

## CLAIR CONNECTION

NW District <http://www.northwest.moumethodist.org/>

Missouri United Methodist Conference <http://www.moumethodist.org/>

# Pastor Cindy Buhman Reflects on Her Ministry



When I retire June 30, 2024, I will have been in the ministry 27 years! I attended Maysville Methodist Church while growing up. It became UMC in 1968, before I started High School in 1970.

Joe and I will be married 47 years this August. Before I was in the ministry, I was a stay-at-home mom for 14 years before starting seminary. I provided child care for other children and did lots of substitute teaching. I directed a pre-school before we had children and did free-lance writing for the local newspaper.

I had always been active in the Maysville church, especially in United Methodist Women, singing in the choir, helping with Sunday School and VBS, etc. In May, 1995, the District Superintendent, Glenn Wiggs, attended the Maysville church for worship. As he was retiring in June that year, I thanked him for his service. He thanked me for mine and then asked the question, "Have you ever thought about ministry?" I said, "Yes. I want to be a lay speaker someday when my boys are older. And I think I would make a dandy Conference UMW president." He said, "That's not what I'm talking about. I mean clergy." I said, "No. I could

never do that." His response was "Well... just think about it." And he proceeded to share about the gifts he saw in me. Long story short... I couldn't think about much else. A few months later, I began working with our pastor Stan Lowrey to explore the calling and options. I began seminary in the fall of 1996, taking three classes to see if I could even do it. It had been 19 years since I was in a classroom! I did pretty well. And never turned back.

Joe did not marry a pastor so it was a drastic change for us. The whole family was impacted, of course. I depended upon Joe more than ever, and my parents, too. Our sons were 14, 11, and 7 at the time. They learned how to run the dishwasher and the washer and dryer. And each one had their microwave specialty! One of the hardest things for me was not being able to attend every class party or field trip for Ethan as I had for his older brothers. My guys supported me throughout, and I think they were/are proud of me. Joe has been my greatest cheerleader! I remember Mitchell saying once, "I can't believe my mom is going back to school. And she's doing it on purpose!"

I am thankful for Saint Paul School of Theology in Kansas City because it is so close. I would not have been able to go otherwise. I graduated in 2000, was commissioned a provisional elder that year and was ordained by Bishop Ann Sherer in 2003, in the first and only class to be ordained under the Budweiser scoreboard in the Hearn Center in Columbia!

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## CLAIR CONNECTION



What an amazing week! I knew what the remodeling plan was, what the drawing looked like, but to actually see the demo work and the new space taking shape has been incredible. All I can say is WOW! The work is progressing quickly, with completion of Phase 1 expected before the end of May.

With this new open space comes much potential for kicking up our level of hospitality. Please keep your eyes and ears and hearts open for ways you can express hospitality to each other and to the guests who will come. And... you might start making a list of people you want to invite to check out our new space and to experience worship with us here at Clair UMC.

This is also a good time to be reminded about our pledges toward the building project. Are you up to date with your pledge? If you haven't had an opportunity to contribute to the building fund, it isn't too late! Now that the work is happening and we can experience the results, you may want to add your gift or add to your gift.

Blessings, Friends, during this exciting time at Clair UMC. It is an honor to be your pastor!

Cindy

SHHHH!

Family is having a surprise  
card shower for Dixie  
Leslie's 90th birthday on  
May 19!

695 College St.

Union Star, MO 64494

### BACKPACKS NEEDED!

We are collecting backpacks for all ages for the Foster Care division of the Children's Division. Please put a comfort item in the backpacks - toy for younger kids or pens, toothbrush, etc. for teens.

# CLAIR CONNECTION

## Annual Flower Sale was a Bloomin' Success!



**\$1300  
raised**



And tips make him SMILE!

## CLAIR CONNECTION

(Continued from Page 1—Pastor Cindy)



I took a ¼ time student appointment to Winston UMC in 1997. I was both nervous and excited and am so thankful for the grace, love, and support the congregation gave to me. Small churches have a unique opportunity to help raise up and shape new pastors. The Winston congregation received an Easter Morning Award one year, celebrating our growth in average attendance from 15 to 40. One of the most special memories is of having VBS for the first time in many years – under the catalpa tree in the front yard!

### **Appointments:**

**Winston UMC - 1997-2002**

**Stanberry UMC - 2000 - 2002**

**Ashland, St. Joseph, Associate - 2002-2003**

**Bethany UMC - 2003-2010**

**Savannah UMC - 2010-2015**

**Northwest District Superintendent - 2015-2018**

**Clair and Ebenezer UMCS - 2018-2024**

I don't think one ever decides to become a district superintendent! The invitation comes out of the blue for most superintendents. Bishop Robert Schnase called me one day while I was working in the office at Savannah and invited me to become the Northwest District Superintendent. He told me to think about it, pray about it, talk to Joe about it, and to call him in the morning! Joe and I talked through how life would be different and decided to give it a try. My original plan was to spend eight years in that role (the maximum allowed), which would get me to retirement age. While the work was rewarding, it was also stressful. After three years and losing some hair, I accepted that administrative work was not my strongest suit and that I would be much happier in a local congregation. I'm all about relationship so getting to know people in church ministry and being a part of their lives is what I love most. I am so honored that people allow me to enter into their lives, that they share their highest and lowest moments with me.

I treasure my time as a DS, though. I especially enjoyed meeting people across the district, supporting pastors, and helping the pastors and congregations to grow in their mission and ministry.

The best part of being a superintendent was getting to know so many pastors throughout the district – and their churches as well – helping pastors with resources to enhance their ministries and discipleship-making. Being aware of and having input into the larger picture of the Missouri Conference was also a special part of serving on the Cabinet.

I have mentioned before that one of my strengths is being a cheerleader. That involves keeping a group motivated, energized, excited, involved, encouraged to keep on. Positivity is my number one strength, so it is natural for me to see the best and the positive in any situation. It is especially important to celebrate victories with the folks we lead, to help them feel good about what they have accomplished and to see God at work. It's fun to celebrate even the smallest victories. Jesus loved to party! And so do I!

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## CLAIR CONNECTION

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COVID was a hard time for all churches. We were forced to do some things differently in order to survive. Both Clair and Ebenezer embraced the technology to be able to worship online, to survive the pandemic, and to emerge even stronger than before. I am so thankful for Jen and Josh at Ebenezer who led the way technologically and helped me to adjust to this new way of doing church.

I believe important attributes for an effective pastor include: Focus on relationships – it is so important to get to know people and to let them know that I really care about them. A sense of humor is important, too!

Willingness to try new things – a philosophy I developed years ago has served me well: “A thing not tried can’t work.”

Ministry has been full of joy-filled moments: baptisms, confirmations, serving Holy Communion, Christmas Eve services, Easter sunrise, Holy Humor Sundays, whenever and wherever we are the church together. I feel especially close to God when experiencing the beauty of nature – the ocean, the mountains, sunsets, fragrant flowers, bodies of water, etc. And... I feel close to God while in corporate worship, singing, praying, sharing in Holy Communion, being the church together. I have been touched recently by *The Chosen* class on Wednesday evenings – watching the video, tying the theme to scripture, having conversation. It’s all very special!



Open Door Food Kitchen comes to mind first as an important mission at Clair. Our service there means so much to those who come for a meal. And the service means so much to the team who serves. Our work with Sisters of Solace was also special to me. What a great program with the opportunity to really be involved in the transformation of lives.

In reviewing accomplishments, an accomplishment that has to top the list is the capital improvements project at Clair. It is something this congregation has talked about for years and years. To be at a spot where we felt financially able to enter into a campaign was huge. Then, the response to the campaign was terrific. And now that the work has begun, it is so amazing to think about all the possibilities for the future. I am very proud of us!

I have said several times that I will especially miss the children, because I know many of them won’t remember me. We have had lots of fun together. What a joy it has been to watch them grow and to help them to learn more about God! I am so honored to have had a part in their lives. And, it will be hard to leave behind the relationships we all have formed during these six years.

### Following retirement

The thing I do for fun right now is to read mystery novels. And, I love watching sports, from our grandsons’ ball games to the Chiefs and the Royals.

I will be 68 in August. Joe and I have several things we want to do while we are able to go and see and do. My mother is 93 and still lives alone. I want to be more available to help her and to spend more time with our grandchildren, especially our little Finley who is 4½. **(Go to Page 6)**



# CLAIR CONNECTION

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Travel is on the agenda for us, beginning with a trip to Alaska in July. We want to do some updating to our house. I haven't sent Christmas cards since I started seminary! I have spent more time cooking in recent months and realize how much I enjoy that.

We have five grandsons and one granddaughter: Kaden, 17; Xander, 15; Grant, 13; Trey, 12; Owen, 11; and Finley, 4½. What a blessing that they all live within an hour of our home!

We will, most likely, start out attending Maysville UMC, my home church and where my mother attends. Our son, Mitchell, is on staff at Kearney UMC, so we will be there some, too. Other than that, we'll visit to see where we best fit.

### TO THE FRIENDS AT CLAIR:

While there is always a level of regret at the things we didn't get to, I am proud of our time together and the ways we have grown in discipleship and in ministry. I am grateful for the love and grace you have shown us and your willingness to let me be your pastor. I

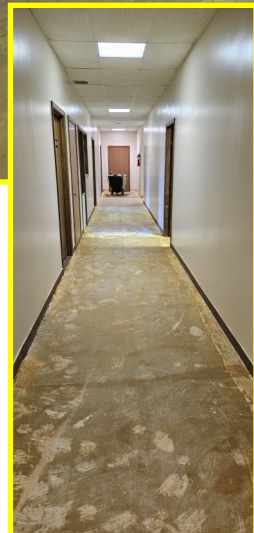
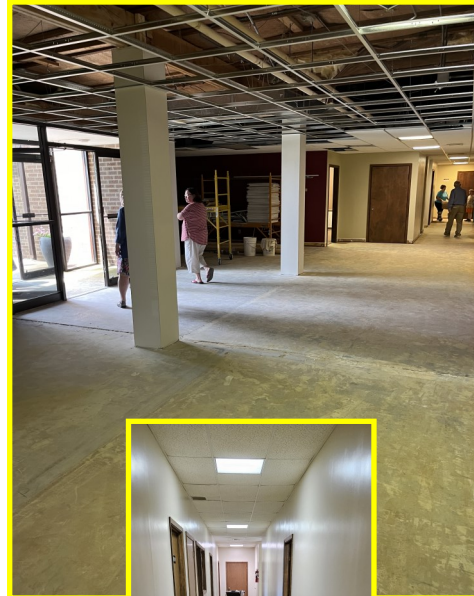
feel we have made progress in these last six years and that the future is bright for Clair UMC! There is such potential. Continue to be the church, committed to mission and ministry and to be welcoming to those who will come. As always, it has been an honor to be your pastor!

*Cindy*



# CLAIR CONNECTION

## PHASE 1 CONSTRUCTION!



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# CLAIR CONNECTION

## Painting Angels Fly in to Help Clair's Facelift!



## WHAT'S HAPPENING

- Now through May The Chosen Study Series 6:15 PM—Wednesdays at Clair
- May 18 Men's Group 8 AM
- May 19 PENTECOST SUNDAY! **WEAR RED!!**
- May 29 Serve Open Door Food Kitchen 9 AM
- June 2 MEMBERSHIP SUNDAY (Baptisms and new members welcomed)
- June 10 Starlight Group at Joy Sander's 6 PM
- June 11 Administrative Council 6 PM
- SAVE THE DATE: June 23 - Pastor Cindy's last sermon at Clair & Retirement Celebration**
- June 30 Due date for backpacks collected for foster kids**
- July 1 Rev. Crystal Karr assumes the helm!
- SAVE THE DATE: July 16-18 VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL 5 PM-7:30 PM**