

February 29, 2024

A message from your Lakewood United Methodist Church Staff Parish and Pastor Relations Committee:

We are grateful for the ministry that Rev. Roy Beth Kelley has shared with Lakewood UMC over the last three years, and we want to wish her heartfelt congratulations as she is being appointed by Bishop Laura Merrill to be the next Northwest District Superintendent. Pastor Roy Beth will continue to lead LUMC until June 30.

The SPPR will be working with our District Superintendent to communicate the needs of the church in selecting the next Senior Pastor for Lakewood. You may read the official announcement from the Arkansas Conference below.

Grace and Peace,
Dr. Andrea Shaw, chair, Lakewood UMC SPPRC

New District Superintendent Named to Northwest District

Bishop Laura Merrill has announced her intention to appoint Rev. Roy Beth Kelley as Superintendent of the Northwest District beginning July 1, 2024. Kelley is currently the senior pastor of Lakewood UMC in North Little Rock. She has served as a pastor under appointment for 13 years in various large and small settings, including Dover UMC, Atkins and Bells Chapel UMCs, and Fort Smith First UMC.

Kelley was ordained as a full elder in 2021. She has served as a local pastor in small churches, as an associate pastor, and now as the senior pastor of a multi-clergy staff. She worked bi-vocationally while maintaining her career as an attorney and brings the perspective of recent experience with seminary and the ordination process.

Kelley's education includes a B.A. in English from Arkansas Tech University, a Juris Doctor degree from the University of Arkansas School of Law, and an M.Div. from United Theological Seminary with concentration areas in Church Renewal and Leadership.

Kelley served as a public school teacher for seven years and as an attorney for 20 years before being called into ministry. She has served as a member and chair of the Legislative Committee for the Arkansas Bar Association and shared that, "This opportunity impacted my faith in the area of seeking justice."

"My greatest passion in ministry is to witness people being reborn in a relationship with Christ. I love to see people light up when they really grasp how much they are loved by God and start to grow in faith and love for God and their neighbors," shared Rev. Kelley. "I am thrilled to begin this new adventure with God and to have the opportunity to support and encourage the clergy, laity, and churches in the Northwest District. I can't wait to be a part of all the wonderful ways Northwest District United Methodists are proclaiming the love of God, living out their faith, and serving in their mission fields!"

Bishop Merrill shared, "Roy Beth's diverse experience will be a great asset to her and to the whole cabinet as she fulfills this new role. She brings energy, creativity, and a generous spirit to the work of ministry, and I am grateful for her willingness to serve in this way."