

The View

FROM
HOPE RIDGE
UNITED
METHODIST
CHURCH



Volume 71

June/July/August 2015

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From the Desk of Pastor Beth: Planning as a Team

Leadership is tricky... I sometimes wonder if even Jesus struggled to keep His 12 disciples in line. When I look at the Biblical stories of leaders, they each had to discern what it was that God was calling them to do. I am often reminded that Moses led the Israelites through the desert for 40 years to enter the promised land. I hope it doesn't take 40 years here, but I do know that good planning and vision take time. Creating a plan for our church and a strategy to accomplish it, is a part of my challenge as your pastor. When Jon and I came in 2011, we began this work by examining the mission of the United Methodist Church, which is "making and maturing disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world." Then, we focused around the vision of welcoming all, to worship God, to be nurtured by the Holy Spirit and one another, and to be sent to serve in Christ's name.

Last fall, Hope Ridge did a great job addressing some concerns necessary to continue to grow and reach new people. One hard-to-discuss concern was the mortgage. This congregation worked together and tackled a third capital campaign, which has allowed us to be in the best financial place that we have been since I have been here, and we need to continue to keep that steady. Jon and I plan to continue to join you in keeping us strong through financial commitment, thereby supporting a strategy for growth. I'm very proud of the work that you all did and are doing now, knowing that the campaign will still be going until 2017.

Our next step is for our leadership team, Administrative Council, to continue to plan for growth. Last month, we offered a survey to the congregation that outlined our "readiness" to reach new people. This survey may have felt vague, because we are still praying and working through holy conversations to create our plan. The "new places" that this survey asked about referred to using our current facility, while continuing to make emotional and spiritual space for people to find a place to love and serve God through Hope Ridge. This survey did give us some information about our congregation, and the Administrative Council is currently working toward a clearer long-term strategic plan for our congregation.

As I hope to lead our congregation forward, I am reminded that our work is about people's hearts, and inviting them to experience God's grace. My hope is that we would continue to work together, creating a clear plan that is financially sustainable, and that respects and honors the gifts of both our staff and each of you, as congregational servants.

Thank you for your patience and prayers around our next steps as a congregation!

Blessings and peace,
Pastor Beth

WELCOME: "Welcoming others into a relationship..."

The Relational Work of Welcoming...

As we work on these plans and strategies to help us, I rely on your help in developing relationships with one another in the congregation. Hope Ridge is really good at welcoming others on Sunday morning, but it's hard to be new and jump into a study or social setting. I'm realistic and realize that not everyone will feel a deep connection to each other, but I need all of your help in connecting with others here at Hope Ridge.



As we enter into the summer season, how can you help Hope Ridge continue to reach one another?

- ⇒ Watch out for others at church, begin to reach out to them beyond Sunday morning. It could be via email or phone call or cookout, etc. (Through the office, we keep an eye out for members and friends who have been absent, but it is a balance- we don't want to bug people, but we really do care when we don't see them.)
- ⇒ Make a plan to invite an acquaintance to an event over the summer.
- ⇒ Become a mentor to a new member. Let Pastor Beth know if you could be a partner in getting a new member acquainted with Hope Ridge.
- ⇒ Look at the sending opportunities coming up and decide where you can serve. We need 7 volunteers for the week of day camp at Woodlawn. We are also still in need of help for VBS this year. Please join in, it's a great way to get to know other people, and it really is fun!
- ⇒ Watch in August, as we will offer our fall line-up of classes and servant opportunities both in the church and outside of the church- and then invite someone personally to join you.

Blessings to you all for a safe and fun summer, and I look forward to seeing you in the community and at Hope Ridge!

Pastor Beth



WELCOME TO THE FUN AND EDUCATIONAL OUTINGS
ORGANIZED BY THE HOPE RIDGE UMW—Both men and women welcome!

Tuesday, June 23 @ 11:30am—Summer Lunch Bunch/Meeting— The next get -together for fun and fellowship will be at The Jade Tree, 7673 Mentor Ave. Please contact Diana Trubiani with questions, or RSVP on the Connection Card.

Saturday, July 11 @ 10 am—*Garfield Home--Guided Behind the Ropes Tour--* ages 16 and up, \$15 each. This special tour take you into several rooms in the Garfield home BEHIND public barriers; allows you to handle some artifacts!

Tuesday, July 21 @ 11:30am—Summer Lunch Bunch/Meeting—location to be announced (TBA).

Tuesday, Aug 18 @ 6pm— *Playhouse Square Take a Hike Tour.* Free, with donations appreciated for the Heritage Tourism. Learn about the theatres and grandeur of the past, present, and future Playhouse Square!

Wednesday, Sept 2, time TBA— *Guided Walking Tour of Lakeview Cemetery.* Free, but \$5 donation is appreciated, time to be scheduled between 9am and 2:30pm. Among the tour topics are the Garfield and Rockefeller monuments, the Wade Chapel, geology, architecture, horticulture, nature, animals, and history.

Wednesday, Oct 7 @ 12:30pm—*One-hour "Lolly the Trolley" Cleveland Sightseeing Tour.*
Adults \$13, seniors \$12, children \$10. More that 20 sights and facts will be shared while on the narrated tour!

WORSHIP: So that they can worship God,...

SERVICES:

8:30am Worship in the Chapel with Communion each Sunday.

10:30am Worship in the Worship and Family Life Center (WFLC).

Communion and Family Worship is on the first Sunday of each month.

10:30am Ridge Kidz Worship in the Youth Room. A fun service for kids age 3 thru 5th grade with songs, stories, prayer, mission projects and activities. The first Sunday of each month is Family Worship, and the children stay in the WFLC service with their families instead of Ridge Kidz.

COMING SUNDAY TOPICS:

June 14—Graduate Recognition Sunday, led by Cheryl Noviski

June 21— Festival of the Christian Home; also Father's Day,
and Pastor Beth's Ordination Celebration following worship.

June 28 thru Aug 2—Guideposts of Grace— "How the Ten Commandments
continue to be the guideposts of God's grace for us to live by,"
is the theme of this sermon series.

Aug 2— VBS Celebration Sunday, Promotion Sunday and Third Grade Bible Presentations

Aug 9 thru Sept 6— Family Reunion—Hear from the pastors of Hope Ridge and
Mentor UMC as we talk about our family of faith.



Congratulations, Pastor Jon!

Beginning July 1st, Pastor Jon has been given Lead Pastor responsibilities at Shoregate UMC in Willowick. However, this is a part-time 50% (two Sundays a month) ministry, with 25% (and the third Sunday of the month), of his time still to be at Hope Ridge and 25% of his time (and one Sunday a month) at Mentor UMC. Pastor Jon will be working with all three churches providing small group opportunities, missions and community events that can be shared by all three churches. Pastor Jon asks to be lifted in prayer during this time of transition and as he assumes his new responsibilities.

YOU'RE INVITED TO CELEBRATE!

PASTOR BETH'S ORDINATION is Tuesday, June 16, at 7:30pm at Hoover Auditorium in Lakeside, Ohio. An after-ordination party will be held at the cottage at 167 Peach Ave, Lakeside, for friends and family attending.

But if you can't attend, an "Ordination Watch Party" will be held here at Hope Ridge beginning at 7pm, where we can view the service together live on the big screens.

Please bring a snack, appetizer or dessert to share.

Coffee and lemonade will be provided.

It is also available to watch
on your home computer
at www.eocumc.com, Annual
Conference section, Live
Stream tab.



A cake reception will be
held after the 10:30am
service on Sunday, June
21, to celebrate with the
Wilterdink family.

Did you know...Pastor Beth is THE speaker for the June 12-14, 2015 Youth Annual Conference??
That is a BIG honor and we are very proud of her! She requests to be lifted in prayer during those days,
that her words will reach the youth and make a difference in their lives.

<http://www.eocumc.com/youth/ohioyac15/guests.html>

NURTURE: Be Nurtured by the Holy Spirit and one another,...



VBS IS SCHEDULED FOR JULY 27-31!

Registration for children age 4-5th grade ongoing until full.
<http://hoperidge.com/wordpressHRUMC/category/2015-vbs/>

Fellowship events coming this summer!

Saturday, June 6 @ 9am—Nature Devotion and Hike at Veterans Park in Mentor. Meet at the park pavilion.

Friday, June 26, 5-9pm—Ridge Kidz family swim party and cookout at the Paul & Gretchen Baptie's home for the families of Ridge Kidz and adults who have participated in Ridge Kidz. RSVP at the Ridge Kidz check-in on Sundays.

Monday, July 6, 11am-2pm—Beach Day @ Fairport Harbor Beach. Join in for a day of fun at the beach. Meet by the food stand. Look for the red balloons. Bring food to share.

Saturday, July 18—Women's Day Out—step away from work and family for a time and connect with God and one another here at Hope Ridge. Rev. Kathy Dickreide will lead us through the day of topics and relaxation.

Sunday, July 19, 6:30pm—Faith Night at the Captain's Game—Come for a fun family night of faith, fireworks, bobbleheads and baseball! Tickets @ \$9 each, plus optional food and Kid Zone vouchers. Forms at Info Desk to be turned in to the church office with your payment by July 8.

Sunday, August 9—All-Church Picnic— Details to follow!

Saturday, August 15, 8am—Concord Community Days—Let's represent Hope Ridge UMC at the 5K run/walk, or if you don't run, offer to serve at a water station during the race.



NEW MEMBER CLASS

Interested in joining Hope Ridge or being a mentor? A new member class will be offered this summer on **Mondays at 7pm, June 22-July 27**, titled *Following Jesus*. Register today on your Connection Card. Also, if you would like to be a mentor for a new member, see Pastor Beth with questions or sign up on Sunday's Connection Card.

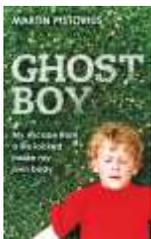
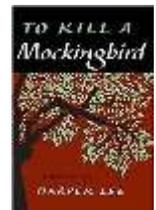
Sunday, August 23rd - "Going Deep with Discipleship" Sunday

On this Sunday both Hope Ridge and Mentor UMC in all services will recognize the importance of small groups and celebrate the work of those in Disciple Bible Study. We hope this is Sunday when people will learn about new studies and be inspired and motivated to sign-up for small groups which will begin in the fall.

SUMMER READING DISCUSSIONS

During the summer break, Hope Ridge is invited to join with the Mentor UMC summer book discussions on Social Justice:

- ◆ Meet **Wednesday, June 10 at 10am** in the Mentor UMC Chapel to discuss *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee.
- ◆ Meet **Thursday, July 9 at 1pm** in the Mentor UMC Chapel to discuss *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness* by Michelle Alexander.
- ◆ Meet **Tuesday, August 4 at 10am** in the Mentor UMC Chapel to discuss *Go Set a Watchman*, to be released July 14, by Harper Lee.



Hope Ridge Book Club—Join us on **Monday, Aug. 24, 2015 at 7pm** in the Hope Ridge Library to discuss the fascinating true story *Ghost Boy* by Martin Pistorius.

"Ghost Boy" synopsis: In January 1988, Martin Pistorius, aged twelve, fell inexplicably sick. First he lost his voice and stopped eating. Then he slept constantly and shunned human contact. Doctors were mystified. Within eighteen months he was mute and wheelchair-bound. Martin's parents were told an unknown degenerative disease left him with the mind of a baby and less than two years to live. Martin was moved to care centers for severely disabled children. The stress and heartache shook his parents' marriage and their family to the core. Their boy was gone. Or so they thought.

SEND: and be sent out to serve others in Christ's name."

Adopt-A-Senior Ministry (ASM) is a new outreach this year at Hope Ridge that wants to assist and make a positive difference in the lives of older adults living at home. [Click here for their latest newsletter](#) or talk with any team member if you would like to know more or be a part of this new mission. Team members include: Carol Darr, Tish & Dan Davis, Sharon Eckerle, Chris Finan, Diane Kinsey, Bonnie Lillibridge, Cheryl Noviski, Melissa Pottenger, and Don Sotka.

UMW RUMMAGE SALE is scheduled for Sat, June 13. Drop off your items June 8, 9, and 10 from 9:30am-8pm. Help sorting and pricing is always welcome! The UMW uses the funds raised though the Rummage Sale for mission outreach, both global and community, as well as church projects.

HAVE A HEART FOR CHILDREN? Nurturers are needed. Sign-up on a Sunday Connection Card.

- With Woodlawn camp in Painesville from 9-noon July 13-17.
- With Hope Ridge VBS from 9am-noon July 27-31.
- School supplies, backpacks, and uniforms will be collected from July 26-Aug 16 to be distributed to children who do not have them in local schools.

Honor a Special Man through UMCOR, which provides aid to those affected by natural disasters. Make a donation to UMCOR (United Methodist Committee on Relief) by June 15 to honor or remember a special man in your life whom you would like mentioned in our **Father's Day bulletin insert on June 21.**

HOPE RIDGE PRESCHOOL NEWS... A Changing of Directors



Dear Hope Ridge Family,
This summer, I will officially turn over the reins of Preschool Director to Samantha Meunier. I am confident that she will do a wonderful job and am excited to see how the preschool will flourish under her care. I have been a part of Hope Ridge Preschool for 25 years, 12 years as a teacher and 13 years as director. My roots are **"dug in deep" here, so I won't be a stranger in the months to come. I do hope to serve as a substitute or volunteer, as needed, during my retirement.** I also look forward to enjoying my hobbies (reading, crossword puzzles, Sudoku and sewing), volunteering at my home church (St. James Episcopal in Painesville) and spending time with my husband, family members and friends.

Alice Griffith

Unfortunately, my retirement is off to a bit of a rocky start. I will be undergoing chemotherapy this summer after a diagnosis of breast cancer in April. I thank Hope Ridge parishioners for their prayers and the many, many cards and notes that I have received since that time. I am recovering well from surgery and want to say that your caring has meant the world to me. I have met wonderful people and made many friends while working at the preschool and will miss you all!
With love and thankfulness *Alice Griffith*

From Samantha (Sam) Meunier:

I have always loved the field of education! As a child it was a special treat to join my mom in her classroom (she was also a preschool teacher.) I spent my high school and college summers teaching swim lessons and Bible school, and treasure the time I spent growing with families as their babysitter. I continued my graduate education to receive a Master's Degree in Elementary Ed. I began my professional career teaching Kindergarten, and then spent several years teaching 4th grade. After about five years in the field, I took a brief break from teaching when I was blessed with children of my own.



The Meunier Family

My husband Jason and I were both born and raised in southeastern NY. We met in high school and will be celebrating our 17th anniversary this summer! We have two children, a 12-year old son, Michael, and an 11-year old daughter, Alina. Prior to Hope Ridge, it was one of my life's highlights to be able to stay home and raise my kids! Once they were in school full time, I felt the pull to return to the classroom. Both of my children attended Hope Ridge Preschool, and my family has found a home in Hope Ridge Church, so my heart was called to pursue a teaching opportunity here as well. I was lucky that the opportunity existed, and I have been blessed to be a member of the team since 2011. I feel privileged to be part of the Hope Ridge Family, and I am very excited to begin another chapter at Hope Ridge as the Preschool Director.

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THE HOPE RIDGE PRESCHOOL is currently accepting applications for part-time teachers and substitutes. For a detailed job description or more information, please contact the Preschool Office at [440-639-8817](tel:440-639-8817), or <http://hoperidge.com/wordpressHRUMC/category/job-opportunities/> or submit a resume to hoperidgepsdirector@yahoo.com.

News Around the Church—Finance

MARCH 2015 Report of Our Financial Support of the Hope Ridge Community & Ministries

Summary: Our General Fund offering of \$36,682 in March was \$2,575 more than our needs. Because of this generosity we were able to pay our full apportionment amount for the month. Overall for the year, our offering of \$94,316 has been \$7,143 less than our operating needs.

<u>Monthly</u>		<u>2015 Year-To-Date</u>	
March Operating Expense Needs	\$31,175	YTD Operating Expense Needs	\$92,664
March Apportionment Needs	<u>2,932</u>	YTD Apportionment Needs	<u>8,795</u>
Total Offering Needs	<u>\$34,107</u>	Total Offering Needs	<u>\$101,459</u>
Offerings March 1-31, 2015	\$36,682	YTD Offerings thru March 31	\$94,316

APRIL 2015 Report of Our Financial Support of the Hope Ridge Community & Ministries

Summary: Our General Fund offering of \$29,439 in April was \$3,853 less than our needs. Thank you for your generosity to help the missions of the United Methodist Church. Overall for the year, our offering of \$125,016 is \$9,735 less than our operating needs.

<u>Monthly</u>		<u>2015 Year-To-Date</u>	
April Operating Expense Needs	\$30,361	YTD Operating Expense Needs	\$123,025
April Apportionment Needs	<u>2,932</u>	YTD Apportionment Needs	<u>11,726</u>
Total Offering Needs	<u>\$33,292</u>	Total Offering Needs	<u>\$134,751</u>
Offerings April 1-30, 2015	\$29,439	YTD Offerings thru April 30	\$125,016

May offering totals were not yet available at the time of this printing.



NEW MOBILE GIVING APP FOR APPLE® DEVICES

Simplify your giving with the mobile giving app developed by the General Council of Finance and Administration (GCFA) of The United Methodist Church. The *Joyfully2UMC* app makes giving easy and now it's available for download on Apple® devices! The app is free and can be used to make contributions to Hope Ridge UMC.

The GPS-enabled app, which works with credit and debit cards, lets you quickly donate to Hope Ridge. It can even be used to find a nearby United Methodist church when traveling.

To make contributions, members just need to download the *Joyfully2UMC* app. Type in *Joyfully2UMC* at the App Store to download the app.

Hope Ridge Celebrations

JUNE BIRTHDAYS

- 1 Barbara Moody
- 2 Gretchen Seyfried
Kristina Simer
- 3 Morgan Brunetti
Sally King
Jamie Simer
Richard Thayer
Rick Warner
- 4 Ophelia Allen
- 5 Marcia Clark
- 6 Gordon Bogert
- 7 Sarah Soulsby
- 9 Morgan Ferencak
- 11 Katie Cudzilo
- 14 Harry Fishleigh
- 15 Jennifer Finan
- 18 Brynn Urban
- 19 Diane Kinsey
Mary Wolfe
- 20 Ted Daly
- 21 Gloria Vallone
- 22 Wynne Bogert
Harvey Heaverlo
Dee Strong
Emily Toth
- 24 Lindsey Brunetti
- 26 Beth Fellenstein
Leslie Mizen
Melissa Ruminski
- 27 Carol Darr
Lola Meek
Judy White
- 29 Jesse Lunato
Aiden O'Reilly



JULY BIRTHDAYS

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Kaydrian Gallagher
Kathy Nagy
Joan Schick 2 Jan Benroth
Darren Timura 3 Jennifer Kovell 5 Tony Rodriguez 6 Eva Hancock 7 Rachel Jeavons
Blaise Toman 11 Ashley Hancock 12 Ariel Hawrylo 13 Jesse Jeavons 15 Debbie Molner
David Noviski 17 Erin Finan
Bill Nahumck
Tyler Weber 18 John McLaren 21 Reece Hartman
Kay Wheelock 23 Brad Cudzilo 24 Dominic Duncan
Vic Noviski 25 Lauren Jeavons 26 Ken Lillibridge
Samantha Meunier 27 Sarah Pribulsky 29 Chandler Loomis 30 Jillian Lewis | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 2 3 5 6 7 11 12 13 15 17 18 21 23 24 25 26 27 29 30 |
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July ANNIVERSARIES

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 David & Laura Goodban 3 Tony & Lindsey Brunetti 5 Mark & Ashley Hancock 7 Jim & Brenda Soulsby 8 Mark & Gretchen Seyfried 12 Keith & Kathy Nagy 13 Walter & Judie Elgin 14 Ed & Gail Lowe
Dick & Becky Parker
Dick & Pat Winter 16 Bill & Sally Cardaman 17 Neil & Betsy Newman 18 John & Susanne Goertz 23 Glen & Susan Dieterle
Dave & Cathy Fleck 28 Jerry & Joan Burnfield | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Bill & Sue Nahumck 4 Gary & Yvonne Oyler 5 Gene & Joyce Laubach 8 Jim & Nicki Davies
Tony & Winni Rodriguez 18 Jack & Joy Olpp 19 Gary & Marilyn Stankey 21 Jim & Laura Moll 22 Gordon & Diane Hanford 24 Rick & Melissa Pottenger
Dale & Cindy Sawchik 27 Keith & Jeannie Nelson 28 Dean & Janelle Slavick 29 Fred & Becky Dingeldein |
|--|---|

AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

- | |
|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3 Yvonne Oyler
John Schick 6 Morgan Nelson
Courtney Root 7 Trent Loomis
Cindy Aubin 9 Caroline Campbell 11 Sue Nahumck 12 Eva Thomas 13 Judy Fritinger 15 Linda Kallay 17 Rich Constantine
Jennifer Eshler 19 Shawn Rodeheaver 1 Olivia Fiebig 21 Jamie Chamberlain
Madelyn Warner 23 Winni Rodriguez 25 David Hedstrom
Laurie Rider 26 Pat Jones
Janelle Slavick
Bob Snyderwine 28 Imogene Drobnick
Rick Thompson 29 Jerry Burnfield
Steve Davies
Mason Weber 30 Nathan Ferencak 31 Sharon Chamberlain
Mark Sakach |
|---|

August ANNIVERSARIES

- | |
|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Geoff & Julie Weber 3 Bob & Ruth DeGraff 7 Al & Peg Marks
Jason & Samantha Meunier
Jon & Beth Wilterdink 11 Bob & Cathy Colvin
Tom & Karen Sadler 15 Joe & Sharon Eckerle 16 Gary & Carol Darr
Dennis & Lola Meek 18 Jamie & Sharon
Chamberlain 26 Dan & Sally King 27 Rich & Beth Fellenstein |
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If we have missed your special day, let us know at hopeoffice@hoperidge.com.

**HOPE RIDGE
UNITED METHODIST
CHURCH**

9870 Johnnycake Ridge Rd.
Mentor, OH 44060

Phone: 440-352-2141
Fax: 440-639-2405
hopeoffice@hoperidge.com

Rev. Beth Wilterdink, Pastor
pastorbeth@hoperidge.com
Rev. Jon Wilterdink, Pastor
pastorjon@hoperidge.com

SUMMER OFFICE HOURS
Monday—Thursday: 9am–3pm
Friday: closed



EVENTS FROM CHURCHES AROUND THE COMMUNITY

Youth Programs at Mentor UMC

VBS June 22-26 (age 4 thru grade 6)

Get Out Doors (G.O.D.) Camp June 22-26 (grades 5 and 6)

Middle School Mission Week (grades 6,7,8) July 12-17

Theatre Arts Camp (grades K-8) July 20-31

Register at mentorumc.org/summer-programs

North Mentor Centenary UMC

Bridges Out of Poverty—a comprehensive approach to understanding the dynamics that maintain poverty from the individual to the systemic level.

Saturday, July 11, 8:30am-3:30pm

Cost: \$25 for the textbook, materials, and lunch

Register at <http://mentorumc.org/current/bridges-out-of-poverty-educational-workshop>

St. James Episcopal Church, 131 N. State St. Painesville

Testament of a Naked Man, Monday, June 8 @ 7pm. See the power of the Gospel according to Mark brought to life in a dramatic one-man performance by the Rev. Angus Stuart, Rector of St. Francis-in-the-Wood, West Vancouver, British Columbia. A freewill offering will be taken.

Gardening is for the Birds... and Butterflies, too! Friday, June 19 at noon. Learn plants and habitats that attract butterflies and hummingbirds. Tickets are \$12 for sale at the door or their church office, 354-3526, includes Salad Luncheon and Lake Metroparks presentation.

Conference Thoughts from Our District Superintendent... Rev. Sondra Snode

Recently, the nightly news included a story of an elderly gentleman who called 911, and woke up an entire neighborhood. He had recently been released from the hospital and returned home to an empty refrigerator. As a widower with no family nearby he found himself alone and at the end of his rope. In the interview he acknowledged that he knew dialing 911 would bring an instant response. And it did. The dispatcher who received his call was personally convicted. She copied his shopping list and delivered his choice food. Others heard of the call, and within a few days' time he was inundated with food, including 6 cans of Spam. "I'm in heaven now!"



As we move towards Annual Conference, our theme this year is "Jesus Is Calling Us Up." This is not simply a heaven-bound celebration. This is a call to consider how we are responding to Jesus' call to discipleship? How are we nurturing faith? How are we nurturing the gifts in others? And, empowering them to be in ministry? Disciples make disciples ... and the world, not just the church, ought to be changed because of it. I often receive 911 calls. They are always made by someone anxious. Although the source of anxiety is different, the anxiety is real nonetheless. Usually the person wants an instant response – an instant fix – an instant turn-around. Unfortunately, this is not always possible. But maybe it's fortunate.

As followers of Jesus, we have to be those who respond to difficulties with grace ... with prayer ... with compassion ... with patience ... with forgiveness ... with trust in God's power and presence ... with boldness and confidence as children of God ... This includes change and transitions that occur within our churches. This includes difficulties with our brothers and sisters of Christ, as well as our neighbors in the world. This includes dealing with uncertainties. This includes approaching all that life throws at us. Jesus – our Risen Lord and Savior – means to make a difference in each person's life. He calls us to rise up to the challenge of trusting Him to be at work in our lives. He calls us to rise up to the challenge of representing Him in the world. He calls us to rise up for the sake of His Kingdom. Wake up, Church. How might you be Christ in the world today? He will equip you for the journey!

Sondra Snode

District Superintendent of the Western Reserve District, Sondra@wrdistrict.org