



Delaware Headwaters Charge

Through God's love and in community with one another, we welcome you!

Summer 2024 Newsletter

Welcome to the Delaware Headwaters Charge!

The Delaware Headwaters Charge has brought together Bloomville UMC, Conesville Chapel, Gilboa UMC, Harpersfield UMC, Hobart UMC, First Presbyterian Church/Stamford UMC, and Township UMC under the direction of Pastor Dawn Richard and Pastor Peggy Laemmel. We are happy to have you as a member or a visitor to our churches. God has been doing wonderful things in our communities . . . we invite you to come, share in the fellowship, take root, and grow with us.



There are two ways to stay informed about our Charge.

- Visit our website at www.delawareheadwatersparish.com
- Follow us on Facebook. Facebook groups can be found by searching for
 - *Bloomville United Methodist Church*
 - *Delaware Headwaters Charge*
 - *Hobart United Methodist Church*
 - *Angels' Attic*
 - *Conesville UMC-Conesville*
 - *Harpersfield United Methodist Church*

Pastor Contact Information

Pastor Dawn Richards

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Our wonderful thrift store run by the Hobart United Methodist Women in Faith is now open. Thank you for donating, shopping and helping. Please drop off your treasures any Thursday or Saturday during our open hours. Emergency requests 607-538-9691. **Volunteers are desperately needed.**

Soup's On!



The Missions and Ministry Team has decided that Soup's On will continue as a joint effort by all the churches in the Charge. Please watch the bulletins or our Facebook pages or the website for announcements.

Office Hours

Delaware Headwaters Charge
Office Hours with
Pastor Peggy and Alice Tucker
9-3pm, Thursdays
at Hobart UMC
607-538-9691

Or you may contact the Pastors
directly for their assistance

Subject to change as needed

Save the Date

Mountain Beacon Outdoor Worship and
Potluck at Minekill State Park July 21, 2024
at 10am. **No other services that day.**

Blessing of the Animals at Tractor Supply
in Stamford, Sept 22nd

Vacation Bible School



Vacation Bible School is coming in August 2024

Bloomville UMC will once again have
VBS this summer on Aug. 5-9, 5:30-
8pm. More information coming soon.

Mission & Ministry

We invite you to explore the many ongoing ministry and mission opportunities at each of our churches! Meet, learn, serve God and our communities in many ways! Each church has unique opportunities to fulfill your call to ministry.

For more information about support available, please contact Pastor Dawn or Pastor Peggy.

If you are in need of pastoral services or interested in scheduling a baptism or joining the church, please contact one of the pastors.

A Word From Pastor Dawn

Community Outdoor Worship at Minekill State Park

On July 21 st at 10a, all of our churches are encouraged to come to the Middle Pavilion of Minekill State Park for worship. It is a beautiful setting and it is awesome to worship together.

We will not have regular worship that day at the churches, instead, we will join together with the community and the churches of the Mountain Beacon Parish for worship and a potluck.

The Pavilion is handicap accessible and has bathrooms close by. Worship will be led by Mike Richards, Heather Walts, Gigi and Vance Wetmore. Speakers are Janine Ware and Russ Bedford. Our youth group will be performing a skit. There will also be a special children's activity. Everyone is encouraged to bring a potluck dish to share.

Growing Closer to God Through Bible Study

Participants in our Lenten and after Easter Bible study were able to learn about the Last Parables of Jesus, and the types of Psalms. We had great discussion as well as questions designed to help us grow closer to God. We will take the summer off and then have a Bible Study in the Fall. We welcome suggestions on what you would like to learn about as well as the best times, locations and days of the week!!!

Soup's On

If you have not yet had an opportunity to come to a Soup's On, we invite you to come and participate. Everyone is encouraged to bring a potluck dish to share if they want. We have different churches hosting the event at different locations. The food and fellowship has been wonderful and it is a great opportunity to meet some of the folks in our communities that don't attend church. The donations have gone to a variety of missions. June 1st will be hosted by Harpersfield and held at Hobart from 4-6:30p. Donations will go toward the Conesville Food Pantry. There will not be one in July because of the holiday. Then Gilboa will host on August 3rd at Stamford Presbyterian church. Please come and invite others from your community to join us!

Blessing of the Animals

Our Mountain Beacon Parish is hosting a Blessing of the Animals on Sept. 22nd from 12-3p at the Stamford Tractor Supply parking lot. This is a mission event for all the communities. We hope that you will come and hang out, get your pet blessed and greet others who come. Tractor Supply is assisting with publicity as well as providing free treats and toys. We will also have a pamphlet listing all the churches and their worship service times that we will give out. This is a great way to interact with community folks!

A Word from the Heart.....

I continue to thank God every day for the blessing and privilege of serving God with all of you.

We have had some growing pains as we have adjusted to the new Charge and the Mountain Beacon Parish, but hopefully we are growing into these changes. I wanted to challenge us to think for a few moments about growth...after all, it is Spring and we are seeing the growth of things all around us. But I want to think about spiritual growth. Too often churches focus on growth of membership, getting more people in the pews. But what is MORE important to God than numbers in the pews, is your heart and soul. What is drawing you closer in relationship to God? What is helping you understand more about God's calling on your life? What is helping you expand in your love and care of others? If you don't feel that our present ministries are not helping with this, what do you think would help? Please email me: dawnmarie.richards@yahoo.com or call me: 405-808-4407, with suggestions. Your spiritual growth is my top priority! Blessings in this season of growth!

Pastor Dawn

News from Pastor Peggy

Greeting to Everyone in the name of Jesus,

I can't believe that almost a year has gone by since Michael and I have moved here. We've had so much fun learning about the area and about the churches that I serve. I know that it's been a bit confusing for all of us as I learned about your different customs and cultures, what you like and don't like to do, and what is possible and not possible because of the circumstances of our individual churches. Thank you all for being so patient with me as I tried to find a best rhythm that would serve you.

I look back at the great holidays, like Christmas & Easter; the events, like Township's 200th and the United Women of Faith meetings; and new things that we've tried, like Soup's On, Youth Group, and the Blessing of the Animals, and I am grateful that our congregations want to be involved and express the love of Christ in our communities. I'm looking forward to the year to come and further chances to get to know all of you better and to help you find your meaning of being followers of Jesus in the world.

Many, Many Blessings for our appointment year 2024-2025, *Pastor Peg Laemmel*

Annual Township UMC Picnic: July 28, 12 noon

Every year, on the last Sunday of July, Township UMC holds a community picnic. It's a wonderful event that all the local residents participate in, and anyone else is invited to attend. If you would like to come, please consider bringing something to share – you don't need to be fancy, a bottle of ice-tea or a box of cookies is fine. The important thing is the good fellowship that's to be had by all. We are looking forward to seeing you.



United Women of Faith

You all might be used hearing about the organization called The United Methodist Women. So, who are the United Women of Faith? Well, the UMW decided to change their name to be more inclusive of all the women in our organization who were NOT Methodist, but who were still participating. This is progress! We want to abide by our motto of Open Hearts, Open Minds, and Open Doors, by letting all people of faith find a home with us and Jesus.

We have been having a lot of fun being hosted by members at houses. We have been sharing what we have been reading on the UWF reading list, and listening to programs of how we can improve our spiritual connections and live better lives.

UWF Catskill-Hudson District Day Apart: On June 15, Saturday, 9:00 am – 1:30 pm, the Hobart church will host the District UWF at the Hobart Church. The program will include a nature walk, a time of worship, and a spiritual program. Breakfast will be provided but all participants are asked to bring their own lunch. If you would like to join us, please contact Pastor Peg or Pastor Dawn or call the Hobart Church, 607-538-9691, and leave a message.

Youth Group: Beginning in fall we were able to organize a Youth Group for youth 6th grade and above. We have been meeting at the Bloomville church, on the 3rd Saturday of every month, from 5 – 7 pm. We begin with dinner and then move on to a social hour. This year we have been meeting at the church, but we were able to spend one Saturday at one of our local little league games. Next year we are planning to have some away events, like a retreat or a trip to Oneonta to roller-skate or see a movie. If you know of anyone who would like to join please have them contact Pastor Peg or Pastor Dawn, or call the Hobart Church, 607-538-9691, and leave a message.



General Conference Legislative Recap

ABOUT 2024 GENERAL CONFERENCE

General Conference is the top lawmaking assembly of The United Methodist Church and the only entity that speaks for the denomination. It convenes every four years, with delegates from the denomination's regions around the world.

MAJOR ACTION

Regionalization Petitions Approved

- Delegates approved legislation that would restructure the denomination to be more contextual in different regions served by the church. Bishop Tracy S. Malone, president of the Council of Bishops, said that "Regionalization would enable the church to be contextual in ministry while remaining connected around the mission of the church and the essentials of the faith." It would enable the church to "honor who we are as a worldwide denomination."
- Regionalization represents an effort to put the church's different geographical regions on equal footing and to make the General Conference less U.S.-centric. The current central conferences and the U.S. would become regional conferences, with the same authority to pass legislation for greater missional impact.
- Delegates also approved the continuation of work on a General Book of Discipline that would be brought to the next regular session of General Conference.
- The regionalization legislation involves an amendment to the church's constitution. This would have to be approved by at least two-thirds of the total votes cast across all annual conferences worldwide in order for much of the regionalization legislation to take effect. If they receive the necessary

number of votes, the results would be announced by the United Methodist Council of Bishops. The regionalization constitutional amendment is to be sent out 30 days after the adjournment of General Conference, which means some annual conferences could be voting on the amendment this year.

- Regionalization stands as distinct from the other work of General Conference. It had been in development for many years, with the Standing Committee on Central Conference Matters and the Connectional Table collaborating on the petitions that were submitted. It received support from delegates from every region.

MAJOR ACTION

Removal of Restrictive Language Related to LGBTQ People

The General Conference voted by overwhelming majorities to remove from the United Methodist Book of Discipline discriminatory language and bans related to ministry by, with and for “self-avowed practicing” gay and lesbian people. Actions included:

- Removal of the language that the “practice of homosexuality ... is incompatible with Christian teaching.”
- Removal of the ban on the ordination and appointment of “self-avowed practicing homosexual” clergy.
- Removal of language that made the ordination of “self-avowed practicing homosexual” clergy and the performance of same-sex weddings chargeable offenses.
- Removal of mandatory minimum penalties for clergy holding same-sex weddings.
- Removal of a prohibition against using United Methodist funds to support groups, activities and causes that promote the acceptance of homosexuality.
- Removal of the requirement that the General Council on Finance and

Administration, the denomination’s finance agency, enforce the funding ban. Instead, the provision says the agency should ensure that church funds do not go to anything that rejects LGBTQ persons or limits the response to the HIV epidemic.

- Allowance for all clergy in good standing to be appointed across annual conference lines when their bishop can’t locate an appointment in their conference.

As they have traditionally done, conference bishops and their cabinets will consult with clergy and staff-parish relations committees to find the best appointments for both the local church and the pastor.

These changes bring the Book of Discipline back to a neutral place where one group is not singled out for discrimination. It holds space for differing opinions within The United Methodist Church by avoiding broad mandates.

MAJOR ACTION

Apportionment Percentage Decreased

In an effort to balance funding important connectional ministries through the general church budget and supporting the local church during financial challenges due to the pandemic and disaffiliation, delegates approved a compromise regarding apportionments. Conferences will shift from their current base rate of 3.29% to a base rate of 2.6% for 2025 and 2026. Then, if the apportionment collection rate is 90% or higher in those years, the base rate will increase to 2.9% for 2027 and 2028.

MAJOR ACTION

Budget Approved

Delegates approved a 2025-2028 budget of \$373.4 million. That total is contingent on collection rates being at 90% or more for the next two years. If giving is below that percentage, the budget bottom line will be \$353.6 million. The total approved is significantly smaller than the budget approved by the 2016 General Conference. Annual conferences will be asked to pay less in apportionments.

MAJOR ACTION

Adoption of Revised Social Principles

Delegates approved the first overhaul of the denomination's Social Principles in nearly 50 years. The Social Principles, contained in both the Book of Discipline and Book of Resolutions, are statements that reflect official United Methodist teachings on a wide range of topics. They are not church law but are intended to inform United Methodist witness on issues of the day with a biblical foundation. The 2012 General Conference approved revising the Social Principles, setting in motion a process that involved input from people around the world, coordinated by the General Board of Church and Society. In addition to the language changes regarding human sexuality and inclusiveness, the Social Principles address the importance of advocating for human dignity and combating racism and other threats, caring for creation and the environment, standing against social ills, and supporting healthy community in all its forms, including economic, social and political.

MAJOR ACTION

Disaffiliation Policy Ended, Re-affiliation Measure

Approved

Delegates removed Paragraph 2553 from the Book of Discipline, ending the disaffiliation policy that was added by the special 2019 General Conference. They also required annual conferences affected by disaffiliation to develop grace-filled policies for reaffiliation of churches that want to rejoin the denomination.

ADDITIONAL MAJOR ACTIONS

Delegates also:

- Approved a constitutional amendment addressing the denomination's commitment to eradicating racism.
- Approved an apology to victims and survivors of sexual misconduct by clergy and lay leaders in the church. The resolution also encourages the reporting of sexual abuse and states that the abuse of power will not be tolerated in the church. Delegates also observed Thursdays in Black in recognition of

violence that is perpetrated against women around the world.

- Approved an amendment to include "gender" and "ability" among the attributes that should not impede full participation in the life of the congregation.
- Approved an apology for the role of Methodists in the overthrow of the kingdom of Hawaii in 1893.
- Approved allowing deacons to preside at the sacraments "when contextually appropriate." The new language further states: "Presiding at the celebration of the sacraments involves taking responsibility to lead the gathered community in celebrating baptism and Holy Communion."
- Approved updating jurisdictional young people's ministries, including changing the Division on Ministries with Young People to the Young People's Connectional Network.
- Approved a new retirement plan for U.S. clergy, called Compass, which would be a defined contribution plan similar to what many corporate employers provide. The plan takes effect in 2026.
- Approved a full communion agreement with the Episcopal Church. If the Episcopal Church affirms the agreement, it will mean the denominations recognize each other as the "one, holy, catholic and apostolic church in which the Gospel is rightly preached and taught."
- Approved adding two bishops for Africa, for a total of 15, and set the number of U.S. bishops at 32 – a decrease from the 39 active bishops and one retired bishop currently serving episcopal areas in the U.S.
- Adopted a new Book of Resolutions, including readopting many resolutions and approving new ones, addressing topics such as climate change, rights of farm workers in the U.S., the observance of the Children's Sabbath, caring for Native people and opposition to racial profiling.

- Adopted a resolution condemning racial-ethnic discrimination and gender-based violence against Asian Americans.
- Approved a resolution calling on United Methodist institutions not to invest in the government bonds of countries that have been cited by the U.N. Security Council or the International Criminal Court for prolonged military occupations.
- Approved a motion to allow four Eurasian conferences to leave the denomination and form an autonomous church.
- Celebrated the impact of Africa University and milestone anniversaries – the 200th anniversary of Methodist mission, the 100th anniversary of the United Methodist Building in Washington, D.C., and the 80th anniversary of the United Methodist Committee on Relief.
- Elected a new Judicial Council, the denomination's top court, and filled positions on the Commission on the General Conference, University Senate, general boards and agencies of the church and other entities, as well as trustees to John Street United Methodist Church in New York, the oldest continuously operating Methodist church in the United States.

Alain & Katherine Niles' Update

Dear Friends,

Recently some of my Togolese friends were gathered talking about the weather when my friend in his 40s said he believed this has been the hottest hot season he remembers. All the men agreed and then a man in his late 60s said this has been the hottest hot season since he was born. Temperatures reaching 110 degrees day after day. So.... I think I can accurately say, it's hot. But in the midst of the heat, God is at work in our small corner of the world. Let me share

with you some news in order that you might be encouraged to keep praying for the ministry here.

50th ANNIVERSARY

Last month we drove to the capital of Togo to attend our mission's 50th anniversary in Togo. Over 3500 people attended an all-day event to celebrate God's faithfulness. It was encouraging to see the unity and the thousands of lives impacted by the gospel which was taught and lived out by missionaries over the last 5 decades. God continues to be at work and we are grateful to be a part of the hospital which provides a huge platform for connecting with the unreached.

HOSPITAL OF HOPE

An elderly patient came to my clinic room from northern Burkina Faso with hypertensive urgency. His blood pressure was very high after a recent stroke. We were able to control his pressure and send him out on medications. However, as you may know, some drugs can cause severe side effects. This patient was not far from Mango when he began to develop angioedema (swelling of the tongue and lips), a reaction from a drug he received. They turned around and rushed back to the hospital. By the time he came in to the ER he had almost lost his airway; our team jumped into action, performed an emergency tracheostomy and saved his life. Two weeks later, all healed, tracheostomy tube removed, blood pressure managed, we sent him on his way rejoicing at how God had spared his life. He was so thankful for the care he received. He is a prominent Muslim leader in his area. I know God had him stay with us a little longer so that we could share with him and pray for him.

Bidima is a man I wish you could meet. He came to our hospital in 2015 septic with a distended abdomen due to a typhoid perforation and very close to death. At the time, our colleague Todd Dekryger performed an emergency surgery on him and saved his life. The man had a long recovery but was so

grateful for his care. When he left, he decided he would become a living advertisement for the hospital. He began bringing patients to the hospital one by one. To date, he has now brought 602 patients (and according to him, only 3 have died). I see him almost weekly and he is a reminder of the impact our hospital is having on the lives of our Muslim friends. Praying we can continue to impact his life with the gospel.

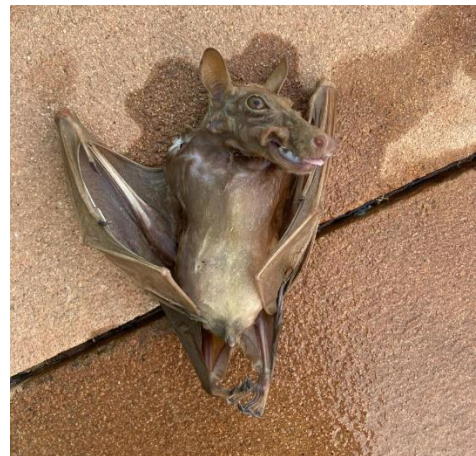
LIVING WAX MUSEUM

Katherine and the kids are in the 4th quarter of their school year. A big highlight and tradition at the missionary kid school is to put on a living wax museum. This year Caleb was David Livingstone and Mia-Joy was Mary Slessor. We are thankful that our kids are doing so well in school and that they have such great friends.

As always, thanks for praying for our family and for the ministry in Mango,
Alain, Katherine, Camille, Caleb, and Mia-Joy

YOU LIKE ANIMALS?

Our kids are always finding local exotic bugs and animals from snakes to strange insects. I, on the other hand, keep finding dead bats in the pool. These aren't your typical bats; they are African Fruit bats. Not the friendliest looking animals, but at least he smiled when I took his picture.



10 Lessons I Want to Instill in My Kids

- If you made a mistake, apologize.
- If you're thankful, show it.
- If you're confused, ask questions.
- If you learn something, teach others.
- If you're stuck, ask for help.
- If you're wrong, fess up.
- If you love someone, tell them.
- If you trip, get back up.
- If someone needs help, help them.
- If you see wrong, take a stance.

Raising Teens Today

till You are done mixin', and probably it will be something even better than biscuits. Amen."

Within that prayer there is great wisdom for all when it comes to complicated situations like we are experiencing in the world today. Stay strong, my friends, because our LORD is mixing several things that we don't really care for, but something even better is going to come when HE is done with it. AMEN

Do you think that is what Paul is talking about in Romans 8:28. . . *"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."*

THE OLD FARMER AND THE PRAYER

OF HIS WORD...

There once was a preacher that was invited to attend a men's breakfast at the local church. As they all set down, the visiting preacher asks one of the impressive older farmers if he would say grace before they ate.

The old farmer stood, everyone bowed their heads and the old farmer began. He said, "Lord, I hate buttermilk." The preacher opened one eye and wondered to himself where this was going.

Then the farmer loudly proclaimed, "Lord, I hate lard!" Now the preacher was overly worried.

However without missing a beat, the farmer prayed on, "And Lord, you know I don't care much for raw white flour."

Just as the preacher was ready to stand and stop everything, the farmer continued. "But Lord, when you mix 'em all together and bake 'em up, I do love fresh biscuits. So lord, when things come up we don't like, when life gets hard, when we just don't understand what you are sayin' to us, we just need to relax and wait

Important Dates

- * **June 7,8,9** Festival of Women Writers, Hobart
- * **June 7-9**, NY Annual Conference, Stamford, CT
- * **June 8 & 9**, Meredith Dairy Fest, 10-3pm
- * **June 9 - Sept. 26**, Stamford Summer Concert Series, stamfordnymusic@gmail.com
- * **June 10**, Hobart UMC, Council, 4:30pm
- * **June 10**, Worship team meeting via ZOOM, 6pm
- * **June 11-23**, Pastor Dawn on vacation
- * **June 15**, UWF District Day Apart, Hobart UMC, 9-1:30pm
- * **June 15**, Kortright Town Wide Lawn Sale Day, 9-4pm
- * **June 16**, Friends of Music, 1st Pres. Church, Stamford, 3-5pm
- * **July 13**, DHC Council meeting, Hobart UMC, 10am
- * **June 22**, Youth Group, 5-7pm
- * **June 24-28**, Pastor Peg's staycation
- * **June 25**, Stam. Pres. potluck and Session meeting 3-6pm
- * **June 25**, Stamford CS Baccalaureated at Harpersfield, 7pm
- * **July 13**, DHC, Council meeting, Hobart UMC, 10am
- * **July 21**, Minekill Service, 10-1pm
- * **July 21**, Friends of Music, 1st Pres. Church, Stamford, 3-5pm
- * **July 28**, Township Community Picnic, 12pm
- * **Aug. 5-9**, VBS at Bloomville UMC
- * **Aug. 8-17**, Pastor Peg's vacation
- * **Aug. 10**, Stamford Yard Sale Day, 8-4pm

- * **Aug. 12-17**, Delaware County Fair, Walton, NY
- * **Aug. 18**, Friends of Music, 1st Pres. Church,
Stamford, 3-5pm
- * **Aug. 19**, MB Parish meeting on ZOOM, 6pm
- * **Aug. 24**, Hobart Sausage & Brew Fest, 1-7pm
- * **Aug. 28**, SPRC meeting @ Hobart, 6pm
- * **Sept. 15**, Friends of Music, 1st Pres. Church,
Stamford, 3-5pm
- * **Sept. 22**, Blessing of the Animals, Stamford Tractor
Supply
- * **Oct. 6**, Stamford Scarecrow Festival
- * **Oct. 20**, Friends of Music, 1st Pres. Church,
Stamford, 3-5pm
- * **Nov. 17**, Friends of Music, 1st Pres. Church,
Stamford, 3-5pm
- * **Dec. 1**, Friends of Music, 1st Pres. Church,
Stamford, 3-5pm