

Dahlgren United Methodist Church

P.O Box 1797

Dahlgren, Virginia 22448

Reaching All with the Love of Christ

April 3, 2019

Dear Friends,

After nearly two years of hard work, congregational engagement, and prayerful discernment the above seven words were approved by the Council as the new vision for our church. This new vision comes at a timely juncture for our church as we look to the future and our impact in the community.

Last month's general conference passed the Traditional plan which maintains the Book of Discipline's existing language on homosexuality while strengthening the disciplinary process for those who violate the Book of Discipline. The Judicial Council is expected to rule on the constitutionality of the changes later this month and the changes will go into effect 1 January 2020. The results of the general conference have generated negative publicity and the topic is sure to remain in the future of issues that the United Methodist Church will continue to deal with.

A tangential effect of the passage of the traditional plan is that DUMC does not have to make a local church decision on the issue. We are the same church, the same congregation, today as we were before the general conference met, and we will be the same church and congregation after the Judicial Council makes its rulings. This frees us to focus on our new vision.

Our new vision statement is the result of studying our congregation's identity and our internal and external context. While it is only seven words, there is a lot to them. They are intended for every church committee and member to internalize. We should all be able to say we are "Reaching All with the Love of Christ by (blank)". In this way we can set goals for ourselves and our church that enable us to live out this vision. Our church's committees are already setting these goals for the coming year and we look forward to the positive impact on our church.

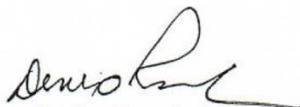
Yes, these are uncertain times, but the challenges today's church faces are not new. In every generation, it has been threatened from without and within. Since its inception, the power of God has been operative in bringing clarity and renewal. Our vision makes clear that we have no intentions of being distracted or divided. By faith we trust that in staying on message and mission, the best is not behind us, but rather, before us. Come what may, God's power knows no limits when His people share an inseparable bond centered in love and service. Our mutual bond and call have been interwoven in the DNA of Dahlgren UMC from its beginning, and by God's grace these will serve to enhance the credibility of our witness long after we are gone.

So, how will we as individuals and as a church fill in that blank, "Reaching All with the Love of Christ" – by ____? It will be exciting to hear what promises we will claim together and watch what God can do.

Godspeed ahead in hope and trust,



Tom Boucher
Council Chairman



Denise Ramsbotham
Lay Leader



Tom Lee
Pastor