



A LETTER FROM PASTOR TOMMY

Dear Friends,

We are halfway through the year 2022. Can you believe it? It has been such a wild and unpredictable few years, there were times I didn't think we would make it to this point. But here we are, growing in fellowship, serving our community, worshiping God, and Sharing the Heart together! I thought I would take this opportunity to share a mid-year update on the state of First Methodist McKinney, our missions and ministries, and the United Methodist Church as a whole.

Even after two difficult pandemic years together, First Methodist is thriving. Our church membership is now 4,516. We have welcomed 90 new members so far this year! This includes 38 fifth graders who chose to join the church at the end of their Confirmation class. We are averaging 1,450 people in worship together each Sunday: 850 in person and 600 online.

Financially, I'm amazed at your generosity. Our giving is \$265,000 ahead of this point last year! Our income is still behind our expenditures, which is very common for this point in the year, but the strength of your giving this year so far is extremely encouraging. Steady and reliable giving throughout the year is vital for the mission and ministries of your church to be effective. Your giving has supported our work sharing food with our downtown community through Feeding Friends and Family. It has let us put on Vacation Bible School for over 300 children. It provides lifesaving medical care for children in Haiti and pays the salary of a full time nurse in the mountains of Guatemala.

The North Texas Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church met this month in person for the first time since 2019! We are happy to say that all your current pastors are returning for another year of service. Rev. Patty Froelich, as you may have heard, will be returning on retired status. We will also receive a new staff member - Rev. Macie Liptoi will join us this Sunday! We are excited for everyone to get to know her.

The big issue on everyone's minds this Conference was the fact that some churches are planning on leaving the United Methodist denomination over the issue of human sexuality and inclusiveness. I am working through a lot of sadness and disappointment over this - maybe you are feeling the same way. After much discussion, the Conference approved a plan for those churches that wish to leave, requiring a 2/3 vote of all members of a church and payment of all the church's financial obligations. We don't expect many churches will take this action, and we hope all followers of Christ will decide they can love and include all of God's children.

This is not the end of the conversation on human sexuality and the Methodist Church. If you want to know more about what the Bible says about homosexuality, how the United Methodist Church is changing as some congregations leave, and what the future holds for First Methodist McKinney please visit our new resource page. You can also reach out to me directly. I am always happy to grab coffee and talk.

Even though we are living through complicated times, we know that what God calls us to do is simple. To love one another. No matter what changes, this is what we will do. For the second half of 2022, and for generations to come, we will keep being the Church together!

Blessings,
Pastor Tommy