



The Messenger

United Methodist Church – 2210 Sixth Avenue East, Alexandria, MN 56308

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July 2021

Published by: Ginger Mayer

To all my Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

The **Minnesota Annual Conference** yearly meeting was held Tuesday, June 22, through Thursday, June 24. A summary article on the Conference website can be found here: [2021 conference highlights](#). It contains many of the links I shared with you in my email on Friday, June 25, 2021. The theme of this year's Conference was "Jesus: Waymaker".

As always, one of the big happenings at Annual Conference is the Ordination and Commissioning Service. For me, I had connections with several people. As a member of the Board of Ordained Ministry, I had the privilege of interviewing Shawna Horn, who became an elder in the Minnesota Annual Conference when her ordination in the Baptist Converge denomination was recognized. I also interviewed Hyun Ah (Hannah) Choi who was commissioned and now becomes a provisional elder.

The biggest delight for me was when Amanda Lunemann, daughter of AUMC member Darlene Lunemann, was ordained at this service. You may remember Amanda when she filled in for me in January as I took some vacation. Amanda was baptized and confirmed at Clotho UMC. When she was attending Hamline University, I asked her to consider parish ministry. After graduating, she attended Claremont School of Theology. Upon graduating with her Masters of Divinity, she returned to Minnesota to begin her work as clergy in the Minnesota Annual Conference. Congratulations, Amanda.

The teaching time was on Wednesday afternoon when the Conference held "hybrid" sessions. Alexandria UMC was one of the hybrid sites and we hosted 15 clergy and lay delegates. Many thanks to the UMW and the Pizza Oven for providing lunch! Our presenter-teacher was Rev. Rachel Billups. I found her quite engaging and her talk was particularly interesting. She is the Senior Pastor at Ginghamburg Church and she, her staff, and her congregations engage in a lot of difficult conversations. They have four rules when engaging these topics: Ask Anything; Listen Well; Freely Disagree; and Love Regardless. Of course, these rules were fleshed out in her presentation, but they are great guides to having difficult discussions.

By engaging in those difficult conversations, churches can let go of the past which is holding them back and begin to move forward with our UMC mission to “make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.” Rev. Billups said:

I’ve come to believe that we will need a new language among our churches to create conversations that will move us forward. I believe we will need new methods of discipleship that effectively connect with up-and-coming generations. And if Jesus truly is the Waymaker, and I desperately believe that he is, then Jesus is already making a way through these cultural shifts” we are living through.

Most of the legislation was *pro forma*: 2022 Budget (7% lower than 2021!), Advanced Specials, approval of Years of Service for the retirees, elected leaders, etc. The one item of legislation that had some discussion was Item 101 “Racial Justice Resolution”. After three “whereas”, the action recommended is, “Therefore, be it resolved that all congregations in the Minnesota Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church join in the national denominational agency work of the General Commission on Race and Religion, the General Board of Church and Society, the denominational work of our Wesleyan siblings in the African Methodist Episcopal Church and the ongoing efforts of ecumenical partners in dismantling racism, opposing white supremacy and advocating for racial justice.” This item passed 313 for to 28 against (92% for). Individual churches are encouraged to become involved and many options were provided in the resolution. Here is an article on the Annual Conference website about this resolution: [Read Article](#)

This resolution fits within the aspirational goal of the Minnesota Annual Conference that was passed at the 2019 Annual Conference: We will be Rooted in Jesus; Grounded in Wesleyan Theology; Inclusive of All Persons; and Engaged in the Work of Justice and Reconciliation. Which brings me back to the difficult conversations.

What are the difficult conversations we should have? Racism, racial justice, systemic racism? Inclusion of all our neighbors including people of color, people with disabilities, non-English speaking people, LGBTQ identifying people? The probability of the UMC splitting in the future? Economic inequality in our community? Sex trafficking? All of the above? Others?

What does it mean when we say we are Christians or Followers of Christ? Love God, love neighbors (Mark 12:29-31, see also Luke 10:25-37) and love each other (John 13:35). Let’s begin the work of showing Alexandria and Douglas County what love looks like in us.

May the Lord bless the keep you! May God’s love shine through you!

Peace in Christ,

Pastor Gary



Nursery is no longer staffed. So parents MUST watch their own child(ren). There is a speaker in the room to listen to the sermon.

Toys are available in Cart Two.

Reminder that we are following our Building Use Policy—the church entrance doors will remain locked unless there are two people present in the building. Please call ahead before you come to church, as there are times when we are not in the building, even though we are working. Also, most days someone is in the office earlier than 9:00 a.m. and later than 1:00 p.m.

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United Methodist Church
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Office Hours

Pastor Gary—Tue-Friday

Admin. Assist. Ginger Mayer

Office is open (9:00-1:00)

Mon-Tue-Wed-Thurs-Fri

Megan Lenz— Director CYFM

Mon, Thurs, Fri (9-11:30)

Publication Date for the next *Messenger*:

Articles for the May issue need to be in the office by NOON on Monday August 23rd

Worship Attendance

Service	2021		2020
	1st/2nd		
June 6	77	100	82
June 13	59		83
June 20	82		74
June 27	81		81



In your prayers, please remember all in positions of leadership, people serving in dangerous and difficult settings, returned and returning service people and their families, all who seek and await peace.



HAPPY



BIRTHDAY

**Lets Celebrate  Years
with an Open House for
Dr. Lowell Gess.**

When: Saturday July 10th

Time: 2PM to 4PM

**Where: Alexandria United Methodist
Church in the Fellowship Hall.**

Family asks for no gifts please.

All are welcome to stop by and wish
Lowell a happy 100th birthday.



Parish News—Milestone Birthdays

Wes Smith—July 1st 80

Dr. Lowell Gess—July 13th 100

Chuck Holm— July 18th 81

Pat Fearing—July 21st 86

Don Baustian—July 27th 97

Bruce Jordan—July 27th 88

Bernie VanZomerem—July 27th 80

Betty Olson—July 28th 81

Arlue Beheng—July 30th 92

Karen Morgan—July 31st 81

The Finance committee is very happy to report that we ended May (the 5th month of the year) with all bills paid and a positive balance! We thank each and every one of you for your strong support over the last several months and pray that a month from now we will be able to tell you that we ended the first half of the year in positive territory We are still working on the conversion from our previous accounting system to Quick books but hope to report to you soon that the conversion is complete and show you some meaningful reports. Thanks for your patience and support.

Store Cards: Reminder we have store cards available from CUB, Elden's, Fleet Farm, and Garden Center. A portion of your purchase goes back to the church's general fund. We have denominations of 25,\$50 and \$100 dollar cards. Cards are available in the office.



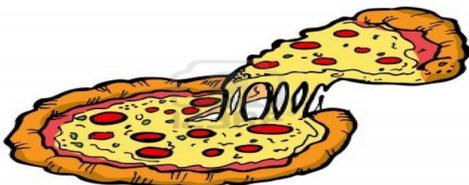
July Pizza Events

July 7—Pizza Night 5:00 PM

**July 14—Pizza Night 5:00 PM
Children's night**

July 21—Pizza Night 5:00 PM

July 28—Pizza Night 5:00 PM



There will be kids selling pop on Wednesday evenings during the pizza events. The money that is raised at the pizza events will be collected and used for a special and fun end of the summer event or events for the Children and youth Ministries of Alexandria United Methodist Church.

Children's Newsletter

July 2021

Happy July Children and parents!

- I am excited to announce that we are selling pop at the pizza oven events during the summer. If you would like to help please let me or Vicki Johnston know so we can get you set up.
- The next thing is that we are having children's nights at the pizza oven as well. Our next one is on July 14th so come and join us for a fun activity.
- The third thing to announce is for this month is that we are planning a movie night on July 28th! It will be at the church and we will have popcorn and other snacks. Please let me know beforehand if you would like to join us so we can plan accordingly for the food. I am pray for each and every one of you!

God Bless, Megan Lenz



Amy Rieke

CYF Team!

Cheryl Taylor

Youth Newsletter

July 2021



Hey Youth and Parents!

We are already hitting July and the weeks just keep going faster! We have a couple of events that will be coming up soon! First, the yfc is selling pop at the Pizza Oven! If you would like to volunteer to help sell, please let me know! The second thing is that we are going to be having a lake day for youth on July 21st! 6:00-8:30 P.M. We will be gathering at City Park and will have pizza and snacks! Please let me know if your youth are going to join so I can plan accordingly. I am praying for you all! God bless, Megan Lenz

Parish Health News: Social Wellness

It has been over a year since we have been “social distancing”. I always thought that was a misnomer as it should really be “physical distancing”. We are social animals and live in-community with others. Healthy relationships are a vital component of health. The health risks from being alone or isolated in one’s life are comparable to the risks associated with cigarette smoking, high blood pressure and obesity.

People who have a strong social network tend to live longer.

The heart and blood pressure of people with healthy relationships respond better to stress.

Strong social networks are associated with a healthier endocrine system and healthier cardiovascular function.

Healthy social networks enhance the immune system’s ability to fight off infectious diseases.

According to Drs. Gay and Kathlyn Hendricks, in their book *Lasting Love: The 5 Secrets of Growing a Vital, Conscious Relationship*, these concepts are necessary in a healthy lasting relationship.

Become a master of commitment. Know what you are committing to, so you can judge whether you are able to follow through.

Make commitments you can stand by. It is important to be honest and empathic to each other’s feeling, hopes and dreams.

Break the cycle of blame and criticism. Own your part in the relationship dynamics.

It can be helpful to shift your focus away from “fixing the other person” and onto more creative expressions resolving conflict thus injecting more positive energy into the relationship.

Become a master of verbal and nonverbal appreciation. It is critical to show appreciation of others for healthy relationships.

How to Grow My Social Network?

Work Out. Join a gym or exercise group to meet new people while exercising.

Take a walk with your pet. Start walking routine after dinner for exercise and to meet neighbors.

Volunteer. Donate some of your time and hard work to charity. You’ll feel good and meet others with similar passions.

Find others who share a hobby, such as hiking, painting, scrapbooking, running, etc.

There are countless ways to grow your social network. Consider your interests and hobbies, and then pursue them. You’re bound to find others with similar passions. Now that the pandemic is slowing

Some Resources for you:

American Psychological Association's Help Center <http://www.apahelpcenter.org/>

Leaving Abuse <http://www.leavingabuse.com/>

Healthyplace.com <http://healthyplace.com/>

WholeFamily.com <http://wholefamily.com/>

Mayo Clinic - Social Support: A Buffer Against Life's Ills http://www.riversideonline.com/health_reference/Behavior-Mental-Health/...

Depression and Anxiety Support Alliance http://www.dbsalliance.org/site/PageServer?pagename=training_home

Conflict Resolution Network <http://www.crnhq.org/>

McGill University - interactive games on self-esteem <http://selfesteemgames.mcgill.ca/games/index.htm>

LeadersDirect.com - self-esteem quiz <http://www.leadersdirect.com/howareyou.html#>

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JULY



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 5:30 PM Finance Committee	2	3
4 9:00 AM Worship Service	5 Office Closed	6 9:30 AM Brush & Palette	7 5 :00 PM Pizza night	8	9	10 Open house for Lowell Gess 2-4PM
11 9:00 AM Worship Service	12	13 9:30 AM Brush & Palette	14 5:30 PM Trustees Meeting 5 :00 PM Pizza/ Children' s night	15 9:00 AM Joy Circle 6:30 PM Church Council	16	17
18 9:00 AM Worship Service	19	20 9:30 AM Brush & Palette	21 5 :00 PM Pizza night 6:00—8:00 PM Youth Lake Day at City park	22	23	24
25 9:00 AM Worship Service	26	27 9:30 AM Brush & Palette	28 5 :00 PM Pizza night Children's movie night at AUMC.	29	30	31

Gary will be on vacation until August 11th.

Alexandria United Methodist

Community News

Space Available: Anyone know or have any groups that need a meeting place? They can meet here at AUMC. If any questions or for available dates call the office.

Fellowship: It is so great to see the smiling faces on Sundays as we enjoy coffee and fellowship outdoors after the service. We will be continuing this practice of coffee outside through the summer as weather permits. Plan to stay just a few minutes or longer if you want and renew friendships that have been distanced for over a year.

July Birthdays

1) Megan Bristow
Gavin Olson
Wes Smith

2) Wyatt Covers

3) 3) Arlyn Cin
Bryson Scribner

4) Rosemary O'Brien

6) Wendy Watts

7) Desiree Galibrath

10) Shannon Determan
Amanda Nomson

11) Jack Nelson

13) Dr. Lowell Gess

16) KoleBert Feda
Sue Rishavy

17) Sarah Swanson

18) Chuck Holm
Will Rieke
Maria Schlopkoehl
Nicolas Witt

19) Andy Vano

20) Spencer Olson

21) Jacob Balcome
Marsha Campbell
Pat Fearing
Aubrey Meyer

22) Bob Olson

25) Rick Christensen

27) Don Baustian

Bruce Jordan
Chloe Loch
Bernie VanZomeran

28) Betty Olson

30) Heidi Becker
Arlue Beheng
Michael Helgeson
Samuel Helgeson
DeeAnn Kraemer

31) Connie Gratias
Karen Morgan

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BIRTHDAY



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Return Service Requested