

PSALM 46

...and

KNOW
that
I am **GOD**

The United Methodist Church General Conference
CHARLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA



Sunday, April 21, 2024
General Conference Prayer Service

All Are Welcome

St. John's United Methodist Church

Welcome to St. John's United Methodist Church

GUEST INFORMATION

We are glad you've joined us and hope you feel at home here. Whoever you are, wherever you are on your faith journey, you are welcome. Our ushers are happy to assist you in anyway. Restrooms are in the Narthex, located in the back of the Sanctuary.

Please take home a copy of our Welcome Brochure located in the Narthex or view it online at: stjohnsbr.org/welcome-brochure.

St. John's Clergy and Staff

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ST. JOHN'S

United Methodist Church

Glorifying God. Feeding People. Making Disciples.

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General Conference Prayer Service

**Please stand as you are comfortable.
Bold indicates congregational response.
Please scan the QR Code to register your attendance.*



Prelude

Words of Welcome

Rev. Lane Cotton Winn

*"Be still, and know that I am God;
I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth."
Psalm 46:10*

*Call to Worship

We gather as people brought together by grace and bound together in the family of God.

May God draw us together in love.

We are part of the people called *United Methodists*, a movement dedicated to prayer, worship, study, and service.

May we never stop seeking the heartwarming Spirit of God.

We are part of the people called *United Methodists*, Yes!
But more than that, we are God's people, connected to every Jesus-follower through the body of Christ.

May the love of Christ unite this day and always. Amen.

*Hymn

And Are We Yet Alive
The United Methodist Hymnal 553, vs. 1 - 4

Prayer for Holy Conferencing

Rev. Latrice Mallard

Candle Lighting

Natalie Cooper, Rev. Larry Norman

We will light candles in prayer for the 862 delegates to General Conference; for the Council of Bishops and all church leaders; and for congregations and faith communities across the United Methodist connection.

SUNG RESPONSE

Make Us One

The Faith We Sing Songbook 2224

**Make us one, Lord, make us one;
Holy Spirit, make us one.**

**Let our love flow so the world will know
we are one in you.**

Mark 12:28-31

For the Word of God in scripture,
 for the Word of God among us,
 for the Word of God within us,
Thanks be to God.

Reflection

Pastor Lane

Hymn

They'll Know We Are Christians By Our Love
 The Faith We Sing Songbook 2223, vs. 1

**We are one in the Spirit, we are one in the Lord,
 we are one in the Spirit, we are one in the Lord,
 and we pray that all unity may one day be restored:**
**And they'll know we are Christians by our love, by our love;
 yes, they'll know we are Christians by our love.**

Prayer for our Delegates

*As the names are read, candles are lit for our six voting delegates.
 Louisiana has three clergy and three lay delegates to General Conference,
 as well as several alternates and delegates to the Jurisdictional Conference.
 Together, they comprise the Louisiana Delegation.*

General Conference Delegates

Clergy	Laity
Rev. Brady Whitton	Jennifer Swann
Rev. Karli Pidgeon	Nettles Brown
Rev. Katie McKay Simpson	Margaret Washington

Another candle is lit for all those serving on the Louisiana Delegation.

Alternates & Jurisdictional Conference Delegates

*Rev. John Cannon, Rev. Matt Rawle, Rev. Simon Chigumira,
 Adam Phillee, Rev. Marissa Teauseau Horvath, Rev. Ellen Alston*

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

**May our delegates work be guided by grace, compassion,
 and love. Amen.**

SUNG RESPONSE:

They'll Know We Are Christians By Our Love
 The Faith We Sing Songbook 2223, vs. 3

**We will work with each other, we will work side by side,
 we will work with each other, we will work side by side.
 and we'll guard human dignity and save human pride:**
**And they'll know we are Christians by our love, by our love;
 yes, they'll know we are Christians by our love.**

Prayer for the Church

Rev. Larry

SUNG RESPONSE:

Lord, Be Glorified

The Faith We Sing Songbook 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.

Prayer for our Witness in the World

Sandra Kuykendall

SUNG RESPONSE:

Lord, Be Glorified

The Faith We Sing Songbook 2150, vs. 1 & 4

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

In our lives, Lord, be glorified today.

In your world, Lord, be glorified, be glorified.

In your world, Lord, be glorified today.

Prayer of Confession

Natalie Cooper

Let us open our hearts and minds to the truth of our lives,
and let us offer that truth to God.

Merciful God,

We confess that we have not loved you with our whole heart.

**We have made idols of our desires, our perceived
righteousness, and even our fears.**

We have failed to be an obedient church.

**We have failed to embrace one another as equally valued
members of one body,
of which Christ alone is the head.**

We have not done your will, we have broken your law...

**We have been lured into legalism and the confines of church
polity, favoring human security over divine, radical grace.**

...we have rebelled against your love,

**believing that your favor is earned by faithfulness,
rather than freely given to us and every sibling in Christ.**

...we have not loved our neighbors,

**when we valued certain voices, perspectives, and bodies
above others.**

...and we have not heard the cry of the needy.

**when we overlooked the hungry, the poor, and the outcast;
when we turned our back on the one who was lost;
when we chose for ourselves who was welcome at your feast.**

Even when we fail to seek forgiveness,
and have not yet forgiven one another,

forgive us, we pray.

Free us for joyful obedience, through Christ our redeemer.

Amen.

A time for silent prayer and confession.

Words of Grace and Forgiveness

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.

*Sharing the Love and Peace of Christ

*Call to the Table

Alleluia

The United Methodist Hymnal 186, vs. 1

*The Great Thanksgiving

With sung responses from The Faith We Sing Songbook 2257

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 gives thanks and remembers God's gift of creativity and compassion.

And so, with your people on earth and all the company of heaven we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

**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

*Sharing the Bread and Cup

A Celtic Medley
The Praise Band

We invite you to come and receive Holy Communion when you feel led.

Everyone is welcome to share in Holy Communion.

Communion will be served using the ancient means of "intinction" with only the pastor and servers touching the elements, or, if you prefer, you may receive pre-packaged elements. Our communion elements are bread and grape juice.

A gluten-free option is also available.

You are invited to stay at the chancel for prayer as long as you desire.

If you are a person with limited mobility, please let the usher know and someone will bring communion to you.

Prayer After Receiving

Pastor Lane

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.

*Light Song

*During the hymn, we will pass the light of Christ
through the congregation and sing by candlelight.*

Bind Us Together

The Faith We Sing Songbook 2226

*Blessing and Sending Forth

*Postlude

Worship Notes

Call to Worship Adapted from prayer by Dr. Lisa Hancock, Discipleship Ministries, March 2024.

Prayer for Holy Conferencing by Bishop Lanette Plambeck, resident bishop, Dakotas-Minnesota Area of The United Methodist Church.

Prayer for Our Delegates by Rev. Lane Cotton Winn.

Prayer for Our Church adapted from a prayer by By Rev. Magrey deVega.

Prayer for Our Witness in the World adapted from a prayer by Rev. Debbie Camphouse Sperry.

Prayer of Confession is adapted from the prayer of confession found in the General Services in the United Methodist Hymnal and was designed for the Opening Worship of the Cal-Pac Annual Conference in 2019.

Prayer After Receiving adapted from a prayer by Thomas Merton.

Ushers for tonight's service are Joyce Robinson and Sandra Kuykendall.



General Conference Prayer Prompts

Each day during this two-week global conference, you are invited into prayer for the Louisiana Delegation (listed below), as well as the following daily prayer prompts:

Louisiana's General Conference Delegates: Rev. Brady Whitton, Jennifer Swann, Rev. Karli Pidgeon, Nettles Brown, Rev. Katie McKay Simpson, Margaret Washington

Our Alternate Delegates: Rev. John Cannon, Rev. Matt Rawle, Rev. Simon Chigumira, Adam Philley, Rev. Marissa Horvath, Rev. Ellen Alston

April 21: All delegates & others preparing to attend General Conference.

April 22: Travel for the Louisiana delegation that they arrive safely.

April 23: Opening Worship; First Plenary session.

April 24: Episcopal Address delivered by South Carolina's Bishop Jonathan Holston; the Young People's Address; Report on the revision to the Social Principles; Legislative Committees as they begin their work.

April 25: Plenary Session; Laity Address; Legislative Committees.

April 26: Plenary Session; Legislative Committees; Financial State of the Church report.

April 28: No G.C. business today. Pray that all attending G.C. will experience meaningful worship, fellowship, and rest.

April 29: Plenary Session. Consecration of Deaconesses and Home Missioners for Lifetime Service; Africa University report.

April 30: Plenary Session. Recognition of retiring bishops and new bishops, including Louisiana's Bishop Delores Williamston; 80th Anniversary of UMCOR (United Methodist Committee on Relief).

May 1: Plenary Session.

May 2: Plenary Session. Commissioning of Missionaries.

May 3: Plenary Session. Final General Commission on Finance & Administration (GCFA) Report; Closing worship.

May 4: Travel day. Pray for safe travel for all who have been part of General Conference.