Mississippi Conference *of* The United Methodist Church

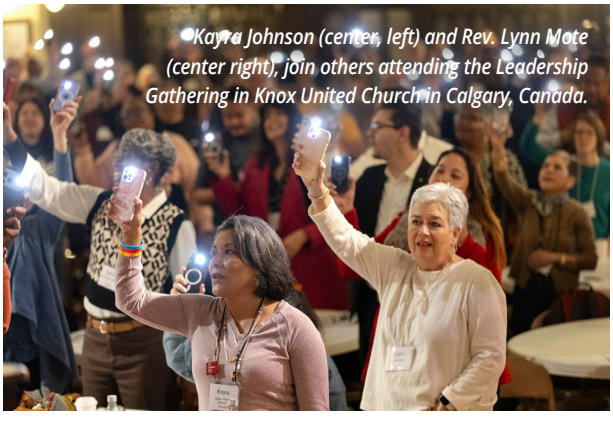
The Circuit Rider

Monthly Newsletter

Mississippians Shape Strategy, Future of the Connection

Jasmine Haynes, Communications Specialist

In late October, Knox United Church in Calgary, Alberta, Canada hosted over 230 United Methodists from four continents at the Leadership Gathering, a denomination-wide meeting without parliamentary procedure and legislation. The bishops envisioned this event being a time to dream and discern what direction the Holy Spirit is guiding the denomination to steer towards next. Mississippi's episcopal leader, Bishop Sharma Lewis Logan, invited Rev. Walter Roberts Jr., conference associate lay leader, Kayra Johnson and lay person, Emily Mote to represent Mississippi at this global denominational gathering. Find out how they represented the Mississippi Conference and learn about the sole Mississippian plenary speaker in this article. Read More



Kayra Johnson (center, left) and Rev. Lynn Mote (center right), join others attending the Leadership Gathering in Knox United Church in Calgary, Canada.

Photo courtesy of Mike DuBose, UM News

Laity Share the Gospel at State Fair



Photo courtesy of Matthew Johnson

Matthew Johnson, Communications Asssistant

Mississippi Conference laity help share the gospel and pray with fairgoers during this year's Mississippi State Fair. For the past three years the Mississippi Conference has maintained a booth inside the Mississippi Trade Mart for the duration of the State Fair. At the booth, fairgoers can receive prayer, gospel tracts, conversation and information about the conference's missions and ministries. This year in addition to conference staff and clergy, lay members stepped outside the four walls to share the love of Christ with fair visitors. Read More

Photo above: *Diane Parkinson and her husband Tony, right, speak with fairgoers, left.*

Memory Ministry Helps Seniors

WLBT in Jackson recently highlighted the ministry of Joyful Connections at St. Mark's United Methodist Church in Brandon. The ministry offers hope and community for adults with mild to moderate memory loss and dementia. Click here to watch the full story.

Photo below: *The Joyful Connections ministry at St. Mark's UMC. Photo courtesy of Facebook.com*



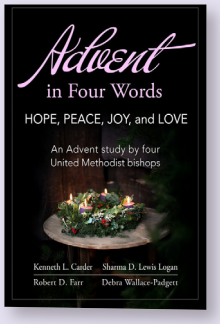
Nov./Dec. 2026

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Connection News

Bishop Lewis Logan Contributes to Advent Study



Mississippi episcopal leader, Bishop Sharma Lewis Logan, along with four other United Methodist Bishops came together to author Advent in Four Words. The Advent study offers a week's worth of daily devotionals from each bishop drawing from scripture and personal insight to guide individuals and groups alike through this sacred season. Click here for more information and to order.

Methodist Foundation Announces New Leadership



Dr. Todd Marion, ***photo right***, has been appointed as the new executive director of the Methodist Foundation of Mississippi. Marion began his tenure as executive director on November 1. Click here to read the full announcement from the Methodist Foundation of Mississippi.

Little Light of Mine Offering Benefits Children's Homes

Support the Methodist Children's Homes of Mississippi this holiday season through the Little Light of Mine Offering. The offering can be collected any Sunday from now until December 31. All proceeds will benefit the ministry and daily operation of the Methodist Children's Homes of Mississippi. Click here for more information on the Little Light of Mine offering.

METHODIST Children's Homes of mississippi

Give Online to Conference Camping Ministries

Mississippi Conference camps, Seashore Assembly, Camp Lake Stephens, Camp Wesley Pines and Gulfside Assembly, provide spaces that offer people retreat while they pursue spiritual growth. You can support the ministry and mission of Mississippi Conference camps by giving online through the donation hub. Click here for the donation hub and give your gift today.



Summer campers at Camp Wesley Pines worship together. Photo courtesy of facebook.com

Campus Ministries Unite During Statewide Wesley

College students from Wesley Foundations across the state will come together for worship and fellowship during the annual Statewide Wesley retreat. The event takes place **February 5 through 7** at Camp Wesley Pines in Hazlehurst. The cost to attend is $115 per student. Churches, small groups and individuals interested in sponsoring students should contact the Wesley Foundation director at that school. Click here to view a list of the Wesley Foundation director's contact information.



Photo right: *Wesley Foundation students gather during the 2026 Statewide Wesley retreat.Photo courtesy of Rev. Eric Davis*

Attend Virtual Do No Harm Event

The General Commission on the Status and Role of Women are sponsoring a virtual conference entitled "Do No Harm" on **November 12 through 14** beginning at 9:00 a.m. The Mississippi Conference has made it possible that anyone who registers under the Mississippi Annual Conference banner can attend free of charge. Email Rev. Mitch Cochran at mcochran@mississippi-umc.org if you have any trouble registering. Click here to register today. The event is open to clergy and laity. Clergy who attend will receive **1.5 CEUs** for the full three days.

Share Your Missions with the Conference

Celebrate your mission work by sharing it with the conference. Submit your mission moments via the Mississippi Conference Celebrating Mission Profile Questionnaire. The questionnaire will allow you to detail the mission work of your ministry, small group or benevolence. Be sure to include three to five high resolution action photos demonstrating your mission work. Click here to submit your mission moments today and click here to view tips for taking great action photos that will highlight your faith community's mission work.



Volunteers hand out food boxes during the AALA/ISI Community Service event.

Photo courtesy of Jasmine Haynes



CFO Updates

In her latest update, Mississippi Conference CFO Dr. Felicia Gavin offers news on the Holistic Management Initiative, announces a conference group insurance plan for churches, makes churches aware of the General Council on Finance and Administration's Local Church Audit Guide and offers reminders about the upcoming open enrollment. Click here to read Gavin's latest updates.

Photo courtesy of Greg Campbell Photography, Inc.

Local Church Online Training | Finance Team

As nominations committees across the state begin to discern new leadership for this charge conference season, the Mississippi Conference has resources to help these servant leaders learn their roles and responsibilities. The finance team in a local church acts as the steward of financial resources, ensuring funds are raised, managed and distributed to fulfill the church's mission and vision. Watch Dr. Felicia Gavin's, ***photo right***, finance training to learn more. To view more resources on the other subject areas of local church training click here.



SAVE THE DATES

Attend UMVIM Team Leader Trainings – Nov. 7, 14 and 21

The United Methodist Volunteers in Mission is hosting a three-week online team leader training course via Zoom. This training is for first-time mission team leaders who may have led teams in the past, or taken the training previously, and are seeking updated information. The trainings take place **November 7, 14 and 21** beginning at 9:00 a.m. Click here for more information and to register for UMVIM Team Leader Training.

Thanksgiving Office Closure – Nov. 26-27

The conference and episcopal offices will be closed **Thursday and Friday, November 26 and 27** in observance of Thanksgiving. Offices will reopen **Monday, November 30** at regular business hours.

Christmas/New Years Office Closure – Dec. 24-Jan.4, 2027

The conference and episcopal offices will be closed **December 24 through January 1, 2027**, in observance of the Christmas and New Year holidays. Offices will reopen **Monday, January 4, 2027**, at regular business hours.

Human Relations Day – Jan.17, 2027

Sunday, January 17, 2027, is Human Relations Day. The special Sunday recognized across the United Methodist connection focuses on building relationships and supporting community and youth outreach. The Human Relations Day offering supports programs like community developers, United Methodist Voluntary Services and youth offender rehabilitation. Click here for the Human Relations Day pastor and leader kit.

Publication Note: The next publication of *The Circuit Rider* will in 2027.

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

As a courtesy to the Mississippi Annual Conference, job announcements from across the United Methodist connection are featured in *The Circuit Rider*. To submit an employment notice, send an email to news@mississippi-umc.org. Postings are not guaranteed to appear more than once in Mississippi Conference publications. To read a description of job opening(s) listed below as well as other listings, click here.

- Director of Student Ministries, Dauphin Way UMC (Mobile, AL)
- Acknowledgement and Donor Stewardship Assistant, Africa University Development Office (Nashville, TN)
- Chief Financial Officer, Horizon Texas Conference (Fort Worth, TX)
- President and CEO, Georgia United Methodist Foundation (Peachtree Corners, GA)
- Director of Administration, Shandon UMC (Columbia, SC)

CARES AND CONCERNS

As you pause to pray this week, take time to ask for strength, peace and comfort for the families and friends of those listed below who have joined the Church Triumphant:

- **Rev. Clifton Whitley Jr.** went to be with the Lord on October 1.
- **Dorothy Jackson**, widow of Rev. George Jackson, joined the Church Triumphant on September 30.
- **Rev. Thomas Shreve** passed away on August 16.