

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



WHAT IS CONNECTIONAL GIVING?

No matter how or where we serve Jesus Christ, United Methodists do God's work through a unique connectional covenant. It's as simple as people coming together and combining their money to accomplish something bigger than themselves. United Methodists support apportioned and designated funds through their connectional gifts.

WHY IS THERE NO LONGER A PRINTED ENVELOPE OR PEW CARD?

As digital worship becomes a permanent part of our ministry, we've updated our resources to meet evolving needs. One change is discontinuing printed resources. Instead, we now offer only offer downloadable resources for each Special Sunday.

WHAT IS A SPECIAL SUNDAY ENVELOPE LABEL?

To support the promotion of each Special Sunday with a branded envelope, we now offer downloadable envelope labels tailored to each event. Human Relations Day is provided as an example.

These labels can be printed on Avery label #41560 and are available in both color and black-and-white. They are designed to fit standard #9 envelopes, making it easy to promote each Special Sunday offering individually.



WHAT ARE PEW CARDS?

Six digital pew cards are available to explain each Special Sunday with a simple message about why we give, how to give, and the impact of our gifts. Each card features a QR code for easy online giving, accessible to both members and visitors.

The cards can be downloaded as a single image for digital use or as four images for printing and display. They are designed to fit in pew racks and are intended to be placed out a few weeks before each Special Sunday.

These pew cards, designed for quadrennial use, include visuals of the front for all six cards and a sample back for Human Relations Day. Digital pew cards for Annual Conference and Awareness Special Sundays are also available.



HOW DOES THE CHURCH SUPPORT CONNECTIONAL GIVING OPPORTUNITIES?

After the general church budget is approved by General Conference, the responsibility for raising funds to support the missions of The United Methodist Church is divided among annual conferences based on a specific formula. Each annual and central conference, using its own formula, divides these requests, along with conference and administrative fund requests, among its local churches. Together, apportioned funds and designated funds represent our connectional giving. By combining several smaller gifts into a larger amount, we can truly effect transformation around the world.

WHAT ARE THE APPORTIONED FUNDS?

As United Methodists, we are united by a connectional covenant rooted in our shared mission and mutual relationships. This covenant fosters collaboration in ministry, mission, and support at every level of the Church. The United Methodist Church funds its mission through a proportional giving system, which distributes the churchwide budget across all conferences. Each conference's portion is determined by a formula approved within that conference. Local churches contribute to these funds, ensuring collective support for the Church's work. There are seven apportioned funds that United Methodist support.

1

WORLD SERVICE FUND

Provides basic financial support to general agencies to maintain the common vision, mission, and ministry of The United Methodist Church. The general agencies produce essential services and ministries beyond the scope of the local congregations and Annual Conferences.

2

AFRICA UNIVERSITY FUND

Supports the general operating expenses of Africa University, located in Old Mutare, Zimbabwe, including faculty and staff salaries and vital infrastructure. Additional donations through World Service Special Gifts support scholarships and the endowment fund.

3

BLACK COLLEGE FUND

Supports eleven HBCUs—the largest number of Black Colleges and universities receiving funding from any church body in the United States. UM-related HBCUs offer opportunities—regardless of race, class, gender or ethnic heritage.

4

THE EPISCOPAL FUND

Funds our bishops' salaries, office and travel expenses, and pension and health-benefit coverage. Bishops are elected to serve the churches and conferences and their work is vital to speaking and leading the Church.

5

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION FUND

Funds the administrative functions of General Conference as well as supports the work of The Connectional Table, The Judicial Council, pension and salary aid, General Council on Finance and Administration and General Commission on Archives and History.

6

INTERDENOMINATIONAL COOPERATION FUND

Enables United Methodists to participate in ecumenical and interreligious organizations advocating for unity among the worldwide Christian church.

7

MINISTERIAL EDUCATION FUND

Supports the recruitment and education of ordained and licensed ministers. Supports programs, scholarships and services at thirteen United Methodist seminaries, continuing education of ordained, licensed and diaconal ministers and courses of study.

WHAT ARE THE CHURCHWIDE SPECIAL SUNDAYS WITH AN OFFERING?

Special Sundays are set aside each year to deepen the connection between the local church and ministries on a global scale. Individuals and congregations are encouraged to support the churches' collective efforts through an offering. There are six designated Churchwide Special Sundays celebrated annually.

1

HUMAN RELATIONS DAY (January)

Raises awareness and support to strengthen human relations through community and youth outreach. Ministries supported on this Sunday include Community Developers, United Methodist Voluntary Services and Youth Offender Rehabilitation Programs.

2

UMCOR SUNDAY (March)

Raises awareness and support for the ministry of the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR). United Methodist cover the operational cost of UMCOR through this Special Sunday to ensure 100% of any donations for specific project or missionary will go towards that project and not administrative cost. This allows UMCOR to focus on immediate relief and recovery to those in need.

3

UNITED METHODIST STUDENT DAY (May)

Raises awareness and support for over seventy scholarships for undergraduate, graduate, or doctoral United Methodist students. Every dollar received assist in educating a new generation of principled Christian leaders for the church and the world.

4

NATIVE AMERICAN MINISTRIES SUNDAY (April/May)

Raises awareness and support to affirm Native American people, their languages, cultures, and gifts to the church and the world. Half of the donations collected remain in the Annual Conference to develop and strengthen ministries through the local Committee on Native American Ministries (CONAM). The remaining dollars support scholarships and vital ministries to develop new programs.

5

PEACE WITH JUSTICE SUNDAY (May/June)

Raises awareness and support for peace-related ministries. Half of the donations collected remain in each Annual Conference to strengthen local social justice ministries and fund a local peace with justice coordinator. The remaining dollars fund three grants that support ethnic/minority local church ministries and are made available to United Methodist congregations and organizations.

6

WORLD COMMUNION SUNDAY (October)

Raises awareness and support in the journey of our inclusive and diverse connection. The foundation for this Sunday is Holy Communion to remind us of our unity in Jesus Christ. Ministries supported on this Sunday include scholarships, grants, mentoring and training for leadership development.



WHAT ARE THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE SPECIAL SUNDAYS WITH AN OFFERING?

Five Special Sundays are observed annually on dates determined by local Annual Conferences that collect a special offering to fund local ministries. Donations received for these Sunday's are governed by local Annual Conferences.

- 1 CHRISTIAN EDUCATION SUNDAY**
Raises awareness and support to nurture growth and learning as disciples of Jesus Christ for all stages of life. Ministries on these Sundays support congregations and districts in providing educational and small-group ministries, developing gifts and strengths to teach, motive and lead service in the church, the community and the world.
- 2 DISABILITY AWARENESS SUNDAY**
Raises awareness and support to fully affirm and incorporate people with disabilities in the congregation and the community. Ministries on these Sundays in many cases support improvements to churches architectural and attitudinal accessibility. This Sunday helps change attitudes, priorities and practices.
- 3 GOLDEN CROSS SUNDAY**
Raises awareness and support for health and welfare ministries for individuals of all ages and stages of life within the conference. Ministries on these Sundays support health and welfare ministries such as hospitals, community-service organizations, retirement communities, and agencies that serve persons with disabilities, children, youth and families.
- 4 RURAL LIFE SUNDAY**
Raises awareness and support of the rural heritage of The United Methodist Church by affirming those who work with and on the land in rural and urban communities. We acknowledge the ongoing crisis of poor housing, health facilities and education occurring in rural areas globally. Ministries on this Sunday strengthen and nurture outreach and witness of congregations in rural areas
- 5 VOLUNTEERS IN MISSION SUNDAY**
Raises awareness and support for the United Methodist Volunteers in Mission (UMVIM) program. UMVIM is designed to provide an official channel to offer guidance and training for short-term mission. It is funded by Conferences and organized by jurisdiction.



WHAT ARE THE CHURCHWIDE AWARENESS SPECIAL SUNDAYS?

Five Special Sundays are observed annually throughout the year to recognize the discipleship of the local church. Awareness Sundays acknowledge the ministries that occur within each local church and support the local community. These Sundays do not have a special offering but commit a day to celebrate those who achieve this work.

1

HERITAGE SUNDAY (May)

Raises awareness and recognition of where the church has been, understand how it shapes us and learn from our history to move forward with a spirit of personal and social holiness. We set aside this day to remember our legacy as United Methodist. Heritage Sunday is generally celebrated on Aldersgate Sunday or the Sunday preceding that date.

2

LAITY SUNDAY (October)

Raises awareness for the work and mission of all laity — not only within the walls of the church but in everyday lives. We recognize all lay Christians are empowered by the Holy Spirit for ministry and equipped to make disciples of Jesus Christ in a world desperately in need of healing and wholeness. Laity Sunday is generally celebrated on the third Sunday in October.

3

ORGAN AND TISSUE DONOR SUNDAY (November)

Raises awareness for the life-giving benefits of organ and tissue donation and encourage all to become donors. United Methodist support health care for all, and believe that organ donation and transplantation is a gift that we can give back. Organ and Tissue Donor Sunday is generally celebrated on the second Sunday in November.

4

MEN'S MINISTRY SUNDAY

Raises awareness for the achievements and ministry men provide within and beyond the local church. We lift up organized United Methodist Men units, as well as other places and organizations where men gather for fellowship, nurture, spiritual development, witness and outreach. It is observed on a day designated by the congregation.

5

WOMEN'S MINISTRY SUNDAY

Raises awareness for the achievements and ministry women provide within and beyond the local church. We celebrate women's history and the ministry women have enhanced within the church. This includes agencies like United Women in Faith and the Status and Role of Women as well as other organizations where women serve. It is observed on a day designated by the congregation.

