



# The Parish Print

May & June 2024

A publication of The Manteno United Methodist Church

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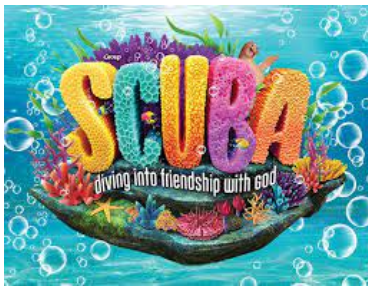
Website: [Mantenoumc.org](http://Mantenoumc.org)

year we will celebrate the 50th Anniversary of U are U!

## VBS 2024

### June 2nd-6th

Mark your calendars! Come dive into friendship with God - Sunday, June 2nd - Thursday, June 6th from 6:00-8:00 PM.



Register now at [mantenoumc.org](http://mantenoumc.org). Please reach out to Jenny Stawick if you are available to volunteer. We need you!



## U are U Sunday

Sunday, May 5th was such a fun worship service with the extra special music from our U are U Preschoolers. In honor of Teacher Appreciation Week a donation was made to Let's Ketchup - a local K3 organization that's helps pay off lunch debt. Please start going through old photo albums and scrapbooks - next

## END OF YEAR SUNDAY SCHOOL PARTY



Sunday, May 19th

Join us for tons of fun to celebrate the end of another wonderful year of Sunday School.

Dear Manteno UMC members, friends, and family,

Greetings in the agape-love of Jesus Christ and the grace of the Holy Spirit! You may have seen the United Methodist General Conference made the news more than usual over the last few weeks. Some of you followed it live on-line or watched it on Youtube afterward, one of the perks of our modern cyber-age. There is so much information to sift through that it can be overwhelming.

Plus, there are the expected rumors and disinformation to sort out. Expect lots of follow-up reports and meetings as our conference and districts and church continue to try to clarify and process everything. We need to take time to understand and process what General Conference means for us as a local church in Manteno IL, in part so we can clearly explain to those who ask us what it all means. I will also direct you to more official news sources like our conference website, [igrc.org](http://igrc.org) and [UMNews](http://UMNews).

As our [UMNews](http://UMNews) says, "It could be argued that this was the most consequential General Conference since the 1968 assembly that created The United

# The Parish Print

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Methodist Church. The church going forward from here is different than it was just a few weeks ago. Not all agree with the more inclusive stance the delegates took, but the passage of worldwide regionalization ensures all may continue ministry in their own context while remaining part of the connection.” <https://www.umnews.org/en/news/may-3-wrap-up-historic-conference-comes-to-a-close>.

Here are some of my own clarifications and observations from behind the front lines as an observer. This conference was very different from any I’ve observed in the past.

- There was healthier input, mutual respect, and teamwork between people of different nationalities.
- Women spoke up more on the floor, as did “queer” delegates.
- The attitude was one of more Christian cooperation than opposition and undermining.
- The first big change our delegates approved was Regionalization. Regionalization is an effort to repent and curtail American UMC colonialism over a very international church. The US would be a separate and equal region like the Central Conferences in Africa, Europe, and Asia.
- The US has always dominated the General Conference with number of delegates, taking most of the time on the floor with our own concerns, and imposing our decisions on the rest of the world without considering their issues and listening to them.
- The plan for Regionalization is a constitutional one and will have to be ratified by 2/3 of delegates of our annual conferences which may take a year.

The next major focus was on changing language and policies condemning and excluding people for their sexual orientation and gender identity, blocking ordination, and criminalizing pastors conducting same-sex weddings

- The phrase stating that “homosexuality is incompatible with Christian teaching” (first added in 1972) has been removed from our Book of Discipline.
- Restrictions obstructing the “self-avowed practicing homosexual” candidate for ministry or a pastor due to their sexual orientation or gender identity were removed.
- Pastors are no longer to be punished, put on trial, or defrocked for conducting same-sex unions, and

churches will not be punished for hosting weddings.

- All of the legislation around these topics passed by clear majority and went into effect as soon as GC closed on May 3 at 6 pm EST.
- At the same time, the UMC does not seek to exclude people who are against homosexuality and gay marriage.
- In fact, a clear and easy path was made for disaffiliated churches to return to the UMC.
- Pastors may still refuse to marry anyone if it goes against their conscience.
- Churches will not be punished for refusing to host any wedding that goes against their conscience.
- Churches will not be forced to have an LGBTQ+ pastor.

Many other decisions were made that impact the life and nature of the UMC, here are just a few:

- We are going to be in full communion with the Episcopal Church, our sister from our mother Anglican Church of England.
- Deacons (who are ordained but not itinerant) now have the right to celebrate sacraments of baptism, communion, and marriage in their place of ministry, like prisons and homeless shelters.
- The Conference shared its first public apology for sexual misconduct in churches by staff and by clergy.
- We will be reducing the number of bishops in the US.
- Africa is gaining two new bishops.
- We approved a new budget which is much lower than the past.
- We have a new pension plan.
- We elected a new judicial council (like the Supreme Court).
- We adopted a new set of Social Principles (guidelines, not laws).

There may be many thoughts and emotional reactions – celebrations, worship, dancing, praying, hugs, tears, relief, confusion, disbelief, anger, grief for those who died or left before these changes, feelings of betrayal, frustration at lack of communication, grief for disaffiliated churches and members who left. It’s normal to have multiple reactions at the same time. I have. I think most of us

## The Parish Print

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are still in shock. Take time to process this information and your feelings and care for yourself.

Members, pastors, and friends on all sides of the larger church debate have been waiting to see if this General Conference changes would finally force them to leave the UMC. We had the first of several information/reaction meetings after church on Sunday, and I was touched by the response of those who came. We do not all believe or think alike. But we do all love alike. We are all committed to staying. Thank you for being family.

For those whose immediate reaction is to leave the church, I encourage you to take more time to consider that the changes actually give the local church more authority over their level of inclusivity. It's up to Manteno UMC. I also believe it's important for Christians to be a fully committed member of a church that helps you grow in your relationship with God and empowers your loving service to others. If that is another congregation, I understand and bless you. Please remember you will always be family, visit anytime, and the doors are always open if you change your mind.

For those members and friends who have felt unwelcome or unsafe, if you've been uncertain if you and your family are really loved, or if you needed to protect yourself from harmful language of incompatibility and exclusion, I encourage you to consider coming back home to Manteno UMC. You have always been part of our family, and our doors and hearts and minds are always open for you when you are ready.

You may have suggestions and questions about when and what will happen next for Manteno UMC. We will have meetings and times to process this over the summer. Feel free to call me at 815-263-9698.

I have faith we will continue to grow as a mission-oriented church serving our communities, a family that loves each other and agrees to disagree, a beacon shining Christ's light of hope in the darkness, God's agape-love to all we meet.

**Love,**

**Rev. Lana J. Robyne**

### **Reminder: Check Out Team Notes & the Church Calendar**

Remember that the minutes from Team meetings are now being posted for all to view on the bulletin board. They are also available online at <http://tinyurl.com/mumcnotes>. You can also stay up to date with our event calendar on our church website at <https://mantenoumc.org>. If you are a Google Calendar user, you can add it to your own calendar with this link: <http://tinyurl.com/mumcaddcalendar>. There's always a lot going on, check it out!

Submitted by Denise Caparula, Ad Council Secretary

***Thank you!***

***Thank you all so much  
for the thoughts,  
prayers, and cards  
after my knee surgery.***

***My recovery is going  
well and my therapists***

***are very pleased with my progress so far.***

***I've been diligently working on my  
therapy "homework" three times a day  
and am now doing out-patient therapy as  
well. Thank you again for thinking of  
me.***

***Sincerely,  
Diane Preston***



## HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY



In honor of Mother's Day, a donation has been made on behalf of all the moms in our congregation to Cunningham Children's Home.

## MARK YOUR CALENDARS

### 2024 BIG REACH

October 13th

We are getting ready for our Manteno UMC day of community service. Please let Jenny Stawick know of any needs in our community that can use our support.

## Raise Right Gift Cards

Orders Placed every Tuesday

Visit the church website

[mantenoumc.org](http://mantenoumc.org) to view the list of gift cards. The church earns a rebate on each card that is ordered to help pay off the mortgage.

## MUMS - All are welcome!

Do you work from home or are you newly retired — you are invited and welcome to join MUMS! It is always a great time of fellowship. Join us on May 21st at noon for a delicious luncheon.

Please RSVP to Sue Cronin at 815-468-9765

## Congrats Class of 2024



### *Middle School*

Cade Bechard  
Kendall Blanchette  
Sydney Pilbeam  
Emily Young

### *High School*

Addison Blanchette  
Danielle Lauridsen  
Kyle Heppe

## U ARE U PRESCHOOL REGISTER NOW FOR FALL 2024

Happy Spring from U are U Preschool! Registration is open for the 2024-2025 school year. Please visit [www.uareupreschool.com/register](http://www.uareupreschool.com/register) for more information. Thank you to everyone that came out for our Subway Fundraiser Night! We were able to raise over \$200 for our program.

## OUR CHURCH DIRECTORY IS ONLINE!

To view the directory online, go to [members.InstantChurchDirectory.com](http://members.InstantChurchDirectory.com) and follow the prompts under "Sign In" to "Create a login now." Please remember, you must confirm your email address before you can sign in.

There is also a free mobile app available for download at the Apple® App store in iTunes®, Google Play™ store and the Amazon Fire App Store. Simply search for "[Instant Church Directory](http://Instant Church Directory)" to get the download. You will need to use your email address as listed in our directory to create a log-in the first time you use the directory online and via the mobile app.

You may also access the directory on our website at [mantenoumc.org](http://mantenoumc.org) with the password: MantenoUMC. Please contact Jenny at 815-468-0057 with any questions

## BLESSING BOX ITEM OF THE MONTH TOILETRIES

The Missions /Outreach team will have a basket by the sanctuary door each Sunday for the Blessings Box. Each month we will have certain items highlighted but any items are come.

**During the remainder of May & June we will be collecting toiletries.**

## Raise Right Gift Cards

Did you know you can buy gift cards from the Raise Right app for the stores you are already shopping and the church earns money for free! Use this code: <https://www.raiseright.com/enroll?enrollCode=L8FL41D863681>

Also, orders are placed most Tuesdays for physical cards that arrive by Sunday of the same week. Order forms are available at church.



## SUMMER GROCERY DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM

Be on the lookout for volunteer sign ups and donations needs for our 5th summer of the grocery distribution programs to support local families in need. We will serve 5 Wednesdays this summer: June 12th & 26th, July 10th & 24th, and August 14th.

## May/June 2024 Calendar Upcoming Events

- May 8 - Blood Drive, 2-6pm
- May 14 - Finance Meeting, 5:30pm
- May 14 - Ad Council Meeting, 7pm
- May 19th - End of Sunday School Party during worship
- May 21 - MUMS Lunch, 12pm
- June 2-6 - VBS, 6-8pm
- June 11 - Finance Meeting, 5:30pm
- June 11 - Ad Council Meeting, 7pm

## Weekly Ministries

- Mondays - Bible Study, 7pm
- Wednesdays - Book Club, 3pm
- Wednesdays - Men's Bible Study, 6pm
- Thursdays - Loving Stitches, 1-3pm
- Fridays - Yoga 8am