

A Communication Plan for

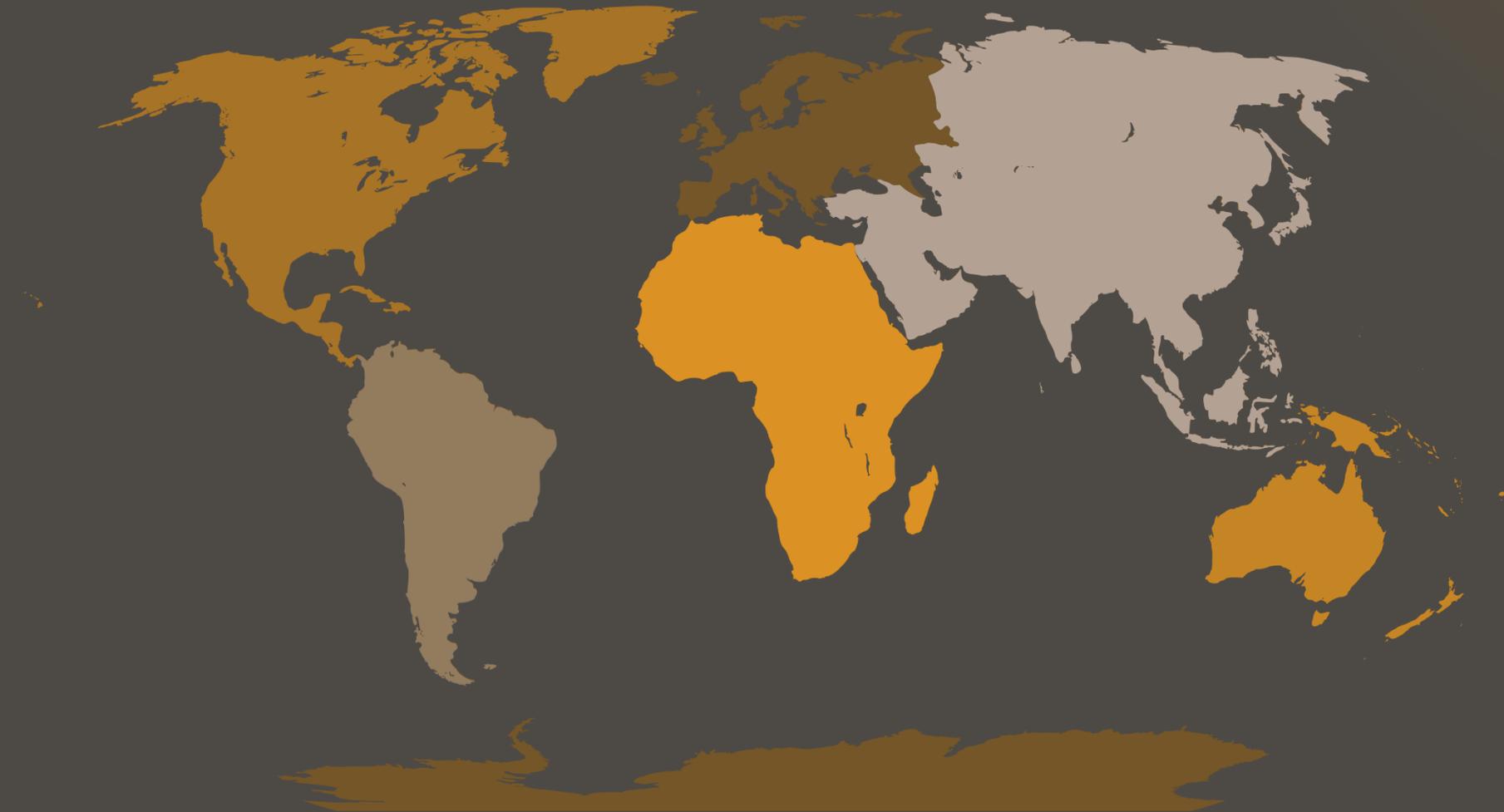
The United Methodist Church



JANUARY 2026

A worldwide church

RICH WITH GEOGRAPHICAL, CULTURAL, LINGUISTIC & GEOPOLITICAL DIVERSITY



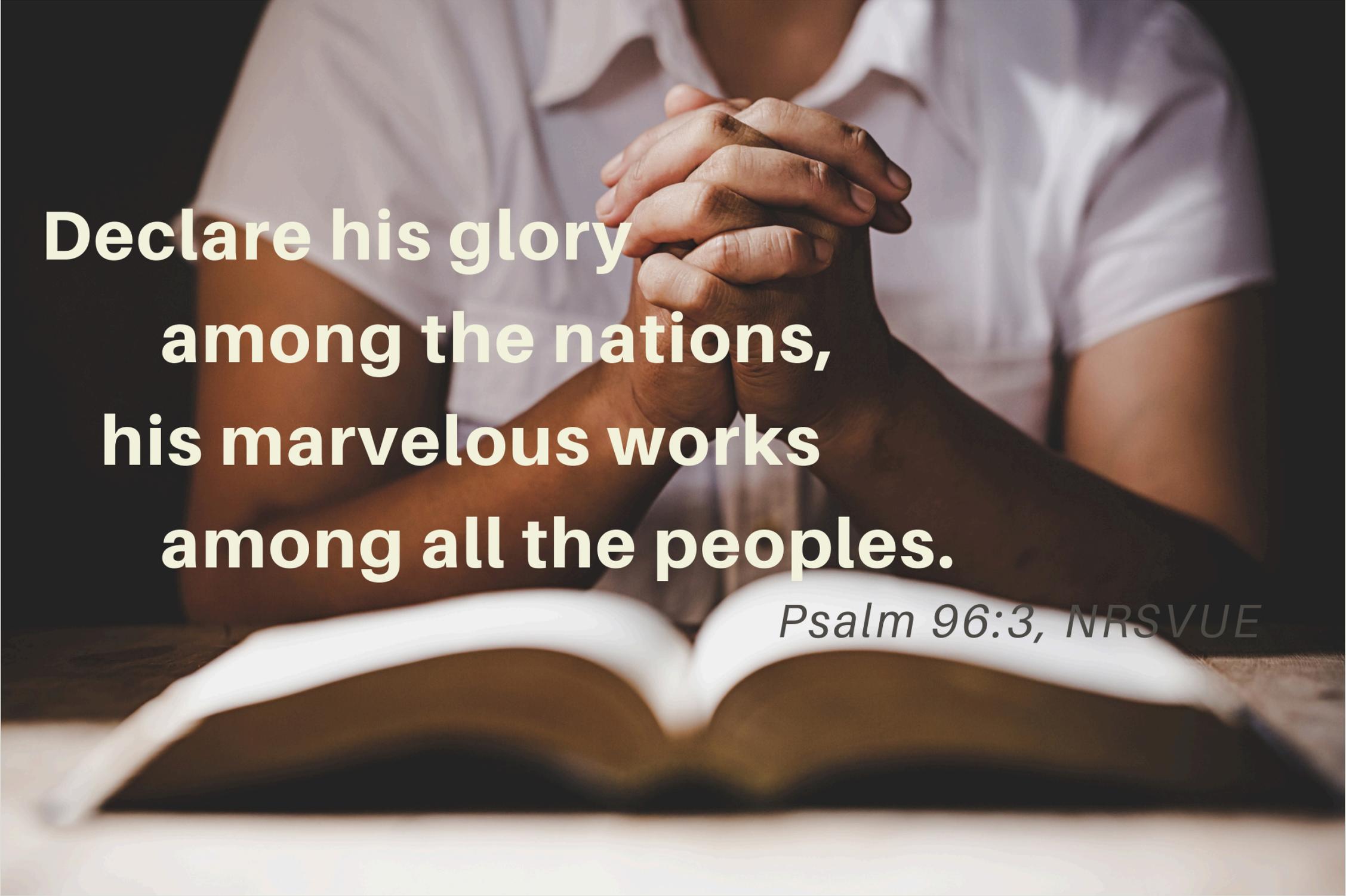
Overview

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Our Mission:

*Engaging
The United Methodist Church
through Christ-centered
communications.*

To establish a clear, consistent, and engaging communication strategy that strengthens connections with church members, empowers leaders and enhances public awareness on a global scale.

A photograph of a person wearing a white short-sleeved shirt, with their hands clasped in prayer over an open Bible. The Bible is open to a page with text, and the person's hands are resting on the pages. The background is dark, and the lighting is soft, highlighting the person's hands and the Bible.

**Declare his glory
among the nations,
his marvelous works
among all the peoples.**

Psalm 96:3, NRSVUE

Guiding Values

LEAD

Thoughtfully and prayerfully, we will lead The UMC in communications

ALIGN

We will align our messages throughout the denomination in collaboration with partners at all levels

We will listen deeply to all of our audiences globally and communicate in a culturally and linguistically relevant manner

GLOBAL

We will embrace the diversity of perspectives within local churches

EMBRACE

Objectives:

MEMBERS

Strengthening faith, fostering a worldwide community and providing spiritual resources

LEADERS

Supporting leadership for ministry through denominational resources, sharing best practices across cultural contexts and encouraging collaboration

MEDIA/PUBLIC

Showcasing The UMC's global impact, values and history



AUDIENCE: MEMBERS

Individuals who regularly attend worship and participate in church activities across different countries and cultures

*Subsets that may require targeted communication:
Seekers, donors*

Members of The United Methodist Church are a diverse group who have endured significant challenges in recent years. The cultural conversation around the church has focused on division, and many members have faced this reality in their local churches and conferences.

Post disaffiliations, members are now in a season of healing, reconciliation, and rebuilding. They need messages of hope that foster unity, strengthen our shared identity as United Methodists, and inspire confidence in a strong future. Our communication must shift away from a “conflict-centered” narrative and refocus on our shared mission—making disciples and living out the vision of the church.

In this context, our members need encouragement and inspiration, particularly stories about how The United Methodist Church continues to embody its mission of sharing God’s love through outreach to their communities. Ultimately, all member-focused content aims to bring people into a relationship with Jesus Christ as we engage them with content on the mission, ministry and history of The UMC.

These messages are best shared through:

- UMC.org
- *UM Now* newsletter
- *Get Your Spirit in Shape* podcast
- UMC Facebook page, YouTube, TikTok





AUDIENCE: LEADERS

Clergy, ministry coordinators, bishops, denominational leaders, local church leaders and volunteers, annual conferences, regional conferences, delegates, caucus groups and the Connectional Table

United Methodist leaders play a vital role in the health and vitality of The UMC. In recent years, they have faced increasing challenges in leading their congregations amid cultural change, theological debates and the ongoing need to adapt to new ways of worship and ministry.

These leaders need practical, actionable resources to support their ministries, guidance in navigating denominational changes and encouragement in their roles. Our content should equip them with tools and insights that foster effective leadership and help them sustain and grow their ministries in the local church, their communities and across the globe.

The best channels to serve local church leaders where they can find timely updates, leadership resources and curated content to meet their specific needs are:

- [ResourceUMC.org](https://www.resourceumc.org)
- *The Source* eNewsletter
- *MyCom* podcast and eNewsletter
- *The ResourceUMC* Facebook page
- *United Methodist Videos* YouTube channel

AUDIENCE: UNITED METHODISTS AROUND THE WORLD



The United Methodist Church is a global, multilingual connection shaped by diverse cultures, experiences, and languages. Across Africa, Europe, the Philippines, and the United States, United Methodists live out the church’s mission in many contexts. Our communication reflects the worldwide nature of the church and seeks to engage people in their languages and cultural contexts.

This includes theological reflections, stories of mission and ministry and denominational updates that reflect the lived experiences of United Methodists around the world. Building trust and engagement across the worldwide church requires consistent, high-quality multilingual content delivered in ways that are accessible and culturally attentive.

Key channels for this work include the French and Portuguese versions of UMC.org and ResourceUMC.org, along with language-specific newsletters, social media channels, and partnerships with regional communicators who help identify, develop, and share stories from across the worldwide church.



AUDIENCE: MEDIA & PUBLIC

Journalists, international media, and the general public

Strategic media placement plays a crucial role in shaping brand perception by influencing how, where, and when audiences encounter a brand's message. Securing media placement in the right channels within the right context ensures that the brand reaches its ideal audience while reinforcing relevance, and placement in high-quality, trusted media outlets that enhance brand authority and trustworthiness.

We plan to continue using this "free-placement" strategy in lieu of paid advertising to manage brand perception.

Primary Outreach Channels

These core channels are supported by a broader network of newsletters, social media, video, podcasts, and partner communications that help share and amplify key messages across the connection.

See Appendix for detailed channel reach

MEMBERS



10.1M PAGEVIEWS

Denominational website for members and those seeking spirituality and a community of faith

+Social +eNewsletter +Podcast

LEADERS



4.8 M PAGEVIEWS

Denominational website for leaders delivering content from across the denomination

+Social +eNewsletter +Messaging
+Podcast

NEWS



3.4M PAGEVIEWS

UM News stories and features

+Social +eNewsletter +Podcast

PUBLIC



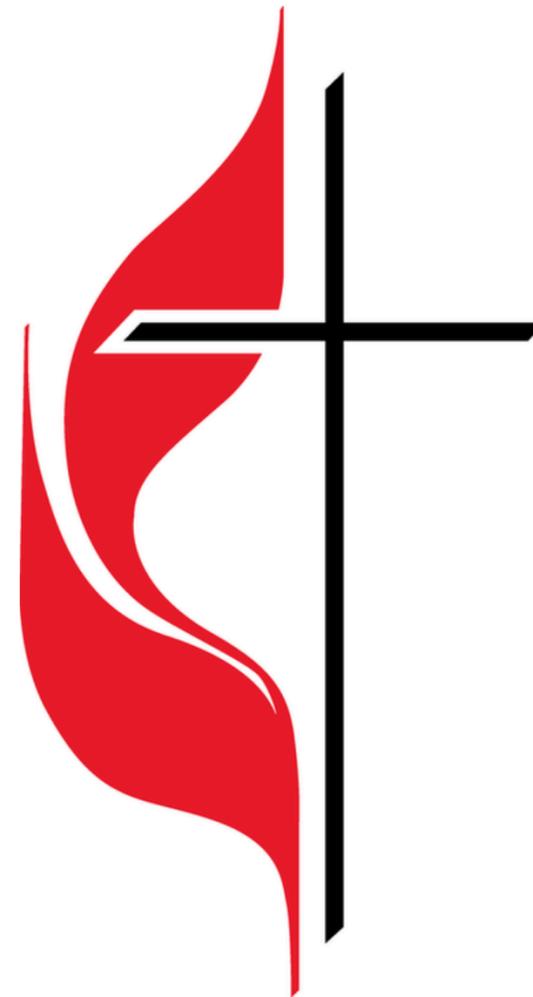
Public Relations: Raising awareness of the mission and ministries of The UMC through media placements

+Press conferences +Media
+Crisis communications
+PR consultation

Accomplish these objectives while...

Creating a strong positioning for The United Methodist Church brand

Through campaigns like #LoveServeLeadUMC and #BeUMC, we continue to highlight what The UMC is and celebrate its mission and ministry.





*A new quad has new challenges,
priorities and needs*

Accomplish these objectives while...

Aligning with Denominational Priorities

- Creating awareness, understanding and adoption of the vision of The UMC
 - Supporting the Leadership Gathering and other denominational initiatives/priorities
 - Promotion of stewardship and giving
-

Accomplish these objectives while...

Creating cultural and linguistic relevance

One faith, many expressions!

We are a diverse Church with different perspectives, cultures, languages, experiences and challenges.

While we share a common Gospel, how we interpret and live it may differ.

Therefore, we must adapt how we communicate.

Partnerships & Collaboration



In 2026, partnerships will continue to be a cornerstone of our communication strategy. We are aligning with the agency-wide goal of strengthening partnerships across the denomination to amplify a unified voice for The United Methodist Church.

United Methodist Communications is committed to expanding the reach and impact of our partners—including denominational agencies, regional and central conferences, and local churches. At the same time, we are building a more cohesive and collaborative communications network to ensure key messages are shared broadly, consistently, and effectively across multiple platforms and audiences.

Key Campaigns

Love Boldly
Serve Joyfully
Lead Courageously



Awareness, engagement, adoption
We will continue to equip leaders, inspire members, and reach seekers through creative strategies, meaningful storytelling, and accessible resources. Through consistent promotion and broad collaboration, we will ensure the vision is widely understood, embraced, and lived out across the connection.

UNITED
IMPACT



Launched in 2025
United in Impact builds off of the *Did You Know?* campaign from the previous quad and aims to evoke a sense of unity, purpose and global community. It emphasizes the significant changes achievable when United Methodists band together to support our mission and ministry. It celebrates how as United Methodists, we are connected by a shared covenant that is based on a common mission and mutual relationships.

#BeUMC

To be continued in 2026
As The United Methodist Church moves beyond disaffiliations into a season of renewed ministry and mission, the #BeUMC campaign got a fresh look in 2025 with updated, full color images. #BeUMC continues to speak to the heart of what it means to be United Methodist while encouraging members to celebrate our core shared values.

Content Plan: Our Vision

Our content strategy centers on the denomination's vision:

**The United Methodist Church
forms disciples of Jesus Christ who,
empowered by the Holy Spirit,
love boldly, serve joyfully,
and lead courageously
in local communities and worldwide connections.**

Throughout the year, our storytelling, resources, and campaigns will reflect these themes. This approach creates a consistent rhythm of messaging across channels while allowing space for timely stories and emerging needs.

Content Plan: Our Vision

Love Boldly

Because God first loved us.

Considerations:

- Epiphany
- Baptism of the Lord
- Prayer for Christian Unity
- Human Relations Sunday
- Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- Ecumenical Sunday

Serve Joyfully

So others may know love of Jesus.

Considerations

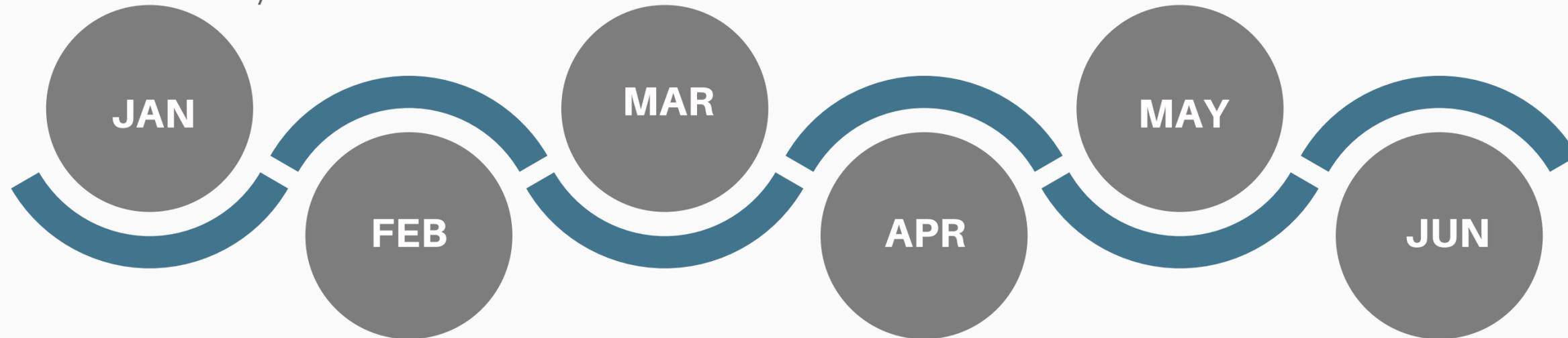
- Women's History Month
- Ash Wednesday
- Lent
- Palm/Passion Sunday
- UMCOR Sunday

Lead Courageously

as the Spirit leads & gifts you

Considerations:

- Mother's Day
- Heritage Sunday / Aldersgate Day
- Pentecost Sunday
- Asian Pacific Heritage Month
- Memorial Day
- Peace with Justice Sunday



Lead Courageously

Into justice, kindness, & humility.

Considerations:

- Black History Month
- Scouting Ministries Sunday
- Ash Wednesday: Lent begins

Love Boldly

as Jesus loves.

Considerations

- Easter
- Holy Week
- Native American Ministries Sunday
- Earth Day
- World Malaria Day

Serve Joyfully

as an expression of love for God & neighbor.

Considerations

- Father's Day
- Juneteenth
- John Wesley's birthday

Content Plan

Love. Serve. Lead.
as all Christians are called.

Considerations:

- Summer church activities

Love. Serve. Lead.
through your UM congregation.

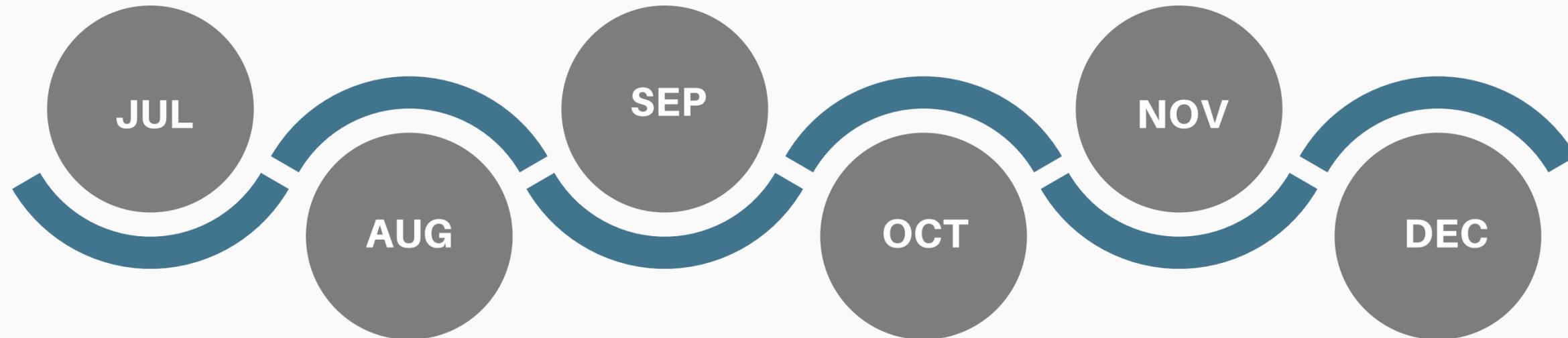
Considerations:

- Hispanic Heritage Month
- Labor Day

Serve Joyfully
as an expression of gratitude.

Considerations:

- Native American Heritage
- All Saints Sunday
- Organ/Tissue Donor Sunday
- Veterans' Day
- International Bible Week
- Reign of Christ Sunday
- Thanksgiving



Love. Serve. Lead.
as taught by Wesley and others.

Considerations:

- Back-to-School
- Back-to-Church

Lead Courageously
into places where others live & work

Considerations:

- Hispanic Heritage Month
- World Communion Sunday
- Laity Sunday
- Children's Sabbath
- Reformation Sunday
- Pastor Appreciation Month

Love Boldly
all God's people

Considerations:

- Advent
- Christmas
- Watchnight
- World AIDS Day
- Charles Wesley's b'day
- Kwanzaa



A Igreja Metodista Unida
forma discípulos de Jesus
Cristo que, capacitados
pelo Espírito Santo,
**amam com ousadia, servem
com alegria e
liderem corajosamente**
nas comunidades locais
e nas conexões mundiais.



The United Methodist
Church forms disciples
of Jesus Christ
who, empowered by the
Holy Spirit, **love boldly,**
serve joyfully, and
lead courageously in
local communities and
worldwide connections.



L'Église Méthodiste Unie
forme des disciples de
Jésus-Christ qui, sous
l'impulsion de l'Esprit
Saint, **aiment avec
audace, servent avec joie**
et **dirigent avec courage**
dans les communautés
locales et les relations
mondiales.

Resources for Leaders

Share. Lead. Live.

Local Church Resources

ResourceUMC.org

Introducing The UMC's Vision to your congregation

- **The Vision of The United Methodist Church** (ResourceUMC.org/Vision)
- **Video: A new Vision for The United Methodist Church** ([LINK](#))
- **Introducing The UMC's Vision to your congregation: Where do I start?** ([LINK](#))

Planning & reference

- **Bring The UMC Vision to your congregation** ([LINK](#))
- **Local Church Reference Guide** ([LINK](#))

Ideas and inspiration

These resources from Discipleship Ministries offer theological reflection and practical imagination for leaders discerning how to lead into the Vision.

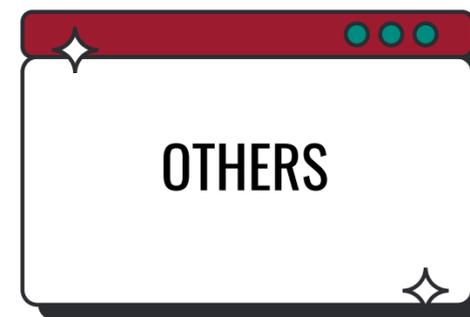
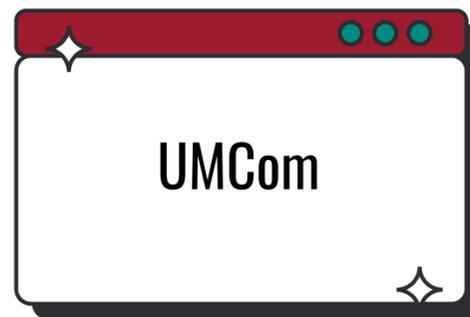
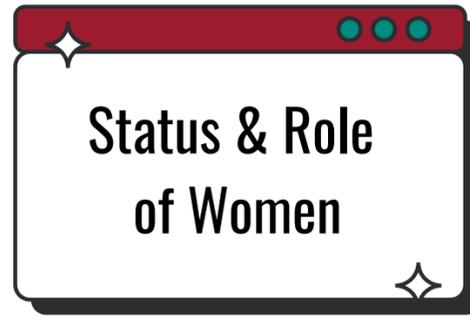
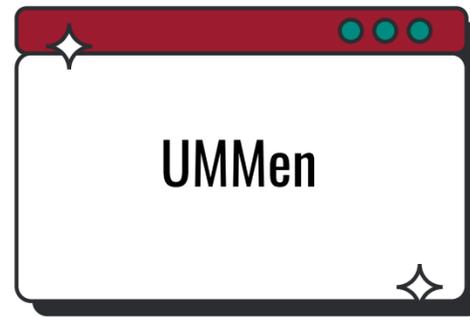
- **Love Boldly: The First Step Toward Discipleship That Transforms** ([LINK](#))
- **Serve Joyfully: The Daily Practice of Hopeful Discipleship** ([LINK](#))
- **Lead Courageously Toward Justice** ([LINK](#))

Promotion

- **Branding Guide** ([LINK](#))
- **Social Media Templates** ([LINK](#))

For Worship

- **Sermons and devotions from Church of the Resurrection** ([LINK](#))
 - Vision-centered worship examples



Local Church Resources

ResourceUMC.org

How our General Boards & Agencies are living into the Vision

Celebrate the connection

These examples show how our General Boards and Agencies are interpreting and living into the shared Vision in their distinct ministries.

- **The UM Vision and the Work of Global Ministries** ([LINK](#))
- **The UM Vision and the Work of Higher Education & Ministry** ([LINK](#))
- **How Church and Society supports the UMC Vision** ([LINK](#))
- **Living out the Vision through the work of GCFA** ([LINK](#))

Resources for Individuals

Living the vision through daily discipleship

About the Vision

Introduction to the Vision of The United Methodist Church

Start here

Get to know the Vision of The United Methodist Church

- **Our United Methodist Vision** ([UMC.org/Vision](https://umc.org/Vision))
 - Official overview of the Vision for members
- **Our UM Vision video** ([LINK](#))
 - Short, shareable introduction to the Vision
- **The Recap Live: A conversation about the Vision**
 - (March 2026; EN, FR & PT planned)
 - Live discussion & reflection on the Vision

Go deeper

Learn how our Vision shapes who we are as the people called United Methodists.

- **Ask The UMC: What is the vision statement of The United Methodist Church?** ([LINK](#))
 - Plain language explanation of the Vision statement
- **A new (timeless) vision for The UMC** ([LINK](#))
 - Our new statement of our Vision is deeply rooted in who we've always been
- **The UMC Vision and Wesley's definition of a Methodist** ([LINK](#))
 - Historical grounding for our vision

Living into the Vision

Personal practice

- **10 Ways to live into the UMC Vision through your antiracism journey** ([LINK](#))
- **We are the Church together: a reflection** ([LINK](#))

Stories & witness

- **Podcast: 'Transformed by Grace': Wesleyan wisdom for today's UMC** ([LINK](#))
- **Podcast: Meet Bishop Carlo A. Rapanut** ([LINK](#))

- **Love Boldly** ([LINK](#)) | **Serve Joyfully** ([LINK](#)) | **Lead Courageously** ([LINK](#))
 - Exploring the Vision through everyday Christian practice



Priorities for 2026

New Reels

For usage in regional conferences focusing on Episcopal Fund and General Administration Fund.

The reels highlight the diverse nationalities and contexts in which The United Methodist Church is lived out around the world. They are currently available in English, French, Portuguese, and Swahili. Reels specifically focused on the United States will be produced later this year and will be available in English, Spanish, and Korean.

The Marketing Plan

As part of a quadrennial campaign, the strategy is designed to build awareness and deepen understanding over time; therefore, the overall approach will remain consistent.

This year, additional stories will be curated to highlight the connectional nature of the church and help audiences better understand how the church is connected, while encouraging participation in and support of apportionment funding.

Social media will serve as the primary promotional channel, with the inclusion of short-form video content, such as reels, to expand reach and engagement.

Two upcoming apportionment webinars will further support and reinforce the campaign's messaging.

Additionally, opportunities to increase visibility at Annual Conferences and other training events for key leaders will continue to be explored and leveraged.

Conference #BeUMC Awards

An opportunity to recognize individuals and congregations who embody the mission and vision of The United Methodist Church, reinforce the new vision statement of The UMC, and inspire others to live into the values of what it means to #BeUMC



#BeUMC 2026: New Expression

THE HANDBOOK

The newly released *Handbook* of The United Methodist Church—a digital, print-ready resource—is designed to help understand who we are, how we are connected, and how we live out our shared mission together. Updated for the current quadrennium, this handbook offers clear explanations, helpful visuals, and trusted information for learning, teaching, and leading in The United Methodist Church.



PR Strategies

MEMBERS/MEDIA/PUBLIC

Goal: Positive Brand perception

Secure high-profile media placement in local, regional and national media for positive UM stories of faith in action and general interest church news

- Pitch UMC-related stories
 - Events such as **Faithful Resistance** allow us opportunities to show our faith in action
- Pitch Annual Conferences, fellow agencies' and other official groups' stories to media
- Share UM positive stories in the national media of Nigeria and Liberia, and assist with messaging



PR Strategies

LEADERS

Goal: Crisis Aversion

Train and support church leaders at all levels to manage crisis

- Provide trainings to bishops, AC Cabinets and other church leaders as needed on crisis communications, spokespersons skill development and publicity tactics
- Provide messaging and media consultation to manage crisis at all levels of the church



Along with all the content and inbound communication strategies, our outbound marketing strategies include:

Promotion Strategies

- Digital ads on internal and external websites, newsletters, apps and social platforms
- Ad targeting based on constituent demographic, interests and behavior

DIGITAL & SOCIAL

- Paid search engine geo-targeted campaigns
- Language specific geo-targeting in regional conferences
- Continuous optimization of online content for search

SEO & SEM

- Annual Conferences
- Denomination-wide events
- Caucus group events
- Topical webinars
- Regional conference events & training

EVENTS & WEBINARS

- Quizzes & polls
- eLearning content
- Interest-based content for lead gen (i.e. Cookbooks)
- Downloadable resources

RESOURCES & CONTENT MKTG

*UMCom maintains a separate full marketing plan that is available upon request.

Research

Provides the grounding for all strategic message planning and ensures relevant content development. It equips us to understand attitudes, behaviors, needs, motivation, media habits, audience segments and more.

The United Methodist Church (UMC) is living through a historic moment of transition. As the Council of Bishops is deeply engaged in discerning and charting the future of the denomination, the Church as a whole is being called to meet this season with clarity, courage, and deep faith. Across the globe, congregations and leaders are wrestling with what it means to live into the Church's long-held mission and a newly launched vision amid cultural shifts, theological tensions, and institutional transformation.

At this pivotal moment, United Methodist Communications is coming alongside the Church's leadership to help articulate the right brand messages – messages that renew the Church's voice, affirm its identity, and invite a meaningful connection with both lifelong members and those newly seeking spiritual community.

The outcome of this project will equip The UMC with a unifying brand strategy to express its voice, one rooted in conviction, grounded in theology, and responsive to the world's needs. It will seek to strengthen the connection between Church and seeker, member and mission, tradition and future.



**Messaging
focus**

SUCCESS METRICS

Directional Metrics

- Increased website traffic
- Increased social reach/engagement
- Increased readership of newsletters
- Increased consumption of non-English content

Partner Metrics

- Increased consumption of partner content

Denominational Metrics

- Increased understanding / acceptance of new vision
- Increased giving
- Positive brand awareness

Campaign Metrics

- Increased participation in campaigns
- Increased resource downloads



THANK YOU

UMCom Managed Social Media Channels

Channel	The United Methodist Church	UMCom	Resource UMC	UM News	Korean Church	IMU Latina	L'Eglise Methodiste Unis (UM News)
Audience	Member	Leader & Member	Leader	Leader & Member	Korean Leaders & Members	Hispanic Leaders - Members	Francophone Leaders & Members (News)
Platform	Facebook Instagram YouTube	Facebook Instagram	Facebook X (formerly Twitter)	Facebook Bluesky	Facebook	Facebook Instagram TikTok YouTube X Flickr	Facebook
Metrics	814K FB likes 80K IG followers 25.4K YT subscribers	200K FB likes 3K IG followers	98K FB likes	233K FB followers 609 Bsky followers	48K FB followers	28.5K FB followers 886 IG followers 434 TikTok 25 YT subscribers 791 X followers 378 Flickr followers	21,176 FB followers

All metrics as of March 2026

UMCom Managed eNewsletters

Newsletter	UM Now	MyCom	UM News Digest (3x/week)	The Source	Duru Allimi	UMCOMtigo
Audience	Member	Leader	Leader & Member	Leader	Korean Leader & Member	Hispanic Leader & Member
Subscriptions	113K	32.9K	61K	18K	2K	981
Delivered (%)	99.6%	99.5%	99.6%	99.8%	99.7%	99.8%
Opened (%)	24.3%	26%	29%	33.5%	38%	29.6%
Click to Open (%)	7.5%	5.5%	5.6%	10%	12.5%	11%