

October 17-18, 2025. Bethany Clio UMC

Our day started with registrar Sally Messner.

Then we gathered to hear Jacob Stone and Pastor Audra Hudson Stone share information from the Environmental Justice Task Force.

On Saturday Gary and Mary Langdon explained that our Mission Focus donations would go to the food pantry at Bethany.

We heard greetings from Bishop Bard and later met Julie Bard.

We heard Andrew Bouse perform with his beloved cello and the congregation listened raptly.

And is that John Wesley I see?

Vice-President Ethel M. Gill introduced our featured speaker, Sally Vonner, who shared information about "Embracing New Challenges." We are at the dawning of new challenges!

Each day has new possibilities! God offers us a new dawn every day! Sally is our General Secretary and CEO of United Women in Faith.

Next is the mystery head! Can you guess who it is?

Jason Phelps is no mystery to many of us and gleefully accepted the biggest balloon bouquet I've ever seen! Happy birthday, friend, and thanks for the help!

And there's our cross and flame!

Next you will see the SERRV display and some eager shoppers.

And it would take forever to examine each frame of the beautiful wall hanging in the dining room.

Carla Moore, CEO of United Methodist Community House in Grand Rapids, shared recent updates with both programs and the facility.

Now for the serene cross and 'Faith' as an altar decoration. And a cross with a rainbow background as an additional stained glass window.

A full slate of officers were installed by Sally, who gave everyone a paper clip and a Soul Care Retreat magnet.

WalthaGaye Leavitt prepared the communion table.

And sprinkled throughout the day was music provided by Marna Jeffery and Laura Marlow. I especially liked "Turn It Up!" (But it was all good.)

And I savored colorful fall leaves on my way home.

Now for apologies...I totally missed a photo of Sharon Smith, and she's our Conference President! But she is the tallest one in the back row of the Leadership Team. And Julia Paradine-Rice, who lead us in the cheer Dream it! Believe it! Do it! with colorful little pom-poms. And there were others I missed, too, including my own book table. So this is by no means a complete gallery. Ruth's minutes will reflect the events of the day more accurately. It took a whole slew of folks to make it happen!

Many thanks to all involved, especially Ethel and Bethany Clio UMC.

A day full of fellowship and inspiration!

See you at Assembly in Indianapolis May 17-19, 2026!

Now for 2 notes from the book lady:

As winter approaches, be sure to prepare by always having between 3-168 new books (from the Reading Program) on hand at any given time.

There will be people in your life that say you have too many books. Those are not your people! Be Kind!