

# UMC GLOBAL SURVEY 2026

## SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

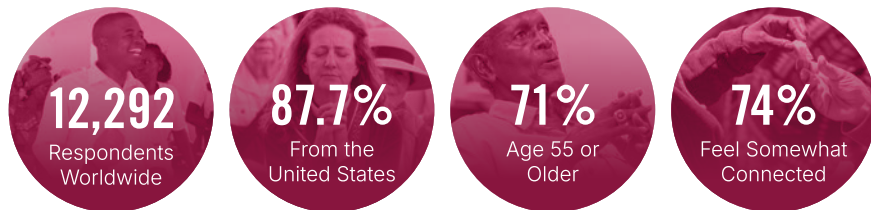


### SURVEY OVERVIEW & KEY FINDINGS

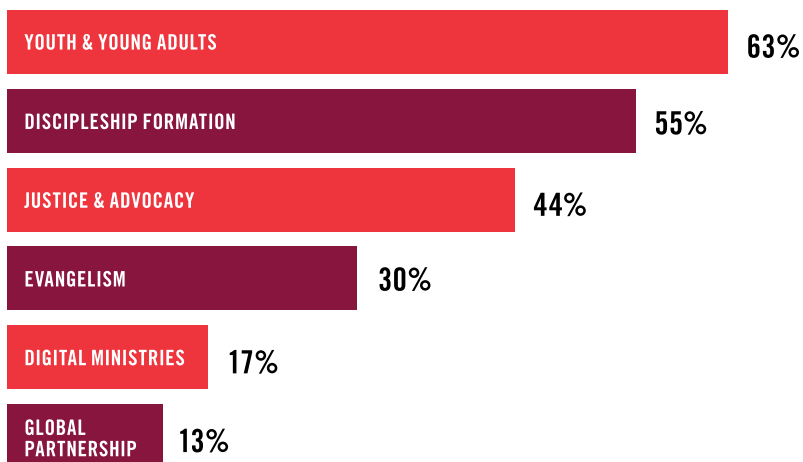
**12,292 United Methodists across 9 world regions** shared their priorities, concerns, and hopes for the denomination's future — **distributed to clergy, employees, and church members in 5 languages.**

### TOP FINDINGS

- **Youth & Young Adult Engagement is the #1 priority across every age group, role, and region** — selected by 63% of all respondents.
- **Discipleship Formation is the top-ranked denominational priority** (avg 2.32 of 6) and the #2 ten-year focus at 55%.
- **Justice & Advocacy is a shared value** across all ages at 44–47% — not a generational divide.
- **International respondents prioritize Evangelism** at 55% vs. 34% in the US, reflecting distinct Wesleyan expressions.
- **The most common word in open-ended responses: "Love"** — transcending every demographic segment.



### 10-YEAR CONGREGATIONAL FOCUS AREAS (%)



### DENOMINATIONAL PRIORITY RANKINGS

**Respondents ranked 6 priorities (1 = most important).** Discipleship leads decisively. The near-tie between Social Justice and Evangelism reflects the denomination's dual identity.

(lower = more important)

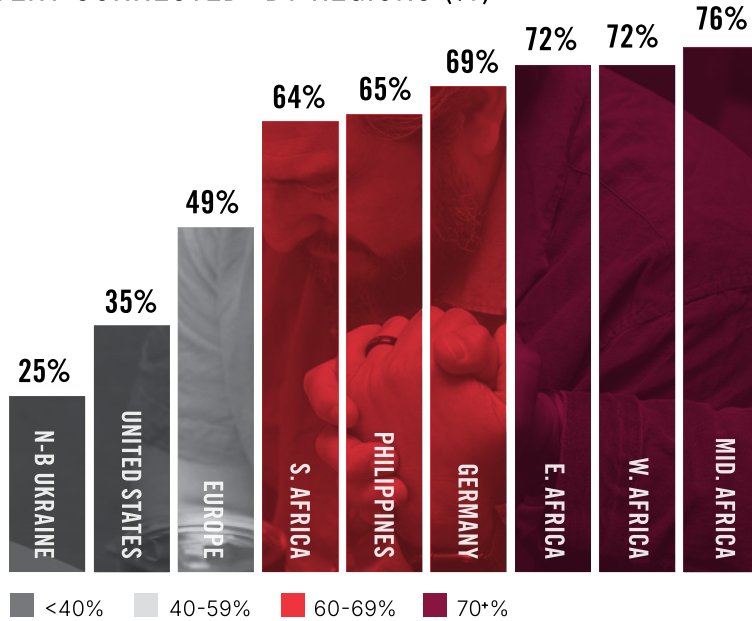


**!** Over 71% of respondents are age 55+. Only 6.5% are under 35. All findings should be read with this demographic weighting in mind.

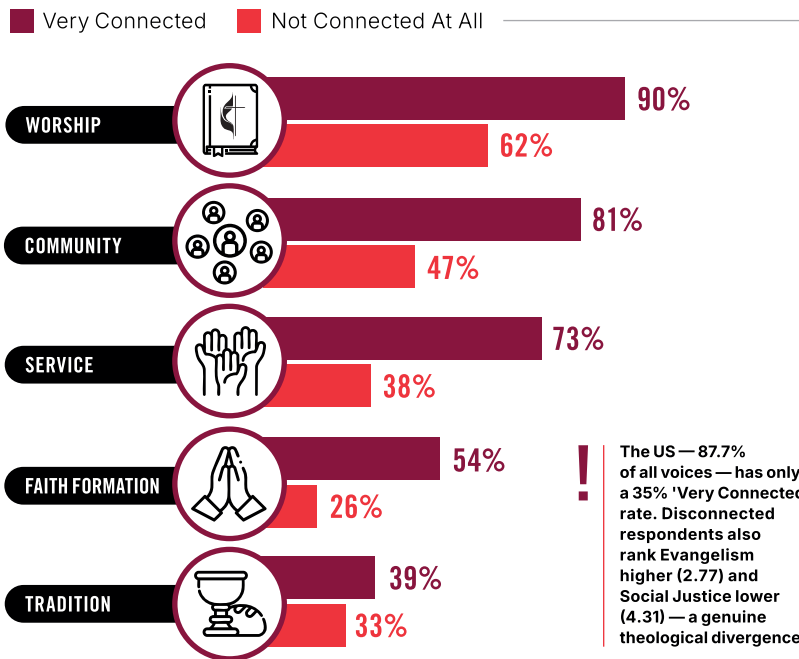
## CONNECTEDNESS: THE MOST ACTIONABLE FINDING

How connected respondents feel to the wider UMC shapes their priorities, participation levels, and vision statement awareness — the most strategically important variable in the survey.

### "VERY CONNECTED" BY REGIONS (%)



### PARTICIPATION: VERY CONNECTED VS. NOT CONNECTED (%)



"Form disciples, invest in youth, love boldly, act justly, and give us a clear plan to do it together."

—THE VOICE OF 12,292 UNITED METHODISTS FROM AROUND THE WORLD

## WHAT RESPONDENTS SAID IN THEIR OWN WORDS

Seven themes emerged consistently across open-ended responses:

- LOVE & UNITY**  
 "Love" is the most common word. Respondents want the UMC remembered for unconditional love and unity.
- YOUTH & SURVIVAL**  
 Urgency about aging demographics. Respondents link the church's survival to engaging young families.
- SOCIAL HOLINESS**  
 Many envision a UMC that lives faith through action in the Wesleyan tradition of works of mercy.
- THEOLOGICAL TENSION**  
 Progressive vs. traditional tension — most pronounced among disconnected and older US members.
- STRUCTURE & COMMS**  
 Frustration with distance from leadership. Requests: less bureaucracy, better communication.
- FORWARD MOMENTUM**  
 Tangible outcomes needed — roadmaps and plans, not just conversation. 'Don't miss this moment.'
- GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP**  
 International respondents call for genuine shared decision-making and amplified non-US voices.

## FIVE IMPERATIVES FOR 2026

- 1 YOUTH & DISCIPLESHIP**  
 Concrete, executable plans. Both appear in every cross-section — they are complementary.
- 2 US CONNECTEDNESS GAP**  
 Only 35% 'Very Connected.' Bridge via better communication and reduced friction.
- 3 THEOLOGICAL SPECTRUM**  
 Social Justice (3.40) and Evangelism (3.41) tied — frame as complementary Wesleyan expressions.
- 4 TANGIBLE OUTCOMES**  
 Fatigued by reports, not action. Need measurable, locally-usable results.
- 5 ELEVATE GLOBAL VOICES**  
 International perspectives must be full partners — not addenda to a US-centric agenda.

