

BAKER MEMORIAL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

THE CARILLON

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The *Carillon* is a monthly publication available in print, on-line and e-mail editions. To sign up, visit our website or contact the church office. bakermemorialchurch.org

The deadline for submitting items to the *The Carillon* is the 20th of the month.



PASTOR MARY'S MESSAGE

Signs of Spiritual Health

So let us not grow weary in doing what is right, for we will reap at harvest time, if we do not give up. So then, whenever we have an opportunity, let us work for the good of all, and especially for those of the family of faith.

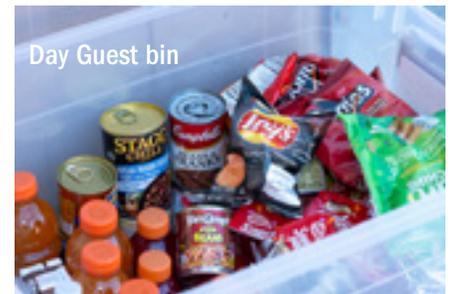
Galatians 6:9-10 NRSV

As the end of 2020 approached, more and more people I know commented that they were tired. Tired of wearing a mask. Tired of being confined to their home. Tired of trying to find ways for their children to thrive in this new way of doing school. Tired of not being able to hug a friend. Tired of worrying about whether they had contracted Covid-19 after someone in their “bubble” became ill. Tired of being unable to be with ill loved ones. Tired of waiting for good news.

As I listened, the thing that I noticed was missing from the “weary list” was people being tired of doing good for their neighbors in need. As a congregation we have been blessed with an ongoing desire to help those around us. We have received clothing and food from all over. We have received donations to help shelter people experiencing homelessness who cannot enter a homeless shelter. We have had Judy Schlarb, Ray Sheers, and Tom Warren come every Tuesday and Thursday to hand out lunches and supplies to our Day Guests who have become our friends. And, what a blessing that the lunches we have been able to give twice a week are generous. We have been able to replenish our food bin every single day with the help of Kurt Heinz and others. We have lived into Paul's directive in the book of Galatians, “So then, whenever we have an opportunity, let us work for the good of all, and especially for those of the family of faith.”

2020 has revealed deep signs of spiritual health in our congregation. The challenges of this year has taken our minds away from less important things and caused us to focus on

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PASTOR MARY'S MESSAGE

Continued from page 1.

the truly urgent things. It has challenged us to be generous, and hopeful, and prayerful. The body of Christ at Baker Memorial UMC has been a small part of the light of Christ that the darkness did not overcome in this time of pain around the world.

Let us pray that this sense of caring, determination, generosity and love for anyone and everyone will continue long past the pandemic. We have just completed a long and deep look at the words of the prophets of the Old Testament. If there is one lesson that I hope we have heard,

When you see a place of ongoing need for love, justice, or assistance please pay attention.

it is that God values justice, authentic faithfulness, mercy, and kindness. In fact, God values these so much, that when people who claim to be faithful do

not display these values, God concludes that they are no longer people of God.

The New Year will bring challenges. More people will become ill with Covid. More people will struggle to keep their businesses open. More people will have need of a hand up out of challenging times. However, the biggest challenge of all may be the temptation to go back to doing things like we used to do them. My prayer is that the pain



of 2020 will help us grow spiritually, so that our care continues to flow freely and our desire

for justice for our neighbor becomes unshakable. No one can predict exactly what that looks like. None of us knows the future. So as 2021 begins I ask you to make a commitment to being open to the stirrings of the Holy Spirit within you. When you see a place of ongoing need for love, justice, or assistance please pay attention. Talk to others and see if perhaps this is a place for our ministry to grow. Then, come talk to me or Pastor Kim Neace so we can see how to build on your faithful understanding.

Praying that your New Year begins in peace, hope, love and joy –
Pastor Mary

Save the Date for Church Conference: February 2 at 7pm

In the April 2017 Church Conference, the congregation gathered to decide on a number of proposals including how to utilize a sizable estate gift from the Will Collins Trust. The uses of that gift have been faithfully carried out with one exception. The congregation voted to set aside \$80,000 of the gift to demolish the houses the church owns on the south-west corner of Cedar and 3rd Avenues. At the time we had hoped to return the land to green space or other usage until the properties sold. Since that time we have learned that the beige colored house is considered historical and cannot be demolished. As a result, the houses remain in place until the property can be sold, and the \$80,000 set aside to demolish them remains unused.

This Zoom based church conference will be for the purpose of repurposing the approximately \$80,000 remaining in the Will Collins Trust Fund for other church building projects. The first project is to remove the bats that have taken up residence in the sanctuary and seal the building to prevent re-entry. This work is estimated at

approximately \$20,000. The second project is to seal the connection between the main building and the external stairs/balcony on the south end of the sanctuary. Over time the seal between the stairs/balcony and the church building has failed and water seeps into the building behind the stairs. In addition, at least one of the steps is no longer properly aligned and needs to be repaired. This project is also currently estimated at a little less than \$20,000 although a more detailed estimate including the step repair may result in a higher cost. A third project is to remove a small sapling growing in one of the chimneys and cap the tops of the chimneys. The remaining funds are proposed to be set aside in a Capital Renewal Fund that would be used for these types of building repairs/equipment replacements as they become necessary in the future.

Details of the proposal and the Zoom link will be available closer to the meeting via Weekly Word and the February *Carillon*. All members are invited to attend and vote on the proposal.

Children & Family Ministry

FOCUS ON JESUS

► **Family Bible Verse:** *They entered the house and saw the child with Mary his mother. Falling to their knees, they honored him. Then they opened their treasure chests and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.* Matthew 2:11, CEB Deep Blue Kids Bible

We made it! Woot woot! Welcome 2021! OK, now what? This past year has been a whirlwind with so many emotions. The last couple months, we moved from thankful heart celebrations to the Christmas cheer. On January 6 it will be Epiphany—or a bonus celebration day in our house because it is also my sister’s birthday. Do you celebrate the story of the Epiphany? (Learn more about Epiphany in the *Ask The UMC* article on page 4.)

Join us this month to meet Humphrey, a camel, through BakerKid’s email storytime. We get to view the Epiphany through his eyes during the wise men’s journey as they seek the Christ child. The wise men brought gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh to the baby Jesus. *Humphrey’s First Christmas* is sweet and adorable! You get to see how Humphrey’s heart transforms during his long travels to Bethlehem. As we too embark on our new journey through 2021, continue to keep your eyes on Jesus. Let’s remember to keep Jesus in your hearts and in your daily journey of life. These days, we don’t give the gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. However, the most precious gift we can give is the worship.

We look forward to returning to worshiping in-person, but remember Matthew 18:20. *For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them.* When we are in physical church, it’s a place where we can be with God. Remember God is everywhere and always with you. He is with you



August and Sofia Tarmichael got creative as they celebrate Jesus’ birth with their Christmas Countdown Activity.



when we pray, sing to His glory, and when you are enjoying His creation. So, when you want to spend time with Him, grab a friend or your family and invite Him to be with you. Does 1+1=3? *Amen!*

Blessing & Hope,
Shelly Stienbarger
Director, Children & Family Ministry

Youth Ministry

In December, we created gift bags and distributed them into the hands of all of the young people in our church. If we missed you, please please reach out and we'll personally drive one over to your residence post haste.

While driving and especially when interacting with many we haven't seen in months, we were met with so much joy and also reminded of our current distress. Some apologized for not engaging in our online sessions due to overload and many expressed a wish for in-person events. Additionally, many told us about loved ones lost. It was a reminder of three things: the kindness needed during this moment, the love and joy we all can share with simple gestures, and the grief so many are experiencing.

This is typically a happy segment to reflect on successful programming and anticipate ministry opportunities—especially as we contemplate the new year, but we can simultaneously make space for the ongoing realities of 2020. Many of our youth and parents are hurting after ten months of e-learning, limited in-person events, and relatives who have passed. With over 315,000 lives lost in our nation to this pandemic, none of us are untouched. Your youth committee is praying for you. Pray for us, as well.

May God bless this year and all of the events, memories, and moments we will share together.

In Christ,
The Baker Youth Team



Festive gift bags and Christmas blessings were distributed to youth.



Ask The UMC

What is the purpose of the Season after Epiphany?

The purpose of the Season after Epiphany is to help the whole congregation get ready to accompany candidates preparing for baptism.

The first Sunday focuses on the Baptism of Christ and the last Sunday on the Transfiguration. These “bookend Sundays” frame the whole of Jesus’ journey in ministry. We start at us the very beginning of Jesus’ ministry at his baptism and conclude with a glimpse of its fulfillment in the age to come in his Transfiguration. As it frames Jesus’ journey in ministry, so it also frames the journey of his disciples, then and now.

The scripture readings in the lectionary provide two distinct pathways of focus for this season.

One pathway, marked by the Old Testament and Gospel readings, follows Jesus in his earliest days with his

disciples, from their calling to beginning to learn what it means live in his way. These scriptures help the local church to focus *outward* on inviting others to join them, or “Come and see.” The hope is that some who respond to your congregation’s invitation may choose to “Come and stay” to prepare for baptism.

The other pathway, through Paul’s letters to the church in Corinth, helps focus the church inward. These readings help congregations work on internal issues in their church life so they can walk more effectively with those preparing for baptism when Lent begins.

By either pathway, the church is supported by the scriptures of this season for its mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

This content was produced by Ask The UMC, a ministry of United Methodist Communications.

MISSIONS CORNER

Serving here, near and far away

CARE FOR CAMBODIA

Mission giving was alive and well on December 6th at the Christmas Story Caravan. It warmed our hearts to see people drive up or walk up to the front lawn with their donations in hand! We passed out a giving card and flyer to everyone so more funds could still be coming in! That evening we collected \$1986. We are blessed by the generosity of the congregations of Baker, Geneva and Batavia as well as the community. Praise God!

SALVATION ARMY ANGEL TREE

Our Angel Tree donations exceeded expectations as well. We asked for 75 gifts cards in increments of \$25 and our congregation donated over 90! Thanks to the Baker congregation many children this season will be shopping at Target, Kohl's, Meier, Walmart and more!!

CHRISTMAS TREE SALES

Sales totaled \$1100! The trees are donated by Dave and Loretta Wilson each year and Missions reaps the full benefit! This year's donation will benefit our Cambodia missionary and her ministry. A heartfelt thanks to Dave and Loretta!

SALVATION ARMY BELL RINGING

Bell Ringing looked a bit different in December 2020 as ringing was outside and sign-ups were online and not in Baker Hall. Bless all those brave souls that rang in the cold! Look for more details in the future on how we did as Salvation Army reveals them this winter! Thanks to Rick Carlson for his incredible service in leading this ministry!

DECEMBER MASK MINISTRY

Ginny Wright and Emily Greene joined the sewing team in December helping Cheryl and Chris meet our weekly goals for the Midwest Distribution Center. Thanks Ginny and Emily!

Also, thank you to Emily Greene and Pete Holmes for donating more fabric and Mitzi Babka for mailing! If you want to help, contact Chris at 630-709-7761 or cstumpf0308@gmail.com.

ALL RAINBOW COVENANT COLORS MET IN 2020

Through donations from our congregation, our missions



budget and fundraisers from the Mission Team we supported the six colors to once again become a Rainbow Covenant

Church! Funds were sent to UMCOR, Hesed House, Tree of life in SD, Senior Ministries in Bolivia, Midwest Mission Distribution Center in Pawnee, IL and our missionary Clara Biswas for her street kids. In addition, we are in a Covenant relationship with Clara and fulfilled our commitment to Global Ministries which serves missionaries worldwide.

So, *Here, Near and Far Away* we contributed to the Red, Blue, Orange, Green, Yellow and Purple Bands!

LAZARUS HOUSE MEALS

In December, the residents enjoyed a holiday meal of Spiral Hams, Scalloped Potatoes, Green Beans with Roasted Red Peppers, Tossed Salad, Rolls and Butter and Homemade Christmas Cookies for dessert! 50 lunches and breakfast items were also provided. Special thanks this month go to Phoebe Circle for donating the hams and an anonymous friend of Isie Barclay who donated the potatoes. Our list of 35 plus volunteers makes it difficult to thank everyone personally, but you are all very much appreciated! If you want to be on the Sign Up Genius volunteer list, contact Chris at cstumpf0308@gmail.com.

TWO NIL FOOD BANK DATES THIS MONTH!

This month, seven spots have been reserved for a January 26 evening session from 6-8pm for Baker. If you want to sign up for this volunteer session and get the safety measures, email info@bakermemorialchurch.org.

The next NIL Food Bank third Mondays volunteer date for Baker Memorial is January 18 from 9am-Noon at the food bank at 273 Dearborn Ct. in Geneva. If you would like to join the monthly third Mondays team or get more information contact Betty Erickson at N9FYC@aol.com.

Blood Drive In January

The January 20 Blood Drive will take place in the entire Wiley Hall allowing for safe distances between donors and all safe guidelines are practiced. Any one of us might need a transfusion at any time. We rely on one another to fill that need! Here are the details:

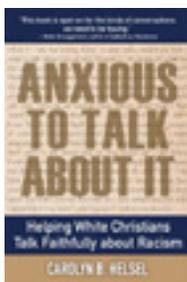
- COVID-19 Antibody Test will be performed on all blood donations as part of standard testing
- Where: Baker Memorial UMC Versiti Blood Drive in Wiley Hall
- When: Wednesday, January 20 from 2:30 to 5:30pm
Please call Pete Holmes 630-377-2183 to schedule an appointment.

Unable to make it January 20? Call Versiti and make an appointment at the Geneva location. Give them Baker's sponsor #100997 on the phone and at check in, Tell them you are from Baker Church. Versiti is located at 2000 W State Street Unit 1E in Geneva (next to Walgreens).

United Methodist Women News

Leadership Meeting: UMW Leadership Team should plan to meet via Zoom on Wednesday, January 6 at 9 am. If you are a circle leader and unable to attend, please forward information regarding your circle activities to Pam Stare at starep@comcast.net

Pledges: Thanks to all who so generously supported UMW with pledges this year. Your contributions are especially appreciated during this challenging time.



Book of the Month: A new program to start the new year from the United Methodist Women! Each month a book will be presented in *The Carillon* with a short synopsis and venues where the books may located. Reading books at home and sharing them with friends is a good way to stay connected.

January's book is *Anxious to Talk About It: Helping White Christians Talk Faithfully About Racism* by Carolyn B. Heisel. Available on e-Books; Target, Amazon (book or Kindle), or order from your local book store. The author gives a splendid synopsis about her book that is well worth watching. The link to her video is <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qYjydtcTh7Q>

UMW Portillo's Fundraiser On The 13th

Want a night off from cooking dinner? It's Portillo's to the rescue! Save the date for UMW's fundraiser at Portillos (3895 E. Main St.) on Wednesday, January 13 from 5 to 8pm. Show the [flier](#) to the drive-thru order taker prior to ordering and 20% of the proceeds benefit UMW.

Multiple Methodists

It seems like "new expressions of Methodism" are starting to pop up all over these days and it can be confusing. The fact is that the United Methodist Church is still a single connected global church. The General Conference which was scheduled for May 2020 was delayed until August 29-September 7, 2021 so no official protocol for dividing the denomination has been decided. All of the "new expressions" are grassroots movements. Some organizations are just getting organized and others have existed for many years. Some of the names you may hear are Liberation Methodist Connexion, UM Forward, Uniting Methodists, and the Wesleyan Covenant Association.

If you are interested in understanding any of these in more depth, an internet search may be the best way to find out what is happening. However, for overall United Methodist information, including updates about these advocacy groups from time to time, the UMC is a helpful resource.

- You can sign-up to receive a weekly summary of Global United Methodist news [here](#).
- You can sign-up for regular news updates from the Northern Illinois Conference [here](#).

Please keep the overall United Methodist Church, as well as Baker Memorial United Methodist Church, in your prayers.

A Gentle Word About Giving

The work of God continues at and through Baker Memorial UMC in these difficult times. Our staff is hard at work seeking to check-in with the whole congregation on a regular basis. Our work with our Day Guests continues. We are learning how to do worship on-line. As you are able, please seek to keep up with your giving during this time, or even accelerate it so we can continue to meet our payroll and bills. We understand that some people will not be able to do this and are working to manage spending accordingly. All of you are in our prayers.



181st Northern Illinois Annual Conference Report

More than 630 members participated in the five-and-a-half-hour interactive session through Zoom video conferencing. Annual Conference members viewed pre-recorded messages and music videos, and voted on key legislation. The Annual Conference approved a requirement for anti-racism training for clergy, a \$4.4 million 2021 budget, and a redistricting plan to reduce the number of districts from six to five.

This was also Bishop Sally Dyck's last annual conference session as an active bishop and eight years as the NIC's episcopal leader. With the postponement of the General and Jurisdictional conferences, Dyck shifted her retirement date to December 31, 2020, in order to see the conference through the Annual Conference meeting.

"Our theme is based on the scripture 1 Peter 3:15b: 'Always be prepared to give an answer to anyone who asks you why you have hope in Christ Jesus.' We may feel that our hope is flagging from day to day, but yet it's exactly for times like these that we need not only a personal response to why church, but a community of faith that can answer that question," Bishop Dyck said. [Click here to read and watch her Episcopal Address.](#)

Laity Address

The Laity Address was also delivered virtually through a prerecorded message. This was NIC Co-Lay Leader Elisa Gatz's last year in this role. Gatz, along with Jessie Cunningham, are rotating off the Board of Laity after serving four years. Gatz challenged all of us to take some time to consider how to be God's hands and voice in your church, your community, and your world. "We are in unprecedented times. Let it be the time we respond in unprecedented ways," Gatz said. [Watch the Laity Address.](#) The Annual Conference approved Connie Augsburg and Eugene Williams as the next two Co-Lay Leaders joining Mark Manzi for the next quadrennium. An amendment brought forward for discussion was approved to send the nominations for the annual conference secretary and annual conference committee chair back to the nominations committee to select a layperson to fill each position in order to alternate clergy and laity each quadrennium.



Legislation

The Annual Conference approved legislation requiring all active clergy to participate in an anti-racism training workshop at least once per quadrennium. This includes local licensed pastors, deacons, and elders. The Board of Ordained Ministry (BOOM) will determine appropriate trainings each year and publicize them to clergy, designating an existing in-person or online training through an organization outside the UMC, or

the conference may organize its own training. The Anti-Racism Task Force (ARTF), created in 2019 to support the conference goal "to live out our belief that racism is incompatible with Christian teaching," recommends continual learning of best practices in anti-racism for all clergy so that they might more effectively lead their congregations in this work.

Redistricting

The Annual Conference also approved reducing the number of Districts and the number of District Superintendents (DS) by one, going from six to five, effective July 1, 2021. The recommendation was made given the changes in population/demographics, decline in church membership, number of churches within the Annual Conference, and downward financial trends. Also, DSs are able to conduct their work more efficiently thanks to advances in technology.

2021 Budget

For the second straight year, CCFA presented a conference budget showing a reduction of approximately 5%. The 2021 budget of \$4.4 million includes estimated conference apportionment receipts of \$4.17 million and takes into account the half-year reduction in District Superintendent compensation of \$76,300. Additionally, the 2021 budget reflects the full-year reduction from downsizing district administrative staff, closing district office locations in 2020 and eliminating two part-time programming positions that are currently vacant.

In addition under the Consent Calendar, the Annual Conference approved the 2021 equitable compensation, which includes a 3% increase to the minimum salary for

Continued on page 8.

Northern Illinois Annual Conference

Continued from page 7.

full-time clergy to \$36,359 in an effort to move the NIC closer to the North Central Jurisdiction average.

Below are some interesting conference statistics –

- 2019 membership in the NIC stands at 76,458, down from 77,496 in 2018.
- Worship attendance stands at 24,430, down from 26,059.
- Church school attendance stands at 5,814, down from 6,531.
- Number of professions or reaffirmations of faith was 858, down from 979.
- Adults and young adults in small groups totaled 24,567, down from 26,812.
- Worshippers engaged in mission totaled 14,594, up slightly from 14, 551.

Worship

There were two pre-recorded video worship services—a Memorial Service which opened the annual conference and a Retirement Service which closed the Annual Conference honoring 22 retired clergy and local pastors with a combined 422 years of ministry. The worship links to each video appear below:

- Memorial Service: <https://vimeo.com/478713483>
- Retirement Service: <https://vimeo.com/480418982>

NIC to Reduce Number of Districts

On November 14, the Northern Illinois Conference (NIC) convened to review legislation, approve a budget for 2021, and wish Bishop Sally Dyck blessings in her retirement. Among the legislation approved was a plan to reduce the number of districts in the NIC. This legislation will be put in place effective July 1, 2021 and will reduce the number of District Superintendents to five at the same time. There are many reasons for reducing the number of districts. These include new technologies that make it easier for a District Superintendent to connect to the churches the oversee, and management of costs for the NIC since the number of churches has declined from 426 in 1990 to 350 in 2020. This map provides an overview the new districts, and a complete list of the churches in each district can be found at <https://www.umcnic.org/media/files/annual%20conference/New%20Districts%20Churches%20in%20Alpha%20Order.pdf>.

The new districts are proposed to be named: Lake North

Offerings/Missions Challenge

Churches also went above and beyond the call for the Annual Conference Mission Challenge despite the pandemic. More than a dozen churches across the conference served as donation sites. More than 5,000 pounds of items and \$1,000 were collected for the Midwest Mission Distribution Center to help people around the world and in our own neighborhoods who are struggling through a disaster or humanitarian crisis.

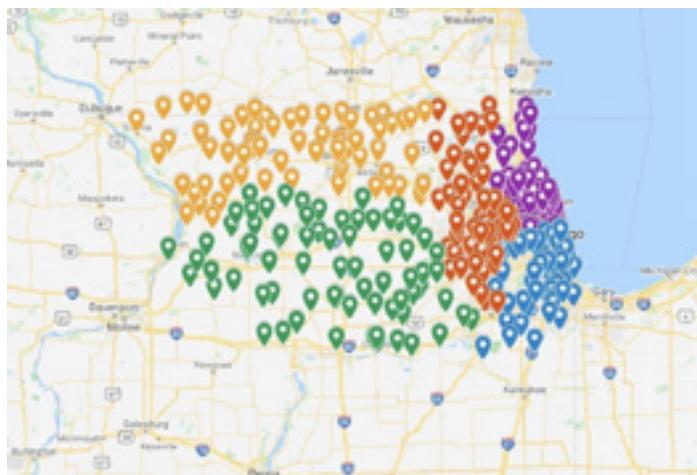
2021

The year 2021 will likely deliver more firsts for the NIC, including interim leadership with Bishop John Hopkins, who will begin Jan. 1. While there's no guarantee of the last of Zoom meetings and COVID-19 restrictions, the Annual Conference will continue to assess and monitor the safest way to gather and will announce information for the 182nd Annual Conference when more information is available.

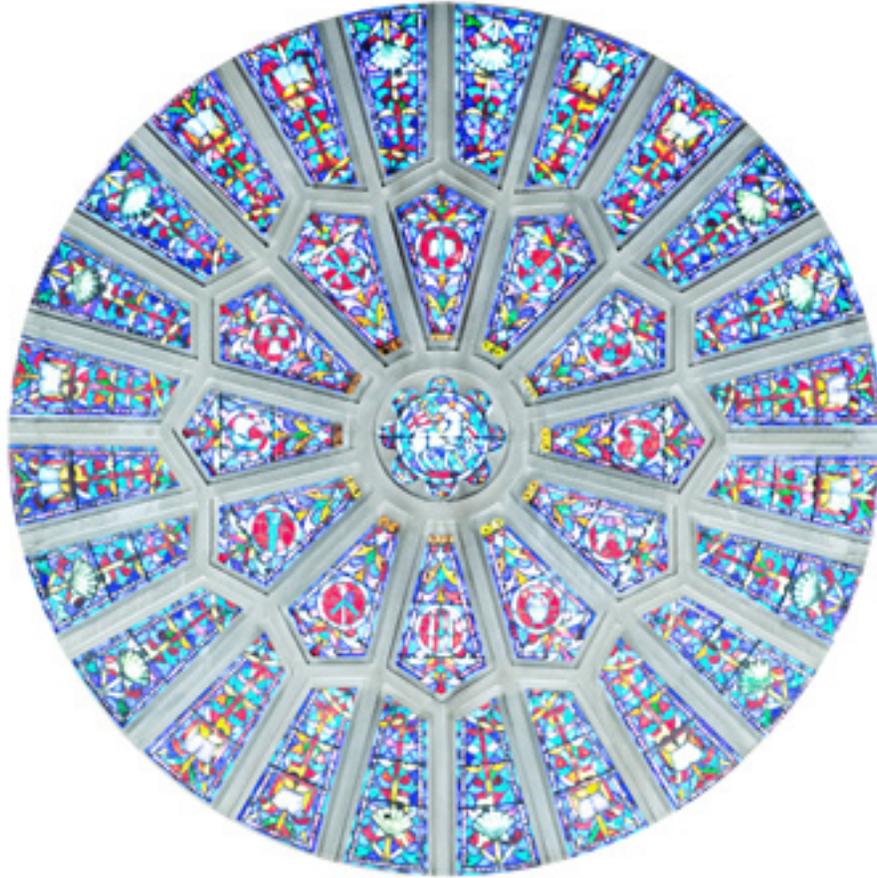
Respectfully submitted,

Lay Conference Attendees—

Debbie Conterato
Betty Ericksen
Steve Wright



(purple), Lake South (blue), Prairie Central (red), Prairie North (yellow) and Prairie South (green). Baker Memorial Church would be included in Prairie Central District along with other churches in our area. In the prior structure the dividing line between districts was at Elgin. In this proposal Elgin churches will also be in the Prairie Central District.



STAFF

Rev. Mary Zajac | *Senior Pastor*

Rev. Kim Neace | *Deacon*

Jeffery Hunt | *Director, Music Ministry*

Mark Edwards | *Organist*

Shelly Stienbarger | *Director, Children & Family Ministry*

Kurt Heinz | *Director of Administration*

Judy Schlarb | *Finance Manager*

Lita Jimenez | *Church Accountant*

Karl Lescelius | *Building Maintenance Manager*

Michele Claney | *Creative Director*

**BAKER MEMORIAL
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**

A traditional church for a modern world

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