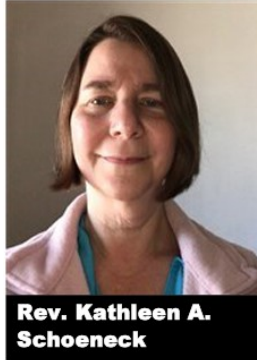




## Calendar of Events

- May 1<sup>st</sup> - Women's Bible Study - 9:30 a.m., Library
- May 1<sup>st</sup> - Prayer Group - 6:30 p.m.
- May 5<sup>th</sup> - Youth Group - 10:30 a.m.-12 p.m., Lakewood
- May 8<sup>th</sup> - Women's Bible Study - 9:30 a.m., Library
- May 8<sup>th</sup> - Pizza and Pruning Night - 5:30 p.m., Lakewood
- May 8<sup>th</sup> - Prayer Group - 6:30 p.m.
- May 11<sup>th</sup> - UWF Meeting - 10 a.m., Library
- May 12<sup>th</sup> - Youth Sunday - 9 a.m.-12 p.m., Lakewood
- May 14<sup>th</sup> - Men's Group - 6:30 p.m., Lakewood
- May 15<sup>th</sup> - Women's Bible Study - 9:30 a.m., Library
- May 15<sup>th</sup> - Preschool Graduation - 11 a.m., Sanctuary
- May 15<sup>th</sup> - Prayer Group - 6:30 p.m.
- May 15<sup>th</sup> - Church Council Meeting - 6:30 p.m., Sanctuary
- May 18<sup>th</sup> - Rummage Sale Drop-Off - 9 a.m.-12 p.m., Fellowship Hall
- May 21<sup>st</sup> - SPRC Meeting - 6:30 p.m., Room 23
- May 22<sup>nd</sup> - Women's Bible Study - 9:30 a.m., Library
- May 22<sup>nd</sup> - Prayer Group - 6:30 p.m.
- May 29<sup>th</sup> - Women's Bible Study - 9:30 a.m., Library
- May 29<sup>th</sup> - Prayer Group - 6:30 p.m.



**Rev. Kathleen A. Schoeneck**

My brothers and sisters in Christ,

This is the current outcome of our General Conference 2024, for all folks that are interested. This article comes from the UMC.org website:

*-Pastor Kathleen*

## General Conference gives regionalization green light

By Heather Hahn, Eveline Chikwanah and Sam Hodges  
April 25, 2024 | CHARLOTTE, N.C. (UM News)

UMC delegates vote in favor of a Worldwide Regionalization plan as she presides over a legislative session of the United Methodist General Conference in Charlotte, N.C., on April 25. The body voted 586 to 164 for an amendment to the denomination's constitution that will now go before annual conference voters for potential ratification.

Key points:

- In what outgoing Council of Bishops President Thomas J. Bickerton called "a historic day for our church," delegates voted 586 to 164 in favor of a constitutional amendment that aims to put The United Methodist Church's different geographic regions on equal footing.
- The amendment now moves to annual conference voters for potential ratification.
- Earlier in the morning plenary, delegates approved four other Worldwide Regionalization petitions on the consent calendar.

General Conference has now passed much of the legislation that aims to give The United Methodist Church's different geographic regions equal standing in decision-making.

In what outgoing Council of Bishops President Thomas J. Bickerton called "a historic day for our church," delegates voted 586 to 164 for an amendment to the denomination's constitution that will now go before annual conference voters for potential ratification.

A constitutional amendment requires at least a two-thirds vote at General Conference; the regionalization amendment

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received 78% of the vote. To be ratified, the amendment also will need at least a two-thirds total vote of annual conference lay and clergy voters. Annual conferences are church regions consisting of multiple congregations and other ministries.

Regionalization has become United Methodist shorthand for a package of legislation that would restructure the denomination. Under the legislation, the U.S. and each central conference — church regions in Africa, Europe and the Philippines — would become regional conferences with the same authority to adapt the Book of Discipline, the denomination's policy book, for more missional effectiveness.

At present, only central conferences have that authority under the denomination's constitution to adapt the Discipline as missional needs and different legal contexts require.

The Standing Committee on Central Conference Matters — a permanent General Conference committee with a majority of its membership from central conferences — submitted the eight petitions of the Worldwide Regionalization proposal. The standing committee, which [met April 21-22](#), gave its final approval to the legislation before the start of General Conference on April 23.

That teed up the proposals for action by the full General Conference plenary in its first week — a big change from previous sessions when General Conference typically does not take up major proposals until its second week.

Earlier in the morning plenary, delegates approved four of the eight Worldwide Regionalization proposals on the consent calendar. The consent calendar includes legislation passed overwhelmingly in General Conference committees that only requires a majority and does not have financial implications.

"I stand before you this morning full of hope and also excited," said Christine Schneider in introducing the constitutional amendment.

She is a reserve delegate from the Switzerland-France-North Africa Conference and member of the Standing Committee on Central Conference Matters that submitted the Worldwide Regionalization proposal.

She acknowledged that the legislation before the General Conference delegates was the work of multiple United Methodists around the globe. That includes the standing committee, the Connectional Table (which coordinates denomination-wide ministries) and members of the Christmas Covenant, a grassroots group of United Methodists in the central conferences who saw regionalization as the best way to promote unity.

"This is a result of excellent collaboration of people from all walks of life, of all parts of our connection," Schneider said.

Judi Kenaston, the Connectional Table's chief connectional ministries officer and a delegate from the West Virginia Conference, [has shepherded the regionalization effort since 2017](#).

She acknowledged that many at General Conference are troubled by [the high number of African delegates who were unable to get visas to attend](#). As of General Conference's opening day on April 23, only 751 of 862 allotted delegates had registered — the majority of absences from the continent of Africa.

"One of the concerns was whether having not all of the delegates present at the General Conference would affect this," Kenaston said in a press conference after the vote. "But the vote total that we had was greater than the number (we needed) if all had been seated. The positive votes would have still carried even if they (absent delegates) had all voted in opposition."

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The Rev. Emmanuel Sinzohagera of the Burundi Conference said the vote was a joyful moment that gave the church “a new kind of energy.”

“This is a good start. A new, fresh start. Legislation is dynamic; it is a process,” Sinzohagera said. “This is the beginning of the process. There are many issues to deal with. Let’s keep going.”

The Rev. Jonathan Ulanday, a delegate from the Philippines who was part of the original team that crafted the Christmas Covenant, said this was “a Kairos moment” for the church.

“What we are trying to do is to place our Lord Jesus Christ at the center of the table and all of us will exist in equity sharing the gifts so The United Methodist Church will grow and flourish in different contexts in different parts of the world,” he said.

Under the amendment that passed General Conference, each regional conference would have the authority to:

- Establish and publish a regional Discipline with legislation and provision pertaining to church structures within its boundaries, including qualifications and educational requirements of clergy and specialized lay ministries.
- Set standards of character and other qualifications for the admission of lay members.
- Establish and publish a regional hymnal and ritual of church, including for marriage and burial. The rites approved would need to be in line with core doctrines of The United Methodist Church and in accordance with local laws.
- Allow the annual conferences to adopt structures adequate to their mission while upholding General Conference-mandated structures.

The amendment also requires regional conferences to recognize annual conferences as the basic bodies of the church, especially on all matters relating to the character and conference relations of its clergy members.

The amendment requires regional conferences to be in line with national laws and not to stray from [the Articles of Religion](#) and [Confession of Faith](#) that contain the denomination’s core belief in Christ’s resurrection, the Trinity and the sacraments of baptism and communion.

The earliest central conferences date to the 1880s, and efforts at regionalization date back to the 1920s. But they have always come up short. At the last regular session of General Conference in 2016, a proposal to create a U.S. central conference didn’t even make it out of legislative committee.

In recent years, efforts of regionalization have gotten caught up in the denomination’s debate over the place of LGBTQ people in the life of the church. Opponents of regionalization have long seen it as a method of liberalizing the church’s stance on homosexuality — at least in the United States.

It should be noted that nowhere does the regionalization legislation mention homosexuality. It also does not end the denomination’s bans on same-sex weddings and “self-avowed practicing” gay clergy.

But if ratified, the amendment would provide each regional conference the freedom to set not only its clergy qualifications but also chargeable offenses under church law.

As part of the morning’s consent calendar, delegates also approved a measure titled “Regionalization and Contextualization of Marriage,” submitted by Michigan Conference Bishop David Bard for the Council of Bishops. The new additions to the Book of Discipline allow central

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conferences to set their standards for marriage rites and clergy ordination.

The entire consent calendar that included the regionalization legislation and the Council of Bishops measure passed by a vote of 646 to 73.

“At the end of this General Conference, if anyone comes up to you and says, ‘We didn’t do anything at General Conference,’ (tell them) we just did,” Susan Brumbaugh, General Conference’s coordinator of the calendar, said after that first consent calendar vote.

The easy passage of the amendment and consent calendar indicate a significant change in delegations since the tumultuous 2019 General Conference and the disaffiliation of a quarter of U.S. churches over LGBTQ inclusion.

However, the support for regionalization was hardly unanimous.

One continued sticking point was the fact that the regionalization legislation does not eliminate jurisdictions in the U.S. The five U.S. jurisdictions, like the current seven central conferences, elect bishops but don’t have the same authority to adapt the Discipline.

The Methodist Church established jurisdictions when it formed in 1939 as a way to keep U.S. southern and northern bishops separate and a way to keep Black Methodists segregated from the wider church. The formation of The United Methodist Church in 1968 [eliminated the segregated Central Jurisdiction](#). But many United Methodists agree that the racist history taints the jurisdictional system.

The Rev. Robert Zilhaver, a delegate from the Western Pennsylvania Conference, proposed a lengthy amendment that would have eliminated the requirements in the denomination’s constitution to have jurisdictions. But that amendment failed.

Odell Horne, a delegate from the North Georgia Conference, also raised the concern that regionalization without dealing with jurisdictions continues an “inherently racist system.”

Standing committee members and other delegates acknowledged the concerns.

One of the Worldwide Regionalization petitions on the consent calendar creates a study committee to look at the future of jurisdictions and any issues that come up with regionalization.

Reaction to the regionalization vote came quickly as delegates left plenary for their lunch break.

Zilhaver said he opposed the regionalization proposal.

“I wanted the U.S. region, I just didn’t want it with jurisdictions,” he said.

Without dismantling the five jurisdictions, he said, regionalization will just add another layer of church structure.

So, as Zilhaver sees it, regionalization is adding cost and failing to deal with the church’s history of racism.

“Sin costs money,” he said.

Others see potential for this to be just the first step toward a better United Methodist Church that is moving beyond its colonial past and finding a way to stay together despite differing views on LGBTQ inclusion and other issues.

“I’m so excited,” said the Rev. Amy Lippoldt of the Great Plains Conference and a standing committee member. “It’s a huge and important step for the future of the church in the short term and

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for the next 100 years.”

But the Rev. James Labala of the Liberia Conference voted against regionalization as presented.

“If America can be a single region, why can’t Africa?” he said. “It’s not fair.”

He added that in his view, regionalization would weaken Africa’s power in The United Methodist Church, even as the denomination continues to grow on the continent.

Three other petitions of worldwide regionalization deal solely with the U.S. and are currently before members of the Conferences Legislative Committee at General Conference. That committee could move that legislation to the full plenary as early as April 27. Those petitions only need a simple majority to pass.

Lonnie Chafin, a Northern Illinois delegate and chair of that committee, said he felt gratitude for all the people who worked so hard on regionalization.

“I feel like this General Conference is really focused on the future of the church,” he said. “We really are figuring out how we’re going to live together and go forward ... It’s the most promising thing that could happen.”

Incoming Council of Bishops President Tracy Smith Malone presided during the session that took up the regionalization amendment. She also worked with representatives from the standing committee, Christmas Covenant and Connectional Table as they worked on the legislation that evidently went before General Conference voters.

“We are a beautiful, diverse, international worldwide church and the regionalization plan is a reflection of what that looks like,” she said at a press conference after the vote. “Yes, it decenters the U.S., but it also dismantles colonialism giving a sense of agency, a sense of autonomy, while still keeping us connected missionally, still keeping us as one body — people called United Methodist.”

She added that after the vote, she had to contain herself.

“I said to myself: ‘Look at God and look at God’s people.’”

Hahn is assistant news editor for UM News. Chikwanah and Hodges are United Methodist News reporters. Contact them at (615) 742-5470 or [newsdesk@umnews.org](mailto:newsdesk@umnews.org). To read more United Methodist news, [subscribe to the free daily or weekly Digests](#).

## General Conference photos



UM News has photographers on the plenary floor of General Conference 2024 and at special events and meetings throughout the session. View photos from each day on Flickr. [See photos](#)



# LAKEWOOD PRESCHOOL



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## **PLEASE NOTE:**

The Men's group has been moved to the second Tuesday of the month. The meeting will be at 6:30 on Tuesday May 14<sup>th</sup>. All Lakewood men are invited.

## **A 'THANK YOU' FROM FINANCE**

Thank you for your financial commitment to Lakewood. Not only does your giving help those inside the church, your giving allows Lakewood to help others in the community experience Jesus. Your giving is a blessing to many. We will enter May with contributions exceeding expenses. We are 'in the black.'

This is also the final year of the Sanctuary Remodel Campaign. Pledges for this year are \$36,600. Please remember to honor your pledge. Thank you for your support of the church renovation.

Please follow weekly giving trends in the bulletin. God loves a cheerful giver!

# MAY BIRTHDAYS

Doris Allen	5/02
Kathy Fisher	5/03
Frances Skellie	5/04
Loren Cicero	5/05
Scott Moren	5/05
Dolores Schmidt	5/05
Daniel Boccio	5/06
David Estes	5/08
Vincent Ferrante	5/08
Doris Atkinson	5/10
Tiffany Dickinson	5/10
Tyler Logan	5/10
Betty McKnight	5/11
Jessica Apthorp	5/12
William Darnell	5/12
Marla DeSantis	5/12
Holden Dieter	5/12
Sherry Hartman	5/12
Joanie Counts	5/14
Cindy Minnick	5/14
Joseph Currier II	5/21
Mike Hess	5/22
Nancy Lamanna	5/23
Alysa Frith	5/24
Sean Marsden	5/24
Michael Paul	5/24
Kevin Currier	5/25
Colin Keith	5/25
Audrey Lawton	5/25
Britany Metzler	5/25
Cathy Fresch	5/27
Sydney Moore	5/27
Dominic Pratt	5/27
Charlotte Killian	5/28
Courtney Stoll	5/28
David Briggs	5/29
Charles Brown	5/29
Joseph Dzeskiewicz	5/29
Sara Kuhrman	5/29
Patty Rhone	5/31

## Council Update - May

### Pathways to Intentional and Innovative Ministries Planning

**Retreat:** After months of praying, discerning, and compiling data, we are ready to plan. On the first Saturday in June, we will be hosting a planning retreat led and supported by WPAUMC. All are welcome to join us as we pray, analyze the data, and determine next steps. Please contact Jackie Bull if you plan on attending as lunch will be provided.

**Date:** Saturday, June 1

**Time:** 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

**Location:** Lakewood

**RSVP:** By May 26 to Jackie (call or text 814-323-6805)

**Prayer:** Prayer releases the power of God. When God's power is released, it brings spiritual increase. Whenever God wants to do a new work, God first sets people apart to pray. Prayer is the precursor to change. Praying moves us closer to the heart of God, a heart filled with compassion for people who are far from God and in deep need.

To paraphrase Wesley, "Nothing happens until somebody starts praying." What should we be praying for? What do we want to change or improve at Lakewood? What is it that we want? Until we ask God or tell Him what we want, we may never receive.

### *Join Council in praying for the following intentions:*

- Younger families to join us
- Fervent discipleship with members
- Purposeful participation of members

**Lakewood Handbook:** Council has worked together to develop a handbook that contains all the information one might need about our committees and ministries. The handbook is available on our website and hard copies are available in the office.

**The next Council meeting will be May 15 at 6:30 p.m.**



### April 2024 Attendance:

Average attendance for weekly in-person worship: 79

Average views of weekly livestream (Youtube): 40

Average weekly combined "attendance" for April: 119

Average weekly combined "attendance" to-date for 2024: 122

**“I was hungry and you gave me something to eat.”**

Matthew 25:35



## **MAY SCHEDULE TRACY and ASBURY**

<b>DATE</b>	<b>PICKUP DRIVER</b>	<b>PACKING TEAM</b>	<b>DELIVERY DRIVER</b>
MAY 01/02	R. Estes 10:30 a.m.	R. Estes 6:30 p.m.	J. Kot 10:00 a.m.
MAY 08/09	J. Kot 10:30 a.m.	S. Pike 11:30 a.m.	H. Kendall 10:00 a.m.
MAY 15/16	R. Pike 10:30 a.m.	K. Fisher 6:30 p.m.	R. Fisher 10:00 a.m.
MAY 22/23	C. Spicher 10:30 a.m.	J. Goodman 11:30 a.m.	J. Kell/J. Rhone 10:00 a.m.
MAY 29/30	C. Spicher 10:30 a.m.	M. Spicher 11:30 a.m.	C. Spicher 10:00 a.m.

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## **PIZZA AND PRUNING**

The Trustees will be hosting the annual Pizza and Pruning night on Wednesday, May 8<sup>th</sup> starting at 5:30 p.m. We are asking for your help in sprucing up the outside of the church. Leaf clean up, weeding, trimming and general yard maintenance are all part of the work needed for upkeep of the church grounds. Trustees will provide pizza and beverages for the volunteers. Work should only take about 90 minutes. Come on out and enjoy some fellowship with your fellow Lakewoodians.



# Lakewood Youth Group News

*Helping youth to discover, experience & know the love and presence of Jesus Christ*



## Meeting Schedule

Students in grades 6<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> are welcome to join us.

*\*Event dates and times are subject to change.*

- May 5:           **Lakewood 10:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.**
- May 12:          **Youth Sunday - Lakewood 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.**  
**\*This is a change in the original schedule\***
- June 2:           **Youth Family Picnic – Bulls' Land – 4:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.**
- June 11:         **Mission Barn Service Project in New Castle, PA**  
**Meet at Lakewood at 8:00 a.m.**  
**Service Project: 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.**  
**Return to Lakewood at 3:30 p.m.**
- July 15-19:      **Uth 4 Missions at Jumonville - a week of camp and service projects**

## Contact Information

**For questions and concerns please contact us any time.**

Jackie and Jeremiah Bull

**Home: 814-833-4520**

**Call or Text: 814-323-6805**

**Email: [missjackie77@hotmail.com](mailto:missjackie77@hotmail.com)**

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## LAKWOOD UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH

Spring is in the air and so is Lakewood's rummage sale. The rummage sale is Thursday, June 6<sup>th</sup> (family and friends) 5 - 7 p.m.; Friday, June 7<sup>th</sup> from noon - 7 p.m.; and Saturday, June 8<sup>th</sup> from 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. So, start cleaning your closets, basements and garages. The drop off dates are Saturday, May 18<sup>th</sup> from 9 a.m. - noon and Saturday, June 1<sup>st</sup> from 9 - 11 a.m. Please DO NOT BRING any books, Christmas items, winter clothes, or electronics.



## **VBS 2024: July 7 – 11, 6 to 8 p.m.**

Surrounded by water, trees, and rolling hills, Camp Firelight is the perfect location for every Camper's favorite summer activities! During each assembly session, Campers join first-time camp counselor Miss Pam and Lu (short for Lumen), the lightning bug mascot, and learn to face their fears while trusting in God. Each day, Campers see Counselor Pam face new challenges, from as simple as leading Campers on a hike to as intimidating as meeting a new and wise nature expert. With the help of Lu the Lightning Bug and the Camp Counselor Guidebook, Counselor Pam and our Campers explore timeless Bible stories that show how Old and New Testament Campers trusted God in the face of their own fears and went on to do great things in God's name.

**Come join us as part of the VBS Camp Firelight team!**

**Be a Camp station Leader or Helper**

**Contact Miss Pam at 814-450-4819 or [pkayanthony@yahoo.com](mailto:pkayanthony@yahoo.com)**



## **Highmark Walk for a Healthy Community to benefit the Erie United Methodist Alliance (EUMA)**

Lakewood will have a contingent walking to raise money for EUMA at the Highmark Walk for a Healthy Community. The primary goal of the walk is to help participating organizations raise money for their individual missions. One hundred percent of the funds raised through this event go directly back to the participating organizations, as Highmark underwrites all the associated costs of the event. The Walk is on Saturday, June 1<sup>st</sup> at Penn State Behrend and it begins at 9:00 a.m. If you want to walk as part of the Lakewood team, go to <http://hcf.convio.net/euma> or click on the link on the EUMA website. If you want to donate, go to the same listed website, or give directly to one of our walkers at church. If you have additional questions, please contact Chris Paul at [bertachris@yahoo.com](mailto:bertachris@yahoo.com) or at 814-838-4767.