



# GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH UPPER MIDWEST CONFERENCE

## *Special Edition Newsletter*

*This Special Edition is dedicated to the Convening General Conference of the Global Methodist Church. As you read, I hope you hear the work of the Holy Spirit guiding the formation of our denomination. It will be worth your time.*

*You will be blessed!*

**Pastor James Parks, Conference Superintendent**

### **What's In This Issue:**

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## **The Global Methodist Church Announces** **NEW Mission and Vision Statements!**

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**OUR MISSION**

The Global Methodist Church exists to make disciples of Jesus Christ and spread scriptural holiness across the globe.

GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH 

**OUR VISION**

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.

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## **Six New Interim Bishops Elected**

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**We elected six new interim Bishops to serve for the next two years.**

- **Kimba Evariste:** Democratic Republic of the Congo
- **John Pena Auta:** Nigeria
- **Leah Hidde-Gregory:** Mid-Texas
- **Kenneth Levingston:** Trinity
- **Carolyn Moore:** North Georgia
- **Jeff Greenway:** Allegheny West Annual Conferences

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## **Upper Midwest & South Africa Delegations Meet**

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Here is the Upper Midwest Delegation with the Delegation from our sister Conference of South Africa. It was wonderful to talk with them face to face.

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## General Conference Recap Video

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### **In Case You Missed It!**

On Sunday, October 13th at Marion Methodist the Upper Midwest Conference offered a Recap of the 2024 Global Methodist Church General Conference.

**The Video is Now Available on our YouTube Channel!**

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

**Be Sure to Check It Out!**

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# Convening General Conference Reflection

by Rev. Ross Reinhiller, Conference Assistant Superintendent

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When the LORD brought back the captivity of Zion,

We were like those who dream.

Then our mouth was filled with laughter,

And our tongue with singing.

Then they said among the nations,

“The LORD has done great things for them.”

The LORD has done great things for us,

And we are glad. Bring back our captivity,

O LORD, As the streams in the South.

Those who sow in tears Shall reap in joy.

He who continually goes forth weeping,

Bearing seed for sowing,

Shall doubtless come again with rejoicing,

Bringing his sheaves with him.

Psalm 126

I lived this Psalm at the Convening Conference of the Global Methodist Church. Like the people of Israel, I felt like I was returning from a long exile. I did not

know what exactly to expect. But from the opening worship to the conclusion of the Conference, the Spirit of God reigned! Important work was accomplished, we have a constitution and affirmed our doctrinal stand. Temporary bishops were elected, and the next General Conference was set. The greatest work was the openness in worship! From the first hymn of the first service to the benediction of the last service, the Lord was there!

The Lord kept the Conference focused on our mission and ministry. Whether working on legislation or worshipping, the whole conference focused on bringing the lost to Christ and upholding our belief in the redemptive and regenerative work of God. We committed to spreading “scriptural holiness” throughout the land!

**The Lord restored our souls!**

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## Delegates Reviews of Committee Work

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### **Constitution Legislative Committee**

**by Rev. Corey Jenkins and Rev. Mike Morgan**

Corey Jenkins and Mike Morgan were thrilled to be part of the Constitution Legislative Committee. Establishing the Constitution at the Convening Conference was critical as it is the governing document of the Global Methodist Church.

Constructing a constitution is very Wesleyan in that John Wesley believed steadfastly in the proper organization of the church. Our Constitution provides a schema for which our mission and ministry will function and grow the Church. In a few pages our foundational principles, the organization of the church and the Restrictive Rule are in true Methodist fashion concisely defined.

It was a blessing to be part of a committee (of 34 souls). Truly we did not begin our work with the same vision, yet every conversation and deliberation though intense and spirited were holy. A dozen hours or so were spent reforming the draft version provided in the Transitional Book of Doctrines and Discipline until we had full agreement.

However, this task was so important that though we thought our work complete, Chairperson Ryan Barnett reassembled us the next day, broke us into small groups to comb through – word by word the entire document. The result of this master stroke of leadership was several hours of spirited conversation, a handful of amendments, a unanimous vote an overwhelming feeling of gratitude that **NOW WE HAD A CONSTITUTION!**

**You are encouraged to read the Constitution of the Global Methodist Church!**

[Read the Constitution Here](#)



## Episcopacy Committee

by Rev. Jonathan Lee

At the recent GMC General Conference, the Holy Spirit's presence was deeply felt, not only in worship but also in our discussions, where mutual respect prevailed, even amid diverse viewpoints. Our focus on inclusivity and patient communication made this gathering especially memorable, as we worked to ensure every voice was honored.

A key outcome was the election of six bishops: two African bishops, two female bishops, one African-American bishop, and one white male bishop from the U.S. This diverse election reflects the GMC's commitment to inclusivity, embodying our belief that leadership in the church should reflect the diversity of the body of Christ, as seen in Scripture. For instance, Paul emphasized in Galatians 3:28, "There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus," affirming that our diversity strengthens our unity in Christ. The presence of ethnic and gender diversity within the episcopacy shows that the GMC is dedicated to fostering a leadership culture where all backgrounds are valued, paving the way for a more unified, global church.

Throughout the conference, we were mindful of our brothers and sisters joining via Zoom, many of whom spoke different languages. The Holy Spirit enabled us to extend grace and patience as we engaged across cultural and linguistic differences, echoing the vision of the early church in Acts 2:5-6, where people from every nation heard the gospel in their own language. This openness underscored the importance of unity within our community, rooted in mutual respect and love, and strengthened our bonds as we made significant decisions that will guide the church's future.

In conclusion, this conference was a powerful testament to how the GMC is intentionally living out its commitment to inclusivity, not only in words but in actions. With Spirit-led conversations, a dedication to patient listening, and a focus on fostering diversity, we have set a course that reflects the heart of the gospel, preparing the church to flourish in a world that needs it more than ever.





## Ministry and the Local Church

by Rev. Valerie Reinhiller

The Ministry and the Local Church Legislative Committee was busy. We dealt with 44 petitions. Our committee consisted of delegates from Bulgaria, Spain, Panama, Tanzania, Congo, and other counties in addition to the United States.

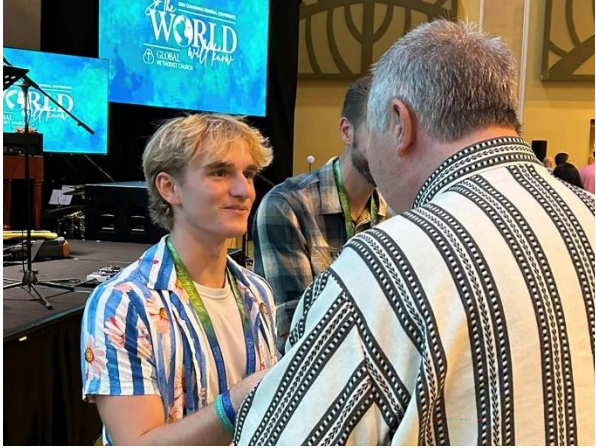
Our petitions mainly dealt with how people begin their education for ministry and how people become ordained. As the committee worked together, we paused several times during the conversations and asked God to lead us in our conversation and decisions. We did not always agree with each other as we discussed petitions, but we all were patient and respectful as we came to decisions. We all sensed the Holy Spirit's leading as we determined the next right steps and decisions which will impact the Global Methodist movement for years to come.



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## Reflections from Our Delegates

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**by Gabriel Holien**

This was my first ever general conference. Unlike a lot of others at this conference, I haven't been in ministry or the UMC Church for many years of my life, simply because I haven't had that many years of life so far. Regardless, the 2024 Convening General Conference for the Global Methodist Church was one I will remember for the rest of my life. The most memorable thing is something that one can get in the Midwestern United States, Costa Rica, or anywhere else in the world--the presence of the Lord. God's presence was so tangible during the entire week of that conference. The pastors and leaders of the faith from all around the globe helped foster that through our amazing praise, intentional conversations, and unity as a family of God. I heard someone describe it like a cloud of the glory of God over the group of Global



**by Rev. Rey Colón**

In the TV show, *The Chosen*, Mary Magdalene says this about her encounter with Jesus: "I was one way, and now I am completely different. And the thing that happened in between was Him." Even though these words are not in the bible one could agree that they do justice to Mary's encounter with the Lord. As the clergy delegate representing South Dakota I did not know what to expect from the General Conference in Costa Rica. I had never been to a general conference before, but that did not matter because no one had ever been to a GMC General Conference! I believe that what we all experienced in Costa Rica was similar to Mary's experience. Even though we all came from different parts of the world, we all shared the same hurts and disappointments. The conference was supposed to be a time for legislation

Methodists the entire week. There were prayers of prophecy, consecration, intercession, thanksgiving, guidance, praise, and everything else. The unity I experienced there was unmatched, although I knew nobody there, every conversation I had felt like old friends catching up. The Holy Spirit was evident in every conversation, and the topics were mostly of joy and remembrance of what God has done. There were groups of people with different ethnicities and language, yet that did not stop us from being the body of Christ together and working for the Kingdom.

Although my reflection might not be one of great informational depth or what we got accomplished, I believe one of the most important things was that God Himself was there with us. If we weren't doing it through, by, and for the love and glory of Jesus Christ, it would have all been useless. I know that the Hand of God was upon that conference, and that it will continue to be upon His body of believers all across the globe for the revival that is hitting us.

and business, but it turned out to be a time of healing and unity. I get the feeling that many left Costa Rica feeling like they are now completely different than before because of Him.

The atmosphere at the conference made me feel welcomed, accepted, and inspired. As an ethnic minority, I was pleased to see that the GMC truly is global. This became very evident in the election of bishops and the site for the GC2026. Also, a selfless spirit inundated the legislative sessions where delegates helped each other brainstorming ideas. One of my favorite highlights was spending time with the bishops and learning about their faith stories. One story in particular that stuck with me is that of Bishop Bob Hayes and his journey of breaking the color barrier in ministry. I believe that this is one of the many stories that have brought us to where we are today. The General Conference gave us a taste of what God is and will continue to do through the holiness movement that I like to call Global Methodism.

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**by Rev. Dave Mendyk**

Dear Christians in the Methodist Movement,

The tendency is to list the work results which took place at GC and their importance: like working through 252 petitions to change our transitional Book of Doctrines & Discipline, voting on a Constitution, electing Bishops, and accepting a new Mission Statement for the Global Methodist Church.

However, more importantly, new Trust was being built as people there discerned the unity of Holy Spirit, the Love of Christ, and the Wesleyan Way that held us together. The desire for open discussion was present in each Legislative Committee and sub-committee. Healing took place as many of the petitions spoke to a traumatic experience someone had when attempting to disaffiliate. Prayer opened each plenary session, many times being called for from the floor," Bishop, Point of order; I call for prayer before this big vote!" And we would do it.



**by Andrea Schadel**

Our time at the convening general conference of the Global Methodist Church was powerful, Spirit led, and full of encouragement! To finally stand in a room of faithful followers of Christ who are of one mind, one body, and one spirit, was everything that we have prayed for! I think there was a general sense of humility and dedication to serve before we went, and once we were there the willingness to let the Spirit lead, and let the Lord lay the foundation of our new church was overwhelming. We felt His presence in worship, in committee work, on the floor, and in the fellowship! Praise the Lord!

Over the course of the week we adopted a constitution, affirmed judicial practices, and prayerfully discerned a mission and vision for the church. The way we worked with one another set a tone of unity and mission for the work that still lies ahead. We also elected 6 new bishops who are clearly gifted with spirit filled leadership! They will go

At times, one would stop to consider that millions of prayers are being answered here, right now, and I was born for such a time as this! I often took advantage of the Prayer Room at the Conference Center where I saw Bishop Nominees on their knees. We experienced blended worship that was inspiring. I believe I took advantage of four out of five Altar Calls. Bishop Luis Palamo rolled out the red carpet for us and unity was created between Annual Conferences, Races, Countries, and languages.

forward as true servants of the church and defenders of the faith across the world.

While we were there we also solidified a partnership with the Methodist Church of Costa Rica, opening the doors for other groups with strong Wesleyan roots to come along side the GM Church for the glory of God and Christs mission of reconciliation on earth! Truly a spirit of partnership and unity! After this foundational gathering many of us left encouraged and excited that the best days of Methodism are ahead of us!



**by Jodi Cataldo**

For such a time as this! God has called up a revival in us...the people of God, the LAOS, of the Global Methodist Church! "For if you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance for the Jews will arise from another place, but you and your father's family will perish. And



**by Rev. Zach Kingery**

The Convening Conference truly was a time of Holy Conferencing. As an alternate clergy delegate I was able to sit in on various committee discussions and deliberations. This allowed me to see how both the clergy and laity delegates handled their responsibilities

who knows but that you have come to your royal position for such a time as this?” —Esther 4:14 (NIV).

We as a people have stepped away in faith to reach for something far greater than what we could even conceive of. God has called us to a new birth, a revival of scriptural holiness! This was never so evident as during the 2024 Convening General Conference of the Global Methodist Church. No longer are the people willing to live with the status quo but truly want to be in a spirit of revival not seen since the days of the Methodist Movement when scriptural holiness was indeed spreading across the land. The people worshiped, they prayed and prayed and prayed. And God blessed! Revival begins in us, the people of God to the glory of God. Dear Lord, help us to be faithful to the calling of revival you have wrought in us!

From the global nature of the conference, the holy conversations had, to the unity of spirit among the people, we are off to a supernatural start! The groundwork has been set and now the momentum is up to us and our faithfulness to God’s call for revival in us. Let it be so. Amen!

with a sense of discernment and deep commitment to establishing ourselves as a denomination in such a way that provides freedom instead of undue restriction while also striving to be true to our Christian nature and Wesleyan heritage.

To have times of genuine worship at the start of business meetings was truly an experience that I hope will be part of our Annual Conference gatherings. I have participated in business meetings in multiple denominations and more often than not the time of worship prior to business is performative, agenda driven, and more about gathering people than centering hearts on Christ. Never had I wept during an orchestra and choir performance but this General Conference changed that. Never had witnessed people running to the altar during a time scheduled for a plenary session but this General Conference changed that.

It is my hope that this convening General Conference for our Global Methodist movement is not the high point but rather the ignition point so that hearts and lives might catch fire with a Holy Spirit passion that sweeps across the globe and throughout generations.

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**by Clarence Mittleider**

The 2024 Convening General Conference was life changing for me. The Holy Spirit was there in all the worship services. I called my wife the first day and told her I would never be the same. It was such an honor and privilege for me to be able to vote for the constitution and the bishops it was a historic event.

I believe that God had a plan for me to be there because I went from a reserve 3 to alternate in just a little over a month. I didn't think I would even be there. The prayer where everyone was speaking their own language felt like Pentecost. The week changed me so much that I came home and signed up for online seminary classes starting in January as I feel God is calling me to do more.



**by Rev. Darcy Rubenking**

The first General Conference of the Global Methodist Church met in Costa Rica on September 20-26. It was not only a historic meeting to birth a new denomination but it was a time of spirit-filled worship and working together in cooperation and love.

Having been to previous general conferences, this conference was a pleasant change. People truly wanted to seek God's direction and would pray over times of voting and decisions.

Wonderful worship services and prayer brought us into God's presence and blessing. I could feel the Spirit of God in the conference center. Having the privilege of being an alternate delegate and attending this general conference gives me hope for the future of the Global Methodist Church. So many people have been praying for this meeting and this new movement and God is moving in our midst. I praise God for all the people I got to meet from

around the world who are striving to follow Jesus and proclaim scriptural holiness. May God continue to bless The Global Methodist Church and may we seek to follow Him where He leads.

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**by Jerry Rozeboom**

Prior to the delegate selection process beginning, I had really not considered submitting my name as a possible delegate to the general conference. Like many, I was a bit fatigued after having helped lead our church through the disaffiliation process and it was rewarding to see our church progressing nicely through the healing phase. I was quite "comfortable" remaining involved locally and to an extent in the initial GMChurch annual conferences. Then, after some "encouragement" from our pastors and lay leaders to get involved at the general conference level I entered into prayerful discernment and felt the Holy Spirit telling me to get more



**by Norma Morrison**

"We are making history today!" Those were the words of Bishop Hayes as he opened our first plenary session of the Convening General Conference in Costa Rica. The sentiment continued throughout the conference in the legislation that was passed but perhaps more importantly, through the spirit and unity of its people.

For me, it was a long road to arrive there. God had called me not only to serve in my local church and conference, but also in the General Church. For 25 years I worked for faithfulness to scripture in our former denomination. Two years ago God spoke to me directly that I was not



involved in the life of the GMC, eventually being designated as a laity delegate from the Upper Midwest Conference.

As this was my first general conference, I tried to be a sponge and absorb as much knowledge about the inner workings of the GMChurch and the workings of the general conference as I could via research and the numerous weekly zoom meetings with very knowledgeable clergy and lay delegates. It was remarkable how much information was shared and how much time and effort all the delegates put into general conference preparation.

In all honesty, I wrestled with the Holy Spirit at times, questioning whether I was qualified enough to be a lay delegate and was repeatedly told to trust Him to guide me as well as each of the other delegates.

Upon arrival in Costa Rica, I quickly became impressed with the amount of effort the GMC leadership and volunteers had put into making this conference extraordinarily successful and spiritually impactful.

We all had heard the stories of the acrimony, animosity and ill will at previous UMC general conferences leading to a bit of trepidation in regard to whether this conference would be

to forget where I came from (The UMC). When worship began that first morning, great healing could be felt across the body. The tears started flowing~ for the joy, for the memory of all the hardships, for my spouse (deceased) and others not there who had worked so faithfully.

I thought of what a grand celebration they must be having... a GMC Convening Conference "Watch party" in heaven! Perhaps you know some of them too.

Others from our delegation will share about the amazing worship times, the specific legislations that were passed, our Constitution, Bishops, and new Mission and Vision Statements. But for many another highlight was connecting with old friends from across the globe and making new ones. That is the great blessing as we work together in this new Wesleyan movement called The Global Methodist Church.

In his message on Sunday Bishop Jones reminded us that the Kingdom of God is righteousness, peace, and JOY (Rom. 14:7) and JOY and Holy Spirit go together (Acts 13:52). He challenged us to take it home. **WE WANT THE WORLD TO KNOW JOY!** So that is my prayer for each of you... that you will know joy and that others will see it in each of us... "So the World Will Know!" All glory and honor and praise to our Father, Jesus, and Holy Spirit!

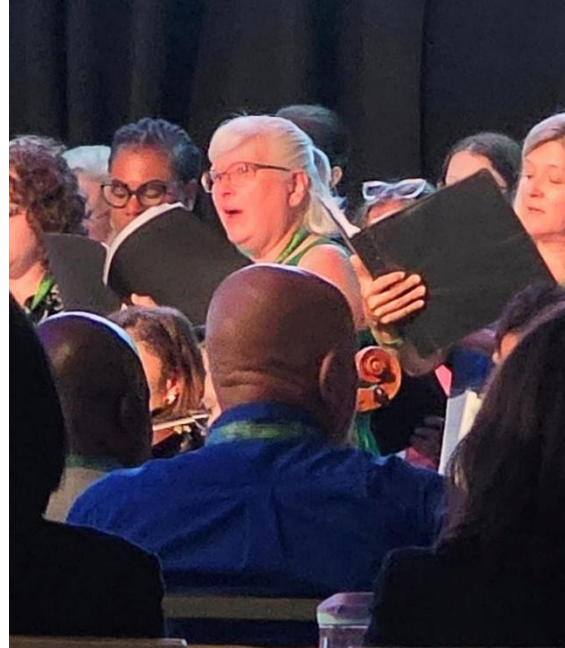
"different". Very quickly it became apparent that indeed the presence of the Holy Spirit was felt by all and that this truly was going to be a much different experience than past UMC general conferences.

Throughout the extensive committee and plenary work, we all felt that we were reading from the same book, in the same chapter, and usually on the same page, although not always focused on the same paragraph or sentence initially. Quickly, these differences were congenially, methodically, professionally and always spiritually guided to an amicable resolution. It was truly remarkable how the Holy Spirit guided each and every step in the committee and plenary sessions.

The worship component was akin to a weeklong revival with the Holy Spirit, once again, present throughout.

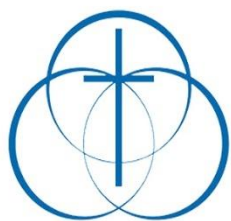
In conclusion, I felt that the convening GMChurch general conference achieved everything we had hoped for and then some. Establishing a Biblical, Wesleyan based constitution built on a foundation of solid bedrock was a monumental accomplishment.

I liken it to coming from a denomination that at times was rudderless and in constant troubled waters and now having the GMChurch place a denominational constitutional rudder in the water capable of guiding a navy



aircraft carrier through the most treacherous spiritual waters ahead via the constant presence of the Holy Spirit as our captain. Establishing ourselves as a truly Global entity with conferences and delegates from around the world was also remarkable leading up to the election of new bishops reflecting the composition of our Global denomination. As I reflect on the last few years, being a retired Ob/Gyn, I liken the disaffiliation process to a painful labor without any analgesia, knowing the outcome would be the birth of a beautiful child of God. At the convening GMC general conference, we saw the birth of that child of God and indeed His church has truly been birthed in the image of God. Hallelujah!

**Coming 2026!**



**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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