



THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Dakotas-Minnesota Area

Resident Bishop
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April 9, 2025

Dear members and friends of Dakotas United Methodist Churches,

"We love because God first loved us." - 1 John 4:19

Even as we journey through this Lenten season toward the cross and the empty tomb, conference leadership is preparing for the 32nd session of the Dakotas Annual Conference, which will take place June 6-8, 2025, at Dakota Wesleyan University in Mitchell, South Dakota. I look forward to this time of reconnection with fellow United Methodists from across the Dakotas, the rejuvenation of our faith that comes with worship, celebration, learning and conversation, and the recommitment to our shared calling and mission.

This year's theme is *"Created for Love"* and will center around the words of 1 John 4:7-21. These words remind us that the love we were created for is lived out in tangible, incarnational ways. It is through our acts of love that God is made visible to the world and God's love is made complete (4:12.) One such act of love is our Miracle Offering – an act of hope, generosity, and grace that extends our reach beyond what any one congregation could do alone. **This year, the 2025 Miracle Offering will support the ongoing, life-giving work of the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR).**

Whether responding to natural disasters, addressing global food insecurity, attending to urgent health needs, or equipping communities with clean water and hygiene kits, UMCOR is often the first to arrive and the last to leave. Every act of relief, every rebuilt home, every safe space provided, every life cared for is an embodiment of love made visible. UMCOR epitomizes the power of our connection and exemplifies incarnational love. Your gifts support well-coordinated, sustainable relief efforts.

In a world where so many feel forgotten, abandoned, or overwhelmed by crisis, our partnership in the work of UMCOR bears witness to the love of Jesus in this world. We proclaim, with courage and compassion, that love still leads. Because God first loved us, we extend that love through action—through giving, serving, and showing up. The role of the church—the Body of Christ that is created for the purpose of loving our neighbors—has never been more critical.

In addition to giving financially to the Miracle Offering, **congregations are invited to collect items for Midwest Mission** and bring them to annual conference. UMCOR partners with mission depots such as Midwest Mission to quickly and effectively respond following a disaster. Home Care Kits (formerly known as Flood Buckets) and Personal Dignity Kits, along with other items, act as visible signs of God's love and the church's presence to people in need around the world and around the corner.



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Please invite the members and friends of your congregation to join in this shared act of generosity and incarnational love. Every gift, whether large or small, is part of a greater miracle that says to a hurting world: You are not alone. You are beloved.

Additional information and resources to promote the 2025 Miracle Offering can be found on our website, www.dakotasumc.org.

Let us join together—one church, one body, one heart—Created for Love.

Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bishop Lanette Plambeck".

Bishop Lanette Plambeck
Resident Bishop
Dakotas-Minnesota Episcopal Area
The United Methodist Church