MISSION MOMENTS & MORE

These mission moments demonstrate the connectional mission of the United Methodist Church. Each one highlights a specific ministry and the real impact it's making in the world. Consider using these in personal prayer time, in small groups or during worship.

DECEMBER 6, 2026 —2nd Sunday of Advent — Human Relations Day

MISSION MOMENT

Begin today's reflection by reading the Scripture passage using the link below — Psalm 85:1–2, 8–13 (CEB)

The psalmist writes to a people who have already tasted restoration and are asking God to bring it again. "Lord, you've been kind to your land; you've changed Jacob's circumstances for the better... You've forgiven your people's wrongdoing." They remember what God has done, but they do not stop there. They look ahead, longing to hear God speak peace once again: "Let me hear what the Lord God says, because he speaks peace to his people... God's salvation is very close." Then comes one of Scripture's most beautiful pictures of what that peace looks like: "Faithful love and truth have met; righteousness and peace have kissed."

That is more than a beautiful image. It is a picture of what happens when God's people allow love and justice to walk together. The psalmist does not separate compassion from righteousness or mercy from truth. They belong together. "Righteousness walks before God, making a road for his steps." In other words, when we follow God, we help make a way for peace, justice, and faithful love to take root in the world around us.

This week, as we recognize Human Rights Day on December 10, we are reminded that every person is created with dignity and deserves to be treated with justice, compassion, and respect. As people of faith, we are called not simply to recognize injustice, but to help make a way for God's vision of peace and righteousness to become visible in our communities.

That vision comes to life each January through Human Relations Day, one of the churchwide Special Sundays of The United Methodist Church. Observed on the Sunday before Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday, Human Relations Day calls us to strengthen communities, build relationships across differences, and work toward the beloved community Dr. King envisioned—a community rooted in dignity, justice, equity, and love.

The offering collected on Human Relations Day puts that vision into action. Through our connectional giving, gifts support ministries such as the Community Developers Program, which works alongside neighborhoods, often communities of color, as residents identify needs, develop leaders, and work toward lasting change. Imagine a neighborhood organizer who is trained and supported through the program, spending years building trust block by block until residents themselves lead an effort for safer housing or a new community garden. The transformation begins not with someone outside the community telling people what they need, but with people within the community discovering what is possible and working together to make it happen.

That is the beauty of being a connected church. We do not have to build the beloved community alone. Through our shared covenant of connectional giving, congregations join their gifts so that ministries can take root in places many of us may never see. One congregation may give a little, another may give a little more, but together those gifts become a road on which faithful love and truth can meet, and righteousness and peace can kiss.

Every gift tells a story. Through Human Relations Day, our gifts become part of a story of communities discovering their strength, neighbors building relationships, and God's vision of peace and justice becoming visible in places we may never reach on our own.

Reflection Question:
Where in your own community might love and justice be waiting to meet?

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Title: The Soup That Needed Everyone
Materials: A big pot or mixing bowl, toy food pieces like carrots, potatoes, corn, etc., and a large spoon

Good morning, friends! I'm so glad to see you today!

I brought a big pot today. (Hold up the pot.) But look inside, it is empty! That is not very good for making soup, is it?

Let's fix that. (Hold up the carrot.) I have a carrot! (Put it in the pot.) But one carrot alone does not make a very good soup, does it?

(Hold up the potato.) Here is a potato! (Put it in.) Still not quite soup yet.

(Hold up the corn.) And some corn! (Put it in, and stir with the spoon.) Now let's stir it all together.

Look at that! All these different foods came together to make one yummy pot of soup! Isn't that wonderful? None of them could make a big pot of soup all by themselves, but together, they made something really good.

The Bible tells us that God loves it when different things come together to make something beautiful. It says, "Faithful love and truth have met; righteousness and peace have kissed." That means being loving and being fair come together, kind of like our soup, to make something wonderful for everybody.

A long time ago, a man named Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. had a big dream. He dreamed that all of God's people, everybody, no matter what they looked like or where they came from, could come together, just like our soup, and make something beautiful together.

Every January, our church family remembers that dream on a special day called Human Relations Day. It is one of six special days that churches everywhere celebrate together.

Here is something wonderful: our church is not just one little ingredient, all by itself! We are connected to churches everywhere, near and far, and when we all bring what we have, we make something big and good together, just like our soup. When we give on this day, we help make our neighborhoods warmer and kinder, just like a warm bowl of soup on a cold day.

Every single gift tells a story, and when we all bring our little bit, those stories mix together into something wonderful, just like this soup.

This week, can you bring your little bit to help make something good? Maybe that means sharing, or including someone who needs a friend.

Prayer: Dear God, thank You for making all of us different, and thank You for how good it is when we come together. Help us bring our little bit, so we can make something wonderful together, just like this soup. Thank You for people like Dr. King, who dreamed of a world where everyone has a seat at the table. Amen.

OFFERTORY PRAYER

Gracious God, Your Word promises that faithful love and truth will meet, and that righteousness and peace will kiss. As we bring our gifts before You on this Human Relations Day, we ask that our offering become part of that promise, meeting need with love and injustice with truth. Through connectional giving, join what we bring with gifts from congregations we may never meet, so that together, our offering builds the beloved community Dr. King envisioned, dignity, equity, and love, walking hand in hand across Your whole Church. Amen.

OFFERTORY PRAYER from Discipleship Ministries

Peace-speaking God, we come longing to hear your voice again—your word of mercy, your promise of restoration. Receive these gifts as signs of our trust that your steadfast love and faithfulness are already at work among us. Where we have wandered, guide us back. Where we have grown weary, revive us. Where division has taken hold, let righteousness and peace meet again through us. Use what we offer to help your church sing the old songs of faith with new conviction and to live as people through whom your peace is spoken into the world. In hope and gratitude, we give ourselves and these gifts to you. Amen.

NEWSLETTER NUGGET

The Psalmist writes that “faithful love and truth have met; righteousness and peace have kissed” (Psalm 85:10, CEB), a picture of the beloved community Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. envisioned. The United Methodist Church remembers that vision each January on Human Relations Day, one of six churchwide Special Sundays, supporting ministries that build dignity, equity, and love across the connection. With Human Rights Day on December 10, now is a good time to prepare our hearts and minds for the celebration.

Join us this Sunday for worship as we begin building the beloved community together.

DECEMBER 13, 2026 — 3rd Sunday of Advent — The Advance Giving Channel and GBGM

MISSION MOMENT

Begin today's reflection by reading the Scripture passage using the link below — Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11 (CEB)

Isaiah 61 opens with a mission statement: "The Lord God's spirit is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me. He has sent me to bring good news to the poor, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim release for captives, and liberation for prisoners… to comfort all who mourn." Centuries later, Jesus stood up in a synagogue in his hometown, read these very words aloud, and told those gathered that the promise was being fulfilled that day. It is worth remembering that this is the mission Jesus claimed as his own.

Isaiah does not leave that mission abstract. The anointed one is sent to do something: bind up the brokenhearted, free captives, comfort mourners, and rebuild what was left in ruins. "They will rebuild the ancient ruins; they will restore formerly deserted places; they will renew ruined cities, places deserted in generations past." Good news, in Isaiah's vision, takes shape through action. It becomes restoration people can see and experience.

As followers of Jesus, we are invited to participate in that mission. The United Methodist Church does this in many ways, including through The Advance, our "second-mile" giving channel. Administered by the General Board of Global Ministries, The Advance allows United Methodists to give beyond their regular connectional giving to specific ministries and projects, including clinics, schools, wells, and disaster-response efforts.

That ministry is possible because we are a connected Church. The World Service Fund supports the ongoing work of Global Ministries, while The Advance provides a way for individuals and congregations to choose additional ministries they want to support. Because the operating costs of Global Ministries are funded through the World Service Fund, 100% of gifts given through The Advance go to the designated project or missionary.

Consider an Advance project supporting migrants and refugees. A family forced from home by conflict may arrive somewhere unfamiliar with almost nothing, and find shelter, food, and someone willing to walk alongside them as they rebuild their lives. December 18, International Migrants Day, offers a fitting opportunity to remember that Isaiah's vision of rebuilding what has been devastated is not simply ancient poetry. Through the Church, we can become part of that work today.

This is what our connection makes possible. No congregation could reach every person experiencing crisis, but together, our gifts can travel far beyond our own communities. Every gift tells a story, and through The Advance, we have the opportunity to help write stories of hope, restoration, and Christ's love in places we may never see.

Reflection Question:
Whose ruins might God be inviting you to help rebuild this week?

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Title: Turning Sad Into Glad
Materials: Building blocks, a bandage, a toy or paper crown

Good morning, friends! I'm so glad to see you today!
Today I brought a few things. (have the building blocks set up as a tower, then gently knock it over.) Oh no, look at this! Somebody's tower fell down! That's sad, isn't it?

The Bible tells us that God sends helpers to fix things that are broken and to help people who feel sad. Listen to this: God said He would send someone "to bind up the brokenhearted… to comfort all who mourn." That means God sends helpers to take care of hurting hearts, kind of like a really big, gentle bandage. (Hold up the bandage.)

And guess what else God promised? Instead of feeling sad, God said He would give people "a crown in place of ashes" and "oil of joy in place of mourning." That means God trades sad feelings for happy ones, like a special party crown! (Put on the toy crown.)

A long, long time ago, Jesus stood up in church and read these very same words. He told everyone that helping sad people feel better and fixing what was broken was His job too.

Our church helps with that today! There is a special way our whole church family gives called The Advance. When people give a little extra, on top of their regular offering, that money goes straight to help someone far away, maybe someone who had to leave their home, or someone who needs a doctor, a school, or clean water.

(Rebuild the block tower.) Look! We can build it back up, together! That is what our gifts do too. They help rebuild what is broken, and they help turn sad into glad.

Every single gift we give allows us to build a new story, just like these blocks. And when we give, we get to be part of God's story of turning sad into glad, all over the world.

Prayer: Dear God, thank You for helping people who feel sad, and for fixing things that are broken. Help us give what we have so You can use it to help others, near and far. Thank You for turning sad into glad. Amen.

OFFERTORY PRAYER

Gracious God, you sent good news to the poor, comfort to those who mourn, and freedom to those who are captive, promising to rebuild what was left in ruins. As we bring our gifts before you, remind us that we are part of a Church that works together to carry your love and hope to people in need. Through The Advance, join our gifts with those of congregations we may never meet, so that together we can help rebuild, restore, and share your good news with people in crisis. Amen.

OFFERTORY PRAYER from Discipleship Ministries

Joy-giving God, you restore us beyond what we can imagine, filling our mouths with laughter and our lives with hope. Receive these gifts as signs of our trust that you are still at work, turning tears into joy and scarcity into abundance. When we forget, remind us. When we grow weary, renew us. When we shrink the circle, widen our hearts again. Use what we offer to plant seeds of joy in dry places, so that communities may be rebuilt, relationships restored, and your people once again shout with gladness. In gratitude for what you have done, are doing, and will do, we give ourselves to you. Amen.

NEWSLETTER NUGGET

Isaiah 61 describes good news that rebuilds ruins, restores what was deserted, and turns mourning into joy (CEB); the very passage Jesus read as his own mission. The United Methodist Church participates in that mission through The Advance, our “second-mile” giving channel administered by Global Ministries. Because Global Ministries is funded through the World Service Fund, 100 percent of every Advance gift reaches its designated project directly. With International Migrants Day on December 18, it’s a fitting time to remember how our gifts can bring hope and restoration to people in need.

Join us this Sunday for worship as we celebrate the good news we carry together.

DECEMBER 20, 2026 — 4th Sunday of Advent – Episcopal Fund

MISSION MOMENT

Begin today's reflection by reading the Scripture passage using the link below — 2 Samuel 7:1–11, 16 (CEB)

When David settles into his palace, and God has given him rest from his enemies, his first instinct is generous: build God a proper house, since God has only ever lived in a tent. It is a beautiful impulse. But God's answer, through the prophet Nathan, turns the whole logic around. God does not need David to build a house. Instead, God reminds David where his own leadership came from: "I took you from the pasture, from following the flock, to be leader over my people Israel." God had already been providing for David the entire time, going with him, clearing away his enemies, and now promising, "Your dynasty and your kingdom will be secured forever before me. Your throne will be established forever."

David's story reminds us that even those called to lead are first cared for by God. David could lead because God had already provided what he needed to fulfill that calling. That same pattern invites us to think about how the Church cares for those entrusted with leadership today.

In The United Methodist Church, bishops carry enormous responsibility through spiritual oversight, administrative leadership, and pastoral care for clergy and congregations across whole regions, often stretching across several states or, for some bishops, several countries. Their ministry is not sustained by one congregation or by the bishop alone. It is supported by the Church we share. Through the covenant of connectional giving, United Methodists together fund The Episcopal Fund, which supports bishops' salaries, office and travel expenses, and retirement and health benefits.

That shared support means a congregation that may never meet a particular bishop can still have a part in that bishop's ministry. Our gifts help make it possible for bishops to spend their time and energy doing what they are called to do: visiting struggling churches, ordaining new pastors, supporting clergy, and offering guidance when the Church faces difficult decisions.

Picture a newly consecrated bishop assigned to a region facing significant transition, with congregations closing, others merging, and clergy needing steady guidance. Because the Church shares the responsibility for sustaining episcopal leadership, that bishop can focus on walking with those congregations through a difficult season rather than carrying the responsibility alone. Behind that ministry are thousands of congregations giving together, most of whose names the bishop will never know.

That is part of the beauty of being a connected church. No congregation carries ministry alone, and no bishop leads alone either. Every gift tells a story, and part of that story is a leader who can give more fully to the work of the Church because a whole connection has chosen to stand behind that ministry.

Reflection Question:
Who in your life leads well because someone else, quietly, made that leadership possible?

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Title: The Best Kind of Thank You
Materials: Two small gift boxes, one labeled "For God" and one labeled "For David" (real or drawn)

Good morning, friends! I'm so glad to see you today!

I have a few things I think you will recognize today. What are these? (Pause) Yes presents! Have you ever wanted to give someone a really special thank-you gift?

In the Bible, there was a young man named David. A long time ago, David used to take care of sheep, but God gave him a big, important job: to help take care of God's people!

David felt so thankful that he thought, "I want to build God a beautiful house to say thank you!" (Hold up the box labeled "For God.") Wasn't that a kind idea?

But guess what God said? God said, "David, you don't need to build Me a house. Instead, I am going to take care of you!" (Hold up the box labeled "For David," and open it like it's full of good things.) God promised to always be with David and help him do his important job well.

Isn't that surprising? David wanted to give God a gift, and God gave David an even bigger gift back: help, and love, and care, forever.

Guess what? Our church has really important helpers too, called bishops. Bishops help take care of many, many churches and pastors, so they have a big, important job, just like David did.

And just like God took care of David, our whole church family takes care of our bishops too! When we give to our church, some of that help goes to make sure our bishops have what they need to do their important work.

Every single gift tells a story! When we give to help take care of our leaders, we get to be part of God's story of taking care of people.

This week, is there a helper in your life you could say thank you to, like a teacher, a doctor, or a pastor? Maybe you could make them a card, or just say something kind.

Prayer: Dear God, thank You for taking care of David, and thank You for taking care of us too. Help us remember to say thank you to our helpers, and help us be a helper to someone else this week. Amen.

OFFERTORY PRAYER

Faithful God, You took David from the pasture and made him a leader, promising to be with him and sustain him all his days. As we bring our gifts before You, we give thanks for the bishops who lead The United Methodist Church, and we ask that our offering, joined through The Episcopal Fund with gifts from congregations across the connection, free them to lead well, unburdened by worry for their own support. May this covenant of shared giving sustain faithful shepherds, so they can sustain Your people. Amen.

OFFERTORY PRAYER from Discipleship Ministries

Faithful and Ever-Present God, your steadfast love endures even when we struggle to see it, and your promises stand firm across every generation. As Mary sang of your great reversal, we bring these gifts in hope, trusting that you are still lifting the lowly, filling the hungry, and turning the world toward your grace. When we feel forgotten, remind us of your covenant. When the world seems unchanged, help us live as witnesses to your transforming love. Use these offerings—and our lives—to magnify your name, to embody your faithfulness, and to join your work of renewal in the world. With grateful hearts, we rejoice in you. Amen.

NEWSLETTER NUGGET

When David wanted to build God a house, God turned the promise around: “I took you from the pasture… to be leader over my people,” and pledged to sustain David instead (2 Samuel 7:8, CEB). The United Methodist Church lives out that same pattern through The Episcopal Fund, which our apportionments support so that bishops can lead without carrying the weight of their own support alone. No congregation, and no bishop, walks this connection by themselves.

Join us this Sunday for worship as we give thanks for the leaders who guide us together.

DECEMBER 27, 2026 — 1st Sunday After Christmas – Peace with Justice Sunday

MISSION MOMENT

Begin today's reflection by reading the Scripture passage using the link below — Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11 (CEB)

Isaiah 61:10–62:3 continues a song of restoration and gives it a sense of urgency. The prophet celebrates being "clothed... with clothes of victory... a robe of righteousness," rejoicing like a bride and groom on their wedding day. But then the tone changes: "For Zion's sake I won't keep silent, and for Jerusalem's sake I won't sit still until her righteousness shines out like a light, and her salvation blazes like a torch." The joy of restoration does not lead the prophet to sit back and admire what God has done. It creates a desire to see that restoration reach the people who are still waiting for it.

We have just celebrated the birth of Christ, the one who came into the world as good news for all people. Christmas invites us to celebrate God coming among us, but Isaiah reminds us that God's work does not stop with celebration. The light we have welcomed is meant to shine through us, especially where people are still waiting for justice, peace, and hope.

On January 1, World Day of Peace, people around the world are invited to reflect on the call to peace and our shared responsibility to build a more peaceful world. For Christians, that call is more than a hope for the absence of conflict. It is a call to pursue the kind of peace Isaiah describes. A peace where righteousness shines, people experience dignity, and restoration becomes possible.

That longing for a world where righteousness can shine is one way we can understand Peace with Justice Sunday, one of the six churchwide Special Sundays in The United Methodist Church. We are called to pursue Christ's vision of peace; not simply the absence of conflict, but the presence of justice, reconciliation, and dignity. Through this Sunday, congregations support ministries that work alongside communities to address injustice and create lasting change.

Picture a community organizer, supported in part through a Peace with Justice grant, who spends months building relationships between residents and local officials after years of neglect have left a neighborhood without safe housing or clean water. The work may not make headlines, and change may not happen quickly. But each conversation, each new relationship, and each step toward a better future is part of making justice visible. It is the kind of patient; persistent work Isaiah describes…a light that continues to shine.

And the work does not belong to one congregation alone. When we give on Peace with Justice Sunday, our gifts join with those of congregations across The United Methodist Church to support peacemaking and justice ministries that reach far beyond our own communities. Together, we can help create the conditions where people who have been overlooked can be heard, communities can become stronger, and God's vision of righteousness and peace can take root.

Every gift tells a story, and this story is still being written wherever God's people choose to pursue peace, seek justice, and refuse to give up on restoration. As we begin a new year, may the light we celebrated at Christmas continue to shine through us; leading us toward a world where peace and justice are not simply hoped for, but lived out.

Reflection Question:
As we approach World Day of Peace this week, where might God be asking you not to stay silent, but to let the light of Christ's peace and justice shine?

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Title: The Light That Never Gives Up
Materials: A flashlight, a sparkly ribbon or garland

Good morning, friends! I'm so glad to see you today! I brought a flashlight today. *(Hold it up.)* Watch what happens when I turn it on! *(Turn on the flashlight.)* Look how it shines, even in the dark!

We just celebrated something very special last week, didn't we? (Pause) Yes, the birth of Jesus! Jesus came into the world to show us God's love and to be a light for all people. That's why we talk about Jesus as a light. And today, our Bible story helps us think about what that light means.

Listen to what the Bible says: "I won't keep silent, and I won't sit still until her righteousness shines out like a light, and her salvation blazes like a torch." God's light keeps shining, even when things are dark. God keeps working to bring love, peace, and what is right into the world.

Sometimes things in the world are not fair. Maybe someone does not have enough food, a safe place to live, or someone is not being kind to them. God does not just look away. God wants us to notice and care, too. Jesus showed us what that looks like by loving people, helping people, and caring for those who were hurting.

"The Bible also tells us that God treasures us. That means every one of you is important to God. God sees you, loves you, and wants you to know that you matter."

Every year, our church family remembers something called Peace with Justice Sunday. It is one of six special days that churches across The United Methodist Church celebrate together. On this day, we help support people who are working to make things more fair, safe, and peaceful for others, like being a flashlight for people who need help.

When we give on this day, we help keep Christ's light shining in our neighborhoods and in communities far away. Every gift tells a story. And when we give, we become part of the story of God's light shining through people who are helping others.

So this week, I have a challenge for you: Can you be a flashlight for somebody? Maybe you can stand up for a friend, help someone who needs you, share with someone, or simply be kind to someone who feels left out.

Jesus is our light. And we can help His light shine, too!

Prayer: Dear God, thank You for being a light that never gives up. Thank You for holding us close, like a treasure in Your hand. Help us be a light for others this week, and help us help make things fair for everyone. Amen.

OFFERTORY PRAYER

God of justice, You promise not to stay silent until righteousness shines out like a light and salvation blazes like a torch. As we bring our gifts before You on this Peace with Justice Sunday, we ask that our offering join the work of peacemakers and advocates across The United Methodist Church, near and far. Through connectional giving, unite what we bring with gifts from congregations we may never meet, so that together, our offering becomes light in places still waiting for justice, held always in Your hand. Amen.

OFFERTORY PRAYER from Discipleship Ministries

God of hope and joy, the gifts we offer to you pale when our minds try to grasp all we have been given in this season: wholeness in our woundedness, hope in our despair, peace in our turmoil, forgiveness in our rebellion. Like Simeon, our eyes have seen your salvation, and you give us light in our darkness. Help us embrace your extravagant generosity as we give ourselves to others. In our Savior's holy name, we pray. Amen.

NEWSLETTER NUGGET

Isaiah describes a God who refuses to stay silent or stop working until righteousness shines "like a light" and salvation "blazes like a torch" (Isaiah 61:10–62:3, CEB). On Peace with Justice Sunday, The United Methodist Church responds to that call by supporting ministries that speak up for justice, work for peace, and help communities experience hope and restoration.

Join us this Sunday for worship as we commit to being light for a world still waiting for peace with justice.