



GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH UPPER MIDWEST CONFERENCE

Monthly Newsletter

October 2024 Newsletter

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[General Conference Reflection](#)

by Rev. James Parks, Upper Midwest Conference Superintendent

Greetings from your Conference Superintendent. I returned from our Convening General Conference a few days ago. My body and mind are still tired from the focused work we did in Costa Rica, and my spirit is filled to overflowing from the experience of the Holy Spirit.

There was a lot of legislation that happened to move our denomination from a transitional phase to a more solid state. The term I heard a few times is that our denomination is now wet cement. We added more form to our organization, however, with another General Conference planned for 2026 (in central Africa), that will give us two years to shape the cement before it dries. So, if there are structures or processes that we learn do not serve the local church well in the next two years, we can make adjustments then.

We will be working to share the legislative decisions that were made. It will take some time for everything to be compiled and made available. We did change the name of my role to Conference Superintendent. We also adopted a general episcopacy model for our denomination. This means that bishops will not have just one conference that they preside over. Eventually, they will have six to eight conferences. The reason for this is to help the bishops stay focused on their call to teach the faith and shepherd the larger church in our Wesleyan way. We elected six interim bishops to serve until the 2026 General Conference.

We did adopt a constitution. This will be the standards of our theology and the principles of our practice as a church. It was great to lean on our delegation members who were in the committees that focused on this work when we were making amendments. Included in this legislative work was a new mission and vision statement that we will get to know.

We had many other legislative committees with great work done in all of them. The other significant work was worship. The General Conference regularly had time to give God the glory. We sang and prayed in many languages as a global denomination. It felt to me like a little Pentecost. Although I heard Spanish, French, Korean, Swahili, and probably some other different languages I did not know, there was one spirit. Each word spoken was to give honor and praise to Jesus Christ who is our sole purpose and salvation. He was working to unify us.

I am not sure exactly what I expected this General Conference to be, but it was more than I expected. The Spirit of God was present and active in everything we did. We came from all over the globe with different ideas and expectations. I know I left Costa Rica with a spirit that was unified with our brothers and sisters from many different cultures and backgrounds because Jesus brings us together.

We are working to offer a General Conference Recap on Sunday, October 13th at 3:30pm CST. This will be a time of singing, praying, and sharing about General Conference. We will host it in Marion, Iowa at Marion Methodist Church, and it will

be live-streamed to our [Conference YouTube Channel](#). I hope you will join us for this recap.



Global Methodist Church General Conference

RECAP

Sunday, October 13

3:30 - 5:00 PM

Marion Methodist Sanctuary
5050 REC Drive, Marion IA

Also Livestreaming On Our YouTube Channel

<https://www.youtube.com/@UpperMidwestConferenceMedia>

The bottom line for me is that the Spirit of God was moving and active as he led our General Conference. God did great things. And God is not done yet. God is just beginning this new season in the church. We are called to follow where God is leading us, which is to make disciples of Jesus Christ and spread scriptural holiness across the globe.

In CHRIST,

James Parks

GENERAL CONVENING CONFERENCE



Upper Midwest Delegation Update

Greetings from your General Conference delegation!

There are times you just know that you are in the will of God, and that is the peace I have about the Convening General Conference in Costa Rica. I truly believe that the Global Methodist Church was totally in the will of God and will be in the days and months and years ahead.

Passionate delegates from across the globe discussed, disagreed, and deliberated on legislation yet discerned a way forward in a spirit of true unity. We have a Constitution and added 6 new Bishops for the next 2 years... 2 from Africa, 2 women, a black man and white man from the US. It was amazing to experience!

We also have mission and vision statements that are true to our Wesleyan call to the world. In a final legislative act, delegates voted to change the Global Methodist Church's mission statement and introduce a vision statement. The new mission statement reads: "The Global Methodist Church exists to make disciples of Jesus Christ and spread scriptural holiness across the globe." The newly adopted vision statement declares: "Through the empowerment of the Holy Spirit, the Global Methodist Church envisions multiplying disciples of Jesus Christ throughout the earth who flourish in scriptural holiness as we worship passionately, love extravagantly, and witness boldly."

You can be proud of how your delegation represented you and the Upper Midwest Conference. They worked hard and learned so much to help us be more involved in the General Church. It was my great privilege and honor to lead our delegation. I am blessed.

Norma Morrison

Please take the time to see the videos of your peers that were live in Costa Rica. You can find the videos on our [Facebook Page](#).

Opportunity to Give

2024 Convening General Conference Delegation Expenses



Click the button below to give online.

[Give to Delegation Fund](#)

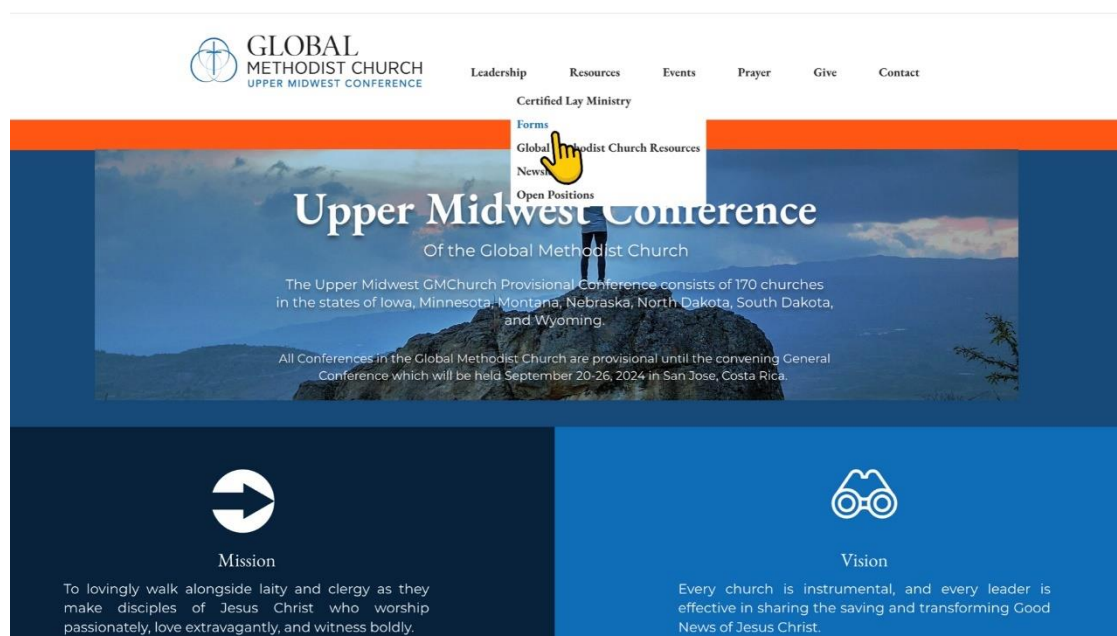
We continue to raise funds to cover the cost of our delegation traveling to represent us. **Our actual expenses are less than anticipated so our goal has been adjusted to reflect this.** If you or your church would like to support this effort, you can give online or you can mail a check to:

**Upper Midwest
GMChurch**

**416 S Minnesota St.
Mitchell, SD 57301**

**Please remember to
designate it for
General Conference.**

UPPER MIDWEST ANNOUNCEMENTS



[Annual Charge Conference Forms](#)

One of the spiritual gifts Paul mentions in 1 Corinthians 12 is the gift of administration. People with this gift can manage, organize, and coordinate people and resources. These gifted people set goals and create order from chaos. Paul reminds us how important these gifts are to the Body of Christ.

I have been leaning into people with these gifts to help us develop the forms for our annual charge conferences in the Upper Midwest Conference. Our Transition Book of Doctrine and Discipline calls **the charge conference the connection between the local church and conference**. Each charge is to gather annually for the ministry of administration.

These forms are not perfect. (We are still less than a year old.) They are meant to **assist each church in gathering information vital to the ministries of the local church**. This time, we are requesting extra basic information as we try to compile accurate information from each church as we have all experienced much change over the last 12 months or more. Much of the information for these forms are not for the use of the conference, rather to help the local church gather the information they need to function as an organization.

You can find these forms [HERE](#) and they will be available through our

[Conference website under resources then forms](#).

Please be in contact with your presiding elder with the questions you have.

In CHRIST,

Rev. James E. Parks

[Annual Charge Conference Forms](#)



NEW APPOINTMENTS

Hyun “Tommy” Suh

Windom First Church in Windom, MN

Melody Williams

Geneseo Methodist Church in Buckingham, IA

Todd Holman

Faith Bible Church in Britt, IA

Tom Sumers

Cresbard & Tolstory Churches in Cresbard & Tolstory, SD

Shawn Abbas

Geddes Community Church in Geddes, SD

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



[Don't Feel Like Praying? Pray anyway!](#)

"Praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication" (Eph. 6:18)

"Pray without ceasing" (1 Thess. 5:17)

"Continue steadfastly in prayer" (Col. 4:2)

When you have been ready to pray or join a prayer meeting, have you ever experienced interruptions like a phone ring, someone needing your attention, a delayed email reply, or have suddenly not felt good so you ended up not praying or missing the prayer meeting? Have you ever wondered why? It is a spiritual battle; the enemy, Satan, is behind it!

Whenever we draw closer to God, we experience disruption. Of course, our focus is on Jesus, not Satan; but knowing his strategies is necessary to win the battle and be victorious. Throughout the New Testament, Satan is referred to as a "tempter" (Mt. 4:3), "the ruler of the demons" (Mt. 12:24), "the God of this Age"

(2 Cor. 4:4), "the evil one" (1 Jn. 5:18), and "a roaring lion" (1 Pet. 5:8). Ephesians 6:12 says; "For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavens." Paul tells the Ephesian church to put on the full armor of God, so that they can stand firm against Satan's schemes. James tells Christians

that if they resist the devil, he will flee. Peter tells believers to beware: Satan is always on the prowl.

Don't feel like praying? Pray anyway!

Satan's goal is to keep us living in sin to discourage, deceive, and divide us. Satan diverts us from God's blessings and causes us to doubt His Word and Love so that we turn away from Him with no prayer and no power of the Holy Spirit. Then Satan rocks the 'sleeping Christians and churches' so they remain asleep! Take this to heart: Jesus Christ already defeated Satan. The enemy trembles at the name of Jesus. Satan is a defeated foe! By Jesus' death and resurrection, Christ defeated the powers of death and Hell and Satan; someday His victory will be complete when He comes again. Hallelujah! **Christ must be the foundation of our lives and the church.** Prayer is our connection to God and a very simple thing, yet it seems to be the hardest to persist. How is your prayer life? What do you think God would say about it? **Think about this: if we don't pray, who will take over our lives, our homes, our churches, our denominations, and our nation?** Jesus or Satan?

Don't Feel Like Praying? Pray anyway!

I invite you to join the Conference-wide Prayer meetings, one in the morning and one in the evening so that you can join us according to your schedule.

Please click the button below to email us and let us know which Prayer Meeting you would like to join and we will send you the link.

Every 3rd Monday at 7:00 PM (CT)

Join Zoom Meeting

[Monday Prayer Zoom](#)

Every 2nd Tuesday at 10:00 AM (CT)

Join Zoom Meeting

[Tuesday Prayer Zoom](#)

The Prayer points for this month:

1. Every church will have prayer meetings and realize the importance of prayer.
2. Renewal and revival in our GMC churches
3. Our pastors and laity
4. General Conference: wisdom, guidance, and protection

5. Evangelism: Boldness to share the Gospel
6. Election in the USA: God's Will be done
7. Suffering and persecuted churches worldwide.

You can also find more information on the Upper Midwest Conference Website under "[Prayer & Intercession](#)"



[Subtract to Multiply](#)

Rev. Zach Kingery, Multiplication Team

Multiplication is necessary in our Methodist movement we have called the Global Methodist Church. It is an active command in Scripture to “Go, make disciples” (Matt. 28:19) and to truly be “Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us” (2 Cor 5:20).

When we take Scripture seriously and when we begin to understand that every disciple has been “created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do” (Eph 2:10) then perhaps we must - and I mean must - begin to look at our practices and ask ourselves, and implore of the Holy Spirit, whether what we are doing is advancing the Gospel in our communities.

I often reflect on a statement made by Bishop Webb that I believe was said at the New Hope Conference in April 2023 at Calvary Fargo, “If your church is doing something that isn’t advancing the Gospel, stop it.”

Friends, if you were called to plant a church in the community where your congregation already exists with the goal of winning that community to Christ would you be doing things the way you are currently doing them?

I regularly ask that question to pastors and most often their response is a decisive “no.” We might be an inviting people but the majority of our congregations are not personally inviting people to church, our small groups hit a certain point where they cease bringing in new, unreached people, and too often our Sunday morning services are ruled by preference of style and not the overwhelming desire to submit all things to the cross (yes, even our personal preferences and cultural traditions) so that we might see one more person ushered into the Kingdom of heaven as their life is transformed by Christ.

So what are we to do?!

I will not tell a congregation that to reach the lost and see a community won to Christ they must remove pews or put a drum set on stage. People do not surrender to Jesus because of smoke machines or worship leaders in skinny jeans. Modern or traditional, rock bands or pipe organs, these things are methods, not the message. Rather, people are led to Christ most effectively when we personally, actively engage them in one on one discipleship. When we hold one another accountable. When we create a culture of doing all that we are able to glorify our Father in heaven and reach just one more person for Jesus. And most often that happens when we are willing to say, “Lord, I give everything to you.”

Isn’t that who we are as Methodists? People who are willing to surrender it all to Jesus so that we might pick up the cross and daily walk with Him? John Wesley adapted and popularized it with Alleine’s *Vindiciae Pietatis*, which we call the Wesley Covenant Prayer: “*I freely and fully surrender all things to your glory and service...*”

So what might you, your family, church leadership, and congregation need to stop doing so that we can once again be used by God to spread Scriptural holiness across the land?

What might you need to surrender in your life, and your preferences for how you ‘do church’ so that we might rediscover the pioneering spirit of Methodism which once planted a church in every county in the continental US?

What might need to be subtracted so that we can be a Conference which has multiplication as an active, vital part of our DNA? A conference where because we

have laid aside everything for the Gospel we can joyfully declare, “In the Upper Midwest, every church plants. All for the glory of God.”



Certified Lay Ministry

Laities 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 is open from September 1-November 15, 2024

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](#)



[Sharing Good News](#)

We want to hear from 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.

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

[Share Your Story](#)

MORE INFORMATION

Be the First to Know!



Sign up for our Newsletter

[Subscribe Here](#)

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

Important Dates to Remember



September 20-26, 2024
Global Methodist Church
Convening General Conference

June 13-15, 2025
Annual Conference

[Connect with the Upper Midwest](#)

[“Crossroads” Email Newsletter](#)



What Is the Church Center App?

Church Center App is a [website](#) and mobile app that you can use to explore, engage, and stay connected with the Upper Midwest Conference.

[Church Center \(iPhone\)](#)

[Church Center \(Android\)](#)

[Learn More about Church Center](#)



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."

Can you imagine what would happen in the spiritual realm if we prayed the same prayer together at noon daily?

[Upper Midwest Noon Prayer](#)

Facebook Page



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.

[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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