



La Tijera

United Methodist Church Newsletter

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The Week that United Methodism Stood Still

This is excerpted from an article written by Rev. Jeremy Smith published on his blog, *Hacking Christianity*.

“The United Methodist Church has reached the apex point of its future. ... The truth is that the tenacity of United Methodism rests on the integrity of the plan that comes from the Bishops as they meet this week in Chicago, Illinois.

Without a strong plan that successfully navigates the tensions in United Methodism and blurs the fault-lines between the factions, plans will gain prominence that benefit those factions. ... But here’s what I think will happen as we wait with baited breath.

1. The UMC will continue to discriminate.

The question on the table is what will be a new configuration of authority and flexibility that will allow some pockets of United Methodism

to continue to discriminate against LGBTQ persons—and whether that will be palatable enough to gain conservative and moderate support (while obviously opposed by progressives who rightly oppose injustice anywhere, but we are a minority voice at this table).

2. It will be a moderate Course Correction.

The UMC has no appetite for change. Our votes on LGBTQ inclusion have been in the same 55/45 range for decades. That aversion to change impacts the scope of the Bishops’ work. The Multiple Branches model floated by A Way Forward would require over 20 Constitutional Amendments that would require a higher threshold of support. While there are elements of the branches model that are intriguing, the politics and structure stand in the way of it being a

viable option. For this reason, the One Church model is more likely to be the basis for conversation because it doesn’t require Constitutional Amendments.

I doubt the result will look like either plan.

3. The impetus for change will be Global, not US-only.

The UMC wants to be a part of these [global] economic and religious shifts as global church. But we can only do so if the global church sees value in remaining united with America entities that they may not be in alignment with over cultural values.

Since Christianity exported homophobia and persecution of LGBTQ persons to Africa, it only makes sense that we eradicate it from our UM polity before it becomes enshrined in the rising power structure.

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“LIFE STANDS BEFORE ME LIKE AN ETERNAL SPRING WITH NEW AND BRILLIANT CLOTHES.”

- CARL FRIEDRICH GAUSS

Dates to Remember . . .

05/02 at 7 p.m.—Loss Control Workshop at Torrance UMC

05/06 at 9:30 a.m.—Worship! Communion will be served, and it’s also new member Sunday. After worship, join together for a welcome celebration and make seed balls to Grow the Rainbow

05/06 at 6:30 p.m.—The Gathering. An hour of silence, scripture, prayer, meditation & Taize

music.

05/08 at 12n—PATH birthday celebration (West LA)

05/12 at 10:00 a.m.—Pre-Conference Briefing of the West District, Anaheim UMC

05/13 at 9:30 a.m.—Worship! We will honor the women in our lives during worship.

05/17 at 6:30 p.m.—Ad Council

05/20 at 6:45 a.m.—PATH West Los Angeles breakfast service.

05/20 at 9:30 a.m.—Worship

0527 at 9:30 a.m.—Worship & Pentecost Sunday.

05/28—Memorial Day. The church office will be closed.

05/30—05/31—The Bishop’s Transitions Workshop

Breakfast Church

On April 29th, La Tijera's Sunday morning worship service looked a little different than it usually does—because it took place around a breakfast table!

Breakfast Church happens outside of the sanctuary in a more casual setting and includes breakfast. Breakfast Church is informal, with space at the table for everyone.

At Breakfast Church, we explore scripture through questions and con-

versation, and work through how scripture is relevant in the 21st century and how it can impact our lives.

Our next Breakfast Church will take place on Sunday, July 1st.

We look forward to seeing you at Breakfast Church.



Grow the Rainbow

After worship on Sunday, May 6th, not only will we enjoy a celebratory reception welcoming Michael Hagar into membership, we are going to make our own Seedles Seed Bombs! On Earth Day, we gave away seed bombs to help bees, butterflies and hummingbirds. They were such a hit, that we decided we would hold a workshop on how to make your own seed bombs (or seed balls). You can make a gift of seed bombs for Mother's Day, make a gift for a friend, or make a gift for yourself—and they will be a gift to the

environment by producing wildflowers.

We are joining in Seedles seed company's mission to "... inspire kids to grow one billion wildflowers to bring back the bees and ensure a sustainable food system for their future." Seedles is on a mission to bring back the bees, which is why they created Seedles. Seed bombs make it fun and easy to help solve the bee decline problem. Growing wildflowers is the #1 way to save the bees. We can grow wildflowers and continue to demand regulations banning pesticides and weed killers.

Seed bombs are made out of seeds, compost and clay. All the ingredients to make your own seed bombs with Seedles supplies will be provided, including gift bags if you would like to give your seed bombs as a gift. It's free, it's fun, and it's a way for all of us to help grow the rainbow for the earth.

Over 250 million wildflowers have been planted with Seedles seed bombs so far.

Come join together on May 6th to Grow the Rainbow!

Save the bees!

Update from the Holy Hive

Last Spring, in response to La Tijera’s growing concern about bees dying at an alarming rate (the endangered species category!) we made a decision to enter into urban beekeeping. Pastor Lyda and Dawn Jacobs embarked on 10 months of Beekeeping 101 classes at The Valley Hive in Chatsworth. During that training, La Tijera became the proud keepers of 10,000 bees and the Holy Hive was set up in Pastor Lyda’s backyard. The Holy Hive was

doing very well until late in November, when it experienced hive collapse. This is not uncommon, but it was devastating. Once a hive collapses (basically, the hive as a unit dies) you have to wait until the next Spring to start again. We are happy to report that with money received from Jerry Anderson, Pastor Lyda’s dad and church member, who passed away in November, the Holy Hive is starting again with a new addition—Jerry’s Bees! We have added another hive, so we are caretakers of two thriving

hives—the Holy Hive and Jerry’s Bees! So far, things are going well in both hives—the queens are laying eggs, pollen is being stored, and honey is being made. We are excited that the bees are back!



Good Stuff

Thanks to donations received, we recently purchased two banners and a “Welcome” intro clip for our website and social media.

Visit our website at latijeraumc.org to check out the new “Welcome” intro—it’s on our home page—click on “Welcome Message” to view. Heart-felt “Woo hoos!” are in order—\$522.00 was raised on Easter Sunday for suicide pre-



vention & awareness programs at Didi Hirsch Mental Health Services, and \$170.00 was raised for Native American

Ministries on April 15th. Well done!

New Members

La Tijera UMC welcomes our two newest members: Lynn Scott (joined April 8th) and Michael Hagar (joining on May 6th).

We celebrate Lynn and Michael and say, “Welcome and thank you for choosing La Tijera as your church home!”



La Tijera United Methodist Church

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We are a Reconciling church!
ALL are welcome here.



The Week that United Methodism Stood Still (cont.)

By removing the language prohibiting LGBTQ persons from fully participating in the life of the church, we offer a globally connected church that cares about all human rights violations inside the church and outside in culture. It sets us against some cultural forces now, but it positions us as the moral center to speak with authority against all injustices.

I wish for a revolutionary moment for the church, one that captures the imagination and propels us forward through the divided culture and toxic politics. But I know evolutionary processes are more in the DNA of the people called Methodists, and we will see if nurture overcomes our nature, or if we truly do have a bold prophetic leadership that we have yearned for until this moment.

May we move forward together, better together, and leave no one sacrificed on the unjust alters of unity, for the sake of our mission to trans-

form the world through disciples of Jesus Christ.”

*To read the entire article, visit
hackingchristianity.net*

...

Along with Rev. Jeremy and so many others in the UMC, I believe that we must find a way to be a beacon of justice and inclusion, not only in the church, but throughout the world. Along with so many others in the UMC, I wonder if we will actually become that beacon, or if politics and the culture of “very slow to change” will put out the light of radical welcome.

There are so many things to celebrate which promote inclusion ... at the end of April, the Trans Wellness Center opened in Los Angeles; there are 903 Reconciling Communities and 35,019 Reconciling Individuals in the United Methodist Church; and my children’s lives include friends who are non-binary, openly identify in the LGBTQ community, reflect different religions, come from different countries, and

represent many different cultures. I see these things, and I have hope that the world is changing for the better.

And yet ... this past year, we have seen LGTB protections in the work place stripped or weakened, racism reflected in our government’s policies, sexism is still a part of most women’s daily existence, and anti-immigrant and anti-Muslim sentiment is found everywhere.

I have been told that I am going to hell because I believe in same-gender marriage and that I obviously don’t know how to read and interpret the Bible because I do not believe that the Bible is the **inerrant** Word of God. I have been told these things by church-going United Methodists.

I pray that indeed we can find a way forward—a way which reflects God’s inclusive love and justice for everyone—and that we find a way to listen to and value each other, even when we don’t agree. Pastor Lyda