



Greater Southwest District

Michigan Conference

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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Grace and Peace to You:

We are looking forward to 2023 Church Conferences. This is the first year in a while that will feel like Church Conference season of days gone by. Note that we are calling these annual meetings “Church Conferences”- that means everyone in your congregation is invited to attend, although only members may vote. It was my best laid plan to do all these in person and on site. However, I realize that many of your churches have adopted a practice of holding meetings virtually. So, you have choices to make. You may elect to hold your Church Conference in person, or it may be a virtual meeting. You can also choose the time for your Church Conference: daytime, afternoon, or evening. If there are specific days that you would request that we avoid because of things going on in the life of the church, please let us know and we will do our best to accommodate those considerations. Our District Administrator has created a poll that allows you to indicate your preference. <https://michigan-reg.brtapp.com/2023ChurchConferenceScheduleSurvey> Once we have your responses, we will draft a schedule.

This year I am asking all congregations to complete the Church Profile that is part of the Church Conference material. I believe it will be a good investment of your time since it will cause you to take a close look at your church and assess post-Covid realities. You are also being asked to include a “State of the Church” presentation in your Church Conference. The material you compile for your Church profile will inform and shape that presentation. What to include in this presentation is up to you. My only guidance is that it should last no longer than 10-20 minutes, it should present things that will capture a snapshot of your congregation in 2023 and should be meaningful to the people in attendance. Possible formats include PowerPoint presentations, reports from ministry areas, liturgical dance, magic acts and/or ballads written for the occasion.

I’m looking forward to what will likely be my final round of Church Conferences as the District Superintendent of the Greater Southwest District. I don’t know what my future holds, but I’m trying to focus my best energies and efforts in finishing well and making each remaining moment matter. I have been increasingly aware that none of us gets to choose the times we live in, we only get to choose what we do with the time we are given. I am praying for grace enough to make the best possible use of the time I have left with the people of the Greater Southwest District.

Stay Grounded in Grace.

Dwayne Bagley
Superintendent, Greater Southwest District