship

07/23 at 6:30 p.m.—Potluck dinner & small group study, “Short Stories of Jesus”

07/29—9:30 a.m.—Worship



Short Stories by Jesus

“Short Stories by Jesus, The Enigmatic Parables of a Controversial Rabbi,” small group experience will begin on Monday, July 16th and end on Monday, August 20th.

The renowned biblical scholar, author of *The Misunderstood Jew*, and general editor for *The Jewish Annotated New Testament* interweaves history and spiritual analysis to explore Jesus' most popular teaching parables, exposing their misinterpretations and making them lively and relevant for modern readers.

Jesus was a skilled storyteller and perceptive teacher who used parables from everyday life to effectively convey his message and meaning. Life in first-century Palestine was very different from our world today, and many traditional interpretations of Jesus'

stories ignore this disparity and have often allowed anti-Semitism and misogyny to color their perspectives.

In this wise, entertaining, and educational book, Amy-Jill Levine offers a fresh, timely reinterpretation of Jesus' narratives. In *Short Stories by Jesus*, she analyzes these “problems with parables,” taking readers back in time to understand how their original Jewish audience understood them. Levine reveals the parables' connections to first-century economic and agricultural life, social customs and morality, Jewish scriptures and Roman culture. With this revitalized understanding, she

interprets these moving stories for the contemporary reader, showing how the parables are not just about Jesus, but are also about us—and when read rightly, still challenge and provoke us two thousand years later.

We will meet for six Mondays at 6:30 p.m. to share a potluck meal together, and then begin this DVD/Book study at 7:00 p.m.

The cost of the book is \$10.00; however, no one will be turned away due to a lack of funds. To reserve your book, please RSVP to “info@latijeraumc.org.”

Woo hoo—book study and a potluck!

5K for Suicide Prevention & Awareness

On Sunday, September 30th, we invite you to join us at the Alive & Running 5K Walk/Run for Suicide Prevention & Awareness—we will not hold our worship service in the sanctuary—we will be at the starting line of the 5K!

We will meet at the race location the morning of the 30th, lift up a prayer together, then walk, run, stroll, jog, laugh, and share stories as we raise awareness and money for suicide prevention.

If you would like to support Team La Tijera UMC—here's how you can do it! **Our Team page will be up and running by July 16th.** To register after July 16th, visit: <http://support.didihirsch.org/aliveandrunning> and search for Team La Tijera UMC or the name of a member of the Team and help us make a difference.

Pastor Lyda is once again the Team Captain and is looking forward to raising funds for suicide awareness and prevention.

Become a part of Team La Tijera—sponsor a walker—support suicide prevention & awareness programs!



Team La Tijera UMC 2017!

Ethics Over Politics

At La Tijera UMC, we value diversity and differences of opinion. We celebrate the many and varied political ideas and affiliations that are a part of this community, and we are diligent about making sure that everyone feels welcome and valued here.

La Tijera UMC also stands firmly on the side of the most vulnerable, the marginalized and the oppressed. We speak and act on behalf of justice and love, and will not be silent when we recognize great harm being done. Great harm is being done to children and families who were separated at our borders, and we invite you to speak out against this harm, regardless of where you stand on undocumented persons and immigration issues.

"Nazis separated me from my parents as a child. The trauma lasts a lifetime. What's happening in our own backyard today is as evil and criminal as what happened to me and my siblings as children in Nazi Europe. It needs to be stopped immediately."

- Yoka Verdoner, Holocaust survivor, California



OCCUPY DEMOCRATS

There are many agencies working on behalf of immigrant children's rights, the ACLU and KIND (Kids in Need of Defense) are just two, should you wish to explore ways to help.

A recent turnaround by the President happened on June 20th. Children will no longer be separated from their parents; but that this order would not end the "zero tolerance policy" and that families would be incarcerated together. This new incarceration of families could well be indefinite.

One form of cruelty has been substituted for another. Harm continues.

Making a Killing: Guns, Greed & the NRA

On Friday, July 13th at 7:00 p.m., La Tijera will host a screening of the film, **"Making a Killing: Guns, Greed and the NRA."**

This film tells the story of how guns, and the billions made off of them, affect the lives of everyday Americans. It features personal stories from people across the country who have been affected by gun violence, including survivors and victims' families. The film exposes how powerful gun companies

and the NRA are resisting responsible legislature for the sake of profit—and thereby putting people in danger. The film looks into gun tragedies that include unintentional shootings, domestic violence, suicides, mass shootings and trafficking—and what we can do to put an end to this profit-driven crisis.

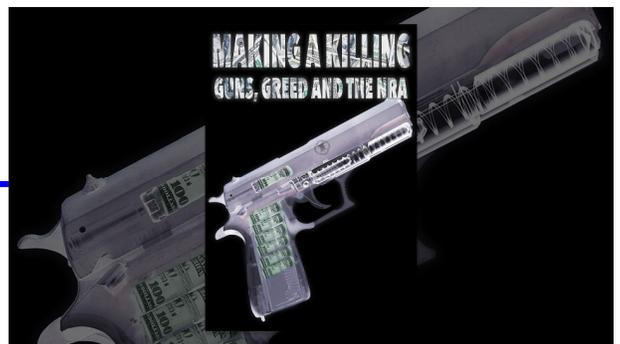
This is event is FREE! The documentary is not rated; however, we recommend attendees be high school age and older. Popcorn and

water bottles will be offered

To reserve your free ticket, please visit our website, Latijeraumc.org, and go to "News and Events" - or—you can visit Eventbrite.com and search for "Making a Killing."

We hope to see you on July 13th for "Making a Killing: Guns, Greed and the NRA."

#NoMoreSchoolShootings



You are Invited to Dream

On Sunday, August 26th immediately following worship, members and friends of La Tijera UMC are invited to come together to dream and vision where we would like to be for three months, six months, and 12 months into the future.

We will share lunch together—after all, you shouldn't vision on an empty stomach—and share our hopes and ideas. No idea is too wild for consideration!

We will use the questions posed in last month's Newsletter:

- What is our church founded on?
- What does that mean?
- How much prayer is being invested for our church?
- What has our faith, hope and love meant?
- Do we know God loves us?
- What is our special purpose?

- How do others see the effectual power of the Holy Spirit in us?"
- Who are the people around us who might not feel welcome at a church?
- Why do you suppose they don't attend?
- What problems in the community need to be addressed (racism, homelessness, education, marginalization of others, etc.)? - and—
- Could we do something about these issues?

Come dream something new on August 26th!

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We are a Reconciling church!
ALL are welcome here.



From Lyda . . .

Recent news reports have been tough to take. Families separated at the border, children being moved to “baby prisons,” and parents not knowing if or when they will see their children again. And suddenly ... a reversal of harmful actions and now children will no longer be taken away from their parents. Now the families will be incarcerated together. Still harmful.

We also learned that the administration intends to petition a court to revisit the landmark 1997 *Flores* settlement, which set forth minimum conditions for the treatment and detention of migrant children. The centerpiece of *Flores* requires that children be released from government custody as quickly as possible. Separately, it requires that those who are held have access to education, health care and recreation, and that they not be kept in confinement. The administration wants to dismantle those minimum child-welfare protec-

tions so that it can, in the words of the executive order, “detain alien families together throughout the pendency of criminal proceedings for improper entry or any removal or other immigration proceedings.” (The Nation, Julianne Hing.) Still harmful.

From April to May, over 1,900 minors were taken from their families at the border. This executive order has not changed anything in terms of reunification of families, and it appears that there will not be efforts made to reunite children who have already been separated from their families. Still harmful.

And speaking of “child, family and baby” prisons, California’s punishment economy is thriving. State taxpayers pay \$20 billion every year to operate one of the largest prison systems in the world.

As Robert Greenwald of Brave New Films states, “\$20 billion is more than enough to cover the costs of tuition

for every student attending public college in California. And it’s almost three times the state’s public spending on mental health services. The punishment economy is harmful, ineffective, expensive and overwhelmingly targets poor people of color. It’s time to invest in what really keeps communities safe: education, health, and preventative and rehabilitative services.”

We cannot remain silent in the face of injustice. Issues involving immigration and our prison systems, in addition to other issues that marginalize and cause harm, require people of faith to step away from political parties and step into the justice that we are called to pursue.

“But if anyone has the world’s goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God’s love abide in him? Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth.” (1st John 3:17-18).