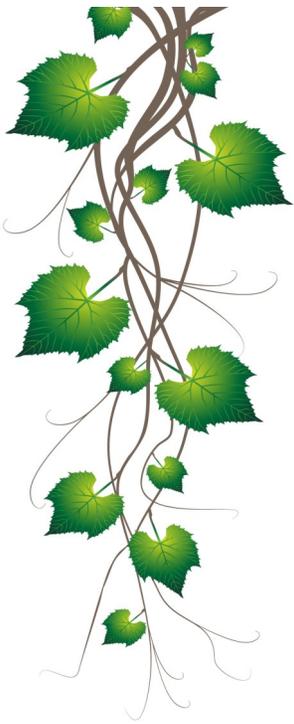


# The Arbor Vine

Ann Arbor District of The United Methodist Church  
Rev. Mark E. Spaw, District Superintendent



## January 2018

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### ALL IN THE FAMILY

In a New Year's Day newspaper cartoon, old 'Father Time', his term expired, is bequeathing the New Year to the traditional diapered New Year infant. Holding an hour glass in one hand, he is reading from a prepared text...he says to the babe, "Here is your Social Security number, fax number, cell phone number, pager number, internet provider number, employee ID number, pin number, ATM access number, automated account balance number" (and this is only a partial list).

More and more in our modern society we human beings are being identified as numbers and less and less as a member of God's family. Think about the love that God has lavished upon us by allowing us to be identified as His children. This means, of course, that when we are able to identify ourselves as children of God, we are able to identify ALL others as God's children—ALL members of the same humanity, ALL members of the same human family of God. And it is at this point that the real meaning of the coming of the Christ Child, our Messiah, our Savior becomes clear to us.

The following ad appeared in the classified section of a weekly newspaper—For Sale! Complete Encyclopedia Set. Twenty-six volumes in mint condition. Never used. My husband knows it all!

We may very well think that we know it all but in your celebration of Christmas did you find the Messiah, the Christ Child...did it make a difference in your life?

In this New Year of 2018, will we recognize Jesus as our Divine Host, inviting us to the Kingdom now? Or, will we turn our heads in the direction of every passing allurements? This is not a matter of rejecting the world in favor of the Kingdom. Rather, it is a matter of embracing the world in the spirit of the Kingdom. In 2018 it will be a matter of entering into our worldly affairs and our human relations in the spirit of sacrificial love, gathering in ALL of God's family.

Have we found the Messiah? You will see me most clearly, Jesus is telling us, in the faces of our brothers and sisters whose demands on our love and concerns are the hardest to meet. Have we found the Messiah? We will see most clearly, Jesus is telling us, in the faces of those brothers and sisters whom we find hardest to love.

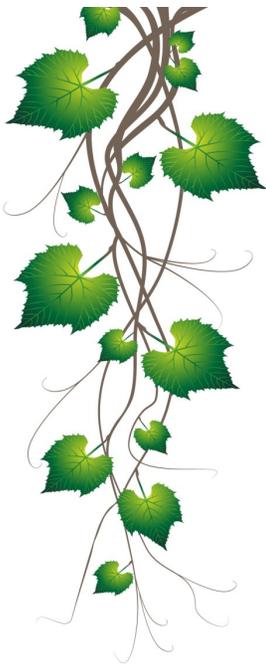
You will know if you have found the Messiah when in Him you begin to put your complete trust and faith. In 2018 I pray that we as individuals and as a faith filled community, will spread the love that the Christ child brings to ALL of God's family!

WISHING YOU NOTHING BUT BLESSINGS IN 2018.

Rev. Mark E. Spaw

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# NEWSWORTHY AND IMPORTANT

## ORDER 2017 JOURNALS

The Detroit Annual Conference Journal will not be automatically mailed out as it has been in the past. The following will need to order and pay for a Journal (s) online in order to receive it: local churches, individual persons (including clergy wanting a personal copy), conference committees, agencies and boards, all lay persons. The exception is retired clergy and surviving spouse (of the year the clergy person is memorialized at annual conference). These persons will receive one complimentary copy of the Detroit Conference Journal with no ordering required. Online orders may be placed using this link:

[www.createspace.com/7686679](http://www.createspace.com/7686679)

View the 2017 journal on the Michigan Conference web site using this link:

<http://resources.michiganumc.org/resources/detroit-conference-journals/>

## SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE

The Office of Loans and Scholarships at GBHEM offers over 70 scholarships. Applications for the 2018-2019 academic school year are open from **January 3 to March 7, 2018**. Click here to reach their web site:

<https://www.gbhem.org/loans-and-scholarships/scholarships/>

## LOCAL CHURCH ANNUAL REPORTS DUE IN JANUARY

The following information is available in full by using this link:

<http://statistician.michiganumc.org/homepage/year-end-announcement-letter/>

The Annual Report is required of all congregations. The senior pastor is the chief administrative officer of the local church and has the ultimate responsibility for making sure that the report is submitted by the due date and for its accuracy. January 1 the tables will be open for you to begin entering your stats.

Your User Name is your church's six digit G.C.No and the password you used when you last signed on. A link to all usernames can be found at:

<http://statistician.michiganumc.org/homepage/frequently-asked-questions/>

## CELEBRATION AND INTRODUCTION OF DISTRICT 8—APRIL 27 AT 6:30 PM

Please plan to attend a Friday night celebration of the coming together of the Albion and Ann Arbor districts. The event will be led by Rev. Dale Miller (current Albion District DS) and Rev. Mark Spaw. We will fellowship with others, choose the name of our new district (see article below) and discuss and choose our district officers and leaders and set the 2019 budget. The evening will be hosted by Jackson First UMC located at 275 West Michigan Avenue in Jackson.



## ANN ARBOR DISTRICT-ALBION DISTRICT-DISTRICT 8. WHAT'S IN A NAME?

As we transition into what was the Albion District and the Ann Arbor District we will be referred to as District 8. District 8 is not the name we will stay with and we're looking for some ideas of what the name of our district will be and are asking for your creative input. Take a look at the boundary lines, counties, the shape of the mitten (or hand) and offer a suggestion. Go to [aadistrictg.org](http://aadistrictg.org) and click on District Boundaries Report.

Send suggestions to Dar McGee at [aadisumc@sbcglobal.net](mailto:aadisumc@sbcglobal.net).

## SPRING LAY SERVANT MINISTRIES

In 2018, Spring Lay Servant classes are Saturday, April 7 and Saturday, April 21 at yet to be determined site. Mark your calendar and plan to attend.

## HUMAN RELATIONS DAY OFFERING

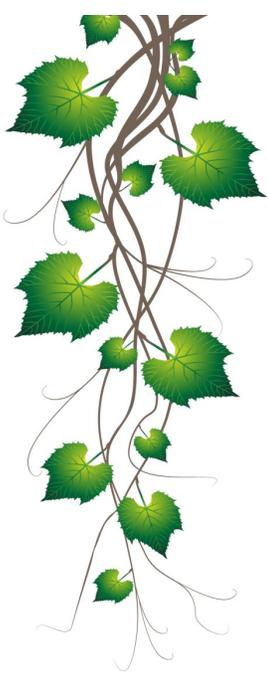
Human Relations Day Sunday is January 14. Together, we extend a helping hand to those in crisis so they can overcome formidable obstacles. Downloadable resources are available at this link:

## JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

Jan 14 Stephen Perrine

Jan 23 Sarah Baek

Jan 28 Jessica Boley



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### **BISHOP DAVID BARD ANNOUNCES DIRECTORS AND DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENTS**

Bishop Bard has announced the names of seven Directors of the new Michigan Conference and the appointments for superintendent assignments for the nine new districts. Along with the Bishop, these 16 persons will put their skills and gifts to work focusing the vision and shaping the mission for the 140,000 United Methodists in the state when the new conference begins functioning on July 1, 2018.

Directors continuing in service are: the Rev. John Boley, Clergy Assistant to the Bishop; David Dobbs, Director of Administrative Services and Conference Treasurer; Mark Doyal, Director of Communications; the Rev. Don Emmert, Director of Conference Benefits; and the Rev. Benton Heisler, Director of Connectional Ministry.

Rev. Jennifer (Jennie) Browne will serve in the new position, Director of Clergy Excellence. Church Vibrancy will be served by the Rev. Dirk Elliott.

District Superintendents are to be close partners in the new approach to staffing. Seven of the current Superintendents will continue with new assignments including the Reverends Scott Harmon (District 1), Anita Hahn (District 2), David Kim (District 3), John Hice (District 6), Dwayne Bagley (District 7) Elizabeth Hill (District 8) and Charles Boayue (District 9). The Rev. Dr. Margie Crawford and the Rev. Dr. Jerome (Jerry) DeVine come on the Cabinet as leaders of the new District 4 and District 5 respectively.

The information on the re-districting can be found on the Michigan Conference and Ann Arbor district web sites. The current Ann Arbor district will expand and become District 8 where we will welcome Rev. Elizabeth Hill as the District Superintendent as Rev. Mark Spaw has termed out from serving as the District Superintendent for the past 8 years.

What lies ahead? The process for determining Associate and Administrative Assistant positions will take place this winter. District organization—naming, visioning, nominations, activity planning, budgeting—will be done in the months leading up to Annual Conference. The nine new D.S.s begin ministry with their districts and Directors come together as a team on July 1, 2018.

The location of district offices will be part of the organization happening through the spring. Directors' offices will be housed at the Conference Center in Lansing and in the nearby Conference Center North.

Bishop Bard asks all to be in prayer during this time of transition.

### **2018 MICHIGAN ANNUAL CONFERENCE IS MAY 31—JUNE 3**

As the New Year approaches, it's time to look ahead to the 2018 Michigan Annual Conference, May 31 through June 3, 2018 at the Grand Traverse Resort in Acme, Michigan.

The 2018 theme, "Ministry with\*" will introduce a new model for mission for the Michigan Conference. TOM Talks (Transformational Outreach and Ministry) will demonstrate how to engage youth, schools, the poor, neighbors and even your church in mission during ten education sessions on Friday and Saturday.

The nine new districts will be another significant focus for members' attention. The Conference Program Committee listened carefully to feedback from those attending the 2017 Annual Conference. That input was overwhelmingly positive, however, adjustments have been made to reduce dinner costs, address more special dietary needs and reduced rates for hotel rooms. Specifics will be announced in January to aid churches in planning for participation by their pastor(s) and lay member(s).

Directions on how to submit legislation to the 2018 Michigan Annual Conference will be released in January. The deadline for submitting items for consideration is February 15, 2018.

Registration will open mid-February, 2018. No room reservations may be made before that time. Members are asked to NOT contact Grand Traverse Resort to book a room.



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**Return Service Requested**



**The Arbor Vine**

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