

Welcome to the Laity Minute!

As a member of the laity, I am proud to begin a new column in our newsletter devoted to all things laity. I hope to bring you everything from general church information, UMW news, current events, and anything of interest happening in the UMC today. As it so happens, October is a perfect month to begin!

This month, on Oct. 21, we acknowledge Laity Sunday. The day is one of remembrance and celebration of the laity's impact and contributions to the church. The word laity originates from the Latin word *laicus* meaning "of the people." Of course, laity has played an important role in the Methodist Church for many decades. But, the earliest plan for Laity Sunday was actually in 1928. At this time, it was known as Laymen's Sunday and wasn't officially mentioned in the Book of Discipline until 1944. It wasn't until 1972 that the Book of Discipline changed to the more gender-neutral Laity Sunday as we know it today.

The United Methodist Church gives anyone the opportunity to become a lay person. (Learn more at Holston.org or umc.org.) Different levels of lay ministry allow people to serve as they feel led and open the door to many exciting ways to grow in faith and leadership.

At Centenary, we have had many amazing members of the laity. They have been there to assist our clergy as needed and have performed leadership activities in an effective and purposeful manner. The UMC has long used laity to augment and enhance the mission of the church, the community, and the world. Plus, someone had to take over when the Circuit Riders were away! So, as we acknowledge Laity Sunday, we can remember and celebrate the missions and efforts of all laity past, present and future.