

CONNECT & ENCOURAGE & THRIVE

But how can people call for help if they don't know who to trust? And how can they know who to trust if they haven't heard of the One who can be trusted? And how can they hear if nobody tells them? And how is anyone going to tell them unless someone is sent to do it? Romans 10:14 (MSG)

We congratulate those retiring and those moving to new appointments

Patti and Everett Harpole (retiring)

Don and Cindy Buege (retiring)

Carl and Geri Litchfield (retiring)

Mike and Beth Simon (retiring)

Ken and Dawn VanderLaan (retiring)

Greg and Joanne Culver-moving to Vicksburg (Kalamazoo Dist) UMC

Jon and Diane Pohl-moving to Asbury (Lansing Dist) UMC

Nate and Amy Starkey-moving to Stony Creek (Ann Arbor Dist) UMC

We Welcome YOU to the Grand Traverse District (*new to the district)

*Anne and Mike Riegler-welcome to Mears and Shelby UMCs (Mike will be serving Montague UMC)

Todd and Noreen Shafer-welcome to Indian River UMC

*Bryan and Ashley Kilpatrick-welcome to Mancelona and Alba UMCs

*Joshua and Leah Manning-welcome to Lake Ann UMC

*Jeff and Nancy Swainston-welcome to Manton UMC

*Brad and Erika Bunn-welcome to St. Paul UMC

*Rick and Lisa Hodgeson-welcome to Scottville UMC

Mike and Lynnette Neihardt-welcome to Horton Bay UMC

Randy Hitts-welcome to Charlevoix UMC

*Jeremy and Toinette Wicks-welcome to Traverse City New Church Start

Colleen and Brian Wierman-welcome to Kingsley UMC

Jack and Patti Conklin-welcome to Fife Lake, Williamsburg, East Boardman and South Boardman UMCs

Ben Sexton (Lay Preacher) and Corey-assigned to Fife Lake, Williamsburg, East Boardman and South Boardman UMCs

Craig and Pattie Pahl-welcome to Barnard and East Jordan UMCs

*Sean and Andrea Barton – welcome to Grawn and Grant UMCs

Hal Ferris (short term)-welcome to Norwood UMC

Words from our DS Anita Hahn

So put away all malice and all guile and insincerity and envy and all slander. Like newborn babes, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up to salvation for you have tasted the kindness of the Lord. (1 Peter 2:9) But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people or God's own possession, so that you may proclaim the wonderful deeds of the God who has called you out of darkness into God's marvelous light. 1 Peter 2:1-3

In my own, personal faith walk, I have wondered what would happen if I put the words to "The Summons," (page 2130, Faith We Sing, John Bell) into practice?

The first verse says, "Will you come and follow me if I but call your name? Will you go where you don't know and never be the same? Will you let my love be shown, will you let my name be known, will you let my life be grown in you and you in me?"

Six years ago, God called my name and asked me to be a District Superintendent. The voice on the other end of the phone sounded like Bishop Keaton, but the voice in my soul was God. I was scared and overwhelmed, but I knew it was where God was calling me to serve. After attending Annual Conference this year I came home thinking—I've been a District Superintendent for 6 years—I should have my act together, and every day I still wonder, "Why did God call me? How can I serve more effectively?" The question at the bottom of my heart is, "How can I live into this role so that the "Body of Christ," the local church, will gain strength and keep leading us into transforming the world for Jesus Christ?" Gracious God, I long to make a difference!

Will you come and follow me if I but call your name? God has called me (I'm still humbled). God has called you (Praise GOD!!) Thank you for taking steps to walk into new and tough places of ministry. Thank you for not accepting easy answers and being willing to ask the tough questions so that you can hear God's leading rather than simply doing "easy tasks."

Will you go where you don't know and never be the same? My initial question as we step into creating a new Conference is "what can we do new?" I love change (I think). But what scares me the most is that we will change everything—and not be any more effective? Who is God calling us to reach—do we know their names? And in meeting persons, needs, the longings; will we allow ourselves to be forever changed? (Go to news.michiganumc.org and sign up to receive MIConnect every Wednesday to see how the United Methodist Church is transforming Michigan and the World--it makes me proud!) I am grateful that transforming the world is not up to me-but that there are many gifted and talented persons who have said YES to God's call and that **we** are seeking to walk and live as Christ has invited-in unity! Together!

Will you let Jesus grow in you and will you grow in Jesus? I wish there were easy answers in the days ahead as we seek to witness to the love that Jesus has poured upon us. Reality is-the walk of faith that Jesus has called us to is exactly that-a walk of faith! And by God's grace, with our eyes on God's great mercy and love—we will grow in our effectiveness so that others too will meet Jesus—know the same forgiveness and grace that we have encountered and be allowed to realize that he/she too has been created by God—beloved and blessed!

So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any incentive of love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. Philippians 2:1-2

Grace and Peace!

Anita K. Hahn

New Missions and Ministry Grants

Check out our website <http://grand-traverse.michiganumc.org/missions> and complete your application for 2017. We will accept requests as long as there are funds remaining. Thank you for visioning and planning new ministries and ways that you can connect with the people in your community!

Missionaries coming soon to West Michigan!

This fall West Michigan will have the opportunity to host several missionaries from our 6-Lanes book. September 23rd through October 6th the Rev. Nkemba Nddjunga and his wife Mbwizu who are serving in Cameroon will be here. October 16th to November 22nd we will have Rev. Delbert Groves and his wife Sandy who are serving the New Life Center in Zambia. And starting around Labor Day we will have Rev. Paul Webster and Silvester who are serving in Mujila Falls, Zambia.

West Michigan is always generous and wonderful in supporting our missionaries around the world and this fall you will have the opportunity to extend some more radical hospitality to them by inviting them to join you for a meal and a time to fellowship while they share their stories. Through this time with our missionaries we are able to experience what being in mission is doing to change the world.

We know as believers, we are called to actively spread God's words and love and to make a positive difference in the world. Our missionaries are fulfilling what Mark says in 16:15 He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation." Each of you can be part of their mission journey by sharing your time and hearing their story.

If you are interested in hosting them for a visit at your church please contact your Conference Secretary of Global Ministries, Sharon Burkart at sharonannburkart@gmail.com or 269-967-0301 or contact your District Mission Secretary (Mike Neihardt: barneyfife@torchlake.com) or the District Office.

Thank you and God Bless

Sharon Burkart West MI CSGM

And....Rev. Laura Alexander Elliott is joining Soaring Unlimited Haiti as its new Executive Director, following the retirement of Founding Director Dorothy Frederickson. Rev. Elliott met Dorothy and several Soaring Board members while on a Methodist Mission Trip to Haiti in early 2015. She was suggested by Dorothy to the Board as her possible successor, has interacted extensively with Soaring leaders in recent months, and trained with Dorothy this past May in Cap Haitien.

Rev. Elliott is an Ordained Deacon Clergy in the Western North Carolina Annual Conference of the UMC, which has appointed her as a Missionary to Haiti in her new capacity with Soaring Unlimited. Over two decades of community service and Methodist ministry, she has acquired significant experience in faith-based nonprofit management with the Methodist Children's Home and other United Way-affiliated agencies.

Pastor Laura has also helped lead a half dozen international mission trips in Central America and the Caribbean, has served with Wesley Foundation campus ministry, and has been under clergy appointment with three congregations in the Metro-Charlotte and Winston-Salem areas of N.C. She is a member of the Board of Ordained Ministry in her Annual Conf.

Pastor Laura will serve for extended periods of time in the Fall and Spring based at the Soaring Mission House in Cap Haitien, and will make extended trips to Michigan when in the U.S. to network with congregations and work with the Soaring Board. She will also be working to expand Soaring's support network to new congregations in Michigan, Florida and N.C.

Laura will be at Traverse City Central UMC Sunday, August 6 and stay until Thursday, August 10.
*Please contact Chuck Ellinwood at chiela@aol.com if you would like to schedule a visit.

Grand Traverse District Youth Events

Look for more info and registration details @ <http://grand-traverse.michiganumc.org/>

2017

Summer Camp: There is still time to register for summer camp! Go to umcamping.org to register for one of our nine UMC Camps or go to lakelouisecommunity.org to register for our sister camp in Boyne Falls, Mi.

July 30 Ludington MI, 7:00-10:00 p.m. Christian business leaders encouraged by the vision of Jack Conklin, have worked for the past two years to design this major Christian Music event. Integrity Music has completed a nationwide search for new music and artists who will be showcased! It's guaranteed to be an evening of high energy, worship and praise!

2018

April 28-29 SPRING SPLASH!!! hosted by District Youth Council, Great Wolf Lodge/Traverse City, Our focus this years is on going deeper with Christ and gaining the tools of faith that we need to face the Giants. (Philippians 4:13) Mark your calendar! More info coming. Judy Zimpfer, 231-357-6128
judy.momzee@gmail.com

Lay Servant Training Events:

For more information and the classes being held, please check out our website
<http://grand-traverse.michiganumc.org/district-lay-servant-ministries/>

We have a weekend training being planned at Lake Louise on Oct. 13 and 14. More details will be coming to you as soon as we have them in place.

****DATE TO SAVE!! District Conference: Nov. 11th at Traverse Bay UMC**