

Our Journey Together

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:



Dakotas Annual Conference 2023 Highlights

The 30th session of the Dakotas Annual Conference was held June 8-10, in Sioux Falls, SD. More than 450 United Methodists from North and South Dakota experienced inspiring worship, meaningful learning, and conducting business.

Bishop's Episcopal Address: In the Emmaus Road story, the impossible becomes possible as the world is made right again through encounters with the resurrected Christ who brings healing, reconciliation, and hope. Bishop Lanette Plambeck, in her Episcopal Address, reminds us that this story of the two disciples on the road is our story too. During this challenging time in The UMC, she invited Dakotas United Methodists to move forward and declare that there is enough love for all of us, and she reminded each person: You are loved. You are a child of God and a person of worth. There are no exceptions.

Fresh Expressions with Michael Beck: Rev. Dr. Michael Beck is co-pastor of two Florida churches and a network of "fresh expressions" led by laity that gather in various community venues and public spaces around shared interests and hobbies. He talked about fresh expressions as a new movement of Christian communities where people with no connection to the church are finding life and encountering Christ. Dinner church whereby people gather to share a meal is an easy starting point for a fresh expression, Beck said. Some of the other fresh expressions he's involved with take place in a tattoo parlor, at a restaurant, in a virtual reality space, at dog park, and even at Tesla charging stations.

Ministry milestones: Those gathered honored and thanked 14 clergy entering retirement, and they celebrated a pastor ordained as an elder, four commissioned as provisional members, eight local licensed pastors who completed their educational requirements, and six people authorized to serve as local pastors in the congregations and ministry areas in which they are appointed.

Legislation: Voting members of the 30th Session of the Dakotas Annual Conference ratified 24 church disaffiliation agreements, approved four legislative items, referred one item, and one legislative item was ruled out of order. The body approved the 2024 budget and spending plan, the nominations report, and the consent calendar.

2023 Miracle Offering: Bishop Lanette invited those present to the 2023 Miracle Offering: The Road to Hope. "We need to reach into our pockets, not only for financial gifts, but also to let people know that every local church is a pocket of hope," said Bishop Lanette. So far \$42,000 has been collected for the 2023 Miracle Offering. In response to the increasing numbers of deaths by suicide, ideation of suicide, and attempts among youth in North and South Dakota, and the mental health crisis in our nation, the offering recipients are Helpline of South Dakota and FirstLink of North Dakota.

Ushers & Greeters	2
Financial Update	2
Denomination Update	2
Leadership Openings	2
B'Days & Anniv.	2
Leadership Minutes	3-4
July Calendar	5
Abundance of Gifts	6



Content Due

Do you have items you would like included in next month's newsletter? If so, please have them into the church office no later than July 18





July Ushers and Greeters
July 2 & 9 Maxon & Linda Conkey
July 16 & 23 Don & Shirley Hofer
July 30 Doug & JoAnn Testerman

If you need to miss a week in which you are scheduled to usher, it is your responsibility to find someone to fill in for you. Please remember also, there are other ways in which you can help serve the church. We are always looking for folks to serve coffee fellowship, to be communion stewards, and lead small groups.

Financial Update from Leadership Team



Financial Update as of May 31, 2023:

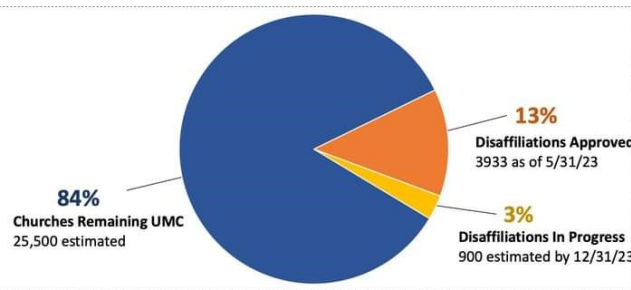
2023 General Fund Income Year to Date: \$58,818.54
 2023 General Fund Expenses Year to Date: \$71,454.68
 General Fund Difference: (\$12,636.14)



UMC Denominational Update

To date, here in the Dakotas Conference 42 churches have chosen to leave the denomination, as well as 14 active pastors. There will be one more session where disaffiliations will be approved. At this point, while Leadership continues to keep up to date with matters, no action will be considered until after General Conference next spring.

Across the connection, here is the status of where things stand in the denomination.



Leadership Openings for 2024



Several members of our church's leadership will be stepping down at the end of this year. Pastor Teresa and our Nominations team are praying for those who may be called to fill these positions. Will you prayerfully consider where God might be calling you to serve?

Known Openings as of now:

- Church Treasurer
- Lay Leader
- Education Leader
- Finance Committee Member
- Trustee Committee Member
- Staff-Parish Committee Members (2)

If you have questions about these positions or the requirements of them, please see Pastor Teresa.

Birthdays:

Jul 1 Nancy Cotton	Jul 13 Jaymin VanDerWerff
Jul 2 Lee Conkey	Jul 19 Doug Purrington
Jul 3 JoAnn Testerman	Jul 24 Lisa Fritzsche
Jul 5 Joan Canham	Jul 24 Ron, Jr. Hoftiezer
Jul 7 Tamie Grogan	Jul 24 Curtis Wilbur
Jul 12 Margaret Moncur	
Jul 13 Mary Phinney-Veneklasen	

Anniversaries:

Jul 3 Jerry & Nancy Cotton	Jul 22 Chad & LaDonna Wharton
Jul 6 Doug & JoAnn Testerman	
Jul 17 Collin & Katie Otteson	



Come join in celebrating Margaret Moncur's 90th birthday Sun. July 8, 2-4pm Methodist Church

****Please note these minutes have not yet been approved and are subject to modification****

Leadership Team Meeting June 21, 2023

I. Call to Order Vice Chairperson, Linda Blackburn called the June 21, 2023 Leadership Team meeting to order at 5:00 pm in the Library of the church. No Sub-Committees met earlier to the full meeting.

Members present: Pastor Teresa Whetsel, Linda Blackburn, Andrea Fiala, Dwight Greenough, Eugene Moncur, and JoAnn Testerman. Absent was Joe Fiala, Sara Gates, Chris Keeter, Mike Moncur, JoAnn Morford, and Karen Steptoe. Visitors present were Shirley Hofer and Merle Jenner.

II. Loving

Opening Devotional – Pastor Teresa led the group with a devotional from *My Utmost For His Highest* by Oswald Chambers. This selection was based on Job 42 and stressed praying for friends. Pastor Teresa then read a prayer from *The Junior Catechism of the Methodist Episcopal Church and the Methodist Episcopal Church, South* (copyright 1905) The Team then moved on to the business portion of the meeting.

- a. The Mission Statement of the UMC was read from the agenda.
- b. Where have you seen God at work lately? Most comments were about the recent rain and VBS.

III Learning

Consent Calendar-
Secretary's Minutes for May
Finance Report for May

Vice Chairman, Linda Blackburn, stated because there was not a quorum of voting members present the Consent Calendar items would be held until the July meeting to be voted on for approval.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be **Thursday July 20** with sub-committees meeting at **5:00 pm** with the full Leadership Team **at 5:30**. The members were reminded that this date could be subject to change when those absent were able to check their calendars.

IV. Leading

Sub-Committee Reports:

Finance:

Treasurer's report for May - The report was prepared by Mike Moncur and emailed out to the Leadership Team. Hard copies were handed out at the meeting also. The report showed revenues at \$9,437.73 and expenses at \$12,816.51 for a general fund difference of (\$865.56). YTD general fund difference of (\$12,636.14) As there was not a quorum present the Treasurer's Report could not be approved at this meeting. It will be brought to the Leadership Team in July for approval.

Trustees:

June report Andrea Fiala chairman of Trustees, pointed out that items being worked on are listed in the agenda but wanted the Team to be especially aware of the two programmable thermostats and the quote of \$1050. It was the general consensus that this item be talked about again in July before a decision is made concerning purchase.

- o Message sign repairs – complete Thank you to the crew who completed this project and to Don & Shirley Hofer for donating the granite top.

Staff-Parish Relations: Dwight Greenough reported the 2023 Clergy- Church Annual Assessment will be done soon. It is due by July 15. Pastor Teresa had copies of *Duties of the Pastor* for Dwight Greenough and Karen Steptoe.

Thoughts on increasing revenue Vice Chairman Linda Blackburn asked if there were other thoughts concerning increasing revenue. She asked if there were thoughts on the July 2nd fireworks time. Andrea Fiala said Karen Steptoe had sent some information with her to share at the meeting. Karen has talked with Wilber Ellis and they will donate 50 bottles of water and Agtegra will donate 75 bottles of water. Linda Blackburn said she will buy another 125 bottles and donate them. Andrea Fiala will ask Mike Donlin from MidWay Drive-In about popcorn. Other possibilities for popping corn are Ace Hardware and the Miller School concessions. Andrea will also get the bags for the popcorn. The clipboard will be passed this Sunday for volunteers to sign up for passing out the water and popcorn before the fireworks. Pastor Teresa will design a small flyer to be attached to the popcorn bags stating what our church offers. Other outreach ideas to involve the community were talked about. Pastor Teresa said this Sunday the Annual Conference missional report video will be shown. In the video several churches will be shown doing their outreach projects. Some ideas may be taken from that.

- c. Pastor's Report- Pastor Teresa said she had 8 parishioner visits and one suicide intervention visit. Pastor Teresa also talked of a few highlights of Annual Conference. Michael Beck of Florida was the featured speaker and talked of faith conversations where people are. His book is *Fresh Expressions*. Pastor handed out copies of Legislative Round-Up put out by Doreen Gosmire, director of communications, Dakotas UMC. Pastor Teresa asked what some of the thoughts were from the group concerning splitting her time here and with Highmore UMC. She said she will do a time audit and said of course summer and winter are going to be different. She said DS Dan Bader wanted the thoughts from here. Nothing needs to be decided right now. More discussion will be needed. Pastor-Parish will take the lead on this.

d. Lay Leadership openings for the fall– Pastor Teresa wants the Team to be aware there will be several changes this Fall from needing a Treasurer and Christian Ed Chairman plus the rotation changes on the Leadership Team roster.

e. UMC/GMC discussion–There are no changes at this time. Leadership will now wait to see where General Conference leads in 2024.








f. Communication Plan

July Fireworks plan will be explained and volunteer clipboard will be passed. Pastor will put in her article in the newsletter about Annual Conference and openings for Lay Leadership. Community Outreach- how we can bring Jesus to people outside our walls.

There was no more business brought before the group.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned with The Lord's Prayer at 6:20 p.m.

July 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2 Fireworks Hospitality Event 	3	4	5	6	7	8 Margaret Moncur's 90th Birthday Party 2-4 pm 
9	10	11 UWF Library 1:30 pm 	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19 • UWF Work Day Trinity 10-2 • Senior Boxes	20 Leadership Mtg 5pm 	21	22
23	24	25	26	27 FEEDING SOUTH DAKOTA Food Truck Noon-1 	28	29
30 Spare Change Sunday 	31	Meals on Wheels July 31 – Aug 4 				

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An abundance of gifts

In 2022, people set some amazing Guinness World Records. A Nebraska man paddled more than 37 miles in a hollowed-out pumpkin boat. A Vermont teen wearing 4-inch heels walked more than 600 feet across a tightrope. And an Oregon man found and alphabetized all 26 letters in a can of alphabet soup in 2 minutes and 8.6 seconds. (The toughest part, he says, is distinguishing subtle differences between letters such as M and W.)

Your talents might not earn you any world records, but they certainly can grow faith and change lives. Whether you're good at teaching, singing, writing, cooking or accounting, the church can put those skills to productive use. Romans 12 lists many more qualities you may not realize are spiritual gifts: graciousness, serving, generosity, acts of mercy, loving and honoring others, extending hospitality, rejoicing and weeping with people, making peace.

You might not be able to outperform the alphabet soup record. But God abundantly blesses each of us to "outdo one another in showing honor" (Romans 12:10, ESV) and in sharing his love.



—Stephanie Martin