The United Methodist Council of Bishops has invited each annual conference to designate one day to hold a 24-hour prayer vigil for General Conference. These prayer vigils began on January 1 with the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference and are continuing through the 131 days from January 1 to May 10, the opening day of General Conference. Because The United Methodist Church has 131 annual conferences throughout the world, each annual conference is able to take one day. Bishop Young Jin Cho selected **Sunday, April 10**, to be the day for the Virginia Conference prayer vigil. Mount Olivet’s prayer hour is 6:00-7:00 a.m.

Thank you for taking this hour to pray for the delegates, staff, guests, and United Methodist Church as we prepare for our quadrennial General Conference.

**SUGGESTED SUPPLIES**

It will be helpful to have a Bible, a cross, the United Methodist logo with the cross and flame, a globe or world map, paper to write on and pens or pencils for writing, a candle, and a means to light the candle.

When you are ready to begin, we encourage you to use these words or others of your own choosing:

- We light this candle as a reminder that Jesus Christ is the light of the world.
- We place this cross is to remind us that we serve a risen Lord who is the head of the church.
- We place The United Methodist cross and flame to remind us that we were formed in 1969 from the union of two expressions of the Church universal, the Evangelical United Brethren Church and the Methodist Church (the two flames by the one cross).

**OPENING SCRIPTURE**

*[When you are ready, please read the following passage from the John: 1:1--5 (the Common English Bible translation is printed below).*]

1 In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God.
2 The Word was with God in the beginning.
3 Everything came into being through the Word, and without the Word nothing came into being. What came into being
4 through the Word was life, and the life was the light for all people.
5 The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness doesn’t extinguish the light.

Prayerfully reflect on this truth, that the Word—Jesus Christ—was with God and was God from the very beginning. Everything that “came into being” did so because the Word—Jesus—was involved in the creation of all things—all people—all planets—all solar systems—everything! We are one in Christ by creation and by redemption. Through our profession of faith in Christ and baptism in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, we are spiritually connected to one another.
What prayers, songs or feelings or pictures come to you now as you reflect on the reality Jesus Christ is the creator, light and life of all people?

[Pause here for two to five minutes. This will allow time to center ourselves in Christ, pray, sing and draw, etc.]

Now, offer a prayer for yourself and for all your brothers and sisters in the United Methodist Church who have responded to the call to Christian discipleship. Open yourself to this holy mystery of our oneness in Jesus Christ. Meditate on the spiritual reality that we are sisters and brothers. Pray that this deep and essential truth will undergird and guide all preparation for the General Conference, all the interactions during the General Conference and the commitments made at the General Conference.

[Pause three to five minutes for prayer, reflection and writing, etc.]

When you are ready, read this verse from John 1:14 CEB.

14 The Word became flesh
and made his home among us.
We have seen his glory,
glory like that of a father’s only son,
full of grace and truth.

Let the Holy Spirit help us consider anew the mystery of the incarnation, the cosmic Christ who was involved in all creation, now come to us as a baby—so vulnerable—so powerful—so unique. Consider Charles Wesley’s poetic reflection on the mystery of how the unique Word of God became flesh, “God contracted to a span, incomprehensibly made man.”

What prayer or thought comes to you now as you consider the mystery of the incarnation—God with us—the Word become flesh?

[Pause to reflect and pray. Feel free to write or draw. If there is a group, invite people to briefly tell about the thoughts and prayers that come to them today.]

When you are ready, consider the character and content of the living Word of God who “became flesh and made his home among us...full of grace and truth.” As you consider the essential nature of Jesus Christ—full of love, grace and truth—what prayer, song, feelings and pictures come to you now?

[Pause for two to five minutes to allow yourself to write or draw or pray the thoughts and feelings that come to you.]

**THE GENERAL CONFERENCE**

General Conference is the United Methodist Church’s top legislative body. It meets every four years; and, it is the only entity that speaks for The United Methodist Church. The 2016 General Conference will be held in Portland, Ore., in the Western Jurisdiction.

The General Conference is an international body of nearly 1,000 delegates. The delegates are elected by annual conferences (at annual conference sessions) to attend General Conference. They represent all annual conferences around the world. Half of the delegates are laity (non-clergy members), half are clergy. In 2016 there will be 864 voting delegates from the following areas of the world.
Bishops attend the General Conference but cannot vote. Different bishops serve as presiding officers during the conference. Other bishops cannot speak unless permission is specifically granted by the delegates.

During General Conference, delegates discuss and vote on petitions and resolutions proposed by individuals, agencies, annual conferences, and other groups within the denomination. These actions result in a revision of the *Book of Discipline*, the denomination's book of law, and *Book of Resolutions*, policies of the denomination on current social issues.

It is at General Conference where delegates wrestle with today's issues in light of scriptural teachings and the church's understanding of that teaching. Here is where the church's official stands and church policies are made regarding such issues as mission, vision, discipleship, spiritual formation, human sexuality, abortion, war, peace, and funding.

Consider the awesome responsibility of these 864 men and women from around the world, meeting for 11 days for worship, prayer and discussion in order to discern God's will and direction for 13 million United Methodists.

Pray for this assembly, its member and its leaders, as the Holy Spirit leads you to pray. [Pause for a few minutes to do pray, reflect, write or draw.]
THE DELEGATES AND ALTERNATES

Here are the names of the lay and clergy delegates and alternates of our annual conference. If you wish, you can also pray for the delegates and alternates from your Jurisdiction or any of the other areas of the world.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General Conference Elected Clergy:</th>
<th>General Conference Elected Laity:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Tom Berlin</td>
<td>1. Martha Stokes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Denise Honeycutt</td>
<td>3. Shirley Cauffman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Tammy Estep</td>
<td>5. Virginia Greer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Ileana Rosario</td>
<td>7. Joyce Winston</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Peter Moon</td>
<td>8. Gene Mims</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Mark Ogren</td>
<td>10. Alison Malloy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jurisdictional Conference Elected Clergy:</th>
<th>Jurisdictional Conference Elected Laity:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Seonyoung Kim</td>
<td>1. Neill Caldwell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Keith Boyette</td>
<td>2. Willard Douglas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Bob Cooper</td>
<td>3. Larry Burian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Alex Joyner</td>
<td>4. Jacob Paysour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Beth Givens</td>
<td>5. Olivia Hinton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Tommy Herndon</td>
<td>6. Michael Monge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Marc Brown</td>
<td>7. Vicki A. Boger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Jason Stanley</td>
<td>8. Virginia Turner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Greg West</td>
<td>10. Aimee Hong</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
11. David Ford

Alternates:
1. R. Bruce Johnson
2. Brenda Biler
3. Alan Combs
4. Thomas Barnard
5. Won Un
6. David McAlister-Wilson
7. Kathleen Overby Webster
8. Ed Walker
9. David Rash
10. John D. Copenhaver
10. Paulo DaSilva

11. Rachel Wright

Alternates:
1. Zach Ferguson
2. Leon Newbanks
3. Lori Valentine de Segovia
4. Nancy Yarborough
5. Nina Winkler
6. Carlos Liceaga
7. Joel Joyner

Pray for the delegates and alternates as the Holy Spirit leads you to pray.

THE WORLD

The Church of Jesus Christ is a missionary church—engaged in God’s mission to seek and save the lost, the least and the lonely. If you have a globe or world map, prayerfully gaze at the world, imagine the seven billion people on it, and pray the prayer that God places on your heart.

Pray that God’s mission—to seek and to save the lost—will be the top priority of all Christians, in all churches, including the United Methodist Church around the world.

[Pause for a few minutes to do pray, reflect, write or draw. Be attentive and receptive to the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Are there particular people or places or situations in the world that you feel led to pray for now?]

THANKSGIVING

As you close your hour of prayer. Give thanks to God for the gift of Jesus Christ—the Word of God become flesh—full of grace and truth. Give thanks to the risen Lord, Jesus Christ, who sent the Holy Spirit to lead and guide us—teaching us everything that Jesus taught the first disciples.

If you feel led, you might want to conclude this hour with The Lord’s Prayer.