

The United Methodist Church of Antioch

# THE MESSENGER

*“The mission of the United Methodist Church of Antioch is to grow in faith, worship God following the teachings of Jesus Christ, and be instruments of God’s love, through the Holy Spirit, as we reach out to our community and the world.”*

March, 2024  
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## FROM PASTOR KATIE’S KEYBOARD...

This month our denomination will gather for **General Conference** in Charleston, North Carolina, April 23rd – May 3rd. Over the last few months there has been much conversation in various secular news outlets about what has been happening in The United Methodist Church and why. A few people have asked a few questions here and there, but I thought now would be good



time to give everyone some information before it became more prominent in the news again.

At the Special Session of General Conference in 2019 in St. Louis, the General Conference provided a way for churches who disagreed with The United Methodist Church over human sexuality to disaffiliate from the denomination. Since that 2019 conference, according to *UMNews*, 7660 churches have left the denomination, with just eight of those having left from our annual conference – the **Northern Illinois Annual Conference** (<https://www.umnews.org/en/news/disaffiliations-approved-by-annual-conferences>).

While we haven’t felt the effects in our annual conference, our denomination has absolutely taken a hit. This has left lots to figure out in the wake of this many churches leaving – if I’ve read the chart I referenced above correctly the annual conference with the largest number of disaffiliations had 386 churches leave their annual conference, and ten annual conferences had more than 300 churches disaffiliate. This leaves annual conferences reeling to decide who is left to run things, who will their delegates



be to General Conference, how do they reach out to the people whose local churches disaffiliated, but they didn’t want to, and how do we move forward when the churches we partnered in ministry with we now wonder can we trust them? How do we continue to love like Jesus calls us to when we are wounded?

As we proceed to finally holding the 2020 session of General Conference that had been postponed multiple times because of the pandemic, there have been ramifications there, as well. **The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church** allows that any member of a United Methodist Church is allowed to submit a petition for the General Conference to consider. Now the **General Secretary** is asking the delegations for help identifying session of General Conference that had been postponed multiple times because of the pandemic, there have been ramifications there, as well. **The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church** allows that any member of a United Methodist Church is allowed to submit a petition for the General Conference to consider. Now the General Secretary is asking the delegations for help identifying pieces of legislation that have been written by people who are no longer members of a United Methodist Church, so that they can properly be removed from consideration.



One of the ways that I serve our denomination beyond the local church is on the staff of the **General Secretary of the General Conference**. I had the position of the **Recorder Coordinator** for the Special Session in 2019 and will have that again in Charleston. A recorder is the person who sits in the legislative committee room or on the stage for the plenary and inputs the actual decisions made by the body into **CALMS**



## MORE FROM PASTOR KATIE

(our legislative management system) so that the legislative action makes its way into the *Daily Christian Advocate (DCA)* – the official record of what happens at General Conference. As the coordinator I will be scheduling the recorders in each of the legislative sections, as well for their shifts on the stage during plenary. I will be helping troubleshoot for them as they need, and maybe even taking a couple shifts myself. In addition to scheduling the recorders, I will also be scheduling the Channel B transcribers for their shifts during plenary. These people speak onto a secondary channel for the verbatim recording of the proceedings so that whenever someone steps to a microphone they repeat the person's name and spell it onto a second simultaneous track (Channel B) so that when the transcribers are typing out the proceedings, they can just listen to that second track and spell people's names for the DCA. So, this means I will go early to help get things organized on the ground and I will stay a little later and help get things put away for next time.

Please pray for the 864 delegates who will be meeting during this time, for the *Judicial Council* who will be in session, for the *Bishops* who will be presiding and offering wisdom, for the marshals and pages who will be helping the room communicate with each other and enforcing the credentials rules, the paid and volunteer staff who will be gathered to help keep things moving, and the many, many, many advocates, seminary students, and visitors who gather to observe, offer witness, and learn about who we are in this newest iteration of The United Methodist Church.



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|----------|---|
| April 7  | John 20:19-31<br><i>Continue to Believe</i><br>Holy Communion |
| April 14 | Luke 24:36b-48<br><i>Beginning from Jerusalem</i>             |
| April 21 | <i>Phil Georgia Preaches</i>                                  |
| April 28 | <i>Dan Holmes Leads Worship</i>                               |
- Pastor Katie*

*Phil Georgia*



## MISSIONS

### *April Collection*

**OPEN ARMS MISSION FOOD PANTRY** is open to residents of Antioch and Lake Villa Township providing three days of food based on your family size, including fresh milk and frozen meat. Clients may visit once a week at 1548 S. Main St., Antioch, IL 60002. Open Arms accepts **SNAP cards** (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program—food stamps) for food items. But...food stamps don't pay for so many other necessary items. This month we will collect personal hygiene items and paper products. Below are some suggestions. Please do not buy diapers for children or adults. They are not needed. To learn more about Open Arms go to:



[www.openarmsmission.org](http://www.openarmsmission.org)

- Shampoo and Conditioner
- Soap
- Deodorant
- Tooth paste and tooth brushes
- Feminine hygiene products
- Toilet paper
- Kleenex
- Paper towels



### **PADS**

Thank you all for donating to **PADS of Lake County**. My trunk was full with so many donations from our January collection—new winter coats, 20 hats and 16 scarves made by our crocheters, food items, travel bags and gift cards. Hope to have more pictures from March's donations. Take a moment and visit <https://padslakecounty.org/> to see all the ways PADS is improving the lives of the homeless.



### *Advance Giving*

**The Advance** serves as the leading conduit that allows churches, individuals, and organizations to support missionaries and projects throughout the world so to strengthen and sustain one another.

Advance funds are specifically designated for particular projects or ministries, allowing the Church to "advance" the cause of Christ through new church development, disaster relief, missionary support, health services, and many other programs. The Advance represents "second-mile" mission giving, the "first mile" being apportionment giving. The *Northern Illinois Conference* votes to approve these advances each year.

## MORE ON MISSIONS

### *Advance Giving*, continued

Below are two ways UMCA supports Advance Giving:

#### 1. *Native American Ministries Sunday - April 14th, Northern Illinois Fund #769*

This *Special Sunday Appeal* is a denomination wide celebration designed to raise awareness and remind United Methodists of the gifts and contributions made by *Native Americans* to our society. A gap in knowledge exists in The United Methodist Church, in congregations and other United Methodist entities, relative to comprehending concepts of Native American life, cultures, languages, spirit, values, contemporary issues, and such. We affirm the sacredness of indigenous people, their languages, cultures, and gifts to the church and the world.



An offering is taken on this *Special Sunday* to support vital ministries and churches in the Native American communities. The offering allows The United Methodist Church to partner with existing native ministries to develop new programs on behalf of Native Americans. Twenty five percent of your donation funds scholarships for native Americans, 25% funds outreach and ministry grants, and the remaining 50% remains in the local Annual Conference.

#### 2. *Tree of Life Ministry, Pierre, South Dakota (#1236 15) <https://www.treeofliferelief.org/>*

We have chosen the *Tree of Life Ministry* to be one of our Mission Links projects for this year. It is a part of the working hands and feet of God to the *Lakota Nation* residing on the *Rosebud Reservation* serving body, mind, and soul. We feed, cloth, shelter, and love. We demonstrate God's love, power, and grace to a broken, hurting society.

To the naked eye our service may look like a handout or a hand-up. However, to God it may look like an answer to prayer, a much needed witness of love toward salvation.

Every donation is vital to this ministry the gift may vary in size, however the act of obedience and reward is the same.

*Carol Cichonski*



## OUR YOUNG PEOPLE

### *Sunday School/Youth*

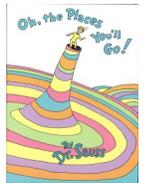
On March 3rd the *Sunday School/Youth* met in the church kitchen for *Pretzel Sunday!* In a Lenten tradition, we heard the story *Brother Giovanni's Little Reward: How the Pretzel Was Born* by *Anna Egan Smucker* and then shaped and baked our own soft pretzels (whose shape reminds us of prayer). *The Youth* have also been busy stuffing eggs with treats. All kids are welcome to join us for an egg hunt in Wesley Hall between services on Easter. If you have questions, please contact *Elisa Gueffier* at [elisagueffier@gmail.com](mailto:elisagueffier@gmail.com).



*Elisa Gueffier*

### *UMCA Preschool*

We have been taking full advantage of the nice weather and getting the children outside for some fresh air and exercise. In March the children were busy building traps to catch those tricky leprechauns, celebrating *Dr. Seuss's birthday*, hearing stories about Easter and collecting items for local shelters as a service project.



I want to thank *Mr. Howard* for sharing his love of trains with the children.

The children cannot get enough of his visits. If you have a special hobby, talent, or collection that you would like to share with the children please contact me and we can set up a time for you to visit. We are always looking for mystery readers to share a story. We can supply the story, or you can bring one of your own.



## MORE ON OUR YOUNG PEOPLE

### UMCA Preschool



I would also like to thank everyone for supporting our ongoing silent auction and **Butterbraids** fundraisers. The preschool is saving for future maintenance

projects on the playground. If you are not interested in any of the current fundraisers, but would like to contribute, you are welcome to make donations directly to the preschool or at church on Sunday by designating “preschool donation” on your giving envelope. If you specify “preschool scholarship” that money will specifically be used to help families in need with their tuition assistance.



Nine years ago, before I became the director of the preschool, I taught the children in our four-year-old program. I asked them to draw a picture of themselves as they were on that day, and then I asked them to think about what their interests might be when they were all grown up and going into high school. I then asked them to draw a picture of that. I saved those pictures, and a few days ago I mailed them to the students along with a personal letter that I included for each of them. My hope is to surprise them and let them know that they are still being thought of. Next month I



will share their responses.

We have begun registration for the coming Fall, and we have a few spots left. If your child is between two and five years old, I would love to discuss our program with you. If you have a child between the ages of three and six years old and are interested in learning more about this year’s summer camp please contact me. Contact me at 847/395-1362

Blessings,

**Kim Dodd**, Director UMCA Preschool



## MUSIC DEPARTMENT

March was a busy month in the Music Department. The **Handbell Choir** performed in worship on both March 17th and March 31st at both services. I continue to be so impressed with the learning curve in this new group. They play as if they have been playing for much longer than a few months and the caring, team spirit is so evident. The month of April brings us back to our 1st and 3rd Sunday of the month rehearsal schedule, April 7th and April 21st, from 11:45 to 12:30 in the music room. The door is always open for new ringers or even just observers. We are working on a challenging piece with ringing and mallets for May 12th. We are so thankful for the congregation’s generous gift of the bells and all the equipment and music that came with them!



The Choir is also working hard, not only learning weekly choir anthems for our 10:30 service, but also preparing ahead for an upcoming cantata. The choir is always open to new members, any week. You only need to come to Room 5, the choir room, at 9:15 am for practice and **Nicole** will set you up with a music folder of your own. We are so blessed to have Nicole working with us. From her monthly, thoughtful prayers, birthday celebrations, and creative rehearsal style, it is a wonderful place to be, make new friends, and sing with a joyful voice to the Lord.

### FROM MIKE DeBENEDETTO

Many people live in the “here and now” They believe in what they can see, smell, touch and, on the surface, feel. Oftentimes a former employee expressed that to me. We’ve all known people who refuse to deal with the abstract part of their lives. If we get the chance to explain a good feeling, decision, thought, or deed, we are told it’s just our conscience. Well, duh! Try to explain that a “conscience” is the holy spirit working within us. Try to explain that a “conscience” is the path of love we take because we are loved. Try and we might as well be speaking Swahili or Afrikaans. Yet, that’s exactly what we are called to do. “Conscience is God present in man”, **Victor Hugo**



Congratulations UMC Antioch! You have been recognized for giving 100% in apportionments!

### WHAT IS CONNECTIONAL GIVING?

Connectional Giving is one of the founding ideas that the United Methodist Church was built upon. Participating in connectional giving helps us to be in mission with people and congregations around the world - giving every church, regardless of size, a larger mission footprint. Connectional giving includes Apportionment giving as well as Mission Links giving.

*Connectional Giving demonstrates our connectedness to one another, to God and to the body of Christ.*

### WHAT ARE APPORTIONMENTS?

Apportionments are the way that congregations are connected to the conference and the world. Apportionments are used to fund the global mission and witness of our church, to help provide the necessary structure to respond in moments of crisis locally, nationally, internationally, and to develop and nurture the leaders we need today and tomorrow.

The basic idea behind apportionments is that local congregations send some of the money they collect to accomplish things that are either beyond their ability to do as individual congregations or that can be done more effectively or efficiently together. Apportionments allow the church to produce goods and services funded by all for the benefit of all – collective goods.

*The connections of the church are more than institutions; the connections are the means God uses to convey grace to the world.*

Because of your apportionment giving in 2023, the conference will be able to help fund a budget for programs and ministries, both local and global. Apportionments denote an understanding that the purpose of the church is not just to care for its members, but also to reach beyond itself to engage with, minister to, and be in mission with the world. They are used to fund our church's global mission and witness; help provide the necessary structure to respond in moments of crisis here and around the world; and to develop and nurture the leaders we need today and tomorrow.

Information from this article and UMCA's acknowledgement can be found at [HTTPS://WWW.UMCNIC.ORG/NEWS/APPORTIONMENTS-CONNECTED-THROUGH-GIVING](https://www.umcnic.org/news/apportionments-connected-through-giving)

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United Methodist Church of Antioch

Our regular in-person worship schedule is Sunday mornings at 8:00 am and 10:30 am. We also go live on our **Facebook** page. The link for the recorded service can be found on our website at [umcantioch.org](http://umcantioch.org). Please join us in person or online for worship!

*[Jesus said] “the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything, and remind you of all that I have said to you.”*

John 14: 26

*The Holy Spirit embodies the life force of the universe, the power of God, the animating energy present in all things and captured by none. Therefore we pray:*

May the gifts of the Holy Spirit bring fire to the earth so that the presence of God may be seen in a new light, in new places, in new ways. May our own hearts burst into flame so that no obstacle, no matter how great, ever obstructs the message of God within each of us. May we come to trust the Word of God in our heart, to speak it with courage, to follow it faithfully and to fan it to flame in others. May the Jesus who filled [all kinds of people] with his Holy Spirit fill the world and the church with new respect for [all people’s value], power, and presence.

Give us, Great God, a sense of the Breath of Spirit within us as we pray for our church, our community, our Christian Education department, and ... (*State the goal in your own life at this time for which you are praying.*) —**Sister Joan Chittister**