



Theology, Sexuality and the Future of the United Methodist Church

As you are aware, the United Methodist Church has been struggling with the issue of human sexuality – specifically full inclusion and ordination of LGBTQ persons – for decades. Eighteen months ago, a 35-person taskforce representing global Methodism – known as **The Commission on the Way Forward** – was instructed to meet and discuss the issue, and the impasse that has strangled our denomination for years.

The Commission will present their deliberations of the process, and their recommendations for the future of the church to the Council of Bishops. The Council will, in turn, present those findings to a special *called* session of General Conference next year. (General Conference, held every four years [or *quadrennium* in UMC-speak], is the only body within the United Methodist Church that is authorized to speak on behalf of the whole church).

The called General Conference in 2019 will vote on the proposal from the Council of Bishops/Commission on the Way Forward. And I'm sure the regularly-scheduled General Conference in 2020 will explore ways to move forward in the wake of that decision.

We all know this is a thorny and delicate issue, and sadly no solution will

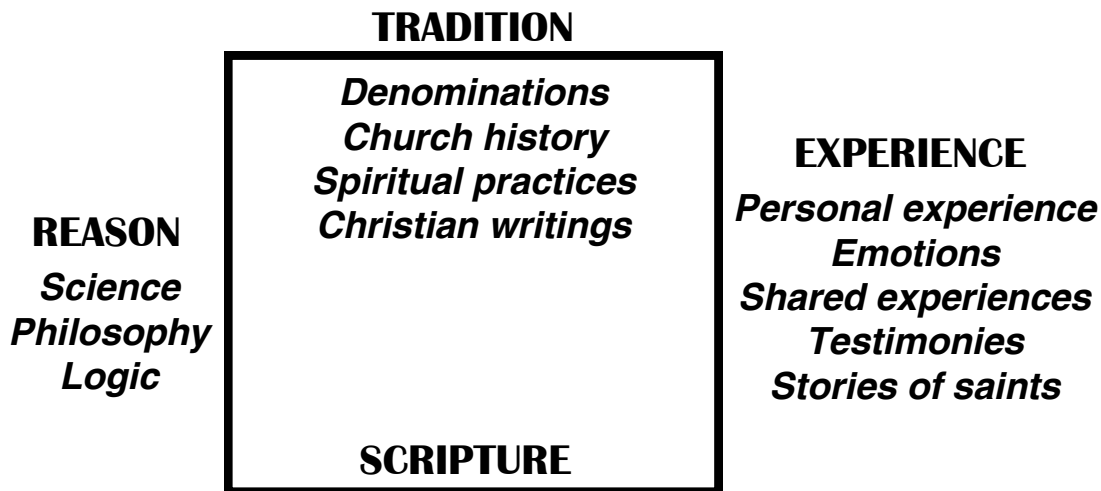
continued

From Pastor Todd, continued

satisfy everyone. Many of you know LGBTQ persons and so this issue hits close to home. We're aware of other denominations that have moved to fully include LGBTQ persons in leadership and ordination. There are people who have left – and continue to leave – the United Methodist Church as a result of this issue. As I said, it's been an albatross around the neck of our denomination since the 1970s.

But United Methodists have a way to think *theologically* about issues. There is a construct called the *Wesleyan Quadrilateral* that aids us in doing this. The Quadrilateral was not created by Wesley himself, but by theologians who synthesized Wesley's theological perspective.

There are four sides to any quadrilateral, and there are four components that Wesley believed helped Christians to know God better and think theologically about faith and its practice. They are (in order of Wesley's emphasis) *Scripture, tradition, reason and experience*.



To help us better understand the issue of human sexuality in the United Methodist Church, I will be presenting a sermon series in July entitled "It's Hip To Be Square" which will allow us to explore this contentious issue through the four aspects of our Wesleyan theology. While this series will in no way answer every question, it will hopefully give us a stronger theological base from which to consider the future of United Methodism as it relates to the decisions of the called General Conference next year.

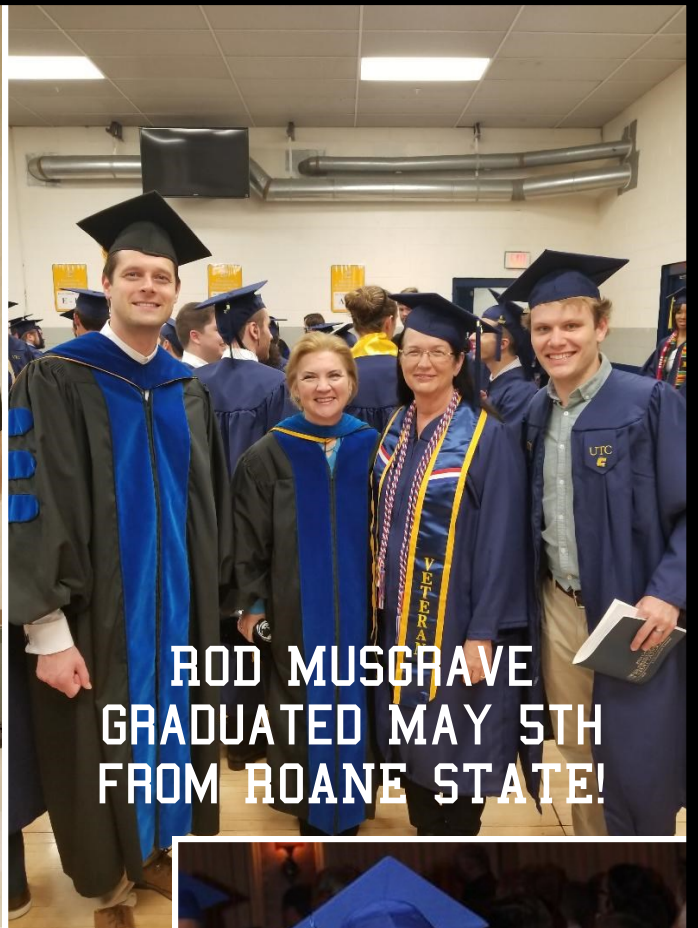
I hope we'll gain more insight by considering our church's future from these four angles. I hope you'll bear with me as I present this series since I'm discovering how much I still need to learn about the issue. And I encourage you to continue to be in prayer for our denomination. We are facing a significant point of transition that will shape who we are for a long time to come. May God grant us wisdom, patience, guidance – and as always, "Open Hearts, Open Minds, Open Doors" – no matter what happens.

Congratulations! **GRADUATES**

BARBARA MUSGRAVE
GRADUATED MAY 5TH
FROM UTC!

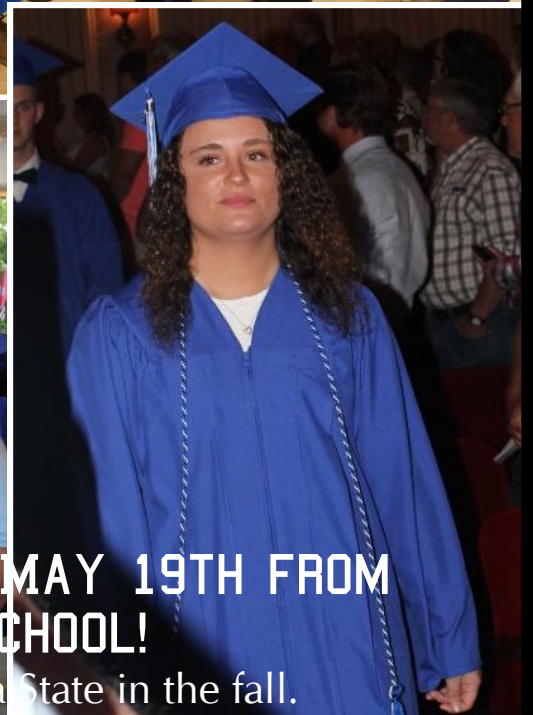


ROD MUSGRAVE
GRADUATED MAY 5TH
FROM ROANE STATE!



BAILEY NELSON GRADUATED MAY 19TH FROM
SALE CREEK HIGH SCHOOL!

She will be attending Chattanooga State in the fall.



Congratulations! **GRADUATES**



Kellsea will be attending Chattanooga State in the fall.

**KELLSEA HENDRIX
GRADUATED MAY 19TH FROM
SALE CREEK HIGH SCHOOL!**



**BRODY DOTSON
GRADUATED MAY 22ND FROM
SODDY ELEMENTARY!**

He will be attending Sale Creek Middle School in the fall.



June Birthdays

9 Sid Parrott
11 Becky Stulce
Hannah Musgrave
Kathy Vinyard
12 Marti Hendrix
15 Daisy Mulkey
Marie Musgrave
17 Carl McLaughlin
24 Matthew Kingrea
28 Matt Lyon



June Anniversaries

4 Charles & Gena Bain
6 Arnie & Becky Stulce
Doug & Karen Yeatts
11 Tim & Leann Seale
12 Andy & Jamie Nelson
17 Jeff & Karen Ward
20 Buck & Jean Johnson
24 Vic & Sharon Rogers

SUMMER SCHEDULE

- Wednesday evening meals will resume in September.
- First Sunday breakfasts WILL CONTINUE through the summer.
- Martha's & Mary's Bible study will not meet during the summer but will resume in September.
- Pastor Todd's Bible study will not meet during the summer. He will begin a new study in the fall.



More Haiku from our 'Tweens'

As a reminder to anyone who wants to create your own Haiku poetry, it is composed of three lines. The first line has five syllables; the second line has seven syllables; and the third line has five syllables.

In answer to this Haiku question, the Tween kids wrote:

**Tell about your gifts;
Which of your strengths can you use
for worshipping God?**

Brody Dotson wrote: **I love to sing songs. I like to pray with the Lord. I like to forgive.**

LET'S PLAY

CAPTION THIS PICTURE!



What are Arnie, Andrew and Ray up to (besides the obvious)?

Think up a funny caption for this picture and email it to Pastor Todd at revjtodd@yahoo.com.

We'll run some of the best ones in the next edition of "The Vine."



Longtime members Jim & Virginia Gram recently celebrated several milestones.

On July 19 of last year they celebrated their 65th wedding anniversary. On February 13th, Virginia celebrated her 92nd birthday, and most recently on April 24th, Jim celebrated his 90th birthday.

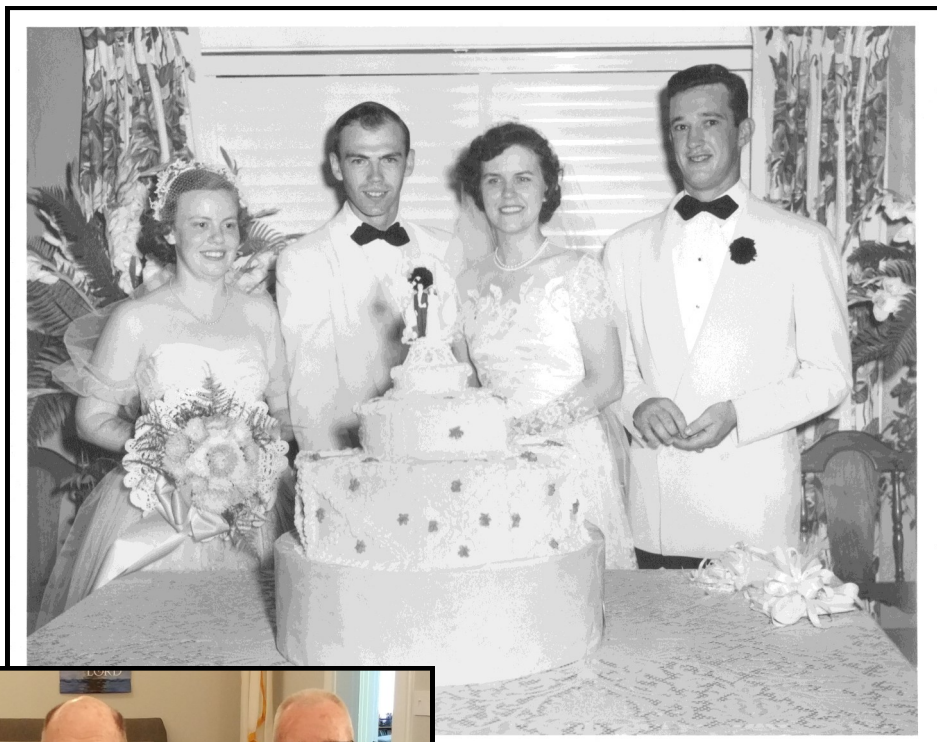
A friend, Ann Wilson Haynes, wrote an introduction about the couple that is truly a wonderful love story. She tells about Jim growing up in Syracuse, New York, and being the Valedictorian of his high school class. He went on to get his degree from Syracuse University before joining the Air Force. He developed a friendship with Gene Elliott while stationed at Biloxi, Mississippi. This led to Gene setting up a blind date with his cousin, Virginia, which in turn led to an amazing life for this wonderful couple.

During their 65 years together they have seen many changes. A few of them are:

- Gas was 20¢ a gallon
- You could buy a new Buick for \$2,280 and a first-class postage stamp for 3¢.

Jim & Virginia became the parents of four children: David, Cathy, Billy, and Alan. The couple has four grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

According to Mrs. Haynes, they are truly



living examples of the late Rev. Tom Lynch's saying, "*Put legs on your prayers.*"

In the words of Mrs. Haynes, "From my personal observations, they are shining examples of what true love & commitment mean, not only to each other, but to their Lord and they still *hold hands*. What a life, what a legacy!



VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL
JUNE 18TH - 22ND **6:30 - 8:30 PM**



"Spring Anew"

by Claudia Inwood

Silently walks the steps of life, through days of peace and earthly strife.

Take time to enjoy them every one, as if your life has just begun.

Spring rain falling in droplets clear, scent of flowers blooming on the air.

A gentle breeze flutters on your face, as you hear the bird's song everyplace.

A child's laughter, a sweet hug or two, of those who mean so much to you.

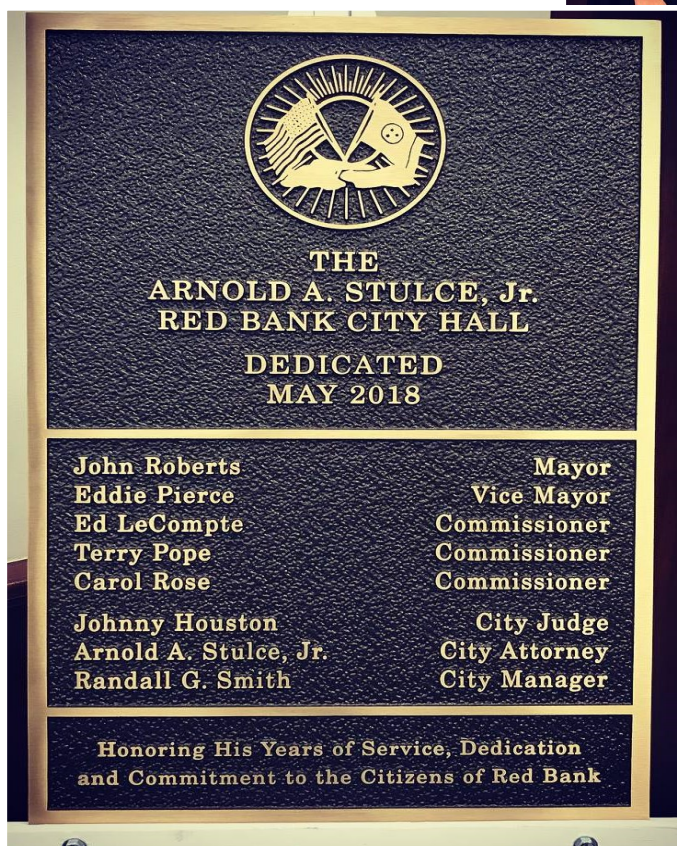
Quiet time in night's drowsy sleep, when you pray the Lord my soul to keep.

Faith, love and hope, God's gift to you, hold each one dear each day anew.

But whatever may ever come your way, keep your precious memories tucked away.

Arnie Stulce honored by the City of Red Bank

Arnie Stulce was honored recently by the City of Red Bank for his 33 years of service as the City Attorney. City Hall has been named The Arnold A. Stulce, Jr. Red Bank City Hall as a tribute to his dedication and commitment.



Congratulations!
Arnie

COMING THIS FALL...

Pastor Todd's new Bible study that includes power-hungry political leaders, child abuse, moral confusion, male politicians chasing women, senseless violence, social chaos, and uncertainty over the roles of men and women (to name just a few).

No, it's not about the headlines on the evening news.

It's the Old Testament book of

JUDGES



Sunday, June 3rd

*SERMON SERIES: MORE WILD, WICKED,
AND WONDERFUL WOMEN OF THE BIBLE*
"Hell Hath No Fury..."

ALL HANDS-ON MISSION KITS FOR ZIMBABWE DUE!

Sunday, June 10th

Judge Clarence Shattuck, guest speaker

JUNE 10th—13th

HOLSTON ANNUAL CONFERENCE
Administrative Board meeting

Sunday, June 17th

FATHER'S DAY

"I Wonder What They Were Thinking?"

Monday, June 18th

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

Tuesday, June 19th

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL
AARP meeting

Wednesday, June 20th

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

Thursday, June 21st

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL
United Methodist Women

Friday, June 22nd

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

Sunday, June 24th

HYMN SING SUNDAY!

