

HOW TO GUIDE FOR SPECIAL SUNDAYS

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.

CHURCHWIDE SPECIAL SUNDAYS WITH AN OFFERING

Six Special Sundays are observed annually on dates determined by the General Conference that collect a special offering to fund local and global ministries. Donations received for these Sunday's are governed by general agencies.

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 Methodists 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

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.

4

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.

5

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.

6

UNITED METHODIST STUDENT DAY (November)

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.

With digital becoming a permanent format of worship, it required us to revise and adapt our current resources to meet new needs. We hope this guide answers questions on how to use the new resources to promote and teach members about the importance of giving to the Special Sundays.

WHAT IS THE SPECIAL SUNDAY ENVELOPE AND WHY ONLY ONE VERSION?

The Special Sunday envelope is designed to represent ALL six (6) Special Sundays. It is USPS- approved, meaning it can be mailed, allowing members the choice to either mail in their donations or give in person during worship. Proving only one envelope reduces inventory cost, encourages year-round giving and raises awareness of all six (6) Special Sundays.



WHAT ARE PEW CARDS?

There are six (6) individual pew cards that clarify each Special Sunday using a simplified message describing why we give, how to give and the impact of our gifts. Included on each pew card is a QR code offering easy access for members as well as visitors who prefer online giving. They are designed to fit in the pew racks located on the back of each pew and we encourage you to place them out a few weeks prior to the Special Sunday...or you can order all six and display them year-round! The images below represent the front side of the six new pew cards and offer a view of the back of Human Relations Day pew card. Pew cards are designed to be used for a quadrennial.



Order these new resources [online](#) or by phone 800-991-6011 from 7:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m. Mountain Standard Time. In addition to print version, the pew cards are available in digital format and are available for download [here](#). There are also Annual Conference and Awareness Sunday pew cards available and can be found [here](#).



IDEAS ON HOW

TO USE THE SPECIAL SUNDAY RESOURCES

Incorporate these ideas during worship, class or small groups to promote

Introduce the resources early

To inspire stronger donations, announce the upcoming celebration at least 2 weeks in advance. Consider these ideas:

- If you project resources digitally during worship, use the downloadable pew cards, social graphics or infographic to speak into the Special Sunday ministry OR use a video to explore the ministries we support
- Incorporate the graphics in your printed bulletin or newsletters 2-3 weeks prior to the Special Sunday
- Place the pew cards in pew racks three weeks prior to the Sunday or keep all 6 (six) in the pew rack to promote year-round
- Announce the Special Sunday online in emails, on social platforms or on your website using the digital graphics
- Include a pew card in each Sunday School classes or small groups to announce the upcoming Special Sunday
- Place the pew cards and envelopes in high-traffic areas around your church

Include envelope and pew card in bulletins

For those local churches who use printed bulletins, consider including the envelope and pew card in your bulletin on the day of the Special Sunday to encourage giving. Doing this also ensures those who missed the announcements may have the opportunity to understand and be aware of the special offering.

Include envelope and pew cards in mailings

For those who still mail out a newsletter, consider including the envelope and pew cards in your newsletter mailings. This allows those who are unable to attend to mail back their donation to the church.

Include envelope and pew cards in visitor packets

Include the envelope and pew cards in visitor packets or at events to share information on the ministries we support

GET YOUR CHURCH INVOLVED IN SPECIAL SUNDAY CELEBRATIONS

The local Church plays a very important role in connecting members to missions. These celebrations can help your congregation discover - or continue to support - areas of mission. Children's ministries can collect spare change drives; youth and young adult ministries can create virtual mission trips and learn about the ministries of the Special Sunday while fundraising; and the whole congregation can pray together for the outcome of the ministry.

Review the online [pastor and leader kits](#) for each Special Sunday and explore the resources available for use in worship, study, devotion and promotion.

Involve church leadership and laity in the planning of the Special Sunday. Use the [planning calendar](#) and the friends and family participate guide to help you schedule and promote the connectional giving efforts.

Invite your congregation to be a part of the Special Sunday celebration and offerings.

Share information, stories, and incorporate the provided content into your social media posts, sermons, and communications. Every Special Sunday pastor and leaders kit includes social media graphics and content to use and share.

Thank your church for participating. We encourage you to highlight the donations received and remind them of how they are the hands and feet of Christ.



HOW ARE THE DONATIONS COLLECTED FOR EACH SPECIAL SUNDAY?

Offerings for Special Sundays work best if collected through the local church. Church offices collect the donations and submit them to their annual conference treasurer who then forwards the dollars to GCFA. Promoting specific details about the online giving opportunities is an essential element of the Special Sunday offering. When posting on social media or sending out information, be sure to include a link to the online giving page for your local church. If your church does not have an online link, use the official Special Sunday donation site at ResourceUMC.org/SSGive. This will allow people to easily make a donation and will offer them giving information to use in their own social media posts to encourage others to give. Pew cards also have a QR code linking directly to the donation site.

WHAT SPECIAL SUNDAY RESOURCES ARE AVAILABLE?

PASTOR AND LEADER KITS

There is a kit for every Special Sunday available online.

Click the links below to find the appropriate resources you need:

- [Human Relations Day Sunday](#)
- [UMCOR Sunday](#)
- [Native American Ministries Sunday](#)
- [Peace with Justice Sunday](#)
- [World Communion Sunday](#)
- [United Methodist Student Day Sunday](#)

SOCIA MEDIA GRAPHICS, ADS AND INFOGRAPHICS

Graphics are easy to share and use and offer an easy way to inspire giving. Graphics are available and designed specifically for each Special Sunday and are available in multiple languages. We encourage you to follow UMCGiving [Facebook](#) so you can easily like and share all the post leading up to Special Sundays.

AGE LEVEL RESOURCES

Every age needs to be included in these connectional giving efforts. Find resource guides, adult discussion questions, devotional podcast, reading list, a youth month long plan, children's bulletins, messages and children's activities.

MISSION MOMENTS AND MORE

These resources are created to be used during worship, as newsletter content or personal use. They include weekly devotions that provide a moment for mission, an offertory prayer, a children's message and bite sized newsletter copy to be inserted in your church newsletter or bulletin. Mission Moments are posted monthly and incorporate featured content about all giving opportunities and can be viewed [here](#).

IMPACT STORIES

Use these stories to share the ministry of hope and restoration and the unmeasurable impact of generosity. These articles offer another way to share the message of the mission of the Church. They are easy to read and share and can be viewed [here](#).

PROMOTIONAL AND PLANNING RESOURCES

These resources help you plan and promote each Special Sunday. Find prewritten content, posters, mobile wallpapers and more. We have planned the full year for you in the [planning calendar](#) or you can gain new ideas in the resource guides.

