



GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH UPPER MIDWEST CONFERENCE

Monthly Newsletter



We are so excited to announce that as our conference grows, our need for communicating the good things God is doing grows. Starting this month, we will be sending two emails each month with content about our Upper Midwest Global Methodist Conference. Our prayer is that you are informed, inspired, and encouraged to share this news with others.

December 2024 Newsletter

What's In This Issue:

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- [Discernment & Planting](#) – Multiplication Team
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- [Book of Doctrine & Disciplines](#)



Power of Presence

by Rev. James Parks, Upper Midwest Conference Superintendent

I've just returned from an incredible journey to South Africa as part of a delegation from our conference and the Florida Conference. Norma Morrison joined me as the lay person representative on the trip from our conference. Together, we met with our brothers and sisters in the partner conference there. This visit was more than a trip—it was the beginning of what we hope will be a vibrant partnership among our three conferences.



Our shared goal?

To grow as disciple-making communities
that spread scriptural holiness around the world.

Our trip was a whirlwind of activity, taking us coast to coast across this beautiful country. Our first stop was Cape Town on the Atlantic Ocean, where we visited three churches on our very first full day. That evening, we flew to

Durban, perched on the shores of the Indian Ocean. We traveled this region for two days visiting churches. From there, we traveled to the Limpopo province to visit Blessman International, an inspiring ministry headquartered in Des Moines, Iowa, with three thriving campuses in South Africa. Finally, we returned to Johannesburg for the culmination of our visit: the Annual Conference.



Every church welcomed us with overwhelming hospitality. Imagine this: joyful singing, the vibrant energy of a youth-led parade, and the warm smiles of people eager to share their hearts and stories. We also were taught the GMC handshake that has three parts representing the three persons of the Trinity. Wherever we went, we were showered with food, drinks, and meaningful gifts—tokens of love that connected us as members of the same family in Christ. Among the many gifts was a beautiful wooden serving tray, engraved with the Global Methodist Church logo and the words: *“Thank you for embracing us with your presence.”*



I didn't fully notice the inscription until I was back home, but its message perfectly captured the theme of our visit. Over and over, I sensed that the Global Methodists of South Africa felt truly embraced by their worldwide denomination. Our presence wasn't just symbolic—it made them feel valued, connected, and part of something much larger. These churches, which had

left the United Methodist Church years ago to become independent, were now celebrating their new identity as part of the Global Methodist Church.



I was deeply moved by the joy and appreciation radiating from these brothers and sisters. Representing our Upper Midwest Conference in these moments was both humbling and inspiring. And now, I look forward to the day when we'll come together again—not just through delegations like this one, but as teams traveling back and forth to learn, serve, and grow together. In fact, we're already preparing to welcome a delegation from South Africa to our Annual Conference in June 2025!



There's something profoundly powerful about being in the same room with other believers from around the world. It reminds us that our denomination is truly global—and that the love of Jesus knows no borders.



This sense of presence resonates deeply during Advent. Advent reminds us that God Himself became present with us through Jesus, who is called Immanuel—God with us. His presence is transformative, a gift of love that changes everything.

As we celebrate this season, I pray that you experience the power of God’s presence in your life and in your church. I also pray that your presence will be a warm embrace for those who are lost, hurting, or wandering in this broken world.

May the love of Jesus shine brightly through you, wherever you go, as we celebrate this wonderful season of hope and joy.

In Christ,
James Parks

MULTIPLICATION TEAM UPDATE

[Multiplication Team Update](#)

Rev. Zach Kingery, Multiplication Team

Discernment and Planting

Church planting is not a business decision nor is it a trend to participate in. Planting, and multiplication, should come as a response to the discerned leading of the Lord. There are areas of need in our Conference. Areas that are devoid of community transforming congregations sharing the Gospel of Jesus, areas without a vibrant Wesleyan witness – areas you and your congregation are called to reach.

The start of 2025 needs to be a season of discernment as we work toward our goal of seeing Every Church Plant.

- Form a Discernment Group: Gather a discernment group together and talk with other GMCs nearby about joining you in the discernment process.
- Begin meeting regularly for prayer and discernment:
 - This can be done in person, via zoom, or a hybrid of both. These times should be dedicated to discernment as you seek from the Lord His will for this move toward multiplication.
 - This is also a time to count the cost (Luke 14:25–33). It is a time of preparation that is necessary for those who send and those who will be sent.
- Forget the box:

- Don't be afraid to see and do things differently. There are no cookie-cutter communities so there should not be cookie-cutter congregations. As you meet to discern, the group may feel led to explore a launch large method of multiplication or a micro-expression. You might discern starting a network of house churches or start a movement that focuses on a local college campus. In whatever direction the group is led, be sure to put in the time to discern, the work of planning and studying the area to which you are called, and do not let the box of past or current methods stop you from moving forward in faith.

If you are ready to start a local discernment group for multiplication and planting, please reach out to the Multiplication Team. We are here to assist you in this process, help hold you accountable, and to pray for you as you discern what God has planned. Email contact@uppermidwestgmc.org with "Multiplication Discernment" in the subject

Get Involved

- Speaking Schedule
 - Is your congregation hearing the call to become multipliers? Are you interested in starting new ministries, multiplying your ministries, or becoming a church that plants? Or do you know that those seeds need to be planted in your congregation? Then reach out to the Multiplication Team about getting on the speaking schedule so we can meet with your leadership team, lead a workshop, and/or preach about multiplication and planting. Email contact@uppermidwestgmc.org with "Multiplication" in the subject
- Monthly Multiplier Zoom Call – Starting January 2025
 - Join in with other multipliers and leaders in our Conference on a monthly Zoom call where we discuss multiplication practices, encourage one another, and get inspired to see Every Church Plant. **Mark your calendars for the 3rd Saturday of the month at 10AM Central.**

Get Equipped

As the Multiplication Team, we know that the path to multiplication in our conference will happen best as the result of a deep commitment to evangelism and active discipleship.

Starting January 2025, Dirt Roads Network has Clergy Cooperatives available to encourage and equip our Upper Midwest clergy as they lead and develop vibrant congregations on mission for Jesus. The purpose of these zoom based Cooperatives is to connect pastors in like-minded communities and equip them on missional practices, discernment, and discipleship as they raise up and send out missionaries from their congregation to impact their discerned mission fields.

TheSpring 2025 DRN Cooperative is offered at no cost to clergy in the Upper Midwest Conference thanks to the generous sponsorship of Aldersgate Church in Aberdeen SD. We are grateful for their partnership in making this opportunity available.

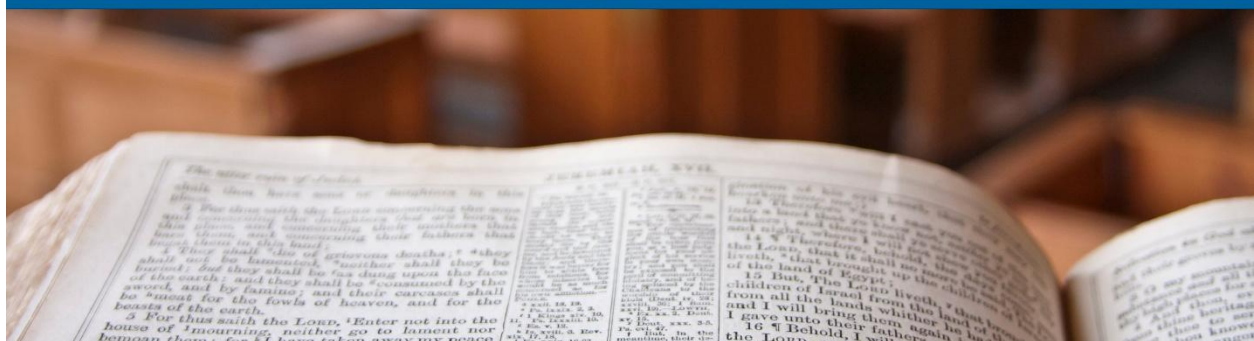
Follow the link to learn more and consider signing up: <https://forms.gle/S6tX5Zika3Xkeys646>

UPPER MIDWEST ANNOUNCEMENTS



Certified Lay Ministry

UPPERMIDWEST CONFERENCE OF THE GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH



[Certified Lay Ministry](#)

Laity have long been the stronghold of Methodism and essential to the Wesleyan movement. John Wesley recognized early the gifts of the laity and called them out raising up new leaders as exhorters, class leaders, and lay preachers. Today Certified Lay Ministers serve in a variety of capacities such as providing pulpit supply, conducting public worship, providing congregational care, serving as church administrator, leading small groups, assisting in program leadership, serving as a lay leader, developing new faith communities and even serving in lead pastoral leadership under the supervision of a clergy person.

The Global Methodist Church also recognizes the importance of a lay led movement. Therefore, the GMC has made certified lay ministry a priority in its foundational stages of ministry and provided this vital leadership path for lay people.

Being certified as a lay minister lets others know that you have committed to a journey of spiritual and educational growth and want to serve Jesus Christ in an extraordinary way.

Beginning on December 7, we will be holding the next session of a virtual lay ministry school which will fulfill all the educational requirements for certification. Our 2024-2025 Winter/Spring school will be held via ZOOM and a link will be provided prior to each class session. Classes will be one Saturday a month for six months from 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. CDT.

[**Registration Form**](#)

Registration forms should be returned to:
Jodi Cataldo

CLM/LayMinistry School Director

Upper Midwest Conference of the GMChurch

3920 S. Terry Ave., Apt. 36

Sioux Falls, SD 57106

jodi.cataldo@gmail.com

[More Information](#)



NEW APPOINTMENTS

James Shroll

11/1 – Clear Lake & Gary, SD

View the updated list of appointments, churches, and districts in the Upper Midwest conference in our [Index of Churches](#).

[Index of Churches](#)



[Bold Witness](#)

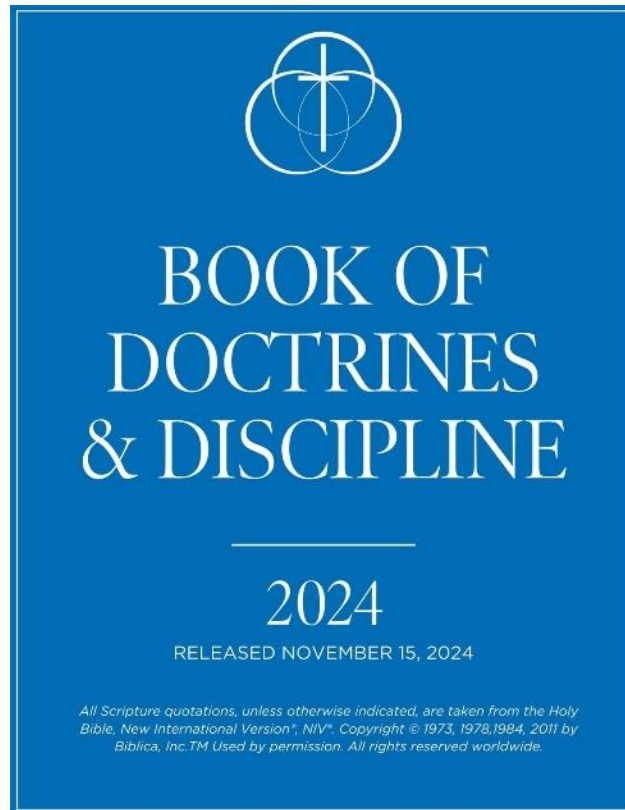
Now in conjunction with the Global Methodist Church, we are excited to invite you to share your story – your bold witness of what God’s doing in, around, and through you. There are good ministries and exciting events happening all over our conference – and we want you to share them with us so we can spread the good news.

Take a minute or two and fill out this quick form to celebrate something going on in your local congregation, or in another local GM Church in your area. These will be shared in future Upper Midwest Newsletters and with the Global Methodist communications team.

Let’s get excited about how God is using us in this season!

[**Share Your Story**](#)

GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS



[The Book of Doctrines and Disciplines: Preliminary Version Now Available](#)

We are excited to share that the preliminary version of The Book of Doctrines and Disciplines is now available in English on the Global Methodist Church [website](#). This resource provides essential guidance for our church and is being released in response to the immediate need for planning purposes.

We want to clarify that this is not the final version.

Additional sections, including historical information and an index, are still being compiled and should be available soon. We anticipate having the final version ready next week, along with the revised Judicial Practices and Procedures.

Translations into the other official languages of the Global Methodist Church will occur once revisions have been concluded. Once complete, these translations will be uploaded to the website, ensuring accessibility for our global community.

While the Book of Doctrine and Discipline will not officially take effect until January 1, 2025, its preliminary release marks an important milestone as we continue to build a denomination centered on Christ and His mission.

We extend our deepest gratitude to the Journal Committee for their dedication and hard work on this important resource. Their efforts reflect the Lord's continued movement among us and our collective commitment to spreading scriptural holiness across the globe.

Visit the [Global Methodist Church](#) website to access the English version today. Stay tuned for the final version with added features, coming soon!

[Book of Doctrines & Disciplines](#)

MORE INFORMATION

Be the First to Know!



Sign up for our Newsletter

Important Dates to Remember



June 13-15, 2025
Annual Conference

[Subscribe Here](#)

****Note:** The Deadline for Newsletter Articles/Info is the 20th of the Month.

"Crossroads" Email Newsletter



Stay up to date on events, articles, and more from Global Methodist Church communications. Click below to subscribe to these weekly emails sharing stories and opportunities from across our new denomination.

[Subscribe Here](#)

Prayer Update



Please find the [Upper Midwest Conference Noon Prayer](#) introduced at the Annual Conference on the Conference website under "Prayer Opportunities."

[Upper Midwest Noon Prayer](#)

Monthly Prayer Zoom Meeting: Every 2nd Tuesday at 7:00 PM (CT). Email Christina Sung for the Zoom link: revcsung@gmail.com

[Facebook Page](#)

[YouTube Channel](#)



We are excited to announce that we have launched a Facebook Page for our conference. We would love for you to visit, like, follow, and share this page with others. Our Facebook Page will be used to share upcoming events, updates, and ministry highlights from across our states.

Check out our new YouTube channel and Subscribe to keep up to date!

[Subscribe on YouTube](#)

[Upper Midwest Facebook Page](#)





GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH UPPER MIDWEST CONFERENCE

Lovingly walk alongside laity and clergy as they make disciples of Jesus Christ
who worship passionately, love extravagantly and witness boldly.

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