



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 350 United Methodist churches in the state.

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- **Bishop Ough: Stay strong and stay together:** At this difficult time in our denomination, Dakotas-Minnesota Area Bishop Bruce R. Ough said he believes the best way forward for the Minnesota Annual Conference is to stay together and stay strong in this in-between time. “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. In the days and months ahead, I implore you to be the leaders and the church God is calling us to be. Remain true to yourself while also committing yourself to respectful conversation with those who hold different convictions. Clarify your identity and values as a congregation. Reflect on how you are called to be in ministry with the LGBTQIA+ community. And most importantly, stay laser focused on our shared mission to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.”
  - **ELI Project welcomes six interns, expands in scope:** The ELI Project, a Minnesota Conference summer internship program for college students exploring a call to vocational ministry, is now in its fifth year and has expanded in scope. This year, in addition to four new interns, two former “2.0” interns will return to explore

ministry in a different way. Whereas regular ELI interns spend two months taking a deep dive within a single host congregation, ELI 2.0 interns will mentor the new interns, attend worship at different churches each week, participate in a social justice or community engagement project of their choosing, and learn from two mentors. One former ELI intern is now pastoring a Minnesota church, and several others are pursuing candidacy in the conference. Thanks be to God for these young leaders!

- **Live stream Annual Conference:** Even if you’re not planning to attend Annual Conference (June 18-20 in St. Cloud), you can still tune in to all plenary sessions via live streaming—including two teaching sessions by Rev. Dr. Mark Teasdale and Bishop Ough’s Episcopal Address. The Celebration of Life in Ministry worship service that honors recently departed clergy and those being commissioned, ordained, and welcomed as licensed local pastors will also be live streamed. Join us remotely! Learn more: <https://www.minnesotaumc.org/2019AClivestreaming>

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### BRIGHT SPOT IN OUR MIDST

- **Minnesota Earthkeepers double in number:** Twenty-two Minnesota United Methodists were recently commissioned as Earthkeepers—thus doubling the number of Earthkeepers in the Minnesota Conference to 44 total. EarthKeepers are United Methodists who are keenly aware of the ecological challenges in our world today and feel called to be part of a movement to transform the world. They work with their congregations and communities in many different ways. Isaiah Friesen, the conference’s environmental justice organizer, works with Earthkeepers and welcomes the opportunity to visit with anyone interested in further exploring creation care. Contact him at [isaiah.friesen@minnesotaumc.org](mailto:isaiah.friesen@minnesotaumc.org) or 612-230-6128.

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### STAY CONNECTED!

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