



**Oregon-Idaho Conference**  
The United Methodist Church

**Boise First UMC (Cathedral of the Rockies)  
FAQs – Removal of Gen. Lee Image from Sanctuary  
Aug. 7 2020**

**Why did you need to have a service of deconsecration?**

The idea of the service of deconsecration of the window was to formally end the church's relationship with the image of General Lee and its connection to slavery. It was important to do this in a way that represented the holy nature of the worship space, and to reclaim it for our mission of making disciples while serving the community. It is not uncommon for churches to deconsecrate or decommission church buildings when they are no longer to be used for religious purposes.

**Who will be removing the window?**

Associated Crafts & Willet Hauser Stained Glass Studio, located in Winona, Minnesota, is a successor of the company that originally designed and installed the windows in 1960.

**What is happening to the window?**

Arrangements have been made to give it to the Idaho Black History Museum in Boise.

**How much is it costing?**

This window is being removed as part of a larger project to maintain all the stained glass at the church. Estimated cost is \$26,000.

**Who is designing the new window? When will it be completed?**

The window will not be replaced immediately, allowing time for careful selection of an image that represents the church's values and mission. Willet-Hauser will design and install a new window sometime in the future.

**What is happening to that space until a new window is put in place?** The section of the window being removed will be covered securely by plexiglass until a new window can be installed.

### **Why is the church also going to replace the images of presidents Washington and Lincoln?**

In consultation with the company that designed and built the window it became clear that there was no simple way to remove only Gen. Lee's visage from the space. The window was designed with the three men together. We could not remove one without significantly affecting the artwork. We will have a new stained glass window in that space.

### **Was there any consideration given to the fact the President Washington owned slaves?**

The main focus has always been on Gen. Lee, who led the Confederate army in the Civil War, a conflict that was rooted in the enslaving of Black people in the United States. Gen. Lee's actions, denouncing his country to lead the bloody fight to keep people enslaved, runs contrary to our beliefs as Christians. It is time to remove the image from the church.

President Washington owned slaves for much of his life. After the Revolutionary War, he began to have doubts about slavery, and was concerned that eventually slavery could divide the nation. Upon his death in 1799, in his strongest statement against slavery, his will ordered that his slaves be released upon his wife's death. The fact that President Washington owned slaves remains a part of his and our nation's history.

### **Wouldn't it just have been simpler and cheaper to put a plaque under the window denouncing Lee than removing the entire window?**

That could have been done, but it would not have resolved the issue of having the image of the man who led the Confederate army in its fight to preserve legalized slavery in the United portrayed alongside other religious and historical leaders. Removing his image is the morally and theologically correct action, reflecting the teachings and values of Jesus.

Local contact: Rev. Karen Hernandez  
Sage District Superintendent  
Oregon-Idaho Conference UMC  
208-697-4510 | [revkarenhernandez@gmail.com](mailto:revkarenhernandez@gmail.com)