

VOL. 2 ISSUE 1 · JANUARY-FEBRUARY 2025

# CONNECTION

Official Bi-Monthly Magazine of Camphor Memorial UMC



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## Because Jesus Said So

FROM THE DESK OF BISHOP LANETTE PLAMBECK

Simon replied, “Master, we’ve worked hard all night and caught nothing. But because you say so, I’ll drop the nets.” Luke 5:5 (CEB)

Siblings in Christ,

Grace and peace to you in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

I come to you with a simple yet transformative phrase that can shape our faith and practice: “Because Jesus said so.” These four words captured Simon Peter’s heart in Luke 5:5, leading to a miraculous catch of fish — and they can likewise transform our lives, our churches, and our communities.

When Peter, an experienced fisherman, had fished all night with no success, he found Jesus inviting him to go deeper and cast his nets again. Despite his doubts, Peter responded: “Because you say so, I’ll drop the nets.” That single act of obedience revealed Jesus’ authority, love, and abundant provision. Today, that same invitation stands before us: Will we heed Christ’s voice in every sphere of our lives and ministries?

Below are key areas where Christ’s commandments call us to say, “Because You say so.”

1. “Repent and believe the good news!” (Mark 1:15)

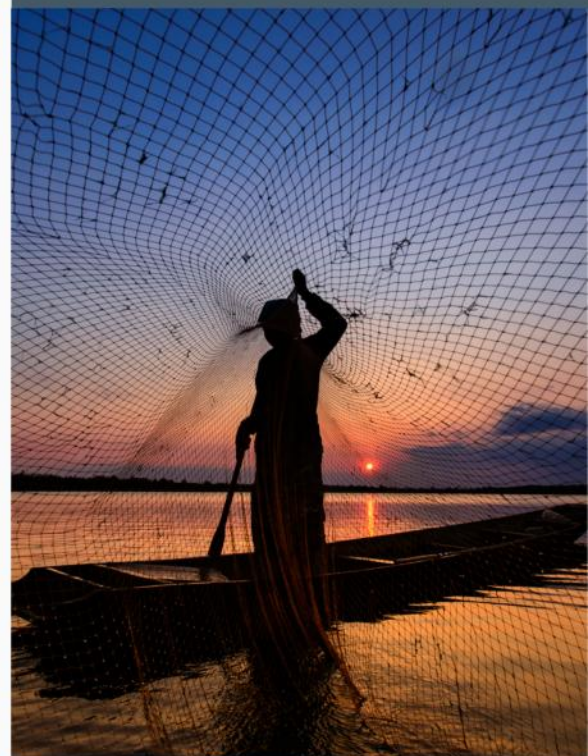
We turn away from sin, confess where we have fallen short, and trust God’s grace. In a world of competing voices, we anchor ourselves in the good news of Christ’s saving love. It is Jesus alone who is our Lord and Savior.

2. “Love the Lord your God with all your heart...” (Matthew 22:37)

True discipleship begins in wholehearted devotion. When we say “yes” to Jesus, we give God our ultimate allegiance and invite the presence, power, and provision of the Holy Spirit to shape every priority and purpose in our lives.

**“I come to you with a simple yet transformative phrase that can shape our faith and practice: “Because Jesus said so.” These four words captured Simon Peter’s heart in Luke 5:5, leading to a miraculous catch of fish — and they can likewise transform our lives, our churches, and our communities.”**

-BISHOP LANETTE PLAMBECK





## Because Jesus Said So (Cont'd)

FROM THE DESK OF BISHOP LANETTE PLAMBECK

3. "Love your neighbor as yourself." (Matthew 22:39)

We are called to embody compassion, justice, and mercy for those we encounter — across the street or across the world. The Holy Spirit empowers us to see every person as beloved in God's eyes. To those whom much is given, much is expected.

4. Show mercy to the least of these: "I was hungry and you gave me food... I was in prison and you visited me." (Matthew 25:35-36)

The heart of the gospel moves us toward those who suffer — feeding the hungry, welcoming the stranger, caring for the sick, and visiting the lonely or imprisoned. When we serve those most in need, we serve Jesus himself.

5. "Seek first his kingdom and his righteousness..." (Matthew 6:33)

Our calling is to be shaped more by the values of God's kingdom — love, peace, and justice — than by the shifting pressures or politics of the world. May we let biblical mandates and Christ's priorities set our agendas, personally and collectively.

6. Abide in Christ daily: "Remain in me, as I also remain in you." (John 15:4)

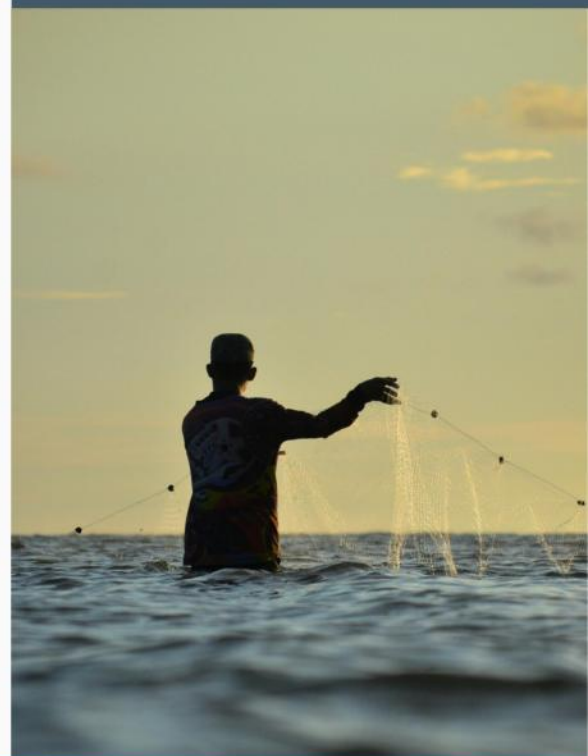
Discipleship is not a one-time decision; it's an ongoing relationship. In prayer, worship, and scripture, we draw sustaining life from Christ, bearing fruit for his glory. Engage in daily practices that center and anchor your faith. Make a commitment to grow in your faith.

7. "Go and make disciples of all nations..." (Matthew 28:19)

Our churches and ministries exist not only for ourselves, but to share the hope of Jesus with the world. We engage in evangelism and discipleship, raising up believers and building God's kingdom/kin-dom on earth. (See the Beatitudes in Matthew 5:3-12 for a glimpse of God's hope for the world.)

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## Because Jesus Said So (Cont'd)

FROM THE DESK OF BISHOP LANETTE PLAMBECK

9. "Go and do likewise." (Luke 10:37)

After telling the parable of the Good Samaritan — a story about radical, boundary-crossing mercy — Jesus tells his listeners, "Go and do likewise." Because Jesus said so, we commit ourselves to compassionate, sacrificial care for the wounded and marginalized in our society.

10. "Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful." (Luke 6:36)

Jesus links our practice of mercy to God's own merciful character. We are called to reflect God's compassion in how we treat others. Because Jesus said so, we choose empathy over indifference and forgiveness over vengeance.

11. "Freely you have received; freely give." (Matthew 10:8)

In commissioning the disciples to heal and serve, Jesus reminds them that all they have is a gift from God. Because Jesus said so, we extend kindness, generosity, and advocacy to others without demanding payback or recognition, trusting God's abundant grace to supply our needs.

12. I am leaving this one blank — and inviting you to fill it in....

Friends, in each of these commands, the key is not merely the action but the reason: because Jesus said so. We obey not out of compulsion or fear but out of devotion to the One who first loved us. Jesus' words are trustworthy; his authority is absolute; and his desire for us is life abundant. By choosing to follow his commands, even when our nets feel empty and we cannot see the next step, we position ourselves to witness the miraculous catch — the inbreaking of God's reign among us.

In this season, let us join Peter in responding with humble faith. Let us offer up our nets, our lives, and our ministries to the God who can do immeasurably more than we could ever ask or imagine (Ephesians 3:20). May our unified confession in the Dakotas-Minnesota Episcopal Area be: "Yes, Lord — because You say so, we will go, serve, love, and abide in You."

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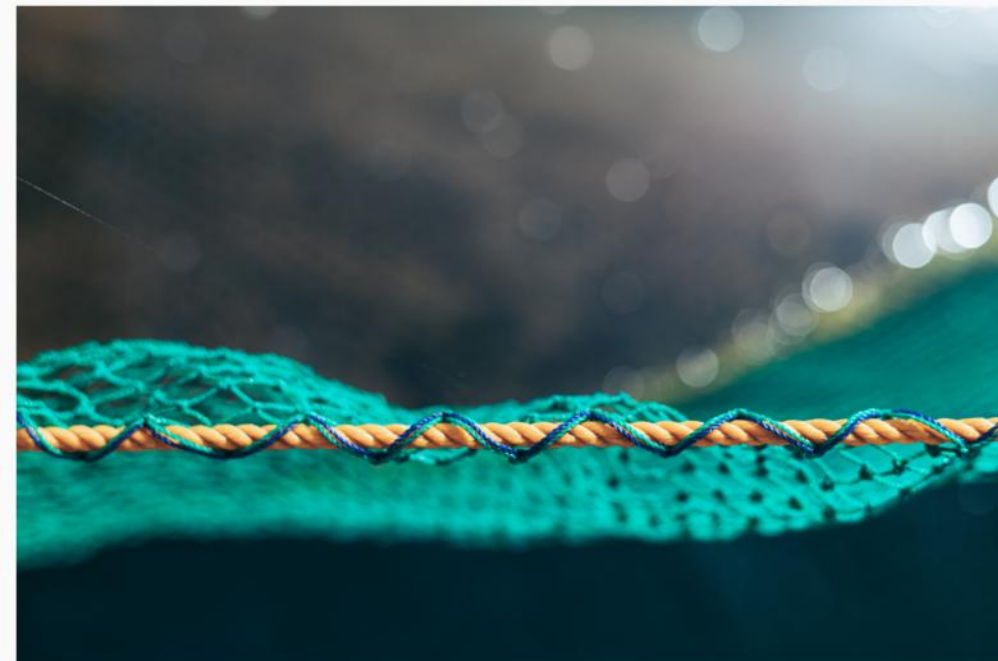
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And may the witness of Christ's church shine brightly as we answer his call in faithful obedience, proclaiming in word and deed the good news of Jesus — our Savior and Lord.

Grace and peace be with you all,

Bishop Lanette Plambeck  
Resident Bishop, Dakotas-Minnesota Episcopal Area  
The United Methodist Church



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## Methodist Corner

Camphor Memorial UMC is a predominantly Black/African American Church who is part of the United Methodist Church, a global connection whose mission is "To make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the World". Being rooted in Jesus, Grounded in Wesleyan theology, inclusive of all people and being engaged in the work of Justice and Reconciliation, we strive to grow in our love with God, with one another and the community we are called to serve. Check out to see what is going on in our connectional system

## News Across the Connection



**Council of Bishops**  
The United Methodist Church



Scan the QR code to visit the official page of the Council of Bishops of The United Methodist Church. Stay informed about the leadership, initiatives, and important updates from our bishops. It's a great way to connect with the heart of our denomination and learn more about their work in guiding the church globally.



**UM News**  
FAIR. FAITHFUL. TRUSTED.

Scan the QR code to access the latest news and updates from across the entire United Methodist Church connection. Stay up to date with important stories, events, and initiatives happening worldwide, and see how our global church is making an impact in communities everywhere.



**Minnesota**  
**Annual Conference**  
of the United Methodist Church

Scan the QR code to visit the official page of the Minnesota Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church. Discover the latest news, upcoming events, and initiatives from our conference. Stay informed about how we are serving our communities and advancing the mission of the church in Minnesota.



**"Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can, in all the places you can, at all the times you can, to all the people you can, as long as ever you can."**

JOHN WESLEY



# Fun Corner-November/December Answers

For each of the following sets, challenge yourself to arrange the four Old Testament books in the order they appear in the Bible.

Test your knowledge of the biblical sequence and strengthen your understanding of the scriptures!

1. Leviticus, Genesis, 1 Kings, Exodus
2. Lamentations, Isaiah, Jeremiah, 2 Chronicles
3. Nahum, Jonah, Habakkuk, Micah
4. 2 Kings, 1 Chronicles, Numbers, Song of Songs
5. Psalms, Ecclesiastes, Job, Proverbs
6. Haggai, Zephaniah, Malachi, Zechariah
7. Joel, Hosea, Daniel, Ezekiel
8. Esther, Nehemiah, Job, Ezra
9. Judges, 1 Samuel, Deuteronomy, Joshua
10. Amos, 2 Samuel, Proverbs, Ruth



## November/December Answer Key

1. Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, 1 Kings
2. 2 Chronicles, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations
3. Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk
4. Numbers, 2 Kings, 1 Chronicles, Song of Songs
5. Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes
6. Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi
7. Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel
8. Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Job
9. Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, 1 Samuel
10. Ruth, 2 Samuel, Proverbs, Amos



# Fun Corner-Out of Order: New Testament

Write Answers Here

For each of the following sets, challenge yourself to arrange the four New Testament books in the order they appear in the Bible.

Test your knowledge of the biblical sequence and strengthen your understanding of the scriptures!

1. Luke, Matthew, John, Mark
2. Acts, 1 Corinthians, John, Romans
3. Philemon, James, 1 Peter, Hebrews
4. 1 Peter, 1 Corinthians, 1 John, 1 Thessalonians
5. Ephesians, Colossians, Galatians, Philippians
6. 2 Timothy, 2 John, 2 Corinthians, Titus
7. Jude, Revelation, James, Philemon
8. 3 John, Ephesians, Hebrews, Titus
9. James, Philemon, Philippians, Romans
10. Hebrews, Colossians, Jude, Acts

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.



Answers will be given in the March-April Edition!



## Prayer Corner

When we unite in prayer and openly share our needs with God, a profound sense of strength emerges. Let's invest some time in prayer, lifting up the concerns and requests listed in our prayer corner:

### Prayer Requests

Alton Campbell  
Dr. Charles Crutchfield  
Nealie Christopher & Family  
Gordon Edmond  
Clifton Fuller  
Melvin Henderson  
Dr. Joi Lewis  
Gary Martin  
Sharon Martin  
Willie P. McCoy, Jr.  
Carlton McQuirter  
Karen Morgan  
Calvin Morgan

### Seniors and Homebound

Verlene Booker  
Glenice Booker Butler  
Margaret Carter  
James Cummings  
Ginnie Dennis  
Doris Douglas  
Charlotte Drake  
Johnette Houston  
Pat Jemie  
Carrie Lewis  
Barbara Wulf

**“Let us then approach  
God’s throne of grace  
with confidence, so that  
we may receive mercy  
and find grace to help us  
in our time of need.”**

-HEBREWS 4:16 (NIV)

### Prayer of the Month

**“Prayer for Beginnings”-Valerie Bridgeman Davis  
Africana Worship Book (Year C)**

God of every beginning, walk with us in our halting steps. Prod us forward  
when we would stop. Hold us up when we fall. Love us when we pout  
because we do not want to change.

Change us into the image of Christ. Grow us up and out. May we spread  
into your grace. Blossom into your joy. Run into your mercy, this day and  
always. Amen.



# Camphor Connects Hub

## Happy Heavenly Birthday Rev. Dennis M. Oglesby, Jr.

Happy Heavenly Birthday to the angel of this house, Rev. Dennis M. Oglesby, Jr. whose birthday was Tuesday January 21st.

To honor his legacy, scan the QR Code to hear the powerful messages he preached here at Camphor before God called him to glory.



## Camphor Social Justice Ministry



Check out the following announcements from Camphor Memorial UMC Social Justice Ministry

Introducing the Exciting New United 4 Youth Campaign!

The Camphor Social Justice Ministry is proud to be part of the United 4 Youth Campaign, which aims to secure \$30 million in ongoing funding for youth programming within the new state Department of Children, Youth, and Families. Additionally, we will be funding a study on best practices for youth programming. We are kicking off a six-month strategy during the legislative session and invite you to learn more about the campaign through clicking the link below.

[Thursday, February 6th at 6:00 PM | Virtual BBCC + Muslim Coalition Joint United 4 Youth Campaign Strategy Meeting](#)

On Thursday, February 6th, from 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM on Zoom, we will reflect on the United 4 Youth Campaign Launch that took place on January 21st. We will also discuss the long-term legislative strategy needed to secure important investments for youth and shape the new state Department of Children, Youth and Families.

[Tuesday, February 18th at 3:30 PM | We Make Minnesota Fund Our Futures Rally](#)

Join us on Tuesday, February 18th, from 3:30 PM to 5:00 PM at the Minnesota State Capitol Rotunda (75 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd, St. Paul, MN) as we come together to advocate for a Minnesota where everyone, regardless of race, zip code, or gender, has access to what they need to thrive, including affordable, accessible, and culturally relevant youth programming. We recognize that wealthy corporations are not contributing their fair share, which forces us to prioritize essential services while those at the top continue to accumulate wealth. Join us to make it clear that we expect our elected officials to prioritize funding for our children's futures, especially in light of a new federal administration.

For all the events, scan the QR Code





# Camphor Connects Hub



## All Black Affair: Picture Gallery

Scan the QR Code to view photos from our unforgettable first annual "All Black Affair." To access the gallery, simply enter the password: GO+All Black.

Enjoy reliving the memories from this spectacular event!



## 2025 Thomas Scholarship Applications Now Available

Applications for the 2025 Thomas Scholarship are now available!

You can pick up a copy in the church narthex or on the office countertop downstairs. To be eligible, applicants must plan to enroll or be enrolled in an undergraduate, graduate, or vocational program for the fall of 2025. Last year's scholarship awards ranged from \$500 to \$2,500.

Your generosity makes a difference! You can contribute to the Thomas Scholarship Fund using your white offering envelope or donate online through the Camphor website. Please indicate "Thomas Scholarship" on your check or online donation.

Thank you for your unwavering support of the Thomas Scholarship Fund and for helping us invest in the future of our students!



## Camphor's Black History Month Presentations

Join us for Youth Sunday on February 23, 2025, as we celebrate Black History Month with special presentations! If you would like to participate, here are four ways you can get involved:

1. Join the planning committee.
2. Actively participate in the program or presentations.
3. Volunteer on the day of the event to support the presenters.
4. Bring or donate refreshments.
- 5.



If you're interested in participating, please scan the QR Code to complete the Black History Month interest form. We look forward to an exciting and dynamic celebration of Black History Month

# Camphor Connects Hub

## Worship/Music Ministry

- Rehearsals (All held in Sanctuary):
  - Sanctuary Choir:
    - Every First and Third Wednesday (4 pm-6 pm)
    - Every First and Third Saturday (1 pm-3 pm)
  - Woman's Chorale
    - Every Second Wednesday (4 pm-6 pm)
    - Every Second Saturday (4 pm-6 pm)
  - Voices of Grace
    - Every Fourth Wednesday (6 pm-7:30 pm)
    - Every Fourth Saturday (1 pm-2:30 pm)
- Rose of Sharon Praise Dance Rehearsal: Every Second and Fourth Saturday (9am in Sanctuary)



## UMM and UWF



United Women in Faith

General Meeting: Every Second Saturday at 10am  
(Fellowship/Narthex Area)



United Methodist Men

General Meeting: Every Second Saturday  
at 10:30am (Conference Room)

## Ministry Teams Events

Usher Team Meeting: Every First Sunday  
(12 pm in Conference Room)

Trustee's Meeting: Every First Monday  
(6:30 pm via Zoom)

Congregational Care Team: Every Third Sunday  
(11:30 am in Conference Room)

Admin Council: Every Third Tuesday  
(6 pm via Zoom)







CAMPBOR MEMORIAL UMC  
585 FULLER AVENUE  
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**Office Hours**  
**Tuesday & Thursday 8:30am-4pm**

**Camphor Memorial UMC Staff**

Rev. Isiah Dennis  
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Evelyn Doyle  
Church Administrator  
[admin@camphorconnects.org](mailto:admin@camphorconnects.org)

"Growing in our relationship with God, one another, and the community God has called us to serve."

