GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
UPPER MIDWEST CONFERENCE NEWSLETTER
Early Edition

October 2026

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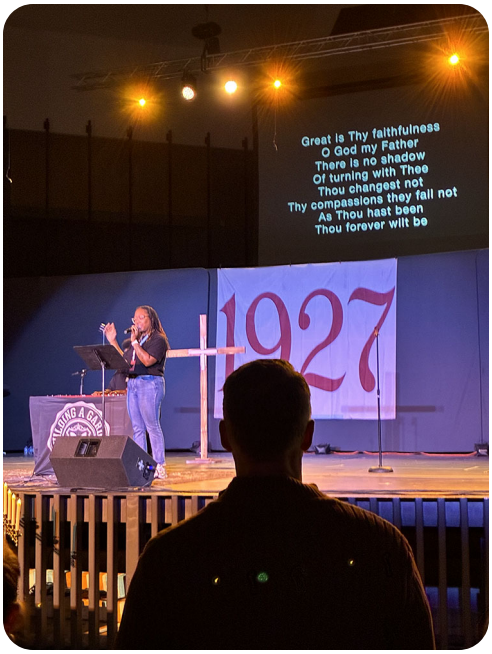
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1927 Church: Christ Is Enough

by Rev. James Parks,
Upper Midwest Conference Superintendent



I was blessed to attend the public launch worship service of 1927 on September 27. 1927 is a new Global Methodist Church plant in Des Moines, Iowa. A team of people have been praying, preparing, and moving toward the launch of this new church. Five Global Methodist churches from the surrounding area have also been praying with the team and offering resources and support.

We are still in a season of "Barn Raising," where local churches and individuals can come alongside 1927 and offer their prayers, resources, and encouragement.

The worship service was a beautiful mixture of ancient and modern. Candles flickered as we sang worship songs, received communion, spoke a creed, and prayed Wesley's Covenant







Prayer. Whole families worshiped together, intentionally without a separate children's church. In his message, Pastor Cam Scott compared us to the Colossians, reminding us that we still need to know that **Christ is enough**.

As I sat in that service, I found myself dreaming about the day when launch Sundays like this become a regular occurrence across our conference. We are growing in our Wesleyan roots of multiplication. The Holy Spirit is moving people and congregations to rally around making more room for more people who need the love and grace of Jesus.

I want to encourage you to focus on a Scripture that is at the heart of 1927. The name of the church comes from Psalm 27—the 19th book of the Bible, chapter 27. The final verse says:
"Wait for the Lord; be strong and take heart and wait for the Lord."

As I read that verse, something struck me. The Psalm tells us twice to "wait," but waiting doesn't seem like an activity that requires much strength or heart. If waiting simply means sitting still, why does the Psalm tell us to be strong and take heart?

I believe the answer is that waiting on the Lord is not passive. It is preparation.

When we wait for the Lord, He is strengthening us. He is giving us courage. He is preparing us so that when it is time to move, we are ready to give all that God has given us.

Sometimes we are slow to move when God calls us. We procrastinate.

Other times, we move before God's timing. We rush ahead in our own strength, and our own strength will never be enough.

But the invitation of Psalm 27 is different: Wait for the Lord. Be strong. Take heart. And then, when God says move, move.

That is my prayer for our conference.

I want to encourage every person and every church in the Upper Midwest Conference to spend time waiting on the Lord. Ask Him to strengthen you. Ask Him to give you courage. Ask Him to show you where He is preparing you to be activated in multiplication.

Maybe God is preparing you to plant a church in an urban area like Des Moines. Maybe He is preparing you to help plant a church in a rural community that needs a gathering place for the grace of Jesus. Maybe He is preparing you to support 1927—or another church plant—with your prayers, your resources, your people, or your presence.

Whatever God is preparing you for in your waiting, be ready to move when He says it is time.

Because when we move in God's strength and God's timing, we make room for more people to discover what the people of 1927 are proclaiming: **Christ is enough**.

Prefer to Watch Instead?

We're excited to offer a new way to experience Pastor James' newsletter article!

In addition to reading the article above, you can now watch him share a similar message in a video format. Whether you're on the go, prefer listening, or simply

enjoy hearing the message directly from Rev. Parks, this new option makes it even easier to stay connected.

We hope this additional format helps you engage with the encouragement, vision, and updates shared each month.

Click below to watch this month's video message on YouTube.



Watch on Our YouTube Channel Here: https://youtu.be/7X9eetqUh_w

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Want to Share the Message With Your Congregation?

If you would like to share the video message with your congregation and prefer a cleaner viewing experience with minimal distractions click below and check out the video on our NEW Vimeo Channel.

Watch on Our Vimeo Channel Here: https://vimeo.com/1233090532?share=copy&fl=sv&fe=ci

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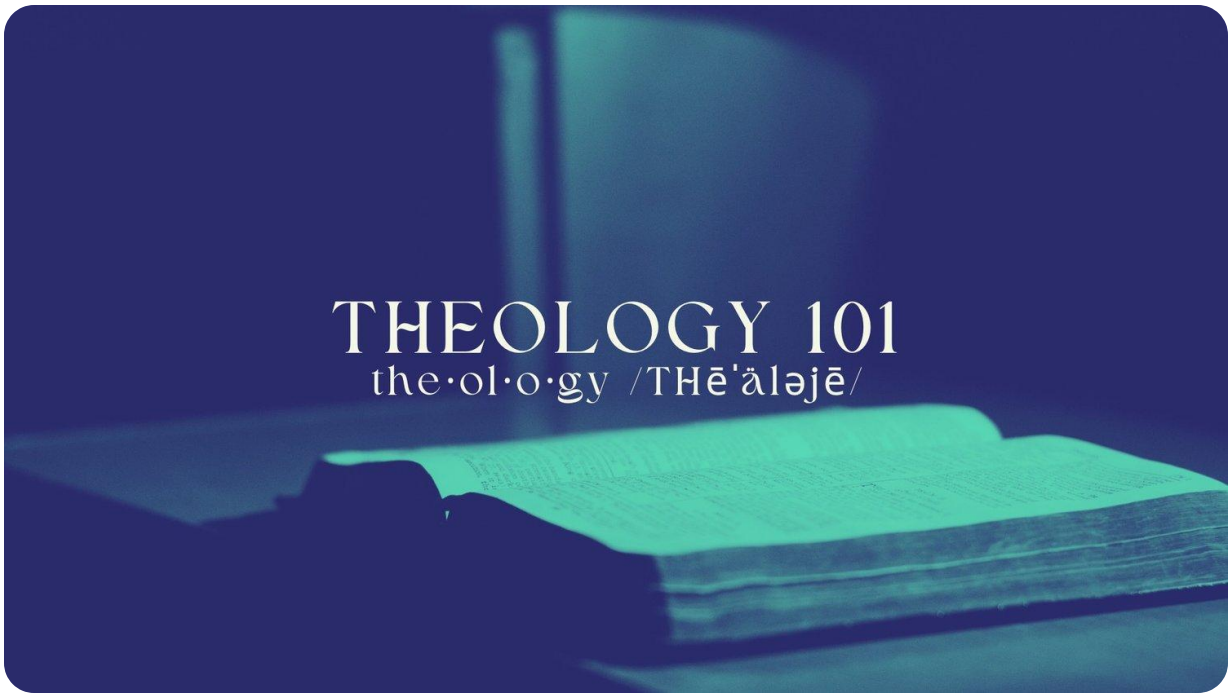


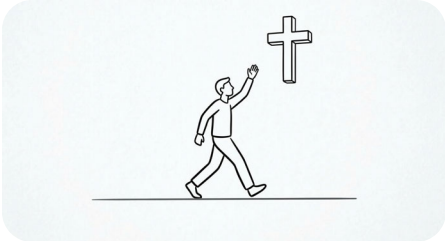
The Prayer Shepherds at Grand View Methodist

by Pastor Jen Zoller, Conference Prayer Team

What a blessing it is to hold up someone else's name before the Lord so that they might be blessed, healed, or experience God's never-ending love in some way. The Prayer Shepherds at Grand View Methodist in Iowa do just that every week, and we want to tell you about what we do, how we are growing, and inspire you to step closer to Jesus to help make your church a house of prayer.

Read the Full Article Here:
https://www.uppermidwestgmc.org/post/the-prayer-shepherds-at-grand-view-methodist





Doctrines AND Discipline

Rev. Dr. Travis Stevick
Pastor, Grace Methodist Church, Marcus, IA
YouTube.com/tstevick1
travisstevick.substack.com

One of the things that has shaped the early days of the Global Methodist Church is a commitment to classic Christian orthodoxy and sound doctrine. That is to say, it is crucially important to make sure that our beliefs are correct, by which we mean in alignment with the words and spirit of the Holy Scriptures. In spite of what news organizations may have claimed, the key issue for all the Global Methodist leaders that I know was always Biblical authority and the importance of doctrine. It has been the focus of many articles in the past few years, and it is indeed crucial.

Read the Full Article Here:
https://www.uppermidwestgmc.org/post/doctrines-and-discipline

Upper Midwest Conference...
We Really ARE Better Together!

Upper Midwest Missions Team

The Wells in South Africa Update

Blessman International wasted no time in putting our wells donation ($170,000!) to work, with the first of our 13+ wells being drilled on September 1st at a day care center in Limpopo, South Africa. Just one week later, 12 of us from the Upper Midwest Conference were onsite to witness the second borehole being drilled deeper and deeper to reach clean water for another center and its surrounding community.

In addition to the well being drilled, we gave about 14 women two new clean containers each to soon carry water from the well to their homes. The old containers they exchanged for the new ones were... "filthy... disgusting... full of mold and crud." It's hard to imagine even cooking with that water, let alone drinking it!

Several churches at Annual Conference made plans to raise funds this Fall to add to the total. Note that donations will be accepted until December 31, 2026, so it's not too late to share in this joy of making a difference. Thank you for YOUR witness for Jesus!





The Mission Experience at General Conference

The Upper Midwest Conference also made a difference in many lives in the Johannesburg area through a financial donation from the Conference and several volunteers' participation during the Mission Experience. Through the Mission Experience that took place simultaneously during General Conference, 385 volunteers served 5 local Global Methodist Church communities. They served 4950 hot meals, and more than 450 people received health checks and hygiene kits in addition to their meal. There was training for laity and clergy and daily Christian discussions. We prayed for God to send 100 children to the 5-day Children's Bible Camp in Soweto. God sent 600-850 children daily to receive a meal and experience the love of Jesus! It doesn't get any better than that!

Meanwhile, this summer many of our local churches sent mission teams throughout the world doing various kinds of ministry. We really ARE better together!

"But (we) will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon (us). And (we) will be (His) witnesses, telling people about (Him) everywhere– in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."
- Acts 1:8

Missions Facebook Page: https://www.facebook.com/groups/2013769506210046

Email Missions Team: missions@uppermidwestgmc.org

Give Financially to Missions: https://uppermidwestgmc.churchcenter.com/giving



To Which Are We Called: Comfort or Conversions?

Upper Midwest Jethro Project Team

Shortly following the hope- and joy-inspiring General Conference, a handful of us from across our previous connection who spent ourselves and yearned for exactly these moments gathered on Zoom. We affirmed the great leadership of our delegation, and our hearts are saturated with optimism for what the Global Methodist movement is becoming in the world.

UPPER MIDWEST ANNOUNCEMENTS

GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
UPPER MIDWEST CONFERENCE



When we gathered in June, we voted to hold next year's Annual Conference in Aberdeen, South Dakota. Since then, our Conference Planning Team has been working to prepare for our time together and has spent time in Aberdeen connecting with the church, hotels, and community.

As we worked through the details, we discovered that hotel availability in Aberdeen will be very limited because of a large construction project in the area. Hotel costs are also higher because of the demand. We believe this would make things unnecessarily difficult for us to gather in Aberdeen.

Because of that, the Conference Planning Team and Conference Leadership Council have decided to **move our 2027 Annual Conference back to Sioux City, Iowa.**

We are disappointed that we won't be gathering in Aberdeen next year, but we have not given up on the idea. We hope to have Annual Conference in Aberdeen in a future year when the construction project is completed and lodging is more readily available.

Our desire is always to make Annual Conference a time when we can come together, worship, encourage one another, conduct the business of the Conference, and celebrate what God is doing among us. We believe returning to Sioux City will help us do that well in 2027.



2026 Charge Conference Forms Are Now Available!

Good News! The forms for this year's Charge Conference are now available online. You can find them at: https://www.uppermidwestgmc.org/charge-conference

Please download the forms you need, and **SINCE IT IS A YEAR OF GENERAL CONFERENCE AND WE WANT TO VERIFY ALL INFORMATION, PLEASE FILL IN ALL FORMS COMPLETELY** and submit them within a week after your Charge Conference. Schedule your Charge Conference with your Presiding Elder by the end of November. If you have any questions or need assistance, your Presiding Elder can assist you.

Thank you for your leadership and faithful service as we prepare for this important work together.

In CHRIST,
James Parks

Plan to Attend Exponential Central 2026

by Rev. Zach Kingery, Conference Multiplication Team Leader

The Upper Midwest Multiplication Team is gathering a group to attend Exponential Central, November 10-12, 2026, at Community Christian Church in Naperville, Illinois.

Exponential is a leading multiplication-focused ministry that equips churches and leaders across denominational lines. This year's conference theme is "Multiplier: How Healthy Leaders Create Lasting Impact" with inspiring speakers like Carey Nieuwhof, J.D. Greear, Will Chung, and Derwin Gray.

Through main sessions, practical workshops, conversations with other ministry leaders, and optional pre-conference intensives, participants will be equipped and encouraged to multiply disciples, develop spiritual leaders, and reproduce churches. **Bring your church leadership, young adults, and teenagers - this is not a clergy only kind of event, it is for disciplemakers!**

Attending Exponential together is an opportunity to strengthen a culture of disciple-making and multiplication in your congregation and throughout the Upper Midwest Conference as we rediscover the multiplying DNA that has been part of the Methodist movement from its beginning.

The Multiplication Team will purchase the tickets together in order to receive a bulk discount. **Email us if you are interested because we may have extra tickets.**

Limited funds are also available to help participants with travel expenses. More information about tickets and possible travel assistance is available by contacting

the Multiplication Team.

To join the Upper Midwest group or request more information, email multiplicationteam@uppermidwestgmc.org

Conference information and the complete schedule are available at exponential.org/central-2026

We would love to have you join us in Naperville!



Certified Lay Ministry Information

The Upper Midwest Conference's Certified Lay Ministry (CLM) program has open enrollment to join at any time during the year. This program is for professing members (for at least 2 years) who are in lay leadership within their church, leading a church as a lay person, or are called to further their calling to join in leadership. You will learn more about your calling, understanding the church, Bible study, mission, evangelism, and more! Each class is 1 day and may include pre-work before or homework after the conclusion of the class. Upon completion of the coursework and other requirements, you would be commissioned as a CLM at the next Upper Midwest Annual Conference.

You'll find more information about the program and the registration form here: https://www.uppermidwestgmc.org/certified-lay-ministry

If you have any further questions, please reach out to the CLM Committee here: **certifiedlayministry@uppermidwestgmc.org**





GLOBAL METHODIST ANNOUNCEMENTS



Methodist Roots:

Assembly of Bishops Teaching Series

Methodism at its best is nothing more and nothing less than vital Christianity. As John Wesley said, it is the religion of the Bible, the religion of the early church, and the religion of the Church of England. We as Global Methodists want to embrace the best of our heritage and tradition. But that means we need to both remember it and understand it.

In Methodist Roots, a special teaching series with our Assembly of Bishops, you'll discover the history of Methodism and understand how key features of the faith influence the church today.

Start by watching the Methodist Roots video. This video was filmed in the United Kingdom and features significant Wesleyan sites that connect us to our Methodist heritage. After watching the video, use this study guide to dive deeper into the topics with your church, small group, or in your personal devotional time. Throughout the series, you'll also learn about important and sacred places that serve as a reminder of God's faithfulness and calling. Each week, you'll experience snippets of these significant sites – from Wesley's Chapel in London to Charles Wesley's home in Bristol.

Watch Methodist Roots Here: https://www.globalmethodist.org/methodist-roots

Download the Study Guide Here: https://irp.cdn-website.com/1876eae9/files/uploaded/ENGLISH_2026-08-07_MethodistRoots_StudyGuide_v2.pdf

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Registration Is Open!

Register Here:
https://us.list-manage.com/T_ooW543Nel?e=c034ddcc43&c2id=8dcdb9f0f4348ecfaa578bda30e36f7d

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2027 Insurance Rates

The Finance, Administration, Pensions and Benefits Commission has been working closely with GuideStone to review rates and plan options for the coming year. For the past several years, we have worked diligently to keep rates as stable as possible for our clergy and local churches. For 2027, however, GuideStone's underlying medical insurance rates reflect an approximately **12% increase** over 2026.

The **Health Choice 1000 (HC1000)** plan will no longer be available. Participants currently enrolled in HC1000 would transition to **Health Choice 2000 (HC2000)**. While HC2000 carries a higher deductible, it also provides a lower premium structure.

The 2027 plan comparison ch rt wi be added to the GMC website as so n as p ssible.

Monthly Rates for Medical Plans

Effective January 1, 2027

Medical Plan	Coverage Tier	Total Monthly Rate	Pastor Monthly Rate (GuideStone via EAP)	Church Monthly Rate (GuideStone via EAP)	Local Church Monthly HSA Rate
Health Choice 2000	Employee	$1,112.33	$88.22	$1,024.11	n/a
Health Choice 2000	Employee + Spouse or Employee + Child(ren)	$2,113.42	$182.25	$1,931.17	n/a
Health Choice 2000	Employee + Family	$2,892.05	$258.65	$2,633.40	n/a
Health Choice 5000	Employee	$1,036.40	$12.30	$1,024.11	n/a
Health Choice 5000	Employee + Spouse or Employee + Child(ren)	$1,969.16	$37.99	$1,931.17	n/a
Health Choice 5000	Employee + Family	$2,694.65	$61.25	$2,633.40	n/a
Health Saver 2000	Employee	$1,149.60	$125.50	$926.58	$97.53
Health Saver 2000	Employee + Spouse or Employee + Child(ren)	$2,194.00	$262.83	$1,736.10	$195.07
Health Saver 2000	Employee + Family	$2,930.46	$297.06	$2,438.33	$195.07
Health Saver 4000*	Employee	$1,024.11	$-	$907.46	$97.53 + $19.12
Health Saver 4000*	Employee + Spouse or Employee + Child(ren)	$1,931.17	$-	$1,724.16	$195.07 + $11.94
Health Saver 4000*	Employee + Family	$2,633.40	$-	$2,359.38	$195.07 + $78.95

There are several other important updates for 2027:

- **Dental rates will decrease 13.5%**.
- **Vision rates will decrease 5.4%**. GuideStone has discontinued the Standard Plus Vision option, and two vision options will be available for 2027.
- **Disability, life and accident rates will remain unchanged**.
- For the first time, **annual conferences will have the opportunity to include eligible conference staff in the GMC insurance plan.** Participation will be determined on a conference-by-conference basis, and additional information will be provided to help conferences consider this option.

Open enrollment will take place October 15 through November 12.

We recognize that insurance changes naturally generate questions, particularly when they affect household budgets and healthcare decisions. Our goal is to communicate these changes transparently and provide the information and support you need to understand your 2027 options.

Please visit the **Benefits & Insurance** page for updated rates and information about benefits.

View Rates Here:
https://6x7ieqbbb.cc.rs6.net/tn.jsp?f=0014CwjiYLe6dZsuxKWgxyoXYBEWVianEAyUQgakcb_HjdTy7F7HGlGbzNns1X-DaTbucklzJMh7LI-QpKbJNn0RLNXBP6hur0pbkpadB68-dcFuXmSFxDCbyBBjawBxJqJtpmrsnyGnfsXjn_Hz9Y4YWDbckCaJyvduZLtqUS8PhhizC_atbWZdtGja3gfHR1ApdW9d7BwnstO7cggFWYQpQ==&c=H6GFvhvQ54IcFTats1pqUJVra6yl4hHaR_wttqfBuGjQmIkFW75Bgg==&ch=wUzf6nRs6Wx4nVOy_5Wx1D11PuzO0aRgjDdaKmSTaoFHEftcV5pwKg==

Change to the Compensation Base used for Retirement Contribution Calculations

At the recent General Conference, Petition 1172 was adopted, removing the following sentence from ¶ 443.4.e of the "Book of Doctrines and Discipline":

“Housing shall not be considered as part of compensation or remuneration except to the extent provided for in denominational pension and benefit plans.”

As a result of this legislative change, the denominational offices will no longer be able to provide a standardized calculation of the total compensation or contribution base used to determine clergy retirement contributions and disability benefits.

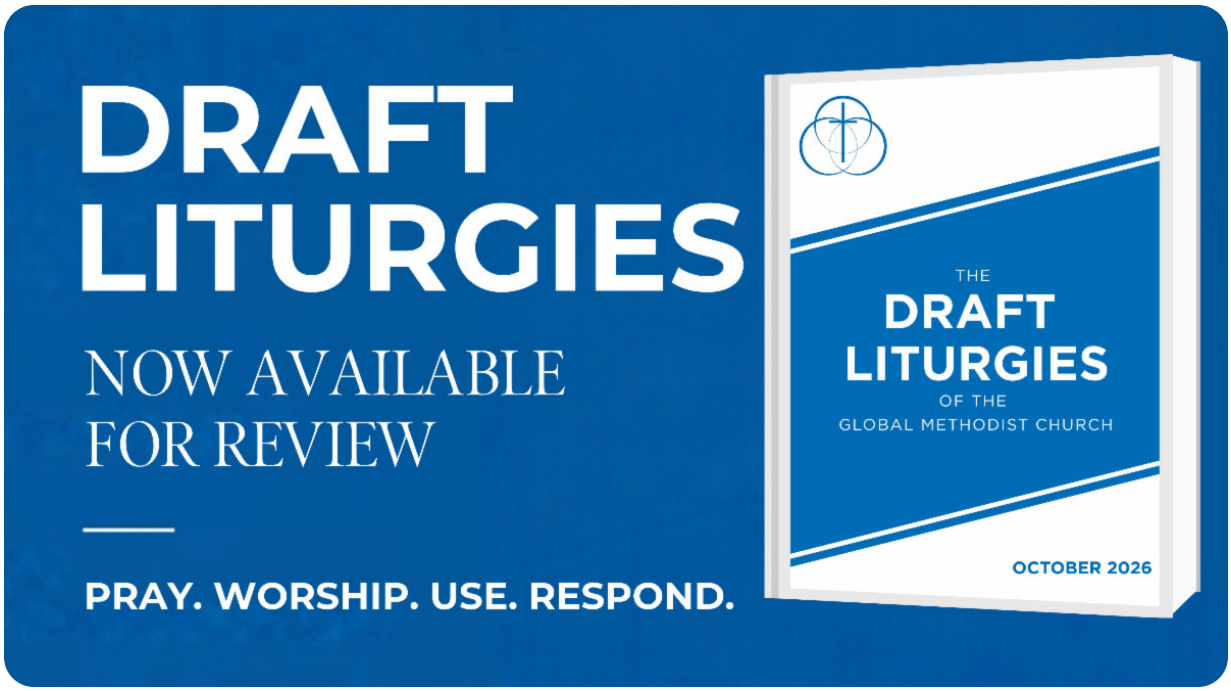
While there is nothing in the new "Book of Doctrines and Discipline," which has not yet been published, that would require a denominational retirement plan to include housing or a housing allowance as part of the retirement contribution calculation, there is also nothing that prohibits its inclusion. With the removal of the language that previously addressed this issue, the **denominational office cannot determine on behalf of an annual conference what compensation should be included in its retirement contribution base**.

Therefore, **local churches should contact their annual conference office** for guidance regarding their conference’s policy and the appropriate calculation to use for clergy retirement contributions.

Consistent with this change, the denominational office will no longer provide the **Retirement Contribution Worksheet** or the **Clergy Compensation Form**. Each annual conference will need to provide its churches with the appropriate guidance and calculation methodology based upon the policy adopted by that conference.

Have questions?

If you have any questions or need to speak to someone on our Benefits Team, please email us at **benefits@globalmethodist.org**.



You're Invited to Review the Draft Liturgies of the Global Methodist Church

The Global Methodist Church holds the conviction that the liturgical witness of the Church is central to our life together in faith. Liturgy leads the Church in doxology, or "right praise," in

response to God's mighty acts of salvation in Jesus Christ. It is vital because it both guards and teaches our doctrine and unites us with the communion of saints from every tribe, tongue, and nation, gathered around the throne in praise of the Triune God through the power of the Holy Spirit.

At its core, liturgy is the Church's communal prayer and conversation with God. We believe that our practices of prayer shape what we believe, and what we believe shapes how we live as faithful followers of Jesus. In light of this, **we are excited to release the Draft Liturgies of the Global Methodist Church** as a means of honoring Christ in our mission to spread scriptural holiness across the globe. **Today officially begins a three-month review period to collect feedback from the general church.** A final editing process will begin on January 1 with publication in 2027.

The Liturgy Task Force of the Connectional Council began work over a year ago to identify and develop liturgies most needed by pastors. The writing team has been dedicated to following the leading of the Holy Spirit by upholding the liturgical integrity of the Church in conversation with our doctrinal commitments as Wesleyans. These liturgies reflect a commitment to recovering our Wesleyan heritage through the *Book of Common Prayer* while remaining flexible enough to serve diverse global contexts. **To support participation across our global connection, the Draft Liturgies are available for review in all six official languages of the Global Methodist Church. The Draft Liturgies of the Global Methodist Church include the primary services that** pastors and church leaders use in everyday ministry. We recognize that many additional liturgies could be included in the future, but this collection provides a place for us to begin together as a denomination.

This resource has undergone a global consultation process involving practitioners and ministers from around the world. It has been reviewed by leaders across the denomination, and **now it is time for the Church to use these liturgies in their local contexts and provide feedback.** We pray that these liturgies will faithfully serve Christ and the Global Methodist Church by the power of the Spirit, to the glory of God the Father.

In Christ,
Rev. Dr. Tesia L. Mallory
Chair, Liturgy Task Force
The Connectional Council

Feedback will be accepted through December 31, 2026.

Review the Draft Liturgies

Access the Draft Liturgies Here:

https://6x7ieqbbb.cc.rs6.net/tn.jsp?f=001jKB9g5mLPFdYlQqfrBGhBrdPrnuueReRTHJSYJ45QLsKNeutRwLR5Q-XJPVU4Hqv7BAjguLmJALnjG-hpsjX9L8U1neuBcUzz1UQTCahYikPZzs6QUcRAmQbAsrLVkA_Yv_7QxDGN9KAGXqFVNqlwsbkpczsfDmcCUcw5eTwXeFojnJsTe9F2g==&c=CekBKUt6YILlPAhs9StNj9p-HG0B4s_bCha18_rduhsl_8GDPoijuQ==&ch=yN3xXUMWMJeaU5ZZthxVY0mtUyC8Dvmtzyc0LSAn0aP0YmGr80sJyg==

Submit Feedback Here:

https://6x7ieqbbb.cc.rs6.net/tn.jsp?f=001jKB9g5mLPFdYlQqfrBGhBrdPrnuueReRTHJSYJ45QLsKNeutRwLR5Q-XJPVU4Hqv2byrZwkWfjGncDd1itiz4llC7SrZVwaznQ7015CvK-HhNiow_FP7EFWPxxe-nOBqhqM1wvBEkH0uOn8HXNUMaslCX6Xezc3SgBRnPRXgjK4=&c=CekBKUt6YILlPAhs9StNj9p-HG0B4s_bCha18_rduhsl_8GDPoijuQ==&ch=yN3xXUMWMJeaU5ZZthxVY0mtUyC8Dvmtzyc0LSAn0aP0YmGr80sJyg==

Be the First to Know!



Sign up for our Upper Midwest Newsletter



Global Methodist Church "Across the Globe" Newsletter

Upper Midwest: https://www.uppermidwestgmc.org/newsletter
Global Methodist Church: https://globalmethodist.org/connect/

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

Don't miss out on the latest updates, inspiration, and more—delivered straight to your inbox. Sign up now!

Important Dates

Share Your Story



November 12-24, 2026
Conference Mission Trip to South Africa

June 11-13, 2027
Annual Conference in Sioux City, IA

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.

https://form.jotform.com/242467999461171

Upper Midwest Prayer Opportunities



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?
Join Us and Let's Find Out!



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 at 7:00 PM (CST)

https://www.uppermidwestgmc.org/prayer

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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