

margin, and to confront every injustice. Remind us that the mission to make disciples for the transformation of the world won't change. Come, Holy Spirit, to guide every step and decision, heal our hearts, give us courage, and shine Your glory in us and around us to the world. Amen.

Visit <http://bit.ly/UNYprayeraut> hors to learn about the members of CLT who are providing the prayers.

Visit <https://www.unyumc.org/news/perspectives> for new prayers each week as we approach General Conference.

#### **Get information from trusted news sources**

Visit <http://bit.ly/UMnewssource> to sign up for the Daily Digest from the UM News Service. United Methodist News Service is the authorized organization that reports news regarding The United Methodist Church. Their staff understands the often-confusing procedures of The United Methodist Church and will provide the most accurate information.

In addition to the *Bridge*, Upper New York has other trusted news resources:

Visit <http://bit.ly/UNYWD> to sign up for the Upper New York *Weekly Digest*. Sent via email every Wednesday, The *Weekly Digest* a round-up of

that week's UNY Notes, along with feature articles, direct links to several "hot spots" on the Conference website, photos, and more.

Visit <https://www.facebook.com/uppernewyork/> and "like" the UNY Conference. On Facebook, we post pictures, short videos, ask questions from fun to serious, share the latest news from the Conference, and really try to engage with our followers. This is the perfect avenue for you to share with us whether that be as simple as "liking" a post or sharing your pictures and thoughts in the comment section of one of our posts. These posts will appear in your news feed along with posts from your other Facebook friends.

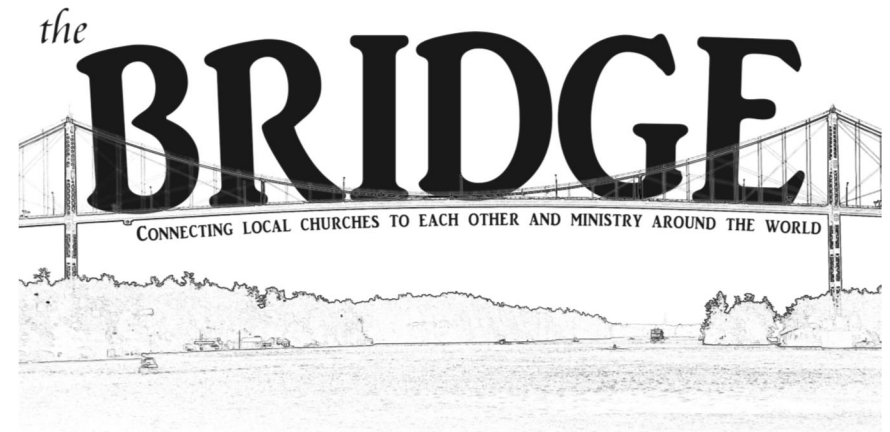
#### **Maintain a focus on discipleship**

Remember that regardless of what happens at General Conference, it is important to remember that the mission of making disciples and following God's call for ministry for your church continues.

#### **Continue giving**

Remember that one unique aspect about the United Methodist Church is connectionalism. Your offering not only helps your local church and the surrounding community, but also, it helps those in need nationally and globally.

Connect with United Methodists from Upper New York and around the world by following the Upper New York Conference on Facebook at: <https://www.facebook.com/uppernewyork/>



The Upper New York Conference's vision is to live the gospel of Jesus Christ and to be God's love with our neighbors in all places.

## A look inside!

Getting ready for General Conference

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*The Bridge is a Conference Communications Ministry tool that delivers to local churches news and stories of ministry from around the Upper New York Conference and the world. For more news and stories visit:*

**[www.unyumc.org](http://www.unyumc.org)**

# Getting ready for General Conference

General Conference is coming up this May. How can you help your congregation get ready for this event when the uncertainty of how the decisions made at General Conference will affect the denomination's future?

## Pray

Be in prayer, as individuals and as a church community, for General Conference, delegates, and for discernment.

**Pray,  
Pray now,  
Pray for the Others.**

Love one another. The command echoes through Scripture and awakens us to life. Jesus intended for the world to verify the truth of his message by observing us in our love for one another and all God sends into our lives. (John 13:35, 17:22-23) In this season, there are momentous preparations being made for our United Methodist community to

part, possibly to multiply in new ways. How we do that matters. ***Because praying is an expression of loving that is accessible to all, we, your UNY Conference Leadership Team (CLT), call all who can sense the resonance of our voices to, "Pray with us!"*** Pray for the wellbeing and faithfulness of those who think differently, whose path seems to diverge from your own. Pray for the ones with whom you are aligned, and for the ones who strive to lead in this poignantly sad and possibly exciting time. The world is watching how we treat one another.

In the weeks leading up to General Conference, members of the UNY CLT will be sharing prayers designed to be used however the Spirit calls you to use them.

Now, in the second week of the CLT prayer initiative, we have shared two prayers.

**The first prayer was crafted by the Rev. Harold Wheat:**

"I will sow them among the people: and they shall remember me in far countries." (Zech. 10:9) According to God's will Christendom is a scattered people, scattered like seed "into all the kingdoms of the earth." (Deut. 28:25) (Bonhoeffer, 1954: 18)

Gracious God, a scattering of your United Methodist people is being considered. By you, by us, or by those who oppose your church unaware of what they are doing, it's not yet clear. Leaning into the passing winds, we pause to recognize your transcendent grace and reaffirm our trust in your guiding Spirit. With the first followers of The Way of



Christ we pray, "grant to your servants to speak your word with all boldness while you stretch out your hand to heal." (Acts 4:29-30) In whatever relational field we find ourselves, bless us to be healthy vessels of your love and grace so that we may be a blessing to those you send into our lives. We pray in the name of your son, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Works cited:

Bonhoeffer, Dietrich. *Life Together*. Trans. John Doberstein, (Harper & Row, NY; 1954).

Scripture not re-quoted from *Life Together* is taken from the New Revised Standard Version copyright 1989 by the Division of Christian Education of the national Council of Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

**The second prayer was crafted by the Rev. Steven Taylor:**

Almighty God, in Jesus' Name, we bow before you together in worship and

praise because of Your love and grace in our lives. We hear the words of the angels who declared to your people, and to us, "Fear not!" In this season of unsettledness in the United Methodist Church, we confess that we bring unwanted, and sometimes hindering, sinful thoughts, actions, and fears with us to You, thinking that if we can just control a few more things or people, that we will move Your heart as we desire. Forgive us. Turn our hearts back to You and give us ears to hear again, "Fear not."

We know You are not done with any of us yet, even as You are allowing ground-shaking change to occur once again in Your Church. We grieve losses and celebrate what can be. Increase our trust in You and in the mission You have given us to be your hands and feet, and to reach a lost and broken world, those on every

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