

Centenary Chimes

NEWSLETTER

CENTENARY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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AUGUST 2018/SEPTEMBER 2018

Pastor's Pen



In June, we bid a fond farewell to our associate pastor, Rev. Dr. Richard Kuyama and Keiko. It was a month of celebrations both at church and at Annual Conference in Redlands. I hope you all had the time to say, "See you later" to the Kuyama family.

Then in July, we welcomed Rev. Dr. Ryohei Kawano to Centenary as our assistant pastor in charge of the Japanese Language Ministry. Rev. Kawano is a familiar face to Centenary since he has often filled in as a pulpit supply for Rev. Richard during his absence. Here's a little snippet of Rev. Kawano's bio.

Rev. Ryohei Kawano was born in Utsunomiya City, Tochigi Prefecture, Japan in 1941. He was introduced to Christianity when he was in high school. (He has an amazing testimony about how Jesus changed his life completely and entirely. When you get a chance, please ask him and get to know him.) He went to Japan Christian College for his B.A. and then attended California Graduate School of Theology for his M.A. He also received an honorary Doctor of Divinity (D.D.) from the Pacific International Theological Seminary. He got ordained through the Japan Mennonite Association in 1969. His ministry experiences include pastoring churches in Japan, various Free Methodist churches in the United States, and most recently, at LA Union Church. He is happily married to his wife, Ryoko, with whom he shares two daughters and nine grandchildren.

In the previous edition of the Chimes, I talked about ways to bid farewell to Rev. Richard. This month, I would like to share ways in which we can welcome our new assistant pastor to our church. The list below is taken from "50 Ways to Welcome your New Pastor or Associate Pastor" from the Lewis Center for Church Leadership by Robert Crossman.

1. Open your hearts and decide that you are going to love your new pastor.
2. Begin praying daily for the new pastor and family, even as you continue to pray for your departing pastor and family.
3. Introduce yourself to the pastor repeatedly! You have one name to learn; your pastor has many names to learn.
4. Wear name tags. Even if name tags are not a tradition, the congregation can wear them for a few weeks to help the pastor learn names.

Let us all do our best to make Rev. Kawano feel at home by giving him and his wife a very warm Centenary welcome. I sincerely hope you take time to get to know him and Ryoko.

Peace,
Rev. Sunyoung Lee

Our Prayers

We lift up prayers for these persons and families:
In remembrance of these saints who now rest from their labor...

Amy Nagata who passed away on June 10, 2018.
Arata (Art) Furuno who passed away on July 4, 2018.

Please pray for the healing and recovery of:

Mary Enomoto
Rodney Kageyama
Yuko Kondo

Upcoming Church Events

- | | |
|--------------|--|
| August 1 | Youth Ministry "Expressions", (6 p.m. dinner, 6:30 – 7:30 p.m. program) |
| August 5 | Checking-In-Ministry Luncheon, 11:45 a.m. |
| August 8 | Youth Ministry "Expressions" |
| August 12 | Trustees Meeting, 12:30 p.m. |
| August 15 | Youth Ministry "Expressions" |
| August 19 | Finance Committee Meeting, 12:00 p.m. |
| August 22 | Youth Ministry "Expressions" |
| August 25 | Centenary UMC Men's Group Gathering, 8 a.m. - noon |
| August 26 | English Praise Worship, 10:45 a.m.
Staff Parish Relations Committee Meeting, 12:15 p.m. |
| September 9 | Vision Implementation Team Meeting, 12:30 p.m. |
| September 28 | 25th Annual Golf Tournament @ Montebello Golf Course |
| September 30 | English Praise Worship, 10:45 a.m. |

Regular Events

Sunday Mornings – Nihongo Worship Service, 9:30 a.m.
with Rev. Ryohei Kawano
Adult Sunday School, 9:30 a.m.
with Cynthia Nishinaka
English Worship Service, 10:45 a.m.
with Rev. Sunyoung Lee

Monday Night Bible Study, 6 p.m. – 7 p.m.

Thursday Eastside Bible Study – 7:30 p.m.

Thursday Night Praise Band Practice, 6 p.m. – 9 p.m.

Kid City

It will soon be time for the students at Kid City to head back to school. Centenary will once again be filling back to school bags with spiral notebooks, folders, pens, snacks, and other goodies. The beginning of each semester puts a strain on budgets as tuition is paid and books are bought. The Kid City students are so thankful to have the supplies to start the school year. With 40 college graduates, the 200 kids in the program have role models and mentors. The current college students share their experiences and support those following them. It is a program of caring and love that Centenary encourages with our gifts. If you would like to help support these students, you can make a donation to Centenary with Kid City written in the memo line. You will help fill these bags!

Acknowledgements

May 14, 2018 - July 8, 2018

Judy Asazawa - In memory of Jim Nishitsuji
Susan Babu - In memory of James Nishitsuji
Steve and Jan Haruta - In memory of Aiko Nobori
Steve and Jan Haruta - In memory of M/M
Hiroshi Haruta
Steve and Jan Haruta - In memory of Mrs. Satsuki Fujita
Steve and Jan Haruta - In memory of Noel Hagiya
Brian Kinoshita - In memory of Gary Setsuo Kinoshita
Richard and Frances Kushino - In memory of Nob Hangu
Victor and Cynthia Lew - In memory of Fumi Nakamura
Yoshio and Lillie Miyagishima - In memory of
Jim Nishitsuji
Harry and Fujiko Murakami - In memory of Jim Nishitsuji
Paul Murata - In memory of Emi Murata
Judy Nakatani - In memory of James Masaharu Nishitsuji
Robert and Gail Nishinaka - In memory of
Fumi Nakamura
Linda Susan Nishitsuji - In memory of Jim Nishitsuji
James and Linda Nishitsuji - Memorial day
James and Linda Nishitsuji - In memory of Misako
Agnes Nishitsuji
Emie Obata - In loving memory of Jim Nishitsuji
Richard Preece - In memory of Jim Nishitsuji
Yuriko Mary Shikai - In memory of Mitsuko Nakazono

SPECIAL OFFERING

Paul Abe - In honor of Rev Richard Kuyama retirement
Susan Edwards - Donation toward May utility bill
Susan Edwards - Donation toward June utility bill
Susan Edwards - Donation toward July utility bill
Carol Fujita - Thank you .Richard
Alex Fukui - Appreciation to Wesley and Martha Nishinaka
Gloria Fujita O'Brien for their involvement and
Contributions to Okaeri 2018.
Fukui Mortuary - In honor of Rev. Dr Richard Kuyama
Dolly Kaplan - In honor of Rev Richard Kuyama retirement
Little Tokyo Service Center In honor of Kuyama sensei
Lori Matsuno - Congrats to Rev. Richard Kuyama
Lori Matsuno - Thank you Rev. Richard
Robert and Gail Nishinaka - Graduation of Caitlin O'Brien
from UCI
Pat, Gloria, Caitlin O'Brien - In appreciation of
Rev. Richard and Keiko Kuyama
Wendell and Jane Oyama - Pentecost Sunday
Wendell and Jane Oyama - Celebration of birth of
grandchild Lydia
Ernie and Jane Rivera - Mia's graduation from
Cerritos Elementary
Teruyo Sugamura - Special Offering

PEACE with JUSTICE

Judy Asazawa	Victor and Cynthia Lew
Mary Enomoto	Theresa Miyashiro-Sonoda
Lilia Hansbrough	Robert and Gail Nishinaka
Steve and Jan Haruta	Marilyn Nobori
Ernest Hiroshige	Wendell and Jane Oyama
Dolly Kaplan	Jonathan Oyama
Terry Kasuyama	Dennis Park
Harry and Carol Kuruma	Skeeter and Carole Sasaki
Brian Kurushima	Emi Takashima
Richard and Frances Kushino	Carolyn Tokunaga
Sunyoung Lee	Vicky Uyemura
Kris and Stephanie Leese	France Wong

Men's Breakfast

Saturday, August 25, 2018, @ 9:30 am
at Centenary

All men invited. Respond to (hosts):

Skeeter Sasaki, 323 661-8243,
sasakisk@earthlink.net

Harry Kuruma, 626 308-1710, hkuruma@att.net

Dennis Park, 661 644-2962, djpark1957@yahoo.com

Come enjoy food and fellowship

Rev. Dr. Yasuhiko Richard Kuyama



Rev. Dr. Richard Kuyama retired after 30 years of ministry and 15 years at Centenary! During worship, Tim Yamamoto's slideshow of Rev. Richard's Ministries highlighted the passions that will fill his retirement days and were so heartfully presented in his sermon.

When Rev. Richard arrived at Centenary, the Nihongo Congregation was financially unstable. Operating in the red for years, legacy money had been used to bridge the gap. Not sure about what to do, he asked Father Boyle of Homeboy Industries for some advice. Father Boyle gave him some perspective – the Japanese Language Division was \$20,000 in debt but Homeboys had a debt of \$1,000,000.

Father Boyle asked him, "What is it that you want to do Richard?" Rev. Richard's reply was social work but he also had to preach. Father Boyle had the same responsibilities and once again asked Rev. Richard what he wanted to do. Knowing his love was outreach whether it was visitations, Bible Study in homes, or working on social justice issues, he sought ways to use his passions to serve God.

The sushi chef classes enabled graduates to change their lives, to start new careers, to find a path to improve their lives. Definitely a social justice goal but limited in numbers. Then a call came from Japan. They were setting up group homes and they needed training. Rev. Richard called Boys Town. With their long history of housing and caring for children, they held a key to the knowledge he needed. He and the Japanese congregation set to work translating the English manual into Japanese. He traveled to Japan with Boys Town representatives to explain and train. He translated for trainers as government workers and social workers listened and learned. Over time, 9000 people were trained, mostly in Japan but some at a Malibu retreat center. A Parenting Manual followed later and now one on Foster Care is being developed. Daughter Katie's social work background and training is being put to use as they write and translate. This part of his life grew too fast and in retirement, he will now have the time to expand the programs.

From Father Boyle's question of "What do you want to do?" Rev. Richard has found his mission and ministry – to help families and children.

As he looks back at his years at Centenary, he remembers visiting the Normandie church and being fed and well taken care of. These are the people of his flock today. They may be old, suffering from dementia or Alzheimers but to him it doesn't matter. He loves to visit, to bring happiness to one person, one day at a time. As he sits at bedsides, he loves to sing, "What A Friend We Have in Jesus" or "Jesus Loves Me." They may not recognize him, but the music reaches them. They feel the blessing of God's love.

God sent Rev. Richard from Japan to Los Angeles. Through his ministry, he sees hope and the promise of the Resurrection and Eternal Life. He is here to send God's love to others and to assure all that they have a friend that cares.

We will miss his smile, his enthusiasm, his caring love, and passion for others. We wish him Godspeed as he continues to follow the path God has created.

(Summarized from Rev. Richard's Retirement Sermon)

Finances

Giving report for May and June 2018 from Gail Nishinaka, Treasurer.

	May/June Actual	May/June Budget	YTD Actual	YTD Budget
Pledges	\$20,420	\$25,666	\$65,100	\$77,000
Unpledged Giving	\$9,802	\$5,975	\$37,030	\$27,125
TOTAL	\$30,222	\$31,641	\$102,130	\$104,125
Apportionments & Quotas	\$10,916	\$10,916	\$32,748	\$32,748

Special Sundays

Peace and Justice	\$771
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The 2018 Arigato Bazaar net income was **\$35,520**.

The 6 month pledge statements were distributed in July.

Expressions

EXPRESSIONS is a new youth ministry begun at Centenary UMC. A very successful introductory evening was held Friday evening, July 6. 30 youth from Centenary and the downtown Los Angeles community enjoyed the evening which began with a free dinner of loco moco hamburgers with macaroni and green salads. The program included mixers, participation by all in introductory lessons of taiko, Japanese Minyo dancing, and karate and concluded with small group discussions by the youth sharing how they felt about learning new skills, meeting new friends and how the evening's experience helped them grow in self confidence, self awareness and appreciation for others. Parents and youth advisors met in a separate group to share their experiences and questions about what they would like their children to experience in EXPRESSIONS.

This ministry is being developed by Cynthia Nishinaka with the faithful help of Centenary's Taiko, Japanese Dance and Karate group members. The ministry will continue regularly in the Social Hall on Wednesday evenings from 6pm to 8pm throughout the month of August (Aug. 1, 8, 15 and 22 – no meeting on Aug 29) and throughout the year. New attendees are welcome for any or all of the evenings. The evenings will alternate each week, - learning taiko one week, Japanese or hip hop dance one week, or karate one week.

Cynthia's enthusiastic passion for this ministry began with her desire to reach youth in the broader Centenary community in a program to experience and grow in God's Love. Through EXPRESSIONS –(1)by learning new skills in a loving supportive environment and (2)by sharing and supporting each other in their experiences through conversation and art – it is hoped that the youth will be enriched and empowered by God's Love and be inspired to impact others by sharing that Love.

Many thanks go to

- Chikara Taiko led by Brian Kurushima
- Minyo Dance led by Sensei Imoto Hoshunjyu
- Karate led by Art Ishii and Walter Nishinaka
- Kitchen Crew Gloria O'Brien, Wesley Nishinaka
- Mixers Caitlin O'Brien
- Discussion Leaders Cynthia Nishinaka, Vicky Leon, and Carole Sasaki
- Overall Resource Pastor Sunyoung Lee

A special appreciation for Cynthia Nishinaka's leadership in this important ministry. The youth expressed their appreciation by their enthusiastic participation in each of the activities and by expressing their interest in continuing in the August sessions.



EXPRESSIONS Introductory evening July 6, 2018

Iftar at Centenary



Iftar 2018 at Centenary



Iftar 2018 Muslim Brothers and Sisters at Centenary

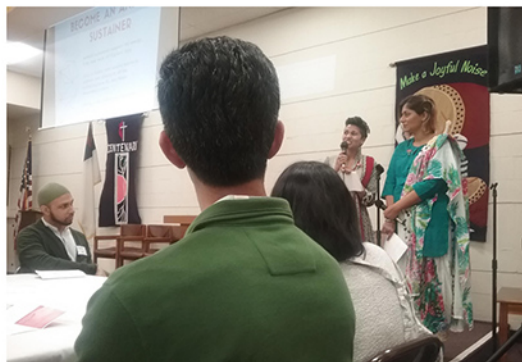
On May 24, 2018, Vigilant Love held an event called, Bridging Communities Iftar: Food, community, Ramadan at Centenary. Vigilant Love is a grassroots healing and arts-driven organization that counters mainstream narratives of narrow mindedness. Vigilant Love creates space for connection and grassroots movement to ensure the safety and justice of communities impacted by Islamophobia and violence.

Vigilant Love and Centenary take a stand against the injustices and social concerns plaguing the world today. Ramadan observed by Muslims worldwide as a month of fasting to commemorate the first revelation of the Quran to Muhammad, Muslims refrain from consuming food and drinking liquids from dawn to dusk for 30 days. Iftar is the evening meal with which Muslims end their daily Ramadan fast at sunset. So what better place to “break the fast” with our Muslim brothers and sisters than at Centenary?

Just under 300 community allies and supporters came to Centenary to validate support and solidarity with the Muslim community.

The United Methodist Church encourages local congregations to develop ongoing relationships with Muslims and their respective organizations. We are urged to have conversations, programs, dialogues leading to understanding of both religions and appreciation for the gifts that each religion brings to the world. And through this we will find commonalities, differences, areas of mutual cooperation leading to a better understanding of each other. The idea is to knock down “walls” and build “bridges” to create peace, love and good will towards all of our neighbors.

Centenary throughout its history has always been described as a community “bridge”. On May 24, 2018 Christians, Muslims, Buddhist, Jews and many people of various faiths and beliefs shared in the spirit of culture and community. Brothers and sisters of this earth coming together as neighbors to dialogue, teach, learn, and share.



Vigilant Love

Soon after the San Bernadino shooting, as a rapid response to a wave of Islamophobic backlash in Southern California and across the country, Vigilant Love was organized. The organization started as a coalition, founded on the longstanding relationships of Los Angeles based Muslim American and Japanese American programs and solidarity since 9/11 and is committed to building a legacy of intersectional, multi-ethnic, multi-spiritual solidarity.

This diversity was reflected in the sponsors of the “Bridging Communities Iftar” - Asian Americans Advancing Justice – LA, JANM, JACL (Los Angeles, San Fernando, Venice WLA), Jewish Voice for Peace, Little Tokyo Service Center, Nikkei for Civil Rights and Redress, Nikkei Progressives, White People 4 Black Lives, American Friends Service Committee, API Equality-LA, AP American Labor Alliance, Muslim Anti-Racism Collaborative, National Queer API Alliance, New Ground, SW Asian North Afrikan Alliance, Hollywood Independent Church and Centenary UMC.

**Vigilant Love is a grassroots healing and arts-driven organization that counters mainstream narratives of narrow mindedness. It creates space for connection and grassroots movement to ensure the safety and justice of communities impacted by Islamophobia and violence. A spinoff group from Nikkei for Civil Rights and Redress, Vigilant Love is made up of 2nd, 3rd, and 4th generation Japanese Americans continuing the legacy of standing up against racism and marginalization of communities.*



Iftar 2018 Young Leaders at Centenary



Iftar 2018 at Centenary



ENRICH EMPOWER IMPACT





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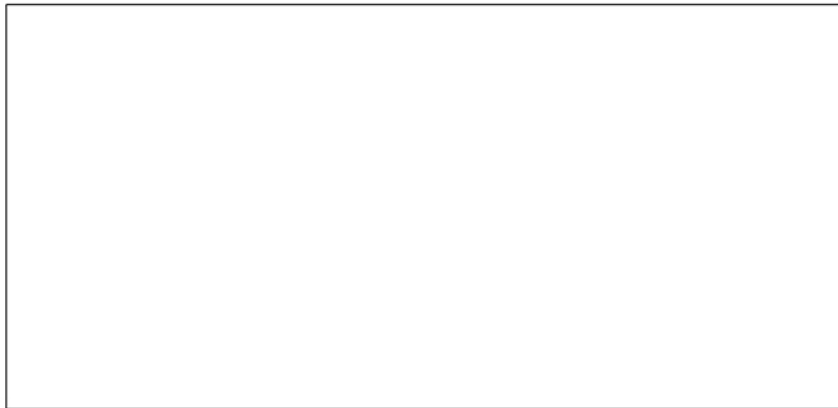
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Nick Nakagawa



Nick Nakagawa
signs with Warriors

<http://www.waldorfwarriors.com/article/2884.php>

FOREST CITY, Iowa – The Waldorf hockey team added some offensive firepower for the immediate future this week, as Warrior head coach Brett Shelanski is pleased to announce the signing of Nick Nakagawa to a Letter of Intent.

Nakagawa will join the Warrior hockey team as a freshman in the fall of 2018.

A prolific scorer from Los Angeles, California, the 19-year-old winger netted 17 goals and assisted on 17 others this past winter playing in 43 games for the Daytona Racers of the United States Premier Hockey League (USPHL).

"Nick brings a dimension of speed and skill to our lineup, and a lot of offensive ability," Waldorf's head coach, Shelanski, said. "He can create chances for his teammate, and finish too, so we were definitely excited to add his skill and his speed to our lineup."

A student at Palisades Charter High School in California, Nakagawa spent the last two seasons competing in junior hockey, playing in 25 games for the Tahoe Icemen of the Western States Hockey League (WSHL) in 2016-17 before joining the Racers for 17 games to finish the 2016-17 season.

In his third season in Dayton, Nakagawa netted four goals and had three assists in 17 games for the Racers, and his leadership earned him the honor of being the team's assistant captain this past winter.

"It's a great accomplishment to be able to continue playing hockey in college," Nakagawa said. "It's something I've worked for my whole career."

"Waldorf seems like a good fit, academically and athletically," he added. "I feel I'll be able to find a niche at Waldorf."

This article is featured in the Decision 2019: One with Christ, One with each other, One in ministry to all the world (Aug/Sep/Oct 2018) issue of Circuit Rider. Please read this article, especially as we reflect on what it means to be a church of Christ unified and discerning for God's work. – Rev. Sunyoung Lee

A HEART AT PEACE By Bishop Grant Hagiya

The Commission on a Way Forward (the group of thirty-two set apart to make recommendations about human sexuality by the General Conference in 2016) read together *The Anatomy of Peace* by the Arbing Institute. The book had a powerful influence on our work of coming together as a community of very diverse and sometimes opposite points of view. Some of the concepts in *The Anatomy of Peace* are so important that we are recommending that every annual conference delegation read the book together in preparation for the Special Called Session of General Conference in February 2019.

In the midst of daily living, and especially during conflict, the book demonstrates how we are either functioning with “a heart at war” or with “a heart at peace.” A heart at war means that we are closed by our own position or beliefs, and we are not willing to compromise or listen to anything contrary. Our actions are to defend, protect, and conquer. A heart at war means that our souls are restless and unsettled, and we are willing to aggressively enforce our beliefs. When we have a heart at war, we see people as objects, and we treat them as vehicles that we use, obstacles that we blame, and irrelevancies that we ignore.

In contrast, a heart at peace means that we know where we stand, but with a “convicted humility,” we are open to explore all sides of an issue in order to be open to where God is leading us. Our actions are to be curious, open-minded, and willing to say, “I might be wrong about this.” When we have a heart at peace, we see people as subjects, and we seek to know their needs, concerns, and challenges. We treat them with the love and compassion that we yearn to receive from others.

Our United Methodist General Conferences, for more than two decades, reflect an ethos sustaining a heart at war, especially over issues that clearly divide us, such as human sexuality. During my very first General Conference, as a young clergyperson, I was taught that I must be ready to defend my position and to fight for those concessions that would affect “our” point of view. There was no talk of what God’s will was, but rather the reinforcing of a select theological and political position in the church. I was taught to live with a heart at war!

Tragically, I was not the only one schooled in this way. It is too ironic, because we are not a military, a for-profit corporation, or a political institution whose mission is to win, overpower, and conquer the competition.

We are part of the church of Jesus Christ, whose main purpose is to love God and our neighbor the same way we love ourselves. We should be taught not to win but to sacrifice, not to overpower but to love, not to conquer but to show compassion, not to lecture but to listen. In short, we should be taught to have a heart at peace, not at war.

At the deeper levels of the Arbing principles, they teach that organizations have been going about reaching their desired outcomes with the wrong motives. Most organizations try to shape the behavior of their workers in order to get to desired results. Examples are: “sell more,” “recruit more,” or “produce more.” We do this in the church also: “attract more people,” “raise more money,” and “recruit younger people.” By focusing on these behaviors, organizations believe that they will achieve the desired outcomes.

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However, cajoling coworkers to drive harder seldom works. It is extremely difficult to change or alter people's behaviors, because behaviors alone do not deliver success, vitality, or health. A classic example of this resistance to adapt is the American Medical Association's research, in which people with chronic heart disease were told directly that unless they changed their lifestyle, they would soon die. Only one in seven were able to change their behaviors or lifestyle, even when told they would die as the consequence.

Unless we change our mindset or attitudes, as well as our hearts (our emotions), we will not be able to achieve the desired results. The holistic internal reference of individuals must change for the cultural shift to take place. We are describing *metanoia* (translated in the Common English Bible as "changed hearts and lives"), which is a 180-degree shift in our internal reference. This is how we become "part of the new creation" in Christ Jesus (2 Cor 5: 17).

The United Methodist Church's General Conference falls into this same trap each quadrennium. We try to control delegates' behavior through the organizational rules and regulations that are set for the conference. Parliamentary procedure, legislative processes, and the long-standing cultural norms of General Conference, such as sitting in order of delegate election, rule the day.

We pay very little attention to developing the minds and hearts of delegates in a positive and constructive way. In fact, we harden the minds and hearts of our delegates by preparing them for conflict, war, and winning others to "our" side. This kind of power has led to the current impasse concerning LGBTQ inclusion. We have hardened our stances vis-à-vis the other side and are not willing to be open to where God is leading us.

What if we prepared for the Special Called Session of General Conference and future General Conferences differently? What if we worked toward a heart at peace instead of a heart at war? What if we came together with the desired outcomes of the whole church as our main priorities: mission, outreach, compassion, justice, and the "Making of Disciples for the Transformation of the World"?

So, as we prepare for the Special Called Session, what does it mean to have a heart at peace? The theological statement that the Commission on a Way Forward uses is "convicted humility." As it is described in our Commission's theological framework:

This is an attitude which combines honesty about the differing convictions which divide us with humility about the way in which each of our views may stand in need of correction. It also involves humble repentance for the ways in which we have spoken and acted as those seeking to win a fight rather than those called to discern the shape of faithfulness together. In that spirit, we wish to lift up the shared core commitments which define the Wesleyan movement, and ground our search for wisdom and holiness.

If the majority of our delegates can come with this "convicted humility" as an expression of a heart at peace, we will have a chance to shape The United Methodist Church in a whole new and fresh way. At stake is the future of our denomination, and we dare not allow our selfishness, sinfulness, and hearts at war to jeopardize what we offer to the world. A heart at peace is the answer, and one that must not falter.