

# Upper Midwest GMC Newsletter

## Fourth Edition, July 1, 2023

Connecting for passionate worship, extravagant love, and bold witness!

### Recapping UMC Annual Conferences

As we transition to the GMC, many churches are still involved in the disaffiliation process. The Upper Midwest Provisional Conference of the GMC currently involves churches from seven states: North and South Dakota, Minnesota, Nebraska, Iowa, Wyoming and Montana. Most of this newsletter will be focused on the happenings at UM annual conferences in these states.

The most important actions taken at the annual conferences are the disaffiliations. However, not all churches that disaffiliate become part of the Global Methodist Church. Below, I have listed only the churches that are officially part of the GMC as of July 1. Also, there are more disaffiliations occurring later in the year, and churches continue to apply to be part of the GMC. We are in a fluid situation; so if you think your church is listed (or not listed) incorrectly, please contact your church leaders to clarify the situation.

#### ***The Dakotas***

The Dakotas Annual Conference met June 8-10 at the Sioux Falls Convention Center in Sioux Falls, SD. Following successful disaffiliation votes, the following 32 churches have become part of the GMC as of July 1:

Bowman, ND / Cavalier, ND / Fargo, ND (Calvary) / Hazen, ND / Lehr, ND (Community) / Medina, ND (Emmanuel) / Oakes, ND / Tappen, ND (Tappen Cornerstone) / Tuttle, ND (Salem) / Williston, ND (Faith)

Aberdeen, SD (Aldersgate) / Arlington, SD / Belle Fourche, SD / Bristol-Butler, SD / Claremont, SD / Clear Lake, SD / Elk Point, SD / Eureka, SD (Saving Grace Community) / Gary, SD / Geddes, SD / Hitchcock, SD / Huron, SD (Faith Alive) / Kellerton, SD (Vienna) / Kennebec, SD / Mellette, SD (Northwestern) / Milbank, SD (Central) / Presho, SD / Reliance, SD / Selby, SD / Stickney, SD (Prairie's Edge) / Watertown, SD (Cornerstone) / Winner, SD

# Thoughts on The Dakotas Conference

by Ross Reinhiller

My grandmother's best friend Nora O'Hearn said, "Best part of the good old days is they are over!" This sentiment describes well the past Annual Conference Session. It is over!

The highlight of the conference was the affirmative vote on the disaffiliation of 24 churches. Each church was treated with dignity in a business like manner. Kathy Chesney did a fine job of leading the conference through the process.

The other striking feature of this conference was the high number of evangelical clergy retiring. The conference honored these pastors and gave time for recognition. It may be the way things naturally flow in the life of people but I do think it is worth noting that the number was significant.

The rest of the conference was punctuated by programed optimism from the conference leadership that was not consistent with actions. The purposeful decision not to allow retired clergy to serve Global Methodist churches, the maneuver to avoid votes on retired clergy access to the Lynch Foundation funds, and an extra special session seemed incongruent

with the words and hopes expressed for the furtherance of the work of Christ in the world. The conference will engage the world unless it involves the Global Methodist Church. The Dakotas Annual Conference membership—by a lack of desire to approach or challenge the leadership on any of these points—made it clear that any reaching out in a catholic spirit will have to come from the Global Methodists.



Rev. Ross Reinhiller

So, for me, the best part of annual conference and my forced departure from the United Methodist denomination is that it is over! I left the conference with the words of Isaiah 10:1-3.



## Minnesota

The Minnesota Annual Conference met May 31-June 1 at the River's Edge Convention Center in St. Cloud, MN. After successful votes on disaffiliation, the following six churches have become part of the GMC as of July 1:

Akeley, MN / Lake City, MN (Redeeming Grace Community) / Sebeka, MN (Living Hope Family) / Windom, MN / Verndale, MN / Vining, MN (Hewitt Community)

## *Minnesota United Methodist Annual Conference*

The Minnesota Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church was held in St. Cloud, MN on May 31 through June 1. The theme of this year's conference was "Encounter. Transform. Respond. The Emmaus Experience." It was drawn on Luke 24:13-35. This post-resurrection story where everything has changed and the implications still seem a bit cloudy mirrors the time and space we are living as a church. We, like the two disciples, are on the road, asking deep questions, and trying to make sense of what it means to be a disciple of Jesus today. And we, too, are finding that we encounter Christ in transforming ways when we do.

Over the course of the two-day conference voting members in attendance at Annual Conference approved all pieces of legislation before them, including resolutions opposing assault-style weapons, addressing the Israeli detention of children, and supporting both a U.S. Regional Conference and the "removal of all discriminatory policies and harmful language related to sexual orientation" from the Book of Discipline.

One of the first orders of business on May 31 was the disaffiliation of churches from the Minnesota United Methodist Conference. Members were invited to come forward to speak to the assembly.

Pastor Wes Johnson from Living Hope Family Church of Sebeka was the only one to take the floor. He asked for the Minnesota Annual Conference to ratify the disaffiliation agreements for 14 Minnesota United Methodist Churches on May 31, 2023.

"I am a longtime member of this MN Annual Conference since I was three years old. I was baptized by a Bishop in the Nebraska Annual Conference. My dad was in school at the time, he was a Methodist and then a United Methodist pastor for many years in this Annual Conference. My grandfather was a Methodist pastor in Nebraska along with my uncle.

My name is Wesley, so I have a long heritage in Methodism. I remember coming to the Annual Conference for the first time as an actual delegate from my local church as a youth. I was on the Conference Council on Youth Ministries as a youth for one year which was the year we put together the UMYM ministry. Some of you will remember that. It was a long running ministry of this Annual Conference.



Rev. Wesley Johnson, pastor of Living Hope Family Church of Sebeka, gave a heartfelt plea for the ratification the agreement for 14 churches to disaffiliate from the MN UMC Conference.

My first introduction to the Board of Ordained Ministry was doing my Deacon's orders and then my Elder's orders, two separate ordinations at that time. I've had numerous experiences with many of you in this room over the years. I had such great ministry on the Board of Ordained Ministry for 13 years. I worked with a lot of the clergy who are here through the credentialing process.

One of the greatest memories for me is being able to come to Annual Conference with my dad. It was something that was very much a special bond between us. I remember the Annual Conference was home. I looked forward to meeting so many people. This was my church. I didn't have an on-going church otherwise. I remember having pastors tell me they tried whatever they could to not come to Annual Conference and it never made sense to me. I thought why? Why would you do that? To me it was always a special place, it was home. Sad to say it's no longer home for me.

One of the things I learned along the way about 11 years ago, the Lord strongly impressed upon me that this world is not my home and no institution, denomination, or any other thing of this world is my home. Where God is, is where I am to be and God showed me through that type of an experience that I needed to surrender all that I am and all that I have for God's purposes and plans and that means even my earthly associations.

And so a few years later one of those earthly associations that God made very clear that I needed to leave was the United Methodist Church. I needed to leave it in order for me to be able to do and be who God wanted me to be. That is what I have done with a variety of different things.

So, I ask you to ratify this agreement for these 14 churches and for a few of us pastors who are pastoring

them who are giving up our membership in this Annual Conference. Ratify it so that we can go forth and be in the hand of God, the hand that leads us and guides us, as we also leave you in that same hand of God. We are no longer members together. Those that I have shared so long with, so many ministries with, you will be my friends and will continue to be my friends, and I hope that we will not lose those relationships. So please ratify these documents.”

Wes Johnson was the only member to speak on the disaffiliation. After his moving statements, members ratified the terms of disaffiliation agreements made between the conference Board of Trustees and 14 local churches who have chosen to go a different direction from the Minnesota Annual Conference. After the vote, Bishop Lanette Plambeck asked Minnesota United Methodists to keep these congregations in their hearts and to pray that they may continue to live out their faith and serve as beacons of light and hope for all.

A break was then taken and the disaffiliating church pastors and voting delegates were asked to gather in the lobby while papers were signed, copies made and documents given to delegates. Members in that group were informed that they were welcome to stay for the rest of the conference but would no longer have voting privileges.



Bishop Lanette Plambeck shakes hands in parting with Rev. John C. Carpenter, pastor of Akeley Methodist Church, as the final disaffiliation papers were signed at the MN UMC Annual Conference.

Resolutions for Disaffiliations of Churches Item Title of Legislation Action

- 501 Disaffiliation of Akeley United Methodist Church, Akeley, MN
- 502 Disaffiliation of Central United Methodist Church, Verndale, MN
- 503 Disaffiliation of First United Methodist Church of Ortonville, MN
- 504 Disaffiliation of The United Methodist Church of Raymond, MN
- 505 Disaffiliation of The First United Methodist Church of Windom, MN
- 506 Disaffiliation of The Methodist Church of Hawick, MN
- 507 Disaffiliation of United Methodist Church of Hewitt, MN
- 508 Disaffiliation of Korean Evangelical United Methodist Church of Minnesota
- 509 Disaffiliation of Money Creek Methodist Church, Houston, MN
- 510 Disaffiliation of Olivet United Methodist Church, Robinsdale, MN
- 511 Disaffiliation of Salem United Methodist Church, Pipestone, MN
- 512 Disaffiliation of The Methodist Church of Sebeka, MN
- 513 Disaffiliation of Verndale United Methodist Church, Inc., Verndale, MN
- 514 Disaffiliation of Villard United Methodist Church, Villard, MN



## Nebraska

The Great Plains Annual Conference met June 7-10 at the LaVista Conference Center in LaVista, NE. After successful votes on disaffiliation, the following 44 churches have become part of the GMC as of July 1:

Arapahoe, NE / Arcadia, NE / Ashland, NE / Atkinson, NE / Barada, NE / Bassett, NE / Benkelman, NE / Burwell, NE (Calvary) / Cedar Hill, NE / Chappell, NE / Chester, NE / Cody, NE (Hunts Chapel) / Culbertson, NE / Curtis, NE / Curtis, NE (Grand Prairie) / Elsie, NE / Eustis, NE / Fairbury, NE / Fairbury, NE (Daykin) / Fairbury, NE (Endicott) / Falls City, NE (Bethel) / Farnam, NE / Giltner, NE / Gordon, NE (Clinton) / Hebron, NE / Holdrege, NE / Jamison, NE / Imperial, NE / Lewellen, NE / Louisville, NE / Max, NE / Maywood, NE / McCook, NE / Ogallala, NE (Faith) / Omaha, NE (Living Faith) / O'Neill, NE / Oshkosh, NE / Sidney, NE / Springview, NE / Trenton, NE / Trumbull, NE / Valentine, NE / Wallace, NE / Wauneta, NE

# NE GMC NEWS



**GLOBAL**  
METHODIST CHURCH

## LET'S CELEBRATE!!!!

Mark you calendars for a Celebration near you!  
AUGUST 26th 10:00-2:30.

For your convenience there will be FOUR locations all on the same day to gather, celebrate, and worship together.  
Imperial, Holdrege, Ashland & Valentine. YOU PICK!

**Nebraska Facebook page**

*Friends of Global Methodist  
Movement of NE*

### REPORT ON NE CHURCHES

Global churches (2 approval pending)	44
Churches with undeclared affiliation	22
Independent churches	12
*****	
Churches that disaffiliated in the first round	17
Churches that disaffiliated in the second round	59
New Plant Churches—	2

#### New Global John Wesley \$1,000 Plaque.

*John Wesley*  
**Global Methodist**  
**Men's Scholarship Endowment Fund**



*Determined To Be Doer's  
of The Word & Not Hearer's Only*

This plaque is available to anyone who donates one thousand dollars to the GMC Scholarship Fund. One can join two ways. The first way is with a thousand dollar donation or one can donate one hundred dollars a year for ten years!

Gifts should be sent to Randy Fleming, PO Box 410 Springfield, Ne. 68059 or by calling Randy @ 402-210-4885. Checks should be made out to Global Methodist Men's Scholarship Fund.

Scholarships will be awarded annually to young Men & Women entering Full-Time Christian Service from Nebraska.

-Randy Fleming





## Iowa

The Iowa Annual Conference met on May 23, 2023, and held a special conference to handle disaffiliations. At this online special conference, 83 churches were approved for disaffiliation. There will be another special conference held November 18, 2023, for those who needed more time for conversation. The following 48 churches have become part of the GMC as of July 1:

Alburnett, IA / Argyle, IA (Melrose) / Armstrong, IA / Britt, IA (Faith Bible) / Center Point, IA (Anchor Bible) / Clarinda, IA (Community) / Clarion, IA / Central City, IA / Davenport, IA (Christ Church) / Delhi, IA / Dubuque, IA (CenterGrove) Dubuque, IA (Grand View) / Dubuque, IA (Wesley) / Esterville, IA (Cornerstone) / Gifford, IA Gladbrook, IA / Grimes, IA / Harlan, IA / Harlan, IA (First) / Hedrick, IA (Community) Iowa Falls, IA (The Owasa) / Lansing, IA (Grace) / Lisbon, IA / Manchester, IA / Marcus, IA (Grace) Marion, IA (Christ Community) / Marion, IA (Marion Methodist) / Marion, IA (Prairie Chapel) Marshalltown, IA / Maxwell, IA / Mediapolis, IA (Mediapolis) / Mediapolis, IA (Sperry) New Sharon, IA (Lacey) / Ogden, IA (Grace) / Ollie, IA (Prairie View Church) / Richland, IA Sioux City, IA (Crescent Park) / Sioux City, IA (St. James) / Sioux City, IA (Trimble) Tiffin, IA / Walker, IA / Waverly, IA (Heritage) / What Cheer, IA (Delta) / What Cheer, IA West Branch, IA (Calvary) / Wyoming, IA



## Montana

Following the Mountain Sky Annual Conference, two churches in Montana have become affiliated with the GMC: Great Falls, MT (West Side) / Sun River, MT

## Wyoming

Currently there are no disaffiliations from Wyoming, partly due to the requirement by leadership to pay 50% of their assets in order to disaffiliate. Please pray for the churches of Wyoming.



## Churches and clergy can now apply online to become part of the GMC!

Go to the GMC website (<https://globalmethodist.org>).  
Scroll down and click on the link: Clergy and Church Applications.  
Pick "Clergy" or "Church" and enter your information.

### Camps Available in the Upper Midwest GMC:

#### **Red Rock** in Paynesville, MN

A multi-generational camp available.

Check out their link: <https://redrockcamp.org/>

#### **Prairie Bible Camp** near Lehr, ND

Address: 7840 50th Ave SE, Lehr, ND 58460

Phone: (701) 378-2540

Check out camp pics at:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/ndsu-libraries-grhc/albums/72157695248533062/>

#### **Camp Comeca** near Cozad, Nebraska

Check out their link: <https://comeca.camp/>

Iowa: **Finding Our Hope in Jesus** at Grinnell College, July 10-14, 2023



## *Looking at the Bigger Picture of the Global Methodist Church*

*Excerpt from "The Changing Shape of Methodism"*

*Thomas Lambrecht, Good News Magazine*

### **Disaffiliation Progress**

As of [the printing of this article], 1,836 congregations have disaffiliated from the UM Church in 2023. Added to the 2,017 that disaffiliated before this year, that means 3,853 churches have disaffiliated, representing 13 percent of all U.S. congregations.

It is estimated that at least another 1,100 congregations will complete the disaffiliation process over the rest of this year. It will probably be more than that, as some conferences do not publicize the number of disaffiliating churches until right before the annual conference meets to vote. Even with this conservative projection, nearly 5,000 churches total will have disaffiliated by the end of 2023, which represents 17 percent of all U.S. UM congregations.

Although exact numbers are not available at this point, it appears that at least 80 percent of disaffiliating congregations are aligning immediately with the Global Methodist Church (GMC). Others are remaining independent for a time while they discern their future and heal from the

wounds of disaffiliation. It is expected that many of these churches will eventually choose to align with the GMC. In addition, many new GMC churches are starting with core members of congregations that did not reach the required two-thirds vote to disaffiliate.

Based on these projections, the GMC should have well over 4,000 congregations and nearly 1 million members in the U.S. when the current wave of disaffiliations is completed and churches work their way through the discernment and application process to join the GMC.

## **A Global GMC**

Of course, the GMC is a global denomination not limited to the U.S. The very first congregational members of the GMC were in the Bulgaria Annual Conference, which officially joined the GMC on its launch date of May 1, 2022. Last Fall, Slovakia also joined the GMC. Since that time, Estonia and four conferences in Russia and Eurasia have voted to leave the UM Church to become autonomous, and they may become part of the GMC when that process is completed.

In the Philippines, UM congregations are moving to the GMC and new congregations have been planted there. One or more Philippine annual conferences are in the process of being formed. One of the first GMC church plants last year was Good News of Life Church, planted in Antipolo City, a part of Greater Manila.

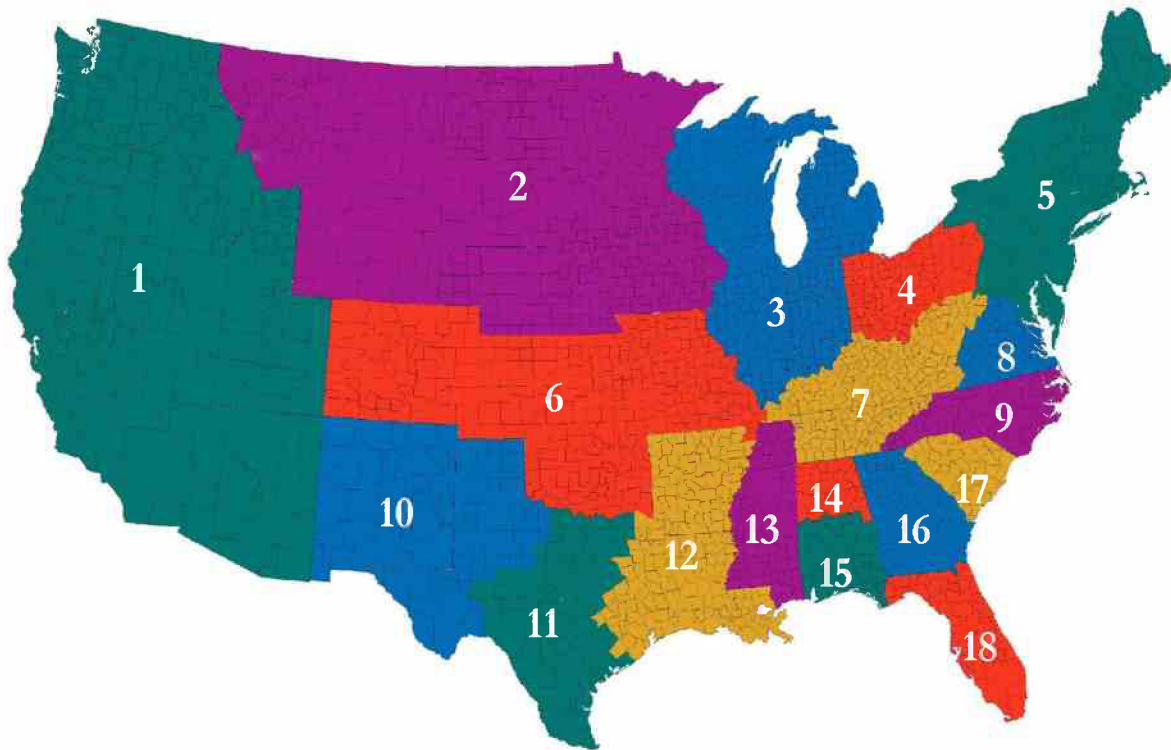
The GMC has been registered in the Democratic Republic of Congo for former United Methodists who have been evicted from their UM membership by some of the bishops there, and new congregations are being planted there. Preparations for registering the GMC in other countries of Africa are also taking place. It is believed that at least half of the African annual conferences will eventually join the GMC if the language in the Book of Discipline regarding marriage and ordination is changed. That would make African members the largest block of members in the GMC.

In addition, Methodists in other parts of Europe, Asia, and Latin America are exploring deeper relationships with the GMC as a way of linking with a theologically like-minded global denomination. Just this week, the Spain provisional district was formed with seven congregations centered around Barcelona. These explorations hold the potential for making the GMC a truly global denomination with a strong presence on each of five continents. Since the U.S. part of the GMC may not be a majority of the church, it will be an opportunity to explore what it means to be truly global, with voices from other parts of the globe giving leadership to the church and counterbalancing some of the “bad habits” U.S. Methodists have fallen into. There will be challenges and a learning process for all, but the end result promises to be a different kind of Methodist denomination that truly represents what the Kingdom of God will look like someday – people of every language, nation, and tribe!





# GMC US Regional Map



**Global Methodist Continental United States Provisional Regions Map**

1 West Region	2 Upper Midwest TCAT	3 Great Lakes PAC	4 Allegheny West PAC	5 Northeastern TCAT	6 Heartland TCAT
7 Mid South TCAT	8 Virginia TCAT	9 North Carolina PAC	10 West Plains PAC	11 Mid-Tex PAC	12 Eastern Texas PAC
13 Mississippi West Tennessee TCAT	14 North Alabama PAC	15 Alabama Emerald Coast Pac	16 Georgia PAC	17 South Carolina TCAT	18 Florida TCAT

***Newsletter Submissions***  
**Contact:**  
 John or Karen - [kkcar56@gmail.com](mailto:kkcar56@gmail.com)



**Check out:**

- The Upper Midwest GMC
- Dakotas Minnesota GMC Facebook
- GMC Clergy only Facebook
- Friends of the GMC Facebook
- The Global Methodist Church

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