THE TULSA UNITED METHODIST CHURCH HOSTING OF THE UNITED DAUGHTERS OF THE CONFEDERACY DOCUMENTS

INTRODUCTION:

Despite all these letters and emails the Boston Avenue United Methodist Church provided their facilities to the United Daughters of the Confederacy and did not respond to my letters.

The only reply from the United Methodist Church was from Peter D. Weaver who said that “I share your concern” and had passed on my letter to the leadership of the United Methodist Church to the Bishop of Oklahoma Robert E. Hayes Jr. However, despite my email to his office following up on this there never was any reply from Bishop Hayes or any other UMC official.

1.   Letter to the board of directors of the Tulsa Metropolitan Ministry with an ongoing list of to whom it has been copied.

2.   Letter to Senior Minister Rev. David Wiggs, Boston Avenue United Methodist Church.

3.   Letter to the leadership of the leadership of the United Methodist Church (UMC).

4.   Letter to the General Commission on Race and Religion at the United Methodist Church.

5.   Letter to the Black Methodists for Church Renewal.

6.   Email to Boston Avenue United Methodist Church Communication Director Shari Goodwin.

7.   Letter to the board of directors of the Tulsa Interfaith Alliance.

8.   Letter to Ms. Mana Tahaie, Director of Racial Justice, YWCA Tulsa.

9. Information links.

NOTE ON LINKS IN LETTERS:

1. The link in the following letters to the article<http://www.blackcommentator2.com/531_farley_sebesta_hague_guests.html> was pulled to accommodate the subject of the article. The situation had changed since the article project was started. An article specifically about the United Daughters of the Confederacy will be later published instead and provided here when published. At the time of the letters the article was online until 2014.
2. The website was redesigned but you should be able to find all the information to which there are [www.templeofdemocracy.com](http://www.templeofdemocracy.com) links given by going to [www.templeofdemocracy.com](http://www.templeofdemocracy.com). Plus there will be redirects where possible for some of the links.

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| LETTER TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE TULSA METROPOLITAN MINISTRY    October 5, 2013    Tulsa Metropolitan Ministry Board of Directors  221 South Nogales Ave.  Tulsa, OK 74127    Dear Board of Directors:    I recently emailed the Tulsa Metropolitan Ministry (TMM) a request for help to persuade the Boston Avenue United Methodist Church **not** to host the United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC) national convention memorial service. The UDC is a racist organization and is enabled by being allowed the use of historically and architecturally prominent buildings by mainstream religious faiths. (I can supply documentation on the UDCs racism in the 21st century. For the early and middle 20th century you can go to[www.confederatepastpresent.org](http://www.confederatepastpresent.org) and use the search term “daughters.” Also, October 3, 2013 *Black Commentator* published this article<http://www.blackcommentator2.com/531_farley_sebesta_hague_guests.html> in which about a third is devoted to the racist history of the UDC in the 20th and 21st century.)    I got in reply, not a request for more information, or an explanation of what was my purpose, **but an irate email from Ray Hickman, director of the TMM, which was blind carbon copied to the TMM board**. So I have decided to write all the board members of the TMM about this issue and share this letter to the TMM board with the larger faith community in Tulsa and elsewhere. I would like to make public Ray Hickman’s email to me but he has refused to give permission. It was sent to me in his capacity as director of the TMM using a TMM email address and it was blind carbon copy broadcast to all the TMM board members. I think as a simple matter of fairness to me and transparency the TMM board members should make it public.    I have been researching and publishing papers and books about the neo-Confederate movement for over 20 years. I enclose a bibliography of my academic work. The links for free access to my papers published at [www.blackcommentator.com](http://www.blackcommentator.com) as well as my academic resume can be found at <http://www.templeofdemocracy.com/resume.htm>.    I am now focusing on eliminating the support for neo-Confederacy by mainstream organizations. Recently I successfully concluded a campaign to get corporations to stop supporting the Sons of Confederate Veterans (SCV) documented in a follow up report in *Black Commentator* at<http://www.blackcommentator2.com/527_cover_scv_donation_loss_sebesta_guest.html>. This campaign utilized my paper on the extremism and racism of the SCV published in*Black Commentator* at <http://www.blackcommentator.com/526/526_confederacy_sebesta_guest_share.html>.  In the follow up report I stated that I was going to pursue other mainstream groups to ask them to stop enabling and supporting neo-Confederacy. Specifically I mentioned churches that enable the SCV.    Encouraged by the rapid success of this first project, in which the SCV was entirely dropped in eight days by corporate America, I have started this church project regarding the SCV. However, I thought, why just the SCV, why not include the churches that support the UDC as well. I thought I should go after the whole issue of mainstream churches enabling neo-Confederate organizations.    The one reason not to include the UDC is that I haven’t published an online paper on the UDC as I have done for the SCV, but with some of the recent articles in the UDC’s*UDC Magazine* their racism is rather apparent if genteel. (I can supply documentation.) Another issue is that there isn’t much time to persuade the Boston Avenue United Methodist Church between the starting of this effort in September and when the UDC National Convention memorial service happens on Nov. 10th. But I decided to get started anyways. (I enclose tables of hosting churches in the 21st century for both the UDC and SCV and they are also online at: [www.templeofdemocracy.com/bostonavenue.htm](http://www.templeofdemocracy.com/bostonavenue.htm))    So I have been busy writing the leadership of the United Methodist Church (UMC), the UMC General Commission on Race and Religion, and the Black Methodists for Church Renewal asking them to not host the UDC. I emailed Communication Director Shari Goodwin of the Boston Avenue UMC. I may hear from them yet. (Letters online at:[www.templeofdemocracy.com/bostonavenue.htm](http://www.templeofdemocracy.com/bostonavenue.htm))    I have also started to contact individuals and organizations in Tulsa and elsewhere asking for them to raise the issue and help me in my effort. Hence I received the aforementioned email from Hickman.    When I first started researching the neo-Confederates my research was mostly assembling a gallery of horrors, “they wrote these terrible things, they say these terrible things.” Looking back I feel that sometimes I was a carnival barker shouting, “*It has three terrible heads, one spits fire, one spits venom, and one is a talk show radio host*!” But over time I was able to discredit the more vocal and more overtly neo-Confederate racist groups and get mainstream America to drop them. In 1998 my research had the impact that Republican Party officials stopped associating with the Council of Conservative Citizens ([www.cofcc.org](http://www.cofcc.org)) and in 2000 my revelations about *Southern Partisan* magazine resulted in that Republican Party officials, academics, columnists, and anyone else with career aspirations stopped appearing in it. It is no longer printed.    Though there was some merit in these activities over time I have realized that I haven’t dealt with the most important issues in contesting for the historical consciousness of America against the neo-Confederates. One of these issues is how neo-Confederate organizations that avoid overt public pronouncements of extremism are enabled by mainstream institutions.    It is all well and good that the *Canadian Review of American Studies* at the University of Toronto published Euan Hague’s and my paper on Confederate Christian Nationalism. The public learns that there are still advocates of pro-slavery theology and that the neo-Confederates have a large overlap with Christian Reconstructionism (Dominionism). (Online at: <http://www.templeofdemocracy.com/ConfederateChristianNationalism.pdf>).  However, it is the enabling of the UDC and SCV by mainstream denominations that has I think has a larger impact by legitimizing them.    The British academic, Michael Billig in his landmark book, “Banal Nationalism,” discusses the fact that the discussion of nationalism usually revolves around extremists to the exclusion of seeing the banal nationalism in everyday life. Billig contrasts the focus of the usual analyst of nationalism to the analyst of banal nationalism as follows:    The analyst of banal nationalism does not have the theoretical luxury of exposing the nationalism of others. The analyst cannot place exotic nationalists under the microscope as specimens, in order to stain the tissues of repressed sexuality, or turn the magnifying lens on to the unreasonable stereotypes, which ooze from the mouth of the specimen. In presenting the psychology of a Le Pen or Zhirinovsky, ‘we’ might experience a shiver of fear as ‘we’ contemplate ‘them’, the nationalists, with their violent emotions and ‘their’ crude stereotyping of the Other. And ‘we’ will recognize ‘ourselves’ among the objects of this stereotyping. Alongside the ‘foreigners’ and the ‘racial inferiors’, there ‘we’ will be – the ‘liberal degenerates’, with ‘our’ international broadmindedness. ‘We’ will be reassured to have confirmed ‘ourselves’ as theOther of ‘our’ Other.    By extending the concept of nationalism, the analyst is not safely removed from the scope of investigation. We might imagine that we possess a cosmopolitan broadness of spirit. But, if nationalism is a wider ideology, whose familiar commonplaces catch us unawares, then this is too reassuring. We will not remain unaffected. If the thesis is correct, then nationalism has seeped into the corners of our consciousness; it is present in the very words which we might try to use for analysis. It is naïve to think that a text of exposure can escape from the times and place of its formulation. It can attempt, instead, to do something more modest: it can draw attention to the powers of an ideology which is so familiar that it hardly seems noticeable. [ Billig, Michael, *Banal Nationalism*, Sage Publications, London, 1995.]    I extend Billig’s concept to a concept of banal white nationalism. My paper on it is online at [www.templeofdemocracy.com/breaking.htm](http://www.templeofdemocracy.com/breaking.htm). The issue of attitudes towards race is not confined to marginal individuals who we will socially never run into, who have belligerent attitudes and poor middle class decorum, who perhaps wear funny clothes and are the subjects of sensational news reports. However, the issue of race can come up with people we know at the dinner table, at board meetings, at social functions, in circles in which we circulate. When it does I find that it is very distressing to people. As Billig points out regarding every day nationalism that, “*the analyst is not safely removed from the scope of investigation,*” As Billig points out that when it is a sensationalist group, we will be “reassured” that we are not like them, but I think the corollary of this is that when they are like us, we are not reassured, but instead disturbed. Hence the aforementioned email from Hickman.    Since the UDC doesn’t fit the stereotypes of a racist group they tend not be recognized as such, but we still have to ask the question why a group formed to honor the Confederacy was seen acceptable by the Boston Avenue UMC and why they have persisted in finding the UDC acceptable when contacted about them. Have they reflected on what might underlie their thinking?    I am hoping to raise the issue in Tulsa and elsewhere with the result that the UMC does disinvite the UDC. It would be a good precedent to get other denominations to not enable neo-Confederacy. Having mainstream churches reject the UDC would undermine their mainstream credibility and lessen their influence on American historical memory regarding race. I hope that there are people in Tulsa that will help me in my endeavor.    I have discovered also in starting this project that it is also becoming an inquiry into the nature of Christianity in America. The discussions, the responses, the decisions, all map out the issues of American Christianity, the historical memory of the Confederacy, and race.                                                                                        Regards,                                                                                        Edward H. Sebesta    **The Board of Directors at the time of sending this letter were**: Rev. Dr. Bill Crowell of Boston Avenue UMC, Mark Berman, Rev. Msgr. Patrick Gaalaas of the Tulsa Catholic Diocese, Rev. Dr. Sam Haun of Southminister Presbyterian USA, Jeanne Jacobs, Rev. Bob Lawrence Director of the Tulsa Interfaith Alliance, Keith McArtor, Dr. Sandra Rana, Bill Wilkinson.  There was no reply to this letter. |

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| LETTER TO SENIOR MINISTER REV. DAVID WIGGS, BOSTON AVENUE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH                                                                                                    October 7, 2013                                                                                                    Edward H. Sebesta    [esebesta@tx.rr.com](mailto:esebesta@tx.rr.com)  Rev. David Wiggs  Senior Minister  Boston Avenue United Methodist Church  1301 S. Boston Ave.  Tulsa, OK 74119    Dear Rev. Wiggs:    I am writing you to request that Boston Avenue United Methodist Church not make available its church and facilities to the United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC).    The UDC has a racist past from the early 20th century to the 21st century. This is an organization that still runs and is proud of a Red Shirt Shrine to glorify a violent white supremacist group in 19th century South Carolina. In an article in the Dec. 2012 *UDC Magazine*, pages 11-14, the infamous post-Civil War Black Codes of the former Confederate states  are defended, African American men are represented as potential rapists, the 14th Amendment to the Constitution is argued to be misguided, African Americans are asserted to have been incompetent to be citizens. The article asserts, “Newly liberated Negroes were not prepared for their freedom…” These are but two contemporary examples of the UDC’s racism. I enclose documentation.    For documentation of the UDC’s racism in the early and middle 20th century you can go to [www.confederatepastpresent.org](http://www.confederatepastpresent.org) and use the search term “daughters.” Also, recently*Black Commentator* at <http://www.blackcommentator2.com/531_farley_sebesta_hague_guests.html>  published an article in which about a third is devoted to the racist history of the UDC in the 20th and 21st century.)    When Boston Avenue United Methodist Church allows the use of its architecturally prominent church it lends the prestige of the both the building the United Methodist Church to the UDC and helps enable this neo-Confederate organization.                                                                                        Sincerely Yours,                                                                                            Edward H. Sebesta    CC: Assoc. Minister Rev. EvaMarie Herndon Campbell, Assoc. Minister Rev. Dr. Bill Crowell, Assoc. Minister Rev. Mary Ann Emmons, Assoc. Minister Rev. Dr. WilliamTankersley III, Assoc. Minister Rev. Paul Staat.  There was no reply to this letter. |

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| LETTER TO THE LEADERSHIP OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH                                                                                                                September 14, 2013  Larry M. Goodpaster  President United Methodist Church  100 Maryland Ave. NE  Washington, DC 20002    Dear Mr. Goodpaster:    In the August 2013 issue of *UDC Magazine*, the official publication of the United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC), on page 19 it is announced that the Boston Avenue United Methodist Church is hosting a UDC national convention memorial service. I find it very disappointing to see that the United Methodist Church is enabling with the prestige of their organization and the Boston Avenue church’s architectural preeminence a neo-Confederate organization whose racism goes back generations.    This is an organization that runs a Red Shirt Shrine to glorify a violent white supremacist group in 19th century South Carolina. In an article in the Dec. 2012 *UDC Magazine*, pages 11-14, the infamous post-Civil War Black Codes of the former Confederate states  are defended, African American men are represented as potential rapists, the 14thAmendment to the Constitution is argued to be misguided, African Americans are asserted to have been incompetent to be citizens. The article asserts, “Newly liberated Negroes were not prepared for their freedom…” These are but two contemporary examples of the UDC’s racism. I am in progress of compiling a dossier on the UDC much like this dossier I published at *Black Commentator* on the Sons of Confederate Veterans. <http://www.blackcommentator.com/526/526_confederacy_sebesta_guest_share.html> .    The offering of the Boston Avenue church facilities to the UDC makes a mockery of whatever assertions you might make in support of racial equality or in respect of African Americans. It certainly also brings into question any non-discriminatory employment policies that the United Methodist Church might have. I ask that you not allow the UDC to use your churches for their functions both now and in the future.                                                                                                    Sincerely Yours,                                                                                                        Edward H. Sebesta    P.S. Documentation enclosed.  CC: Pres. Designate Rosemarie Wenner, Secretary Robert E. Hayes Jr., Executive Secretary Neil Irons, Ecumenical Officer Sharon Zimmerman Rader, Immediate Past Pres. Gregory Vaughn Palmer. |

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| LETTER TO THE GENERAL COMMISSION ON RACE AND RELIGION AT THE UMC    September 21, 2013    Ms. Erin M. Hawkins  General Secretary  General Commission on Religion and Race  The United Methodist Church  100 Maryland Ave. NE  Suite 400  Washington, DC 20002    Dear Ms. Hawkins:    Please find enclosed my letter to President Larry M. Goodpaster requesting that the United Methodist Church not allow their facilities to be used by the United Daughters of the Confederacy. I can email you all the documentation that I sent President Goodpaster.    I am asking that the General Commission on Religion and Race to recommend to the United Methodist Church that the United Methodist Church not allow the United Daughters of the Confederacy to use their facilities.                                                                                        Sincerely Yours,                                                                                            Edward H. Sebesta    CC: Executive Assistant to the General Secretary Ms. Maurita Bowie, Assistant General Secretary for Administration and Human Resources Ms. Frances Jett Roberts, Director of Program Coordination and Management Rev. Amy Stapleton, Financial Services Assistant Ms. Michelle Tello, Team Leader, Monitoring and Advocacy Mr. Giovanni Arroyo, Training and Development Specialist Rev. Dr. Grace Cajiuat, Communication Strategist Ms. Barbara Michelman, Production Support and Social Media Specialists Ms. JeehyePak, Web Specialists Ms. Kyra DeBlaker-Gebhard.  No response to this letter. |

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| LETTER TO THE BLACK METHODIST FOR CHURCH RENEWAL    September 21, 2013    Rev. Cedrick Bridgeforth  Chairperson  Black Methodists for Church Renewal, Inc.  201 8th Ave. South  Nashville, TN 37203-3919    Dear Rev. Bridgeforth:    I am writing you to ask for your assistance to convince the United Methodist Church (UMC) not lend its facilities for an upcoming United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC) national convention service. I enclose a copy of my letter to President Larry M. Goodpaster giving forth my reasons as to why the UMC should not allow the UDC to use its facilities. I can supply by email all the documentation mentioned.                                                                                        Sincerely Yours,                                                                                              Edward H. Sebesta      CC: Vice Chairperson Ms. Deborah Bell, Secretary Rev. Danita R. Anderson, Treasurer Mrs. Angella Current-Felder, Executive Director Pamela J. Crosby, Administrative Assistant Courtney Caine.    No reply to this letter was received. |

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| EMAIL TO BOSTON AVENUE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH COMMUNICATION DIRECTOR SHARI GOODWIN    From:   Edward H.Sebesta [edwardsebesta@gmail.com]  Sent:    Thursday, September 12, 2013 1:00 PM  To:       'sharigoodwin@bostonavenue.org'  Subject:           Does your membership know you are enabling the United Daughters of the  Confederacy?    Dear Ms. Goodwin:    Visiting your website for the Boston Avenue Methodist Church it seems like the members are nice people. How surprising it is to find out that you aid and enable neo-Confederates. I am referring to the fact that you are lending your church for a United Daughters of the Confederacy function the afternoon of Sunday Nov. 10, 2013.    This group has a long record of racism.    Besides your members, do African American Methodists and churches in Tulsa know that you are enabling neo-Confederates?    American churches need to stop enabling neo-Confederacy.  I would ask that you stop enabling neo-Confederacy.    Regards,    Edward H. Sebesta    Co-editor of “Neo-Confederacy: A Critical Introduction,” Univ. of Texas Press, 2008  (<http://www.utexas.edu/utpress/excerpts/exhagneo.html>), and “The Confederate and Neo-  Confederate Reader: The ‘Great Truth’ About the ‘Lost Cause’” Univ. Press of Mississippi 2010.  (<http://www.upress.state.ms.us/books/1338>).  Author of chapter about the Civil War and  Reconstruction in the notorious Texas teaching standards in Politics and the History Curriculum:  The Struggle over Standards in Texas and the Nation, published by Palgrave Macmillan.  <http://www.keitherekson.com/books/politics-and-the-history-curriculum/> |

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| LETTER TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE TULSA INTERFAITH ALLIANCE      October 6, 2013    Board of Directors                                                      [esebesta@tx.rr.com](mailto:esebesta@tx.rr.com)  Interfaith Alliance  P.O. Box 35654  Tulsa, OK 74153-0654    Dear Interfaith Alliance:    I am trying to persuade the Boston Avenue United Methodist Church to not allow their facilities to be used by the neo-Confederate United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC) for their national convention service. At [www.templeofdemocracy.com/bostonavenue.htm](http://www.templeofdemocracy.com/bostonavenue.htm) you can follow the correspondence of my campaign.    The neo-confederate UDC is an organization with a long history of racism going from the 20th century to the 21st century. I enclose a very recent sample of the UDC’s racism. In an article in the Dec. 2012 *UDC Magazine*, pages 11-14, the infamous post-Civil War Black Codes of the former Confederate states  are defended, African American men are represented as potential rapists, the 14th Amendment to the Constitution is argued to be misguided, African Americans are asserted to have been incompetent to be citizens. The article asserts, “Newly liberated Negroes were not prepared for their freedom…” You can also go online and read a recent article I had published of which about one-third details the history of the racism of the UDC. It is at <http://www.blackcommentator2.com/531_farley_sebesta_hague_guests.html>. Finally for their racism in the early and mid-20thcentury you can go to [www.confederatepastpresent.org](http://www.confederatepastpresent.org) and use the search term “daughters.”    The Boston Avenue United Methodist Church enables the UDC when they lend the prestige of their denomination and their architecturally prominent building for their use.  I enclose a copy of my letter to the Tulsa Metropolitan Ministry which details my motivations behind this campaign. I am hoping your Interfaith Alliance might assist me in persuading the Boston Avenue United Methodist Church to not host the UDC.                                                                                                    Sincerely Yours,                                                                                                      Edward H. Sebesta    P.S. I enclose a biographical note of my published academic works. You can access for free the guest links to my *Black Commentator* articles at[www.templeofdemocracy.com/resume.htm](http://www.templeofdemocracy.com/resume.htm).  There was no response to this letter. |

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| LETTER TO MS. MANA TAHAIE, DIRECTOR OF RACIAL JUSTICE YWCA TULSA  (Yes, I know this letter is nearly identical to the previous letter. This only so many ways I can write this.)                                                                                        October 6, 2013  [esebesta@tx.rr.com](mailto:esebesta@tx.rr.com)    Mana Tahaie  Director of Racial Justice YWCA – Tulsa  1503 South Denver Avenue  Tulsa, OK 74119    Dear Ms. Tahaie:    I am trying to persuade the Boston Avenue United Methodist Church to not allow their facilities to be used by the neo-Confederate United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC) for their national convention service. At [www.templeofdemocracy.com/bostonavenue.htm](http://www.templeofdemocracy.com/bostonavenue.htm) you can follow the correspondence of my campaign.    The neo-confederate UDC is an organization with a long history of racism going from the 20th century to the 21st century. I enclose a very recent sample of the UDC’s racism. In an article in the Dec. 2012 *UDC Magazine*, pages 11-14, the infamous post-Civil War Black Codes of the former Confederate states  are defended, African American men are represented as potential rapists, the 14th Amendment to the Constitution is argued to be misguided, African Americans are asserted to have been incompetent to be citizens. The article asserts, “Newly liberated Negroes were not prepared for their freedom…” You can also go online and read a recent article I had published of which about one-third details the history of the racism of the UDC. It is at <http://www.blackcommentator2.com/531_farley_sebesta_hague_guests.html>. Finally for their racism in the early and mid-20thcentury you can go to [www.confederatepastpresent.org](http://www.confederatepastpresent.org) and use the search term “daughters.”    The Boston Avenue United Methodist Church enables the UDC when they lend the prestige of their denomination and their architecturally prominent building for their use.  I enclose a copy of my letter to the Tulsa Metropolitan Ministry which details my motivations behind this campaign. I am hoping you might assist me in persuading the Boston Avenue United Methodist Church to not host the UDC.                                                                                                    Sincerely Yours,                                                                                                        Edward H. Sebesta    P.S. I enclose a biographical note of my published academic works. You can access for free the guest links to my *Black Commentator* articles at[www.templeofdemocracy.com/resume.htm](http://www.templeofdemocracy.com/resume.htm). |

INFORMATION LINKS

1.      This link takes you to a website which documents the racism of the UDC in the early and mid-20th century. <http://www.confederatepastpresent.org/index.php?searchword=daughters&ordering=&searchphrase=all&catid=&catname=&option=com_search>