

OIIMC Prayer for General Conference of The United Methodist Church - By the Rev. Bryan Tener

Ever living and ever loving Spirit,

We praise you for your loving presence with us, a presence who will never leave us, a Spirit presence that draws us towards you, that sustains us and that shapes us. You walked with us long ago, as we walked the trail of removal, removed from sacred spaces. You walked with us as we found ourselves in new lands far from what was known. You walk with us today as we move forward as a people, and in particular, as a denomination, and we trust that you will walk with us for the generations to come.

Come, Spirit, Come.

Work within our denominational leaders, our Bishops, Clergy, and Lay delegates and bring renewal—that communication can be open; that relationships divided through the difference of views and difference of opinions would be open to understanding and open to reconciliation; that barriers that have been put up would be torn down so that love would find a way.

That through your presence all who a part of General Conference would be firmly grounded in hope.

In the strenuous and sometimes frustrating work that takes place at General Conference offer your sustaining presence to all of our delegates so that they would continue their work with clear minds and open hearts.

And throughout the continued preparation before General Conference, during General conference, and even after offer your wisdom that our leaders would discern a path forward that is evermore faithful to your love and more closely aligned with your vision for this world.

Come, Spirit, Come.

fill your church—in particular the United Methodist Church with your grace and love

So that in our life as a church we would offer a powerful witness to the world of what it means to love alike although we may not always think alike.

that our lives will make a real difference to real people in the real world as we work towards the fulfillment of your life giving mission for others.

That your love lived out through the life of our church would be a beacon of hope to others and that in all our relations we would see all peoples deeply connected with one another, with all of creation, and with You.

Come, Spirit, Come.

fill our lives with your presence—so that more and more every day, all that we do and say will be an expression of love for others in a way that transforms the world, where broken people find healing, where the stranger finds hospitality, where those who feel isolated or alone find relationship and experience community, that your expression of love would bring an experience of, peace, of hope, and of life.

Through your church, may your Spirit's presence lead us to be more committed to justice, lead us to peace, and lead us towards your kingdom as we move into the unknown future holding onto a known hope, the hope of new life and resurrection.

Come, Spirit, Come

Be present, lead us, shape us, use us so that we would be more faithful to you as a denomination, as local churches, and as individuals. Help us to remember the ways in which your love was made known through the generations before us, that we would experience your loving presence and live it out so that the generations who come after would know your love. In Jesus' most holy name we pray. Amen.

Response Reading - By the Rev. Delana Taylor

L: Walking in the footsteps of our ancestors, listening, praying, singing songs of hope. Their words remind us that despite hardship and injustice,

P: We are still here, with grateful hearts. God is with us on our journey

L: Creating in the image of the Creator, we sow and water, tend and harvest with the cycle of the moon and the seasons of the Earth.

P: We are still here, with humble hearts. God is with us on our journey.

L: Hearing the voices of those who stepped out in faith from generations past, they call us to shake off the burdens of this life, to sing and to dance.

P: We are still here, with joyful hearts. God is with us on our journey.

L: Bound in spirit to one another, through the stories of our people, connected to Creator and earth in a web of relationship, seeking grace and balance in all we do.

P: We are still here, with hopeful hearts, God be with us on our journey.

Prayer - By the Rev. Delana Taylor

Creator God, as you have gathered us in generations past, lead and guide us this day
as we seek your wisdom and your vision for our people.

Give us eyes to see one another as you see us,
people of one God,

connected to one another and to you

In all our relations, and in your son Jesus.

Give us ears to hear the wisdom of our elders
and the laughter of our children.

Give us words of blessing and healing for a hurting world.

Open our hearts and lead us on the path of peace.

We stand together on sacred ground with grateful hearts,
knowing that the One who promises is faithful and true. Amen.