



THE FLAME

Monthly Newsletter
for

Central and Algonquin United Methodist Churches

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The Pastor's Perspective

Dear Ones in Christ,

I have been asked to address the recent postponement of the United Methodist Church General Conference (UMC GC). For those of you unfamiliar with our structure, the UMC GC meets every four years. The UMC GC is the official governing body for all UM. It is this week-long gathering that decides how we will be in connection together.

Delegates (1,000 total of laity and clergy) come to UMC GC from all over the world. The number of delegates from each area is based on their UM population. Local churches send delegates to (in our case) The Michigan Annual Conference. Our church delegates vote on who the Michigan Annual Conference will send to the UMC GC. Clergy vote for clergy delegates. Laity vote for lay delegates. We are not certain yet if the Michigan Conference delegates who were elected to go to UMC GC in 2020 will represent us at the next UMC GC. This will be decided by the Judicial Council of the UMC.

Here is a portion of a recent announcement...

United Methodists reacted to General Conference's third postponement — this time to 2024 — with strong emotions ranging from outrage to relief. Many also expressed weariness with the uncertainty that has faced the denomination since before the pandemic.

The hope was that The United Methodist Church's top lawmaking body would resolve the denomination's longtime debate over LGBTQ inclusion and avoid costly litigation by adopting a formal separation plan...

The Commission on the General Conference announced March 3 that the international legislative assembly (UMC GC) could not go forward this year because of long waits for visas.

Later in the article... The Rev. Kennetha Bigham-Tsai, a delegate from the Michigan Conference, the top executive of the Connectional Table that coordinates denomination-wide mission and ministries, and previous District Superintendent shared these thoughts:

"I believe that we are at an inflection point that is forcing us to think beyond our legislative processes. We are going to have to find ways to move forward without a General Conference, for now," she said.

"The Holy Spirit is moving in The United Methodist Church. Mission and ministry will continue in our church."

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Pastor's Perspective Continued:

Because of the way our denomination is organized, the concrete answers that you might be searching for do not exist at this time. So do not allow the fearmongers (within and outside the UMC) to get you worried or feeling like actions need to be taken. Our new vision and mission are what will continue to guide our work together right now. Let's focus on being followers of Jesus. The rest will work itself out. When the time comes, you will have plenty (plenty!) of instructions, assistance, and time to make any decisions that need to be made.

Please read the letter from Bishop David Bard in the newsletter. Call me with questions.

In Christ,

Pastor Vickie



PRAYER WHEEL FOR OUR MILITARY

Lord, hold our troops in your loving hands. Protect them as they protect us. Bless them and their families for the selfless acts they perform for us in our time of need. We ask this in the name of Jesus, our Lord and Savior. Amen.

Gavin Povey, the grandson of Diana and Ron Morgan is in the Air Force and is stationed in Great Falls, Montana. His wife, Jewel, is also in the Air Force and she and their little son, Eli Morgan Povey, are also in Great Falls.

Sawyer Ball, the son of Marcia and Carl Ball is with the U.S. Army and assigned to Fort Carson, in Colorado Springs, Colorado. He is there with his wife Sherry and family..

Brent Johnson is stationed at Dover, Delaware and is a pilot with the U.S. Air Force. He is married to Captain Catherine Johnson, who is also in the Air Force and is in Intelligence. His grandparents are Gayle and Bob Johnson.

CW4 Sam Morgan is stationed in Savannah, Georgia and is the commander of a Black Hawk helicopter. He is working toward his Chief Warrant Officer 5, which is the highest rank he can achieve in the Army in his field. He and his wife, Stacie, have 6 children, one of whom is their biological child and 5 are adopted. He was honored to be able to help in the part of baptizing 2 of the children. His parents are Virginia and Terry Morgan and he is the nephew of Tom and Harriette Robinson.

Command Sgt. Major John Todd Lutz is stationed at Fort Bragg in Fayette, N.C. He is the son of John Lutz and the late Carol Lutz and the nephew of Tom and Harriette Robinson.

The Alpha Company, 3rd Battalion, 66th Armored Regiment from Fort Riley, Kansas is deployed to Lithuania. Pastor Vickie's great nephew, Jake Peters, is serving with this group. Jake is a loader and driver of the M1 Abrams. He had his 21st birthday on February 6, 2022. His father is Mark Peters.

We would like to extend prayers and recognition beyond our church family to anyone who would like their loved ones, friends or acquaintances mentioned for special prayers in this space. We welcome anyone to make your newsletter editors or our church office aware of them.

ALGONQUIN AND CENTRAL UNITED METHODIST CHURCHES MISSION: CONNECTING ALL PEOPLE TO GOD BY BUILDING BRIDGES OF CARING, OUTREACH AND ACCEPTANCE

MISSION FOR LENT

Central will be taking donations for Ukraine through Easter Sunday. There will be containers at either entrance to the sanctuary where you can place your change, currency or check (write "Ukraine" on memo line). You can also send in a donation to the church office (again make sure to designate it for Ukraine). We will send the final total to United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) and 100% of the funds will go directly to those in need in Ukraine.

You can also donate directly to UMCOR on line by going to their website-- <https://umcmission.org/>

Please continue to keep all the people who are caught up in this war in your prayers. Pray for peace on earth as it is in heaven. God bless you for all you are doing.

Sharing Your Gifts

We want to make giving easier for everyone. Some of you mail in a check, some bring it to worship in your offering envelope and some of you even bring it by the office so you can say hi to Sherry and Pastor Vickie. They enjoy your visits!!

Did you know we also have on-line giving? You can give a one-time donation to a variety of categories or set up a payment plan so it's done for the year. To give on line just go to our website: www.cumcsso.org and click on the GIVE button at the top right. It's quick, easy, and very secure. We are using Vanco, which is the company recommended by the UMC.

Beginning on March 13, we now celebrate a time of offering during worship (remember those days?). The boxes that were outside the sanctuary doors have been removed and one placed up front. During the second hymn, people can come forward and place their gifts in the box. If you are joining us on line, a slide will give you information on how you can share your financial gifts with us.

Thank you for your continued financial support. We understand you have many places asking for your gifts, and we appreciate your trust in us!!

Submitted by The Finance Committee



A REMINDER: The deadline for material to be submitted for our next *Flame*,
The May 2022 issue, is **April 15, 2022 at noon**.

NOTES AND NOTEWORTHY

ATTENTION, FAMILIES OF GRADUATES

Do you have a **high school** or a **higher education graduate** in your family? If so, please submit some information on them so we can recognize them in an upcoming issue of the “Flame.” Also include a photo of your high school graduate. You can phone me at 632-7958 or email me at blarson1517@charter.net.

Submitted by Barbara Larson

Please note the color of our “Flame” cover this month. It is a light purple (or lavender) as that is the shade traditionally associated with Lent. This is a season meant to prepare for Easter Sunday, which is on April 17.

RECIPE ROUNDUP CORNER

(*We know we have many wonderful cooks in Algonquin and Central Churches. We invite the sharing of your favorite recipes. Just write them out, include your name, and turn them into the box marked for “The Flame” outside of our secretary’s office, or email them to Barb Larson at blarson1517@charter.net. It can be desserts, entrees, beverages, appetizers, etc.)*

JUMBO BREAKFAST COOKIES

Ingredients:	2 cups white sugar	1 cup peanut butter	1 cup softened butter
	½ cup water	2 tablespoons vanilla	2 eggs
	2 1/4 cups flour	1 teaspoon baking soda	½ teaspoon salt
		1 ½ cups rolled oats	
	1 cup dried cranberries	1 cup chopped walnuts	6 cups Cheerios cereal



Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Mix together 1st 6 ingredients until smooth. Combine the flour, baking soda and salt and mix into batter. Mix in oats, cranberries and walnuts, and then stir in the cereal. Drop dough, using an ice cream scoop, onto an ungreased, parchment lined cookie sheet, spacing the cookies about 4" apart. Bake 12 minutes or until light golden brown. Let stand on cookie sheet for 5 minutes before moving to wire racks to cool. Enjoy!! Submitted by Jan Rogers

(Jan also wrote: “My 1st go at this recipe I cut it in ½ to see if it was worthy. 24 hours later I made the full batch!! Definitely worthy and great for sharing!”)

(Editor’s Note: As I was typing out this recipe to include it in our “Flame” issue, I thought it sounded so good that I made it. The cookies are delicious! I did as Jan said she 1st did, and made ½ the recipe. Also, not being exactly a morning person, I enjoyed mine for a lunch treat! I am thinking we could also perhaps substitute the dried cranberries with fresh whole ones.) Barb Larson

Worship Services for Holy Week



April 10th—Palm Sunday Service

“God Moves to the Cross”

9:00 a.m. Algonquin UMC

10:30 a.m. Central UMC



April 14th—Maundy Thursday Service—7:00 p.m.

Algonquin UMC



April 15th—Good Friday Service—7:00 p.m.

Central UMC



April 17th—EASTER Sunday Service

“God Moves Out of the Tomb”

9:00—Algonquin UMC

10:30—Central UMC



BISHOP BARD ON THE GENERAL CONFERENCE POSTPONEMENT

Be strong and courageous... Get to work. Don't be afraid or discouraged, because the Lord God...is with you. – I Chronicles 28:20 – David's words to his son Solomon

March 3, 2022 | LANSING — Friends, today, the Commission on the General Conference for The United Methodist Church announced that the 2020 General Conference, already postponed twice, will be postponed again, this time until 2024.

This news will be received with a range of feelings across our churches. There are some for whom this just makes sense given the uneven distribution of vaccinations across the globe, the current world situation, and the challenge of obtaining the appropriate travel documents for all the elected delegates from around the world. For others, this is deeply disappointing, delaying an anticipated vote on a denominational separation even further, which might allow for new expressions of Methodism to emerge and bring an end to our disputes over how we minister with and to the LGBTQ+ community. Some ask just how we can make it through the coming months with deep unresolved tensions. I have heard all your voices. I understand your concerns.

I understand the range of feelings. The delay in General Conference is disappointing. I also know that the world continues to need the good news of God's love in Jesus Christ. People need Jesus. The world needs churches that can surround people with communities of love and forgiveness. The world needs people and communities of faith committed to justice, peace, reconciliation, committed to seeing the image of God in all others and breaking down dividing walls. I know we have some profound differences about how God calls us to be in ministry.

We also share many of the same passions to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. People are hurting. People are wounded. Relationships are frayed. Families are struggling. Our world is plagued by war, poverty, environmental degradation, and the persistence of old prejudices and ancient hatreds. Yet, God still calls us, each of us and all of us, to be in ministry for and with Jesus Christ in this chaotic and all-too broken world.

We can, at this moment, allow ourselves to focus on anger, fear, dismay, disappointment, or we can feel these feelings and still move toward the strength of love and the courage to be in ministry.

My commitments to all of you are the same commitments I have made in my ministry with you in this difficult time. I am committed to kindness. I am committed to graciousness. I am committed to fairness. I am committed to seeking as much wisdom as I can to exercise the ministry to which I am called. As we move forward in this tense time, I am committed to communicating with you all clearly and fairly. As we continue to discuss future alternatives in the coming months, I will consistently provide sources for additional information to you. While I am committed to the continuing United Methodist Church, I will make sure you know where to find information about other expressions of Methodism. As a conference, we will do our best to provide resources for your congregational discernment about your mission, vision, and values. We have been living in an uneasy tension with one another. While uncomfortable, I trust we can continue to live in this tension. My commitments include the understandings reached concerning abeyance and fairness in working with all congregations and clergy when the Protocol for Reconciliation and Grace Through Separation was first announced in early 2020.

The Michigan Conference has consistently identified a direction for its future, a direction that defines inclusivity in ways beyond our current polity, a direction that seeks to combine personal faith development, congregational vibrancy, and passion for creating a more just and peaceful world. There is spaciousness, room for difference in matters of conscience, and encouragement to ongoing dialogue amid contradictory convictions within that broad direction. As a bishop, I have shared with many that I am not interested in exchanging one set of judicial processes, complaints, and trials about matters of conscience for another. And I recognize that not everyone sees themselves or their congregation as part of this direction. There are unanswered questions about whether or not new expressions of Methodism may launch before General Conference. There remain provisions for disaffiliation for local congregations in accordance with paragraph 2553 of The Book of Discipline, revised in 2019.

(Continued on the next page)

Message from Bishop Bard Continued:

The Council of Bishops has scheduled a meeting for March 8, and I may have more to share with you following that meeting. At that time, I may be in a better position to respond to more specific questions about disaffiliation, pathways for new expressions of Methodism to form, and whether or not Jurisdictional Conferences might yet be held this year. If pathways to new expressions of Methodism are developed, I will work graciously with those seeking to move in that direction.

I have long cherished these words of Parker Palmer and have shared them often. ““ Don’t be afraid” does not mean we cannot have fear. Everyone has fear, and people who embrace the call to leadership often find fear abounding. Instead, the words say we do not need to be the fear we have. We do not have to lead from a place of fear, thereby engendering a world in which fear abounds. We have places of fear inside us, but we have other places as well – places with names like trust and hope and faith. We can choose to lead from one of those places, to stand on ground that is not riddled with the fault lines of fear, to move toward others from a place of promise instead of anxiety.” You’re your Life Speak)

May we not be the fear we feel. May we not be defined by our disappointment, anger, or dismay. Instead, may we find ways to lead and work in ministry from places with names like trust and hope, and faith. By the power of the Holy Spirit, may we be courageous and do the work of ministry to which we have all been called by God in Jesus Christ.

Those who were in church on Sunday, March 20th., received a bookmark with the Serenity Prayer, by Reinhold Niebuhr, as the theme. For those of you who weren't there, here is the prayer in its entirety. Most of you will know the first part, but maybe not the last part.

Serenity Prayer

by Reinhold Niebuhr

God grant me the serenity to

accept the things I cannot change, the courage to

change the things I can, and the wisdom to

know the difference...

Living one day at a time; enjoying one moment at a time;

taking this world as it is and not as I would have it;

trusting that You will make all things right if I

surrender to Your will; so that I may be reasonably

happy in this life and supremely happy

with You forever in the next. Amen.



ALGONQUIN UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

1604 W Fourth Avenue
Sault Ste Marie, MI 49783

Our **Worship Servants** for the month of April are:

April 3: Liturgist: Bev Atkins Greeter: Rachel Pratt Online Host: Rachel Pratt

April 10: Liturgist: Grace Rousseau Greeters: Todd and Mary Beth Vollick
Online Host: Mary Beth Vollick

April 17: Greeter: Bev Harwood

April 24: Liturgist: Bev Atkins Greeters: Bob and Bernita Sibbald
Online Host: Bernita Sibbald

Submitted by Bernita Sibbald

Our next **Ladies Craft Day** will be held at Algonquin Church on Saturday, April 23rd from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. All ladies from Central and Algonquin are invited to attend to make a prayer box, have lunch, and, best of all, enjoy good fellowship. Please RSVP to me by April 20th at 906-635-0150.

Submitted by Bev Atkins

Easter Flower Order for 2022

I would like to order a plant(s) to be displayed at Central UMC on Easter Sunday (April 17, 2022).

Chrysanthemum (\$20.00) Daffodil (\$16.00) Tulip (\$16.00)
 Hydrangea (\$25.00) Lily (\$15.00)

Please indicate how you would like the flower dedication listed in the Easter Sunday bulletin. **Please print clearly:**

In honor of: _____

In memory: _____

For the glory of Easter: _____

By: _____ Total Enclosed: \$ _____

Telephone Number: _____

Please place the completed form and payment in the Sunday morning offering plate, mail it to the church, or turn it in to the church office by **Sunday, April 3, 2022**. Please plan to take your plant after the Easter service.

BIRTHDAY AND ANNIVERSARY BLESSINGS AND WISHES

Central Birthdays

April 3 - Megan Bunker Moran

April 3 - Lisa Vincent

April 4 - Sue Mackie

April 22—Norb Bennin

April 24—Dennis Hill

Central Anniversaries

April 16—Cathy and John Wilkinson



Algonquin Birthdays

April 8 - Frances Sylvester

April 10—Bernita Sibbald

April 16—Todd Vollrick

April 27—Jim Atkins

April 30—Lillie Dost

April 30—Leo Shea

ENDOWMENT FUND UPDATE

Last year the Endowment Committee approved \$115,566.70 to fund projects requested throughout the 2021 calendar year.

This year, the Endowment Committee will be reviewing requests for funding on May 17th. The deadline for submitting requests is May 5th. Request forms are available from the Church office and are also in the pigeon hole mailboxes outside the Church office.

Funds requested can be used for the promotion and development of religious, charitable and educational activities, and for non reoccurring purposes not regularly budgeted .

We hope the work areas will consider and submit requests for this upcoming window of opportunity. Thank you.

Submitted by Tom Robinson

CENTRAL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
111 EAST SPRUCE STREET
SAULT SAINTE MARIE, MI 49783-2189

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April 2022



Easter is a "moveable" date.

In 2022 it is on April 17th.

*It falls on the first Sunday after the first full moon
after the spring equinox.*

(The spring equinox is the first day of spring.)

HAVE A BLESSED EASTER!!

