



*And are we yet alive,
and see each other's face?
Glory and thanks to Jesus give
for this almighty grace!*

--Charles Wesley, UMH #553 (adapted)

October 2022

Beloved in Christ:

I thank God for each and every one of you, and for the grace that has brought us through these past two and a half years. Knowing that some of us lost friends and family members during the pandemic, not to mention jobs and important connections, etc., let us renew our commitment to live so as to honor those who have gone before us as we move forward with our ministries. We lean on God's strength and pray for courage, energy, and creativity as we look to the future with hope.

In this spirit, I look forward to being in person for as many Staff-Parish Relations Committee (SPRC) meetings and Church Conferences this fall as possible. In order to do so, my schedule will be very full. I thank you for giving me some grace and working within the parameters of the published schedule when possible. If you wish for your meeting to be hybrid, I thank you for taking on the responsibility of setting up the technology and links that will make this possible.

Please alert me ahead of time if you are experiencing a COVID-19 outbreak in your setting so that we can make a collaborative decision regarding masking, rescheduling, etc. I will plan on bringing a mask with me to every meeting; and will be at the ready to wear it if it is your practice or if I know I have been exposed to others who may be contagious. In a spirit of Christian care, thank you for encouraging people to stay home if they test positive or are exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms.

Regarding the logistics for these meetings, all church conferences need to be properly warned at least ten days in advance and in at least two ways.

You may notice that the parsonage inspection report is once again included in this year's items that need to be completed. This is an intentional reintroduction of this form. I encourage the pastor, SPRC, and Trustees to discuss and address any matters that may need attention at the parsonage before the day of the church conference. If there are concerns that you think I should see, please let me know ahead of time so that we can arrange a time for me to be at the parsonage. If yours is a parsonage that you know is going to have new occupants in July 2023

due to a retirement, etc., please send me your best description of the parsonage, including any repairs that will need to be made before the next pastor and family reside there.

Please note that a completed but unsigned copy of the Pastoral Compensation Report needs to be postmarked (if using the mail) or scanned and emailed (gmds@neumc.org and gmdistrict@neumc.org) two weeks ahead of the scheduled church conference. All forms plus nominations and reports must be *received* one week ahead of time via email or mail regardless of the format of the meeting. Rena, our new District Administrative Assistant, checks mail and email Monday through Thursday of each week. When sending forms by mail, please keep copies as back up. Also, per usual, I should be informed about any new candidates for ministry when the church conference schedule is published.

If the church conference is scheduled for a date after December 1, the Church Council (Administrative Council/Administrative Board/One Board) should meet prior to December 1 to approve the pastor's salary pending final vote at the upcoming church conference and submit the compensation form without signatures. (Please note that this is one week after Thanksgiving.) You can then ratify the compensation at the church conference, sign, and send in the form to the district office.

If your SPRC or church conference is scheduled at a time when your community would like to gather at the table for a meal, we can meet and eat at the same time. We will be sharing in communion when time and health permit. Please prepare the communion elements for your church conference in the way that you share in them on a Sunday.

Thank you for your patience and perseverance as Rena and I endeavor to move forward with preparations for the church conference season. Please reach out to us if you have any questions or concerns ahead of your church conference.

In Christ's peace,



Rev. Jill Colley Robinson
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