



# Greater Southwest District

Michigan Conference

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Rev. Dwayne Bagley, District Superintendent  
dbagley@michiganumc.org • cell: 269.370.2800

Mandana Nordbrock, Executive Assistant  
mnordbrock@michiganumc.org • office: 269.372.7525

2350 Ring Road North, Suite B • Kalamazoo, MI 49006

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Grace to You and Peace in the Name of Jesus Christ,

By now you should have already received the schedule for your 2019 Church Conference. I hope that your date will work for your congregation. We allowed input into our scheduling process and drafted the schedule based on that feedback and your church's geographical proximity in relation to others. If the assigned date will not work, please call the District Office, but please know that changes to the schedule will be extremely difficult to make at this point.

Throughout this past summer a verse from a Charles Wesley hymn kept returning to me, "And are we yet alive and see each other's face?". The questions it poses seem worth reflection so, I offer the verse to your churches as a way to shape our shared time at this year's Church Conference. I would like each congregation to present a "State of the Church" report which includes any "life signs" you wish to highlight as an answer to the question, "Are we yet alive?" Some suggestions include the following: reports on the financial health of the congregation, testimonies from new or longtime members about what the ministry of the church has meant to them, sharing details about recently begun or existing mission programs and projects, and any account of how discipleship formation happens in your congregation.

Also, we will continue to work with EM360 this year. In this second year of the process, pastors and their SPRCs (or governance boards) are invited to review progress on the goals they set as part of last year's outcomes from the online survey they completed. Due to the delays in completing assessments for some churches, you may be at a place where you are just setting shared ministry goals. This is okay. I would encourage you to make the process work for you in your setting. Please note that churches that are served by a retired pastor are not required to invest in the EM360 formation process. You may use the evaluation tools available on the Michigan Conference website. And if you have received a new appointment in 2019, we have a separate instrument for you which will be available by September 16. No church on the District is required to do the Profile of the Church, but other reports (membership, trustees, lay leadership, finance) should be prepared. A checklist of requirements is included with this mailing. Please review and send the materials to the District Office one week before your Church Conference date.

As always, if you have questions or concerns, please feel free to contact the District Office or email me directly. I am looking forward to our time together this fall.

God's Peace,

Rev. Dwayne Bagley  
District Superintendent

encl: 2019 CC updated schedule  
2019 CC forms checklist  
2019 CC agenda