

Overview of Prayer Support for the 2012 General Conference

(Overview updated February 29, 2012)

Our desire is to engage the entire United Methodist Church in prayer: *for* the General Conference and *with* all those who will attend as delegates, bishops, and church leaders. You can be a part of this prayer ministry: (1) in your own home, (2) in your local church, (3) in your district, (4) in your annual conference, or, as described in Part II below, (5) by coming to Tampa, FL, for any part of the General Conference.



I. LOCAL PRAYER SUPPORT

Pray Now: Contact your district superintendent or conference office to receive the names of all the elected delegates for the General and Jurisdictional Conference. Begin to pray for these men and women by name as they prepare themselves intellectually and spiritually for their work.

Prayer Website: The General Board of Discipleship will provide information, guidance, and support to help United Methodists around the world pray together in new and more meaningful ways. It also makes available spiritual formation resources for elected delegates during their meetings prior to April 24. Please visit the GBOD General Conference prayer website regularly: <http://bit.ly/ydmc3d>

To hear the message by Rev. Tom Albin given at the Thursday Afternoon Opening Worship Service of the Pre-General Conference event in Tampa, FL, January 19 click the link below. The entire recording of the greeting and announcements is 86 minutes. You can fast forward by putting your computer cursor near the bottom of the video and sliding the bar forward or backward: <http://bit.ly/prayer-GC2012>

Social Media Sites: Members of the Florida Spiritual Formation Team have created a Facebook Page named: *2012 UMC General Conference Prayer Ministry*; and, the Twitter Account is: *@GC2012Pray*.

Pray Together with United Methodists Around the World: The *50 Days of Prayer Before and During the General Conference* begins on Friday, March 16, and continues for 40 days before the event and includes the 10 days that the Conference will be in session (April 24–May 4). The Upper Room has given this resource to the UMC as a gift. It is available for every United Methodist at no cost as a PDF file or an e-book that you can download from the Internet: <http://50daysofprayer.upperroom.org>

- Multiple translations are available as free pdf downloads, and other translations are in the works;
- There is a free English eBook;
- And, there is a free RSS feed, so individuals can easily receive the daily meditations via email.
- There is an English print edition available: individually for just \$4.95, or even cheaper when purchased in bulk for groups and congregations;

The Upper Room grants permission to translate this resource into other languages to serve the needs of people in other countries.

Please take some time today to [visit the 50 Days of Prayer website for the resource](#). Encourage your friends, family, and church to join with us in prayer for **God's will to be done in God's way and in God's time**.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

1. **SUBSCRIBE** for the daily meditation email. Join us in the commitment to join together in prayer alongside United Methodists around the globe.

2. "**Share**" and "**LIKE**" the page, so that it will be seen within your social networks (e.g. Facebook and Twitter).

3. Point out the page to your church staff and the web developer of your church website, as we have included a **banner widget** and instructions for adding it to a website or blogsite.

4. Tell your church leaders that the resource is available in an inexpensive print edition that can be purchased in bulk. [Click here](#) for information about purchasing this resource as a print-on-demand booklet from the United Methodist Reporter at a minimal cost that includes all shipping and handling. The cost ranges from \$4.95 for a single copy to \$3.95 for 26 copies or more. You may also order the printed resource by phone: 1-855-469-3386. To download a list of Frequently Asked Questions about this resource, [click here](#).

Commissioning Service March 11 for those who will commit to 50 Days of Prayer: The *50 Days of Prayer for the General Conference* begins on Friday, March 16. On Sunday, March 11, there will be a brief commissioning service for all those who will commit to the 50 days of prayer for General Conference and all those who will participate in the Prayer Vigil. [See the GBOD website](#).

Organize a Prayer Vigil: Consider organizing a prayer vigil in your local church, cluster, or district. One model is to pray throughout the hours that the General Conference is in session each day (8:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time). Another model would be to organize volunteers who will pray 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. And there are a variety of options, including partnering with United Methodist churches in other states or other countries. If you need help organizing such an event, attend a prayer training event or consult the GBOD General Conference prayer website identified above.

Make a Mantle of Prayer for the Delegates and Leaders: We will be making mantles of prayer to serve as a physical symbol of the prayers of United Methodists around the world. These will be created in venues across Florida and representative locations in other U.S. jurisdictions. Volunteers will come to pray, worship, and work together to create these mantles of hand-dyed silk. During the opening worship service of General Conference, these mantles will be placed on every elected delegate, bishop, worship leader, staff member, and prayer volunteer—reminding them that they are yoked with Christ and covered with the mantle of prayer as they do the work of discernment and holy conferencing. Volunteers are needed to make these prayer coverings. If you would like to host a prayer event and participate in making the mantles of prayer, please contact Joyce Estes, artistic designer for Prayer Ministry (e-mail: enjoycesilks@gmail.com).



Provide Financial Support for the Prayer Ministry: Even though The Upper Room has donated the 50 Days of Prayer and UMR has priced the printed version below their actual costs, the total cost for the other aspects of the prayer ministry is significant. The goal is to have these underwritten by donations from ordinary

people like us. Aldersgate Renewal Ministries has agreed to receive and disburse the funds for the Prayer Ministry so it will not be a burden on the General Conference or host committee. Make checks payable to: Aldersgate Renewal Ministries or ARM. On the memo line, write: "GC 2012 Prayer Ministry." Donations may be mailed to ARM, Attn. Darlene Dowlen, 121 East Avenue, Goodlettsville, TN 37072. Gifts may also be given online; in the Comments box please put "GC 2012 Prayer Ministry." The link for online giving is: <http://bit.ly/wi9XA5>

All donors will receive a receipt from Aldersgate Renewal Ministries at the end of 2012.

II. PRAYER SUPPORT IN TAMPA (for those who can come to the convention center)

Prayer Walk April 23 at 1:30 p.m. in the Tampa Convention Center Prayer Room (River Walk Rooms 3 and 4): Bishop Whitaker of Florida will lead us in the initial prayer service. Then we will pray and walk through the entire Convention Center with the help of Jonathan Dow and Margie Burger of Aldersgate Renewal Ministries. This will be a holy experience; everyone is welcome and needed.

Help with the Prayer Room: The General Conference Prayer Room is a sacred place of beauty, peace, and prayer. It is open to elected delegates, staff, visitors, and guests. Everyone is welcome. Inside the prayer room and the prayer stations (in other parts of the building), there will be multisensory prayer experiences. Volunteers are needed to help set up the prayer room and prayer stations in the convention center prior to April 23, staff them during the conference, and take them down at the end of the conference on May 4. Volunteers are also needed to be available to pray with and for the participants in the General Conference (see heading below).

Prayer Ministry Volunteers at the Convention Center: For many General Conferences, God has called people to come to the site and pray. To serve in this ministry of intercession, Florida residents will need to register as a prayer volunteer through the Florida Conference (UMC) website: <http://www.flumc2.org/pages/detail/1828>. Non-Florida residents will register through Rev. Tom Albin at The Upper Room (email talbin@upperroom.org or call 1-877-899-2780). Once you have registered, you will receive a request for supplemental information that will help the Prayer Team know how best to utilize your skills and abilities as a "prayer delegate." We will prepare a special name tag for you so elected delegates and other conference participants will be able to identify you as a person who can pray with them and for their concerns.

Each day, the volunteer schedule is divided into three shifts: 7:30-11:30 a.m., 11:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m., and 2:30-7:30 p.m. All prayer volunteers are encouraged to participate in the plenary worship services each evening and to be in prayer during the service.

Prayer volunteer orientation and training will take place at the beginning of each of the three shifts. Volunteers will check in at the main Volunteer Services Center before coming to the Prayer Room. When you arrive at the Prayer Room, we will get to know one another, pray together, receive an overview of our ministry, and receive basic training in how to pray with and for those who come for prayer. Then you will be assigned to serve in various locations throughout the Convention Center.

Spiritual Guidance: Trained spiritual directors will be on hand in the Prayer Room to help those desiring assistance in discernment and holy conferencing.

We are praying for God's will to be done in God's way and God's time. Join us in prayer and help us engage the global family of the United Methodist Church in intentional, fervent prayer.

For additional information, contact Rev. Tom Albin at The Upper Room; email: talbin@upperroom.org or call toll free: 1-877-899-2780.