



# Delaware Headwaters Charge

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

## Spring 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](http://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 closed. Thank you for donating, shopping and helping. Please keep all your treasures and drop them off in May. Emergency requests 607-538-9691

## 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 our Facebook pages or the website for announcements.



**Township UMC will be pausing for the winter after January 14<sup>th</sup> service and reopening March 24, 2024**

## *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.

## *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*



# *From Pastor Dawn*

## **Soup's On Ministry**

The Mountain Beacon Parish composed of the Delaware Headwaters Charge, Jefferson, North Blenheim and West Fulton have been hard at work with the Soup's On Ministry. Offered once a month at both the Senior Living Center and at various churches across the Mountain Beacon Parish, we are teaching healthy eating (Senior Living) and feeding people.

The amazing women in the picture below have been serving up healthy soup at the Senior Living and teaching them about healthy types of soups. Our churches have rotated providing meals at the various churches on the first Saturday of the month from 4-7p. If you want to participate in this ministry, please let your pastors know!



## **A Word from the Heart...**

For Christmas, I received a hydroponics growing kit which included six herbs. I planted them the first week of January and have already had to put four in pots. Eagerly, I looked at them growing each week and began using them in cooking after about three weeks. I love the fact that despite the winter, I was actually growing and using fresh herbs!

I love fresh fruits, herbs and vegetables. In the dead of winter, these signs of growing things bring hope...hope that soon Spring will come and we will be able to see the signs of growth all around us.

Our spiritual journeys can be like winter. Sometimes we are barren and dormant in our faith. We struggle to find hope and to grow closer to God. We see what is happening in the world, we may struggle financially, we may have loved ones going through crisis or loss and that can be overwhelming.

Easter is a time of hope. It reminds us that even in the bleakest of situations like Jesus' crucifixion, there will also be resurrection. Resurrection moments, new life moments, new hope moments are all around us. The birth of a new child, success of a grandchild in school or work, kind people helping us with things, a phone call at a difficult moment, growing things...so many ways we receive hope and "new life". But we have to be open to seeing these resurrection moments. So, look around my friends. Where can you find new life, resurrection? And how might you be the resurrection moment to someone else?

Blessings, Pastor Dawn

## **Prayer Walk Ministry**

Each Wednesday, people from the community and our churches join us for our Prayer Walks. We usually walk a small section of the Catskill Scenic Trail, beginning in different areas. To begin the walk, we lift up prayers for each other and the community. Then we begin walking and sharing about what is going on in our lives. Somewhere along the way, we stop and a scripture is read followed by a reflection question to discuss as we walk. We usually have 2 to 3 scriptures that we read and reflect on as we walk. When we are finished, we lift up things we are grateful for, to God. Between the scenery, the walking and the fellowship I always feel uplifted at the end of the walk. The picture below was taking on the South Gilboa section of the trail.

If this sounds like something you would enjoy, please come and join us!



# Vacation Bible School is coming in August 2024

Bloomville UMC will once again have VBS this summer on Aug. 5-9. Volunteers are needed to make this another successful event for the children. More information coming soon.

### Senior Living Worship Ministry

The first and third Tuesdays of the month at 3p, Pastor Peg and I offer worship at the Senior Living Center in Stamford. We average between 10-20 people and it is one of the highlights of my month. Some of the people from our churches come and help bring the residents to the worship area. Because we have several residents who are members of our churches, it is a wonderful opportunity to visit with them. It is a delight to get to know these wise and wonderful seniors as well as a chance during the week to worship. If you are interested in helping with this ministry, please talk to your pastors!

### Lent Bible Study

Our sermon series for Lent, The Last Parables of Jesus, is also the basis for our Bible Study, which takes place at 10a and 6p on Mondays. We have had lively discussion on what we heard in the sermon, and the in-depth study of the parable that was preached on that Thursday/Sunday. If you are interested in an ongoing Bible study or another short term Bible study, please talk to your pastors!

### Save the Date.....

- Mountain Beacon Outdoor Worship and Potluck at Minekill State Park July 21, 2024 at 10a.
- Blessing of the Animals at Tractor Supply in Stamford, Sept 22<sup>nd</sup>



## Love. Grow. Serve.

Sunday School  
Youth Group

Thank you to EVERYONE who makes our Youth Programs so successful.  
We appreciate your willingness to try new things.  
We appreciate your love of church and youth.  
We appreciate your generosity and giftedness.  
We appreciate your faith and willingness to nurture.  
We appreciate your leadership and passion.  
And most of all, we appreciate you!

# Save the Date

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# *From Pastor Peggy*

## **Youth Group**

**For all interested youth 6<sup>th</sup> – 12 grade.**

Grace and Peace Everyone,

I can't believe that it's been eight months since Michael and I moved to the area. It's gone by so quickly, but we've been having a lot of good fun and fellowship with all the new churches. Thank you everyone for the wonderful Christmas celebrations and all the other wonderful events like Soup's On and the Kid's Winter Arts Fair.

Now we are in the middle of Lent and approaching Easter. To me Lent is a special time. When I was a kid, I didn't like Lent because you were supposed to give up something that you liked, like chocolate. But as I got older, I realized that it's a chance for all of us to slow down a bit and really look at what is important in our lives. I decided that what I should be giving up is something that gets in the way of connecting with God. If chocolate or sugar is that something and it makes you healthier and brings you closer to God then go ahead and give it up. On the other side of the coin, I think that this is a chance for us to also add something that will bring us closer to God. So if you add 10 minutes of prayer, journaling, or bible reading everyday, or even decide to go to bed 30 minutes earlier so that you will have more energy, that's a positive practice to add to your life.

Lent is also a chance for us to open ourselves up to the miracle of Easter. The resurrection happened when Jesus gave up his life for our sins and to give us proof positive that there was a life beyond the one that we live in now. I always feel that in giving up the bad and bringing on the good, is a way for us to prepare for our eternal lives in Christ and God's love. I pray that all of us will be able to let go of what hinders us and take on something that will sustain us. I'm looking forward to seeing you all on Easter morning when we celebrate the new world that Christ is leading us into.

Pastor Peg

On January 20<sup>th</sup> Bloomville had our first Youth Group gathering. After some planning we decided that our group is going to meet the third Saturday of every month, 5-7 with dinner and an activity. But if we do an activity outside the church, we'll change the time to suit what we'll be doing. Some of the activities our youth would like to do: Hiking, Board Game night, Movie Night, Barbeque and Park Day, Go to an Athletic Event, Skiing & Ice Skating, Roller Skating & Laser Tag in Oneonta, a Church Sleepover, Sledding, Going on a Youth Group Retreat NYAC or Our Own, a Trip to United Nations, a Bicycle trip (Maybe Rail trail), Camping Out or maybe a Sleep Over @ Church.

After we put together this list we decided to have a Board Game Night in February. We will be meeting again on Saturday, March 16. Details to be announced since we are seeing if we can schedule an event to go to. All youth from our community are invited to come and join, you don't need to be a member of our church.

## **VBS**

It's never too early to start to plan for Vacation Bible School. Last year our theme was Learning How to Fly with God. This year our theme will be Sports. Dates to be announced soon, but keep your calendars free for around the beginning of August. We hope you see you all there.

## **United Women of Faith**

### **(United Methodist Women)**

The UWF have been busy with our fellowship and our mission work. In December Dorothy Wetmore hosted a lovely Christmas gathering at her house where we admired her collection of angels and talked about our favorite Christmas moments over the years. Thank you Dorothy for the lovely dessert that you provided.

In January, Pastor Dawn introduced us to the UMF reading program. This is a list of books designed to provide new outlooks and discussions that will strengthen our faith. We have decided that each month someone will read a book from the list that they are

interested in and present it to the rest of the group at our meetings. Karen Ogborn will present in March, Pastor Peg in April, and Betty Reed in May.

In February, Pastor Peg, in honor of Valentine's Day, brought in some discussion cards that her daughter had recommended. The questions were fun like, "What was your favorite film as a child?" We had to guess the answers for other people and laughed a lot at some of the information that was given.

We've also been continuing with our monthly mission. For December we collected mittens and gloves for the local food banks and for January, toothpaste and toothbrushes. For February and March, we are collecting soup and also healthy snacks for our first responders.

The UWF meets on the second Wednesday of every month at 2:00. The location skips around as people host. All ladies welcome to our gatherings, and if you need a ride Pastor Peg will be happy to drive you. Below is our schedule for the rest of the year.

March 13: Hobart Coffee Hour Rm

April 10: Dorothy Wetmore's House, Hobart

May 8: Betty Reed's House, Delhi

June 12: Cathy Rappleyea's Lake House,  
Unadilla, NY

### **Kid's Winter Art's Festival**

On January 27, the Delaware Headwater's Parish held their first Winter Art's Festival for students ages K-12. The Stamford Church hosted the event, and from 12 – 3 pm the students were able to have a healthy lunch and then participate in Music, Crafting, Yoga, and Making and tasting a healthy snack. The kids who participated had a lot of fun. Thank you to all those who helped us to set-up, teach, and clean-up afterwards.

We hope to repeat the event next year.

### **A Bit of History**

When my mother was given the post of church historian at Asbury UMC in Croton, NY (my hometown church) she decided that she was going to clean out and reorganize all those old files. In one file she found an old *Hobart*

*Church Cookbook*, which had been compiled by the Lady's Society, which became the United Methodist Women, and is now the United Women of Faith.

There is no publishing date on our Hobart cookbook, but the Minister, Rev. Robert J. Harrison (1921-1923) wrote a brief poem which is at the beginning of the book. I am assuming from that, and the style of printing and book construction, that these are the approximate years it was produced.

We know that both churches had active women's groups. (And both women's groups are still active.) The Asbury Ladies have records of making and distributing Clam Chowder (A recipe included in the 1894 Asbury cookbook) on election day in the 1930's and '40's so that mothers could take the time to go and vote and not have to worry about cooking supper in the age of slower cars and horse and buggies. It's very possible that a member of Asbury and a member of Hobart, through our conference's connectional ministry, became friends and exchanged cookbooks, which is how a copy probably ended up in Croton.

Below is a charming commentary printed at the beginning of the *Conserves* section. In honor of Valentine's Day, I would like to share it with you. (All grammar is as written.) The title of the piece is *How to Preserve a Husband*, but in our modern era, when men and women both cook and marital norms have changed, we can substitute *Husband* for *Spouse*.

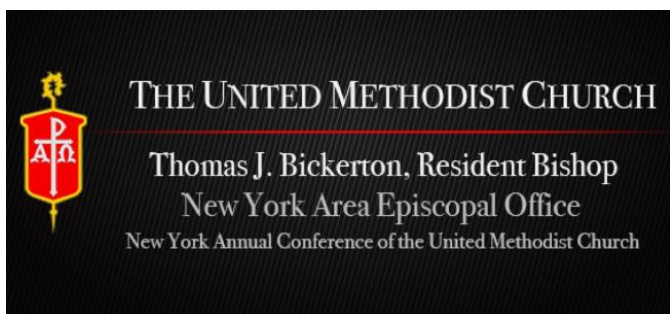
How to Preserve a Husband (Spouse)

Select with care, taking only varieties that have been reared in a pure moral atmosphere. Do not choose too young or too old. When once selected never reconsider your decision, but devote your entire thoughts to preparation for domestic use. Great care should be taken that they are never in hot water, or kept in a pickle,

as this will in time sour even the best. Should the varieties necessarily be poor, they may be kept tender, sweet, and good by adding a little of the spice of life, when well sweetened with smiles and flavored with kisses – to taste. To make more attractive garnish with patience, then wrap in a mantle of charity, and keep near the fire of domestic devotion. Serve with strawberries and cream. When thus prepared they will keep for years.

– Aunt Mary

Michael and I are planning on trying out some of the recipes and modernizing them for future newsletters. – Pastor Peg



Dear Administrative Councils,

*“Just as you excel in everything ... see also that you excel in the grace of giving.”*  
2 Corinthians 8:7

In our recent cabinet meeting, we have reviewed the giving of each of our local churches for the last year and noted that your church paid 100% of your connectional apportionments last year. As your bishop, I’m especially proud of the commitment you have to each other and the way in which you demonstrate your commitment through your payment of Connectional Apportionments. I am writing today to thank you for that commitment. It has not gone unnoticed and, I know, is a result of intentional hard work on your part.

Our United Methodist Book of Discipline clearly states that paying your Connectional Apportionments is every local church’s “first benevolent responsibility.” Your faithfulness on your giving to our

apportionments, you are demonstrating that you are a partner in ministry with the New York Annual Conference. I’m proud to write and acknowledge your faithfulness not only to the New York Annual Conference, and not only to the broader connection of The United Methodist Church, but also to the “kingdom work” that God has called us to as faithful disciples.

Thank you so very much for your hard work and faithfulness. It is greatly appreciated

God is faithful! Faithful is also what God is asking us to be. In the book of II Corinthians, Paul recounts the extreme faithfulness of the church in Macedonia even in the midst of what Paul described as a severe ordeal in the midst of extreme poverty. They were faithful and joyful as they gave themselves to God and to one another. When they did, they gave beyond what the Bible says was their ability to give at all.

God changed the world through them. As we are faithful, I believe God will once again change the world, . . . through us!

Thank you once again for your faithfulness on your Conference Apportionments. I deeply appreciate it.

The Journey Continues, . . .  
Thomas J. Bickerton  
Resident Bishop

## *On Our Prayer List*

*Lord, You invite all who are burdened to come to you. Allow your healing hand to heal those in our hearts. Touch their souls with Your compassion for others. Touch their hearts with Your courage and infinite love for all. Touch their minds with Your wisdom, that their mouth may always proclaim Your praise. Teach them to reach out to You in their need, and help them to lead others to You by example. Most loving heart of Jesus, bring them health in body and spirit that they may serve You with all their strength. Touch gently the lives which You have created, now and forever. Amen*



## **Alain & Katherine Niles' Update**

Dear Friends,

Lots to share with you about the last few months of ministry at the Hospital of Hope and some upcoming events.

God is at work in our hot, dusty region and we hope this can encourage you as you pray for the work here.

Let's start with the **Hospital of Hope Update!** In December we received our newest surgical resident coming to us from Cameroon. We are thankful for the PAACS program (Pan African Academy of Christian Surgeons) and for our surgeons pouring into the lives of these residents as we seek to train future African surgeons. I don't participate in their training, but I get to work with them daily and do ministry with them. On the medical side, we have fewer career doctors, so we have recently hired a few more Togolese doctors to join our ranks and help run the hospital. This will be helpful in the busy season, but for now, requires a lot of work on our staff's part to get these doctors up to the quality standards we expect at our hospital. Pray for a unified team!

We have had some very difficult cases recently, both in complexity and in the emotional weight of caring for them up until their death. I was running our emergency room one day this month when a young pregnant woman came in after ingesting insecticide in order to end her life. She immediately regretted her decision and started drinking red palm oil to induce vomiting. When I began caring for her, she was stable despite kidney damage, but over the next few days began to face complications. She ultimately lost her pregnancy, eroded her esophagus, went into respiratory distress and eventually died. It was

heartbreaking to watch her husband by her side and feel the family's pain.

**Family Update** We are healthy and doing well as a family. Last month we had a wonderful trip to Senegal to celebrate with the entire Niles family their parents 50th wedding anniversary, over 45 years in France and their recent retirement. We got to surf and hang out with cousins! We also were able to go to Dakar, the capital of Senegal and spend time with Katherine's brother and family who serve at the embassy. We love our family and had a much-needed break in the most western part of Africa.

**Latest Crisis** There's always some sort of challenge that takes up our time and stretches our faith. The last month was WATER and the lack of it. The pumps in town that pump the water from the river to our homes broke and we went 2 weeks without water to our house. When it finally came on, it was for short intervals a few times a day. Slowly the water is becoming more consistent, but it is still a major challenge, especially for the hospital. The hospital has had to truck in all of its water from the river 3-4 times a day. At our house, I was able to build a water tower and fill a 2000-liter tank to help provide us with more reserves. We finally feel like we can have a shower and maybe do some laundry. Pray for the pumps to get fixed properly and for the new tanker truck that was purchased for the hospital to reduce the number of trips each day.

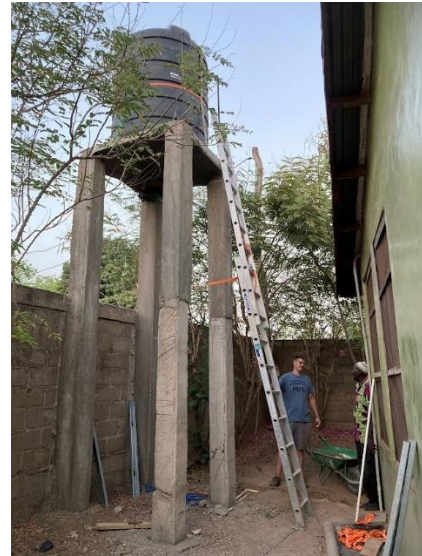
**House Church** We continue to invest our time alongside another Togolese family in leading a small house church in the heart of town. We meet in various people's homes on Sundays. Usually sitting on the ground, under trees, in courtyards or wherever we can fit everyone. We have about 20 regular attendees and then we also pickup patients from our hospital who are getting long term care and have come to faith recently. So, we usually are around 30 people

packed into the homes for worship and studying God's Word. I split the teaching with my colleague, Yaovi, and we are currently studying Thessalonians. When I teach, I am translated into Moba, Gangam and Tchokossi so that everyone understands in their heart language. The group is growing, maturing and we are now looking to someday get a location of our own in town. Pray for this group and for God to do great things through these believers this year.

**Upcoming Events** -Camille will be heading to a youth retreat in the south of Togo. We are excited that she gets to go and we are grateful for those who will be pouring into the lives of these missionary kids. -In March, our mission organization, ABWE, will be hosting a big ceremony in the capital of Togo to celebrate 50 years of ministry in the country. It should be a big event with many people impacted by the various ministries coming out to praise God.

Thanks for praying for our family and for the ministry here in Mango,

*Alain, Katherine, Camille, Caleb and Mia-Joy*



**We wish to share Bishop Karen Oliveto's weekly message and follow-up conversation:**

When I moved from seminary in Berkeley, CA to Bloomville, a small dairy farming community in upstate NY, the first thing I noticed was how sparsely populated the area was: I could drive for miles and miles and not see a soul. So as I was setting up the parsonage, I went to one of the larger communities in the area for some needed purchases.

The first thing I picked up was a book on auto repair so that if I broke down on one of the dirt roads crisscrossing the area, I \*might\* be able to address the issue. I found the perfect book: "A

Manual of Step-by-Step Procedures for the Complete Idiot”.

The next thing I did was go to a flea market where I got a great deal on car tools. I was ready now for any car repair!

Before I headed back to Bloomville, I stopped at a grocery store and picked up food for the week. I headed home and turned off the highway onto the dirt road that would lead back to Bloomville. I was singing along to a (Carpenters) cassette tape when the road curved and there, on that lonely road, on a curve no less (!), was a car sitting in the middle of the road with its hood up. The family must've been there a long time. The guy was all covered in oil and his kid was red-faced from crying.

My reflexes were quick and I managed to pass him with no issue and made my way home. I just couldn't believe he didn't have the sense to push his car out of the road!

As I unpacked my bags, I looked at all the food I had bought. I thought of the red-faced kid—what if he had been hungry?

Then I looked at the tools I bought and remembered the man all covered in oil, trying to fix his engine without proper tools.

Then I took out the repair manual, and it was then that I realized that title really fit: I had been a complete idiot.

I had been so wrapped up in my own affairs that I failed to realize that I had a number of things to offer the man and his family.

A bright and somewhat shifty lawyer tried to find a loophole in Jesus' statement, that we should “love God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself.” You could almost imagine the lawyer's eyes bearing down on Jesus when he asked, “And who is my neighbor?”

Jesus, in responding, shifts the emphasis of the question. Instead of answering the question, “Who is my neighbor?” Jesus provides the parable of the Good Samaritan and asks, “Who is being neighborly?” Instead of answering who we should/should not help, Jesus answers HOW we

should help. Jesus shows that it doesn't matter who is the one in need. What matters is whether or not we reach out as a neighbor and give aid.

Every day, people pass before us in need. Every day, we have what is needed to ease their pain, provide comfort and care, and help make healing happen. Too often, we have closed ourselves off from seeing our neighbor in people who make us uncomfortable, whose lives we don't understand, whose poverty makes us turn our heads. Yet, Jesus asks us the same question, “Who is being neighborly?”

Each of us has so much to offer that would address the pain and suffering in the world. All we need to do is look around us and respond, like the Good Samaritan did. If you were in a lineup with several others, and someone was asked to identify, “Who is being neighborly?”, would you be picked?

With love,  
Bishop Karen

Alice Tucker: Bloomville is still a wonderful caring community and we keep you in a special place in our hearts

Karen Oliveto: And you all hold a very special place in my heart! So grateful for the years we shared in ministry together!

David Collins: The Bloomville folk love you so much! When we served there, you were upheld as much beloved!!



# Rev. David Collins joins Camp Indianola as its new director



Rev. David Collins, pictured with his family, has been hired as the new director of Camp Indianola.

Camp and Retreat Ministries of the Pacific Northwest Conference is excited to announce the hiring of Rev. David Collins as the new director of Camp Indianola! David comes to us with his wife Romana and daughters Veronika, 11, and Viktoria, 8. He will be starting his new position on March 1, 2024.

Rev. Collins grew up in South Carolina. For the past 17 years, he has served as a United Methodist pastor and youth director in local congregations and the past 11 years as an ordained Elder. Most of his ministry experience has been in the New York Annual Conference.

"Growing up, I always loved camping and the outdoors, especially with Scouts, but I never imagined my path would lead to serving full-time in our United Methodist Camp and Retreat Ministries," shared Collins.

Since July 2022, Pete Simpson has been serving Camp Indianola as interim director, helping the camp complete several facility updates and upgrades and overseeing the camping program's emergence from the COVID-19 pandemic. Simpson will transition out of his responsibilities as Collins comes on board as director.

"We are so grateful for Pete's leadership during a challenging time, getting essential work done that will assist in ministry moving forward," said Alan Rogstad, executive director of PNW Camp & Retreat Ministries. "We are also very excited to welcome David and his family to this important ministry. I look forward to working with him as Camp Indianola moves into the future.

Collins's passion for the outdoors has endured and is something he shares with his family. "Over the last four years, my family has visited 27 national parks, countless monuments, and historical sites. After serving primarily in the local congregation for the past 17 years, this was truly inspiring."

"Camp Indianola is equally inspiring as a place where the beauty, goodness, and grace of God's Creation can be seen and experienced first-hand as we look to grow our faith in Christ," offered Collins. "I look forward to continuing this journey with all of you by God's grace. We are so excited to call the Pacific Northwest our new home!"

By **Patrick Scriven**

*Camp Indianola is a summer camp, retreat center and outdoor education facility located 45 minutes from Seattle on beautiful Puget Sound. It is one of four United Methodist Camps found in the Pacific Northwest Conference.*

# Bookmobile Schedule for DELAWARE COUNTY 2024

Tuesdays January 9 – February 6 – March 5 – April  
9 – May 7 – June 4 – July 9 – August 6 – September  
3 – October 8 – November 5 – December 3

Hobart 11:00 – 11:55 NBT Bank 147 Maple  
Avenue Davenport 1:00 – 1:15 Fire House 15838  
State Highway 23  
East Meredith 1:30 – 1:45 New Fire Station 6192  
County Highway 10  
Meridale 2:00 – 2:30 Fire House 50 County  
Highway 10  
Treadwell 2:50 – 3:15 Croton House 4520 County  
Highway 14

