



## Shady Grove United Methodist Church

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*Knowing and Growing Through Christ*

March 1, 2019

Dear Church Family,

You are probably aware that over 800 global delegates (both clergy and laity) met earlier this week in St. Louis at the 2019 Special Session of the General Conference of the United Methodist Church. The main purpose of this conference was to determine how the United Methodist Church would address same-sex marriage and the service of openly gay clergy by looking at plans for how the denomination is structured.

By a vote of 438-384, the delegates approved the Traditional Plan, which reaffirms the church's existing stance against performing same-sex marriage ceremonies and against openly gay clergy serving. The Judicial Committee of the General Conference now must review the plan and determine if it is in accordance with our United Methodist Constitution.

As your Shady Grove UMC Church Council, we wish to respond and share with you our continued focus, namely on Jesus Christ and the mission statement that guides everything we do here:

**Shady Grove United Methodist Church Short Pump welcomes, teaches and helps all people to know and grow in Christ through stewardship, worship, education and evangelism. We are a church family reaching out to encourage all people on their faith journey. With an attitude of worship and a spirit of grace, we serve others in the name of Christ.**

You will notice that "all people" appears twice in our mission statement. All people are welcome at Shady Grove.

We know that the decision reached by the majority, but not all, of the delegates this week at General Conference will please some, anger some, and disappoint others. There are many questions about the future of the worldwide United Methodist Church. We encourage you to reach out to us, your leadership team, and discuss your concerns, your feelings, your hopes. But make no mistake – and we can't state this strongly enough – we remain absolutely committed to bringing all people to know our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ; strengthening our collective and individual faith in Him; and serving as His hands and feet in our community. Nothing will ever distract us from our mission. Nothing.

In Christ,

Polly Rowan, Chair

Paul Pfeffer

Rick Dodge

Robert Reed

Christy Molnar

Amy Harmony

Steve Howell

David Hollins

Brenda Ferrell