



# GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH UPPER MIDWEST CONFERENCE NEWSLETTER

Update

**May, 2026**

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## A Gift That Lasts Beyond Graduation: Sharing Hope With the Next Generation

*Rev. Ross Reinhiller, Upper Midwest Conference Vice Superintendent*

*"I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread." ~ Psalm 37:25*

May is the season of celebration. We begin the month celebrating our mothers and the women whose lives influence us. We end the month remembering those whose lives are complete on the earth and their memory is dear to us. But in between these celebrations there are a host of graduations.

(continued on next page)

Whether through the mail or on social media, the graduation announcements arrive. Some show the graduate as a little child and culminating with the senior picture. There is the young woman or man smiling at us surrounded by their accomplishments and activities. They look so hopeful and so young.

In the events of graduation with all its celebrations, that graduate does not know that they are leaving behind most of the things that defined them. No one in college or university is impressed with your letter-person's jacket. Awards from childhood are now part of their personal museum of cherished memories.

This graduation season, beside the Walmart gift card or Amazon certificate there is one more gift to give. Take a moment and write a letter or a note to the graduate not only congratulating them but also take the moment to share the hope that is in you. The gift that will mean the most is that note from someone who took the time to tell them why through life God makes a difference.

Sometimes we take for granted that the greatest gift we share is our personal experience and testimony. Tell them what Jesus means to you and why Spirit never disappoints. Let your graduate know what God does for you, what God will do, for the gift card will be spent but your letter will remain, and it will be read more than once.

God bless you as you bless your graduate. - Ross

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### **Building Bridges for the Next Generation and Multicultural Ministry**

*by Rev. WonGuen Lee,*

*Lead Pastor, Korean Evangelical Methodist Church of Minnesota*

Rev. WonGeun Lee currently serves as the lead pastor of the Korean Evangelical Methodist Church of Minnesota and is passionate about discipleship, multicultural ministry, and building bridges for the next generation

His ministry journey has stretched across Korea, China, Kyrgyzstan, and the United States



Since 2014, he has served as a missionary in Kyrgyzstan, ministering among local Kyrgyz and Chinese communities and planting Nazareth Church as a gospel-centered community. He also founded KCMA (Kyrgyzstan China Mission Association) to support and train Chinese missionaries serving throughout Central Asia.

Rev. Lee continues to partner with local leaders raised up in Kyrgyzstan through online mission ministry. Through biblical teaching, prayer, discipleship, and practical support, he seeks to bring spiritual and practical restoration to people's lives. Though borders are far apart, the connection of the gospel continues.

He studied video production at a community college in Beijing, China, and earned his Master of Divinity (M.Div.) from Methodist Theological University in Seoul, Korea. He later received his Doctor of Ministry (D.Min.) degree from United Theological Seminary. His doctoral project, "Biblical Stewardship and Financial Management Education for Nazareth Church in Kyrgyzstan," was recognized as the 2024 Outstanding Project in Church Renewal. He is committed to a ministry where the gospel is deeply connected to everyday life.

In Minnesota, Rev. Lee serves alongside Rev. Eric Shin to build a community where first-generation Korean immigrants, the next generation, and people from diverse cultural backgrounds can experience God's kingdom together through the gospel. He especially hopes that the Korean Ministry (KM) and the English Ministry (EM) will move forward together as two wheels advancing toward God's kingdom, beyond differences in language and culture. He is passionate about helping the next generation personally encounter Jesus and live out their faith as disciples in the world.

Rev. Lee is also committed to building relationships and partnerships with diverse churches throughout the Upper Midwest Annual Conference and the GMC. He hopes churches from different cultures and generations will work together in unity, reflecting the diversity and reconciliation of God's kingdom.

His ministry is not simply about running programs, but about walking alongside wounded hearts, immigrant loneliness, and the struggles of the next generation. Through the Word, prayer, community, and service, he hopes to become a channel of God's restoring grace.

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## Prayer Requests from Rev. WonGuen Lee

- Pray that KM and EM would grow together in unity as a healing and restoring community.
- Pray for God's wisdom as the church transitions to a new worship location.
- Pray for spiritual fruit and provision for the Kyrgyzstan online mission ministry.
- Pray for renewed strength, wisdom, and health for Rev. Lee and his family, and for God's healing grace over his wife's emotional and mental restoration.

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## Women's Ministry in the Upper Midwest

by Becky Heeren, Women's Ministry Team Leader  
**Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!**  
**Philippians 4:4 NIV** We are grateful for all of you who support Women's Ministry in your local churches and in our wonderful Upper Midwest Conference!

Did you enjoy reading stories from the Conference Mission Trip to South Africa written by Upper Midwest women? They were published in the past 3 newsletter articles and are now all posted on our Facebook page, so you can "like" and share them. Maybe you or someone you know would love an experience like theirs. You're in luck - there will be another opportunity to travel to Blessman International in November 2026. Check out news articles from the Upper Midwest Mission team for updates.

We are looking forward to ANNUAL CONFERENCE in Sioux City next month! And ... Rejoice! has something NEW planned! Believe us when we say we have a sweet welcome planned for all of you ; -)

Becky Heeren,  
Upper Midwest Conference Coordinator for Global Methodist Women's Ministries  
[womensministry@uppermidwestgmc.org](mailto:womensministry@uppermidwestgmc.org)

*"We rejoice in whom God has made us!"*

Check out our Facebook page at: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1011329353896024>

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## 2026 Upper Midwest Annual Conference

**June 19-21, 2025**  
at the Convention Center  
in Sioux City, IA



View James Parks video invitation at the following YouTube address:

<https://na01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fuppermidwestgmc.us18.list-manage.com%2Ftrack%2Fclick%3Fu%3D64124f1d5b1170491dea9f3cf%26id%3D16fb99f8b7%26e%3Dcf0d94bb0f&data=05%7C02%7C%7C58794c528b734ccff61d08de844570d4%>

## Registration

Registration is now open for the 2026 Annual Conference in Sioux City!  
The \$120 conference fee includes Saturday lunch and light snacks.  
Click on the next page for more details and to secure your spot.

## **Young Adult/Youth Discount**

For this year's conference, a \$60 discount code is available for young adult and youth participants. If you are 40 years old or younger, apply the code YA40 before completing your registration to receive the \$60 discount.

Registration: go to: <https://uppermidwestgmc.churchcenter.com/registrations/events/3465716>

## **Leadership Encounter**

### **What is Leadership Encounter?**

Not a "required" extra day of annual conference! Not a workshop, strategy session or meeting! NOPE!

Leadership Encounter has been designed by a half dozen pastors from several states in the Upper Midwest Conference in response to the concern raised by many in our 7 state Conference: **"we just don't know each other yet!"**

Growing our Conference and her ministries will happen at the speed of relationship and relationship takes time so the **Leadership Encounter** was conceived to enhance relationship growth. The timing is pragmatic. Global Methodists from Rushmore to the Mississippi plan to be in Sioux City in June, thus, the days preceding Annual Conference seemed the most economical regarding time and cost.

The event is designed for Pastors and lay persons to come together to "know and be known" to each other, make connections across the Upper Midwest Conference, be in fellowship, laugh, pray, worship and praise God for who and what we are.

Wesley Global Methodist Church in Sioux City will graciously host. On Wednesday, June 17th, the doors will open at 6:30 PM with the program beginning promptly at 7 PM. Thursday, June 18th, doors will open at 9 AM. Programming for lay and clergy will begin at 9:30 AM and continue through our *free to you* lunch, after which we ask lay people to excuse themselves as the clergy will gather for a special afternoon session from 1:30 to 4:30 for clergy connection.

Please sign up for the Leadership Encounter when you register for Annual Conference.

## **Annual Conference Hospitality Volunteer**

Help welcome and support attendees at Annual Conference by greeting guests, offering directions, and assisting as needed. A friendly presence and willing heart make all the difference—no experience required.

## **Hotel Accommodations**

A limited number of rooms are available at select local hotels with exclusive discounted rates for June.

**Courtyard by Marriott** 1-712-292-6893 Ask for Global Methodist Annual Conference Discount

**Hilton Garden Inn Riverfront** 1-712-261-6878 Ask for Global Methodist Annual Conference Discount

**DoubleTree by Hilton** 1-877-402-1980 Ask for Global Methodist Annual Conference Discount

**Marriott Riverfront** 1-402-284-4476 Ask for Global Methodist Annual Conference Discount

## Annual Conference Opportunities for Special Gatherings

If you or your team want to host a special gathering at Annual Conference this year, let us know, and we will reserve a meeting room for you! You, your team, or district handle the details, and we will promote it for you.

### Meeting time options:

- Thursday, Friday, or Saturday evening (districts, conference/ministry teams, etc.) can meet off-site at a restaurant or at the convention center. If meeting at the convention center for dinner, all food has to be ordered through the convention center, and you have to have contacted the Conference Planning Team at least a month before Annual conference for food ordering.
- Saturday morning gatherings. (You can simply meet, or you can offer a breakfast gathering with food ordered through the convention center and paid for by your team) You can also arrange to meet off-site and let us know where you are meeting, and we will promote that.

Contact Elizabeth Pierson to get your gathering on the schedule.

Elizabeth can be contacted at [sessions@uppermidwestgmc.org](mailto:sessions@uppermidwestgmc.org) or by calling 218-371-8352

## Video Sermon Resource for June 21, 2026 Coming Soon!

With our Annual Conference happening on a Sunday, we know many local churches need to find creative ways to have a sermon with their pastor away. Bishop Webb is preparing a video sermon that will be available for churches to use in place of a live message on Sunday, June 21. We hope your local congregations will be blessed by this resource.

## Breakout Sessions

We're excited to offer two breakout session times this year. (Friday, June 19, and Saturday, June 20 at 1:30pm). Whether you're interested in AI, Church Administration, Benefits, Bands, Connection, Discipleship, Multiplication, Missions or more, there's something for everyone. Check out the [Breakout sessions descriptions](#) at <https://www.uppermidwestumc.org/breakout-sessions> and choose the one that's right for you!

## Livestream

For those unable to join us in Sioux City, we're excited to announce that we'll be livestreaming the worship events from Annual Conference. Simply go to [the Upper Midwest YouTube Channel](#) to join us for these special services. Livestream will be at no cost. Go to:

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCeUq0W7V\\_b9fGnG\\_MEMo0w](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCeUq0W7V_b9fGnG_MEMo0w)

## Ordination Service

All are welcome to attend the Upper Midwest Conference Ordination Service on Sunday, June 21, 2026, at 9:00 am at the Convention Center in Sioux City, IA. This will be an exciting event for our ordinands and the Annual Conference.

If you are an ordained Global Methodist Church Deacon or Elder and would like to process during the Ordination Service, please bring your robe and a red stole. The clergy will line up at 8:20 am in Meeting Rooms 1/2 on the Main floor.

## Clergy and Spouse Appreciation Banquet

### *Clergy and Spouse Appreciation Banquet*

The Wesley Global Methodist Church of Sioux City, IA is hosting a Clergy & Spouse Appreciation Banquet as a way to bless the clergy and their spouses of the Upper Midwest Conference

☀️ *Thursday, June 18, 2026* ☀️  
*5:00 PM in our Dining Room*

*Please Note:*

*This special dinner is complimentary, but seating is limited to the first 150 registrants. Please be sure to register both the clergy member and their spouse.*

*Register Here:*

<https://uppermidwestgmc.churchcenter.com/registrations/events/3550793>

## *Disaster Response* UPDATE

### South Georgia Wildfires

Right now, families in Nahunta, Georgia, are trying to figure out what comes next after devastating wildfires tore through South Georgia and destroyed more than 100 homes and residential structures. Many families lost everything in a matter of hours, including their homes, belongings, vehicles, and sense of stability. Most did not have homeowner's insurance, and federal aid may not be available. But even in the middle of heartbreak, this community is showing incredible strength.

Neighbors are taking in neighbors. Churches are stepping up. People are doing everything they can to help each other survive and rebuild. **Our team is on the ground and committed to supporting these families over the next 12 months, not just in the immediate aftermath, but through the long road of recovery ahead.**

Right now, the greatest need is financial support. If you wish to provide financial support, here is the direct link. <https://thefaithresponders.org/donate>

## GLOBAL METHODIST ANNOUNCEMENTS



### A Month to Celebrate Mission and Movement

The **Kingdom Advancement Commission** resources local churches, annual conferences and the general church to fulfill the Global Methodist Church's mission to "make disciples of Jesus Christ and spread scriptural holiness across the globe," focusing specifically on:

[Evangelism](#)

[Church Multiplication](#)

[Mission Mobilization](#)

[Unreached Peoples Groups](#)

[Disaster Response](#)

The GMC desires to be a **missional movement** of people who are multiplying disciples of Jesus Christ throughout the earth who flourish in scriptural holiness as we worship passionately, love extravagantly, and witness boldly.

May is Kingdom Advancement Month in the GMC. Visit the **Kingdom Advancement web portal** by clicking the button below to learn more and explore the exciting resources available to you and your congregation.

Find out more at: <https://kingdomadvancement.globalmethodist.org>



## General Conference Information

### Proposed Episcopal Areas Released Ahead of 2026 Plenary

The Global Episcopacy Committee (GEC) of the Global Methodist Church has released proposed episcopal areas for the 2026–2032 sexennial ahead of the historic Plenary Gathering on May 30, 2026.

The proposed areas released now are preliminary and will not become official until approved by the Plenary Gathering.

The proposal was developed through extensive review, consultation, and delegation ranking data gathered during the discernment process.

The Global Episcopacy Committee shared that the proposed model is intended to best support the mission and growth of the Global Methodist Church worldwide.

The official list of episcopal nominees will be released on Friday, May 15, with additional nominee information and supporting resources to follow in the coming weeks.

Learn more by going to: <https://www.beautyofholiness2026.org/episcopal-elections>

## General Conference Website

As we look ahead to the 2026 Global Methodist Church General Conference, you won't want to miss the latest updates and resources being shared!

The **Beauty of Holiness 2026** website is your go-to destination for news, event details, registration information, and insights to help you prepare for this historic gathering of Methodists from around the world.

Visit [www.beautyofholiness2026.org](http://www.beautyofholiness2026.org) to stay informed, get inspired, and join the movement of spreading scriptural holiness across the globe.

## Prayer for General Conference 2026

**Please pray the following prayer points for the 2026 General Conference gathering of the Global Methodist Church:**

**MUCH PARTICIPATION** among our churches and annual conferences in the upcoming 40 Days of Prayer and Fasting for General Conference 2026.

*"If my people who are called by my name humble themselves, and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land." -2 Chronicles 7:14*

**GOD TO PREPARE** the hearts of our delegates, leaders, and volunteers who will be serving at General Conference 2026.

*"One day, as these men were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, 'Appoint Barnabas and Saul for the special work to which I have called them.' So after more fasting and prayer, the men laid their hands on them and sent them on their way." -Acts 13:2-3*

Please go to the following address to access May/June Prayer Guide for General Conference:

[https://irp.cdn-website.com4829cd2f/files/uploaded/2026-02-04\\_May\\_PrayerGuides\\_English.pdf](https://irp.cdn-website.com4829cd2f/files/uploaded/2026-02-04_May_PrayerGuides_English.pdf)

## MORE INFORMATION



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Subscribe at: <https://www.uppermidwestgmc.org/newsletter>



**Global Methodist Church**

**“Across the Globe” Newsletter Subscribe at:**  
<https://www.globalmethodist.org/connect>



**June 19–21, 2026**

Upper Midwest Annual Conference

**August 30–September 5, 2026**

General Conference, Johannesburg, S Africa

**November 12–24, 2026**

Conference Mission Trip to South Africa

**Full Calendar can be viewed at:** <https://uppermidwestgmc.churchcenter.com/calendar?view=list>



We want to celebrate the great things happening throughout our conference. Whether it’s happening in Districts, Conference-Wide, or in Local Churches - share how the Holy Spirit is moving in ministry around you. Fill out this simple form, and we’ll highlight these stories on social media for our Upper Midwest Conference. Fill out the following form: <https://form.jotform.com/242467999461171>

Upper Midwest Prayer Opportunities



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

**The Upper Midwest Conference  
Daily Noon Prayer**

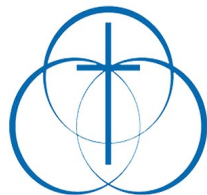
Can you imagine what would happen in the spiritual realm if we prayed the same prayer together at noon daily?

**Scheduled Zoom Prayer Meetings**

Please click the button below and let us know that you would like to join and we will send you the link.

**Monthly on the 3rd Tuesday**

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**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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