



Prayer Vigil: “Called to Action”

A Prayer Guide from the North Alabama Prayer Team

Matthew 28:19-20—“Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to obey everything that I’ve commanded you. Look, I myself will be with you every day until the end of this present age.”

This great commission pronounced by Jesus before he ascended is an echo of his first command to his first disciples in Matthew 4:19: “Come, follow me, and I will send you out to fish for people.” From the beginning of his ministry until he left this earth, Jesus called his disciples to action. His language was imperative. Jesus’ call to action remains imperative for us today.

Come! First we must move from where we are to where Jesus is. **Follow!** But Jesus does not stand still. Like the first disciples, we learn as we walk. **Go!** We must go into the world; the world will not come to us. **Make!** Disciples are created through a loving, continuous, relational witness. **Baptize!** Carry the water, the symbol of the Holy Spirit poured out, to the world. **Teach!** Share everything Christ commanded us to do. **Remember!** Act with the confidence of Christ, because you remember.

Thousands of delegates will converge for General Conference to determine the future of the United Methodist Church. They have agreed to lay down their nets to come and follow. These delegates are undoubtedly feeling the awesome responsibility entrusted to them, and are already seeking God’s will in prayer, in study, in meeting and discussion.

More than two thousand years ago a smaller delegation met in Galilee. For three years they had walked and talked and lived and learned as they followed Jesus. And then, one last time, Jesus came to be with them, just as he had promised. His final words were a call to action—to go and make disciples, to baptize and teach, and amidst it all, to remember.

And no doubt it will be the same at our General Conference. It will be a great event as delegates gather from all over the world. But its true significance will be derived only from the presence of the One who called the disciples to meet him for a last word in Galilee, the One who called His disciples to action. The One who continues to call us to action today. And no doubt Jesus will renew that call clearly at General Conference. Let us pray for the same expectation held by the original disciples as they met in Galilee and waited.

PRAYER: God of all nations, we pray for the United Methodist Church and for General Conference. Bless the leaders and delegates as they seek to move from where they are to where you are. Grant a sense of expectancy of your presence

during the preparation and the Conference. Prepare hearts and minds to once again hear and respond to your commission to go, make, baptize, teach and remember. We pray through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Prayer vigil ideas from Lyn Cosby and the North Alabama Prayer Team:

- Plan a conference-wide kickoff event prior to the assigned date
- Plan gatherings in each district
- Appoint area recruiters to solicit volunteers
- Seek out existing prayer teams or groups in local churches
- Write and share simple prayers among volunteers
- Plan activities that can be done while praying, such as making prayer beads or writing messages of encouragement to delegates
- Involve children and youth

Some things to share with prayer volunteers for the day of prayer:

- A list of your own delegation
- A list of prayer concerns specific to your area
- A list of Annual Conferences / Episcopal areas worldwide
- A list of actively serving Bishops
- A list of Legislative Committees
- The General Conference Agenda
- A list of major legislative issues