



# CONFERENCE *CIRCUIT*

The West Virginia Conference of The United Methodist Church

Issue #4

Sunday, June 11, 2023

## 2023 Ordinands



### Bradley G. Davis

will be ordained as an Elder. A son of the coalfields, Brad serves as pastor of the six churches that make up the Welch Charge of McDowell County in the Southern District.

He is a native of Williamson, Mingo County, where his parents, Gary and Ginny Davis, and two elder brothers, Paul and Gary, still reside.

Brad is extremely passionate about the southern coalfields and its people, longing to see a resurrection of the place he calls home brought about by the good news of God's kingdom and its power to transform lives and communities. His ministry emphasizes the church's mission to co-labor with God to give a glimpse of God's Kingdom in the here and now by pursuing justice for and showing mercy to all people.

### Betsy M. Evans,

a daughter of the WV Annual Conference, is returning home after a time away. With a heart for service and for bridging the church with the world, Betsy will be ordained as a Deacon and will continue to serve through the ministries of Word, Service, Compassion, and Justice. She is passionate about inspiring others to grow in discipleship through inward practices of spiritual formation and outward expressions of serving others.

Betsy's gifts for ministry include the development of creative worship, building strong relationships of faith through pastoral care and small group activities, establishing collaborative and ecumenical partnerships for ministry, and providing compassionate and innovative leadership through missional witness at the Beckley Community UMC.



## Provisional Elders



Robert Dean Cole is married to Angie, from Guatemala who is a gifted teacher. He is the grandson (E. Ray Cole), son (Robert C. "Bob" Cole), and brother (WVWC grad James E. Cole) of United Methodist ministers. He is a third year MDiv student at Methodist Theological School in Ohio (MTSO) in Delaware, OH.

Fun Fact: Dean served on submarines in the USN in the 1980s.



John Langenstein is the son of Mary Smith and Robin and Steve Langenstein. He is from Berkeley Springs, WV. He received a Bachelor of Arts in Chemistry and Religious Studies at WVU, before going to Wesley Theological Seminary where he received his MDiv. He is the husband of Rev. Grace Langenstein of Gateway UMC. He is a member of the Conference Communications Team and serves as pastor of North View United Methodist Church in Clarksburg. On July 1 he will also serve as pastor of Temple UMC. John gives special thanks to Dr. Jane Donovan for being the first "to see in me the minister I could become."



Lawrence Wesley Rebelo, graduated from WV Wesleyan College in 2018 and WTS in 2021. Son of Rev. Paul and Christine Rebelo (both graduates of MTSO), Lawrence is the proud older brother of three younger siblings: Emily, Montgomery, & Rachel. He is married to Christina Rebelo, who is a registered nurse (MSN) and a graduate of West Virginia Wesleyan College. He is inspired by the life-saving work Christina does every day. Lawrence wouldn't be where he is without those people who continually love and care for him day in and day out. For them he is grateful.



## Bishop Steiner Ball: ‘Move Forward in the Midst of the Messiness’

Saturday afternoon in her State of the Church address, Bishop Sandra Steiner Ball called on Annual Conference attendees to continue showing love to all, despite “messiness” in the church.

“In the midst of the messiness, what I want to press upon you is that the word of God continues to go forth and persevere,” Steiner Ball said.

“There are people that live and continue to dwell in deep pain and deep hurt, and they need the comfort of Christ. They need the healing of Christ. They need the hope of Christ, and if we pause our ministry over some church messiness, then there are people who are not getting the hope and healing light and life that they need,” Steiner Ball said.

### In Annual Conference Business ...

- We were taught about prayer by Sue Nelson Kibbey.
- We remembered 30 clergy, 12 spouses, and 12 surviving spouses in the Memorial Service. Rev. Jacob Steele from Christ UMC in Wheeling was the preacher.
- Conference approved three resolutions enabling the Board of Trustees to do their work. Also approved was the resolution: “Congregations Engaging in Partnerships with their Local Schools,” submitted by the Conference Board of Global Ministries. Another resolution, Regarding Faithfulness to the Book of Discipline, was not considered after its submission date was found to not align with rules adopted at this session.
- Conference elected Sarah Estep, laity from MonValley District, to begin as Conference Secretary on July 1, 2023.
- Mary Lou Greenwood Boice, Director of the Advance for the General Board of Global Ministries, celebrated the work of the West Virginia Conference’s Global Ministries and shared the work of the Global Ministries around the world.
- We heard reports from New Places. New People; Core Leadership Team; and Congregational Vitality. Reports highlighted the Fresh Expressions movement, workshops that are enabling congregational vitality, coaching, and an entertaining “Jeopardy” presentation explaining the work of the Core Leadership Team.
- Jeff Taylor, President, and Kim Matthews, Vice President, shared the work of the WV United Methodist Foundation and offered to come talk to any congregation that would like to learn more.
- Bonnie MacDonald (clergy, director of Leadership Formation and co-director of Connectional Ministries) and Jamion Wolford (Lay Equalization Director of Administrative Services) introduced and thanked

- the Connectional Ministries Staff, Conference Administrative Staff, and District Administrative Staff.
- Deborah Coble, Director of Communications, introduced the Communications Team. Three persons were certified communicators: Caitlin Ware, John Langenstein, and Todd Hurley.
- The body approved the Conference Property Report, including the closure of 47 churches.
- A budget of \$11,335,418 for 2024 was approved. This budget is \$578,803 less than the 2023 budget, a decrease of 4.86 percent.
- The bishop’s spouse, Rev. Dr. Barry Steiner Ball, was recognized and thanked.
- The date for 2024 Annual Conference is June 6 - June 9, 2024 at West Virginia Wesleyan College.



After a Friday evening ice cream social, Shea James and Chip Bennett became human ice cream sundaes to celebrate a successful fund-raising goal and raise additional funds for Conference Council on Youth Ministries (CCYM). The event raised a total of \$2,950 and included human sundaes Barry Steiner Ball and Lauren Shanholtzer.



Rev. Jake Steele, left, and Rick Hyre celebrate their Northern District victory in the Celebration of Mission district cornhole playoff Friday evening in front of Wesley Chapel.



Bishop Sandra Steiner Ball presents Rev. Brad Bennett with The Helping Hands of Excellence Award. The award recognizes a communications person for service to the United Methodist Church as they further the witness of Jesus Christ at home and around the world.

Scan this QR code with your smartphone camera to read more about all that is happening at our 2023 WV Annual Conference

