



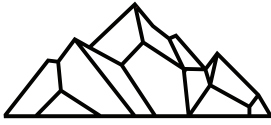
# SINGING THE LORD'S SONG

## Service of Recognition, Commissioning, and Ordination

Sunday, June 13, 2021 at 1 PM



**Michigan Conference**  
The United Methodist Church



## WELCOME

Welcome to this significant service of worship and celebration of ministry. This afternoon we will recognize, commission and ordain those whom God has called into the leadership of the church. All that we do is anchored in the sacrament of baptism and the ministry of all baptized persons. We invite you to participate fully and pray that the Holy Spirit will work within you as we offer praise and thanksgiving to God for gathering, empowering and sending us to be the body and do the work of Christ.

### **Commissioned as Deacons and Elders**

Commissioning relates persons to the ministry of the provisional members within the annual conference. In it, we acknowledge and affirm God's call and the individual's gifts and training for leadership in the local church. We offer our support for their continuing formation as they journey toward ordination and full membership. Those preparing for ordination as elders and serving local congregations are licensed and authorized for sacramental and pastoral duties. Those preparing for ordination as deacons are licensed and authorized for their appropriate specialized ministries.

### **Ordination of Deacons and Elders**

Ordination is understood as the act of the Holy Spirit. As a liturgical act, it is the culmination of a process in which representatives of the whole Church discern and validate the call, gifts and effectiveness for ministry of those being ordained. Ordination of deacons and elders is both to an office and for a lifetime. It confers a new identity in the life of the church as well as authority for ministry. Upon ordination, deacons and elders become accountable to the whole church, to the community of the ordained, and to the order of deacons or elders of which they are a part. The ministry of the deacon is to teach and to form disciples, to lead worship together with other ordained and lay persons, conduct marriages and bury the dead, and lead the congregation in interpreting the needs and hopes of the world. Deacons exemplify Christian discipleship and create opportunities for others to enter into discipleship. The ministry of the elder is expressed by leading the people of God in worship and prayer, by leading persons to faith in Jesus Christ, by exercising pastoral supervision in the congregation, and by leading the Church in obedience to mission in the world.

# PRELUDE

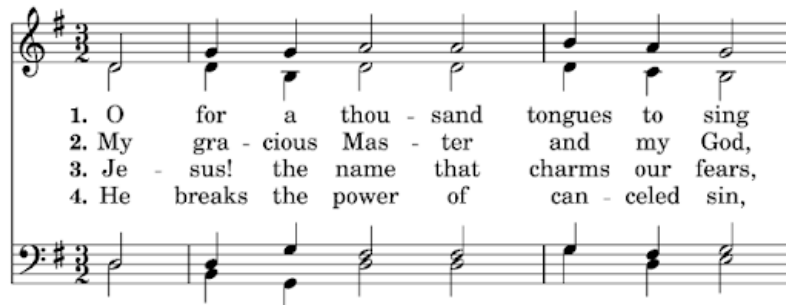
Offertory by John Ness Beck  
Performed by Rev. Caleb Williams

## \*PROCESSIONAL

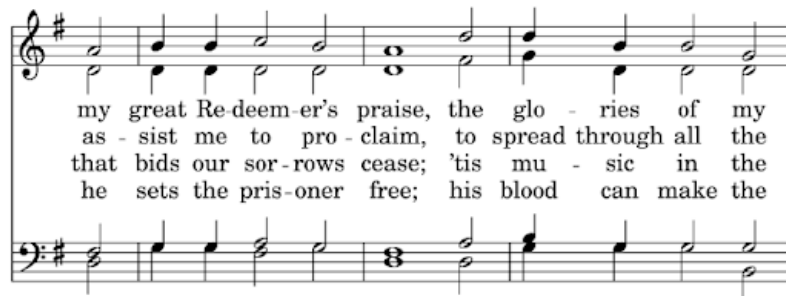
\*Indicates all are invited to stand as you are able.

O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing UMH #57 stanzas 1-5, 7

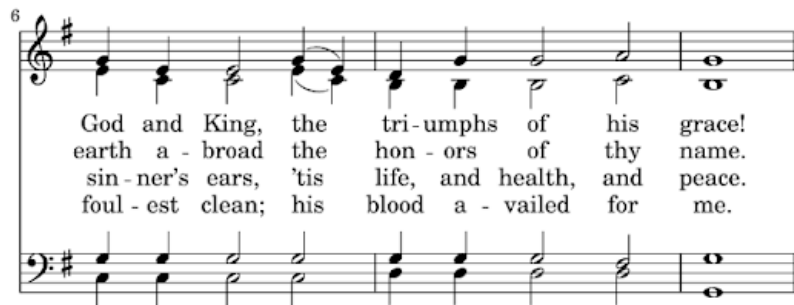
57 O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing



1. O for a thou - sand tongues to sing  
2. My gra - cious Mas - ter and my God,  
3. Je - sus! the name that charms our fears,  
4. He breaks the power of can - celed sin,



my great Re - deem - er's praise, the glo - ries of my  
as - sist me to pro - claim, to spread through all the  
that bids our sor - rows cease; 'tis mu - sic in the  
he sets the pris - oner free; his blood can make the



God and King, the tri - umphs of his grace!  
earth a - broad the hon - ors of thy name.  
sin - ner's ears, 'tis life, and health, and peace.  
foul - est clean; his blood a - vailed for me.

\*May be omitted  
Alt. tone: RICHMOND  
United Methodist Hymnal 57  
WORDS: Charles Wesley, 1739  
MUSIC (ARMON, CM): Carl G. Gläser, arr. by Lowell Mason, 1839

57 O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing

5. He speaks, and listening to his voice,  
new life the dead receive;  
the mournful, broken hearts rejoice,  
the humble poor believe.

7. In Christ, your head, you then shall know,  
shall feel your sins forgiven;  
anticipate your heaven below,  
and own that love is heaven.

## \*GREETING AND PRAYER

Bishop David A. Bard, Bishop of the Michigan Conference of The United Methodist Church:  
The grace of Jesus Christ be with you all.

**People: And also with you.**

The Holy Spirit is among us.

**People: Move us, Holy Spirit!**

Let us pray.

**All: Eternal God, by Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit you gave to your apostles and all your church many excellent gifts. Come upon us gathered here to set apart those who will lead among us by calling and equipping us to fulfill your desire that we do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with you.**

**We pray in the name of Jesus. Amen.**

## \*RECOGNITION OF COMMON MINISTRY AND REAFFIRMATION OF BAPTISM

Sisters and brothers in Christ,  
we are all made one with the death of Jesus Christ and raised with him  
to walk in newness of life in the gift of baptism by water and the Spirit.  
The same Spirit who enlivens us  
empowers us with many and diverse gifts to serve as new creatures,  
renouncing evil, embracing and submitting to Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior,  
and joining together as his body to serve as his representatives in the world.  
We all start here. The Spirit leads us all.

**All: We reaffirm our baptism and our common call to ministry. Thanks be to God!**

## MUSICAL RESPONSE

**Jesu, Jesu** UMH #432 Refrain only

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**Jesu, Jesu**

*Refrain*



Je - su, Je - su, fill us with your love, show  
us how to serve the neigh - bors we have from you.

WORDS: Tom Colvin

MUSIC: Ghana folk song; adapt. Tom Colvin

Words © 1969 Hope Publishing Co.

## PRESENTATION OF PERSONS TO BE RECOGNIZED, COMMISSIONED, OR ORDAINED

***Bishop Bard:***

Who presents these candidates to be commissioned, to be transferred and commissioned, to be recognized, or to be ordained?

***Annette Erbes, Lay Leader:***

On behalf of the laity of local congregations of the Michigan Conference, who have recommended them in our local congregations, we present these candidates with our prayers and support.

***Rev. Barry Petrucci, Chair, Board of Ordained Ministry:***

On behalf of the Board of Ordained Ministry, and the Michigan Conference which has approved them, I present these candidates for commissioning with our prayers and support:

To be commissioned for the work of a Deacon:

**2020 Class**

Michelle Marie King

**2021 Class**

Elisabeth Ann Danielsons

Shonagh Taruza

To be commissioned for the work of an Elder:

**2020 Class**

Martin Timothy Cobb

Jessica Mae Davenport

Eric Max Falker

Susan Elizabeth Hitts

Suzanne Lee Hutchison

Ryan Casey Low Edwardson

Scott William Marsh

Kellas Dale Penny III

Paul Christopher Reissmann IV

Joyce Lee Vanderlip

Jenaba Rebecca Duymovic Waggy

**2021 Class**

Rachael Marie Dunlap

Audrey Savage Mangum

Daniel Dung Nguyen

Stephanie Elaine Norton

I present these candidates to be transferred as Provisional Members or Full Members with our prayers and support:

To be transferred as Provisional Members for the work of an Elder:

**2020 Class**

Vaughn William Thurston-Cox

**To be transferred as Full Members for the work of an Elder:**

**2020 Class**

Jonathan Edward Bratt Carle

Eung Yong Kim

Timothy Lee Kobler

**2021 Class**

Thomas Leo Hoffmeyer

I present these candidates for ordination with our prayers and support:

**For ordination as Deacon:****2020 Class**

Rodney Glenn Gasaway

**For ordination as Elder:****2020 Class**

Dillon Selby Burns

Mary Kathryn Butler-Loring

Matthew David Chapman

Elise Rodgers Low Edwardson

Cydney Michelle Idsinga

**2021 Class**

Robert Paul Blanchard

Christopher Alan Butson

Tania Jana Dozeman

Sean Kent Kidd

YooJin Kim

Tiffany Marie Newsom

Linda Jo Stephan

**Bishop Bard:** We rejoice in the Spirit's work in our lives  
and the lives of these who come to serve and lead among us.

**All: We will uphold them with our prayers and support.**

**Thanks be to God.**

**THE GENERAL EXAMINATION****Bishop Bard:**

My sisters and brothers in Christ, the Church now confirms your calling.

As ordained or commissioned ministers, you are to be coworkers with laity, bishops, elders, deacons, local pastors, provisional members, diaconal ministers, deaconesses, home missionaries, supply pastors, and with all the people of God. Remember you are called to serve rather than to be served, to proclaim the faith of the Church and no other, to look after the concerns of God above all.

So we may know you believe yourselves to be called by

God and that you profess the Christian faith, we ask you:

Do you believe that God has called you to the life and work of set apart ministry?

**I do so believe.**

Do you believe in the Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit  
and confess Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior?

**I do so believe and confess.**

Are you persuaded that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments  
contain all things necessary for salvation through faith in Jesus Christ  
and are the unique and authoritative standard for the Church's faith and life?

**I am so persuaded, by God's grace.**

Will you be faithful in prayer, in the study of the Holy Scriptures,  
and with the help of the Holy Spirit continually rekindle the gift of God that is in you?

**I will, with the help of God.**

Will you do your best to pattern your life in accordance with the teachings of Christ?

**I will, with the help of God.**

Will you, in the exercise of your ministry, lead the people of God to faith in Jesus Christ, participate in the life and work of the community, and seek peace, justice, and freedom for all people?

**I will, with the help of God.**

Will you be faithful to The United Methodist Church, accepting and upholding its order, liturgy, doctrine, and discipline, defending them against all doctrines contrary to God's Holy Word, and committing yourself to be accountable with those serving with you, and to the bishop and those who are appointed to supervise your ministry?

**I will, with the help of God.**

Will you, for the sake of the Church's life and mission, covenant to participate in the life of the order into which you are commissioned, recognized or ordained?

Will you give yourself to God through the order, in order to sustain and build each other up in prayer, study, worship and service under the rule of life set forth in the vows you take this day?

**I will, with the help of God.**

May God, who has given you the will to do these things, give you grace to perform them, that the work begun in you by the Holy Spirit may be brought to perfection.

**All: Amen.**

## **PROCLAMATION AND RESPONSE**

The Scripture Readings

1 Corinthians 4:1-5

\*Matthew 13:24-30

(Please stand for the gospel reading.)

## **SERMON**

*Bishop David A. Bard*

**"Watching the Detectives"**

## **INVITATION TO THE OFFERING**

*Rev. John W. Boley:*

Today's offering will support the Ministerial Education Fund, which assists men and women pursuing pastoral leadership in The United Methodist Church through seminary and continuing education scholarships, funding of our thirteen U.S. United Methodist seminaries, and more. You are invited to give through your Annual Conference offering envelope.

## **OFFERTORY**

*Rev. Caleb Williams*

## **PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING**

*Rev. John W. Boley:*

Spirit of Wisdom, thank you for the call you have placed on each of our lives, and for those you have called into ordained ministry. Bless these gifts, and those they will impact, that we may share in your vision for the world. Amen.

## EXAMINATION OF CANDIDATES FOR COMMISSIONING

*Bishop Bard:*

Provisional members are bound to the service of God, appointed and supervised by the bishop, and guided by ordained and lay colleagues and the Board of Ordained Ministry, as they continue to grow in grace and to practice and perfect their skills in the ministries to which they may later be ordained as Deacon or Elder. This is the way of life and work of a provisional member.

Do you believe that God has called you to continue your preparation toward ordained ministry in this way?

**I do so believe.**

## RECOGNITION OF ORDERS: PROVISIONAL MEMBER TRANSFER

Bishop: One among you first received their call and ministry in another fellowship of Christ's holy Church, and have sought provisional membership in the Michigan Conference of the United Methodist Church.

Vaughn William Thurston-Cox, we recognize and welcome you to serve among us as a provisional Elder in the United Methodist Church.

**People: We receive you with joy! Thanks be to God!**

## COMMISSIONING AND LAYING ON OF HANDS

The Bishop, extending arms over all of the candidates and prays:

*Bishop Bard:*

God of the apostles and prophets, of the martyrs and teachers, you raise up men and women to be apostolic leaders in your Church.

By your Holy Spirit help these, your servants, to understand and live the mystery of your love with boldness and joy. Deepen their sense of purpose as they exercise commissioned ministry. Empower them and those who will walk with them to guide their ministry, together with all of your people, to heal the sick, love the outcast, resist evil, preach the Word, and give themselves freely for your name's sake. **Amen.**

Pour out your Holy Spirit upon Full Name.

Send him/her now to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ, to announce the reign of God, and to equip the Church for ministry, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

## PRESENTATION OF NEWLY COMMISSIONED MEMBERS

Bishop Bard: As you have placed yourselves into the hands of God,

People: And as we have prayed for the Holy Spirit to empower you for your continuing growth in ministry among us,

Bishop Bard: We now send you forth to announce the good news of God's kingdom, and equip disciples of Jesus for ministry.

**People: Lead us to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.**

*Bishop Bard:* I present to you these newly commissioned members of The Michigan Conference of The United Methodist Church!



## MUSICAL RESPONSE

Jesu, Jesu UMH #432 Refrain only

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### Jesu, Jesu

*Refrain*



Je - su, Je - su, fill us with your love, show  
us how to serve the neigh - bors we have from you.

WORDS: Tom Colvin  
MUSIC: Ghana folk song; adapt. Tom Colvin  
Words © 1969 Hope Publishing Co.

## EXAMINATION OF DEACON

*Rev. Dwayne Bagley, District Superintendent of the Greater Southwest District*

A Deacon is called to share in Christ's ministry of servanthood, to relate the life of the community to its service in the world, to lead others into Christian discipleship,  
to nurture disciples for witness and service,  
to lead in worship, to teach and proclaim God's Word,  
to assist Elders and appointed Local Pastors at Holy Baptism and Holy Communion,  
to interpret to the Church the world's hurts and hopes,  
to serve all people, particularly the poor, the sick, and the oppressed,  
and to lead Christ's people in ministries of compassion and justice, liberation and reconciliation, even in the face of hardship and personal sacrifice.

*The Bishop examines the Deacon candidate:*

This is the rule of life and work of a Deacon.

Do you believe that God has called you to the life and work of a Deacon?

**I do so believe.**

Will you, for the sake of the Church's life and mission, covenant to participate in the Order of Deacons?

Will you give yourself to God through the Order of Deacons

in order to sustain and build each other up in prayer, study, worship, and service?

**I will, with the help of God, and with the help of my sisters and brothers in the Order of Deacons.**

## PRAYER FOR DEACON

*Rev. Sue Pethoud, Chair of Order of Deacons:*

We thank you, Living God, that in your great love you sent Jesus Christ to take the form of a servant, becoming obedient even to death on the cross. You have taught us, by His word and example, that whoever would be great among us must be servant of all.

Give this servant grace to be faithful to his promise, constant in his discipleship, and always ready for works of loving service. Give him a share in the ministry of Jesus Christ, who came not to be served, but to serve. **Amen.**

## EXAMINATION OF ELDERS

*Rev. Margie Crawford, District Superintendent of the Midwest District*

An Elder is called to share in the ministry of Christ and of the whole Church:  
 to preach and teach the Word of God  
 and faithfully administer the sacraments of Holy Baptism and Holy Communion;  
 to lead the people of God in worship and prayer; to lead persons to faith in Jesus Christ;  
 to exercise pastoral supervision, to order the life of the congregation and connection,  
 to counsel the troubled, and declare the forgiveness of sin;  
 to lead the people of God in obedience to Christ's mission in the world;  
 to seek justice, peace, and freedom for all people; and to take a responsible place  
 in the government of the Church and in service in and to the community.

*The Bishop:* This is the rule of life and work of an Elder.

Do you believe that God has called you to the life and work of an Elder?

**I do so believe.**

Will you, for the sake of the Church's life and mission, covenant to participate in the Order of Elders?

Will you give yourself to God through the Order of Elders in order to  
 sustain and build each other up in prayer, study, worship, and service?

**I will, with the help of God, and the help of my sisters and brothers in the Order of Elders.**

## PRAYER FOR ELDERS

Rev. Chris Lane, Chair, Order of Elders

We praise you, eternal God, because you have called us to be a priestly people.

We thank you that Christ has overcome death, pouring forth gifts upon your people, making some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, in order to equip the saints, to build up the body of Christ, and to fulfill your gracious purposes in the world. Give to these your servants the grace and power they need to serve you in this ministry. Make them faithful pastors, patient teachers, and wise counselors. Enable them to serve without reproach, to proclaim the gospel, to administer the sacraments, and to offer with all your people spiritual sacrifices acceptable to you, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## RECOGNITION OF ORDERS

*Bishop Bard:*

One among you first received your call and ministry in another fellowship of Christ's Holy Church. You have affirmed the vows of your ordination and embraced our own, committing yourself to accept and uphold the doctrine, liturgy, and discipline of the United Methodist Church.

Rev. Eung Yong Kim, we recognize and welcome you to serve among us as an Elder in full connection in the United Methodist Church.

**People: We receive you with joy! Thanks be to God!**

Three among you are transferring from another annual conference of the United Methodist Church.

Rev. Jonathan Edward Bratt Carle,  
 we recognize and welcome you to serve among us.  
**People: We receive you with joy! Thanks be to God!**

Rev. Timothy Lee Kobler  
 we recognize and welcome you to serve among us.  
**People: We receive you with joy! Thanks be to God!**

Rev. Thomas Hoffmeyer  
 we recognize and welcome you to serve among us.  
**People: We receive you with joy! Thanks be to God!**

## LAYING ON OF HANDS FOR ORDINANDS: INVOCATION OF HOLY SPIRIT

Bishop Bard: The Lord be with you.

**People: And also with you.**

Bishop Bard: Holy Spirit, move among us! Come, Holy Spirit!

**People: Come, Holy Spirit!**

Bishop Bard: These persons are to be ordained by God and the Church for the ministry of Deacon and Elders, to which they have been called by the Holy Spirit.

Let us pray for them.

Bishop Bard:

Come, Holy Spirit; Come, Father of the Poor; Come, Mother of the Broken.

Come, Giver of Gifts, fill the hearts of your faithful,

for without your divine power, no good can come from our work.

Wash what is unclean, water what is dry, heal what is wounded.

Bend what is inflexible, warm what is chilled and guide what is astray.

Grant that these persons to be ordained, and that we, your people,

may follow where you lead and live in joyful obedience to your will,

through Jesus Christ, Savior and Healer of the world.

Bishop Bard: Come upon these, your servants.

**People: Come upon these, your servants.**

**Amen.**

## LAYING ON OF HANDS FOR ORDINANDS: DEACON

Almighty God, pour upon Full Name your Holy Spirit for the office and work of a Deacon in Christ's holy Church. **Amen.**

Name, take authority as a Deacon

to proclaim the Word of God and to lead God's people

in ministries of compassion and justice;

in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Bishop Bard: Full Name, be a Deacon among us.

**People: Thanks be to God. Alleluia!**

## LAYING ON OF HANDS FOR ORDINANDS: ELDERS

Almighty God, pour upon Full Name your Holy Spirit, for the office and work of an Elder in Christ's holy Church. **Amen.**

Name, take authority as an Elder

to preach the Word of God,

to administer the Holy Sacraments

and to order the life of the Church;

in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Bishop Bard: Full Name, be an Elder among us.

**People: Thanks be to God. Alleluia! .**

## PRESENTATION OF THE NEWLY ORDAINED

Bishop Bard: As you have placed yourselves into the hands of God

**People: And as we have prayed for the Holy Spirit**

**to empower you for your ministry among us,**

Bishop Bard: Fulfill your calling as Deacon and Elders in Christ's holy Church.

**People: Lead us to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.**

Bishop Bard: Friends in Christ, it is my utmost joy to present to you those we have ordained.

Please receive them with thanksgiving.

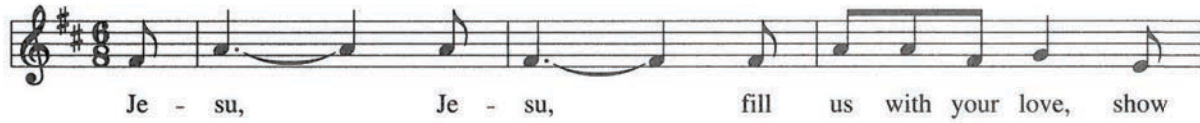
# MUSICAL RESPONSE

Jesu, Jesu UMH #432 Refrain only

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## Jesu, Jesu

*Refrain*



WORDS: Tom Colvin

MUSIC: Ghana folk song; adapt. Tom Colvin

Words © 1969 Hope Publishing Co.

## HYMN OF SERVICE

### The Servant Song

Like the Wesleys before us, when we have something to say that comes from the heart, it often comes out in song.

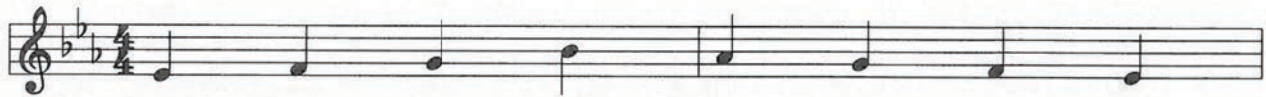
Verse 1-5: Rev. Caleb Williams

Verse 6: Bishop Bard

UNITED IN CHRIST

## The Servant Song


2222



1., 6. Broth - er, sis - ter, let me serve you,  
 2. We are pil - grims on a jour - ney;  
 3. I will hold the Christ - light for you  
 4. I will weep when you are weep - ing;  
 5. When we sing to God in heav - en,



let me be as Christ to you; pray that I may  
 we're to - geth - er on this road. We are here to  
 in the night - time of your fear; I will hold my  
 when you laugh, I'll laugh with you. I will share your  
 we shall find such har - mo - ny, born of all we've



have the grace to let you be my ser - vant, too.  
 help each oth - er walk the mile and bear the load.  
 hand out to you, speak the peace you long to hear.  
 joy and sor - row till we've seen this jour - ney through.  
 known to - geth - er of Christ's love and ag - o - ny.

From our baptism, we are all called to ministry, as disciples of Jesus Christ. If you are feeling called to consider ministry as a vocation, within The United Methodist Church, we would invite you to visit with your pastor or District Superintendent. We celebrate the call that God places on all of our lives, through the grace of Jesus Christ.

### \*SONG OF INVITATION

Here I Am Lord UMH #593

## Here I Am, Lord

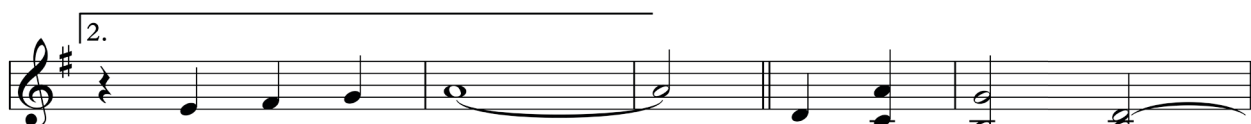
Dan Schutte, 1981 adapt. Carlton R. Young, 1988



- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1. I, the Lord of sea and sky,<br>I who made the stars of night,        | I have heard my peo-ple cry.<br>I will make their dark ness bright.     |
| 2. I, the Lord of snow and rain,<br>I will break their hearts of stone, | I have borne my peo-ple's pain.<br>Give them hearts for love a - lone.  |
| 3. I, the Lord of wind and flame,<br>Fin-est bread I will pro - vide    | I will tend the poor and lame.<br>Till their hearts be sa - tis - fied. |



All who dwell in dark and sin My hand will save.  
 Who will bear my light to them?  
 I have wept for love of them. They turn a - way.  
 I will speak my word to them, My hand will save.  
 I will set a feast for them.  
 I will give my life to them.



Whom shall I send? \_\_\_\_\_ Here I am Lord. \_\_\_\_\_



\_\_\_\_\_ Is it I Lord? \_\_\_\_\_ I have heard you cal-ling in the

## \*PRAYER AND DISMISSAL WITH BLESSING

*Bishop Bard:*

We thank you, gracious God, for raising up among us faithful servants.  
Clothe them with your righteousness,  
and grant that we, with them, may glorify you by giving ourselves to others. **Amen.**

*Bishop:* The grace of Jesus Christ, the love of God,  
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you always.

*Rodney Glenn Gasaway, Newly Ordained Deacon:*

In all that you do, go in peace to serve God and your neighbor.

**All: We are sent in Christ's name. Thanks be to God!**

## \*GOING FORTH

**Children, Go Where I Send Thee**

African American Heritage Hymnal, #623

**Refrain:**

Children, go where I send thee.  
How shall I send thee?

1 I'm gonna send thee one by one,  
one is the little bitty baby was born, born,  
born in Bethlehem. **[Refrain]**

2 I'm gonna send thee two by two,  
two are Paul and Silas  
one is the little, bitty baby was born, born,  
born in Bethlehem. **[Refrain]**

3 Three are the Hebrew children,  
4 Four are the gospel writers,

5 Five are the five that dressed so fine,

6 Six are the six that couldn't get fixed,

7 Seven are the seven came down from heaven,

8 Eight are the eight that stood at the gate,

9 Nine are the nine that dressed so fine,

10 Ten are the ten commandments,

11 Eleven are the 'leven came down from heaven,

12 Twelve are the twelve disciples,

## RECESSIONAL

## MUSICAL SELECTIONS

United Methodist Hymnal #57 - O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing  
CCLI Song # 1369. Carl Gotthelf Glaser | Charles Wesley.  
© Words: Public Domain  
Music: Public Domain.

United Methodist Hymnal #432 - Jesu, Jesu  
CCLI Song # 3049039. Tom Colvin  
© 1969, 1989 Hope Publishing Company  
Words and Music: Traditional Caribbean. Public Domain

The Faith We Sing #2222 - The Servant Song  
CCLI Song #72673  
Words and music by Richard Gillard. ©1977 Universal Music - Brentwood Benson Publishing  
(Admin. by Brentwood-Benson Music Publishing, Inc.)

United Methodist Hymnal #593 - Here I Am, Lord  
Words and music by Dan Schutte, 1981.  
©1981, 1983, 1989 Daniel L. Schutte and NALR

Children, Go Where I Send Thee  
CCLI #7081250  
Words and Music: African American Spiritual. Public Domain



**All are invited to stay and join the reception generously provided by  
The United Methodist Foundation of Michigan**

## Commissioned Deacon, Class of 2020

### MICHELLE MARIE KING



Seminary: Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary

Home Church: Farmington First UMC

Currently Serving: Transitional leave

Statement:

*My most fundamental belief is that everyone is a beloved child of God, created in the image of God, and therefore we should treat everyone with love, respect, and dignity. I am passionate about making church a place where that happens - where everyone feels welcomed, loved, and valued for who they are. I want everyone to experience the unconditional love of God and know that they have sacred worth that comes from God, not from how successful they are in the eyes of the world. Church should also be a place where people feel free to be their true, authentic selves, without having to hide part of themselves or pretend to be something they're not. I'm especially passionate about making this a reality for people who struggle with their mental health. People who have a mental illness and their loved ones often feel like they must hide that part of their life at church and as a result they don't get the love and support they need. I feel called to help change that, to help make church a space where people know they are loved and accepted no matter what.*

## Commissioned Elders, Class of 2020

### MARTIN TIMOTHY COBB (Jessica Cobb)



Seminary: Methodist Theological School in Ohio

Home Church: Portage Prairie UMC

Currently Serving: Schoolcraft and Pleasant Valley UMC

Statement:

*The longer I serve in ministry the more aware I am of my deep dependence on the presence of the Holy Spirit. Blessed time spent in God's presence has shaped my life and given call and focus to the gratitude that I have for the grace of my Savior. Christ has made all the difference in my life and it was only with the assistance of the Spirit that I will be commissioned. Knowing the importance of my relationship and dependence on God leads me to cultivate that relationship in my own life, and in the life of the Body of Christ. I love all the ways we worship and devote. I am profoundly grateful and called to share the sacraments, to new and fresh worship expressions, and to every style of music and praise. I just love each purposeful time with God.*

*I am an evangelistic nutball, and that also comes from my deep dependence on Christ. I want to share God's life-changing grace with all those whom God loves so much. I serve the communities I am appointed with the love and grace of our Lord, and I invite and encourage the Body of Christ to join me.*

### JESSICA MAE DAVENPORT (Torey Davenport)



Seminary: Wesley Theological Seminary

Home Church: Hope Church UMC, Bloomington Illinois

Currently Serving: Portage Chapel Hill & Wesley Foundation of Kalamazoo

Statement:

*My passion for ministry centers around relationships and creating community with Christ as the center. Working with many unchurched or de-churched young adults has reminded me that people crave honest authentic community where they can talk about their faith and their doubts, and have folks that support them, root them on, and will challenge them to grow with love. I don't think that desire is exclusive to young adults and I'm passionate about listening to the Spirit and discerning how to do that wherever God calls me.*

*It's a new and sometimes scary time to be called into vocational ministry with our church. Through these past few years, I've found that I'm passionate about partnering with God to*



*figure out how we continue to move forward, honoring the parts of our past that deserve recognition, and also freeing ourselves to do Spirit led ministry with integrity. While we're not sure what that will look like, I'm passionate about taking a breath and taking my next right faithful step.*



**ERIC MAX FALKER** (*Katja Falker*)

**Seminary:** United Theological Seminary

**Home Church:** Tawas UMC

**Currently Serving:** Houghton Grace and Painesdale

**Statement:**

*God may call the qualified, but more importantly, God qualifies the called. As a former engineer, I often felt that I was missing out on my greater purpose. I found that purpose when God called me into youth and music ministry and eventually led me down the path of ordination. My heart longs to help the church be innovative and intergenerational. I love playing music as part of my ministry, because it is like speaking another language of worship. In every message I preach and every decision I make with the church, I try to ask, "Why does this matter to those who aren't here yet?" I believe the Christian faith is about life transformation, starting with ourselves. It is my greatest hope that, by the grace of God and through my service, people will know Jesus as the lover of their souls and they will live their lives as a holy and pleasing sacrifice to the Risen Savior.*



**SUSAN ELIZABETH HITTS** (*Randy Hitts*)

**Seminary:** United Theological Seminary

**Home Church:** Alanson UMC

**Currently Serving:** Harbor Springs UMC

**Statement:**

*I am passionate about people integrating faith into their everyday lives and applying Scripture to their current circumstances. The word of God is still living and active now, and faith still matters. Therefore, my deepest joy in ministry is in participating in Bible Studies that encourage attendees to discover what the words mean in their lives or preaching messages that look at the historical but connect to the current.*

*As a pastor, I find it deeply satisfying to be present in important moments in the lives of congregants. I enjoy baptizing, bringing communion to shut-ins at our weekly nursing home service, officiating weddings, and being present at the end of life. I appreciate the opportunity to live a life of faith with those in my community. These are also moments where faith and life connect.*

*In seminary, I was taught, "If you preach anything, preach hope." I believe that hope is found in the personal and continual work of God in humanity. It is the understanding that faith matters in daily life which brings hope. Therefore, I seek to remind people that faith still matters, Jesus still loves, the Holy Spirit still leads, and God has not forgotten us.*



**SUZANNE LEE HUTCHISON** (*David Hutchison*)

**Seminary:** Methodist Theological School in Ohio

**Home Church:** Brighton First UMC

**Currently Serving:** Plymouth First UMC

**Statement:**

*My life and my understanding of God have been enriched by every person I have met. As a result, I am passionate about ministry that encompasses the full diversity of God's creation. There is wisdom gained by learning from people who have different experiences from our own. There is strength garnered by a community that has wrestled with differences and come to consensus. There is compassion gifted when we listen to the voices from outside our own circles. These are qualities that serve the church well as it seeks to live out its mission in the world. When the church breaks down boundaries and embraces the image of God in all people, we become a fuller reflection of God's Kingdom. Therefore, I am passionate about ministry where people of all ages, ethnicities, identities and abilities learn, serve and grow side by side; and where everyone is welcome at the table and challenged to invite the next person too.*



**RYAN CASEY LOW EDWARDSON** (Rev. Elise Rodgers Low Edwardson)

Seminary: Duke Divinity School

Home Church: Grace UMC, Spencer, Iowa

Currently Serving: Escanaba First UMC / Bark River UMC

**Statement:**

*As a servant leader I am passionate about using my relatability and authenticity to forge deep relationships with and between God's people. I pride myself on asking someone how they are doing and actually wanting to know. I daily work towards extending to others the same grace God has extended to me. I seek to see the best in people for they bear the image of God. I enjoy encouraging people and helping them see themselves as God sees them.*

*Among my gifts as a minister is a willingness to listen before speaking. I enjoy teaching and learning together with others. I take seriously the prayer taught by our Lord: "Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven," and find it imperative in my ministry to continually envision and live out what God is doing to make that prayer a reality among us.*



**SCOTT WILLIAM MARSH** (Meagan Marsh)

Seminary: Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary

Home Church: Paw Paw UMC

Currently Serving: Coleman Faith UMC

**Statement:**

*Howard Thurman in his book Jesus and the Disinherited once wrote; "Every man is potentially every other man's neighbor. Neighborliness is nonspatial; it is qualitative. A man must love his neighbor directly, clearly, permitting no barriers between." This understanding of love and neighbor drives my passion for ministry. To know that my siblings need help and that our Savior called us into such servanthood means I cannot ignore their cries. Ministry breaks down barriers, and opens our hearts for further transformation. Suddenly the afflictions of those we serve become our own, their interests become our interests, their joy our joy. I'm passionate for this type of ministry because of the redemptive seed it sows in the heart of all who do it. When the church takes on justice seeking attitudes, when we work tirelessly for the benefit of the oppressed and when we do this all in the name of Jesus the Christ, that is ministry! May we seek such a ministry until the kingdom of God is formed on earth; until all of God's creation and children rejoice under the loving care of God the Creator. Glory be to God!*



**KELLAS DALE PENNY III** (Leanne Penny)

Seminary: Asbury Theological Seminary

Home Church: Ada First UMC, Ada Oklahoma

Currently Serving: Water's Edge UMC

**Statement:**

*In ministry I love the moments when you can open up someone's eyes to the love of God and how faith can be different than what they have known in their past. Making the Bible come alive, leading someone to experience God in a new way, helping individuals out of a difficult place, creating a community where people can come and feel welcomed just as they are; these are some of my favorite ways in which I see God working in ministry. I'm passionate about these moments.*

*I also love changing people's perspectives on what a pastor is or can be like. I always love having a conversation with a random person where half-way through they are apologizing for cursing, because they had no idea that I was a pastor. I love showing grace in those moments. Whether it is through having fun facial hair, showing up to a concert unexpectedly, or through having nerdy discussions about fantasy novels and tabletop gaming, being myself and bringing that into being a pastor helps me open other's eyes to what following Jesus looks like.*



**PAUL CHRISTOPHER REISSMANN IV** (*Ashleigh Reissmann*)

**Seminary:** Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary

**Home Church:** Bangor Simpson UMC

**Currently Serving:** Wayland UMC

**Statement:**

*I have been called by God to Plant vibrant ministries, to Proclaim the Gospel wherever I go, and to Promote the sacred worth of all people. At this vital time in the life of our Methodist heritage, I believe God is calling me to become a holy partner in fostering relationships of deep worth - the same fulfilling relationship that was brought to me when God's Spirit called me out onto the waters of my own life and satisfied the deepest longings of my heart. May the Christ seated at the heart of all things bless us, keep us, and inspire us to complete the work the people called Methodist have been called to and may I be called to write my portion of our story.*



**JOYCE LEE VANDERLIP**

**Seminary:** Perkins School of Theology

**Home Church:** South Mundy UMC

**Currently Serving:** Centreville UMC

**Statement:**

*I am deeply passionate about working in cooperation with the Holy Spirit in introducing people to God, developing their faith in Christ and helping them grow into mature Christians. By helping each other develop a deep, abiding love for God and a sincere concern for others, assisting parents in navigating the difficulties of raising Godly children in an ungodly world, and giving our children a firm Biblical foundation enabling them to stand steadfast in faith when challenged, through the grace of God, we, as the church, make disciples of Jesus Christ. When we learn to talk to, not at, each other by acquiring the art and skill of listening, and the ability to truly enter into a shared dialogue, learn to not only welcome others but to be open to diversity and embrace healthy change, and truly learn to love others, especially our enemies, with God's grace, we can, and do, transform the world. My deepest wish is for all to stop comparing and competing as the world teaches, and instead learn to cherish, encourage, and support each other, appreciating the unique gifts each brings and celebrating each stride, large or small, made in building the kingdom of God.*



**JENABA REBECCA DUYMOVIC WAGGY**

**Seminary:** Vanderbilt University

**Home Church:** Portage Chapel Hill UMC

**Currently Serving:** Essexville: St. Luke's UMC

**Statement:**

*I had every intention of being a college professor before God invited me to a different path, so much of my passion for ministry is grounded in education. I do not believe we can successfully be the Church in the world if we do not know the Church we have been; it is important to me that we learn and question our heritage, our received assumptions, and that lovely phrase "we've always done it this way." We stand on the shoulders of countless saints who have wrestled with God and fought the darkness—part of learning our own pasts is being able to lean on them in our own shadows and places of deep joy and overwhelming grief. In addition, I am drawn to the way in which we who lead create space for people—including ourselves—to discover and rediscover their own faith. How are we saying the things that we say? What does that say about us? We have a message of joy, of hope, of healing, of love, of redemption, of belonging. In our worship, in our service, in our meetings, in our small groups, are we actually delivering that message?*

## Elder Received into Provisional Membership, Class of 2020



**VAUGHN WILLIAM THURSTON-COX** (*Rev. Hillary Thurston-Cox*)

Seminary: Asbury Theological Seminary

Home Church: Rose Lake

Currently Serving: Central UMC, Lake Odessa

**Statement:**

*When I married the love of my life, I married into her church. I have no regrets. My years in Free Methodism shaped how I understand our life with God and each other. But today is very special, because it is a return home I now celebrate with my bride.*

*At forty-four I am not the same person I was at twenty-six. I still value my theological training as essential to breaking open Scripture for all of God's people and discerning how it is we are called to live with God together, but at the heart of our faith isn't just another doctrinal statement. It is the Community of Holy Love, the eternal embrace of Father in Son in Spirit. And I know those words aren't always helpful. Those are simply the words I have to describe the Trinitarian mystery that makes many one together and embodies itself within compassionate community.*

*If my heart aches for anything, it aches to embody that compassion for others. In a world where we find ourselves at war with ourselves, benign indifference just isn't enough. As God's people we are called to bear one another's burdens, not multiply them. My hope isn't election to bishop; it is to become a healing presence for those that our world, and sometimes churches, leave broken.*

## Ordained Deacon, Class of 2020



**RODNEY GLENN GASAWAY** (*Janice Gasaway*)

Seminary: Methodist Theological School in Ohio / Ecumenical Theological Seminary

Home Church: Livonia Newburg UMC

Currently Serving: Livonia Newburg UMC and Chelsea First UMC

**Statement:**

*My passion for ministry is driven by my call to serve others with love, grounded in compassion, justice, forgiveness, and mercy. As Christians, we have all been bathed in grace and it should be our desire to share God's gift with the world through our words and actions. I try to embody practical divinity by sharing the teachings of Christ with all who will listen. Evangelism is intentional, strengthened by practice and attitude. It should be modeled for others, meeting people wherever they are in their lives, while living your own. We all have more in common with one another than we typically acknowledge. Love, pain, suffering, understanding, forgiveness, worry, and hope are all cornerstones of the human experiences, and something we all face on a daily basis. Do not be afraid to meet others who seem different than you. Do not be afraid to share your faith. God will do the rest.*

## Ordained Elders, Class of 2020



**DILLON SELBY BURNS** (*Jennifer Burns*)

Seminary: Perkins School of Theology

Home Church: Saline First UMC

Currently Serving: Manchester UMC

Statement:

*I am passionate about nurturing faith communities through creative worship, thoughtful teaching, and intentional ministry to the local community. Partnering with a congregation, I seek out opportunities to recognize God's presence among us and invitation to grow in faith. It excites me when we can catch wind of the Holy Spirit and follow wherever God might lead us.*



**MARY KATHRYN BUTLER-LORING**

Seminary: Methodist Theological School in Ohio

Home Church: Grand Rapids First UMC

Currently Serving: Belleville First UMC

Statement:

*My passion for ministry is to offer compassion, create connections, and work together collaboratively. In a way, these are the micro-mission intentions that I utilize in order to fulfill the United Methodist mission statement of making disciples with Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. Compassion was the mode of operandum that Jesus used throughout the gospels. He was always showing compassion to the least and the lost. Compassion for others means seeing Christ in the other. By offering compassion, I am able to create connections even in the most difficult situations. Connections can only transpire when we use convicted humility. Creating connections helps my ability to love God and love my neighbor as myself. It opens my eyes to the unique qualities and needs within the community. Connections help me know those I am serving and for them to know me well too. When my compassion allows for deep connections, it is then that collaboration can begin to occur. Working together collaboratively allows for the greatest use of each person's giftedness. Collaborations create more possibilities than what a single person can accomplish. Collaboration grows the faith community as we work together in the mission to transform the world.*



**MATTHEW DAVID CHAPMAN** (*Abigail Chapman*)

Seminary: Methodist Theological School of Ohio

Home Church: Washington Avenue UMC

Currently Serving: Traverse Bay UMC

Statement:

*I believe that my vocation and the vocation of all people is the same - being a beloved Child of God. Each person, regardless of career, occupation, or passion, are first and foremost called to be a beloved child of God. My passion for ministry is to guide and walk with others as they learn and experience this vocation by knowing that they are a deeply loved child of God, and then for them to be equipped, through preaching and teaching, to go and share that Good News with all of God's other beloved children. As John writes in his first letter: "Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. (1 John 4:7)"*



**ELISE RODGERS LOW EDWARDSON** (*Ryan Casey Low Edwardson*)

Seminary: Duke Divinity School

Home Church: Saline First UMC

Currently Serving: Escanaba Central UMC

Statement:

*I am passionate about making God's love real and relevant for people across generations. I am so grateful to get to share the restorative grace of Jesus through creative worship, meaningful relationships, and missional engagement. One of my great joys in ministry is helping God's Word come to life through preaching and storytelling, revealing the ways that ancient words resonate with our present reality. As I enter ordained ministry, I hope to continue cultivating Christian*

*community where all feel comfortable enough to bring their hopes, wonderings, and big questions, while never being so comfortable as to become complacent in our journey with Jesus. With hope in my heart, I look forward to where the Spirit leads.*



**CYDNEY MICHELLE IDSINGA**

Seminary: Asbury Seminary  
Home Church: Lake Harbor UMC Muskegon  
Currently Serving: Marne UMC

**Statement:**

*Two-year-old Sarah looked up at me, "What do you want to be when you get grown up?" I hadn't told anyone what God had shown me almost five years earlier. I was afraid they would mock me; my past wasn't exactly pastoral. "I'm going to be a pastor when I grow up," I said aloud for the first time. Two years later Sarah, myself and our little dog headed to Asbury Seminary in Wilmore Kentucky. I felt like I was starting on an epic adventure. I was right! It has been 10 years since that day and the excitement I held has only grown. I sometimes feel guilty for being paid to do something that brings me such joy. I could not have imagined the honor of holding someone's hand as they say goodbye to this life, nor fathomed the connection I felt to God when I baptized a baby for the first time. I am still amazed by the power of God's presence when I pray with those who are suffering and I have a blast on Sunday Mornings. I get to spend the bulk of my time doing Jesus stuff and I am crazy nuts about him. I stand amazed.*

## Elders Received into Full Membership, Class of 2020



**JONATHAN EDWARD BRATT CARLE** (Jessica Bratt Carle)

Seminary: Vanderbilt Divinity School  
Home Church: West End UMC, Nashville TN  
Currently Serving: Ionia First UMC / Lyons-Muir Church

**Statement:**

*My passion for ministry is the vital link between the Art of Worship and the Church's Ministry of Reconciliation in the world. Whether it's high church or low... whether we're jamming to a 7 piece rock band or a 4 manual Casavant with trumpets en chamade and full chorus... the Liturgy of the Body of Christ in praise and prayer propels God's people into the suffering of this weary world with Good News. When the Preached Word becomes Bread, and the Sacramental Bread becomes the Word, people are transfigured by an encounter with the Living God and made ready to go with power and love to where the world is dying. My passion for ministry is the Life of Christ, who lives in us by the Spirit to draw all people to himself.*



**EUNG YONG KIM** (Ok soon Lee)

Seminary: Wesley Theological Seminary  
Home Church: Troy Korean UMC  
Currently Serving: Troy Korean UMC

**Statement:**

*My passion for ministry stems from Jesus' example with his disciples via his 'leading' and the disciples' 'living'. My calling is to make disciples via the gospel is with focus on the word to develop true worshippers, nurture spiritual families and cultivate leaders for ministry.*

*My vision is to create a dynamic where the 'leading' and 'living' ministries become the fabric of our church. 'Leading' ministry by preaching the gospel, daily meditation and sharing of the word with the whole church and nurturing spiritual families via small groups ministry. 'Living' ministry by training and equipping congregation members to serve in the fields of worship, evangelism, and stewardship. One of our on-going spiritual training is the "Walk to Emmaus" program where participants deepen their relationship with Jesus. The 'living' ministry is organized into committees for worship, missions, newcomers, education, service and communication. We are establishing our church as the body of Christ via these ministries to cultivate leaders who can go make disciples of all nations to fulfill the great commission.*



**TIMOTHY LEE KOBLER**

**Seminary:** Candler School of Theology

**Home Church:** Aldersgate UMC, Marion, IL

**Currently Serving:** The Wesley Foundation at the University of Michigan

**Statement:**

*Methodism was born on a college campus and continues to be a vital place for spiritual growth and discernment. My call to ordained ministry began in the context of collegiate ministry. They provided a loving place for me to explore my beliefs and to give voice to my doubts. I began to sense that God was calling me to be a part of collegiate ministry so that I could help facilitate the same opportunities for students in the years to come. I am thankful that I have been able to serve as a Chaplain and Wesley Foundation director for eighteen of my twenty-seven years of ministry in the United Methodist Church. It's exciting to see students develop a deeper faith and discover their gifts for serving in the church and world. It has been important to set the table wide and provide a safe space for students to bring their full selves, their questions, and their doubts. I feel that serving in the context of higher education ministry has been most rewarding, and that I'm truly living out my call. It's constantly changing and growing, which excites me and helps keep me on my toes.*

## Commissioned Deacons, Class of 2021



**ELISABETH ANN DANIELSONS**

**Seminary:** Wesley Theological Seminary

**Home Church:** First UMC Hannibal, MO

**Currently Serving:** West Side UMC Ann Arbor

**Statement:**

*I have always been driven by my passion for learning. As a Deacon, my call is just that to help people grow more closely in their relationship with God, one another, and the world. I am currently called to do this with the children and youth I serve alongside. We have deep conversations and wonderings together to explore those big questions of faith, mixed in with a little silliness and fun. My favorite moments in ministry is when someone makes a deeper connection with Scripture and is inspired to live out that connection in their faith.*



**SHONAGH TARUZA**

**Seminary:** Ashland Theological Seminary

**Home Church:** Ann Arbor First UMC

**Currently Serving:** Ann Arbor First UMC

**Statement:**

*I believe that the healing that the world is desperately in need of right now can be facilitated by the Church serving as an instrument of God's love and grace. The work of healing is preceded by the work of justice, and I have felt God calling both my home church and I to this work. I feel strongly called specifically to the work of racial justice and healing. I have been blessed with opportunities to work on antiracism in small groups, at different churches, within the wider Ann Arbor community, and through the Michigan conference as part of Bishop Bard's Anti-bias/Antiracism Working Group. I understand Martin Luther King Jr's vision of the Beloved Community as God's vision for us too, and by the grace of God I am committed to doing my very small part of making this dream a future reality.*

## Commissioned Elders, Class of 2021



**RACHAEL MARIE DUNLAP** (Rev. Zack Dunlap)

Seminary: Asbury Theological Seminary

Home Church: Birmingham and Berkley First UMC

Currently Serving: Birmingham and Berkley First UMC

**Statement:**

*Ministry- In the broadest sense, ministry involves activities of a Christian. How we live our life and interact with those around us is ministry. Ministry is also, the grace and love we offer to a neighbor as we navigate the ebb and flow of our experiences and circumstances sharing what God has blessed us with. Ministry can be specific, for some it involves an intentionality or focus-like serving a particular population, following a call to an organization, or teaching and preaching the gospel. Others may experience ministry as living faithfully and volunteering in the church community. For me, I must be about encouraging, teaching, and building into the life of others that they may hear the gospel more effectively. First by shining the light and life of Christ who first loved with his life, death, and resurrection, and then pouring out that love on others. Digging deep and standing alongside folks through the tough stuff of life is what draws me to grow in my passion and my call into vocational ministry.*



**AUDREY SAVAGE MANGUM**

Seminary: Methodist Theological School in Ohio

Home Church: Detroit Second Grace UMC

Currently Serving: The UM Union and the Greater Detroit District

**Statement:**

*God is good all the time, and all the time, God is good! I love God and all of God's people. I have a special affinity for those crying out from urban areas, those made vulnerable by the vicissitudes of life, such as the novel coronavirus pandemic, joblessness, homelessness, and systemic racism. I can proudly say that I look forward to living, working, and worshipping in Detroit! I want to sing the songs of Zion in a place where people have forgotten the melody or no longer believe the words; where families are suffering.*

*I anticipate a new season of camp for urban youth and others as we return to activities together that bring joy, fellowship, and Christian development. Perhaps the season of isolation and fear brought by COVID-19 has reminded us all of our utter dependency on God and our need for one another.*

*My prayer is that we will seek new ways to praise God, lift high the name of Jesus, and walk where the Holy Spirit leads. Praise be to God for new beginnings!*



**DANIEL DUNG NGUYEN**

Seminary: Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary

Home Church: Grand Rapids Vietnamese UMC

Currently Serving: Grand Rapids Vietnamese UMC

**Statement:**

*It is a great privilege for me to serve God in the UMC, where I have learned a lot from John Wesley, our founder of Methodism, especially his passion for God and for people, which was powerfully and vividly reflected in his ministry. My passion for ministry lies in how I love and serve God and others in my racial and ethnic congregation and my Asian-American community. I believe an ordained elder is called into a three-fold ministry: prophetic, priestly and pastoral. For me, I am so passionate about raising a prophetic voice in an unjust society. In my ministry setting, I make sure that justice of equality is exercised, and that no racism, classism, or any kind of discrimination is present as God shows no partiality or God doesn't play favorites with one group of people over another (Acts 10:34-35). I passionately seek and do justice and peace with love among people regardless how different we are in terms of gender, race, language, culture, social or economic standing, etc. God is loving and gracious towards all people no matter who they are or what they have done. My ministry passion motto is: "True disciples for real transformation."*





**STEPHANIE ELAINE NORTON** (*Ash Norton*)

Seminary: Asbury Theological Seminary

Home Church: Westwood UMC

Currently Serving: Hartford UMC

Statement:

*I am passionate about reflecting God's love to all people in faithful service to my neighbors. Serving as a pastor, this takes the form of:*

- *Hosting an inclusive Christian community that is filled with love and grace.*
- *Making space for the marginalized and oppressed people in our congregations, who may have been excluded in the past.*
- *Working to make the world a more equitable and just place for all people.*
- *Fostering individual personal relationships with God, as well as calling the church to corporate growth.*
- *Partnering with the Holy Spirit in order to transform lives.*
- *Sharing the Gospel message and my personal testimony with all people.*

## Ordained Elders, Class of 2021



**ROBERT PAUL BLANCHARD** (*Keri Blanchard*)

Seminary: Methodist Theological School in Ohio

Home Church: Petersburg

Currently Serving: Lansing First UMC

Statement:

*I found my calling into ministry due to a passion to see the world become a more just and compassionate place. As a pastor it has been a joy to learn alongside my congregants in Bible study, and to help foster deeper understandings of our Wesleyan history. Growing deeper in our own particular identity and place within the Church universal has made us better able to move out into the world sharing the good news of Jesus Christ's love and justice.*



**CHRISTOPHER ALAN BUTSON** (*Cathy Butson*)

Seminary: Methodist Theological School in Ohio

Home Church: Monroe: St. Paul's UMC

Currently Serving: Ypsilanti: Lincoln Community

Statement:

*I am most passionate about nurturing the church as a distinctive community of character that moves outward in witness to Christ and service to the world; about proclaiming the gospel to all people, inviting them to accept God's grace for themselves, and empowering laity to do the same; and about principled, effective parish ministry that leads Christians into holiness of heart and life characterized by love of God and neighbor. I aim to pursue these passions by (1) interpreting, teaching, and proclaiming the scriptures through sound theological scholarship; (2) administering the sacraments as often as possible and educating laity on their meaning and centrality; (3) ordering the life of the church in ways that are conducive to the moral formation of parishioners and to ministries of evangelism, nurture, and service; and (4) guiding congregations into ministries that participate in God's preferential option for the poor and work of love, reconciliation, and justice for the world.*



**TANIA JANA DOZEMAN** (Ted Dozeman)

Seminary: Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary

Home Church: Beechwood Reformed Church

Currently Serving: Holland First UMC

**Statement:**

*I am passionate about partnering with disciples to foster authentic faith communities that by listening first figure out how to be in ministry with their community.*

*Things that set my heart on fire are creating opportunities to put our faith in conversation with current justice issues, helping a faith community to figure out how to be a church of small groups that de-centers the role of clergy, and being a supportive midwife to people as they figure out the unique ways they connect with God.*

*In the song The Summons we sing the question, "Will you use the faith you've found to reshape the world around through my (Jesus's) sight and touch and sound in you, and you in me?"*

*I believe this is the question that is asked of all of us, regardless of title.*

*My answer is yes.*

*Even though I do not know how the reshaping of church as we have known it will take form. Yes.*

*Even though I cannot clearly cast a vision for what ministry will look like in six months, or six years. Yes.*

*Even though all I can do is to be nimble and faithful to my role in God's kin-dom. Yes.*



**SEAN KENT KIDD**

Seminary: Methodist Theological School in Ohio

Home Church: Pokagon UMC (Dowagiac)

Currently Serving: Kalamazoo: Westwood UMC

**Statement:**

*I felt the call of God into Christian ministry early in my life. I had no idea the direction God would take me, but I felt God's presence in a deep and meaningful way. I have a passion for authentic Christian community and "doing life together." I love teaching and proclaiming the word of God and seeing how it transforms people's lives. Pastoral care is another incredible gift to offer and to receive. I feel extremely humbled and honored that people allow me into the sacred space reserved only for the most trusted of friends. Local church ministry brings me tremendous joy and my journey has been filled with compassion and grace.*



**YOOJIN KIM** (Jung Du Paik)

Seminary: Boston University School of Theology

Home Church: Korean First Central UMC

Currently Serving: Onaway/Millersburg UMC

**Statement:**

*My passion for ministry is in sharing God's love and comfort with the wounded and lonely and in sharing the joys of worshipping God. Sometimes, people cannot feel the love of God due to environmental reasons or their inner reasons like their inner-pain or loneliness. I hope to be used by God to help people find Jesus, who is always with them, to help them feel Jesus' everlasting love, and to remind them they are called to love others as well. I hope to give comfort by sharing the love of God through worship, fellowship, and praying for and with people in community.*

*I want to develop God's loving community where everyone is welcome and feels comfortable, and finds the joy of worshipping God together, where everyone encourages each other in our spiritual and daily journey, pursuing oneness in Christ. So, I feel called to create a space where people authentically find gladness in God's love and share it both within the church community and outside of it so that people know the grace, love, and comfort of God. My passion is to fill my community and my world with the love of God and the joy of worshipping God.*



**TIFFANY MARIE NEWSOM**

Seminary: Wesley Theological Seminary

Home Church: St. Johns First UMC

Currently Serving: Laingsburg UMC

**Statement:**

*I have a passion for missionally focused ministries that work to meet the needs of God's children in the local community and around the world. I particularly enjoy being involved in Trunk-or-Treat, developing innovative worship experiences amidst this pandemic, and serving on the county Respite Board. One thing I dearly miss, is participating in and leading mission trips to Haiti through HAPI (Haitian Assets for Peace International). I hope is that we as a church emerge stronger and more open to creative expressions of being in community as a result of all we have learned this past year.*



**LINDA JO STEPHAN**

Seminary: Candler School of Theology--Emory University

Home Church: Traverse Bay UMC

Currently Serving: Williamston UMC

**Statement:**

*I am passionate about holding space for people in life's hardest and most fragile moments, mediating our community's toughest conversations, and fostering social justice and inclusion with all people and all of creation. I'm also passionate about praising God, and helping people and congregations to find, in the words of Theologian Frederick Buechner: "the place(s) where your deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet."*

## **Elders Received into Full Membership, Class of 2021**



**THOMAS LEO HOFFMEYER** (*Lenore Hoffmeyer*)

Seminary: Asbury Theological Seminary

Home Church: Avon UMC, Indiana

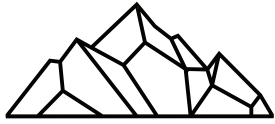
Currently Serving: Good Shepherd UMC of the North (Roscommon)

**Statement:**

*I am passionate about creating a space in the church where all people feel welcome. It is vitally important to let everyone know that they belong to the family of God.*



# SINGING THE LORD'S SONG



## Bishop David Alan Bard

Bishop David Alan Bard is the presiding bishop of the Michigan Conference of The United Methodist Church. Bishop Bard also shepherds the Minnesota Annual Conference as interim bishop until 2022, and serves as President of the North Central Jurisdiction College of Bishops.

Prior to arriving in Michigan in September 2016, Bishop Bard was serving at First United Methodist Church in Duluth, Minnesota since 2005. He was elected to the episcopacy on July 13, 2016 at the North Central Jurisdictional Conference held in Peoria, IL. He has been in ministry for more than 30 years and served in many roles within both the Minnesota Annual Conference and the General Church. Bard was a General and Jurisdictional Conference delegate in 2000, 2004, 2008, and 2012. He was an episcopal nominee in both 2004 and 2008.

Within the Minnesota Conference, Bishop Bard was chair of the Episcopacy Committee and the Higher Education Ministry Team, and he served on the Board of Ordained Ministry and the Congregational Response Team. He was also the conference parliamentarian. He was a district superintendent from 1998 to 2005 and spent three years on the Commission on Religion and Race.

Within the General Church, Bishop Bard serves on the Study on Ministry Commission, the Committee on Faith and Order, and the North Central Jurisdiction Committee on Episcopacy. He has also previously served on the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry, the Commission on General Conference, and the Commission on Theological Education.

Bishop Bard received a BA from the University of Minnesota, Duluth in 1981; his Master of Divinity was earned at United Theological Seminary, Twin Cities 1984; and in 1994 he received a Ph.D. from Southern Methodist University with a focus on Christian ethics

Bishop Bard and his wife, Julie have three married adult children. In his free time, he enjoys music, reading, baseball, and walking outside.

You can reach Bishop Bard via email [bishop@michiganUMC.org](mailto:bishop@michiganUMC.org)



**90+**  
YEARS

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