



Wesleyan Covenant Association International Intercessors Network Prayer Guide June, 2024

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Thank you for praying

The ministry of the WCAIIPN supports the mission of the Wesleyan Covenant Association. The WCA is not so much an organization as it is an international network responding to the prompting of the Holy Spirit in praying, connecting, working, and rejoicing as we see the building wave of spiritual revival the Lord is bringing now.

It is a profound privilege, a beautiful gift, to be given eyes to see and hearts that desire this move of God across the nations. We welcome the renewing work of the Lord among the Methodists and seek, with earnest prayer, to open the gates, break down the barriers, overcome the schemes of The Enemy, quell the conflicts, so that with Spirit-given unity we can together worship, serve, and witness in the Matchless Name of Jesus Christ, our Redeemer.

Our Focus This Month: June 2024

The decisions and direction of the recent United Methodist General Conference are reverberating across Methodism and beyond. Many have been startled into an unwelcome and deeply unsettling awareness of what one Filipino observer called the "bright red line" drawn by the General Conference. Many local church members and leaders are awakening to the reality that these recent decisions require an unavoidable choice on their part. And this choice must now be made when all accessible exits paths have been closed.

These are choices many have also hoped to avoid. They may have been told – and are being told yet – that nothing has changed. They sense within, however, that a seismic change has indeed taken place. They are finding themselves at a fork in the road. The Holy Spirit is stirring them.

Many of us in the WCA network are familiar with this experience. We know the personal disorientation, the spiritual dis-ease, the fraying of relationships with others in our local church, and our wondering whether we have the wisdom, strength, and resilience that faithfulness will require as we respond to the prompting of the Holy Spirit. We have been on this journey ourselves and now have the privilege of praying for others who are just beginning to take steps into the waters of renewal, revival, and change.

When we become aware of the unwelcome and unsettling situation in which we find ourselves, we often blame others, or divert our eyes from the truth, or launch prematurely into activism of some sort. Prayer opens the door to a better way.

Since the UMC General Conference, my email inbox has bulged with “what shall we do now?” inquiries. I have received a major uptick in phone calls from individuals seeking resources, information, and guidance for themselves and the congregations of which they are part. The underlying tone of all of these contacts has been the same: distress!

I am suggesting here four weekly themes as we lift up our sisters and brothers in their time of distress and decision. We welcome the Holy Spirit as Counselor, Comforter, and Guide to direct their steps and strengthen their faithfulness. We are aligning our praying with the stirring of the Holy Spirit.

June 1-7: Confession and Reorientation

Recommended Scripture: 1 Peter 1: 3-12

A prompt for our praying this week:

Many of us, perhaps most of us, believe that choosing God’s will is something like choosing to pursue a New Year’s Resolution. We conjure up our determination and fortify our resolve. We rely upon our willpower. This is what separates the strong people from the weak people: those with strength of character are better than those with weaker character, right? Willfulness is a standard reaction when we know a change is needed. Our willfulness, however, often attempts to exchange our own bright ideas for the Lord’s guidance.

Our sisters and brothers in many UM congregations are being jostled awake. They are rightly looking for “what to do” and “how to fight” and “where to sign up with the insurgency”. As we pray for them and for ourselves, let’s release the immediate impulse to willfulness and action. First, let’s offer confession (for them and for us, as appropriate) for spiritual lethargy and apathy, for indifference, and for our penchant to avoid uncomfortable truth.

Beyond confession, we need clarity about our situation. What is the “bright red line” we see ourselves? What is the decision we are called to make within the congregation of which we are part? How are we to bring influence that is strong, loving, and wise to help others along the path of spiritual engagement with God’s prompting for us now?

These are the prayers this week for ourselves, our UM sisters and brothers, and the mission of our WCA network globally.

June 8-14: Steady On!

Recommended Scripture: 2 Peter 1-3

A prompt for our praying this week:

Methodists generally, particularly in the USA, have been regarded and have regarded themselves as “really nice people.” Many of us have been content to be regarded by the larger cultural around us as generically religious. We have not been distinguished by a particular theology or practice or custom. As a result, many of our sisters and brothers who are just coming to awareness of the conflict around them, in both the church and the larger culture, are also becoming aware that they are not well-prepared to swim in the deeper waters of these challenging times. They realize, though perhaps are hesitant to confront, that their grasp of the gospel and their faithfulness in obedience to Christ may be shallow, weak, and inadequate.

That describes most of us at least some of the time, right?

2 Peter is a potent description of both the absolute faithfulness of God in his mercy toward us and also the corrosive nature of false teaching and deceptive leaders within the church. Our praying this week is not blaming and cursing but pleading with the Lord for a return to the Scriptures, an appeal to the Lord to awaken a desire for consecrated living, and a recognition that this calling from the Lord is right now; it cannot be deferred, or delayed, or delegated to someone else.

Our plea is for the Holy Spirit to open our own ears and eyes as well as those of our sisters and brothers. If we have been building our life and faith on anything other than the firm foundation of Jesus Christ, now is the time to re-commit, re-connect, re-consecrate ourselves to follow the Lord rather than accommodate ourselves to the expectations of the culture. The time for coasting along as a “community of the really nice” is over; this is the season to dig deeper than many of our Methodist friends have ever experienced. We are lifting them to the Lord as they recognize their need to grow up in a hurry.

Let’s pray that our sisters and brothers, and we ourselves, will, as the old hymn puts it, stand up, stand up for Jesus!

June 15-21: Joyful, Generous, Confident Hope

Recommended Scripture: Titus 3: 1-8

If you’ve found yourself “deep in the weeds” of confession, reorientation, and restoring foundations of both faith and faithful living as we have prayed this month, this week we breathe in the joyful, generous, confident hope of the gospel.

I had the privilege of being in Charlotte, NC during the UMC General Conference. WCA was there in partnership with our friends from Good News. Our goal was advocacy, monitoring developments, and networking. About a third of our team came from Africa. On the one hand, the decisions of the UMC General Conference brought deep disappointment to all of us. But almost as quickly, it brought great hope: the decisions of the General Conference had made the “bright red line” of decision very bright indeed. The ebullient joy of the gospel bubbled up in our conversations since we have every confidence that the gospel of the Lord Jesus is God’s victorious alternative.

Let’s pray this week in joyful humility that even though we have trouble in the world, Lord Jesus has overcome the world. Even though we may experience trials and difficulties for a while, these are overshadowed by the joyful confidence we have in the living hope of Christ’s resurrection victory.

Pray particularly for our sisters and brothers in UMC Central Conference this week. Things are rapidly developing in the Annual Conferences in Africa, the Philippines, and Europe. Decisions are underway. Pray for humble and courageous leadership in the sessions of Annual Conferences outside the USA. Pray for protection for those who stand faithfully for the gospel. Ask for God’s provision of safety, financial resources, and places of ministry. The stand of faithfulness can be costly. Ask for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit to provide favor from government officials in the various countries where change in the church is undertaken in major ways. And pray for new, loving, equitable partnerships between brothers and sisters in the USA with our brothers and sisters in other parts of the world. Arise, Lord Jesus!

It is also the Annual Conference “season” in the USA: prayer for doors to be opened so that those congregations who prayerfully discern that the time for separation has come, will be given an opportunity to exit.

June 22-29: Future Focus of the WCA

Recommended Scripture: 1 Corinthians 15:58

You are aware, I imagine, that the Wesleyan Covenant Association is at a pivotal point. We have served as the metaphorical midwife for the development of the Global Methodist Church. We have a continuing role in helping congregations and individuals who want to leave the UMC behind in exchange for a more faithful and fruitful future in the Lord’s work.

Pray for clarity of vision, wisdom, and resources to complete the mission for which the WCA has been called into existence. Ask for flexibility and adaptability so we may keep in step with the Holy Spirit.

Pray in gratitude and blessing for the networks of individuals across annual conferences and countries who have been the “boots on the ground” to provide information, assistance, and direction for those who have experienced a calling to faithfulness which, in so many cases, leads them to leave the UMC.

Pray for new resources being developed and gathered, for the development and launch of a refreshed WCA website, and decisions about the overall future of our network.

Pray particularly for the WCA Global Council and the coming WCA Global Legislative Assembly (coming July 18) via Zoom for unity, wisdom, and a palpable sense of the Lord’s leadership.

Above all, pray for a continued outpouring of the Holy Spirit in raising up a global community of faithful brothers and sisters who proclaim and live the gospel.

Thank you for your ministry of prayer!
It is a great honor to be partners in ministry with you.