

July 2025

Bedford First United Methodist Church
Erie United Methodist Church
Grace United Methodist Church
Wesley Chapel United Methodist Church



Lawrence County UMC News

Committed to the Future

In commitment to and renewal of my covenant as a clergy member in The United Methodist Church, I now reverently begin my appointment with a glad mind and will, and I pray that I shall be worthy of my call to the ministry, my Conference relationship, and the places of ministry to which I have been appointed. I have officially been appointed to serve for another year at Bedford First UMC, Grace UMC and Wesley Chapel UMC with an additional appointment to Erie UMC. Four churches will make me a busy woman when reports are due, but I am very grateful for the opportunity to serve during this last year of ministry before retiring next June.

Transitioning is never easy. Change is scary. I think we all prefer the known to the unknown. It is something that I've struggled with my entire life; times when the only thing I could do was trust in God; stop seeking solutions/resolutions and just let Him work. It has never been easy, but when I look back, giving up control to God was (and is) one of the best decisions I have ever made.

As I approach retirement (and relocation to the Otterbein community in Franklin, Indiana) next June, I confess that I am excited AND scared out of my wits! Questions abound:

- Will I like the community?
- Will I be accepted there?
- Will there be meaningful and useful work for me to do?
- Will God be with me?

The obvious answer to those questions, except the last one, is "who knows!" There's no doubt that God will be with me. He has never left,

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Committed to the Future, continued

although I have been absent for periods of time (some of them lengthy) throughout our relationship.

And that knowledge is what is driving me into the unknown, the urge to step out of my comfort zone, the confidence to move forward in faith on the path God has prepared for me. It's going to be quite different than life here in Bedford, but I truly feel that God is calling me to Franklin. I am scared, but encouraged; fearful but obedient; doubtful but positive. God has me in His hands. And it is all good!

Blessings,
Pastor Judi

Next Generation

Throughout the month of July, Next Generation is collecting money to purchase items for Layette Kits produced by Midwest Mission. A collection basket has been placed at the rear of the sanctuary for your donation; please place donations here instead of in the regular collection plate. *Missions* donation envelopes are provided on the table for your convenience.



~Pastor Judi

Financial Report

For the first five months of 2025, the General Fund ran at a deficit of \$4,000 +/- . On Sunday, June 29 we will hold a Charge Conference to petition for the removal of \$20,000 from trust funds to hopefully cover us for the remainder of 2025.

~Jerry Jackson,
Treasurer



Soul Food

On July 2 we will be discussing *The Five Wishes of Mr. Murray McBride* by Joe Sipes. This is an excellent book in my opinion. There is humor, sadness and lots of love. We will meet, as usual, on the first Wednesday of the month at 10:30 AM in the Friendship Classroom. All women are invited to attend. We go out to lunch after the meeting for fellowship, but you are not obligated to do so.

If you are interested in coming, or would just like to read the books, below is a list for the rest of the year:

August 6--*When I Was Seven* by Mary Ellen Bramwell

September 3--*Fourteen Days: A Collaborative Novel* by The Authors Guild

October 1--*I Am the Messenger* by Markus Zusak

November 5--*Eight Years of Lies* by Lisa Hall

December 3--*The Christmas Candle* by Max Lucado

As you can see from our list, we read a variety of different genres of books. I have read books I would never have picked out on my own to read and have really enjoyed them. We welcome new members.

Linda Schoonmaker

bill.schoonmaker@comcast.net



New District Superintendent

Pastor John Hogsett has been appointed to serve as the District Superintendent for the Southern Rivers District of the Indiana Conference of the United Methodist Church beginning July 1, 2025. He grew up in Northern Indiana and is the son of a retired United Methodist minister. He is a graduate of Duke Divinity School. He and his wife, Marianne, have four adult children.

The Southern Rivers District of the Indiana Conference of the United Methodist Church is the result of the merging of the South and Southwest Districts.



2 Rowena Mount, Pam Bell and Gabe Bower
 5 Judy Johnson
 13 Sally Alesia
 15 Tim MaGill
 17 Dale Groh
 20 Donna Kelly
 21 Lynn Crane
 18 Sandy Huffman
 21 Anthony Minshall
 29 Kayeh Kwakye
 30 Linda Meadows



July 1, Hospitality Committee at 9:00 AM, BFUMC
 July 2, UMW at 11:30, Golden Corral
 July 2, Soul Food at 10:30 AM, BFUMC
 July 8, Administrative Council at 6:00 PM, BFUMC
 Every Sunday, Youth Group at 11:30 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 at 2:00 PM
 Every Tuesday, Bible study at 4:00 PM
 Every Thursday, Fiber Time at 2:00 PM
 Every Saturday, Gideons at 8:00 AM

*Bedford First United
 Methodist
 Church*

1409 K Street
 P. O. Box 84
 Bedford, IN 47421

812-275-2627
 bedfordfirstumc@gmail.com



*Making disciples
 Jesus Christ for
 the transformation
 of the world.*

Sleeping Mat Project

At this point, we do not need any more plastic shopping bags for the sleeping mat project. Thank you so much to everyone who contributed. The loom is set up in the Pitman Center, so if you have time, feel free to try your hand at weaving a mat. An instructional video is available—just ask Pastor Judi about it.



ANNUAL CONFERENCE SUNDAY

The Indiana Annual Conference gathered at St. Luke's United Methodist Church in Indianapolis, Indiana, June 4-7, 2025.

PLENARY HIGHLIGHTS

- The 2026 budget was adopted.
- 30 churches were acknowledged for their many years of changing lives, though they disbanded in the last year.
- Impact 2818 Outdoor Ministries reported 1,580 campers last year with 175 first-time commitments to Christ and 110 calls to vocational ministry.
- Multiple resolutions and amended resolutions passed, aspiring things like ensuring linguistic inclusivity and accessibility in Indiana UMC; immigration and attorney fees for clergy families; appreciation for associate members and licensed local pastors; comprehensive plan for closed church funds and transparency for all district funds.

SERVICE OF REMEMBRANCE

The Conference honored the lives of 34 clergy, 25 spouses, and 6 laity who have joined the Church Triumphant in the last year.

EPISCOPAL ADDRESS

Bishop Tracy S. Malone presented her episcopal address entitled, "For such a time as this." "If there were ever a time we need to multiply love, cultivate joy, and inspire hope to bring good news to the poor, heal the broken hearted, bring liberty to those who find themselves in bondage, to do justice, to love mercy, it is for such a time as this!" she said.

SERVICE OF COMMISSIONING, ORDINATION, AND RETIREMENT

26 retirees were honored for their 701 years of combined service.
2 persons were ordained as deacon.
5 persons were ordained as elders.
2 persons were commissioned for ministry as elders
1 person was commissioned for ministry as a deacon.
8 persons were recognized for their completion of Course of Study.
Rt. Rev. Jennifer Baskerville-Burrows (Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Indianapolis) offered words of inspiration in her sermon, "Picking Up and Laying Down the Loving Work of the Shepherd."

2026 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

We are planning to meet June 3-6, 2026, at St. Luke's United Methodist Church in Indianapolis.

Full details from the 2025 Annual Conference can be found at inumc.org/annual-conference.

Indiana Conference of The United Methodist Church