

March 2024

THE SPIRIT

Newsletter of Floyd United Methodist Church



A Beginner's Guide to General Conference

The last time General Conference met in regular session was nearly eight years ago. The upcoming legislative assembly is scheduled for April 23-May 3, 2024 in Charlotte, N.C.

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FLOYD UNITED
METHODIST CHURCH

PALM SUNDAY

— with —

**Bishop Debra
Wallace-Padgett**



*Join us for this special Sunday
when our bishop will be
visiting us and preaching.*

SUNDAY, MARCH 24, 2024

Breakfast with the Bishop - 9 a.m.

Worship Service - 10 a.m.

Holy Week 2024

Palm Sunday

March 24, 2024

Bishop Debra Wallace-Padgett will be joining us for breakfast at 9 a.m., and then she will preach at the 10 a.m. service.

Maundy Thursday

March 28, 2024

Join us for a special service of worship remembering the Last Supper. This service will be different than in previous years. It will include a “living Last Supper” and Holy Communion.

Good Friday

March 29, 2024

On Good Friday, our congregation will join together with congregations across Floyd for a Community Good Friday Service. *A lunch will follow the service.*

Easter Sunday

March 31, 2024

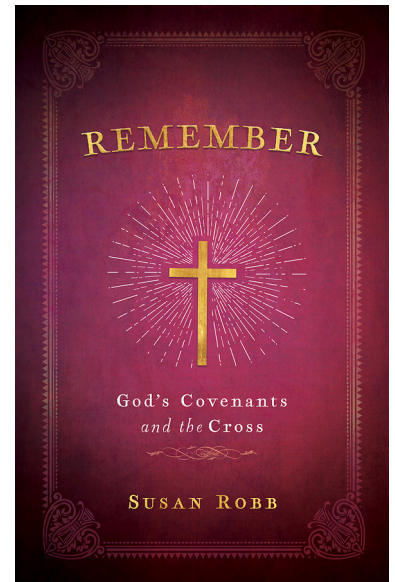
Join us for worship this Easter Sunday as we celebrate Christ's resurrection. Worship will be at 10 a.m. with an Egg Hunt to follow at 11 a.m. for the kids!

Bible Study: Remember

Wednesdays at 11 a.m.
in the Fellowship Hall
February 14 – March 20, 2024

Remember the God who remembers us.

God's covenants throughout the Old Testament show the character of God's promises to the people of Israel. In this book, Susan Robb leads readers through the covenants with Noah, Abraham, Moses, and David, followed by the new



covenant established on Maundy Thursday. The Lenten story culminates with an examination of the cross as another example of God's promise for a new world.

Susan Robb teaches readers the basic lessons of the covenants through a mixture of biblical history and personal stories. Her pastoral character and warm tone provide a basis for understanding God's promises through history and the role of Jesus's passion and crucifixion in the history of the covenants.

Purchasing the book is not required to participate in the study.



General Conference FAQ



THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

A Beginner's Guide to General Conference

By Heather Hahn | Courtesy of UM News

The United Methodist Church has no pope. But it does have a General Conference — the only body that can set official policy and speak for the international denomination. General Conference brings together lay and clergy delegates from four continents whose decisions will affect how millions of United Methodists do church for years to come. Think of the two-week gathering as a combination of a United Nations General Assembly, a U.S. congressional session and a time of rousing Christian worship. The coming General Conference, now scheduled for April 23-May 3 in Charlotte, North Carolina, comes at a particularly momentous time.

General Conference typically gathers every four years. But because of the COVID pandemic, the assembly could not meet in 2020. That means the last regular session was in May 2016 — nearly eight years ago. In the interim, the denomination has seen a quarter of its U.S. churches depart under a disaffiliation policy that began in 2019 and expired at the end of 2023. What comes next for the international denomination will be largely up to General Conference itself. Here are answers to frequently asked questions about the big event.

What does General Conference do?

General Conference is the denomination's highest legislative body. As such, it has the authority to make revisions to the denomination's Book of Discipline and Book of Resolutions. The Discipline is the denomination's governing document that contains its doctrine, constitution, church law, rules of organization and procedures. The Book of Resolutions contains the denomination's positions on current social issues. Resolutions expire after eight years unless General Conference readopts them.

General Conference approves the four-year budget allocating apportionments — shares of church giving — for denomination-wide ministries around the globe. General Conference also sets the formula used for apportioning the budget to annual conferences, the denomination's regional bodies, which in turn ask for apportionments from local churches.

In addition, the assembly approves theological statements on subjects such as baptism and communion. The coming General Conference will consider adopting a theological statement on the United Methodist understanding of church titled "Sent in Love."

General Conference also elects members of the Judicial Council, the denomination's top court; members of the commission that plans General Conference; and some members of other denominational leadership bodies. The Judicial Council will be on hand throughout General Conference to weigh in on questions about General Conference actions including whether legislation is in line with the denomination's constitution.

Who can propose legislation to General Conference?

The Book of Discipline states that any United Methodist organization, clergy member or lay member may submit a General Conference petition — basically the United Methodist equivalent of a bill before a legislature. All told, the coming General Conference has received 1,099 total valid petitions — including 352 new petitions submitted since General Conference's delay in 2020. Some of those petitions were submitted by people who have since left The United Methodist Church. The Rev. Gary Graves, General Conference secretary, plans to provide a report at the start of General Conference identifying those petitions.

Where can people see what legislation is under consideration?

The Advance Daily Christian Advocate contains the petitions and reports that will be before delegates. The Advance Daily Christian Advocate is available in PDF form online. People also can subscribe online to the Daily Christian Advocate at DailyChristianAdvocate.org. The website includes the proposed legislation and will include the daily proceedings. General Conference delegates and first reserves receive free access to the site. Others may access it for a one-time fee of \$49.99.

United Methodist Communications and Graves also will offer an overview of some of the legislation before delegates during a live-streamed orientation from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. U.S. Central time Feb. 29 and March 1. The stream will be available in English, French and Portuguese.

Who votes at General Conference?

The coming General Conference plans to have 862 voting delegates — half clergy and half lay. Of the elected delegates, 55.9% are from the U.S., 32% from Africa, 6% from the Philippines, 4.6% from Europe (including Russia) and the remainder from concordat churches that have close ties to The United Methodist Church. General Conference organizers are working to help delegates obtain the needed visas to attend. Interpreters will support this multinational and multicultural body in 10 languages. Written materials will be available in the four official General Conference languages: English, French, Kiswahili and Portuguese.

How are the delegates chosen?

Annual conferences — the denomination's regional bodies consisting of lay and clergy voters from multiple churches — each elect an allotment of delegates. The United Methodist Church's constitution requires that laity elect the lay delegates, and clergy elect their fellow clergy. The United Methodist Church's constitution also mandates that each annual conference gets at least two General Conference delegates — one lay and one clergy. Beyond this mandatory minimum, conferences are allotted their delegate slates using a formula based on their lay and clergy membership numbers. The delegation allocations for the coming General Conference in Charlotte are based on the membership data available in 2017, well before the COVID pandemic upended so much of church life. Most annual conferences also elect reserves who participate in General Conference as needed to assure that each annual conference is fully represented throughout the session.

The denomination currently has 53 annual conferences in the U.S., and 80 annual conferences in Africa, Europe and the Philippines. But at the time of delegate elections in 2018 and 2019, two U.S. conference mergers had yet to take effect. That means the four legacy conferences involved in those mergers will each seat a delegation in Charlotte.

What is the role of bishops at General Conference?

United Methodist bishops have a limited role during the assembly. They preside at General Conference sessions but do not have voice or vote. This means they cannot make motions or advocate for positions from the floor. Bishops do preach during worship. South Carolina Conference Bishop L. Jonathan Holston also will deliver the episcopal address on behalf of the Council of Bishops. However, bishops usually know well the delegate experience. Many previously served as delegates themselves before their election to the episcopacy.

How often do those attending join in worship?

General Conference opens and closes with Christian worship. Worship services also open each day's proceedings, often with bishops preaching. On April 28 — the Sunday of General Conference — delegates and others at the gathering are encouraged to attend services at local United Methodist churches. Charlotte is home to multiple United Methodist congregations.

How does legislation become church law?

The first stop for legislation under consideration at the coming General Conference is one of 14 legislative committees or the Standing Committee on Central Conference Matters. The standing committee is a permanent General Conference committee that deals with matters pertaining to church regions in Africa, Europe and the Philippines. Petitions approved by committee then move on to the full body of delegates for possible further revision and a vote.

The Book of Discipline requires that all petitions must receive a vote in their assigned committee and all legislation approved by a committee must receive a vote by the full General Conference plenary. It is possible for legislative committees and the plenary to vote down multiple petitions in bulk. Likewise, the General Conference plenary can approve multiple petitions in bulk if they qualify for the consent calendar. Delegates routinely pray over their decision-making. They are to vote based on their own conscience as moved by the Holy Spirit.

What percentage of votes does legislation need to pass?

Most legislation requires only a simple majority of General Conference delegates to pass. Amendments to the denomination's constitution require a two-thirds vote of the General Conference followed by a two-thirds aggregate vote of the lay and clergy members present and voting in the annual conferences. Changes to the denomination's doctrinal standards, which includes basic Christian tenets such as belief in Christ's resurrection and the Trinity, require at least a two-thirds vote of the General Conference followed by three-fourths aggregate vote of the lay and clergy members present and voting in the annual conferences. The United Methodist Church has never altered its doctrinal standards before, and no proposals before the coming General Conference seek to alter them.

When does newly passed legislation take effect?

Legislation approved by the coming General Conference will become effective Jan. 1 next year, unless otherwise specified. However, amendments to the denomination's constitution only take effect after the Council of Bishops certifies their ratification. In practice, that means any new amendment will not take effect until the bishops meet in spring 2026.

Heather Hahn is assistant news editor for UM News. This article was published February 1, 2024.

LENTEN MISSION PROJECT

HEALTH KITS FOR THE ISHE ANESU AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM IN ZIMBABWE

To make a health kit:

1. Pick up a Ziploc bag from one of the tubs located by the doors.
2. Use the shopping list inside to buy the needed items.
3. Return your Ziplock bag with the items inside by Palm Sunday, March 24.

Or give a donation of \$30 to cover the cost of a kit.



March Celebrations

Birthdays

7 - Karen Radford
7 - Easton Thomas
22 - Barbara Simpkins
25 - Travis Cantrell
25 - Karla Huff
26 - Nathaniel Gardner
26 - Dorothy Sumner
27 - Kathy Dulaney
28 - Joyce Gardner

Anniversaries

No anniversaries this month.

Update your family's information by contacting Pastor Timothy.

***Note: our new church management system does not list birthdays or anniversaries without years. This has caused some dates to be lost. Please let Pastor Timothy know if your birthday or anniversary is incorrect or missing. Thank you!*

Serving in March

Ushers

David Blevins
Travis Cantrell
Cindy Salyer
Kevin Wiseman

Bereavement Team

Pam Larimer
Kathy Dulaney
Suzanne Yearout

Summer Camp

Registration is now open for summer camp at Camp Dickenson! Camp Dickenson is a United Methodist ACA accredited camp offering Christian camping experience for rising 2nd-12th graders. Campers from our congregation receive a discount that pays for most or all of the camping experience. To obtain the discount code, please contact Pastor Timothy before registering.

Learn more at campdickenson.com.

Our Prayer List

Long Term

For peace in our world, Christian missionaries,
Joe Blackwell, Casey Blackwell, Kevin Vest, Shelby Hale, Charles Burgess, Ginny Barker, Don Gardner, Peggy Harris, Judi Clemens, Chester Gallimore, Rhett Helms, Mason Pearce, Graysen Bean, Virginia Brown, Ava Juwan Crolley, Angel Spangler, Tommy & Louise Hall, David Wimmer, Gayle Griffin, Donna Johnson

Our Military

All those serving in all branches of our military, Darren Wood, Tom Giles, Michael Kovac, Brody Stroud, Jeremiah Hassel

Short Term

Jim Salyer, Francis Berkley, BP Simpson, Lauren Worley, Sallie Martin, Luca Gucciardo, Joe Sowers, Peggy Harris

Add or remove a name from the list by emailing pastor@floydumc.com.

Financial Report

Offering (1/31/24)	\$15,120.76
Expenses (1/31/24)	\$11,247.12
Difference	\$3,873.64

Give online at floydumc.com or mail in your gift to P.O. Box 55, Floyd, VA 24091.

March 2024 Calendar



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
3	4	5	6 Bible Study, 11 a.m. First Wednesdays, 6 p.m.	7	8	9
10 Worship, 10 a.m. Sunday School, 11 a.m.	11	12	13 Bible Study, 11 a.m.	14	15	16
17 Worship, 10 a.m. Sunday School, 11 a.m.	18 Benefit for Luca Gucciardo, Micah Underwood, & Lauren Worley, 5-7 p.m.	19	20 Bible Study, 11 a.m.	21	22	23
24 Palm Sunday Fourth Sunday Breakfast, 9 a.m. Worship with Bishop Debra Wallace-Padgett, 10 a.m.	25	26	27	28 Maundy Thursday Maundy Thursday Service, 7 p.m.	29 Good Friday Community Good Friday Service, Noon at Floyd Baptist Church	30
31 Easter Sunday Worship, 10 a.m. Easter Egg Hunt, 11 a.m. Sunday School, 11 a.m.	Office Hours Tuesday-Thursday, 9 a.m.–Noon, or by appointment. Find the church calendar online at floydumc.com/events .					