



Cross & Flame

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Are You Connected?

At this year's Western Pennsylvania Annual Conference session, the focus was on making connections - with God, with other United Methodists around the globe, and with people in our communities who need to know Jesus.

Dynamic speakers connected with the 1,800 members in a powerful way during the June gathering, offering insight into how to improve connections.



Bishop Eben

Nhiwatiwa of Zimbabwe, here for the official signing of a partnership agreement between his area and Western Pennsylvania, said the partnership is based on chabadza - a Shona word that describes helping a friend already at work in the field. Building relationships and mutual respect are key.

"The missionary era in Africa has fizzled out. No one is going to do things for us," he said. "We are not going to wave the banner of poverty and people will take care of us. Those in Zimbabwe have to be in the field working." They are! The church is growing rapidly there as disciples enthusiastically worship and praise God and share their faith.

Bishop Nhiwatiwa predicted a revival for the church in the U.S., saying there should be room in everyone's life for the "new heaven and new earth" described in Revelation 21.

"I understand if my brothers and sisters in the U.S. say they are fed up with the church," he said, "because you have everything... You are so up there as a nation so you say, 'what type of a new heaven and a new earth do I need? I have all the answers.'" Yet, he added, "there is hunger here: people are searching for something."

The Rev. Steve Cordle, pastor of Crossroads UMC, who led Bible study also talked about those who are searching. It's our honor and privilege as Christians to offer them Christ -- to share our faith stories.

How? Look for opportunities in your daily life, he said. "Don't wait for an invitation. Risk spiritual conversation!" "Good News must be proclaimed," he explained, even by shy people. Simply living a moral life and doing good works doesn't do the job. "It's necessary to use words. We don't do charades evangelism!"

Learn more at www.wpaumc.org. Click on Annual Conference on the left side of the page.

--Jackie Campbell

Bible Study and Prayer

Join United Methodists throughout Western Pennsylvania in studying these Bible passages from the Revised Common Lectionary and praying for these congregations and pastors.

August 1-7

10th Sunday After Pentecost - Green

Read: Hosea 11:1-11; Ps. 107:1-9, 43; Col. 3:1-11; Luke 12:13-21

Pray for:

- ✠ Kanter UMC, Conellsville Dist., Dennis Zimmerman, pastor
- ✠ McKeesport: West Side and Dravosburg UMCs, Greensburg Dist., Kenneth E. Jones, pastor
- ✠ Beaver Falls: Riverview UMC, Butler Dist., Nancy G. Zahn, pastor
- ✠ Mercer UMC, Franklin Dist., Eric C. Leonard, pastor
- ✠ Duke Center, Kane Dist., Gary L. Sheesley, pastor

August 8-14

11th Sunday After Pentecost - Green

Read: Isaiah 1:1, 10-20; Ps. 50:1-8, 22-23; Hebrews 11:1-3, 8-16; Luke 12:32-40

Pray for:

- ✠ Nixon UMC, Butler Dist., Bruce K. Merritt, pastor
- ✠ Layton UMC, Conellsville Dist., Bryce D. King, pastor
- ✠ Erie: Kingsley UMC, Erie-Meadville Dist., Harold W. Blair, pastor
- ✠ Pymatuning Charge, Franklin Dist., John F. Bargar, pastor
- ✠ Point UMC, Johnstown Dist., Lawrence Raughley, pastor

August 29-September 4

14th Sunday after Pentecost - Green

Read: Jeremiah 2:4-13; Ps. 81:1, 10-16; Hebrews 13:1-8, 15-16; Luke 14:1, 7-14

Pray for:

- ✠ Oil City: Grace and Rouseville UMCs, Franklin Dist., Byron Myers, pastor
- ✠ Elton and Zion UMCs, Johnstown Dist., Wayne R. Cleary, pastor
- ✠ Windover Hills UMC, Pittsburgh Dist., Jude A. Urso, pastor
- ✠ Russell and Akeley UMCs, Kane Dist., David T. Heckman, pastor
- ✠ Erie: Cascade and Simpson UMCs, Erie-Meadville Dist., M. Patricia Mollick, pastor
- ✠ Kittanning: First UMC, Indiana Dist., Allyn L. Ricketts, pastor

August 15-21

12th Sunday After Pentecost - Green

Read: Isaiah 5:1-7; Ps. 80:1-2, 8-19; Hebrews 11:29-12:2; Luke 12:49-56

Pray for:

- ✠ Oakmont UMC, Greensburg Dist., Linda B. Chambers, pastor
- ✠ Marchand Charge, Indiana Dist., Doug A. Dyson, pastor
- ✠ Boston and Elizabeth: First UMCs, Washington Dist., Diane E. M. Gobbel, pastor
- ✠ Johnstown: Oakland UMC, Johnstown Dist., Randall W. Bain, pastor
- ✠ Latrobe UMC, Greensburg Dist., David J. Henderson, pastor

August 22-28

13th Sunday After Pentecost - Green

Read: Jeremiah 1:4-10; Ps. 71:1-6; Hebrews 12:18-29; Luke 13:10-17

Pray for:

- ✠ Smithton: Winnett and Banning UMCs, Conellsville Dist., Mildred Martin, pastor
- ✠ Venango and Little Coolley UMCs, Erie-Meadville Dist., Christine Rogan, pastor
- ✠ Warren UMC, Pittsburgh Dist., Emma L. Smith, pastor
- ✠ Monongahela: First UMC, Washington Dist., Michael Milinovich, pastor
- ✠ Baden UMC, Butler Dist., R. Andrew Verner, pastor