

# Here's your September news from the Prairie North District



**Rev. Fabiola Grandon-Mayer, District Superintendent**

**Welcome to the new Prairie North District!  
From the District Superintendent**



Dear Prairie North District friends,

We are beginning the 2021 Church Conference season - a time to evaluate the work of the church and a time to celebrate your ministries in your communities, despite the difficulties and restrictions of the pandemic. This year, along with receiving reports and voting on important issues, we will lead a conversation framed around the theme "Jesus Makes a Way."

I invite you to celebrate the ministry around you and think about how you have

seen Jesus being a “way maker” in your church and community. The mission continues, and there will always be opportunities to serve, love, help, support, speak up, and make a difference in the community. Remember that we are not alone; God is and will be with us always.

I pray for each of the pastors, deacons, deaconess, lay ministers, and laity in our Prairie North District. May God help us to share joy, love, and hope with others.

Please take care of yourself and be safe and let us continue practicing "Do No Harm" wherever we go. “Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the Lord your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you.” Deut. 31:6 (NIV)

Peace and Blessings,

***Peace – Paz – Shalom***

Rev. Fabiola Grandon-Mayer

[Prairie North District Superintendent](#), NIC UMC

## **WILLOW UMC HOLDS 54th VERSION OF THE WILLOW FOLK FESTIVAL**



The Willow United Methodist Church, located in Jo Daviess County, eight miles southeast of Stockton, held the 54th version of the Willow Folk Festival on August 14-15, 2021. The Folk Festival started as a one-day fundraiser and revival in 1968 and has expanded to offer camping and music in a one-of-a-kind environment. Over the years, it has turned into an iconic event in the area.

People and families from generation to generation come to Willow from all over the country for a weekend in August to sing and enjoy bluegrass music. “We hope as a church to plant seeds to spread the word of Jesus Christ to all these people,” said Karl Lawfer, Lay Leader of Willow UMC.

The worship time on Sunday is reserved for Willow UMC to offer a one-hour presentation with prayers and well-known hymns as "Leaning on the everlasting arms," "How Great Thou Art," "Down by the Riverside," among other medleys.



The church prepares the area for campers, sells food, sets up the stage, sound equipment, and allows people to sing with guitars, banjos, autoharps, or any other folk instrument for a 15-minute segment over the weekend. "This is an attempt to be a witness to all those who come and sing. The church prays over the campground, the church lawn as people sit, gather, and eat," said Pastor Cheryl Carroll.

In 2020 the church offered a Virtual Festival with singers from all over, and this year, 2021, they decided to have it in person as it is held outside with safety guidelines for those who enter the church building.

"Willow is family, friends, music, and love," says the official slogan of the event, which continues to thrive because of the hard work of the church members and the support of the friends and families that gather to share music and fellowship during this annual weekend.

## PRAIRIE NORTH FALL LAY ACADEMY

**Dates:** October 16 @ 9 am- 4 pm  
October 17 @ 1- 4 pm

**Location:** Harvard: First, 1100 N. Division St., Harvard, IL  
**Cost:** \$25

**Course Descriptions and Online registration:**  
[umcnic.org/calendar/prairie-north-fall-lay-academy](http://umcnic.org/calendar/prairie-north-fall-lay-academy)

**Questions? Please contact Leslie Stanford, Lay Ministries Chair, at [jptmom8@gmail.com](mailto:jptmom8@gmail.com)**



# Praying together

## District prayer focus in September

Week of 5th – HAMPSHIRE: ZION – Pastor Matthew Mariani

Week of 12th – FAIRHAVEN – Pastor Sun-Ah Kang

Week of 19th – SHIRLAND – Pastor Rolland Hayag

Week of 26th – McCONNELL – Pastor Doug Carroll

*"Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God" – Philippians 4:6*

## SEPTEMBER

### ACTIVE AND RETIRED CLERGY BIRTHDAYS

09/03 – Jim Bell (Belvidere: First)

09/10 – Elizabeth Rutherford (Apple River & Scales Mound)

09/11 – Thomas Hardwick (Retired Clergy)

09/16 – Howard "Doc" Newcomb (Marengo)

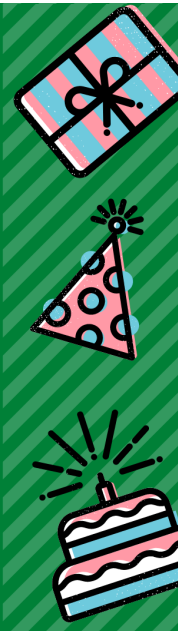
09/16 – David Seller (Burlington)

09/24 – Jacklyn Wills (Herbert: Davis & Kingston)

09/28 – Paul Meyers (Roscoe)

09/29 – Nadan Cho (Mt. Carroll, Thomson, Argo Fay)

09/30 – Siegfried Schwirblat (Orangeville)





## **September Reporter Online**

The September Reporter is on its way to your mailbox but is available online ready to read now.

Learn more about disaster relief efforts for victims of the Haiti earthquake, help for Afghanistan refugees, and how rural churches are impacting their communities. Also, Bishop Hopkins poses the fifth question in his monthly column, “Do we have a Private Faith or a Public Witness?”

[Read more](#)

To stay up to date on Annual Conference news and the October session, visit [umcnic.org/AC2021](https://umcnic.org/AC2021).

## **Prairie North Clergy Zoom Gathering**

Clergy in the Prairie North District will gather on the third Wednesday of every month at 9:30 am via zoom to check in, connect and support each other. Clergy will receive an email on the day before the meeting, with the information to join in or call in.

**Next Clergy Meeting: September 15 - 9:30 am**

**United Methodist Women Meeting**

**Saturday, September 18 – 9:30 to Noon**

This will be the last Annual Meeting of the United Methodist Women of the former Rockford District. They want to celebrate their time as the Rockford District and celebrate their churches and UMW units. It will also be their Annual

Meeting so there will be some business to conduct, HOWEVER, Conference-level elections and approval of the budget for the United Methodist Women of the Prairie North District of the Northern Illinois Conference of The United Methodist Church cannot be set until January 2022.

***More Information:***

*Karen Messley - Rockford District President UMW, [karen@messley.com](mailto:karen@messley.com)*

*Coralee Hardwick – Communications Coordinator UMW, [umwrkfddistnic@gmail.com](mailto:umwrkfddistnic@gmail.com)*

**New Prairie North District Facebook Page**

A great way to stay connected and receive updates about happenings in our district. Check out new postings with photos from the Clergy Picnic!

Like Us on Facebook: [Prairie North District](#)



**Rev. Fabiola Grandon-Mayer**  
Prairie North District Superintendent  
312-346-9766, ext. 781  
[fgrandon-mayer@umcnic.org](mailto:fgrandon-mayer@umcnic.org)

**Debra Rogers**  
Prairie District Administrative Assistant

630-465-2941  
[drogers@umcnic.org](mailto:drogers@umcnic.org)

Northern Illinois Conference  
of The United Methodist Church

77 W. Washington Street, Suite 1820  
Chicago, IL 60602

*Copyright © 2021 Northern Illinois Conference*