

"Ain't Worth a Bucket of Warm Spit"

Vice President of the United States, and former Texas Governor, John Nance Garner, when questioned about being Vice-President was reported as saying, "This job ain't worth a bucket of warm spit."

Every year, along with the Spring flowers, we find Resolutions, springing up to be presented to the summer Annual Conferences within the United Methodist Church.

Depending on the political climate of the day and the ebb and flow of the things that "push our buttons" these perennial documents will cover everything from environmental concerns to issues of human reproduction and human sexuality.

Depending on the nearness of the next General Conference these harbingers of Spring will take on a language and urgency of great significance.

While some are pretty benign, others take on a strident and mean spirit that attacks others without regard for truth or fairness.

When they come up for adoption during a plenary of the Annual Conference - - lines are drawn in the sand and the fight is on. We will have impassioned speeches and red faces on both sides of the issue, and finally after much agony, finger pointing and name calling a vote will be mercifully taken. There are always lots of winners and lots of losers. One side goes away glad and one goes away mad.

The Annual Conference has spoken, and that is that!

Ever wonder what happens to those Resolutions? They end up printed in the Conference Journal in your bookshelf and filed away in someone's file and begin to gather dust for antiquity.

Everybody goes back to what they were doing and we wait for another year to roll around. A few years ago I was compiling a listing of "You Might be United Methodist if" and one of our clergy colleagues submitted this one: "You might be United Methodist if you truly believe a resolution to Annual Conference concerning balancing the federal budget . . . would actually cause the federal budget to be balanced."

In other words, dear ones, we expend a lot of our energy and emotional bank account assets with each other on Resolutions that when all the words are said and the votes taken won't amount to - - ". . . a Bucket of Warm Spit"

By now we should realize that we are not going to reform the United Methodist Church by passing Resolutions.

If we are to reform the church it will be as Wesley said by "spreading scriptural holiness throughout the land"

The mission of the United Methodist Church is to make disciples who love and serve Jesus Christ!

Oh, that we should get so wrought up on leading people to Jesus Christ as some of us do in getting our Resolution passed at Annual Conference.

A Jim Lane Commentary
April 6, 2003