Conference Reflection: Rev. Adriane Curtis (Carmel United Methodist Church)

When I look back on key General Conference years, 1996 in Denver holds a special place in my heart. There were many petitions considered that year, including a short petition decrying political mud-slinging, a petition was endorsed by the South Indiana Conference of the United Methodist Church. The original writer of that petition was my father, Rev. David Rockhill. When Rev. Rockhill traveled with the petition to Denver, I listened with rapt awe to the stories about his time at General Conference. Until that moment, I had envisioned our denomination as an impersonal behemoth. I was just another United Methodist face in the crowd. I could never make a difference, so why even try. That year, I learned the extraordinary truth: Every single lay and clergy member of The United Methodist Church has the power to spark change. All it takes is a vision for something better, and the courage to put pen to paper and speak up.

Our denominational system is not perfect. Sometimes it even seems frustratingly inflexible. Yet, our democratic-style system was developed to empower and give voice to ALL of us. Our Methodist roots uphold the value of every single human being as a beloved child of God. Even more, our theology upholds a God that brings us together for the sake of building God’s kingdom here on earth. We do that work together at General Conference.

I am humbled and excited to be a part of the Indiana delegation to Jurisdictional Conference in 2020. I will also serve as one of the alternates to General Conference in 2020. Throughout the time I am serving, I hope to listen for the people behind the petitions. I am one of many, but now I know that even my small voice has power when it joins the voices of others. I am looking forward to maybe even meeting some of the worldwide “David Rockhills” of the 2020 General Conference.