

The Epistle of St. Paul's

June 2023

From The Pastor's Desk...

Since I attended my first annual conference session when I was serving in the Baltimore-Washington Conference (while serving as a local pastor in Landover Hills, Maryland) in 1993, I would hear each June, as the sessions of the annual conference approached, pronouncements about how this year will be an important, critical, and/or pivotal event. Now don't get me wrong, I love going to the annual conference! The event is part business meeting, part family reunion, part trade show, and part team building. The worship is almost always stellar, and the opportunity to engage in the work of the church at the conference level is meaningful.

That being said, can the annual conference every year live up to the expectations one has of an event being important, critical, and/or pivotal? In all honesty, no. Some years the business portion is tedious. Some years the worship is so-so. Some years the vendors don't offer much in the way of swag. And yet...

And yet every year I attend with a sense of wonder and expectation because the role of the annual conference, as first established by John Wesley, is to recognize that we are in ministry together. The Connection, as Wesley called it, means that we support one another in our ministry contexts and come together to hear about what is happening in local congregations, support those doing the work beyond the local church, and hold one another in love.

As an ordained elder, my membership is with the Mountain Sky Annual Conference. When I go to Colorado Springs for the 2023 annual conference sessions this month, I will be there because I take the connection between myself and the other clergy in the conference seriously. I believe that my ministry is impacted by that of my colleagues and that my ministry in turn affects them. I know that the hundreds of years of ministry represented by those pastors who have died in the last year and those who are retiring as well as the years of ministry yet to be offered by those being commissioned or ordained serve as reminders of my place in the stream of the servants of our God.

This year, a major issue that will be discussed and voted upon are the disaffiliation petitions from more than thirty congregations in the Mountain Sky Conference. No one that I am aware of wants to see any of our siblings in Christ leave. That isn't what we will be voting upon. Instead, we will grieve their desire to separate from us and then accept that their path is diverging from ours, and if the votes go as I anticipate they will, we will send them off with our blessing.

And so, please be in prayer June 22-25 for the work of the Mountain Sky Annual Conference and for the God-shaped future that we will all be leaning into.

Every blessing, *Pastor Charles*

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St. Paul's United Methodist Church

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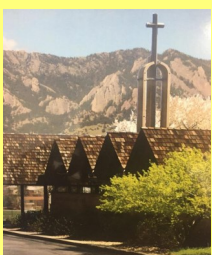
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Ladies Lunch Bunch will meet Thursday, June 1, at 11:45 a.m. at Murphy's Tap House (585 McCaslin Blvd., Louisville). Please R.S.V.P. to Belinda by June 1 (Belinda.Alkula@gmail.com / 303-916-2349).

Breakfast Fellowship will meet on **Saturday, June 10**, at 8:00 a.m. at Le Peep (2525 Arapahoe Ave, Boulder, next to McGuckin's hardware). No reservations necessary. All are welcome!

Sew What will NOT meet during the summer months.

Women's Summer Book Group

Belinda Alkula is hosting an **organizational meeting on Thursday, June 8**, 3:00-4:30 p.m. via Zoom to plan for this year's Women's Summer Book Group. If you are not on her mailing list and would like to participate, contact Belinda at belinda.alkula@gmail.com.

Sunday Fellowship Notes

We'll continue to have Fellowship Time *after* the Sunday service through the summer. Be sure to check your calendar and sign up to host on a Sunday or two. Simple snacks are fine. The purpose of Fellowship Time is to reserve time for visiting with your church family, not to wear yourself out preparing sumptuous snacks (although we'll enjoy them too).

—Louise and Pat for the Fellowship Committee

Free Virtual Mission u Adult Study

July 11, 18, 25, and August 1, 7:00-9:30 pm via Zoom
Four consecutive Thursday evenings

This study is for men and women. It is based on *Exploring the Lord's Prayer as a Spiritual Practice for Social Transformation* by Riva Tableisma, available in print and Kindle versions. Find registration links in the E-pistle and News You Can Use.

Questions? Contact Belinda Alkula (Belinda.Alkula@gmail.com / 303-916-2349).

Hank Troy and Wende Harston will visit St. Paul's on Sunday, July 9. Hank Troy will take part in the service. Save the date—we always enjoy his musical offerings. Plan to stay for a special Fellowship Time—an ice cream social is being planned.

Pilgrimage to Sand Creek

To be partners in building and living in a beloved community requires us to know our history, to learn about one another, to acknowledge our mistakes, and commit to a new way. Often the conversation around the Sand Creek Massacre can leave us stuck at shame that can even lead to resentment. Our calling as followers of Jesus Christ is to process our history and our feelings of guilt or shame in ways that move us toward learning what a new way of being in community might be like. This requires humility and a commitment to the journey. Most times, we are not even the ones to lead that work or prescribe how it is to happen, as we must follow the lead of those directly impacted. If you are interested in participating in this visit to the Sand Creek Massacre National Historic Site on June 26th, below are some initial details for your consideration.

Departure is at 6:30 a.m. with two possible departure locations: First UMC, Colorado Springs, or in Denver. Arrival will be back at the departure locations around 5 p.m. The registration fee is \$30.00, which will include gas for the vans we will be taking, snack, and lunch. Required pre-reading: *Massacre at Sand Creek: How Methodists Were Involved in an American Tragedy*. With our best efforts, we hope the trip will be physically accessible, but please note that we will be riding on some bumpy dirt roads. Questions? Please contact Rev. Bich Thy (Betty) Nguyen at bnguyen@mtnskyumc.org.

Hymn for Trinity Sunday (June 4) by Charles Wesley

Hail holy, holy, holy Lord, Whom One in Three we know, By all Thy heavenly host ador'd, By all Thy church below! One undivided Trinity With triumph we proclaim: Thy universe is full of Thee, And speaks Thy glorious name.

Thee, holy Father, we confess, Thee, holy Son adore, Thee, Spirit of true holiness, We worship evermore: Thine incommunicable right, Almighty God, receive, Which angel-quires and saints in light And saints embodied give.

Three Persons equally divine We magnify and love: And both the quires ere long shall join To sing Thy praise above: Hail holy, holy, holy Lord, (Our heavenly song shall be) Supreme, essential One ador'd In co-eternal Three.

June Birthdays

6-4 Jessica Sawyer

6-4 Diana Meade

6-12 Steve Bainbridge

6-26 Betty Herrell



JUNE PREACHING SCHEDULE

June 4 / Trinity Sunday / Communion

"In the name of the Trinity"

Psalm 8, Matthew 28:16-20

June 11

"Guess who's coming to dinner?"

Romans 4:13-25, Matthew 9:9-13, 18-26

June 18 / Father's Day

"Laughter as prayer"

Romans 5:1-8, Genesis 18:1-15

June 25 / Dan Daniels preaching

Romans 6:1b-11

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