

CROSSROADS

Guided by God's radical love for all, Bethany seeks to... Offer sanctuary, Inspire personal transformation, Foster a faith community, and Engage locally and globally for social justice.

Bethany United Methodist Church Newsletter

July 2018

'Unity Is Not Our Highest Priority'

By Bruce Pettit

Lay Member to Annual Conference

Dave Bennett, a retired district superintendent in the California-Nevada Annual Conference, rose in the plenary session before 1,000 persons gathered in Modesto last month, and flatly declared: "Unity is not our highest priority."



Rev. Dave Bennett,
former Sacramento area
District Superintendent
(*"Unity is not our highest
priority."*)

At issue was the possibility of schism in the United Methodist Church if a recommendation from the Council of Bishops – to let every church and region adapt ministry to its context, thus finally allowing LGBTQ official acceptance in some places – passes at a special General Conference next year, and is not rescinded at the regular General Conference in 2020.

A proposed resolution sponsored by the Manteca and Roseville pastors had declared "unity" as a high priority of Christ's church. But Rev. Bennett countered that unity must fall if it excludes people. Brian Adkins, the pastor at Open Door UMC in Richmond, told plenary that "the definition of unity was not determined" at the Council of Bishops' Commission on the Way Forward (where he represented California-Nevada). The Cal-NeV proposed resolution was defeated – essentially declaring that inclusion has higher value than unity.

I remember General Conference in Pittsburgh in 2004. That was the first time a policy was debated – but defeated – that the General Church is "of two minds" on LGBTQ issues. The policy's passage would have essentially, 14 years ago, adjusted the church to "contextuality" for ministry, which is now being sought, in various regions. The defeat sent that General Conference into serious talk of a split right then and there. As leaders hashed things out, they produced what, to my mind, was a phony resolution on unity. General Conference, so much rattled, passed it 95 to 5 percent. The body rose and held hands aloft to sing "Blessed Be the Tie that Binds." (*cont.*)

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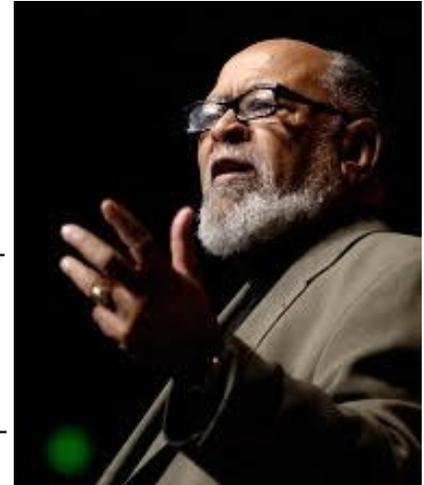
I was an alternate delegate, not able to vote in that sobering moment. The person next to me in the observer stands grabbed my hand and forced it into the air with hers. I did not rudely pull away, but I grimaced and did not sing.



Bishop Minerva Carcano
("Glide is a United Methodist Church")

However, the big issue – by the gossip – at this 2018 Annual Conference Session, was what to do with Glide. Bishop Minerva Carcano wants to end the *de facto* practice of former pastor Cecil Williams still running that church, 18 years after his official retirement, instead of letting the appointed pastor take charge. She removed two appointed UMC clergy from Glide for 2018-19, causing, in the whole Bay Area, great negative publicity for the UMC. The basic agreement, among the people I gossiped with, was that Bishop Cancano was right in her action but deaf in not expecting the negative reaction.

The bishop also urged, in the closed clergy session, that a proposed resolution on Glide's ministry not be passed. The resolution read that the Cal-Nev conference affirms "Glide's radical inclusivity, its social witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ, and its ministry with the poor as authentic representations of United Methodism to which we should all aspire." The resolution was defeated in legislative section by 85 percent, and its Glide sponsors did not force the issue before the whole body – deciding that there was no point in further stirring hard feelings.



Rev. Cecil Williams, pastor of
Glide Memorial UMC
(1963-2000)

Bethany's pastor Sadie, for greater awareness, did however bring to the whole body the Philippine Solidarity Task Force resolution on Jerome Aba – though it had passed 89% in legislative section. Aba was invited by the UMC's General Board of Global Ministries to speak in the U.S. about the lawless government killings in the Philippines, but was detained in April at San Francisco International Airport in what appeared to be a pre-arrangement between the Trump administration and the Filipino government. Michael Yoshii, pastor of Buena Vista UMC in Alameda, before the whole body, praised the protesters at SFO, who were appalled at this detention. He said that Rev. Stone eloquently represented Cal-Nev to the news media.



Rev. Michael Yoshii,
pastor Buena Vista UMC,
Alameda
("Sadie Stone eloquent
for Jerome Aba")

On a positive note, the financial officers told the gathering that, "for the first time in living memory," Cal-Nev paid in full its apportionments to the General and Jurisdictional church – as tithe collections in 2017 rose by 4.7 percent over 2016. That exceeded the finance council's budgeted revenue. This despite local church membership in the conference dropping from 107,203 in 1972 to 71,004 in 2016. The number of local churches also dropped from 382 to 354 in that period. The membership decline is almost entirely among those who would identify as "white," according to the

conference statistician. (cont.)

The conference passed unanimously a resolution denouncing the U.S. Customs and Border Patrol for separating families at the border. It was sponsored by the Conference Committee on Reconciliation, which insists that it speaks to more than LGBTQ issues.

Two personal notes:

(1) Shinya Goto, who began a pastoral internship at Bethany in 2000, is now district superintendent of the El Camino Real District (the peninsula). He reported to the conference that he has opened a district office in San Jose, and later chatted with me that all five districts intend to open district offices. That tugged at me, because the conference closed seven district offices in 2010, allegedly to save money, and laid me off as an administrative assistant. Rev. Goto told me the real difference is probably episcopal leaders' different styles.

(2) For a second year I was a member of the plenary praise band – 12 people this year, with me among its six singers. Just as last year, I am bringing back some cool new songs for Ray to consider.



Rev. Shinya Goto,
El Camino Real District
Superintendent
(Former Bethany
pastoral intern)



Vacation Bible Study

August 6th-10th

In August, Bethany will host a vacation Bible school for kids age 4-5th grade. We'll need your help making it happen. If you're interested in helping with the prep or volunteering any of the days during that week please let Pastor Sadie know.



Stories | Music | Games | Crafts | Science



CHANGEMAKERS
VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL SUMMER CAMP
BETHANY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

AUG. 6TH-10TH

9:30AM-12:30PM
AGES 4 YEARS - 5TH GRADE

1270 SANCHEZ STREET

Sliding Fee \$0-\$30
Find more info
& Sign up
www.bethanysf.org



Dear Ones,
You are invited to

**Carole and Gloria's
Commitment Ceremony**

Sunday, July 29, 2018

Bethany United
Methodist Church
1270 Sanchez Street
at Clipper

Worship begins at 10:45 a.m.

Ceremony to commence
following worship
about 12:15 pm.

Street and valet parking
available.

Reception to follow.

Gloria
510.823.7198 cell/text
Carole
415.308.6699 cell/text



**SF-MARIN
FOOD BANK**

**Bethany Cares
SF Food Bank**

Sign up with Josh Webster;
webste28@gmail.com;
517-410-7034.

Our upcoming volunteer date is:
Saturday, October 13: 12-2 pm



**United Methodist Women's
Unit Forming**

Bethany is in the process of forming a United Methodist Women's unit. We will be focusing on Social Justice and our fellowship/friendship. A meeting to determine our schedule and interest activities will be held in September, after summer vacations. Thus far, five of us have voiced interest with a Bethany United Methodist Women's unit. If you'd like more information or are just curious contact Kay Nemeth, KNemeth@aol.com. Blessings, Kay

Budget Update

The charts below give a picture of our **Church Operating Budget for 2018**.

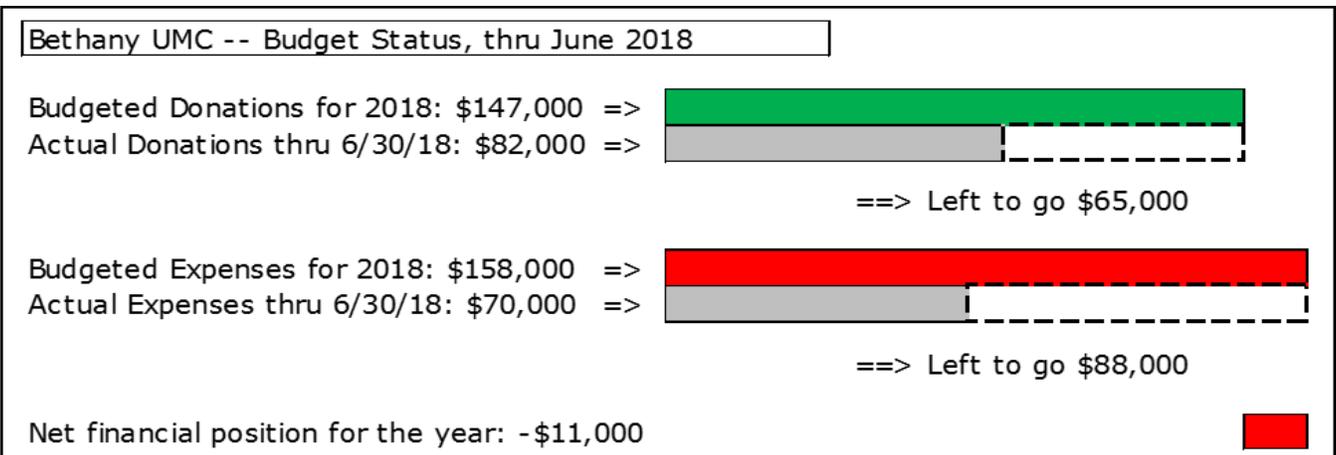
Most of our donations are from members who pledge -- \$129,000 or 90% of our donations are from pledgers. In total, 31 members pledge. Pledges are critical for the life of our church. For those who can commit to a pledge, this really helps us plan for our future – knowing that we have your financial commitment to our future. Every dollar helps.

The majority of our expenses (90%) are for our staff (Sadie, Ray, and Ann) and to support the greater Methodist Church with our tithe. Our tithe is very important for our standing in the greater denomination. We are very fortunate that our building costs are covered by our rental income, and carefully managed by the trustees.

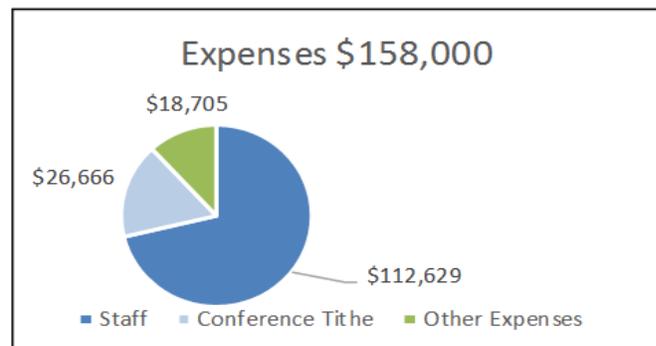
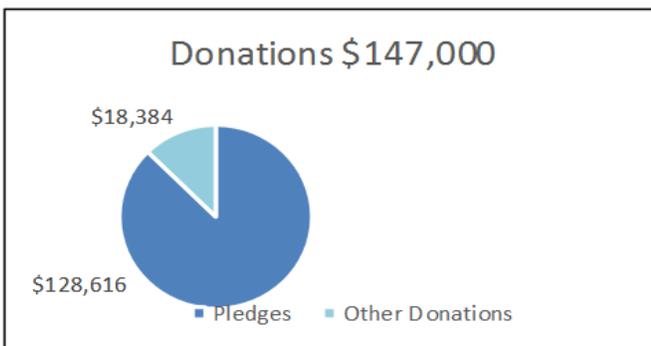
Thru June, total donations have been \$82,000 and expenses have been \$70,000. Remaining donations for the year need to be \$65,000 to meet our budget. Our expenses are higher in the second half of the year due to the holidays and to fulfill the remainder of our annual tithe to the Conference which we do in December. June was a strong month for us with donations of \$22,000 from current pledgers.

Thank you!! We really need your support! Thank you to everyone for all your financial support. Your financial gifts are the foundation for our services and community. We need a strong Bethany UMC in the world today – more than ever!

Kind regards, Steve Wereb, Finance Chair



Annual Budget



JULY 2018

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|--|--|---|---|---|--|--|
| 1 Food Bank Collect 10a Worship 1045a Fellowship 1145a | 2 Moldovan PS (830a-530p) Moldovan New | 3 Moldovan PS Curryw/ Worry 1-5p Bethany Knits 7-830p | 4 | 5 Moldovan PS Bell Appeal 7-930p Al-anon 7-9p | 6 Moldovan PS | 7 |
| 8 Worship 1045a Fellowship 1145a | 9 Moldovan PS A Little Yum 8a-4p | 10 Moldovan PS A Little Yum 8a-4p Curryw/ Worry 1-5p | 11 Moldovan PS A Little Yum 8a-4p SF Sangha 7-9p | 12 Moldovan PS A Little Yum 8a-4p Bell Appeal 7-930p Al-anon 7-9p | 13 Moldovan PS A Little Yum 8a-4p | 14 |
| 15 Worship 1045a Fellowship 1145a | 16 Moldovan PS A Little Yum 8a-4p | 17 Moldovan PS A Little Yum 8a-4p Curryw/ Worry 1-5p Bethany Knits 7-830p | 18 Moldovan PS A Little Yum 8a-4p SF Sangha 7-9p | 19 Moldovan PS A Little Yum 8a-4p Bell Appeal 7-930p Al-anon 7-9p | 20 Moldovan PS A Little Yum 8a-4p Moldovan Graduation 330-530 | 21 Overnight Youth Group thru 7/22 |
| 22 Worship 1045a Fellowship 1145a | 23 A Little Yum 8a-4p | 24 A Little Yum 8a-4p Curryw/ Worry 1-5p | 25 A Little Yum 8a-4p SF Sangha 7-9p | 26 A Little Yum 8a-4p Bell Appeal 7-930p Al-anon 7-9p | 27 A Little Yum 8a-4p | 28 NVDA Training 1-5p Gloria & Carole Ceremony Rehearsal 5-10p |
| 29 Worship 1045a Fellowship 1145a Gloria & Carole Commitment Ceremony 1215p | 30 | 31 Curryw/ Worry 1-5p | | | | |



Contact Us

If you have articles, photos or announcements that you would like to share with the Bethany community, please contact us!

Bethany United Methodist Church

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bethanysoffice@gmail.com

Visit us on the web at
www.bethanysf.org



Happy July Birthdays!!

10: Joshua Webster
16: Julia Friant-Nelson
20: Margaret Elam
21: Martha Gould