

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

# Lawrence County UMC News



## Changes

Change is always difficult. It's even harder when it's foisted on you so that you have absolutely no control over the situation. This is the spot where I find myself today as I write this. I'm sitting in a motel room in the St. Louis area waiting for my cousins to get up and start a new day, one without the presence of their brother, Chuck. You see, Chuck passed away yesterday morning. Although no one knew it, bone cancer had taken possession of his body for some time. In fact, Chuck wasn't even aware that he was ill—until he was. A fairly recent minor backache was something much more sinister and by the time the cancer was discovered, it was nearing its fatal conclusion: the end of Chuck's life. So now, my cousins and I are facing a new reality: life without Chuck.

Changes. They can appear unexpectedly as did Chuck's passing, or they can come gradually, like Graduations or Confirmations or even my retirement in 2026. Life is like that. But while we **KNOW** and begrudgingly **ACCEPT** that changes can, and do, happen frequently, sometimes we struggle with the reality with what we anticipate or expect in the future. I sense some of that when you talk with me about the future of this church.

I can't do much about the rule requiring me to retire next year and I really believe that it is time for me to move on. After six years, it's time for someone new to be granted the absolutely wonderful privilege of being with this congregation, and, as you have probably guessed, time for me to focus on what's left of my family and the next new adventure God has planned for me.

The Strategic Planning Committee has been working diligently to formulate a plan designed to shepherd Bedford First into the future. Some truly great ideas have been proposed, but it will take the efforts of everyone to be successful. So talk with one or more or all of the members of the Strategic Planning Committee:

- Mary Barnes, Chair
- Sherry Hardesty
- Darryl Ivanson
- Janet Jackson
- Judy Johnson
- Karyn Price
- Judy Quyle
- Linda Schoonmaker

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## Changes, continued

Find out how your God-given gifts and talents can be used to advance the work of the church. Better yet, join them in this task.

After all, God expects, demands actually, that we remain true to our calling, our purpose: to serve God with all our hearts and minds, and bodies and souls **AND** to take care of each other while tending God's Creation. In my hometown of Evansville, there is a plaque at historic Bosse Field reminding everyone who enters its gates, "when everybody boosts, everybody wins!" It's true for athletics and it's also true for us.

Changes are coming to each of us, to Bedford First, and to the United Methodist churches of Lawrence County. My prayer is that each of us remains open to God's voice, encouraging, nudging, and sometimes quite frankly, pushing each of us into service for Him.

Go! And be His church!

Blessings,  
Pastor Judi

## Annual Conference

It's Annual Conference time again! Four days of worship, fellowship, inspiration, fun and driving in Indianapolis traffic. Well, four out of five ain't (sorry Rowena!) bad.

This year, attendees will be voting on four amendments to the United Methodist Constitution, after they were approved by the 2020/2024 General Conference. These unique pieces of legislation only become an official part of our UMC Constitution once they are ratified by a "two-thirds affirmative vote of the aggregate of members to the annual conferences. (§ 59, BOD 2020/2024)." In other words, after all eligible voters have cast their ballots, two-thirds of those votes must be "yes" votes for the amendments to be approved. Each vote received matters and approval or failure of the vote may be determined by just a few votes.

At this year's Indiana Annual Conference, we will vote on these amendments. The amendments can be debated but cannot be modified, this is a simple "YES" or "NO" vote.

### **Ballot 1 - Regionalization**

A set of amendments to create new regional conferences that will each have equal power to adapt portions of the Book of Discipline within their prospective regions. The United States would become its own Regional Conference, allowing it to make decisions that specifically address outreach and ministry needs within the U.S. context.

This proposal has the support of the General Conference, the Council of Bishops, and others. Because the General Conference bundled all of the constitutional amendments related to regionalization and took one vote, annual conferences will vote on the regionalization amendments in one ballot.

Continued

## Annual Conference, continued

Worldwide Regionalization represents an organizational vision designed to enhance adaptive evangelism, emphasize our denomination's worldwide nature, and strengthen our connection by prioritizing our mission and ministry. It was overwhelmingly approved by delegates from around the world at General Conference 2024 and now awaits ratification by our Annual Conferences.

### **Ballot 2 - Updating Paragraph 4 Article 4**

An amendment to add the words "gender" and "ability" to Paragraph 4, Article 4 of the constitution to categories that cannot be used to exclude membership in The United Methodist Church.

This proposal has the support of the General Conference, the Council of Bishops, and others.

The amended portion of the Constitution adds the words "ability" and "gender" to existing social categories that clergy in The United Methodist Church cannot use to discriminate against a potential member.

### **Ballot 3 - Updating Article V: Racial Justice**

An amendment to strengthen Article V of the UMC Constitution by explicitly recognizing the church's role in combating racism, racial inequity, colonialism, white privilege, and white supremacy.

This proposal has the support of the General Conference, the Council of Bishops, and others.

Article V of the Book of Discipline serves as a pivotal framework for the United Methodist Church's commitment to addressing and eliminating racism in all its forms. Recent proposed changes to Article V, at the postponed 2020/2024 General Conference session in April/May 2024, have strengthened this commitment by explicitly recognizing the church's role in combating racism, racial inequity, colonialism, white privilege, and white supremacy both within the denomination and in broader society. These changes reflect a critical shift in the church's acknowledgment of and response to deeply entrenched racial injustice.

### **Ballot 4 - Educational Requirements for Clergy**

General Conference voted to amend Section VI, Article IV of the United Methodist Constitution, which establishes the educational requirements for clergy members of annual or provisional conferences who are eligible to vote for clergy delegates to the General Conference.

This proposal has the support of the General Conference, the Council of Bishops, and others.

Previously, the paragraph Section VI, Article IV required a clergy delegate to have completed a "course of study or an M. Div. degree..." It now states: "course of study or Master of Divinity from a University Senate approved theological school or its equivalent as recognized in a Central Conference..."

This amendment ensures that those voting for clergy delegates have met the denominational standards for theological education. It does not expand or restrict voting access for licensed local pastors. Instead, it clarifies the meaning of a Master of Divinity degree and specifies qualifying theological schools and their equivalents.

I will be voting yes for all four, believing that they strengthen the denomination and position us for much grace filled and hopeful future.

Pastor Judi



## Next Generation



Congratulations to Richard Bell on his Confirmation on May 25.



Also, Richard is an entrepreneur! If you need some lawn work done, give him a call.



Congratulations to Kayeh Kwakye as well. Kayeh got her driver's license on May 13.



*Prom 2025*—The lovely FUMC ladies:  
Kat, Madison and Kayeh.



Yet another congratulations...Katarina  
Kwakyee graduated high school on May 30.

## Financial Report

The last three months, the General Fund deficit has been at \$4,000 with little or no extraordinary expenses.

~Jerry Jackson,  
Treasurer



## Soul Food

Soul Food Book Club will meet Wednesday, June 4, at 10:30 AM in the Friendship Classroom. We will be discussing *Almost Perfect* by Diane Daniels Manning. This book is about a teenage boy with learning difficulties and his relationship with an older neighbor who raises and shows poodles. I found it very interesting.

All women are welcome to come to Soul Food and share in the discussions we have the first Wednesday of each month. We all read the same book each month and then come together to discuss the book.

And, of course, we always go somewhere local for church afterwards!

Linda Schoonmaker  
[bill.schoonmaker@comcast.net](mailto:bill.schoonmaker@comcast.net) or 812-275-2211



## Mountain Mission

The Mountain Mission truck will be at our church on Monday, June 16. We are usually one of their first stops, so please have any donations to the church prior to June 16.

They are in need of bed sheets and comforters, new children's coats, children's shoes, clothes and socks, men's clothing and socks, women's socks, purses, pots and pans, and crafting supplies such as yarn and material. The warehouse needs 33-gallon trash bags, paper towels, newspaper for packing, and toilet bowl cleaner.

They ask that we not donate non-working items, very heavy items (pianos, etc.), hymnals or encyclopedias. A full list of needs is on the bulletin board in the main hall.

Monetary donations can be mailed directly to: Methodist Mountain Mission, P. O. Box 888, Jackson, KY 41339.



## Cap Collection Project is Complete



Altrusa has ended their plastic cap/lid collection project, so caps will no longer be collected at the church. Thank you to everyone who contributed to the success of this project over the years.



6 Peggy Parsons and Jennifer Wadsworth  
7 Liz Collins, Barbara Houston  
11 Larry Berry  
25 Eurette Griggs  
30 Mae Smoot



June 2, Hospitality Committee at 9:00 AM, BFUMC  
June 4, Soul Food at 10:30 AM, BFUMC  
June 4, UMW at 1:00 PM at Grace UMC  
June 10, Administrative Council at 6:00 PM, BFUMC  
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.*

April 1, 2025

Bedford First United Methodist Church  
Po Box 84  
Bedford, IN 47421-0084

Dear Bedford First United Methodist Church,

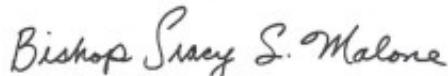
The Indiana Conference is committed to the well-being of every person that our local United Methodist Churches and faith communities serve.

We are called to provide protection and safety for all persons including children, youth, and vulnerable adults. The United Methodist Church affirms that all children, youth, and vulnerable adults have the right to expect a welcoming and safe environment.

The Indiana Conference, through the Children Matter Most ministry, recognizes your church for adopting the child protection guidelines, completing the training course, and providing proof of said policies. May your safekeeping of all children, youth, and vulnerable adults inspire and bless everyone you serve.

Please accept this certificate in recognition of your leadership and commitment.

Grace and Peace,



Rev. Dr. Tracy S. Malone  
Resident Bishop  
Indiana Conference of The United Methodist Church



REV. DR. TRACY S. MALONE  
Resident Bishop  
[bishop@inumc.org](mailto:bishop@inumc.org)

REV. LARRY WHITEHEAD  
Executive Assistant to the Bishop  
[larry.whitehead@inumc.org](mailto:larry.whitehead@inumc.org)

LYNDA PRESTON  
Executive Secretary to the Bishop  
[lynda.preston@inumc.org](mailto:lynda.preston@inumc.org)



OFFICE OF INDIANA SECRETARY OF STATE  
**DIEGO MORALES**



## **Urgent Alert: Phishing Email Impersonating State Entity**

On behalf of Indiana Secretary of State Diego Morales, he would like to make you aware of a phishing attempt currently circulating via state email. **These messages are not legitimate** and appear to come from a sender impersonating a state-affiliated source, such as "txtag" or other entities.

Please be advised:

- **Do not click on any links or attachments** within these suspicious emails.
- Delete the message immediately.
- We are working diligently with the State Office of Technology to investigate and block further attacks.

These emails are designed to mislead recipients into believing they are receiving official state communication. We want to emphasize if you have any concern about the legitimacy of a request from our office, please reach out and we will be happy to assist.

At this point, we have no indication that these phishing emails are imitating emails from our office, but emails are going to individuals/entities that engage with our office. The Indiana Office of Technology (IOT) is aware of the situation and is monitoring closely.

Thank you for your attention and cooperation