

Upper Midwest GMC Newsletter

Eleventh Edition - February 5, 2024

Connecting for passionate worship, extravagant love, and bold witness

Tracie Ludeke Accepts Position Of Treasurer



GLOBAL
METHODIST CHURCH



I am Tracie Ludeke, the new Treasurer for the Upper Midwest Conference of the Global Methodist Church. I am from Holdrege, Nebraska and attend the Holdrege Methodist Church. After 31 years in banking, I now do all the bookkeeping for my husband and my electrical contracting business. I am so excited to serve as your Treasurer.

First, I want to express my gratitude for the generous support, both spiritually and financially, that has helped get our conference off the ground and running. We continue to develop, grow, and prosper for the work of God.

Jeff Pospisil is doing our bookkeeping; he has made a great video explaining our 2023 end-of-year financials that you can watch [here](#). The main information to know is that we had \$54,405 given to the Upper Midwest last year. Our expenses were \$41,141. This means we had \$13,264 going into 2024. The video will go into more detail. If you want the full 2023 report you can request that from Shanna at shannap@uppermidwestgmc.org.

In 2023, we had 72 of our conference churches give towards connectional funding. We will need to grow that number if we are going to accomplish the task of our conference, which is to lovingly walk alongside laity and clergy as they make disciples of Jesus Christ who worship passionately, love extravagantly, and witness boldly.

2024 connectional funding is 1% to the general Global Methodist Church and 2% to the Upper Midwest Conference. Again, from Jeff Pospisil's blog on connectional funding that I borrowed, here is an [online calculator](#) to help figure out your church's connectional funding. Enter your operating income, and it figures your connectional funding for you. Additionally, it details what to include and exclude in operating income and includes links to pay online (preferred) or the address to mail your check. If you need help you can again reach out to Shanna.

I hope you will join me in looking forward to continuing a great 2024 for the Global Methodist Church and the Upper Midwest Conference.

Meet Administrative Assistant Shanna Pinkerton

My name is Shanna Pinkerton, and I am the new Administrative Assistant for the Upper Midwest Conference of the Global Methodist Church.

My husband and I live in Springfield, OH, and have two adult children and three grandchildren. We attend a local church and are involved in worship and media ministries.

A year and a half ago, after over 20 years of working in a church office setting as an Office Administrator, I felt God calling me to something new, so I switched gears and ventured out as a "Virtual Executive Assistant" working from home.

God has blessed me tremendously in this venture and I am really enjoying serving and working with the Upper Midwest and each of you!



Attention Lay Ministers

The Upper Midwest Provisional Conference Board of Ministry is offering recognition of Certified Lay Ministers (CLMs) from the United Methodist Church. If you are a CLM and have joined a Global Methodist Church and would like to continue in CLM ministry, please contact:

Jodi Cataldo at jodi.cataldo@gmail.com.

If you want to become a Certified Lay Minister, please contact Jodi.

Moving Forward Together...



There is this pattern in the Sermon on the Mount where Jesus says, “You have heard it said..., but I say to you...” I believe Jesus was not trying to change the Old Testament teaching, but rather that he was speaking into our human condition. He was



speaking into our legalism and our desire for right and wrong answers. He was calling us to do more than just follow the letter of the law, but showing us the heart of God.

I feel a similar pattern in emails, phone calls, and text messages I get. We used to..., but what are we doing now? In our previous denomination, we knew the routine and the processes. Sometimes we knew them so well we could move through them without even thinking. We now have the opportunity to make adjustments. We can ask questions like, why did

we do it that way? Sometimes, we will see the wisdom, and sometimes, we may not see it. However, we get to search for God’s heart in the ways we shepherd, connect, and equip local churches for the mission of making disciples of Jesus.

I have personally learned over the years that I do not have all the answers. I appreciate being able to say, “I don’t know, but let’s find out.” Together, we can keep asking questions and search for God’s guidance and direction. Through it all, looking for the ways our conference connection can support and encourage local churches to reach people with the love and grace of Jesus. The main questions to me are: how does this support the local church, and how does it help them reach people for Jesus?

Thank you for your patience as we continue to create a conference in the Global Methodist Church that serves the local church. I pray God helps us to continue to find the best ways to shepherd, connect, and equip churches together.

In CHRIST,
Rev. James E. Parks
Upper Midwest President Pro Tem

P.S. We hope to have more details about our Annual Conference and the election of delegates to the Convening General Conference of the Global Methodist Church in our March Newsletter.



Global Methodist

ANNUAL CONFERENCE COMING SOON!

Save these Dates: June 13-15, 2024

We Want to Know! So we are taking a survey.
What topics would you like to focus on at our Annual Conference?

[Submit Your Response](#)

You can Reserve your Hotel Room at the Group Rate for the Upper Midwest Annual Conference now.

[Click Here for More Information](#)

Lenten Reflections...

For I determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and Him crucified.

1 Corinthians 2:2

If Paul knew anybody, he knew the Corinthians and they knew him. Imagine Paul's arrival in the city, all alone without a friend in the world. Maybe he was still beat up from Philippi, he was run out of any number of cities and had just defended himself and the faith in Athens. All he had was what he could carry, and my guess is most of that was tent making tools. There was no eloquence to his words and what he shared sounded foolish to the masses. No wonder he said he came in weakness, fear and even trembling. Despite this the message took hold, it flourished! What made the difference?

Success was not in the messenger but the message. The message is the testimony of God and the singleness of its purpose. "I determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and Him crucified," (1 Cor 2:2). Paul shared who he knows, Jesus, and what he did, sacrifice, and that made all the difference. The Holy Spirit transformed a decadent Roman colony into the thriving center of Christianity in southern Greece.

We are entering the season of Lent. Our hearts and minds focus. Like Paul, let us determine to know nothing except Jesus Christ, and Him crucified. We may not be wise or influential, our pedigree may not

stretch back to Plymouth Rock, but we know Jesus and what He did and does for us. That is enough or almost enough. What God did for us must be shared, our voice must be added to the Faithful so that those



who do not know will have the opportunity. We trust, the power is in the message not the messenger. So join me this Lenten season don't give up chocolate, don't show how sorry we are, instead proclaim in our voices and actions the power of Jesus Christ, the crucified!

*By: Ross Reinhillier, Vice President Pro Tem
Upper Midwest Global Methodist Conference*

Conference **prayer**

James and Ross have been praying for each pastor and church beginning in January 2024. We will pray for 4 churches each week, which should get us through everyone by the end of November. Shanna will reach out ahead of time for specific prayer requests. A prayer request form has been added on our Upper Midwest GMC website.

A Gathering In Minnesota...

On the 29th of January, Wesleyan Covenant Association(WCA) and Global Methodist Church(GMC) clergy and others, gathered for worship, fellowship, prayer and sharing at Pilgrim Methodist Church in Plymouth MN.

It was a time to hold up each other, share our excitement about the new things God is doing in each of our churches and in the fledgling denomination.

Worship was wonderful, the first time for some to worship together. Lunch hosted at the Sunshine Factory certainly brightened our day, but what really stood out was the celebrating together of our hopes and sharing our concerns in this time of transition.

We were encouraged by words from Rev. John Praetorius from the gospel of the disciple's boating struggle and Jesus' walking on the water. We listened to news shared of happenings in the conference and began to address, needs we have and those that the new GMC denomination will need to address.

It was particularly helpful to hear from those "around the edges" i.e. not yet in the GMC. How important it will be to sharpen focus around the theological and ministerial needs of both pastor and laity



who are watching closely what the new denomination does. Topics centered around baptism, soteriology, and connection within the conference and

the global church. The needs of ethnic and new church support were also brought up.

All are committed to the support of one another, and all were able to get back on the road before dark, hallelujah! To God be the Glory!

We are looking forward,

Rev. Bruce Kronen

*Minnesota Northwest Presiding Elder
Global Methodist Church*



NEW GMC STORE!!!!

It is now possible to purchase Global Methodist Merchandise through the new Global Store. Go to gmcstore.org. All profits realized from sales will be invested in the Ministerial Training Fund, a fund created to assist individuals aspiring to serve as clergy persons in the GM Church.

GM Church Reveals General Conference Theme

By Walter B. Fenton



The Global Methodist Church's Transitional Leadership Council has released the logo and theme for its convening General Conference: *So the World Will Know*.

"It is a line taken from Jesus' great prayer in the Gospel of John, chapter 17," said Mike Sims, founder and principal of the Winsome Company, a marketing and consulting firm that assisted in developing the theme.

"Beginning with the conjunction, 'so,' makes the theme a flexible phrase for applying the Gospel message on a worldwide scale: *So the world will know . . . God's love. So the world will know . . . salvation in Christ. So the world will know . . . grace and forgiveness*, and so forth. It is an all-encompassing call for Global Methodists to share Christ in a unified witness to the world."

Launched on May 1, 2022, with just 24 congregations in Bulgaria, the Global Methodist Church now has 4,336 local churches world-wide. Its convening General Conference will be held in San Jose, Costa Rica, September 20 – 26, 2024. The Transitional Leadership Council appointed 22 clergy and laity to serve on the Transitional Commission on the General Conference to develop all the plans for its critical first gathering, including recommending the Conference's theme.

"We entertained numerous ideas before we landed on *So the World Will Know*," said the Rev. Beth Ann Cook, the Commission's chairwoman and the Lead Pastor at St. Paul's Methodist Church in Poseyville, Indiana.

"Selecting a theme sounds easy, but when you stop and think how important it is to choose one that reflects our Church's aspiration, you realize how critical it is to slow down, to pray, to meditate on Scripture, and carefully discern the Holy Spirit's leading. I am very thankful the Commission members and our consultant were committed to that process."

A theme is just one of a myriad number of decisions the Commission is tasked with making. It is also charged with making recommendations for the Conference's daily agenda, collecting and collating petitions for consideration, determining the number of delegates that will attend the gathering, and making sure translation resources are available so all the delegates can fully participate in its deliberations.

"Our theme will begin appearing in English, French, Korean, Spanish, and Swahili, so GMC members all around the world can become familiar with it," said Cara Nicklas, the chairwoman of the Church's Transitional Leadership Council. "It is an elegant, simple, and inspiring theme that I am confident will be embraced by the people of the Church. We are thankful for the prayers and the time and effort the Commission and Winsome Company gave to developing the theme for convening General Conference."

GM Church delegates to the conference will come from provisional annual conferences in Bulgaria, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia-Kenya, the Philippines, Slovakia, Spain, South Africa, and the United States. And the Church continues to register in other countries in Africa, Asia, Europe, and the Americas with the hope that other delegates from these areas will be able to participate in the GM Church's convening General Conference.

The Rev. Walter Fenton is the Global Methodist Church's Deputy Connectional Officer.

DATES TO REMEMBER

- May 1, is the second anniversary of birth of Global Methodist Church
- The Upper Midwest Annual Conference is June 13-15 in Sioux City, IA
- September 20-26, 2024 will be the Convening General Conference will be in San Jose, Costa Rica.



More
Information



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