

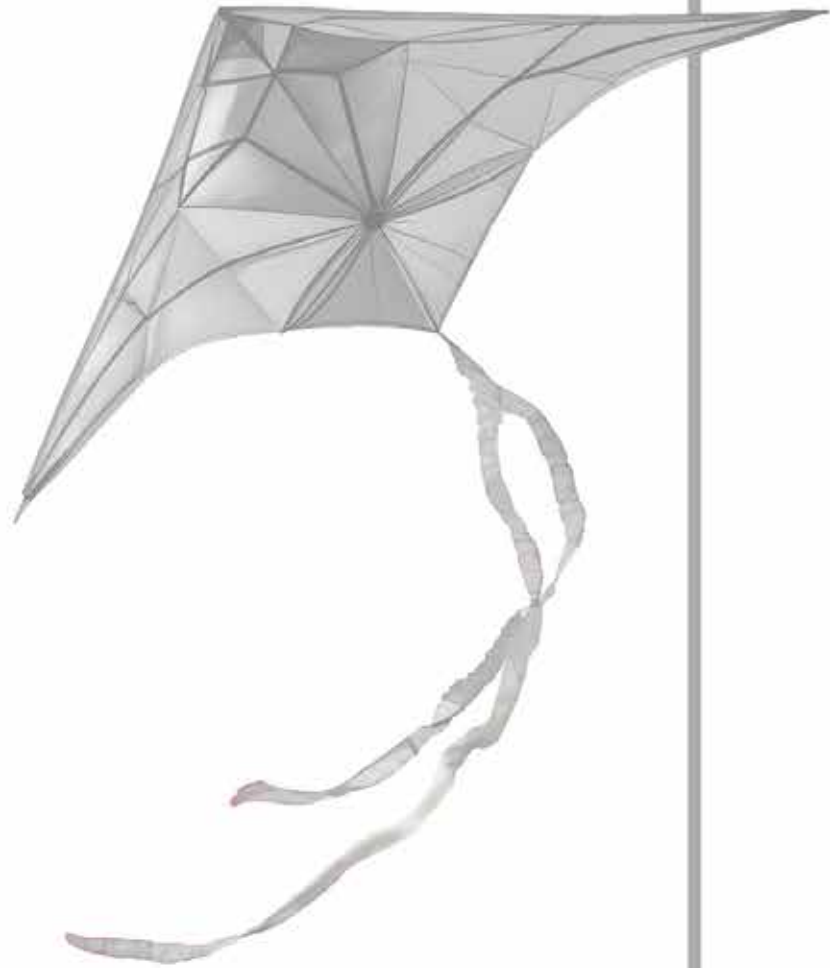
FEARLESS

MICHIGAN ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Embracing
A NEW FUTURE

Motions

2024 Annual Session
May 30 - June 1
Grand Traverse Resort
Acme MI



Charlevoix United Methodist Church/Drawbridge Life
Northern Skies District
Charlevoix, Michigan

Final Worship October 1, 2023

Date of Closure December 31, 2023

(Voted at November 30, 2023 Special Session of Annual Conference)

A Methodist class was organized on the Charlevoix Circuit in the summer of 1867 with 17 members. By 1878 the class had grown into a church with a new building. Its steeple was, for a time, the tallest structure in Charlevoix. Through the next 145 years, the church grew to become an integral part of its community. From Easter Sunrise Services on the shores of Lake Charlevoix, to baptisms in Lake Michigan, to the free lunch program offered for many years from the church, members and friends worked to learn about and grown in their faith and share their love of Jesus with those around them. Ministries included the lunch program, the Rainbow Thrift Shoppe, Kids Hope, work trips to Henderson Settlement in Kentucky, the community Christmas program, and hosting the Charlevoix Thanksgiving dinner. Popular fundraisers drew many hungry customers – the footlong hotdog booth at the Venetian Festival, soup and salad luncheons sponsored by the UMW, chili cookoffs, and famous fish fries. The closing worship was celebrated on October 1, 2023. Furnishings and supplies were donated to churches and ministries near and far; all properties were sold. Throughout the process of closing, members have celebrated the ways in which their faith strengthened their love of God, their lives, and their friendships, and know that it will continue the legacy of Charlevoix UMC in the community for many years to come.

At this 2024 Michigan Annual Conference Corporate Session, in accordance with paragraph 2549 of the 2016 Book of Discipline, the Cabinet moves that these churches be closed as of the following dates:

- | | | |
|-------------------|-------------------|----|
| 1. Leonard UMC | November 30, 2023 | EW |
| 2. Lifespring UMC | December 31, 2023 | GS |
| 3. Rodney UMC | March 2, 2024 | CB |
| 4. Forester UMC | June 30, 2024 | EW |

**Leonard United Methodist Church
East Winds District
Leonard, MI**

Final Worship November 26, 2023

Date of Closure November 30, 2023

Years ago, Circuit Riders from the Union Circuit, organized in 1858, came on horseback to preach in Addison Township, wherever a gathering place was available. In 1886 about one half acre of land was purchased from Leonard Rowland by the following trustees of the Leonard Class of the Union Circuit: Jacob Snyder, Norman Haines, and Samuel B. Cooley.

At that time, lighting was by kerosene lamps over each window, giving place to gas light generated from gasoline, lighted manually but very carefully, as can be well imagined. Parking was not as is in present day living with parking meters, but horse stalls in the back of the lot were rented out to the parishioners. Some of the charter members were from the Myers, Glover, Parrish, Goodwin and Stuffel families.

The church still used the original furniture, pulpit, altar rail, and pews. The Bible on the pulpit was an 1864 edition which included the names of circuit members initiated in those early years. From Leonard Methodist Protestant Church, to Leonard Methodist Church (1939) to Leonard United Methodist Church (1968), this congregation continued to serve her Lord. The spirit of Leonard UMC will live on.

**LifeSpring United Methodist Church
Kalamazoo, Michigan**

Final Worship

Date of Closure December 21, 2023

There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the sun.

-Ecclesiastes 3:1

To everything there is a season and the season for the New Church Start, now LifeSpring Church, has been completed. LifeSpring began in 2001 and has served by birthing three pastors: Jennifer, Jason, and John. We have been united as a family and blessed our community in many ways. Our LifeSpring Legacy continues through the sharing that we are now able to do by providing funds for:

District Summer Camp Scholarships

VBS/Day Camp Grant

Faith Formation Grant

Pastor's Education Scholarship

Prairie Ridge Elementary School

Kalamazoo Gospel Ministries

Kalamazoo Loaves and Fishes

Bronco's Kitchen Foundation

Wesley Foundation of Kalamazoo

Celebrate Recovery

Grief Share Ministry

Samaritan's Purse Christmas Child

District & Conference "New Church
Start"

Sunnyside UMC

Ninth Street UMC

Marcellus UMC

Oshtemo UMC

We have been a family for the past 22 years and we remain devoted to one another as we travel our individual paths following God's direction. LifeSpring found its name in John 4:14. Living Water, Jesus, Spring of living water welling up to eternal life. LifeSpring Church was born to encourage people into a relationship with Jesus Christ, the LifeSpring, by:

- Going and loving people where they are

- Celebrating worship that connects with real life
- Inviting all into the family of God
- Facilitating Christian growth
- Assisting the discovery of spiritual gifts and passions
- Fulfilling God's greater purpose through Christ

We have completed our task as best we could in the time we had together as a LifeSpring family and our LifeSpring Legacy lives on.

**Rodney United Methodist Church
Central Bay District,
Rodney, Michigan**

Final Worship December 31, 2023

Date of Closure March 2, 2024

The story of the Rodney United Methodist Church is the story of the village of Rodney, which was founded in Mecosta County in 1879 by the Hood & Gale Lumber Company as a station along the Detroit, Lansing & Northern Railroad in Colfax Township. Later, the railroad became part of the Pere Marquette Railway.

The town is located eight miles east of Big Rapids and was a branch line that headed north to Chippewa Lake. As with most towns in that area in the 1800's it was a lumber and farming town. It didn't take long for the town to soon have a billiard hall, general store, the Rodney House Hotel, livestock yards, livery stable, and post office, along with the railroad depot.

In 1882, the Sweet Lumber Company generously donated land to the village of Rodney, initiating the establishment of a Congregational Church under the leadership of Reverend Carey. By 1890, followers of John Wesley's teachings had constructed the Rodney Methodist Episcopal Church right next door. The original Congregational Church became vacant by 1912, but in 1924, under the leadership of District Superintendent Reverend J. C. Devinney, the Rodney Methodist Episcopal congregation acquired and moved into this larger building, marking a significant moment in their history.

As with many small towns in Michigan, when the lumber boom ended and the work dried up, so did the towns. That was the story of the Village of Rodney, and of the Rodney United Methodist Church. Rodney United Methodist Church, alongside Third Ave and Paris United Methodist Churches, was an integral part of the Big Rapids Parish from 1948 until its closure on March 1, 2024.

In a display of remarkable faith, the congregation of Rodney made the difficult decision to discontinue use of their historic building due to significant structural issues. Recognizing the challenges that maintaining the aging building would pose for the newly forming ministry in Mecosta County, they chose not to become a burden. Instead, they were resolute in their willingness to let go of the old to make way for new growth. This selfless act is a testament to their deep commitment to their faith and their community, embodying a spirit of renewal that respects their cherished past while embracing the future's possibilities.

Peace,
Pastor Jeremy Wicks

**Forester United Methodist Church
East Winds District
Forester, Michigan**

Final Worship June 9, 2024
Date of Closure June 30, 2024

To celebrate the Forester United Methodist Church, one member wrote: 60 years ago I was all bundled up brought to church with my 5 older siblings. No other church has felt like home to me more than this church. I guess through the years as our lives change, work life, family life, moving to another area, traveling and vacations I believed like a child that my church would be here when I was ready to return.

In time, I was able to return to the church of my childhood. As a member, I have faithfully served the congregation and the greater Carsonville community. Forester will always hold a special place in my heart and in my life. I know that the members of Forester will continue to serve our Lord, following His guiding light as we continue God's work in our lives.

Love, Peace, Grace, Faith, and Prayers to our God.