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The Baby Fold to Welcome Bishop David A. Bard for Historic First Visit on May 22

Normal, IL — The Baby Fold is honored to welcome Bishop David A. Bard of the United Methodist Church on May 22. This visit marks the first time a bishop has formally visited The Baby Fold in decades.

Bishop Bard was installed as presiding bishop of the Illinois Great Rivers Conference on September 28, 2024. He also serves as bishop of the Michigan Area. His visit reflects the longstanding covenantal relationship between The Baby Fold and the United Methodist Church, rooted in shared commitments to faith, service, and the care of children and families.

Elected to the episcopacy in 2016 at the North Central Jurisdictional Conference in Peoria, Illinois, Bishop Bard has served in United Methodist ministry for more than 30 years, including leadership in local church, conference, and denominational settings. Prior to his election as bishop, he served as pastor of First United Methodist Church in Duluth, Minnesota, and as a district superintendent in the Minnesota Annual Conference.

During his visit, Bishop Bard will tour The Baby Fold's programs and meet with leadership and staff to learn more about the organization's work in foster care, early childhood, adoption support, clinical services, and Hammitt Schools, The Baby Fold's special education program.

"We are deeply honored to welcome Bishop Bard to The Baby Fold," said Clete Winkelmann, CEO of The Baby Fold. "His visit affirms our shared calling to serve children and families and strengthens our longstanding relationship with the United Methodist Church."

About The Baby Fold: Since 1902, The Baby Fold has been providing life-critical services to children and families throughout Central Illinois. The Baby Fold's healing-centered programs include foster care, adoption support, special education, autism programs, early childhood initiatives, crisis intervention, and more. The Baby Fold cares for our youngest citizens so they can be blessed with the loving homes, stable lives, and the futures they deserve.

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