



THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Charlotte Episcopal Area
WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA CONFERENCE

Kenneth H. Carter, Jr.
RESIDENT BISHOP

DeEtta Rivens
EXECUTIVE ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Join us during the season of Easter for **The Great 50 Days:** **Words of Reflection & Prayer for United Methodists from United Methodists**



To the people of the United Methodist Church in Western North Carolina,

We are in the season now of Easter. We have transitioned from a 40-day season of fasting (Lent) to a 50-day season of feasting (Easter). We celebrated the resurrection on Sunday, and now we remember that Jesus was with us on earth for 40 days prior to his ascension (Acts 1). There was then a period of ten days before the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2). In these days Jesus appeared to them as the Risen Lord and spoke about the Kingdom of God.

On the Day of Pentecost (which actually means “fifty”), the disciples gathered for the Hebrew feast of Shavuot, which was a harvest festival and a remembrance of God’s gift of the law to Moses on Mt. Sinai. The church calls this the “Great 50 Days”, in celebration of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ and in anticipation of our mission given to us on Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit is poured out on all flesh.

I invite us to observe the Great 50 Days in two ways.

First, each day there will be shared testimony through our social media about how the power of the Resurrection and the Holy Spirit is present in our lives and in our churches and ministries. I hope you will watch for these testimonies, share them, encourage one another, and praise God for them.

And second, I invite you to read, reflect on and pray these words every day between Easter and Pentecost (The Great 50 Days).

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship,
to the breaking of bread and the prayers.

Awe came upon everyone because many wonders and signs
were being done through the apostles. All who believed were together
and had all things in common; they would sell their possessions and goods
and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need.

Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple,
they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts,
praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day
the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

(Acts 2. 42-47, NRSV)

Eternal God, we give you thanks for this holy mystery
in which you have given yourself to us.

Grant that we may go into the world
in the strength of your Spirit,
to give ourselves for others,
in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

(Prayer after Receiving Holy Communion, UM Hymnal)

May the power of the Risen Jesus and the peace of the Holy Spirit fall afresh upon us in the Great 50 Days between Easter and Pentecost.

The Peace of the Lord,



+Ken Carter

Resident Bishop, Western North Carolina Conference of The United Methodist Church