

Communion Prayer Vigil

FEBRUARY 22, 2019 at 6 P.M.

Welcome to All

✠ Please stand as you are comfortable. **Bold** indicates congregational response.

PRELUDE

WORDS of GRACE and WELCOME

Rev. Lane Cotton Winn

✠ CALL to WORSHIP

Based on Ephesians 4:4-6

Tonight we come together as one.

One people, gathered in the name of the one God.

We will worship together as one.

One community, giving praise and honor to the Righteous One.

We are being empowered as one by One.

One body and one Spirit, called to the hope of one calling,

One Lord, one faith, one baptism,

One God, who is above all and through all and in all.

Here together, we will be still and remember that we are all part of one another.

Together, we will be a people of compassion and kindness, centered in Christ's love.

Together we will be the body, united in peace, holding nothing sacred but the mission.

One people, giving witness to the power of One. Amen.

✠ HYMN

And Are We Yet Alive

UMH 553

PRAYER for a WAY FORWARD

*Rev. Ken Irby,
Baton Rouge District Superintendent*

Holy Triune God, in whom there is no distinction or division, we come to you in a time of great debate and discernment in our denomination, acknowledging our brokenness and longing for your Spirit. We have constructed systems of winners and losers, with the result of dehumanizing one another.

Free us from such constricted thinking, and open us up to the mystery of the Trinity, which models a way forward, past our limitations. Help us find a way to seek justice and equality for all people, to affirm our covenantal bonds with one another and to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

We pray for the work of the special General Conference, and that you will open the hearts and minds of all delegates. Grant your wisdom in balancing behavior, belief and belonging. May the work of justice be done with kindness and motivated out of humility, reminding us that we all need one another for the work of the kingdom.

A candle is lit for the 864 delegates.

Empower the delegates to be at peace with one another as they listen, speak and discern.

Bless the bishops as they preside over the proceedings. May they lead with charity and hope for all you are doing in and through the United Methodist Church. We lift up to you our Bishop, Cynthia Fierro-Harvey. Give her courage, clarity and grace.

A candle is lit for the Council of Bishops and all church leaders.

May your wisdom prevail and the Holy Spirit surprise us.

Bless our congregations, reminding us of the holy work to which you have called us, to make your love real by loving you and loving all people. Rekindle in us a deeper commitment to Christ and a firmer grounding in the scriptures, that we might be open to all persons and perspectives, no matter what happens in St. Louis.

A candle is lit for congregations and faith communities across the connection.

We entrust our future into your hands, O great God, Three-in-One. We choose the way of justice, kindness, and humility. Help us to not live in fear, but with hope for what you are doing in our midst.

In the name of Jesus Christ, **Amen.**

PRAYER RESPONSE

What Does the Lord Require of You?

Praise Band

SCRIPTURE

*Latrice Mallard,
Ministry Intern*

Mark 12:28-31

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

What Does the Lord Require of You?
(reprise)

PRAYER for OUR DELEGATES

*Rev. Lane Cotton Winn;
Rev. Ken Irby; Bobbi Marino, Lay Leader*

Gracious God, we pray for our Louisiana delegation as they travel to St. Louis, asking that you would prepare and protect them...in body, mind and spirit. Guard their hearts in the midst of difficult and tension-filled debate. Help them to see people as your holy children, not as opponents or obstacles. Enable them to listen and be a blessing to one another. Soften those who are cynical, empower the fearful and enable them to seek and claim the exciting future you desire for the United Methodist Church.

In lighting candles for our Louisiana delegates, may their hearts be warmed by your presence throughout the General Conference, offering them that which will sustain and uphold them.

A candle is lit for our eight voting delegates.

Louisiana has four clergy and four lay delegates to General Conference, as well as a number of alternates and delegates to the Jurisdictional conference. Together, they comprise the Louisiana delegation.

General Conference Delegates

Clergy

Andy Goff

Pat Day

Lynn Malone

Ellen Alston

Laity

Carolyn Dove

Pete Aguila

Stacy Hood

Olivia Pruet

Jurisdictional Conference Delegates

Juliet Spencer

Bernadine Johnson

Juan Huertas

James Mitchell

Sarah Kreutziger

Terrel Deville

Walter Weiss

Rob Fairly

Alternates: Katie McKay Simpson, Matt Rawle

We ask for your light to shine in and through our delegates and the legislative process.

May our delegates deal not in fear or prejudice, but in grace, compassion and love, holding nothing sacred but the mission. Amen.

SUNG RESPONSE

*Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying
FWS 2193*

**Lord, listen to your children praying,
Lord, send your Spirit in this place;
Lord, listen to your children praying,
send us love, send us power, send us grace.**

A time of silence is observed for personal prayer and reflection.

PRAYERS for OUR WITNESS in the WORLD

Mike Allen, Lay Servant

Loving Savior, we know that the decisions of the church will speak to the world. Right, wrong, or indifferent, people will make assumptions about who we are as a church because of the actions of the General Conference. May their work be a reflection of you. May people see the Good News of Christ - redemption, forgiveness, and inclusion in how we work through challenging issues as a church. **Amen.**

SUNG RESPONSE

*Lord, Be Glorified
FWS 2150, vs. 1, 3*

**In our lives, Lord, be glorified, be glorified.
In our lives, Lord, be glorified today.**

**In your church, Lord, be glorified, be glorified.
In your church, Lord, be glorified today.**

A time of silence is observed for personal prayer and reflection.

PRAYERS for the CHURCH

Pastor Deirdré

Spirit of Gentleness, the days leading up to this conference have been fraught with threats of division and fissure. We know sometimes we need to prune back in order to find new growth, but we also fear the loss of brothers and sisters in the faith. We wonder who will be pruned away and if it might be us. We fear broken churches and broken relationships. Help us to not live in fear, but with hope for what you are doing among us. Help us to put our trust in you. Inspire us to be the church of Jesus Christ, striving toward Christian perfection - loving you, the Lord our God, with all our heart, soul, mind, and spirit and loving our neighbors as ourselves. **Amen.**

✠ HYMN

Spirit, Spirit of Gentleness

FWS 2120

✠ PRAYER of CONFESSION

**Forgiving God,
we confess that we have allowed fear and distrust to place distance between us and our brothers and sisters in the Body of Christ.
Forgive us for our failures of love, goodness, and generosity in the church and in our lives.
We have made idols of our own thoughts, voices, and opinions - instead of trusting in your divine will. We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.
In a culture driven by self-interest, you call us to follow your path of peace, justice, and humility.
Forgive, Lord, when the focus shifts from the good news of Christ and division stirs in your church and in our lives.
Thank you for forgiving us and for your perfect love that casts out all fear.**

A time for silent prayer and confession.

† WORDS of ASSURANCE and PARDON

Hear the good news:
forgiveness is found in Jesus.
In Christ, our hopes are realized; and through Christ,
true love is shown.
In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven.
In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven!
Glory to God. Amen.

† OFFERING SIGNS of PEACE and RECONCILIATION

† THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

UMH 15

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.
Lift up your hearts.
We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give our thanks and praise.
It is right, and a good and joyful thing,
Always and everywhere to give thanks to you,
Lord God Almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

The pastor give thanks and remembers God's gift of salvation.

And so, with all your people on earth, in every place where two or more are gathered in your name, and all the company of heaven, who have gone before us, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

SUNG RESPONSE
FWS 2257

Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord, God of power and might,
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest. (3x)
Blest is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest. (3x)

The congregation is seated and the institution of the Lord's Supper is recalled.

And so, in remembrance of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ, we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving as a holy and living sacrifice, in union with Christ's offering for us, as we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.
Hosanna in the highest. (3x)

The pastor invokes the present work of the Holy Spirit and concludes:

Through your Son, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit in your holy Church, all honor and glory is yours, Almighty God, now and for ever.

Amen. Amen. Amen.
Hosanna in the highest. (3x)

THE LORD'S PRAYER

UMH 895

SHARING the BREAD and CUP

- ♦ *All are welcome to partake in Holy Communion. Come as you feel led.*
- ♦ *Communion will be served using the ancient means of "intinction." When broken bread is placed in your hand you may dip it lightly into the cup.*
- ♦ *You may light a candle on the chancel rail representing your prayers for the General Conference.*
- ♦ *You are invited to stay at the chancel for prayer as long as you desire.*
- ♦ *Gluten-free communion is offered to anyone who desires it at the station on the right.*

PRAYER AFTER RECEIVING

Our Lord God,
we have no idea where we are going.
We do not see the road ahead of us.
We cannot know for certain where it will end.
We do not always know ourselves as well as we think we do.
Even though we often believe we are following your will,
that does not mean we are actually doing so.
But we believe that the desire to please you does,
in fact, please you.
And we pray for that desire in all that we are doing.
We hope that we will never do anything apart from that desire.
We know that if we do this, you will lead us by the right road
and illuminate our way forward. Amen.

† HYMN

FWS 2226

Bind Us Together, Lord
Bind us together, Lord, bind us together
with cords that cannot be broken.
Bind us together, Lord,
bind us together, Lord,
bind us together in love.
There is only one God, there is only one King;
There is only one body, that is why we sing.

† BLESSING and SENDING FORTH

† POSTLUDE

Thank you for worshipping with us. We invite you to take a Strands of Unity Mardi Gras bead necklace, hanging in the narthex, home with you.

There are General Conference information sheets available in the narthex, as well.

Thank you to all of our readers and musicians who helped make our vigil so meaningful.

NIGHTLY PRAYER

Saturday - Tuesday
February 23-26 • 6 p.m.

St. John's sanctuary will be open nightly during the General Conference for people to come anytime from 6 - 7 p.m. for prayer and reflection.

WORSHIP NOTES:

Prayer for A Way Forward was adapted from a prayer by Rev. Magrey deVega, Florida Annual Conference

Prayer for Our Witness in the World and Prayer for Our Church were adapted from a prayer by Rev. Debbie Camphouse Sperry, California-Pacific Annual Conference

Prayer of Confession adapted from A Way Forward Listening Session with Bishop Harvey

Prayer After Receiving adapted from a prayer by Thomas Merton



ST. JOHN'S
United Methodist Church

Glorifying God. Feeding People. Making Disciples.



February 22, 2019
6 p.m. Worship Service