
FUMC News



APRIL 2024

BEDFORD FIRST
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Prayers for the General Conference

I've talked a little about "Breakthrough Prayer" over the past year, but it's truly time to put my thoughts, words, and ideas into use. The 2024 gathering of the General Conference which is the governing body of the United Methodist Church will begin on April 23, 2024 and end on May 3, 2024. So, what will be discussed at this meeting?

According to the official United Methodist News site (<https://www.umnews.org/en/news/looking-ahead-to-general-conference-next-year>),

"The lawmaking assembly faces many proposals dealing with topics as varied as the denomination-wide budget, social teachings, ecumenical relations and international structure.

"All told, General Conference has received 1,100 properly submitted petitions — basically the United Methodist equivalent of bills before a legislature. And just like a bill on Capitol Hill, the first stop for a General Conference petition is in one of the gathering's legislative committees. In 2024, General Conference will have 14 legislative committees."

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In other words, a bunch of stuff. Probably the topic that will be most watched (and reported on) will be any decisions regarding any changes or alterations to the denomination's policies regarding homosexuality. As you might expect, there will be a lot of different perspectives and attitudes shared and discussed! I encourage you to visit the website listed above to learn more about specific petitions that have been submitted.

The entire process is very similar to the workings of our government. In fact, the rise of Methodism in the United States paralleled the forming of our governmental processes. And although the alignment is slightly different (we

Continued

Pastor's Message, continued

don't have one person who serves as President; the Council of Bishops is the closest we get to that). We do have a representative governing body that sets policy and a judiciary arm that enforces the policies.

So, please keep the United Methodist Church **AND** the General Conference attendees in your prayers particularly in the coming weeks. Pray for discernment, obedience, agape love, and, above all, that all participants keep their hearts, minds, and souls attuned to God's will for our denomination and the world.

~Pastor Judi

Soul Food

Soul Food Book Club will meet on Wednesday, April 3 at 10:30 AM in the Friendship Classroom to discuss *Joey* by Jennifer Marshall Bleakley. Lunch to follow.

May 1 we are reading *Death by Darjeeling* by Laura Childs and at our June meeting we will be discussing *A Darker Reality* by Anne Perry. It has been suggested that since *A Darker Reality* is the third book in a series, you might want to read books one and two prior to this book, but that is not necessary.

Come join us for interesting discussions and fellowship with lunch following the meeting. We go to different restaurants in the Bedford area.

~Linda Schoonmaker



Thank You

Many thanks to Sandy Thomas for volunteering her time and talent to decorate the flower cross for our Easter service. She did a beautiful job.



Youth Art Show!

You are cordially invited to attend the youth art show:

- ◆ WHEN: Friday, April 26 (doors open at 5:00 PM)
- ◆ WHERE: FUMC Fellowship Hall

The show will feature works from Bedford North Lawrence High School art students, including our own Kayeh Kwakye. Please stop by to support these talented young people.



2024 Sermon Manuscript Contest

The Indiana Conference Board of Laity is pleased to sponsor the 2024 Laity Sermon Manuscript Contest again this year. The contest is open to all laypersons in the Indiana Conference.

In collaboration with the 2024 Indiana Annual Conference Session, the theme for this year's manuscript contest is ***Cultivate Joy!*** based on Romans 15:13: "***May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.***" The author of the winning manuscript will present his or her manuscript during the Laity Session of Annual Conference, which will take place at St. Luke's United Methodist Church in Indianapolis June 6-8.

Rules:

- Manuscripts must be original and based on the theme stated above.
- Manuscripts should be no more than 10 minutes in length when presented.
- Entries will be judged based on clarity, originality, relationship to the theme and composition.
- Manuscripts must be accompanied by a cover sheet that includes the writer's name, phone number, email address, local church name and district.
- Entrants are asked not to include any personally identifying information in the manuscript itself since the manuscripts will be judged anonymously.
- Previous winners are ineligible for 3 years.
- All entries MUST be received no later than Sunday, April 7.
- The winner will be notified on or before Friday, April 19.



Entries should be submitted to Kim Arnott, Conference Director of Lay Servant Ministries, at kimarnott@mac.com. For additional information about the contest, please contact Kim Arnott at the above email address.

- 11 Vicki Groh
- 12 Sarah Burk
- 17 Kathy Thompson
- 18 Candy Stedman
- 22 Alexis (Clifton) Bales
- 28 Jeff Clifton



UPCOMING Events

- April 2, Hospitality Committee at 9:00 AM
- April 3, Soul Food at 10:30 AM
- April 9, Administrative Council at 6:00 PM
- April 26, Youth Art Show at 5:00 PM
- Every Sunday, Choir Practice, 9:30 AM
- Last Monday of the month, Euchre at 2:00 PM
- Every Tuesday, Men's Breakfast at Bob Evans at 9:00 AM
- Every Tuesday, Grief Share from 2:00 to 3:30 PM
- Every Tuesday, Bible study at 4:00 PM
- Every Thursday, Fiber Time at 2:00 PM
- Every Friday, Youth Group at 6:30 PM
- Every Saturday, Gideons at 8:00 AM

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*Making disciples Jesus
Christ for the transfor-
mation of the world.*