

2 – Progressive supporters of more inclusive plans also are praying over what to do next. Observers note that one major factor in the voting was the global membership of the UMC. Unlike other protestant churches in the US, we are an international denomination, with nearly 50% of membership in areas around the world that are more conservative than the US. Among US delegates, polls indicate 60% preferred a more inclusive plan and some are praying about forming a more progressive connection.

3 – On Monday, March 4, our Virginia Conference bishop, Bishop Sharma D. Lewis, will hold a LiveStream event from 10-11:30AM. She will address the recent outcomes and how we as churches in Virginia may move forward. A link can be found at VAUMC.org.

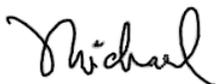
4 – In June, at the annual gathering of our Virginia UMC, we will elect a new delegation of clergy and laity to represent us at the next regular General Conference in Minneapolis, MN, May 5-15, 2020. In the list of nominees for this delegation are Josh Blakely (to be a lay delegate) and Rev. Lyndsie Blakely (to be a clergy delegate). Please be praying for the persons nominated and our wisdom in putting together our delegation from Virginia and all the decisions they will face.

Last, but certainly not least, I invite you to gather this Sunday around the table of Christ; there will always be a place for you. We encounter the radiant Christ of Transfiguration, who stands before us displaying God's glory unlike anyone else, to whom else can we turn? Even as his image glows in our eyes, Christ leads us back down the mountain to be present to others in the valleys of messiness and brokenness of our world, even the painful spaces of grief and death. We have children leading us this week (March 3rd) in worship and communion. They are a vibrant witness to us of our hope and of our calling. As we live with each other, may this new generation see Christ at work, grow more aware of God's grace and help us all live as children of God.

As a pastor, I have spent my time listening, praying, and being with various members and neighbors in this process. I welcome the chance to grab coffee or lunch with you and to journey with you through the days ahead. I confess I don't have all the answers, but the love Christ has given me to share.... it is yours, unreservedly.

With love beyond words, I offer you the grace and peace of Jesus Christ. He who has promised to both save and lead us is faithful to do so, now and always.

With you in Christ,



Michael Kendall
Lead Pastor

For more: (<https://www.umnews.org/en/news/gc2019-maps-uncertain-way-forward>)