

# The Arbor Vine

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

**August 2015**

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*Fresh new information for your church  
starting August 1*

Technology groups from the Detroit and West Michigan Conferences, along with a smart tech company from Grand Rapids, have been developing an improved system for clergy and church information, events, news, and contacts over the last year. If you ever had problems with the current website, DetroitConference.org, you will appreciate this new system. The first draft of this new website and database system will be available August 1 at:

***[www.MichiganUMC.org](http://www.MichiganUMC.org)***

This new system will replace the Detroit Annual Conference website, the West Michigan Conference website and the Brick River database, and do so in a form that is more attractive and easier to use. There will also be a camping website named UMCamping.org.

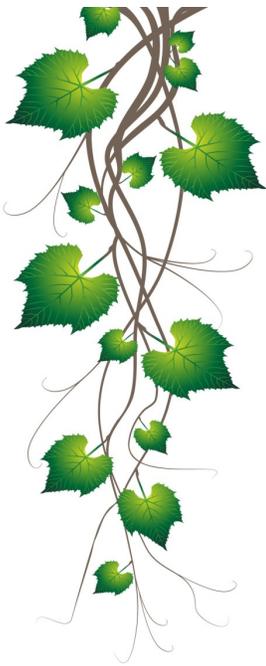
There are many excellent features planned for the new information system, but not all of them are active yet. If you experience any problems, or cannot find information that you need, contact Jane at the Ann Arbor District Office and we will sort it out for you.

There is more information about the process at

<http://detroitconference.org/news/detail/1610>

*Save the Date -*

*The Annual District Meeting will be held on Monday,  
October 19, 6:00 at Brighton. More information will be  
available in the Arbor Vine for September and October.*



## DISTRICT NOTICES

### TENTH ANNUAL SUSTAINABILITY CONFERENCE:

“Green & grow your congregation” is the topic of this conference hosted by Michigan Interfaith Power & Light. Held on Friday, Oct 9, 8:00 am to 4:30 pm at the Peoples Church in East Lansing. Speakers include Sr. Simone Campbell, Rev. George Heartwell, and Valerie Brader. Visit <http://www.miipl.org/greenandgrow-2/>.

### MISSIONARIES WHO ARE ITINERATING TO THE DETROIT ANNUAL CONFERENCE

David Paye Guinkpa, Missionary to Central Africa, October 5-9  
Emmanuel and Florence Mefor, Missionaries to Zimbabwe, November 22-24  
Contact Roberta King to schedule these missionaries to speak at your church. You can reach her at 734-662-8020 or [garyandroberta@sbcglobal.net](mailto:garyandroberta@sbcglobal.net).

### JUSTICE FOR OUR NEIGHBORS SOUTHEASTERN MICHIGAN

JOFN is having an Annual Dinner Fundraiser on Saturday., September 29. See their website at <http://jfonsemi.org/> for more information.

### CHICKEN ROAST COMING ON AUGUST 1

The 36<sup>th</sup> Annual Chicken and Corn Roast will be held at North Lake United Methodist Church on Saturday, August 1, 2015. The church is located at 14111 North Territorial Rd. Chelsea. Tickets at the door. Eat in or take home. Handicap accessible.

### CUSTODIAL POSITION AT NORTHVILLE UMC

Northville First United Methodist Church is looking for an individual to work as a custodian on Sunday mornings, Mon, Wed. & Thurs. evenings as well as a “fill-in” to cover vacations and other absences. If interested or for more info submit your resume to [jhopkins@fumcnorthville.org](mailto:jhopkins@fumcnorthville.org) or call Jim @ 1-248-349-1144

### ORGANIST POSITION AT ANN ARBOR: WEST SIDE

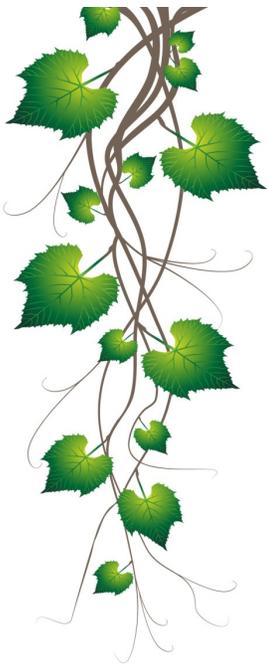
West Side needs a part-time salaried organist. The organist accompanies Wednesday evening choir rehearsals and plays for a single 10:30 am Sunday worship on the beautiful M.P. Moller pipe organ for an annual salary of \$10,000-\$12,000. Contact Adam Begley, director of Music Ministries for a full job description. Submit resumes by August 15.

### SAVE THE DATE - CASS COMMUNITY CHARITY GOLF SCRAMBLE

Monday, Sept 14, 11:00 am Shotgun start at Fox Hills Golf and Banquet Center, 8768 North Territorial Rd, Plymouth MI. To register contact Sue Pethoud at 313-883-2277 or [spethoud@casscommunity.org](mailto:spethoud@casscommunity.org).

***Church Conference agenda and forms  
are available on the District Website:***

**[www.AADistrict.org](http://www.AADistrict.org)**



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# Spaw's Paws

Some thoughts from your D.S., Rev. Mark E. Spaw

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## "REFLECTIONS OF A PRIVILEGED DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT"

It's newsletter time again. As I thought, long and hard, about what to write, it occurred to me that as of July first I will begin my sixth year as your District Superintendent. I guess it's a perfect time to reflect. Before I begin reflecting all over the place, let me share with you, in part, what I wrote in my first Arbor Vine article in July of 2010.

*"I can't tell you how excited I am about being your District Superintendent. You will teach me more about being a DS than I ever learned in seminary. You have already been loving, patient, giving, and accepting. You will teach me, push me, put up with me, but most important you will, I pray, grant me the great privilege of being a part of your lives. Funerals, church conferences, weddings, baptisms, family gatherings, in joyous times and sad times, I hope we will share our lives together. I truly love Christian ministry. Together, with God's help and guidance, we will as a district share the Good News of Jesus Christ and have a blast doing it!*

*Someone once told me 'God has a sense of humor. You are great poof of that.' There is lots of work to do and missions to be completed but that doesn't mean we can't have a great time seeking God's will for the Ann Arbor District and ourselves. In these first few weeks I hope you will be patient and understanding (I'm kind of hoping that the patience and understanding might continue, along with endurance, fortitude and forbearance, for years to come). Please share information with me that will help direct and allow me some insights as to where you are and your hopes for where you would like to see our district be. TOGETHER, let us being this wonderfilled time of ministry. . . Let us begin fresh, new and with Great Spirit. Let's work like we don't need pay, love like we have never been hurt, and dance like nobody is watching. I'm excited and ready to go!"*

God has been good! I wouldn't change a word of what I wrote back in 2010. Not a word! Our district has grown both spiritually and numerically, our many ministries and missions have affected people's lives, and the Good News of Jesus Christ is being shared and lived out!

What a joy and privilege it is to be your District Superintendent. Any by the way, thanks for the many years of the patience, understanding, fortitude, and in general just putting up with me. . . if you could, if you don't mind, I'll be needing more of those things in the future.

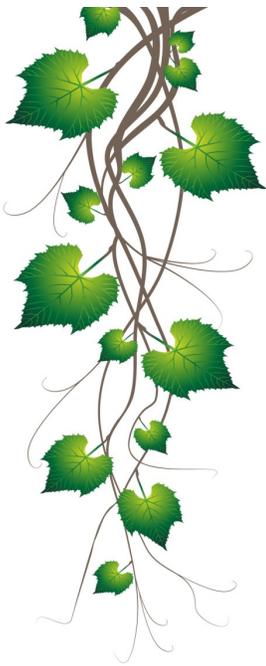
Thank you for allowing me to be a part of your lives and I look forward with great expectancy, to our future ministries and missions, together as the Ann Arbor District. A real community of faith.

God's Peace,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "MARK". The letters are bold and slightly slanted, with a casual, personal feel.

Rev. Mark E. Spaw, D.S.

P.S. We had over 150 attend our annual District Picnic. A big Thank-You to our Special Events Team and the Tecumseh UMC for being such a great host.



## ***Are paid lay staff at local churches eligible for Conference benefits?***

Here is a general answer from the Conference Benefits Officer, Rev. Don Emmert:

*“If health care is a provided benefit through the local church, the conference group health care plan is available to permanent full time (30 hours per week) local church employees. The local church must offer health care to all employees in that specific employment category. For example, it cannot offer health care as a perk to one full time employee but not offer it to other full time employees. The local church may set its own cost sharing schedule, but must adhere to eligibility requirements and/or restrictions of the plan as described in the 2014 Conference Journal beginning on page 182.*

*Disability insurance is not available through the conference, but there is a plan available through the General Board of Pension & Health Benefits at [www.gbophb.org/center-for-health/plans/umlifeoptions/](http://www.gbophb.org/center-for-health/plans/umlifeoptions/). For additional information the board's number is 800-851-2201.*

*A local church may become a UMPIP (403(b)) plan sponsor for its lay employees. In fact, the Discipline recommends that the local church provide retirement benefits (paragraph 258.12) for permanent employees working at least 20 hours per week. A church could contact the General Board of Pension & Health Benefits directly if they would like to become a plan sponsor.”*

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### **Please join us**

for the next Haiti School Project VIM Trip to Cap Haitien and Tovar

**OCTOBER 9-16, 2015**

Keith Thomas and Rev. Rod Green, CO-Leaders

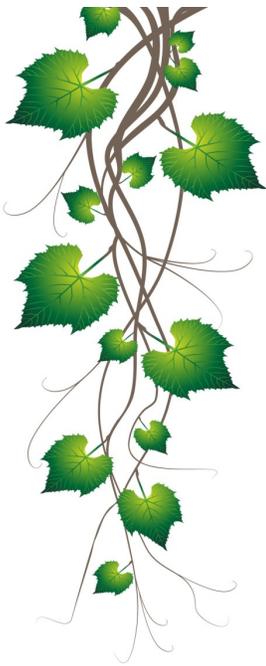
(517)-336-7815

**FOR APPLICATION AND INFORMATION, CONTACT** the team leader  
Keith Thomas [kthomas2741@yahoo.com](mailto:kthomas2741@yahoo.com) or  
Curtis Bartz, 313-278-4849 [jbartz1006@comcast.net](mailto:jbartz1006@comcast.net).

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### **AUGUST BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES**

5 David Freeland	17 Robert & Robin Freysinger	25 Fred & Diane Hatfield
6 Judy Mayo	17 Andy Baek	26 Russell & Ruth Smith
7 Kenneth Frey	20 Tom & Pauline Hart	27 Patricia and Tom Brown
9 Ed & Sondra Willobee	21 Leigh Hook	28 Tina Zimmerman
11 Jerry Stewardson	21 Tom Brown II	29 Lisa Gray-Lion
12 Kenneth & Bonnie Frey	21 Nancy & Deane Wyllys	30 Judy & Jim Braid
15 Robert Brown	25 Joanne Penzien	
15 Diane Hatfield	25 Theresa & James Cochran	



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## ***Revitup! Financial Stability Lifetime of Ministry***

October 5-7, 2015  
Hilton Chicago/Indian Lakes Resort  
Bloomington, Illinois

New to ministry? Or have you been around awhile?  
Looking for new ideas? Trying to figure out the best approach?  
Want to be energized? Inspired? Informed?

### **Put yourself at the top of your list! Plan to attend revitup!**

Find ways to reduce and manage your seminary and personal debt

- Gather practical tips for balancing life and ministry
- Network with other young clergy from across the denomination
- Participate in one-on-one consultations with class instructors/field experts (benefits consultants, pastoral counselors, financial planners, tax consultants, wills and estate planning experts, and more!)
- Go home with new ideas, resources and knowledge

*And...* Earn Continuing Education Units (CEUs)

Visit <http://www.gbophb.org/events/revitup/>

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## ***For UMC Church Secretaries and Office Administration***

**MI-Aim (Detroit Conference UMC Secretaries) has created a communication retreat specifically for you.** Mark Doyle and specialists from Lanio will be there to go over the new data base, to show you what is coming and how you can handle the changes.

### ***Mark your calendar now for October 11-12.***

Click here for retreat registration and info:

[http://saginawbaydistrict.org/item\\_detail.php?item=99](http://saginawbaydistrict.org/item_detail.php?item=99)

All office personnel are invited (paid staff or volunteer), both from Detroit and West Michigan Conferences.

We WANT to better equip you in your administration ministry, and we have fun together too.

See you there!

Teri Rice

President, MI-Aim, Saginaw-Bay District Administrative Assistant

Note: If you would be interested in learning more about this excellent group or might consider taking a role in MI-AIM, contact them at [michiganassistantsinministry@gmail.com](mailto:michiganassistantsinministry@gmail.com). Job descriptions are available at [www.mi-aim.org](http://www.mi-aim.org). The nominations chair, Roxann Kohler, is a volunteer secretary at Hazel Park UMC.

## ***Cleaning out your files this Summer?***

**Consider these Record Retention Guidelines from  
the General Council on Finance Administration**

<b>Document</b>	<b>How Long to Keep (Minimum)</b>
Articles of Incorporation, amendments, bylaws	permanently
Certificate of incorporation and corporate records to the state	permanently
Tax returns	permanently
Work sheets and related backup documents for tax returns	7 years
Minutes	permanently
Annual corporate reports	permanently
Property records	permanently
Contracts and leases in effect	permanently
Insurance policies (including expired policies)	permanently
Insurance letters/correspondence	permanently
Audit reports of CPAs and financial statements	permanently
Employment applications (for current employees)	permanently
Bank statements and reconciliations	7 years
Canceled checks for standard transactions	7 years
Invoices from vendors	7 years
W-2 or 1099 forms	7 years
Housing allowance forms	7 years
Business correspondence	3 years
Employee personnel records (after termination)	3_ years

Some of the suggested retention periods are for legal reasons, while others are based on practical considerations. You may want to keep some records longer than the table suggests.

It is an excellent idea for your organization to discuss and adopt a record retention policy. The above table gives you some suggestions on items to be included in the policy and time periods to be used.

When developing a record retention policy, it is important to think about where those files will be kept, how secure those files will be, and the conditions under which files will need to be stored (heat and particularly dampness can be very destructive to files).

Some of the reasons to keep files and records include legal requirements, potential relevance in future litigation, and the needs of the organization, as well as historic importance. It goes without saying that should there be threatened litigation or an investigation on a certain subject matter, particular care should be given that no file or document relating to that matter be destroyed.

Tax returns and governmental reports affecting tax liability should be kept permanently. However, most backup records, such as receipts documenting income deductions need only be kept for seven years. The Internal Revenue Service calls for a six-year statute of limitations. The IRS has three years from the date of when the income tax return is filed to question or audit it. If the IRS can prove an omission of at least 25% of income, the time period doubles to six years.

CONNECTIONAL GRANTS are intended to assist local congregations in the Ann Arbor District in a program, ministry, or project that the church would find difficult, if not impossible, to do without assistance. Greater weight will be placed on projects and programs that go beyond the church's present budgetary needs. Grants are given both for new and innovative programs.

Ann Arbor District Board of Missions and Church Extension

## APPLICATION FOR CONNECTIONAL CHURCH GRANT FOR 2015

Connectional Church Grants are intended to assist local congregations in the Ann Arbor District in a program, ministry, or project that the church would find difficult, if not impossible, to do without assistance. Greater weight will be placed on projects and programs that go beyond the church's present budgetary ability. Grants are given both for new and innovative programs.

Total Grant Budget for 2015 is \$13,000.00. Grant amounts are limited by the number of churches that apply.

Send this completed form to Connectional Church Grant c/o Dennis Just: 3280 Byron Rd. Howell, MI 48855

Connectional Church Grants will be awarded at the annual meeting of the Ann Arbor District Board of Missions and Church Extension.

If the request is granted your Church will be notified two weeks prior to our fall annual meeting.

We urge you to have a representative in attendance at the annual meeting to receive your grant.

**Application Deadline: September 13, 2015**

Attach any additional sheets if necessary

Church \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Description of project \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Desired goals of project \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Proposed total cost \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Projected date for use of project \_\_\_\_\_

List anticipated sources

Funding

_____	\$ _____
_____	\$ _____
_____	\$ _____

Indicate last year's support for:

Detroit Conference apportionment \$ \_\_\_\_\_ %

Mission and Ministry \$ \_\_\_\_\_ %

District Board of Missions and Church Extension \$ \_\_\_\_\_ %

This request was adopted by administrative board/church council

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

*pastor*

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

*administrative board/church council chairperson*

Ann Arbor District Office  
of the United Methodist Church

900 S. Seventh St. Suite 1

Ann Arbor MI 48103

**Return Service Requested**



**The Arbor Vine**

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