



Minnesota Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church

CONFERENCE CONNECTIONS

All United Methodist churches are connected through shared mission and ministry and united in their efforts to grow in love of God and neighbor, reach new people, and heal a broken world. Check out these news tidbits from the Minnesota Annual Conference, which serves all 360 United Methodist churches in the state.

- **Bishop Ough: Stay strong and stay together:** At this challenging time in The United Methodist Church, Bishop Bruce R. Ough says: “I am committed to being a bishop who opens the church to all peoples, nations, and races as stated in our baptismal vows. That includes the full inclusion of the LGBTQIA+ community. At the same time, I am committed to keeping the doors of the church open to all faithful followers of Jesus even as we have differing understandings of how we live out our ethic of love...In this season in which we do not yet know how the global structure of The United Methodist Church will change, I ask us as Minnesota United Methodists to continue to hold to our center in Jesus, to stay strong and to stay together so that, whatever comes, we can continue the good work we are doing to be a church that boldly and compassionately reaches all people with the love of Jesus Christ.”
- **The Ministry Lab is a great resource available to you:** The Ministry Lab—an ecumenical organization that serves Minnesota United Methodist, United Church of Christ, and Presbyterian churches—just opened at United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities in St. Paul. It fosters experimentation, innovation, and creativity for churches as they seek to remain vibrant and relevant. At The Ministry Lab, you can consult with staff that brings an

understanding of changing ministry contexts and knowledge of outstanding resources, digital and traditional, and access a variety of excellent physical resources. Learn more at <https://rcc-mn.org>.

- **Minnesotans working to shape church’s future:** More than 60 Minnesota United Methodists recently participated in Our Movement Forward, a summit that brought more than 300 attendees to Minneapolis to collaborate on a vision for the church and center the voices of people of color, and queer and transgender individuals. And 10 Minnesotans attended UMCNext, a gathering in Kansas to share hopes, learn from others, and discuss how to create a more inclusive church. Attendees of both events plan to continue organizing and working for change.

BRIGHT SPOTS IN OUR MIDST

- **Minnesota EarthKeepers double in number:** After reflecting on God’s call to care for the planet and learning skills for organizing their communities to work for environmental justice, 22 Minnesota United Methodists were recently commissioned as EarthKeepers, thus doubling the number of Minnesota EarthKeepers to 44 total. EarthKeepers are keenly aware of ecological challenges and feel called to transform the world. To explore how you can deepen your efforts to care for the planet, contact Isaiah Friesen at isaiah.friesen@minnesotaumc.org or 612-230-6128.
- **Minnesota churches help build Sierra Leone school:** Through OC Ministries, 50 Minnesota United Methodist churches contributed to an effort to build The Rev. Richard Ormsby Secondary School in Baiwalla, Sierra Leone. Located in a remote area with significant poverty, it will provide an opportunity for 800 children to graduate from high school. Thanks be to God!

STAY CONNECTED!

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