

January 20, 2021

Dear FUMER friends:

The Staff Parish Relations Committee is pleased to announce the appointment of the Rev. Melany Chalker as our new pastor, starting July 1, 2021. Pastor Melany was introduced to our Staff Parish Relations Committee by our District Superintendent, the Rev. Dr. Jerry DeVine during a virtual meeting. We are enthused about the gifts and graces that she will bring to our congregation!

Pastor Melany was raised on a farm near Saline, MI and attended Saline schools. She then attended Eastern Michigan University pursuing a fine arts degree. Before completing her degree, she moved to Kalkaska where she spent seventeen years as a professional artist eventually owning her own gallery. She received a call to ministry in mid life, while attending the Kalkaska United Methodist Church, and completed her bachelor's degree from Spring Arbor University majoring in Family Life Education. She attended seminary at the Methodist Theological School in Delaware, Ohio. While in seminary she became the pastor of Springville UMC in the Irish Hills of Michigan. She graduated in 2004 and was named Student of the Year. She was ordained an Elder in the West Michigan Annual Conference in 2006. She served the Concord UMC and has been the pastor of the Marshall UMC for the past seven years. She has served as the President of the Michigan Area Pastor's School for ten years and was a member of the Design Team for the merging of the West Michigan and Detroit Annual Conferences. She has a passion for outreach into the local community, worship design, administration, and creating a vision from which to lead. Melany refers to herself as, "An artist by nature, a pastor by calling, and a follower of Jesus by choice."

She is married to her husband, Darryl, who is a commercial contractor and he works all over the state. They have two grown sons and six grandchildren. Pastor Melany and Darryl have a farm about fifteen minutes south of Eaton Rapids where they have refurbished the house. However, they plan to live in the FUMER parsonage so they can build relationships with the FUMER congregation and local community.

The Staff Parish Relations Committee is planning a celebration of Marty's ministry at FUMER and a way to say good bye to Marty and Cindy. We will announce details later in the spring. Marty's last Sunday at FUMER will be June 13th. We will also plan a welcoming for our new pastor, Melany Chalker and her husband. Her first Sunday at FUMER will be July 4th.

Please keep Pastor Marty and Pastor Melany in our prayers during this of transition as we all work together *"to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world."* We trust in God's amazing grace, the love of Christ, and the power of the Holy Spirit as we move forward together. May God continue to be with us and call us forward in faith.

Yours in Christ,

Michael Comer
Chair, FUMER Staff Parish Relations Committee