

## Appointment Season Prompts Prayer

United Methodists are in the midst of an unofficial season in the church year that's not marked on calendars, but prompts much prayer and change in routine nonetheless. It's known as "appointment season" -- the time a bishop and the district superintendents on his Cabinet consider where each clergy person will be appointed to serve in the coming year (July 1-June 30).

In The United Methodist Church, all clergy are appointed to their places of ministry by the bishop assigned to their conference (region). Each appointment is for one year, but the majority of clergy are reappointed to the same church multiple times. Local congregations are represented in the appointment process by their Pastor-Parish Relations Committee (PPRC) that is elected annually by the congregation. Each year, both that committee and the pastor consult with the district superintendent about the pastoral appointment for the next year. They may request a continuation of the appointment or express a need for change.

"Our philosophy is that that longevity is desirable in pastoral appointments and if both the pastor and PPRC recommend the continuation of an appointment, we will attempt to honor that request," said Bishop Thomas J. Bickerton. "However, because we must consider the total scope of needs in all the churches and communities of Western Pennsylvania, there are times when we cannot."

The United Methodist system of appointing pastors is different from the way churches in other denominations secure pastoral leadership. In some, it is up to each local church to call or hire its own pastor, who may also be dismissed by the local church leaders. In United Methodist churches, both the appointed pastors and the congregations to which they are appointed are part of a connection which can provide support, training, mediation, and prayerful supervision.

A pastoral change is difficult and it's important that all who are affected seek God's wisdom and guidance. Pray for the congregations, clergy, Bishop and Cabinet as they move through appointment season.

The way pastors, their families, and congregations respond to this time of change can greatly impact lives and ministries. Seminars will be offered this Spring to help those affected address the issues faced when a pastor moves. Check [www.wpaumc.org](http://www.wpaumc.org) for details.

By Jackie Campbell, WPAUMC News



File image by Carrie Moore

At 2009 Annual Conference, Bishop Bickerton and Pat Harbison read clergy appointments for a Erie-Meadville District.

## Bible Study and Prayer

Join United Methodists throughout Western Pennsylvania in studying these Bible passages from the *Revised Common Lectionary* and praying for these ministries and persons:

### March 7-13

#### Third Sunday in Lent - Purple

**Read:** Is. 55:1-9; Ps. 63:1-8 (UMH 788); 1 Cor. 10:1-13; Luke 13:1-9

#### Pray for:

- ✠ Good Shepherd Parish, Indiana Dist., Donald R. Henderson, pastor; Ron Schick, associate
- ✠ Country Chapel Charge, Butler Dist., Darlene K. Ryniec, pastor
- ✠ Seneca UMC, Franklin Dist., Robert H. Wilson, pastor
- ✠ Johnstown:Beulah UMC, Johnstown Dist., Charles L. Shaffer, pastor
- ✠ Washington:Avery UMC, Washington Dist., Ruth L. Simmons, pastor

### March 14-20

#### Fourth Sunday in Lent - Purple One Great Hour of Sharing Sunday

**Read:** Josh. 5:9-12; Ps. 32 (UMH 766); 2 Cor. 5:16-21; Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32

#### Pray for:

- ✠ Hollsopple:Hopewell UMC, Connellsville Dist., Wilma G. Horner, pastor
- ✠ Conneaut Lake:Trinity UMC, Erie-Meadville Dist., William R. Green, pastor
- ✠ Hillside UMC, Greensburg Dist., Raymond P. Kerr, pastor
- ✠ Emporium:First UMC, Kane Dist., Gary B. Atkinson, pastor
- ✠ Grove City:Grace UMC, Franklin Dist., Paul R. Milliken, pastor
- ✠ North Clarion:Good Shepherd UMC, Kane Dist., David S. Coul, pastor
- ✠ Clairton:Pine Run UMC, Washington Dist., Lota C. Jones, pastor

### March 21-27

#### Fifth Sunday in Lent - Purple

**Read:** Is. 43:16-21; Ps. 126 (UMH 847); Philip. 3:4b-14; John 12:1-8

#### Pray for:

- ✠ Union City:First UMC, Erie-Meadville Dist., Linda B. Chambers, pastor
- ✠ Port Vue UMC, Greensburg Dist., Randy D. Sweet, pastor; Jody Dausey, associate
- ✠ Clarion River Charge, Indiana Dist., Randy Hall, pastor
- ✠ Coraopolis UMC, Pittsburgh Dist., Dean E. Byrom, pastor
- ✠ Somerset:Pleasant Hill UMC, Connellsville Dist., Arthur L. Black, pastor

### March 28-April 3

#### Palm/Passion Sunday - Red or Purple

**Read:** *Liturgy of the Palms:* Luke 19:28-40; Ps. 118:1-2, 19-29 (UMH 839); *Liturgy of the Passion:* Is. 50:4-9a; Ps. 31:9-16 (UMH 764); Philip. 2:5-11; Luke 22:14-23:56 (or Luke 23:1-49)

#### April 1, Holy Thursday - Red or Purple

Ex. 12:1-14; Ps. 116:1-2, 12-19 (UMH 837); 1 Cor. 11:23-26; John 13:1-17, 31b-35

#### April 2, Good Friday - No Color

Is. 52:13-53:12; Ps. 22 (UMH 752); Heb. 10:16-25; John 18:1-19:42

#### Pray for:

- ✠ Sarver:Zion UMC, Butler Dist., Howard A. Greenfield, pastor; Kathy A. Mikesell, deacon
- ✠ Shanksville & Central City UMCs, Johnstown Dist., Randall C. Newell, pastor
- ✠ Pittsburgh:First UMC, Pittsburgh Dist., Robert A. Wilson, pastor