



# THE BELL TOWER



Emily's Chronicles

March 2023

**“No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.”– Romans 8: 37-39 NRSV**

Greetings Brothers and Sisters in Christ of Cody UMC,

We are in Lent and we find ourselves on a beautiful, crazy, life giving journey of deepening our faith. Lent is a beautiful time. Liturgically, there are some remarkable things at work. Spiritually, Lent invokes something within me. It reminds me that our human understanding is limited, but God's love and understanding is limitless.

In our humanness, we find ourselves living in binaries- either its right or wrong, black or white, right or left. We are not always comfortable with the idea of there being more to offer or experience. If we have more choices, than that means we may choose something that is different from the rest. And change is hard. Change is something we struggle with. We don't care to admit it, but it's true.

The United Methodist Church is experiencing immense change. Not the first time, mind you, but a change that has shaped the denomination in ways we have never experienced before. You might have heard some things regarding the Global Methodist Church, disaffiliation, and even things about me as a pastor. I want to clear the air. I want to put rumors to rest. When rumors circle around, harm is done. There is no room for life giving conversation and discernment if we allow rumors to remain.

This all started with the special General Conference that was held in May of 2019. This conference was to address changes to the Book of Discipline, specifically language around homosexuality, marriages of homosexuals, and ordination of homosexual clergy. The plan that was voted on and approved was the Traditional Plan, meaning the language would NOT change, would not be affirming. The language regarding homosexuality in the Book of Discipline has not changed since 1972.

With the Traditional Plan voted on, it was at General Conference of 2020 that new plans would be proposed to change the language. However, Covid hindered that opportunity, and so General Conference was pushed back to 2022. With many conferences outside the United States still being impacted by Covid, and finding safe ways for the General Conference to meet, it was pushed again to May of 2024.



Within this time, the Global Methodist Church was created- a split from the UMC, mainly by the Wesleyan Covenant Association. As of May 1 of 2022, the GMC has been active, still working out a few logistics, but has made their stance on homosexuality- they are conservative theologically and uphold the Traditional Plan in their Book of Discipline. What does that mean for the UMC, and for our church potentially?

First thing to make clear: NO action or vote is needed to REMAIN in connection with the United Methodist Church. If we as a congregation wanted to leave, the delegates of 2019 General Conference voted to approve a grace-filled way for congregations to disaffiliate from the UMC based on “reasons of conscience regarding a change in the requirements and provisions of the Book of Discipline related to the practice of homosexuality or the ordination or marriage of self-avowed practicing homosexuals.” What this means is churches can leave if they do not wish to be affirming or reconciling churches in the UMC.

IF we wanted to disaffiliate, meaning we would not agree with the affirming changes in the Book of Discipline, then we start the process of leaving the denomination. We would no longer be Cody United Methodist Church. People believe that’s where the process ends. That is far from the truth. It is not just a yes or no. It’s a yes we stay, and nothing changes, or a no we leave and then many things change.

Disaffiliation requires 2/3 majority vote by professing members. Professing members are those who have joined the church either by profession of faith, transfer of membership from another church/ denomination, or through baptism in the church. We keep an accurate list of who are members and who are attendees. If you have questions regarding membership, you can always come to the office.

IF we were to disaffiliate, there is an application process we initiate with our District Superintendent, and with the Conference. There is also taking care the matter regarding property. Because the property belongs to the conference, we would have to work with the Board of Trustees from the Conference to gaining ownership of property- church building, grounds, and parsonage.

IF we were to disaffiliate, the church would be responsible for two years of pension liability and mission shares/apportionments. Our church is responsible for a certain amount of the pension and paying towards mission shares of the Conference, and the Conference covers the rest. If we were to leave, the Conference would need the remaining amount plus a year as a pro-rate to help cover the costs for the clergy remaining in the UMC and for the missions within the UMC of Mountain Sky.

This brings me to my next point. As I'm sure you are all aware- I am an affirming pastor. I am an ally to my LGBTQIA2S+ siblings. I was in seminary when General Conference voted on the Traditional Plan for the Book of Discipline, and I saw my classmates and peers lives changed forever. I had members of my ordination class denied because of issues regarding sexuality, and it was hard to see their dreams of ordination be crushed, while I was uplifted and praised. As an ally, I will stand up for the changes in the Book of Discipline. That being said, I will remain in connection with the UMC. IF our congregation was to disaffiliate, I would request a new appointment and would no longer serve as the pastor of this congregation.

I have heard some things regarding my beliefs and what I would enact from the pulpit. I do not believe I push agendas. I make my beliefs known, but I do not wish to push my beliefs onto others. We all have our agreements and differences, that's human nature. I stand to welcome ALL who come through the doors of our beloved church. If people are not feeling welcomed, things need to change.

Our Administrative Council has had conversations around whether or not we should remain in the UMC. We all feel that remaining UMC is the better option, but we want to create opportunities for listening sessions around disaffiliation. Those will be held in late spring. We as an Administrative Council want to be transparent about where we stand and want the churches support. Time and time again, I have heard many of you say that you want to welcome all people, serve all people and be invested in this community. I have heard you say you want to live by the phrase "Open Hearts, Open Minds, Open Doors." If this truly is the case, I believe disaffiliation will only hinder that idea for us. If we want to welcome all, remaining within the UMC will do that.

Peace and Blessings,

*Emily Rettinghouse*

Pastor Emily L Rettinghouse



## Cody United Methodist Church

### Ad Council Meeting Minutes

February 7, 2023

Those in attendance – Ann Armel, Kim Garrison, Carrie Sheffield, Kris Coleman, Linda Bell, Robert Mitchell, Bryan Armel, Larry Snook, Dave Shaw, Gene Parker, Pastor Emily, Kandi Parker

Chairperson, Ann Armel, welcomed everyone to the meeting and Pastor Emily gave the opening prayer.

It was moved and seconded to approve the minutes of the January Ad Council meeting. The motion passed.

#### Old Business

It was reported that the auction to benefit the carpet purpose has been in progress and will close tonight, February 7.

#### New Business

##### Financial Report

Bryan Armel went over the financial report for 2022. The report is included in the February, 2023 newsletter. Bryan is available to discuss the report with anyone who would like to do so.

Disaffiliation - Discussion & Vote of Church Council if we stay UMC or leave UMC:

It was discussed how important it is for us to educate the congregation to help alleviate the belief in rumors, wrong information etc. is needed. It was also decided that time from the pulpit by Pastor Emily as well as a Listening / Education Session in May would be helpful. It was a unanimous vote by the Church Council to stay with UMC.

#### **Committee Reports**

##### Worship

The Worship Committee met in January and we had a great discussion on our programs and work to do in 2023 and for the first 3 months we planned most of what we will be doing through Easter. The first Event is Feb 21 which is the Fat Tuesday evening with a Dinner (Decorations, Jambalaya and Salad and rolls.. and Social Time - including the King Cake which Char Olson has agreed to make. Pastor will get the baby Jesus which is inserted into the cake...

Ash Wednesday follows - and there will be a service at 5:00pm and Pastor has that arranged.

We will be in Lent and of course that is based on this year's calendar.

We follow Lent into the Holy Week, and I will update you as we go forward into March and April.

Sandy Mercer requires some help with her duties and Jann Smith will help with that along with me and Kandi. Claudia Snook has joined us and will help with the events as they come up. She is pleased to be on this Committee. We have readers and ushers each week and moving right along. We purchased 2 new banners at 50% off and 1 is for the Hosanna (Palm Sunday) which we did not have in our stock. Kandi Parker and I will be displaying Banners as we go forward into the different months.

Communion prep is still Sandy Mercer. Newsletter showed dates for folks to mark their calendars. Questions? Pass to Kandi and she will pass to me. We meet again 3rd Thursday in February at 10:00 am

### Education

I won't be able to make it due to working a swim meet on Tuesday. We had a good CPR class Saturday. All who attended were Lu, Larry Z., Karen B., Cap and Linda. Education wise, We just need to make sure we have a backup plan while the Heaths are out for Nursery and if we want to just take a hiatus on Sunday school right now. I will take Nursery on the 26th. Many of us will be gone on the 19th because of the Hunchback performance that will be at 2pm that day, so call time is usually 10am for most of us. We talked about asking Robin Blessing if she could do that day, so we just need to make sure that day is locked down. I think that's the only thing I have for Education and Safety updates and Pastor Emily can update anything on the Youth group. Have a great meeting and God Bless.

Pastor Emily spoke on Youth Group. It is going great; they are averaging around 10 per meeting. There will be no youth group on 2/12/2023 due to the "Big Game", the youth had plans with friends. Youth Group will resume on 02/26/2023.

### Missions – Linda Bell

The Souper Bowl lunch is this Sunday, 2/12/2023 following worship and the proceeds will go to HMFMC. They have found a use for the "Chicken Dinner Money" and that will be split with \$500.00 going to the Jubilee Ministries and \$500.00 going to CASA. They are hoping to have a Mission Moment at worship with representatives from these two groups to speak on what they do and how the money will be used. They will resume Tuesday's from 2:00 to 4:00 at Mentock Park handing out snacks again this summer for about 6 weeks.

### UWF

Unit meeting will be Wed the 8<sup>th</sup> at 12:00pm, program will be Call to Prayer & Self Denial, Sheron Porter will be meeting leader. Naomi Circle will meet Monday February 20th and will also do February visitations. Rebekah Circle will meet Tuesday, February 21st. I believe Rebekah will be cleaning kitchen in February. Thanks Karen

### SPR – Larry Snook

They met and had the 3 month follow-up employment evaluation report for Susan Schmidtberger and all was very positive and she was offered the permanent position and gladly took it.

They have Guidelines for Christian Conversation pamphlets that they will leave in the parlor since that is where meetings are held. These will be for all to read.

Pastor Emily has put in her vacation times and they are working at getting those dates covered.

SPR will be implementing a Buddy System for all of our employees. Members of SPR will support, listen and help staff as needed – be their Buddy.

Confidentiality was discussed at their last meeting and it was stressed just how important that is on this committee.

Lu Shuler will be the Vice Chairman & Ann Armel will serve as Secretary for SPR.

### Trustees – Gene Parker

The Committee has checked into our Legal Documents as requested by DS Mark Calhoun and found that our documents need work and corrections made. They will continue with that process.

They also looked at who the signers were for the Safe Deposit box at the bank and found this needed updated as well.

A motion was made by Pastor Emily and seconded by Byron Coleman to remove Sam Little and Ron Daniels as signors of the Safe Deposit box and add Gene Parker and Bryan Armel. The motion passed.

This puts Francie Audier, Bryan Armel, Gene Parker & Dave Shaw as signors for the Safe Deposit box.

Trustees are looking into a more substantial lighting on 14<sup>th</sup> Street.

They are going to remodel the shed behind the church sometime in the near future.

### Membership Nurture – Dave Shaw

Postcards are being made to send out for Anniversaries & Birthdays.

They sent a monetary gift to our College Students for Christmas.

Dave has a rough draft done for the Directory and ready for Pastor Emily to look over and approve.

Good Samaritan – Kim Garrison

The goal of the committee is to raise \$12,000 for the year.

It seems they provide about \$1000.00 / month of financial aid for Utilities, Rent, etc.

They are planning a Fundraiser Dinner on Palm Sunday, 04/20/2023. It will be Ham, Potatoes, Peas, Rolls, etc. A silent auction will also be held at that time.

Safety – Byron Coleman

They had a meeting on 01/24/2023. It was discussed to stop sanitizing on Saturday morning before worship on Sunday. If the need arises, they will go back to sanitizing.

It was decided to have a Rover and a Front Door watch during Worship service. A sign-up sheet for this is by the AED in Koelmel hall and you don't have to be a member of Safety Committee to do this. Byron has also ordered 3 small Pepper Spray (Handheld) for the Rover & Front Door to carry. The 3<sup>rd</sup> one will be in the Office. They also plan to test the Emergency Pendants worn by the Rover & Front Door watch in the near future. This will be done with ADT, the provider of the pendants. CPR class was led by Suzanne Palmer on 02/04/2023 and 5 people took the class.

Pastor's Report

All is good with her family.

She will be doing Ride Along with Law Enforcement soon and sitting with dispatch as part of her training to be the Law Enforcement Chaplain.

She is busy preparing for Lent and Holy Week.

She has provided vacation dates.

The dates for Camp have been set and there will be both an Elementary and Middle/High School session at Luccock Camp in Montana.

Ann announced that there will be a long-range planning meeting at the Ivy on Thursday, February 21 for that committee.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kandi Parker

Recording Secretary



## Worship Committee

Fat Tuesday was a success despite the Weather! We had about 24 folks who braved it out and all enjoyed the Jambalaya, Salad and Hot Toasted Cheese Bread with a wonderful King Cake to follow for Dessert. Thanks to all who helped prepare and serve. Stan Wolcott was the recipient of the Baby Jesus in his slice of cake. A fun game of Bingo was played. Robert Mitchell was the first to get a Bingo so he received the first slice of the King Cake.

Char Olson you are a great King Cake Maker! Pictures tell the story!!!



### March Readers

March 5 Jann Smith  
March 12 Ann Armel  
March 19 Lauren Newton  
March 26 Diane Ballard

Communion Stewards for March 5th - Claudia & Larry Snook.

Choir will Sing March 5th & 19th - Bells play March 26th.

We so enjoy our music in the church with Choir, Bells and Morning Glories. Thanks to all who perform. A shout out to our Candle Lighter who lights the candles in the beginning of the service and takes the light out at the end. A Big Thank You to Aldrin Morgan.

Ash Wednesday service was attended by 15 brave souls who ventured out in the cold and snow...we also streamed the service so it was available for folks who did not make it to church. Thanks to all who attended and received ashes. Pastor Emily made ashes available in the Sanctuary.

Lent has begun. We now await the beginning of Holy Week. April 2nd is with Palms waving and Palm Sunday Service with Communion. April 9th is Easter Sunday with an Easter Egg hunt and Brunch following. Mark your Calendars to attend and participate.

See You in Church Worship Committee.





# Mardi Gras

## Fat Tuesday

### Food, King Cake

### And Fellowship





## UWF and Circle News



**UWF Meeting** - **Wednesday, March 8th** Mission Team will meet at **11 am**

The UWF Unit meeting will start at Noon.

**UWF PIE the Pastor:** **Save the date, Sunday March 12th** - after worship, to enjoy pie by the slice and bid in an auction to Pie The Pastor ( Pastor Emily's idea) and/or carry home a whole pie. All donations support programs that provide faith, hope and love in action on behalf of women, children and youth around the world.

**GARDEN SEEDS - UWF members** – it is that time of year again. Time to think about garden seeds. We always collect vegetable seeds each spring for the Green Thumb Project in Ohio. We send a lot of seeds each spring as a mission project and remember – their growing season is lots earlier than ours. They will mail them by April 1st. **No flower seeds – just vegetables.** Thank you! Char Olson

**Rebekah Circle** - **Tuesday, March 21st, 1 pm** at the Church in Koelmel Hall.

**Naomi Circle** - **Monday, March 20th, 6:30 pm** at the Church in Koelmel Hall.



## Memes & Memories

**Wednesday March 8th, Noon Koelmel Hall - Carry-in Luncheon**

**All women of the church are invited, welcomed & encouraged to attend.**

Bring a dish to share, using a recipe you have received from a relative or friend. After our lunch together there will be an opportunity for each of us to briefly share what dish we brought, who shared the recipe with us and how that person has helped you to draw closer to or helped you to better see, Jesus in your life. This promises to be a fun, interesting, heartwarming and faith-building experience for all of us.



Cody United Methodist Church now has a Facebook page. You can search "Cody United Methodist Church" on Facebook and like our page. We will post photos, events, bible verses, quotes and announcements. If you would like us to post something on Facebook, please email [laurenbrolier@gmail.com](mailto:laurenbrolier@gmail.com).

**The Youth group will meet March 12th and March 26th at Cody United Methodist Church at 6:30 pm.**

**Dinner will be provided**



Dear Church Family,

We would like to thank all of you for your thoughts, prayers and beautiful cards. You lifted up to us when our beloved mother passed to heaven. They all lifted our saddened hearts.

Many Thanks,

Bev Shaw and Brenda Bangert

# March 2023



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2  Bells practice 5:30 pm	3  World Day of Prayer Noon @ Trinity Lutheran	4
5  10 am Sunday Worship— Holy Communion Choir performs	6  Historical Jesus 4:30 pm  12 Step 6:00 pm	7  Good Samaritan 9:30 am	8  Historical Jesus 4:30 pm  UWF	9    Bells practice 5:30 pm	10	11
12  10 am Sunday Worship  <b>UWF PIE SALE</b>  <i>Daylight Savings begins</i>	13  Historical Jesus 4:30 pm  12 Step 6:00 pm	14  Finance 6:00 pm  AD Council 7:00 pm	15  Historical Jesus 4:30 pm	16    Bells practice 5:30 pm	17	18
19  10 am Sunday Worship Choir performs  Trustees 11 am	20    12 Step 6:00 pm Naomi Circle 6:30 pm	21  Rebekah Circle 1 pm	22	23    Bells practice 5:30 pm	24	25
26  10 am Sunday Worship  Bells Play	27    12 Step 6:00 pm	28  SPR 5:30 pm	29	30    Worship Committee 10:30 am	31	



Julia Cook	March	2	John West	20
Linda Schultz		4	Barney Henrich	21
Paul Worst		5	Ron Daniels	23
Bob Mills		6	Lauren Newton	24
Brittany Smith		7	Cap Bell	26
Diane Ballard		17	Carole Wiltse	26
Val Walsh-Haines		18	Dick Buswell	26



## Happy Anniversary

Scott & Marilyn Steiner	March	19
Dick & Jeanne Blenkinsop		21

# CODY CUPBOARD UPDATE

1st QUARTER 2023

January 118 Pounds

February TBD Pounds

1<sup>st</sup> Quarter Sub-Total 118 Pounds

Please drop off donations on the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of  
each month!

THANK YOU CUMC!



**“Be quick to give a meal  
to the hungry, a bed to  
the homeless—  
cheerfully. Be generous  
with the different things  
God gave you, passing  
them around so all get  
in on it.”**

**1 Peter 4:9-10,  
*The Message***

*Jesus said to him, “Feed my lambs.” John 21:15*

PLACE  
STAMP  
HERE

Cody United Methodist Church  
PO Box 1416  
Cody WY 82414