

2024 Pre-Conference Journal Report

Board of Laity

Excited to serve a risen Savior, looking at the world through the eyes of Jesus, seeing the needs of God's people and reaching out in love - all of these statements describe the Laity of the Arkansas Conference. Good and Holy things are happening in the local church every day and in every community where there is a United Methodist Church presence. It was so exciting to share the work of our individual churches and hear the success stories of the caring outreach and ministries happening around the Conference in last year's Laity Session at Annual Conference. And we have seen it even more in so many ways throughout this year. It's not that we haven't always been doing this. It's just that we seem to have become invigorated and become more open and focused to the task at hand and the needs all around us. We have a message to proclaim boldly - the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Gospel of love and we are determined to share that with the world. And we know that this message is best shared through action and in reaching out to serve others. The Arkansas Conference Laity stand on this and witness to it in everything they do. And, they do it in creative and very innovative ways. That's why it is so important to stay connected to each other, to make our ideas available to each other, which in turn allows us to collaborate and dream with a much bigger and wider scope.

The blessings of God are meant to be shared and each of us understands that. Learning and growing through activities and study provided to us to develop our spirituality even further are recognized and appreciated. We are thankful for the opportunities to deepen our relationship with our Lord and each other that are available to us.

Our Certified Lay Ministry program has begun in full force. This additional way for us, as Laity, to serve is a valuable resource to our Conference. Teresa Bolin and Karen Anderson, along with our District Administrators have organized several exciting workshops and classes to get this process before the Laity and have really energized the ministry of the Laity into making ourselves available and as educated as possible in order to serve local churches fully wherever we are needed.

Living our lives in a way filled with and fashioned by God's love prepares us to be all we were created to be in love and companionship with God and with our neighbors. We strive to keep being stretched by God in new ways so we may be a presence of love to the world.

I am honored to serve our Lord in the Arkansas Annual Conference as Your Lay Leader,

Kathy Conley