



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.”*

July, 2023  
Volume 7, Issue 7

## FROM PASTOR KATIE’S KEYBOARD...

Twenty years of ministry has put me in a reflexive moment, Friends. I am so grateful to be here in Antioch to celebrate with you. To be here, in a place where we have some excitement and energy for mission and serving our community, is truly an honor!

I have served in various places throughout our *Northern Illinois Annual Conference* for these years. So many places of memories: *Cedarville United Methodist Church* in Cedarville, Illinois; *Ohio United Methodist Church* in Ohio, Illinois; *Red Oak United Methodist Church*

in rural Walnut, Illinois; *Wyanet United Methodist Church* in Wyanet, Illinois; *Pecatonica United Methodist Church* in Pecatonica, Illinois; *Erie United Methodist Church* in Erie, Illinois; and the *United Methodist Church of Antioch!* Some of

the people in these places trusted a fresh-out-of-seminary-thinking-they-know-it-all to be their pastor – and loved me through the bumps. At one of the churches on this list, we walked the grief and heartbreak of deciding that it was time to close together.

In one of these churches we celebrated my commissioning. In two of these churches we celebrated my ordination, because I was serving a two-point charge at the time. The local population signs of the

villages where I have lived have said things like 750, 550, 1700, 1500, and 15,000. Because of the generosity of my parishioners and them sharing how they make a living with me, I have driven a combine and I have toured an ice cream factory. I have done 124 funerals for 127 people. I have officiated or co-officiated 28 weddings. I have baptized 54 people – the youngest being 16 days old, and the oldest was 68 years. I have received into membership 75 people – some by transfer of membership,

some at confirmation, and some by profession of faith. As of the last Sunday of June I have preached 925 times, 142 of those being here in Antioch.

The truth is though, each of these numbers represents so much more. They are lives that I have had the privilege to interact with. They are families I’ve walked with as they have grieved their loved ones. They are people who I could laugh through some of the funniest things that happen in life. They are people who prayed for me in rough times. They are people who I have continued to keep in prayer, even after I’ve been appointed to a different church.

I have had the honor to serve places where most people have been able to be in that place for a long time and their roots are deep. While this was

true of my growing-up years, it hasn’t been so for my adult life. Moving every five years or fewer has had some challenges – a lot of which are about keeping boundaries well and trying to

ensure that the next pastor has a chance to love the people I have loved. We walk together for a time, and then our journeys part. I’m grateful for all of it.

Thank you so much for allowing me the opportunity to take a break for this month. I am going to take some down time, and then I’m going on a *Wesley Pilgrimage to England*. My prayer is that the flame underlying my faith is strengthened for the next twenty years. I invite you to pray with me while I am gone.

Here in Antioch, you will be in good hands!





## EARLY ADOPTERS

### *We Need Friendly Faces!*

When our *Early Adopters* group began its mission to envision our church's future, we decided to focus our attention on the following questions: How do we strengthen the relationship with our preschool? What improvements can we make to our online presence and online service, and how do we leverage that to engage online participants in the life of the church? How do we build relationships with our immediate neighbors?

We've recently devoted attention toward the last question. *Wizards Weekend* was on Saturday, June 24th in Wesley Hall. What a fun event. Enjoy the pictures. This was a great way for us to be present in our community. Thank you to everyone who helped make sure that people were comfortable in our building and who helped make sure we were ready for worship in the morning!



### *Antioch's Taste of Summer,*

July 13-16 is just around the corner. We will set up a card table along the west side of Main Street and hand out water bottles (labeled with our church information) and church pamphlets. Thursday - Saturday we will set up from 11:00 am - 4:00 pm, and Sunday will be 12:00 noon - 3:00 pm. As you can imagine we will need many volunteers to cover the two shifts/day Thursday - Saturday,

and one shift on Sunday. A sign-up sheet will be out in Wesley Hall. We hope to have two volunteers per shift. We also need bottled water and/or funds to buy the water. You can bring water into the church kitchen or call **Carol Cichonski** at 847/269-2287



for pickup. A **blue donation box** will be near the volunteer sign-up sheet, if you wish to donate funds to purchase water. We expect to give away 1000 bottles of water. If you have a wagon we can borrow to help move all this heavy stuff from the parking lot to our station, please, again, call Carol or the church office.

All we want to do with this outreach event is to show people that we are friendly people and we

## EARLY ADOPTERS, continued

are a part of the community. There isn't an expectation that you need to be able to convert someone on the spot, but we are encouraging people to be able to talk about what you love about Jesus and the church, if the opportunity arises. No need to force someone into a conversation they don't want to have. And, no matter what, sharing water with our neighbors is a grace that we can offer on what has the potential to be very hot days. Prayerfully consider joining with this outreach to our community.



**Carol Cichonski**

## HIGHLIGHTS FROM ANNUAL CONFERENCE

### *Korean Peace Prayers Inspired Conference Members.*

*NIC's Korean-American pastors* led the Annual Conference members last week in prayers, songs, and personal testimonies for peace on this 70th anniversary of the **Korean Armistice**. The deeply moving service was the highlight of the Annual Conference session. **Watch the video.**

### *Setting a Table for All: Bishop's State of the Conference Address.*

Tables are places where healing and reconciliation can take place. **Bishop Schwerin** shared the hopes and concerns he's heard over the past few months and described plans for building a healthy annual conference.



### *Bible Study: Come Together to the Table, Connected in Christ.*

In his Bible study on the great banquet in Luke 14, **Dr. Rolf Nolasco** reminded Annual Conference members that Jesus's banquet welcomes everyone—and gives places of honor to those who are devalued by society.



### *Special Giving Achievements.*

So far, NIC members have donated \$36,372 to the **Bishop's Appeal for Migrant Needs**. (You can still give!) Churches sent 7,000 pounds of goods to **Midwest Mission**. Over 2,200 pounds were donated by **Prairie Central Churches**

The Annual Conference voted to disaffiliate eight churches that filed the proper paperwork and requested disaffiliation.

**Carol Dunn** and **Robin Kessell** thank the United Methodist Church of Antioch for the opportunity to attend this Conference,

**Carol Dunn**, Lay Member to the Annual Conference

## MUSIC DEPARTMENT



### *Special Music by Liam*

#### **Handbells**

The first time I joined my friend, Pam, for handbell choir, I was a recent college graduate who my Sara played with her Amy at church. I had no idea what fun I was headed into and yes, I had been a musician already for a very long time. But there is something about playing in a handbell choir that surpasses music. The sound of bells speaks to the soul. When **Tom Kessel** goes to ring our church bell on Sunday morning, the sound stirs my heart and helps prepare me to play the prelude. Through the centuries bell ringing has been an integral part of the Christian tradition.

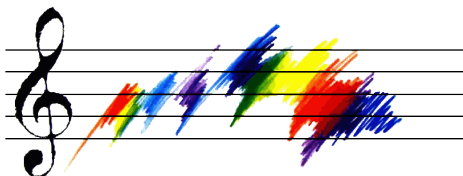


Ringing bells together redefines collaboration. The joy of making music together, and in my case, for Jesus, always included smiles, laughter, friendship, fellowship, and that satisfaction when we could move bells from hand to hand or person to person or just be able to pick up the right bell at the right time! Bell choir is a ministry and a joyous one. I have played in multiple handbell choirs and directed handbell choirs at churches as well as at Trinity, where I taught piano, organ, and piano pedagogy for over two decades. Suffice it to say, I do love handbells!



Through the years I have been approached by several of you about how great it would be to have handbells at our church. I have been very humbled by the positive response and generosity of so many of you. Many times, it has been in the form of encouraging words and the promise of prayer, or the desire to be part of a bell choir at our church. Whatever the outcome, thank you for your faithful response.

*Debbie Gillette*, Director of Music



## IN THE GARDEN



## CHRISTIAN WELLNESS MINISTRY

CWM held a **blood drive** with *Versiti* on June 10th. Our goal was 15 volunteers and with the help of our community we had 13! Blood products are in such short supply that blood banks typically have only enough blood on hand for one day. Although relatively small, our blood drive helped to save close to 21 lives. Thank you UMCA!

The **Golden Gems Team** is pleased to announce that we will hold two more luncheons this year! Our next luncheon for seniors 80 yrs and older will be held on **Thursday, August 3rd** in Wesley Hall. The third Golden Gems luncheon will take place close to Halloween in October! If you are in the 80 yrs and over age group and **did not receive an invitation**, please check with **Tekeesha** in the church office that your birthday has been included in your info. We need your date of birth in order to find everyone eligible for GG. Please do RSVP for each luncheon if you can join us. This helps us in planning but if you don't feel well the morning of the luncheon and are unable to attend, we do understand.



Recently the surgeon general told us that fifty percent of Americans are lonely. That is a big number that each of us can help to decrease. We are all busy but as a gentle reminder, please take the time to reach out to family, friends and neighbors that you haven't heard from in awhile. A simple phone call to tell this person that you care about them could make a real difference in their lives. Loneliness not only affects mental well being but also physical health. You can make a difference in their lives!

**Celebrating**



**Our**



**Pastor**



**Katie!**



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Like us on Facebook:  
United Methodist Church of Antioch

Our schedule for the summer will have only one service at 9:15 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**