



'ARISE'

Williamsport District
Monthly News
October 3, 2024



3 Quick Things:

1. **It's Pastor Appreciation Month.** Many pastors dread this month because they hate the expectations it puts on their people. Some pastors love this month because we all need that reminder that we are appreciated. Our hope is that you'll take some time this month to honor the pastors in your life. Pastors and pastoral leaders, we also ask that you take time to honor yourself this month.
2. **Please let people in your congregation know** that if they want to be connected to the district newsletter, they can email Jill, our District Administrator, at williamsport@susumc.org.
3. **We are looking for a Maintenance Coordinator for the Parsonage.** This would be someone who lives close to Williamsport and would be willing to be the person we (Pastor Daniel) can call upon if things aren't working. Together, we can figure out a solution. If you have someone you'd recommend for this, please lift their name to us.

It is October, and some look at this month longingly while others with trepidation. Summer has come to a close, and autumn is here. Shorts begin to disappear, and sweaters reign supreme. The carefree fun of summer gives way to the busyness and structure of the fall season, especially with the dreaded Charge Conference season... Seasons change.

Over the many seasons of this area, we've been known as the Williamsport District, the Wellsboro District, part of the Wilkes-Barre District, and, more recently, part of the Lewisburg District. On September 29th, 82 clergy and laity from our district gathered for a conference. During that conference, we named some of our hurts and even more of our hopes. We shared about the present realities of our world and looked toward the future.

A new name was also presented for our district. **Effective January 1, 2025, we will be known as the Northern Wilds District.** While we understand new names are not everyone's preference, we recognize that names centered on a geographic place can limit our focus to a location that may not fully represent our large district.

The rationale behind the name is relatively simple. First, we are in the north. Even our southern tip is northern relative to the rest of the conference, where much of the work centers around the conference office. We wanted to acknowledge our geographic location, so those who are newer to our connection will at least know where to look for us on a map.

The second part of the rationale is that whether we are in farmlands, villages, the middle of the Tioga or Loyalsock Forest, in large or small towns, or even in the City of Williamsport, we are journeying through the wilds—both literally (look around us) and spiritually. While many of us view the wilderness as a place we'd prefer to avoid, Scripture shows us numerous times where God encounters people in the wilds.

For Jesus, places of solitude were where He often went to find rest, renewal, and reprieve for the work ahead. Even before He began His public ministry, He went into the wilderness for 40 days, tended by angels, and overcame the temptations thrown at Him. What if, in this new season of our ministry, our churches could be the "wilds" for people once again?

A place where people retreat to encounter God and prepare for the ministry ahead. A place where God offers correction and rebuke in a community that will care for you through it (see the stories of Israel wandering in the wilderness). A place where, even when you feel lost and alone, God shows up on the road to meet you (see the followers of Jesus on the road to Emmaus). What if we embraced that wilderness theme, reminding ourselves that

until Christ comes again, we will be in a wilderness? But it is in the silence, the chaos, and the rest of the wilds that God can find us right where we need to be.

Friends, I am excited—not just for a name but for the vision of our churches being physical and spiritual places for people to encounter a God who loves, provides rest, corrects our course, and gives us what we need for the work ahead. May you go boldly into the Northern Wilds with faith, believing that God is leading us, will find us, and will provide exactly what we need along the way.

Over the next couple of weeks, now that District Conference, One on Ones, and the Onboarding Process is over, you all will start to see some district announcements go out of some ways that we can be on this journey together. There will be times of prayer, times of study, times of fellowship, and times of working together. God's got us, and while I can doubt a lot of things, I don't doubt that God will be faithful.

Peace,
Pastor Daniel



DISTRICT GATHERINGS **OCTOBER 13-17, 2024**

For Bishop Héctor A. Burgos-Núñez to begin to become acquainted with the Susquehanna Conference and our five districts, there will be clergy/laity gatherings in each district.

Gathering for the Williamsport District is taking place October 16 at First UMC in Muncy. Clergy can attend from 1:00-3:00 pm, and then laity and any clergy who could not attend the afternoon are invited from 6:30-8:00pm. You don't need to register.

OCTOBER IS PASTOR APPRECIATION MONTH

Pastor Appreciation Day is Sunday, October 13, 2024. The whole month of October is Pastor Appreciation Month. This season is a special time to honor those who minister to us and celebrate the impact they make on our lives. It reminds us to recognize the work of our pastors. In 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13 Paul began the concept of clergy appreciation when he stated that those who work hard among us should be held in the highest regard for their work.

Pastors work diligently and tirelessly to serve God and those they have been called to shepherd. They provide pastoral care; they teach and help people grow as disciples. Pastors, and many times their families, sacrifice and give unselfishly. Pastor Appreciation Day is the perfect time to show pastors what a good job they are doing and to encourage them to keep up the good work. So, consider doing something special to remind your pastor how much they mean to you and your congregation.

REFRESH YOUR INNOVATION

Saturday, October 19, 2024, 9:00 am - 4:00 pm

Do you desire to innovate, but struggle to know where to begin? Does your church need to adapt and think outside the box? Refresh your innovation is for you! During this hybrid event, you will have the opportunity to hear from and interact with Rev. Dr. Candace Lewis-President-Dean of Gammon Theological Seminary, Paul Nixon-President of Epicenter Group, and Luke Edwards- Associate Director of Church Development in the Western NC Conference.

All the presenters will be zooming in so you can choose to attend fully online or register to attend an in-person gathering at a host church in each of our supervisory areas. We encourage you to bring a team as collaborative thinktank time will be built into the schedule of this event.

Lunch will be provided for those who register to attend in-person at one of the hosting churches.

Registration fee: \$10/person

Teams of 4 - \$35 • Teams of 5 - \$45 • Teams of 6 - \$50


Learn more at


INSTALLATION SERVICE FOR CONFERENCE SUPERINTENDENT, REV. DANIEL WILT

The district will be holding an Installation service on **Sunday, October 20 at 3:00 pm** for our new Conference Superintendent. This will take place at the **United Methodist Church of Wellsboro, 36 Main Street, Wellsboro, PA**. This service is open to both clergy and laity. Daniel will be preaching and there will be special music. **Please email the district office (williamsport@susumc.org) if you plan to attend.**

FROM WESLEY FOREST:

It's been a very wet, stormy few weeks at the Forest and we're going to need your help! Our Fall Work Day is on the books for **Saturday, October 26th**.

 As a result of some crazy weather, we've had a significant amount of trees come down on our trails and near our buildings. We're going to need your help splitting wood, picking up some flood debris, and cleaning up some of our indoor and outdoor gathering spaces.

 If you are willing to spend a day in the Forest with us, please use the link below to register! All ages and abilities are welcome and encouraged to come out for the day. Lunch will be provided!

Link to Register:

CHARGE CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

NORTHEAST CLUSTER - Sunday, November 3 at 2:00 or 6:00 PM at Athens UMC (Cluster Leader, Rev. Dr. Dianne Bentley, will send out the list of times for each church).

MANSFIELD CLUSTER - Monday, November 4 at 6:00 PM at Mansfield First UMC

EAST LYCOMING & EAST LYCOMING EXTENSION CLUSTER - Sunday, November 10 at 2:00 PM at Muncy First

MONTOURSVILLE CLUSTER - Sunday, November 10 at 6:00 PM at Montoursville Faith

LEWISBURG/SELINGROVE CLUSTER - Monday, November 11 at 6:00 PM at Selingsgrove Christ UMC

MIDDLEBURG/MIFFLINBURG CLUSTER - Tuesday, November 12 at 6:00 PM location TBD

MILTON CLUSTER - Wednesday, November 13 at 6:00 PM at Milton St. Andrew's

DANVILLE/NORTHUMBERLAND/SUNBURY CLUSTER - Thursday, November 14 at 6:00 PM at St. Peter's Riverside

LYCOMING CREEK CLUSTER - Saturday, November 16 at 2:00 PM at Heshbon Park UMC

TROY/CANTON CLUSTER - Sunday, November 17 at 2:00 PM at East Canton UMC

COWANESQUE VALLEY CLUSTER - Wednesday, November 20 at 6:00 PM location TBD

GREATER WILLIAMSPORT CLUSTER & JERSEY SHORE CLUSTER - Thursday, November 21 at 6:00 PM at Pine Street

Please be sure to have an Elder lined up to conduct your charge conference. If you need a list of Elders who are willing to help out, please contact the district office williamsport@susumc.org. Thank you.

APP FOR CHRISTIAN SMALL-GROUP STUDIES

Discover the new app for Christian small-group studies! Imagine small groups of 6-16 people studying, praying, and meeting weekly together on an app. All study materials are available in text and audio. This means you can listen to your assignments! Imagine the value of a 24/7 prayer thread, the Bible and a one-click link to your zoom meeting all on your phone, tablet or computer.

OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

1 Pastor Kristi Webster
4 Rev. R. Bruce Wallace
Mrs. Kelly Molter
9 Mrs. Brianna Weems
Pastor Greg Molter
12 Mrs. Linda Helt
18 Pastor Sharon Kent
19 Mrs. Margaret Piper
Rev. Gere Reist
26 Pastor Connie Waugh
28 Rev. Dr. Philip Wanck
Mr. Steve Huels



29 Rev. Edward Preston
30 Rev. Larry Leland
Mrs. Jean Shultz

OCTOBER ANNIVERSARIES

1 Pastor Ann & Chuck Runnels
9 Pastor Tammy & Terry Seyler
10 Rev. Brian & Susan Lucas
12 Pastor Jennifer & Gary Jones – 10th!
15 Rev. Art & Sharon Gladfelter
23 Charles & Linda Thomas

SUSQUEHANNA CLERGY CONSIDERING RETIREMENT IN 2024-2025

As the Appointive Cabinet prepares for the 2025 appointment season, I want to share important information for any pastor (Local Pastor or Elder) currently serving in either local church or extension ministry and may be considering retirement.

Retirement Request Timeline:

First, it is essential to remember that appointments are fixed for a year from July 1 to June 30. While there may be a few extenuating circumstances, as the Cabinet does its work, the understanding is that retirements for this cycle will be effective July 1, 2025. Clergy are expected to complete their current missional assignment on June 30, 2025.

WILLIAMSPORT DISTRICT BOUNDARIES TRAINING

Saturday, November 2

Mansfield First UMC, 67 E. Wellsboro Street, Mansfield PA 16933

From 9am to 3pm. We will have a working lunch, so please bring a bagged lunch with you. Rev. Marian Hartman will be leading the training. Registration form will follow...

READY TO LEVEL UP YOUR MINISTRY?

November 8-9, 2024

Christ Church, 44 Highland Rd, Bethel Park, PA 15102 (just outside of Pittsburgh)

You and a team from your church / charge are invited to attend Level Up!

Each of the keynote speakers and workshop facilitators have been specifically chosen not just for their subject matter knowledge, but because they are real-world practitioners of the ministry concepts they teach. This event is designed to be a catalyst for your ministry as you discern and take your next steps... in 2025 and beyond.

[UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH ANNUAL DAY](#)

November 2, 2024

First UMC, 64 W. Chocolate Ave, Hershey PA 17033

"BE STILL AND KNOW THAT I AM GOD" – Program Led by Melanie Walborn

Participants will experience several musical ways to quiet the mind and spirit in preparation for prayer and meditation.

Mission Project: Please bring gently used winter items, new AAA, AA, D batteries, new sternos, and flashlights to benefit Bethesda Mobile Mission, a street ministry in Harrisburg. For more info, to go: <https://susumc.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/SUSUWF-Annual-Day-2025.pdf>

[NEWSLETTER FROM THE FELLOWSHIP OF LOCAL PASTORS AND ASSOCIATE MEMBERS](#)

Click - [FLPAM Newsletter - Fall 2024 Edition](#)

[VIM COORDINATOR SPEAKING AVAILABILITY](#)

Hello, I'm Michelle Schwartzman and I'm the Conference Volunteers in Mission Coordinator.

There are amazing things happening in our conference with missions. I've been told by GLOBAL Ministries that the Susquehanna Conference is known for being strong in Mission! What a nice compliment to be known to be in service with others.

I wanted to get the word out that I'm available for speaking engagements. There are range of ways I can do this: 5-minute mission moments, Sunday school classes, mission teams, mission committees and so forth. I'm also available to preach based around the purpose and call of Volunteers in Mission (VIM). This can be for Mission Sundays or to fill in while your pastor is away.

A lot of our local churches don't know the ins and outs of VIM, if your church is in mission locally (outside of church property), in Pennsylvania, and across the US, your team is eligible for and asked to receive our free insurance. I can also connect international teams to UMVIM Inc. for low-cost insurance. In addition to the insurance, I provide training for team leaders and team participants...it's great for all to be on board and delegation is a wonderful thing. I provide resources for teams including useful team forms. I can help your team connect to a place to serve and help you gather additional team members. One of my favorite things is that I can help celebrate the mission. You can submit an article, and it is posted on our website, published in the LINK, and on the VIM Facebook page. It not only lets the conference in on celebrating you, but it also gives the conference ideas on serving. We are a connectional church, and I love hearing what our local churches are up to!

Please contact me for the speaking events, insurance, training, and connection. I'm looking forward to it! Michelle Y Schwartzman, Volunteers in Mission Coordinator. vim@susumc.org / 717-766-7441 ext. 3105 <https://www.susmb.org/vim/>

[GRIEVING THROUGH THE HOLIDAYS](#)

Support for those who struggle with the loss of a loved one.

Sundays - 2:00-3:30 PM at Heshbon Park UMC

October 13, November 10, December 8, January 12

Mondays - 7:00-8:30 PM via Zoom

October 14, November 11, December 9, January 13

Attend one session or multiple sessions. Flyer attached.



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DISTRICT OFFICE HOURS
Monday – Thursday
9:00 AM – 3:00 PM
Closed Fridays



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