GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
UPPER MIDWEST CONFERENCE

Update NEWSLETTER

November 2026

What's In This Issue:

Annual Conference Inspiration:

- Give Thanks by Rev. Ross Reinhiller, Vice Superintendent
- God Has Been Faithful Every Step of the Way by Rev. Guillermo Bongolan, Pastor Springville Methodist Church in IA
- Women's Ministry in the Upper Midwest by Becky Heeren, Women's Ministry Leader

Upper Midwest Announcements:

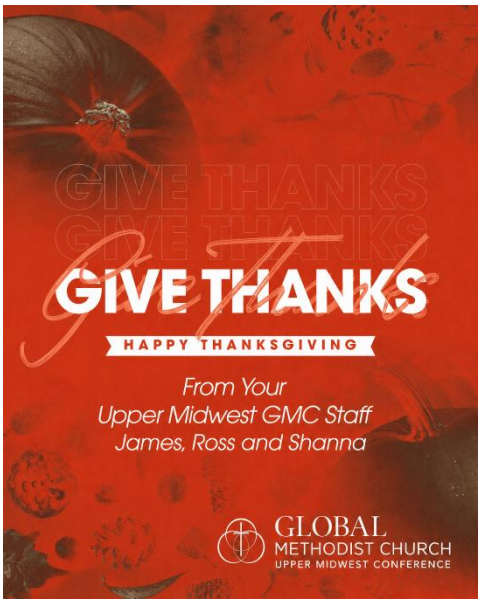
- Prayer of Thanksgivng on Thanksgiving Day
- Advent Prayers
- Announcing Presiding Elder Changes
- Save the Date for 2027 Annual Conference
- 2027 Annual Conference Choir & Worship Team Invitation
- 2026 Charge Conference Forms Are Available!
- Exponential Global 2027
- Meet Your Conference Leaders

Global Methodist Church Announcements:

- Beyond These Walls Early Bird Registration Extended!
- You're Invited to Review the Draft Liturgies of the Global Methodist Church
- Subscribe to Across the Globe: The Podcast

More Information:

- Sign Up for the Upper Midwest and Global Methodist Newsletters
- Important Dates To Remember
- Bold Witness: Submit Your Story!
- Upper Midwest Prayer Opportunities





Give Thanks

by Rev. Ross Reinhiller, Upper Midwest Conference Vice Superintendent

Every November my heart is overwhelmed with thoughts and expressions of thanksgiving. Paul reminds us that thankfulness is the will of God in every situation of our lives. This feeling is more than a one-day affair of turkey and cranberries. It is the constant of our lives.

Thankfulness is looking beyond the circumstance and seeing the source of our gratitude. Paul, when writing to the Thessalonians already lived through many events that if given a choice he would have avoided. Yet here he is reminding the Thessalonians and us that the will of God in Christ Jesus is the constant awareness that Christ Jesus is with us.

We are not thankful that we successfully weathered a storm, rather we are thankful that God is there with us in the storm. We do not live as those who have no hope going from event to event as best as they can. We know that “when we are weak, he is strong” (2 Corinthians 12:9,10).

So join me in this Thanksgiving season with a heart full of the presence of the Lord.
Every day and in all things give thanks.



God Has Been Faithful Every Step of the Way

As I look back on my journey from the NWMin PAC in the Philippines to the Upper Midwest Annual Conference of the Global Methodist Church, I can truly say that God has been faithful every step of the way.

I have been blessed with a caring, understanding, and encouraging church family at Springville Methodist Church in Springville, Iowa. Being the first Asian pastor appointed to a mostly white congregation brought challenges, especially with language and cultural differences. I remember joking, "Either you adjust to my Filipino English, or I adjust to your American English!" We laughed together, but we also learned to understand and love one another. What united us was not our skin color or accent, but our shared faith in and service to Jesus Christ.

During our church's disaffiliation, I faced a personal health challenge that caused me to reflect deeply on my life, my calling, and the time God has given me. In the midst of uncertainty, one prayer remained in my heart: "Lord, how do You want me to use the years You have given me?"

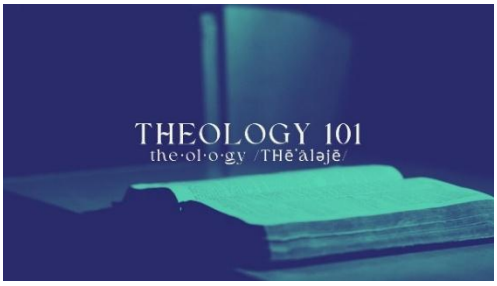
God placed a vision in my heart to help establish a Prayer Mountain ministry in the Philippines, where I had previously served, and to start a worshiping congregation in the southern part of the country. In 2024, God opened the door for mission work in Bukidnon through Springville Methodist Mission. We began Bible studies, distributed Christmas gifts to children, and provided school supplies to students. These may seem like small beginnings, but I believe God works through small acts of faith and obedience. Pastor Mike Sells has also been a tremendous supporter of this mission endeavor, and I am grateful for his encouragement.

Recently, I received encouraging news about my health, and I am thankful for God's sustaining grace throughout this journey. This experience has reminded me that as long as God gives us life, He can continue to use us for His purposes. We may not know what tomorrow holds, but we can trust the One who holds our future.

As I continue serving in Iowa and supporting mission work in the Philippines, my prayer remains: "Lord, let the years You give me be used for Your glory and Your purpose."

God has been faithful every step of the way, and I believe He still has work for us to do.





Women's Ministry in the Upper Midwest

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!



GENERAL CONFERENCE 2026 – WOMEN making a difference!

I met beautiful Christian women from around the globe in Johannesburg. They inspired me with their stories of family, ministry, redemption, resilience, and hope. The Global Methodist Church continues to equip women leaders who benefit their communities as they work for the Kingdom!

Norma Morrison and I were met on Saturday by some of the South African delegates. These ladies treated us like long-lost sisters!

Esther is from Kenya. She was our Social Witness Legislative Committee Secretary. Her ministry is with children and families facing so many difficult circumstances.

Sherlin was a great help in my role with the Social Witness committee. She is from India, one of our fastest-growing Conferences in the GMC.

Lois serves in the Afrika Mashariki Conference. She is a pastor with a heart for Jesus as she ministers to the marginalized in her community.

Alyson and her mom, Suzanne, represented the Mid-South Conference: a high school senior very much engaged in the legislative process, and her proud mama, who is a pastor in Tennessee.





UPPER MIDWEST ANNOUNCEMENTS



Prayer of Thanksgiving on Thanksgiving Day

Rev. Dr. Christina Sung, Conference Prayer Team

Give Thanks to the Lord, for He is good; His Love endures forever.

(PS 136:1)

Loving and gracious Heavenly Father, as we celebrate Thanksgiving, we unite our hearts as a church family to offer You our deepest gratitude, love, and praise. You are the source of all life and who we are, and today we pause to acknowledge Your goodness and mercy.

Thank You for watching over us and providing for our needs. We thank You for Your guidance, Your radical forgiveness, and the new beginnings You grant us through every season. We are sustained daily by an abundant, overwhelming grace that we could never earn and do not deserve.

Father, we thank You for the tangible blessings that fill our lives: for family, friends, the fellowship of our church, our daily bread, and the beauty of Your creation. We also thank You for the hidden blessings that, even through hardship, uncertainty, and seasons of waiting, You have used our trials to draw us closer to Your heart. Thank You for teaching us that Your faithfulness does not depend on our circumstances, and for giving us the strength to trust You always.

Above all, we thank You for sending Your Son, Jesus. Through His ultimate sacrifice, You put Your unfailing love on display and gifted us with the secure hope of eternal life—a coming reality free from death, pain, sin, and sorrow, where we will rest in Your perfect joy and peace.

Holy Spirit, teach us to remain deeply thankful in all circumstances. May our gratitude be a light to those around us, reflecting the supernatural power of Your love, grace, and forgiveness. We trust You with our tomorrows, for You alone are worthy of all glory and honor.

Let us “enter His gates with Thanksgiving and His courts with praise; give thanks to Him and praise His name. For the Lord is good and His love endures forever; His faithfulness continues through all generations.” (Psalm 100:4-5) In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.



Our Upper Midwest Conference Prayer Team has prepared a prayer for each Sunday of Advent, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. These prayers will be shared weekly on our Facebook page. Imagine the power of prayer as churches across our conference unite in prayer throughout this Advent season!

2026 Advent Prayers, Christmas Eve Prayer, and Christmas Prayer

Prayer for the First Sunday of Advent - HOPE

Gracious and loving Heavenly Father, we come before You on this first Sunday of Advent with hearts filled with hope and expectation. We thank You for the gift of Your Son, Jesus Christ, who came into the world to bring salvation, light, and everlasting hope. As we light the first Advent candle, remind us that our hope rests not in the things of this world, but in Your unfailing promises. Merciful God, forgive us when the busyness of this season distracts us from preparing our hearts for Christ. Help us turn away from sin and toward Your holiness. Through the transforming grace of Jesus Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit, renew our hearts and strengthen our love for You and our neighbors. Lord, we pray for those who are lonely, grieving, sick, or struggling with financial hardship. Bring comfort to the hurting, peace to the troubled, and hope to the discouraged. Guide our churches to be faithful witnesses of Christ's love in our communities. As we prepare to celebrate Christ's birth, help us also to live faithfully as we await His glorious return. May our words and actions reflect His love, and may we grow in holiness each day. We pray in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior and coming King. Amen.

(Rev. Mike Harder, Upper Midwest GMC Prayer Team)

Prayer for the Second Sunday of Advent - PEACE

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. (Isaiah 9:6) O God, our Father and Creator - our souls long for peace in a world where turmoil reigns; we pray for Christ's reign of justice, righteousness, and peace. Come, Lord Jesus, come… Lord, be with us throughout this time of active waiting - may anticipation and expectancy of your coming bring us to our knees in humble obedience to your will and purpose for us - as your people, your children. May we be conduits to your peace and justice in this world, and may others see the light of Christ in us, especially in this Advent season. Guard our hearts and minds, O God, and grant us the peace that passes all understanding, as we wait in hopeful anticipation for the coming of the Prince of Peace. Amen. Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever - Isaiah 9:7.

(Rev. Sandra Marquardt, Conference Prayer Team)

Prayer for the Third Sunday of Advent – JOY

Heavenly Father, as we continue our Advent journey, we come before You seeking the joy that only You can give. We remember the Wise Men who followed the star and rejoiced when it led them to Jesus. May their journey of faith inspire us to seek Christ with wonder, worship, and grateful hearts. Father, when the road grows long, and life's troubles threaten to overshadow our joy, remind us of Your unfailing love and faithful promises. Holy Spirit, come and fill us anew. Stir within us a holy joy that rises above our circumstances and strengthens us in difficult times. Open our eyes to Christ's presence among us. Bring comfort to those who grieve, companionship to those who are lonely, and renewed hope to those whose hearts have grown weary. Kindle within us a deeper love for Jesus and a desire to serve others. Lord Jesus, as we prepare to celebrate Your coming, help us offer You the treasures of our hearts: our love, our faith, and our service. Through the Holy Spirit's power, make us joyful witnesses to Your light, sharing Your grace with our neighbors and community. Father, prepare our hearts to welcome Your Son with renewed faith and overflowing joy. We pray through Jesus Christ, Your Son, in the power and fellowship of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

(Rev. Carl Benge, Conference Prayer Team)

Prayer for the Forth Sunday of Advent- LOVE

Gracious Father in Heaven, We thank you and praise You for the greatest miracle of all time--Jesus Christ, the eternal Word became flesh for us and for our salvation. Deepen our understanding of this greatest of all miracles. Jesus Christ, the Son of God and the eternal Word who holds all things together, became a human-being on our behalf. We thank and praise You that Jesus Christ is true God and true man in one person; and He will be the Godman for all eternity. "Thanks be to God for His inexpressible gift" (II Corinthians 9:15). May we take much time to meditate on the miracle of the incarnation as we draw near to Christmas; and may we thank God for His greatest of all gifts--Jesus Christ, the Godman.

(Rev. Mark Bateson, Conference Prayer Team)

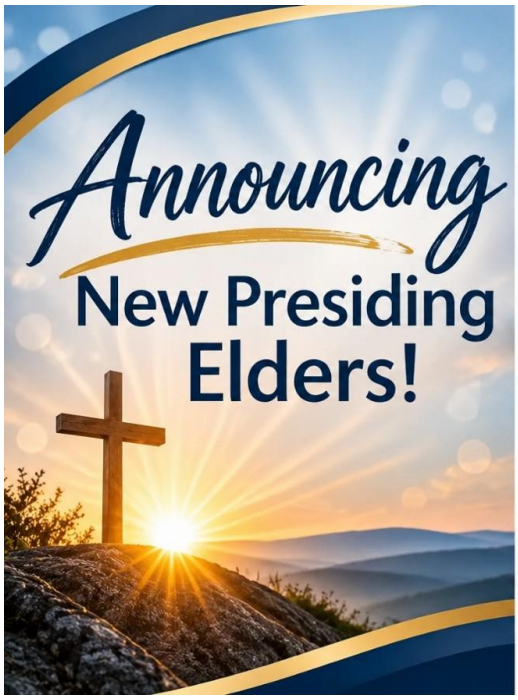
Christmas Eve Prayer

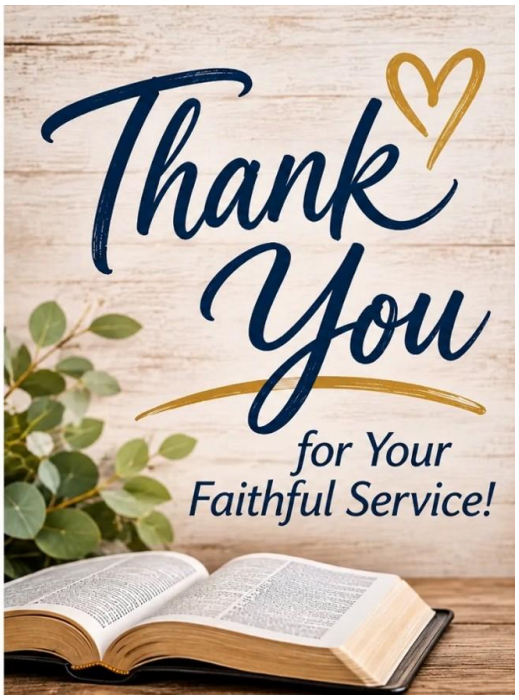
Lord of Lords! We are blessed to celebrate the season of our re-birth! As we have journeyed through Advent, we set our hearts on you and what you have graciously and mercifully done for us already, and our eager anticipation of your second coming is also felt here and now on this Christmas Eve as we celebrate the birth of our dear Jesus. Jesus our Savior. Our King. Our Redeemer! A mere child turned to a mighty conqueror over death and evil. Lord, we sit in tenderness, awe, and wonder at the perfection of your plan just to save us, your children. Thank you, Jesus. Thank you, Lord. May we remember this season and every season that you are our purpose. That you call on the unlikely and the broken, and you redeem us for your glory. The meekest and the mild can be the fiercest soldiers in your army, not by our strengths but yours. All because you loved us and sent your son, Jesus. In your precious name we pray, Amen!

(Heather Severance, the Conference Prayer Team)

Prayer for Christmas

Lord Jesus Christ, Your name is Wonderful. Thank you for coming to earth, for laying down your riches and honor to take on a humble earthly body. You descended the stairway of heaven to be born to a poor family and laid in a manger. What love is this? Though You were in the form of God You did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped but You made Yourself nothing, taking on the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men, and being found in human form humbled Yourself becoming obedient to death even death on a cross. Therefore, God has highly exalted You and given you a name that is above every other name so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow in heaven, and on earth and under the earth and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father. (Phil. 2:6-11) Lord, we bow before You as the shepherds did the night of your birth. We give you praise and glory. Thank you for saving us , for showing us the Father, and showing us how to love. "We love because He first loved us." Help us to be more like You by living in submission to the Father and serving others. "To the only God our Savior through Jesus Christ our Lord be glory, majesty, dominion and authority before all time , now and forever. ". (Jude1:25). Amen. (Carol Bacon, the Conference Prayer Team)





The Upper Midwest Cabinet is pleased to announce the appointments of Bruce Smith and Gwen Mader as Presiding Elders!

Bruce returns to the Cabinet, having previously served as a Presiding Elder. He will be serving the Iowa East Central District. We are also delighted to welcome Gwen, who is returning from the Western Conference after helping plant a church in Arizona and will be serving the South Dakota Southeast District.

We are grateful for the gifts, experience, and faithful hearts that Bruce and Gwen bring to these roles. We are excited to welcome them as they join us in serving the churches and pastors of the Upper Midwest Conference as we continue to fulfill the call of Christ and make disciples.

We also want to express our heartfelt appreciation to Andrew Happ and Joleen Pietrzak for their faithful service on the Cabinet.

We are thankful for their dedication, leadership, and the many ways they have served our Conference and its churches. Their contributions have been a blessing, and we extend our sincere gratitude for their willingness to serve.

Please join us in welcoming Bruce and Gwen into their new roles and in thanking Andrew and Joleen for their faithful service. We give thanks for each of these servants and look forward with excitement to what God has ahead for the Upper Midwest Conference!



Our 2027 Annual Conference will be June 11–13 in Sioux City

Annual Conference is 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. Save the Date to join us!

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Choir & Worship Team Invitation
2027 Annual Conference

The Upper Midwest Conference is inviting clergy and laity to help lead worship at our 2027 Annual Conference in Sioux City, Iowa! Whether you enjoy singing in a choir or have gifts as a musician or worship leader, we would love for you to participate.

Conference Choir

Love to sing? Express your interest in joining the conference choir by completing the **Choir Interest Form**. ***Please respond by December 15, 2026***, to assist with planning. Additional sign-ups will be accepted during Annual Conference registration.

Worship Team Auditions

We are seeking additional vocalists, musicians, and worship leaders to join our existing worship team. Interested individuals should complete the **Worship Team Audition Form** and submit a video showcasing their gifts. Audition deadline: December 15, 2026. Selected participants will be notified by January 1, 2027.

Prayerfully consider sharing your gifts as we gather to worship Jesus together!

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



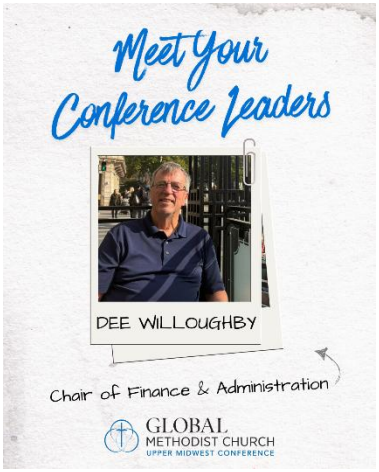
Rev. Zach Kingery and the Multiplication Team want to remind everyone about Exponential Global 2027, March 18–20, in Orlando.

The Global Methodist Church has secured discounted tickets for $135 per person, which includes admission to the main conference and our GMC Pre-Conference Rally on Thursday, March 18. This will be another important opportunity for GMC leaders to gather, connect, and strengthen our shared vision for disciple-making and church multiplication.

Approximately 60 tickets remain! All interested pastors, lay leaders, emerging multipliers, and potential church planters should consider participating.

Register through The River Network: http://therivernetwork.org/exponential

Tickets purchased through The River Network will be distributed in early spring 2027.



Meet Your Conference Leaders

We're excited to introduce you to the people who help lead and serve our Upper Midwest Conference! Over the next few months, we'll be highlighting the leaders of our various conference teams, sharing more about who they are and the important work they do. Though we are spread across multiple states, we are grateful to see how God is working through these leaders and teams to bring us together as one unified Global Methodist Church across our region.

Dee Willoughby

Dee is from First Methodist Church in Clinton, Iowa, and serves as Chair of our Finance and Administration Team.

He and his wife, Barb, have four children. He owns a manufacturing business that dates back to 1906 and has a passion for connecting with and encouraging others.

🎵 Favorite Hymn: It Is Well With My Soul

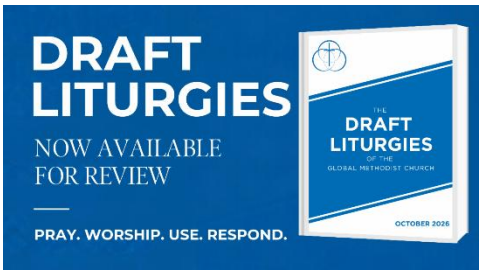
🍽️ Favorite Food: Standing rib roast

🗓️ Favorite Way to Spend a Day Off: Golfing, boating on the Mississippi River, skiing, woodworking, serving the homeless, and encouraging others.

What excites him about our conference's future? “Being bold for Christ.” Dee is passionate about investing in future pastors, supporting seminary students, and helping grow new churches throughout the Upper Midwest.

His encouragement to all of us? “Let's Go!!”

GLOBAL METHODIST ANNOUNCEMENTS



Draft Liturgies of the Global Methodist Church

The Global Methodist Church is 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.

Feedback will be accepted through December 31, 2026.

Learn More Here: https://www.globalmethodist.org/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 Your Feedback Here:
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MORE INFORMATION

Be the First to Know!



Sign up for our Upper Midwest Newsletter

Subscribe here:
https://www.uppermidwestgmc.org/newsletter

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



Global Methodist Church "Across the Globe" Newsletter

Subscribe here: https://globalmethodist.org/connect/

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Important Dates



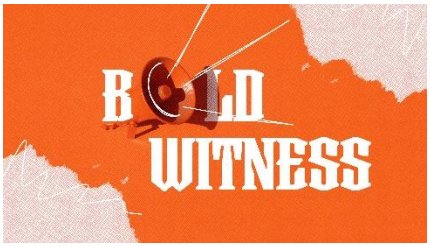
November 12-24, 2026

Conference Mission Trip to South Africa

View the Full Upper Midwest Conference Calendar here:

https://uppermidwestgmc.churchcenter.com/calendar?view=list

Share Your Story



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 here: https://form.jotform.com/242467999461171 and we'll highlight these stories on social media for our Upper Midwest Conference.

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)

Join the Noon Prayer or Request the Link to the Zoom Prayer Meeting here:

https://www.uppermidwestgmc.org/prayer

Check Us Out, find More Information or Contact us:

Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61560495272933

Website: https://uppermidwestgmc.org/

Email: contact@uppermidwestgmc.org

YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCelUq0W7V_b9fGnG_MEMo0w

GLOBAL
METHODIST CHURCH
UPPER MIDWEST CONFERENCE

PO Box 113 I Enon, OH 45323

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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