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February 19, 2019

SOUL FOOD

Seeking God's Will in St. Louis



A historic gathering will take place February 23-26 in St. Louis, Missouri as the specially convened session of General Conference takes place. This meeting will shape and direct the future of The United Methodist Church. It is a monumental moment in our long and varied history. It is my fervent prayer and deepest hope that it will be a God moment.

What we will do in St. Louis is incredibly important. It will say to the world who we are, what we value, how we understand the God of love, and why we believe the church is important. It will determine how we will live together in covenant, and the foundation upon which our covenant is based. It will impact how we treat each other, and what the core of our ministry is in our broken, contentious, and conflicted world. This conference will determine whether we can continue to serve God as the body of Christ or if we will have to go our separate ways. And while it will not settle our different understandings of the authority and interpretation of scripture, our theological debates, and our ideological disagreements, it will influence how we will be able to engage in these issues in the days to come.

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LATEST CONFERENCE NEWS

Childcare Available for Bishop's Clergy Days Apart



Childcare will be available March 26-28 for clergy attending Bishop's Clergy Days Apart. There is no cost for childcare, however parents are responsible for providing any items their child may need, such as snacks, diapers, toys/activities and any other essential items. To sign up for childcare, contact Angela Ullrich at aullrich@wisconsinumc.org by March 11, 2019 at 4 p.m. Include in your email: the number of children,

their names, ages, and if they will be attending all three days. Please note that signing up for childcare is separate from the registration process. If you have not registered yet, visit <https://www.etouches.com/bishopsdayapart2019>.

Welcome New Associate Conference Lay Leader



The Wisconsin Conference is pleased to announce that Ben Brancel has accepted the position of Associate Conference Lay Leader. We welcome Ben to the Conference Board of Laity and to ministry in the Wisconsin Annual Conference! Ben has experience as a Wisconsin politician and former legislator who served as the Wisconsin Secretary of Agriculture until his retirement in 2017. He also managed a dairy operation for 22 years, and now runs a 290-acre beef farm with his wife, son and daughter-in-law. Ben has been actively involved at Briggsville UMC and with the Conference. [Read Ben Brancel's full biography.](#)

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Register for 2019 Laity Convocation by April 1



All in the Wisconsin Annual Conference are invited to the Bishop's Leadership Convocation of the Laity April 5 – 6, 2019 at Steven's Point: St. Paul's UMC in Stevens Point. There is no charge for attending but you must register in advance. The meals are sponsored by the Wisconsin Annual Conference's budget for the Board of Laity.

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Foundation Grant Applications Due March 1



For over 30 years the Foundation has been offering grants to help creative projects and ministries get off the ground. If you have a creative and innovative program, ministry, project or activity which is new to your group, you may qualify for a grant from the Foundation! Please read what ***MAY be*** and ***will NOT*** be funded detailed in our [Grant Guidelines](#). Grants awarded are to be considered seed money rather than

continuing support and typically phase out after three years.

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Communication at Forefront of GC 2019



Communication is a varied and vital part of any General Conference, and that's emphatically true for the special called session of General Conference set for Feb. 23-26 in St. Louis. Everything from print to podcasts will be used to share the story. United Methodist Communications is at the center of it all, including helping put on the legislative event. Sam Hodges from UM News reports. [Read story.](#)

Bishops Agree to Covenant for GC 2019



United Methodist bishops are preparing to preside over the special General Conference set for Feb. 23-26 in St. Louis. In a letter released Feb. 12, Council of Bishops President Bishop Kenneth H. Carter Jr. noted that the bishops will be bound by a covenant of presiding. The letter was written in collaboration with the Commission on the General Conference. [Read press release.](#) [Read letter.](#) [Read](#)

[covenant.](#)

Black History Month: United Methodist Black History Quiz



Too often, the accomplishments of African Americans have not received adequate notice in U.S. history books and classrooms. That is why historian Carter Woodson first proposed a week-long focus on black history in 1926. The first U.S. celebration of Black History Month happened decades later. UMCOM has created this quiz to help you learn more about African American History in the U.S. and in

The United Methodist Church. [Take quiz.](#)

What do United Methodist Really Believe?



The United Methodist Church is a big tent theologically, and people with conservative or traditional religious beliefs make up the largest group under that spreading canvas. Those are two key findings from a new United Methodist Communications survey of United Methodists in the U.S. Sam Hodges from UM News reports. [Read story.](#)

Contingency Fund Grows for Unanticipated Needs



The United Methodist Church budget for new programs that address unanticipated needs will be increased to \$8.9 million while the overall budget for the 2021-2024 quadrennial is being cut by 23 percent. The World Service Contingency Fund was used in the past for ministries including the Immigration Task Force and the Do No Harm initiative to promote the prevention and response to sexual misconduct.

[Read press release.](#) [Read UMNS story on budget.](#) [2021-2024 Quadrennial Report released.](#)

UPCOMING EVENTS

[Register for Retreats at Wisconsin UMC Camps](#)

VOLUNTEER & GIVING OPPORTUNITIES

[United Methodist VIM Disaster Response News](#)

[United Methodist VIM Opportunities for Service Newsletters](#)

[Register for Upcoming VIM Trips](#)

TIPS & RESOURCES

[United Methodist Black History Quiz](#)

[Black History Month Social Media Graphics](#)

[Timeline: Methodism in Black and White](#)

[Global Ministries: Black History Month Ideas for Worship](#)

[Re-Energize Your Prayer Life](#)

[5 Key Elements in Successful Stewardship Strategies](#)

LOCAL ACTIVITIES

[View Full Calendar](#)

INPUT FOR ENEWS

If you have a Conference-related event, a hallelujah moment or a newsworthy story that you want included in ENEWS, or if you have a suggestion for ENEWS, contact: mediacontact@wisconsinumc.org. Please send your submissions by the Friday prior to the week you would like the information featured. Note that ENEWS is also posted weekly on the [Wisconsin Conference](#) website. If you experience a web problem after hours, please report the issue to 608-729-4349.

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