



Charge Conference 2023

Date of Meeting: Tuesday, December 5, 2023

Presiding Elder: Rev. Dr. Rick Owen, South Central District Superintendent

Recording Secretary:

Agenda

Call to Order	Rev. Dr. Rick Owen
Approve Recording Secretary	Rev. Dr. Rick Owen
Opening Prayer	Rev. Mike Holly
Report of the Lay Leader	Janet O'Neil
Nominations Committee Report	Rev. Mike Holly
Staff-Parish Relations Committee Report	Bob Suellentrop
Finance Committee Report	Jay Nichols
Candidate for Certified Lay Servant	Rev. Mike Holly
Additional Reports as Needed	
Report of the Pastors	
Adjourn the Charge Conference	Rev. Dr. Rick Owen



Charge Conference 2023 Lay Leader Report

The laity at Asbury United Methodist Church is vibrant and resilient. We have needed that resilience over the past year. 2023 began with our Discernment Team already in place developing a plan for listening sessions, surveys, and informational guides to address the disaffiliation question faced by all United Methodists. Our survey showed that roughly two thirds of our congregation are compatibilists. They voiced that they could work together even though they might disagree on issues of human sexuality. After much discussion, discernment, and prayer the Asbury Church Council followed the recommendation of the Discernment Team and voted not to put the issue to a vote. We felt there was not a clear two thirds majority in favor of disaffiliation and that such a vote would tear us apart. We are aware that one third of the congregation considers themselves non-compatibilists and are waiting for decisions from the 2024 General Conference.

Meanwhile, the congregation is moving ahead together. In fact, we've developed a campaign called "Asbury Together" that includes a new logo, tee shirts, and bumper stickers. The emphasis is on all the positive ways we work together to impact our community by showing Christian love. Our missions outreach is stronger than ever. Just this quarter we held God's Garage Sale where all items are free; Asbury Serve Day when teams of Asbury volunteers spanned across the Birmingham metro; and even before December our Angel Tree was cleared of all paper angels in one Sunday. It's now being set up for a second round. That's Asbury UMC Together!

We've accomplished this under the careful guidance of our new Senior Pastor, Rev. Mike Holly. His leadership took us through the rough waters of 2023 and along the way he encouraged and solidified our pastoral team. Our modern worship service is thriving under Associate Pastor, Rev. Robert Mercer. Our Pastor of Congregational Care, Rev. Maggie Dunaway, is thriving as she continues seminary and shares the pulpit. Rev. Michael Bowman, the newest associate to join Asbury, is also thriving as he oversees adult, youth, and children's ministries. The depth of discipleship, modeling of Christian values, and loving enthusiasm for our congregation is evident in this pastoral team every day.

Our attendance continues to be stable including an ever-growing online audience that stretches across the country and beyond. Our finances are stable as well with healthy support from the congregation.

We are thankful for 2023 and are prepared for 2024. The congregation of Asbury United Methodist is together as we follow in the footsteps of Christ.

Blessings abound,

Janet Hall O'Neil
Lay Leader, Asbury UMC



Charge Conference 2023 Nominations Committee Report

Church Council

KC Nolen, Chairperson
TBD, Vice-Chairperson
Melissa Franklin, Recording Secretary
Janet O'Neil, Lay Leader
TBD, Board of Trustees
Katie Hammock, Finance Committee
Bill Connor, Staff-Parish Relations Committee
Christy Miller, Missions in Action Committee
Brent Falkenhagen, Lay Delegate to Annual Conference
Thomas Hammock, Lay Delegate to Annual Conference
Melanie Nichols, Lay Delegate to Annual Conference
Lee Ann Daniels, Lay Delegate to Annual Conference
Kristen Bundren, Reserve Lay Delegate
George Hollis, Reserve Lay Delegate
Melissa Franklin, Member at Large (2024)
Bob Gilbert, Member at Large (2024)
Dave Precht, Member at Large (2024)
Angel McPhearson, Member at Large (2025)
Buddy Coker, Member at Large (2025)
Chad Kendrick, Member at Large (2025)
Scott Erb, Member at Large (2026)
John Isaac Southerland, Member at Large (2026)
Janice Wilson, Member at Large (2026)
Leslie Crawford, Children's Ministry
Carol Erickson, Student Ministry
Lee Ann Wagner, Adult Ministry
Becky Paisley, Worship Committee
Delores McGill, United Methodist Women
Alice Little, Young at Heart

Finance Committee

Katie Hammock, Chairperson
TBD, Vice-Chairperson
Katie Hammock (2024)
Larry Anderson (2024)
Presley Rebman (2024)
Bob Gilbert (2025)
Chris Tanner (2025)
Nancy Gotham (2025)
Robert Cole (2026)
Cary Guffey (2026)
Rob Rodgers (2026)

Board of Trustees

TBD, Chairperson
TBD, Vice-Chairperson
Dave Driscoll (2024)
Mike Oatridge (2024)
Brooks Burdette (2024)
Lori Moler (2025)
Tim Braswell (2025)
Rodney Cox (2025)
Angelyn McIlwain (2026)
Trace Traywick (2026)
Keith Wooten (2026)

Staff-Parish Relations Committee

Bill Connor, Chairperson
TBD, Vice-Chairperson
Janet O'Neil, Lay Leader
Bill Connor (2024)
Mollie Shealy (2024)
Nick Duett (2024)
Joe Spain (2025)
Kim Nolen (2025)
Katherine Naumann (2025)
Elise Arrington (2026)
Mac Chandler (2026)
John Henson (2026)

Nominations and Leadership Committee

Rev. Mike Holly, Chairperson
Rev. Robert Mercer, Vice-Chairperson
Janet O'Neil, Lay Leader
Angel McPhearson (2024)
Jessica Johnson (2024)
Joe Spain (2024)
Robert Holton (2025)
Kim Nolen (2025)
Kristen Bundren (2025)
Jaima Binzer (2026)
Wayne Hay (2026)
Lindsey Shar (2026)



**Charge Conference 2023
Report of the Staff-Parish Relations Committee**

Clergy Salaries for Approval

Total Clergy Salary and Professional Expense	\$288,200
<i>(does not include housing allowance)</i>	



Charge Conference 2023 Report of the Finance Committee

2023 Budget Update

As of December 1, 2023, the year to date giving is \$3,579,134.35, 72.69% of the budgeted amount for the year and decrease of -1.66% compared to 2022 year to date giving.

Year to date expenses are \$4,149,577.15, 84.27% of the budgeted amount for the year and an increase of 4.18% compared to 2022 year to date expenses.

The year-to-date net income/loss for 2023 is -\$574,020.49. Historically, nearly one-fourth of Asbury's ministry contributions are received in the month of December and the Finance Committee anticipates a strong month of giving to complete the 2023 fiscal year.

Total operating cash balance of cash accounts held at ServisFirst Bank as of December 1, 2023 was \$1,211,081. Additionally, \$1,881,934 is held in interest-bearing accounts at the Methodist Foundation of North Alabama. Current total liquidity is approximately \$3.1M.

Asbury's current debt balance is \$7,137,416. To date, \$573,120.39 has been paid year to date on debt service. Payments are currently part of the Trustees annual budget and additional principal payments are made from designated REACH Campaign pledge contributions.

2024 Budget Adoption

Whereas, the Finance Committee of Asbury United Methodist Church is responsible for the stewardship and fiscal management of the church's monetary assets, and

Whereas, Asbury United Methodist Church, in an effort to increase information access and transparency regarding income and expenses of the Church, therefore be it

RESOLVED that the 2024 fiscal budget for Asbury United Methodist Church be established at \$5,129,958.88. This amount may change based on end of year reconciliation upon which the allocation for Missions in Action is computed. The 2024 Missions in Action budget is allocated at 10% of the 2023 giving to ministries and is collected as pre-payment during the 2023 budget year. The budget may also be adjusted to reflect Asbury's "fair share" giving through Conference and District apportionments.



**Charge Conference 2023
Candidate for Lay Servant
Rodney K. Cox**

A certified lay servant is a professing member of a local church or charge or a baptized participant of a recognized United Methodist collegiate ministry or other United Methodist ministry setting who desires to serve the church and who knows and is committed to Scripture and the doctrine, heritage, organization, and life of the United Methodist Church. This is a person who has received specific training to witness to the Christian faith through spoken communication, to lead within a church and community, and to provide caring ministry.

The certified lay servant, through continued study and training, should prepare to undertake one or more functions, giving primary attention to service within the local church or charge, United Methodist collegiate ministry, or other United Methodist ministry setting:

- *Provides program leadership, assistance, and support;*
- *Leads meetings for prayer, training, study, and discussion;*
- *Conducts, or assists in conducting, services of worship, preaches the Word, or gives addresses;*
- *Provides congregational and community leadership and fosters caring ministries;*
- *Assist in distribution of Communion elements;*
- *Teachers the Scriptures, doctrine, organization, and ministries of the United Methodist Church.*

Recognition as a certified lay servant may be renewed annually by the district committee on Lay Servant Ministries after the certified lay servant has submitted an annual report and renewal application to the charge conference, giving evidence of satisfactory performance as a certified lay servant, obtained recommendation for renewal from the pastor and church council of the local church where they hold membership, and completed a lay servant ministries advanced course in the last three years.

Rodney K. Cox has served as a Certified Lay Servant to Asbury United Methodist Church during 2023 and has completed the necessary application to be recertified as a Certified Lay Servant for the upcoming year. Rodney is presented to this Charge Conference for affirmation and approval.