



**Hopkins &  
South Monterey**  
United Methodist Churches

June/  
July 2022

# THE VOICE



Summer is here, Church Family!



Greetings Church!

What a Spring we have had! We launched a new ministry for children and families. We are working on paying off Hopkins Village Sewer bill debt. We are expanding our Re-Entry Kit ministry to offer the supplies to more people in need. We pulled off an excellent Community Egg Hunt! We had a full to the brim Lent and a happy Easter season.

Now we find ourselves moving into the season of Pentecost! Pentecost is the first Sunday of June and is kicking off a fun summer! We will be living into Pentecost by celebrating the Holy Spirit among us and welcoming some new members to our church family. How wonderful that our church family is expanding!

One of the other things we get to be excited about is worshiping with some new music by exploring the Faith We Sing hymnal this summer. The Spirit will move as we experience the new melodies and lyrics and reconnect with songs we don't get to use in worship very often.

We will get to have some different worship experiences throughout the summer between a couple hymn-sing Sundays, guest preachers, and a Christian concert. I hope that we all get a chance or two this summer to work on our faith and connection with God in our own ways. Whether that is time spent in creation, with family and friends, traveling, a retreat, mission or volunteer

work, reading, or new spiritual practices.

Personally, I look forward to heading back to camp

over the summer. I will be counseling at Lake Louise for a high school camp and an upper elementary camp. Brennen will join me for a week of clergy family retreat as well. I look forward to experiencing the ways that God will work through us as spiritual leaders at camp and how the Spirit will fill us back up while we get to be campers. I hope that you all get to experience something this summer that fills you with the Spirit and makes you excited to share in God's work in the world too. I don't know what all this summer will bring, but God promises us to be moving!

That is what the season of Pentecost is all about! We celebrate the gift of the Spirit and the start of the church all those years ago. We remember the Spirit is still moving and that the ways the church and the world are being made new by God. We spend time looking for God in our midst and jumping in where the Spirit is guiding us. I can't wait to hear about where you experience God this summer!

Blessings, *Pastor Kelsey*

**Could you just use a listening ear or a friendly chat? Have you been having a hard time? Are you struggling with doubts or questions about God, our faith or the church?**

Pastor Kelsey would love to meet with you.

Office Hours: Tues-Thurs 11am-6pm

Call to schedule a time to meet (in her office, at your home,  
or out for coffee)

*By Appointment when possible or for other times.*

Phone (Calls or Texts): 248-613-0366

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## Summer Worship Schedule

Sundays: 10am at Common Ground

Rain Location: South Monterey UMC

All of our worship services are posted on Youtube during the week after. You can find us on Youtube as Hopkins UMC. Or get a link in the weekly Flocknote.

*Your talent is Gods  
gift to you  
What you do with it is  
your gift back to God*



### Celebrating All Offerings

Every Sunday everyone is encouraged to fill out an offering card that invites us to reflect on all the ways we are offering to the Kingdom of God during our week, by thinking of the categories of Treasure, Time, and Talent. It has been a blessing to recognize all the ways God is working among us and through us as a community and to celebrate all the ways God's Kingdom can be seen around us. Below is a collection of the ways that our church family has given to the Kingdom in the last couple months:

- All forms of giving financially
- Helped make coffee fellowship happen
- So much Egg Hunt Donations & Help
- Friend support
- Homebound birthday celebration
- Homebound visits
- Daily devotional
- UMW work
- Hall projects & clean-up
- Donations to non-profits & organizations
- Church Leadership work
- Volunteering at Wayland High School
- Donation to Hopkins Library
- Mentored at Elementary
- Volunteered at Senior Meals
- Letters & cards to friends
- Time in prayer
- Musical Cast Lunch Help & Donations
- Volunteered with Musical
- Gave rides to the elderly
- Donated to Food Pantry Cereal Drive
- Helped at or Planned Wednesday Worship
- Easter gift bags
- Attended church meetings
- Worked in church and/or Common Ground gardens
- Supported international children
- Helped neighbors with yard work

## Online Giving

Tithe.ly is a secure way to give online from your computer or phone that gives you the ability to give to the offering via credit/debit card from anywhere. You can give once or set up a giving schedule. It is easy to navigate and gives you one less thing to have to remember when trying to get out the door Sunday morning.

Go to: <http://hopkinsumchurch.org/give/> to learn about and give through tithe.ly!



### LOOSE CHANGE



All loose change collected during our summer worship will be used to maintain and upgrade Common Ground.

### Subscribe to Flocknote

To receive church updates: text **HopkinsUMC** to **84576** or [flocknote.com/HopkinsUMC](http://flocknote.com/HopkinsUMC)

The Flocknote is our weekly e-news that gives a review of the last week's service, gives some details for the coming Sunday service, and shares announcements for upcoming events. Sometimes we share new music that we will be using in worship, or extra materials for a worship series.

### Summer Worship

We will hold one joint service again this summer, at 10am at Common Ground. Bring your own chair or blanket and preferred morning beverage. Folks will be bringing snacks for after worship. Kids are encouraged to come and enjoy the open space. In case of inclement weather, we will worship at South Monterey UMC (same time).

### Worship Wednesday on Pause

Our children's/family worship "Worship Wednesdays" will be taking a break for the summer. We encourage those with young ones to join us at Common Ground on Sundays where there is room for them to run around and make noise.

### Food Pantry

During the summer, the Food Pantry is passing out Kids Packs to those who could use an extra help to keep their kids fed while they are not in school. They are asking for donations of kid-friendly foods (PB&J, Mac & cheese, tuna, fruit snacks, crackers, soup, canned pasta, fruit cups, pancake mix, syrup, poptarts, cereal, etc.).



Thank you from the Hopkins Musical Cast for serving them a meal on their last show day!

*Thanks to Juanita for getting the UMW crafts organized and getting it all put away! ~UMW*

Thank you to Vern for lending us your weed whacker to clean up the parsonage yard!  
~Kelsey & Brennen

Dearest Church Family,  
Words can never express my thanks for all you have done for me and my family during my recent bout with heart surgery. Your cards, visits, calls, food, and your prayers have comforted us in so many ways. God has been with us every step of the way just as you all have been. Thank you!  
Alys & Merle & Family

Thank you to Kirstin, Carole, Susie & others for cleaning up our gardens!

Thank you to all the volunteers that helped with the Egg Hunt! Big thank you to Main Street Bakery, CD's, Russo's, Piki's, and other local businesses that donated to the Egg Hunt special prizes and treats! Thank you to the UMW & crafting ladies that gave so much time to packing and unpacking eggs.

Thank you to Rex and Carole Prather for keeping the church yard looking so nice!

Much gratitude to Wesley Foundation of Kalamazoo for giving us a set of Faith We Sing Hymnals so we can have more great music at Common Ground this summer!

# Calendar

## of Upcoming Events

**June 2** - Craft & Fellowship, 3-5pm, HUM Hall

**June 5** - Pentecost & Membership Sunday  
**Begin 10:00 summer worship at Common Ground**

**June 16** - Craft & Fellowship, 3-5pm, HUM Hall

**July 7** - Craft & Fellowship, 3-5pm, HUM Hall

**July 8** - Westward Road Concert, 7pm HUMC  
Soup & Salad Meal, 6pm, HUM Hall

**July 9-17** - Pastor Kelsey at Camp  
Sundays July 10 & 17: Guest preachers

**July 21** - Craft & Fellowship, 3-5pm, HUM Hall

**July 30-Aug 12** - Pastor Kelsey at Camp again  
Sundays July 31 & Aug 7: Guest preachers

## 5th Sunday Potluck bumped to August

We have decided to bump our next 5th Sunday potluck into August. This will be an end-of-the-Summer celebration. Details to come in the next Newsletter.

## Westward Road Concert!



Friday, July 8, we are hosting Christian Musician Family, Westward Road for a concert! The concert will be at 7pm in the Hopkins sanctuary, all are welcome! Entry is free, though we will be asking for a love offering to share with the band. We hope to host a soup and salad meal beforehand, details TBD.

From their website: "Westward Road is an exciting and dynamic family trio... Their "out of the box" take on worship and gospel music paired with their God given ability to communicate the Good News takes audiences into the presence of God in a very powerful way."

# Worship Volunteers

## **JUNE**

**June Greeters:** Reva Daniel & Juanita Curtis

**June 5 10:00 AT COMMON GROUND**

Children's Message - Mitzi Crowe

Liturgist - Mary Howard

Communion Server - Judy Beck

Fellowship snacks - Mary Howard & Reva Daniel

**June 12**

Children's Message - Pastor Kelsey

Liturgist - Vern Kraft

Fellowship snacks - Becks & Juanita Curtis

**June 19**

Children's Message - Mary Howard

Liturgist - Judy Beck

Fellowship snacks - Dick & Judy Weick & Earl & Linda Collier

**June 26**

Children's Message - Alys Edgell

Liturgist - Linda Burton-Collier

Fellowship snacks - Jen & Liam Salisbury & TBD\*

## **JULY**

**July Greeters:** Carl Collier & Becks

**July 3**

Children's Message - Pastor Kelsey

Liturgist - Mitzi Crowe

Communion Server - Sandy Ringler

Fellowship snacks - Krafts & TBD\*

**July 10**

Children's Message - Linda Burton-Collier

Liturgist - Debbie Lemmer

Fellowship snacks - Edgells & TBD\*

**July 17**

Children's Message - Mitzi Crowe

Liturgist - Mandi Edgell

Fellowship snacks - Mitzi Crowe & Holly Steiner

**July 24**

Children's Message - Mary Howard

Liturgist - Reva Daniel

Fellowship snacks - Debbie Lemmer & TBD

**July 31**

Children's Message - Alys Edgell

Liturgist - Vern Kraft

Fellowship snacks - Ringlers & TBD

## **AUGUST**

**August Greeters:** Earl & Linda Collier & Debbie Lemmer

**August 7**

Children's Message - Mitzi Crowe

Liturgist - Mary Howard

Communion Server - Judy Beck

Fellowship snacks - Juanita Curtis & TBD

\*We would love to have a South Monterey person join with the Hopkins person/people to provide fellowship snacks. If you are willing/able to help, please talk to Reva Daniel at church or call her at (616)550-2645.



### **June Birthdays**

4 - Brandon Goodenough      17 - Mandi Edgell

9 - Drew Lewis

25 - Karen Collier

11 - Vern Kraft

26 - Jaron Horton

12 - Gordon Terry

28 - Nancy Vogt

14 - Trevor Collier

### **July Birthdays**

1 - Tom Green

10 -

2 - Jim Ringler

Don Collier

7 - Judy Collier

Elaine Lull

Joe Haas

11 - Nora Mack

8 - Dee Davies

12 - Alaina Lewis

13 - Delilah Brinkhuis

22 - Paul Collier



### **June Anniversaries**

1 - Tom & Dawn Green

15 - Kinian & Nicole Mack

6 - Brennen & Kelsey French

26 - Tadd & Kirstin Heft

### **July Anniversaries**

2 - Justin & Kristan Goodenough

17 - Jen Tew-Salisbury & Liam Salisbury

29 - Trevor & Heather Collier

30 - Geoff & Mitzi Crowe

## **UM Connection Newsletter**

We are part of a connectional church, meaning we are part of a web of United Methodist churches around our state, our country, and the world! And there is often news going on outside our little Hopkins community, but we don't often all hear about it. So, to supplement our usual newsletter, Pastor Kelsey has pulled together some news, updates, and statements from around our conference (State), the country, and the world to keep us in the know. This includes District events, conference news, and responses to current events. Pick one up today! Or check in next week's flocknote for a digital version.





# UNITED METHODIST CONNECTION

Updates & News from our Neighbors, our District, our Conference, and the whole Denomination

## Response to Tornado in Gaylord

A deadly tornado struck Gaylord, Michigan Friday, May 20, about 3:30 PM, causing the confirmed deaths of 2 with at least 44 injured, in addition to widespread property damage across the region. Go to this website for more information and to give online:

[www.michiganumc.org/missions/disaster-response/](http://www.michiganumc.org/missions/disaster-response/)

Bishop Bard responds: " Friday afternoon while in Minnesota preparing for their annual conference, I received the news of the devastating tornado which struck Gaylord and the surrounding area. When Paul writes about our interconnectedness in Jesus Christ that when one part of a body suffers, all suffer with it (1 Corinthians 12:26), it also speaks about our shared humanity. When there is suffering, we are invited to feel it, know it and respond to it in the name and spirit of Jesus. I know you join me in offering your hearts and your prayers. I have requested a solidarity grant from UMCOR that helps provide some immediate relief. Please consider a gift to the Michigan Conference Disaster Response Fund."

Michigan Conference response: When The United Methodist Church responds to disasters our expertise through UMCOR is long-term disaster recovery. After the initial relief phase, which often gets the most media attention, comes the long-term work of disaster recovery, helping people put their lives back together through direct aid and help with accessing additional resources. Know that while we invite an immediate response, we are in this for the long haul. Michigan Conference staff Disaster Response Coordinator, Dan O'Malley, and Nancy Money, the Executive Director of Michigan Disaster Response and Recovery will provide updates on ways you can continue to help.

## UMCOR Collaboration serves needs in Ukraine

"Several other relief organizations have been able to increase their work in Ukraine with UMCOR support. In the southwestern part of Ukraine, a long-time UMCOR partner, International Blue Crescent (IBC), reaches people in the Odessa region with food, water and medical supplies. Odessa has been a target of Russian forces attempting to capture territory along the Black Sea. As Odessans evacuate, IBC distributes emergency food rations at the Moldovan/Romanian border in the city of Izmail. UMCOR support provides 75,000 meals as well as a 2-month supply of food staples for 1000 households in this besieged region. IBC also provides medical supplies to Bolgrad and Artsyz state hospitals based on their urgent needs.

UMCOR has released two emergency grants to the United Methodist Church in Ukraine. According to the district superintendent for the Ukraine/Moldova Provisional Annual Conference, the Rev. Oleg Starodubets, Ukrainian Methodists continue to serve refugees and people struggling in areas under siege.

...In addition to the UMCOR grants, United Methodists support the direct relief efforts of Ukrainian Methodists through the Advance. As of May 17, Global Ministries has tracked \$414,608 received for Ukraine in 2022 through this channel. United Methodists have also supported relief work with refugees offered by churches in neighboring countries through the Advance.

...UMCOR partnered with the Arlene Campbell Humanitarian Foundation and Ohio Health to gather and transport three shipments of medicines and medical supplies worth \$1 million to three hospitals in Kyiv."

Read more:

[michiganumc.org/umcor-partners-saving-lives-in-ukraine/](http://michiganumc.org/umcor-partners-saving-lives-in-ukraine/)

## Michigan Annual Conference

The 2022 Michigan Annual Conference is June 2-4. Based on Psalm 30, we will focus on resiliency as our church journeys through pandemics, denominational, and social change. Annual Conference is a yearly gathering of our state's clergy and lay delegates to discuss business for this church year, hear about missions happening from our churches, and spend time in worship and fellowship together.

Pastor Kelsey and Pastor Linda Burton-Collier are going to represent Hopkins & South Monterey. We will update you all when we return on anything you should know about.

## UMW Name Changes to United Women in Faith

For many years now the women's committee in our UM churches has been called the United Methodist Women. The international leaders for the UMW decided it was time for an update to better invite more women of our communities to be part of the group and ministry without implying they need to be Methodist. In March the new name, logo, website, etc. all launched. In our church, we are working on transitioning how we refer to our women's group from UMW to UWF.

Keep your ears open for new events as we have been inspired by this name change to do more to invite all women in our community to be part of our activities, ministry, and mission.

## UWF Mission Evening

The District United Women in Faith are hosting It's Easy Being Green! a Mission Evening on June 16 at 6:30pm at Climax UMC. Visit stations to learn how your unit can become green! Register by Jun 13.

## Mission u 2022 Study: Luke 13 Who Can We Be Together

A Transformative Biblical Curriculum for Adults, Youth and Children. We find ourselves in a period of incredible disruption and uncertainty. In the midst of a devastating pandemic, a divisive political climate and economic turmoil, we are turning to stories of Jesus that have anchored Christian communities in challenging times for over two millennia. Some of these stories of Jesus are found in the 13th chapter of the Gospel of Luke. The chapter opens and closes with a community trying to make sense of and navigate their way through times of turmoil and tragedy. However, the chapter centers on a story of Jesus teaching in a synagogue on the Sabbath when a woman suddenly

appears. Jesus makes the choice to "set [her] free from [her] ailment" (Luke 13:12) which causes a great deal of commotion among the leaders and crowd gathered there. In this context, Jesus likens the kingdom to a mustard seed and yeast (Luke 13:18-21). What did those images evoke for Jesus' first-century Jewish audience? And what possibilities might seed and yeast hold for us today? At the end of this study, our hope is that participants will leave with a bigger and broader vision of the kind of community Christ is calling us to be in times of loss, grief and massive disruption. What would be possible if we tend to the needs of our communities in small and often disruptive ways as Jesus did in Luke 13? May we do so with the faith that a multitude of small actions, like seeds, can activate a community's healing and renewal.

## District Baseball Game

Join United Methodists from around the District at a Kalamazoo Growlers baseball game July 31 at 1:35pm. Reserved tickets: \$10 includes hat, \$20 includes buffet. Purchase tickets online at [GrowlersTickets.com](https://www.growlertickets.com) using promo code: UMC.

## General Conference Postponed until 2024

The General Conference is an international body of nearly 1,000 delegates that generally meets every four years. The delegates are elected by annual conferences to attend the General Conference gathering. They represent all annual conferences around the world. The only body that can set official policy and speak for the denomination is the General Conference.

"As the pandemic continues and the wait time for visas stretches to over two years in some countries, the Commission on the General Conference announced [March 3] that the 2020 General Conference cannot be held in 2022 due to COVID-related and governmental policies/constraints."

"Commission chairperson Kim Simpson said the decision to postpone once again was an exceedingly difficult one, with many factors to consider..."

"The Book of Discipline 2016 requires the Commission to take necessary measures to assure full participation of all General Conference delegates. Consistent with that guidance, the Commission determined that the physical attendance of as many delegates as possible at the General Conference is critically necessary."

Read more:

[www.umc.org/en/content/general-conference-further-postponed-to-2024](https://www.umc.org/en/content/general-conference-further-postponed-to-2024)

# United Methodists' Response to Current Events & Politics

## United Women of Faith Respond to Potential Roe V. Wade Overturning

"As a leading Christian women's organization committed to the needs of women, children, and youth, United Women in Faith must voice alarm at the possibility of women losing the Constitutional right to legal abortion guaranteed by the Supreme Court's precedent-setting Roe v Wade decision. Overturning Roe could also endanger the right to privacy that should also protect women from being prosecuted for a miscarriage and affords women access to widely used, safe, and legal contraceptives.

"We call on federal and state legislators to act to protect the lives of women and girls by codifying their right to privacy, to legal and safe contraceptives, and, in tragic conflicts of life with life, abortions. State-coerced motherhood—like state-coerced sterilization—undermines women's ability to carefully discern and follow God's calling in their lives.

"Women are entitled to seek guidance in the privacy of their families and faith traditions or ethical mores in these moments."

Read the whole statement:

[uwfaith.org/press/2022/united-women-in-faith-voices-alarm-a-t-possible-overturning-of-roe-v-wade](https://uwfaith.org/press/2022/united-women-in-faith-voices-alarm-a-t-possible-overturning-of-roe-v-wade)

## The United Methodist Church on Abortion

¶161 K, The United Methodist Church Book of Discipline

"Our belief in the sanctity of unborn human life makes us reluctant to approve abortion. But we are equally bound to respect the sacredness of the life and well-being of the mother and the unborn child. We recognize tragic conflicts of life with life that may justify abortion, and in such cases, we support the legal option of abortion under proper medical procedures by certified medical providers. ...

"The Church shall encourage ministries to reduce unintended pregnancies such as comprehensive age-appropriate sexuality education, advocacy in regard to contraception, and support of initiatives that enhance the quality of life for all women and girls around the globe."

## Response to Gun Violence

### Bishop Bard Responded to shootings in Buffalo Grocery & California Church

Here are some highlights from his statement:

"An eighteen-year-old young man, dressed in military-style protective gear, wearing a helmet with a camera, and carrying a military-style assault rifle (an AR-15 clone) arrived at a grocery store in a predominantly Black section of town and began shooting. ... Ten people are dead, and more injured. The gunman posted a racist document online as "justification" for shooting Black people. It was filled with hatred grounded in conspiratorial replacement theory.

...A gunman opened fire at a Taiwanese-American Presbyterian Church, killing one and wounding five others. The man was motivated by a hatred for Taiwanese people though he, himself was born in Taiwan. There was other significant violence over the weekend. In Ohio, an eight-year-old was shot as two groups of women fought in a public park. In Milwaukee, on Friday night, three separate shootings occurred near the site of the Milwaukee Bucks basketball game. Two people were killed at a Houston flea market. It takes some faith and courage to continue to believe in the power of love.

Our country has a violence problem. On average, 321 people are shot each day in the United States. This weekend was particularly horrific but not entirely atypical. We have mental health concerns in this country. Mental health issues among children and adolescents are rising....

Our country continues to have problems with racial hatred. We have a difficult history that we fail to engage deeply with courage and creativity. We often work hard to avoid confronting this history.

"Our hearts go out to all those who grieve, particularly in Buffalo. Our prayers are extended to families and communities who mourn. May the promise of Jesus in the beatitudes be theirs. "Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted." Difficult prayers need to be prayed for the family of the Buffalo shooter. They mourn, too. Calls for accountability for that gunman must accompany our prayers.

We need to pray for our nation, pray that we will look in the mirror and ask ourselves hard questions about who we are and who we want to be. Princeton professor Eddie Glaude, Jr. wrote a couple of days ago: "We face a choice as to what kind of country this will be. If you



sit quietly, you have made your choice.” While I wish I did not have to write again about race and violence, I am not willing to sit quietly. Nor should any who follow Jesus be content to sit quietly.

Beyond prayers, I invite us to engage other beatitudes. “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.” “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.” What might it mean to hunger and thirst for righteousness after Buffalo? What might it mean to be peacemakers? Prayers of mourning and yearning and hungering for better – yes. And we need to continue to have the difficult conversations about race and hatred in this country. Avoiding those conversations only allows the deep infection of racialized thinking and its attendant hatreds and conspiracies to fester in our collective soul. And can we have a conversation about guns in this country? Might we have this conversation as people of faith? ... What does responsible gun ownership look like? What role might society have in keeping guns away from those whose precarious mental health opens them to the kind of hate-filled racialized thinking that is too easily accessible online so that we might avoid killings in stores and parking lots, and places of worship?

We mourn with those who mourn, trusting that the comforting love of God will arrive. May we also seek the blessing of those who hunger and thirst for righteousness and of the peacemakers. It takes some faith and courage to continue to believe in the power of love. Be that person of faith and courage and hope and creativity and love in the name of Jesus.”

Read his full statement here:

[mailchi.mp/michiganumc.org/comments\\_on\\_gc\\_postponement-2775341?e=1010560581](mailto:mailchi.mp/michiganumc.org/comments_on_gc_postponement-2775341?e=1010560581)

## **Robb Elementary School Shooting in Uvalde, Texas**

### **Statement from Bishop Bard:**

During the first day of the Minnesota Annual Conference, it was lunch break when a headline flashed across my phone. There was an active school shooting incident taking place in an elementary school in Texas. Few details of the shooting were provided.

As the conference met in the afternoon, the conference secretary informed me that there were two dead and 14 injured in a Texas school shooting. We paused and prayed. Before the afternoon session ended, more details were arriving.

The school was Robb Elementary School in Uvalde, Texas and the death toll was now 14 children, one teacher, and the eighteen year-old-shooter was also

dead. Voice breaking, I led the conference in prayer again. I write now at the end of a long day, and the death toll is now 19 students, two adults, and the shooter.

*Pray. Pray with cries of anguish and tears of grief. Pray with broken hearts and bruised spirits. Pray for this community. Pray for these families.*

As you pray, ponder something with me. “How does God’s love abide in anyone who has the world’s goods and sees a person in need and yet refuses to help? Little children, let us, love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action.” (1 John 3:17-18)

Prayer is needed speech, but our prayers are insufficient. There is a need in our society for a love that leads to action. There is a need in our society for us to seriously address our problem with violence and the ease with which those intent on doing serious harm acquire weapons that give them the means to do so. While no set of laws will prevent every incident of gun violence, we are not helpless. We can do better. We must do better. Watching such horrific incidents, knowing that there are countless other smaller-scale incidents, and doing nothing is not the way of love.

Grace and Peace,

David Alan Bard Michigan Area Bishop

## **A Call to Action from the Council of Bishops of United Methodist Church**

Thomas J. Bickerton Bishop of New York Annual Conference & President of The Council of Bishops of The United Methodist Church wrote a lengthy letter ending with this: “The call today is for every United Methodist Christian to go on the offense, stating what we believe the power of God can do in our midst, opening ourselves to power of God at work within us, and doing whatever we can to alter the current course of behavior once and for all.”

Read the whole letter here:

<https://www.unitedmethodistbishops.org/files/bishop+bickerton+statement+-+may+25.pdf>

### **Prayer from United Women in Faith**

O Lord in your mercy, hear our cries for the families crushed with sorrow by the loss of their children and loved ones in [May 24th’s] school shooting in Texas. Lord have mercy on our nation that continues to deem this recurring murder of our school children an acceptable price of “freedom.” Lord heal our collective mind and help our politicians muster the integrity and courage to act so that we can stop this carnage and pain.