

## WUMC Weekly Update: May 1, 2024

### 1. Worship

Sunday was a beautiful Sabbath celebration! Bishop Ken Carter delivered an inspiring message on our connection and our call to love. He joined Pastor Karen and District Superintendent Lory Beth Huffman in the recognition and blessing of Jim Brooks as a Certified Lay Minister and affirmed his appointment as Assistant Pastor. If you have questions about what this means you can check out the FAQ letter that is attached.

I encourage you to watch the entire service. You will be inspired. You can click [here to watch on Facebook](#) and [here to watch on YouTube](#)

\*There is no attached sermon this week due to Bishop Carter preaching.

### 2. General Conference Update

If you are interested in General Conference information you can [check out the GC resource page](#). There are links to daily summaries or you can livestream the conference from there as well.

I will share two updates because I know you will see something on the news about it and I want to explain what may seem a bit confusing.

**Regionalization:** Last week, the Conference approved (by a 78% approval vote) regionalization. I explained this a few weeks ago - it means that we will hold our essential doctrines (which cannot be changed) in union with the world-wide United Methodist Church but other sections of the Discipline can be different, based on the contextual ministry needs of certain regions. It allows the US to set ministry guidelines that make sense for us but allows Africa to set guidelines that make sense for Africa. This still must be presented to all Annual Conferences for a vote and must be approved by 2/3 of Annual Conferences in order to be affirmed. In other words, this will not be a quick process.

**Removal of restrictive language:** Today, in a 93% approval vote - the Conference approved the removal of discriminatory language that prohibited LGBTQ persons from becoming ordained clergy, as well as prohibiting ordained clergy from officiating same gender weddings. We make this historic vote, acknowledging that as individuals we interpret scripture in different ways but as a world-wide church, we can find unity in this diversity.

Let us remain clear on what this means for us: It means we are moving toward being a more welcoming, inclusive church who values the sacred worth of ALL people. It does NOT change the appointment process. When a United Methodist Church is to receive a new minister, the SPRC committee is tasked with working with the District Superintendent to find the best candidate for your church. If a church is hesitant to receive a clergy person for any reason, there is a process for resolution. It does NOT change the process for performing or recognizing weddings in the church. Currently, every church can set their own wedding policy and every clergy can decide for themselves what weddings they will officiate and what weddings they will not. What does change is that a United Methodist clergy person can now choose to officiate a same gender wedding and not be punished or lose their credentials. In other words, the door is open to be more inclusive but no one is forced to go against their beliefs.

As the media begins to cover these rulings and others begin to discuss their meanings, please make sure you are seeking the best source of accurate information. If you hear things that concern you or don't make sense to you, please reach out to me (Pastor Karen) and ask. You can text or call 336-293-2697 and I will be happy to explain.

### 3. Bible Study tonight at 5:30

While we plan to begin conversations on the Book of Revelation, we will also take some time to discuss General Conference and what these historic votes mean for our denomination and our church.

4. **Coffee with Karen will meets each Tuesday at 10 at Talia's**

5. **Make plans now to join the Friday Night Foodies this Friday at 5pm at Cagney's.**

6. **Newsletter** - The newsletter is posted on church website the 1<sup>st</sup> of each month. You can find the newsletter by going to **wilkesboroumc.org**. To save printing and postage costs, we only mail it to members who do not have internet/email. All submissions are due the 17<sup>th</sup> of each month. That's today! ☺ There you will also be able to find several other helpful items including the **Weekly Update and Sermons**. In addition, you can find each week's **Worship Bulletin** on the front page of our website.

Go to **wilkesboroumc.org**

Click the **About Us** tab

Click the **Newsletter** tab

Click the month you would like to view

7. **Office Volunteers Needed May 16th & 17th and May 20th & 21st**

I will be out of the office on the above mentioned dates. We are seeking church members that can volunteer to come sit in the church office from 9am - 1pm each of those days. As of right now, the 21st is covered. I need three more volunteers or one person who can come all three days. Please let me know if you are available. Thanks!

8. **Summer Literacy Volunteers** are needed to read with children, help with snacks, pick up & return library books, chaperone walking field trips, assist during breakfast and lunch, serve meal to families on Monday nights, hang out with children on Monday nights during Family Enrichment.

9. **Important Dates To Remember:**

Join us **Sunday for worship at 10am & Sunday school in the Ecclesia Room at 11am.**

**UMM Annual Golf Tournament; Thursday; June 13<sup>th</sup> at Oakwoods Country Club.**

*(For more info or to sign up to play and/or to be a sponsor; please see Robert Rizoti or another member of the UMM)*

**American Red Cross Blood Drive** will be in the fellowship hall on Monday; **June 17<sup>th</sup>**. For more info or to register, please see Margaret Cooper.

10. **Prayer List** (names in **BOLD** are our most recent prayer requests)

Richard Ayers

Mary Lou Brooks

**Laura Davenport**

**Francois Hughes**

**Cynthia Sturdivant**

**Gary York**

Gretchen Barelski, **Mary Lou Brooks**, Chuck Byers, Susan Conway, Brayden Crawford, and his mom, Kyaira Priest (Jan Taylor's great grandson and granddaughter), Jim Day, **Charles Drum**, Kyson Farley, Megan Fiedler, Billy & Kay Hayes, **Greg Luck**, Kent & Brenda Lunsford, John Mabry, Sherry Mabry, Joy Miller, Stephen Nobles, **Glenda Pierce**, Ann Snyder, Mary Summerford, Bob Taylor, Herb Taylor, Sarah Webster, T.A. Welborn, Tempa Welborn, Ricky Wiles, Seth Wilson, Darlene Winslow, Ukraine, our planet in crisis, the US, Israel, Gaza and Middle East, for God to bring Peace to all World Leaders, everyone impacted by last week's tornado and the **UMC Conference**.

**NURSING FACILITIES:** Betty Beshears (Rose Glen Manor), Brenda Dale (Wilkes Health and Rehab), Bobbi Blake (Rose Glen Village), Wanda Garwood (Rose Glen Village), Barbara Groce (Villages of Wilkes), Jenny Miller (Westwood Hills Nursing and Rehab Facility), Caroline Randolph (The Pines in Davidson), Rosie Shephard (Rose Glen Manor)

Blessings,  
Dottie

Greetings Faith Family, on May 1, 2024, Dr. Jim Brooks will officially be appointed as an Assistant Pastor to our congregation. This past Sunday, Bishop Ken Carter, District Superintendent Lory Beth Huffman, and I commissioned Jim for service and offered a blessing for his ministry.

Several folks had questions after the service about what this appointment means for Jim and for our church. Here are a few FAQ's:

**1. Will Jim's hours and salary change?**

Jim has served as your Music Director for almost 35 years as a salaried employee under the direction of the Staff Parish Relations Committee, who annually evaluates job descriptions and salary. His appointment as Assistant Pastor will function in the same way. There are no changes planned for 2024.

**2. What is the difference between an Associate Pastor and an Assistant Pastor?**

An Associate Pastor is an ordained elder (a clergyperson) in The United Methodist Church who has attended seminary and passed board examinations.

An Assistant Pastor is not a clergyperson but is a lay person who has received training, passed an examination process, and been approved to assist an ordained elder in ministry to the church. While Jim will hold the title Pastor of Worship and the Arts and can be called Pastor - his appointment is as a certified lay pastor in the church. (Throughout history the Methodist Church has relied heavily on lay ministers for the work of the church.)

**3. Does this mean Jim might be appointed to another church?**

No. Jim's appointment as a Certified Lay Minister is specific to Wilkesboro United Methodist Church and is not part of the itinerant system that ordained clergy uphold.

**4. Is Jim retiring from his teaching job?**

No! Jim will be the first to tell you his main calling is teaching. For 39 years he has shaped the lives of teenagers and inspired them to become their best selves. He is called to serve this role and continues to love his full-time vocation. His calling as Assistant Pastor is simply a new reflection of his part-time service to the church in which he builds off his vast experience in educational leadership and serves the faith community in new ways.

**5. What will Jim's new role entail?**

As Assistant Pastor of Worship and the Arts, Jim will uphold the usual duties of music director that he has filled for the past 35 years. In addition, he will now serve as the assistant to the pastor in a variety of ways. He will assist in some pastoral care duties, he will become a vital part of the Church Leadership Council, he will continue his work in the planning and leading of worship and special services, and he will be looking for new ways to intersect worship with the creative arts community around us. He will seek opportunities to teach more and will be available as a spiritual leader to the congregation as a whole, not just those who participate in music ministry.

Jim has taken all the required courses, been examined, and approved by the District Committee of Ministry, been approved by the Conference Council of Laity, and appointed to this role by the Bishop and Cabinet of the Western North Carolina Conference. We celebrate his work, rejoice in his calling, and anticipate new and creative expressions of faith in the year to come.

Congratulations Pastor Jim!

It is a great blessing to watch someone live into their calling,  
Pastor Karen