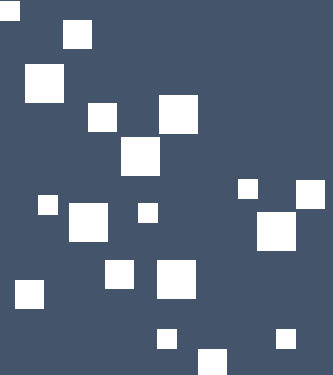
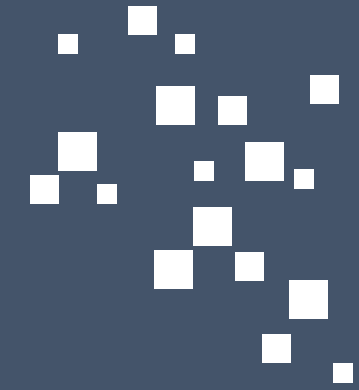




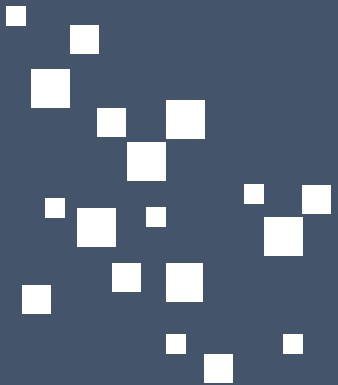
Evaluation Review

2025 report



COMMUNICATIONS
United Methodist Communications
THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Engage people with the story of God's work in the world through The UMC



COMMUNICATIONS

United Methodist Communications

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

New Vision Launch – Phase 1

UMCom was honored to work with the Council of Bishops and Connectional Table on the launch of the new vision for The UMC. In the agency's communications role, it built excitement and drove awareness, engagement, and adoption of the vision that serves as a companion to the Church's overall mission.

Phase 1: Outreach to leaders began in summer 2025

inclusive of bishops, regional and annual conferences, and local church leaders

New Vision awareness marketing early efforts

- Social media promotion global push in US and Regional Conferences led to **36,000 link clicks and 340,000 impressions**
- Search engine marketing resulted in **20,000 web impressions**
- Presence at **two key denominational events** completed (MARCHA Men's & Scouting Nat'l Gathering)
- UM News support
- Announcement press release
- Shared in meetings with communicators, agency communicators, and other leaders
- Encouraged representation at annual conference sessions



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.

Available resources

- ResourceUMC.org/Vision landing page
- Intro video
- Local church reference guide
- Talking points for leaders
- Introducing the new UMC vision to your congregation – video and print piece
- Branding guide
- Bringing The UMC vision to your congregation print piece

New Vision Launch – Phase 2

UMCom expanded awareness efforts in the fall to begin engaging United Methodist members to help them be emboldened by, embrace, and live out the new vision statement.

Phase 2: Outreach to members began in fall 2025

This phase included ongoing outreach efforts with bishops, regional and annual conferences, and local church leaders as mentioned previously.

Highlights included

- The member-focused UMC.org/vision landing page was launched and saw over **69,000 views**.
- Presence at **key denominational events** completed.
[United Methodist Association of Communicators (UMAC), Leadership Institute 2025, and GCORR's Facing the Future Leadership Institute]
- New resource were introduced.
 - Eye-catching large event booth created and launched
 - Design on alternate versions for conference use began
 - Ready-to-use social media templates with scripture and prompts
 - User-generated visuals and member stories
- Geotargeted social ads in the U.S., Africa, and Philippines saw an **engagement of 69,700** and a **reach greater than 2.9 million** people.
- Social Media Series
 - Three-week launch series introduced members to the vision
 - Five-week series inspired digital discipleship and online storytelling and encouraged the use of #BeUMC and #LoveServeLeadUMC





Through the United in Impact campaign UCom helped to strengthen local churches by empowering them to talk about and teach stewardship, equipping pastors and leaders with practical resources, and connecting giving directly to mission outcomes. Campaign promotion launched in June 2025 across UCom and external platforms

Campaign elements that have rolled out include:

- Website landing pages
 - ResourceUMC.org/unitedinimpact
 - UMC.org/unitedinimpact
- Testimonies, impact stories, and videos updated as received
- Training Sessions – Quad Trainings
 - February (U.S.)
 - July (Africa)

Regional Conference specific resources

Resources focus on funds and efforts specific to the Regional Conference and available in French, Portuguese, Kiswahili

- Logos
- Flyer
- Reels
- Discussion Guide

Available resources

U.S. Jurisdictional specific resources

- Logos
- Infographic
- Talking Points and Discussion Guide
- Introduction Video – Available in two formats
- Engagement Prompts

Results

Promotions via websites, newsletters, social platforms, external sites and apps have resulted in:

- **208K pageviews on landing pages**
- 843 downloads of tools kit resources

Connectional Giving

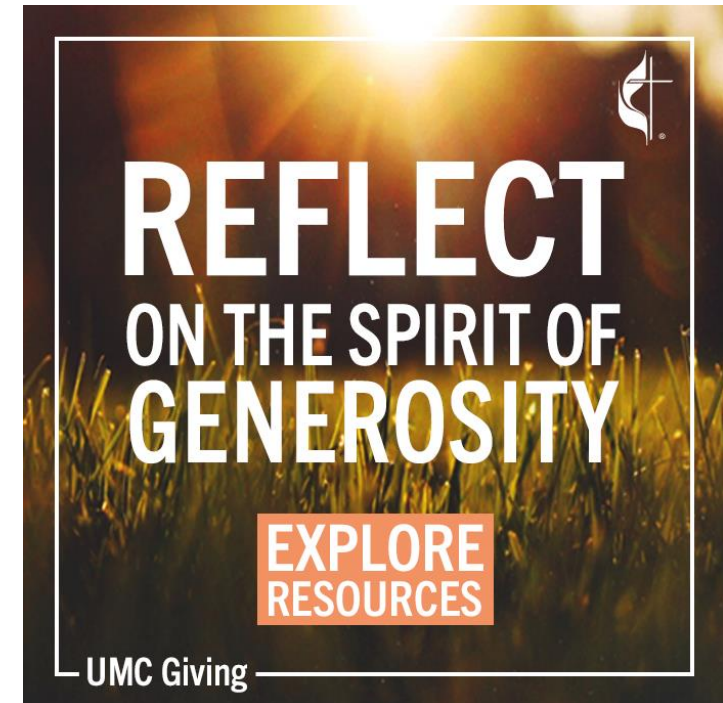
UMCom used awareness and engagement campaigns to deepen understanding of how shared generosity fuels ministry across The United Methodist Church.

Giving generated:

- **\$43M+** in designated giving
- **\$74M+** in apportionments
- 84% collection rate
 - A **13-point increase** over the previous year's 71% collection rate

Marketing efforts garnered:

- 449K pageviews across landing pages



UM News Highlights

Coverage included:

- **843 stories** published across 5 languages (English, French, Spanish, Portuguese, Korean).
- Nearly 70,000 UM News Digest subscribers.
- Stories about mission and ministry in the regional conferences in Africa, Philippines, and Europe received strong readership, with five of them landing in the top 15 stories of the year and bringing in more than 253,000 page views.

Video content:

- UM News increased its video content in 2025. The videos collectively garnered **335,000 views**, that was more than **7x** the video views of 2024.



UM News continued to cover the breaking news of The UMC, including the church's response to:

- The U.S. crackdown on immigration
- Rising political violence
- Racism and tribalism
- Conflict in the Middle East, Ukraine, eastern Congo and other areas where the church is present
- Climate change and disaster relief
- Global health concerns
- Regionalization
- Church property disputes

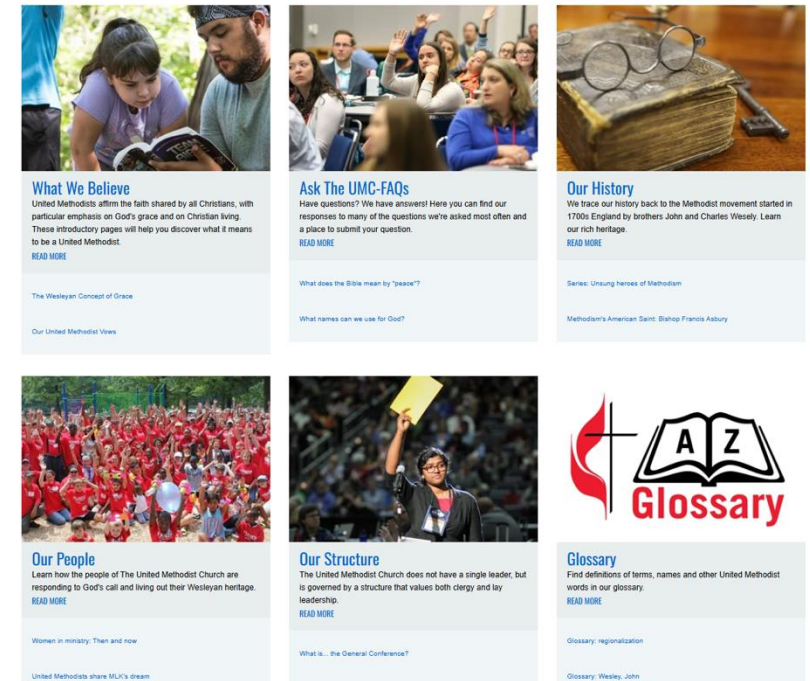
Denominational Content Highlights

UMCom continued to develop original articles, resources, explainers, and multimedia content to help members and leaders better understand United Methodist identity, mission, and life together. The agency also took steps to make leader content more practical and easier to navigate, while recognizing this as ongoing work aligned with real ministry needs.

UMCom additionally served as content strategy partners for agencies and leadership groups, offering editorial guidance, structure, and distribution support to help denominational messages land more clearly and consistently.

Overarching efforts included:

- Provided clear, accessible **content around major denominational moments and initiatives.**
- Focused efforts on explanations of The UMC **vision, regionalization, and other constitutional amendment ratifications.**
- **Helped partners reach the right audiences** with the right content by providing guidance on audience fit and platform strategy—UMC.org for members and ResourceUMC.org for leaders—helping reduce duplication and ensure partner content was clearer, more focused, and more effective
- **Strengthened multilingual content** infrastructure helping to reduce barriers due to language.
 - Content and resources delivered in English, French, Portuguese, Spanish, Korean, and Kiswahili
 - Expanded French and Portuguese capacity through regionally based content coordinators
 - 18 new pieces of **content created in partnership** with agencies and leadership bodies



UMC.org highlights:

- **192 new pieces of contact** published in 2025
 - UMC.org: 151
 - Ask The UMC: 41
- Engagement rose above that of 2024.
- The Recap monthly video update for church members had more than **183k views collectively** across UMC.org, YouTube, Facebook, and TikTok.
- The “Get Your Spirit in Shape” podcast celebrated its **200th episode**
- Ask The UMC . . .
 - created series on what's new in the Book of Discipline and Book of Resolutions, regionalization ratification, and the vision to help educate readers about these important matters.
 - **responded to more than 8,200 inquires** via email and live chat to keep members informed.

Regionalization is ratified. Now what?

Analysis by The Rev. Taylor W Burton Edwards



ResourceUMC.org highlights:

- **75 new pieces of content** published in 2025
- The **United Methodist Church Monthly Ministry Planner** was launched and provided input, tools, and tips for local churches to create ministry activities every month.
 - It saw a 74% engagement rate that indicated strong interaction with leader-focused planning resources.
 - Nearly 12,000 sessions occurred across all its pages in its inaugural year.
- MyCom continued to offer communications tips and tools.
- **27,145 views were garnered by the Church Committees series** that delved into the many facets of church committees, exploring their roles, functions, and the types typically found in local congregations or charges. It also offered insights on who should serve on these committees and provided tips for making them more effective and Spirit-filled.



Website Performance

	Sessions 2025	Sessions 2024	Change in Sessions	Pageviews 2025	Pageviews 2024	Change in Pageviews	Engagement Rate 2025	Engagement Rate 2024
UMC	4,746,906	6,976,080	-31.95%	8,572,391	10,130,410	-15.38%	60.45%	55.21%
Resource UMC	1,828,870	3,209,303	-43.01%	2,516,318	4,810,632	-47.69%	55.55%	61.95%
UM News	2,463,283	2,364,196	4.19%	2,553,014	3,396,355	-24.83%	35.74%	54.45%

A decrease in 2025 traffic was expected due the lack of 2024’s General Conference activity. However, UM News increased the number of its sessions/visits. Also, UMC.org’s engagement rate growth suggested that visitors who kept coming back to the website were regularly interacting with the content more than those who visited last year.

Social Media Performance Highlights



- Instagram growth continued on active channels with 79K UMC followers
- UMC TikTok channel saw nearly 1,500 new followers and was the fastest-growing channel
- YouTube saw 739K views and 13.9K watch hours (+1.6K subscribers)
- BlueSky introduced for news reporting ending the year with 609 followers
- Facebook followers for most denominational profiles were relatively consistent with that of 2024 numbers; with UMC FB communicating to over 8k followers and receiving 2.6M interactions

Facebook Channel Performance

	Facebook Followers 2025	Facebook Followers 2024	Facebook Page Post Engagement 2025	Facebook Page Post Engagement 2024
UMC	812,123	819,570	2,642,942	3,053,487
UMCom	200,103	207,734	384,534	706,237
UM News	234,439	235,770	1,422,518	1,166,864
Resource UMC	97,476	96,029	379,676	311,215
La Iglesia Metodista Unida/Noticias	28,190	28,977	24,858	69,551
L'Eglise Methodiste Unie	21,072	19,648	38,982	4,441
Korean Church	48,598	50,429	77,141	157,545

Facebook followers for most denominational profiles were relatively consistent with that of 2024 numbers. However, some channels did experience a drop-off in followers, spurred predominantly from additional post-General Conference withdrawals. Engagement numbers as expected were lower as it was not a General Conference year and may also have been impacted in part by initial transitions during agency restructuring for the new quad.

Other Social Media Channel Performance

	Instagram Followers 2025	Instagram Followers 2024	Instagram Interactions 2025	Instagram Interactions 2024
UMC	79,185	72,822	252,795	263,665
Noticias Metodistas Unidas	831	735	1,005	475



	TikTok Followers 2025	TikTok Followers 2024
UMC	8,854	7,311
Noticias Metodistas Unidas	34	N/A



	YouTube Views 2025	YouTube Views 2024
UMC <i>(inclusive of UMC, UM News, ResourceUMC, and language channels)</i>	738,960	1,026,170



	Bluesky Followers 2025
UM News	609

In 2025, UMCom moved away from the use of X and started on Bluesky. Followers continued to grow on Instagram and TikTok. On YouTube, the UMC channel saw a reduction in views, but this can be attributed to the removal of the influx of General Conference livestreaming garnered in 2024.



Newsletter Performance

In early 2025, UMCom performed a data cleaning process during a transition to the Salesforce dataset and resulting from a privacy policy notice. This resulted in a solid, trustworthy database from which to work. Proactive lead generation efforts, paired with quality content, lead to a **collective 10% increase in subscribers**.

Publication	2025 Latest Issue # Sent	2024 Last Issue # Sent	% Change	2025 Open Rate (% of Delivered)	2024 Open Rate (% of Delivered)	2025 Click Rate (% of Opens)	2024 Click Rate (% of Opens)
UM Now	98,278	96,472	1.87	31.64	34.68	7.09	8.01
MyCom	28,000	28,094	-0.33	30.37	30.83	5.40	4.36
Weekly Digest	59,530	55,491	7.28	39.97	33.92	8.02	12.84
Standard Digest	59,449	43,862	35.54	38.27	38.88	7.82	10.84
The Source	16,203	13,280	22.01	46.78	45.91	11.01	11.50
DuruAllimi	1,745	1,672	4.37	48.30	49.48	14.95	23.36
TOTAL	263,205	238,871	10.19	37.05	36.64	7.86	10.60

Note: 2024 data included General Conference content.

Public Relations

UMCom helped to spread the message of The UMC and its ministries through public relations initiatives, working with news reporters (local, national, and international) across various mediums to share The UMC's perspectives as well as imparting information within internal church channels. 2025 was a time of navigating change and controlling narratives around crises and disasters. It was also a time of celebrating what it means to be United Methodist.

Media highlights:

- Secured a **series of 9 articles** that shared about the vibrancy of The UMC in Africa via a **Pulitzer Center and The Tennessean partnership**
- Supported annual conferences with story pitches surrounding the Los Angeles fires and Texas flooding – with media coverage including the likes of **NPR** and the **Associated Press**
- Assisted media with **30+ stories**

Internal church publicity support highlight:

- UMCom helped church entities across the connection by providing trusted guidance on the message handling surrounding sensitive issues. **16+ consultation sessions** were conducted to aid in ensuring that The UMC's narrative was heard.

A congregation reckons with the loss of their church in the Los Angeles fires

JANUARY 26, 2025 · 8:00 AM ET

HEARD ON WEEKEND EDITION SUNDAY



Jason DeRose

3-Minute Listen

+ PLAYLIST

TRANSCRIPT

...

In the aftermath of the fires in Los Angeles, clergy are trying to provide pastoral care for their congregations who've lost homes and neighborhoods. Many also need to care for themselves and their charred sanctuaries.

BY MARIAM TAM
Updated 7:04 AM CDT, February 4, 2025

Add AP News on Google

Share

There's the initial shock and chaos in a collective disaster like the deadly and destructive [California wildfires](#). What to take and what to leave behind when ordered to



PART OF: A Liberated Church Despite Loss

'Whoo Whoo, Our Elephant!' United Methodists in Zimbabwe Unify Ahead of Historic Decision



Multiple Authors

October 28, 2025

THE TENNESSEAN



Project
A Liberated Church Despite Loss

Africa is center stage for a landmark change in the United Methodist Church.



Multiple Authors

READ MORE ABOUT THIS PROJECT



PART OF: A Liberated Church Despite Loss

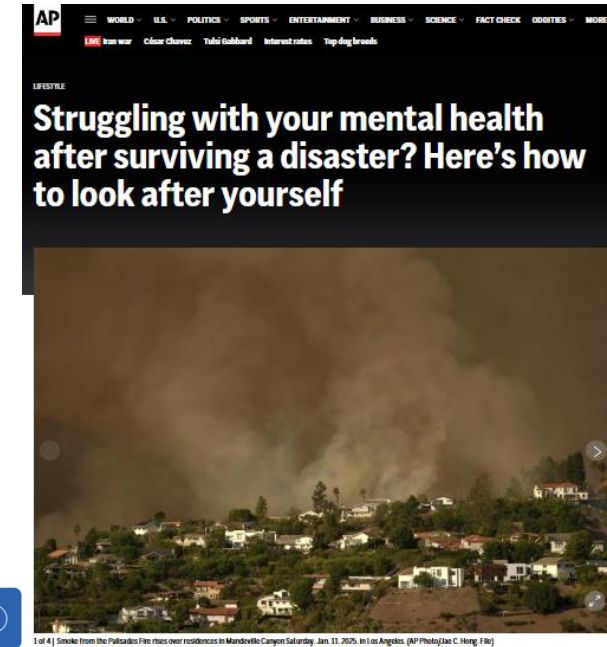
What a United Methodist Conference in Zimbabwe Says About Churches' Desire To Stay in UMC



Liam Adams
GRANTEE

October 28, 2025

THE TENNESSEAN



Global awareness

Nigerian messaging

When tensions caused by misinformation rose in Nigeria resulted in violence and tragedy, UMCom jumped in to help. UMCom worked with The UMC Nigeria (UMCN) to share facts, clear up misconceptions, encourage members to remain peaceful and work towards de-escalation. Through this continual partnership UMCom collectively shifted conversations away from speaking about others to focus on and celebrate The UMCN's faith in action.

Efforts included:

- Ongoing coaching, guidance, message crafting assistance, and media pitches
- Communications training
- UM News coverage and investigative reporting
- An outreach billboard campaign helped share a message of peace and hope
 - Jalingo City gate billboard active
 - Abuja Airport road and Gombe City gate boards (late November 2025)



Philippines signage

UMCom partnered to provide signage to help raise awareness for The UMC in the Philippines.

Award-winning Communications

UMCom has been a longtime, trusted partner in ministry with communicators. The agency serves The UMC faithfully, always striving for excellence. In 2025, the United Methodist Association of Communicators (UMAC) bestowed **10 awards** to United Methodist Communications, which served as a special reminder of the quality and impact of the work the agency does on behalf of the Church.

2025 Communicator of the Year

Joe Iovino

Publicity & Advertising

Leonard M. Perryman Award of Excellence

BEST IN CLASS

Brenda Smotherman, Poonam Patodia

2020/2024 General Conference Publicity Plan

Internet Communications

BEST IN CLASS

2020/2024 General Conference website

Photography

BEST IN CLASS

Mike DuBose

Our Changing Climate

Brand Development

FIRST PLACE

Denominational Booth: 2020/2024 General Conference

Digital Publications - eNewsletter

SECOND PLACE

UM News Digest

United Methodist Communications

Visual Design

SECOND PLACE

Ben Ward

UM News maps illustrating the new central conference structure in Africa

Article Series

THIRD PLACE

The Rev. Taylor W Burton Edwards
Ask The UMC series

Video News Story

THIRD PLACE

Priscilla Muzerengwa

Sanitary Pads to Schoolgirls

Podcast Category

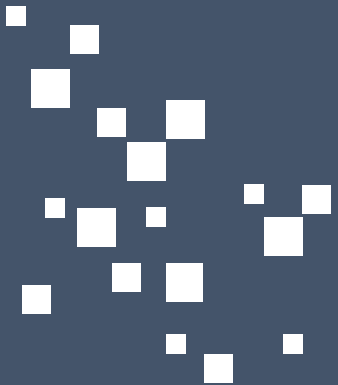
THIRD PLACE

Crystal Caviness & Joe Iovino

Get Your Spirit in Shape: "Blessed are the peacemakers"



Foster partnerships throughout the
denomination to create a stronger
voice for The UMC

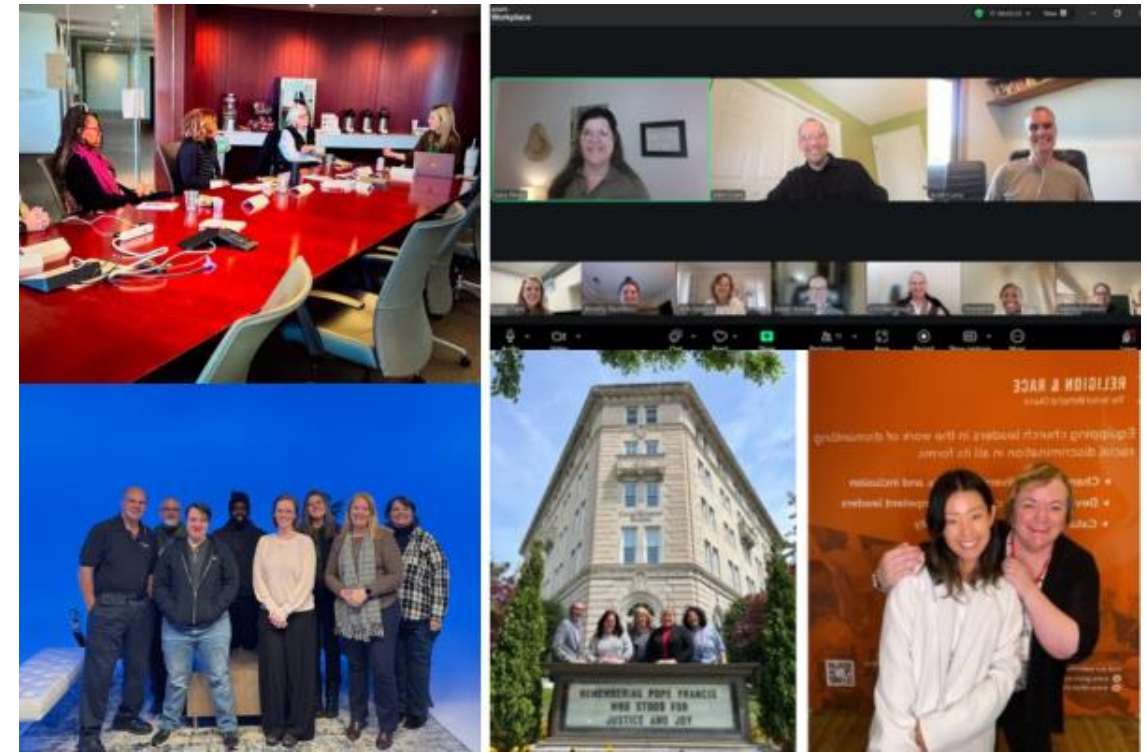


Agency partnerships

UMCom successfully introduced the Agency Partnership Model across most general agencies, establishing consistent content pipelines, reliable communication rhythms, and early collaborative strategic planning that strengthened clarity of shared goals and church priorities while offering a consistent brand and voice across agency communications.

Partnership in Action

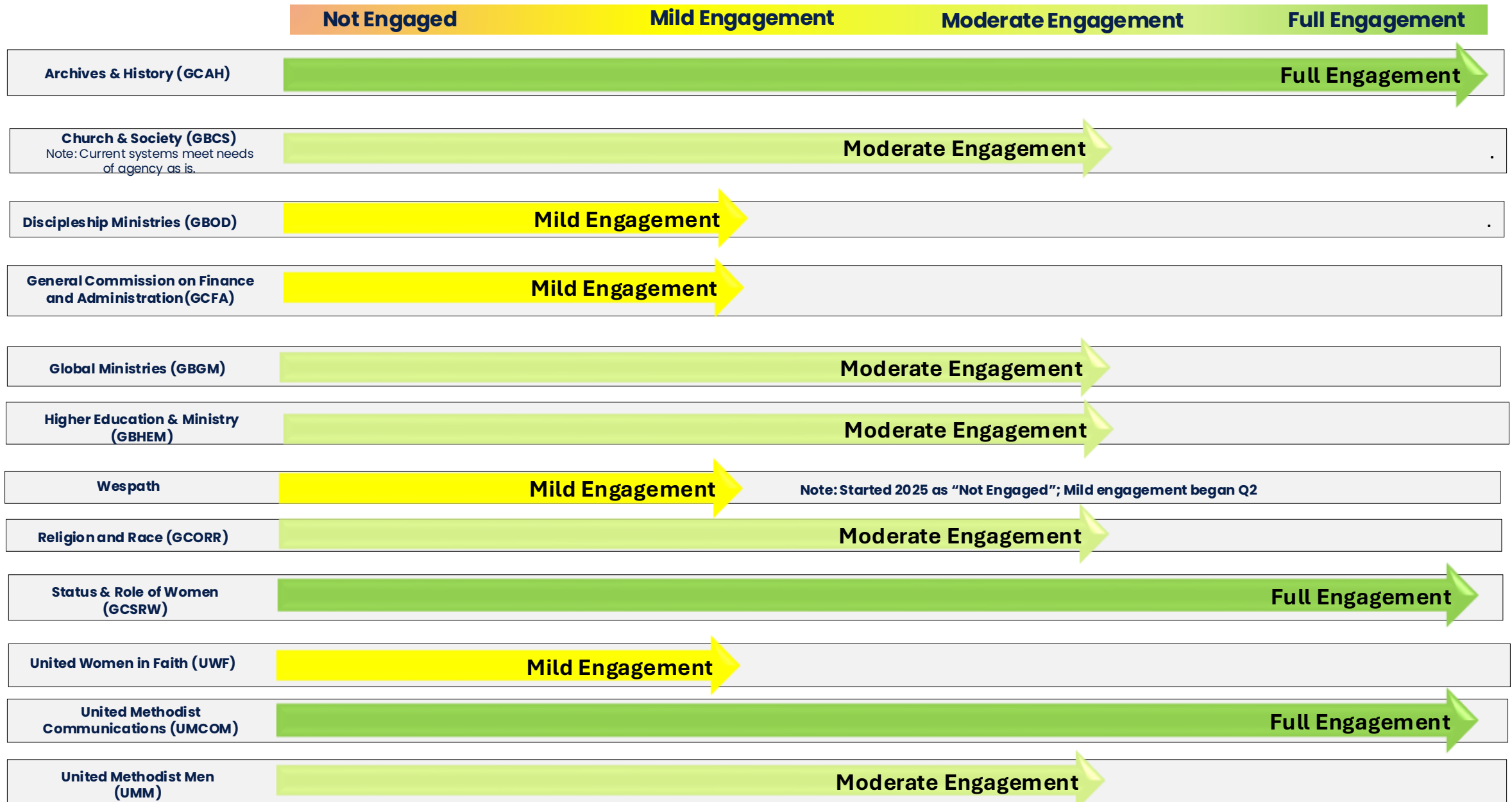
- Shared Services – Website, social media, and CRM support for GCSRW, GCAH, and the Connectional Table
- Data Integration – CRM systems integrated with UMM and GCORR; integration underway for GBGM/GBHEM and GBOD
- Shared Data Privacy Officer – Rollout of a joint privacy policy and DPO for UMCom, GBGM, GBHEM, Discipleship Ministries, GCAH, GCSRW, and UM Men
- Redesigned agency sections on ResourceUMC.org allowed for greater autonomy and visibility while maintaining integration within the broader denominational digital ecosystem; also served as the official website host for GCSRW, GCAH, and UMCom
- Monthly agency communicator meetings
- Production team collaborations on denominational projects including
 - 26 videos for the GCFA Quad Training
 - 5 UMPH Bible studies
 - 6 agencies supported via webinars, livestream events and studio recordings



UMCom strengthened agency collaboration through:

- Expanded historical and global storytelling through GCAH initiatives
- Increased visibility and engagement for Church and Society content
- Improved infrastructure for Global Ministries and disaster response communications
- Enhanced higher education and clergy formation communications
- Growth in strategic partnership with Religion and Race
- Expanded communications capacity for Status & Role of Women
- Improved financial and administrative content coordination
- Broadened men's ministry visibility and event support
- Strategic assessment and planning with United Women in Faith
- Deepened strategic alignment with Wespath

2025 Agency Partner Engagement *as of 12.31.25*



Denominational Partnerships

UMCom managed communications partnerships with U.S. annual conferences, the Connectional Table, the Council of Bishops, the Judicial Council, and the Standing Committee while also guiding communications work with ethnic caucuses, including Hispanic/Latino and Asian groups.

Connectional Ministries

- Work with the Connectional Table and Council of Bishops on:
 - the new vision launch
 - preparations for the 2026 leadership gathering
 - regionalization communications
 - production and meeting support
 - publicity assistance as needed
- ResourceUMC.org served as the official website host for the Connectional Table and the Commission on the General Conference
- Shared data privacy officer and CRM for the Connectional Table
- Oversaw publicity needs for the Commission on the General Conference and served as UMCom liaison

Annual Conferences

- 18 annual conferences received promotional materials, and all others online downloadable resources for AC season.
- Representation on site for 15 AC sessions, 3 workshops on marketing and communications, and 2 awards presented to communicators
- Provided crisis training, list building, and consultation
- Monthly communicator meetings
- UMCom providing year-round support to UMAC and sponsored the annual meeting and made presentations on topics such as podcasting and the vision



Latino Partnerships

- Developed a communications plan with El Plan (Hispanic/Latino Caucus)
- Produced content for 1st-4th generation Hispanic/Latino members and seekers including more video content for social media to connect with younger generations
- Participation at / coverage of events such as MARCHA, ENTRE NOS PHLM, Missionary Consultation for Latin America and the Caribbean, Annual Assembly of the United Methodist Mission in Honduras

Korean partnerships

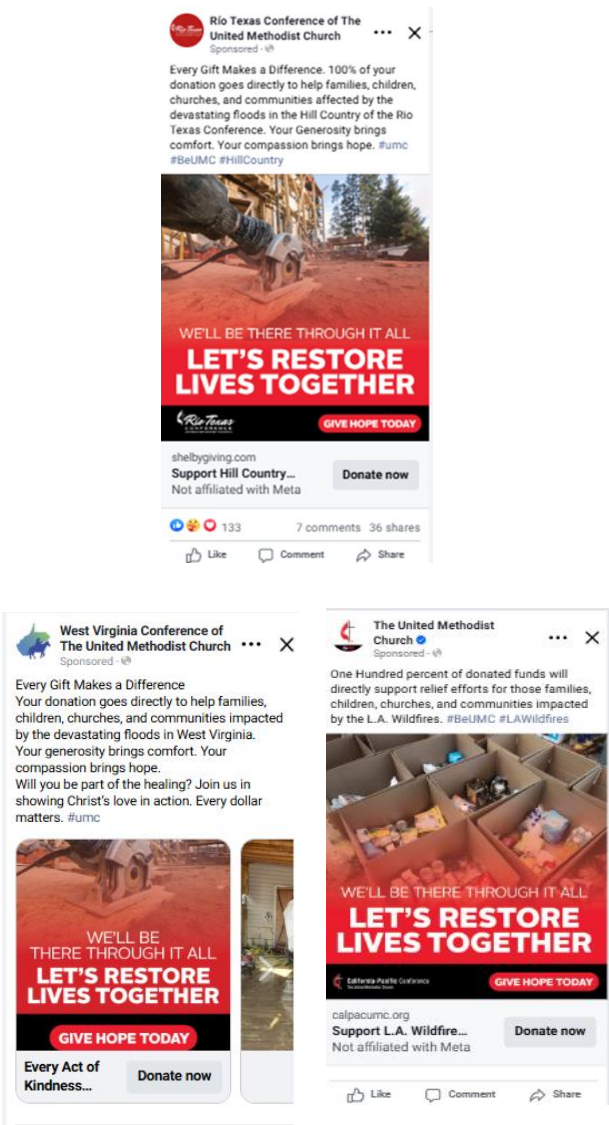
- Caucus president meetings to align content with their needs
- Attendance at United Still Conference

2025 Disaster Response

UMCom supported three Annual Conferences that were impacted by natural disasters in 2025.

Geo-targeted social media ad campaigns were implemented with a donation call to action links guiding people to give on the affected annual conference’s website. Meanwhile, UM News provided reporting that further increased awareness and inspired faithful giving.

Campaign name	Link clicks	Reach	Impressions
January - CalPac, LA Wildfires	4,313	146,597	254,672
June - WV Annual Conference Floods	2,140	41,558	72,680
July - Rio Texas Conference	337	33,854	61,521
July Rio Texas Conference, version 2	2,100	103,559	213,622
Total	8,890	325,568	602,495



Regional Conference Partnerships

At the Regional Conferences, UMCCom collaborated with church leaders to align ministries and implement modern communication solutions that expand the Church's reach through relevant local communication channels. The agency regularly engaged with communicators to build relationships, assessed needs, provided resources to strengthen their efforts, and ensured that accurate information from their areas was available to leaders and members alike.

Training:

- Agreement signed for communications training certification for a cohort of 40 communicators identified by their bishops through Africa University (Zimbabwe) *officially launching in 2026*
- West Africa - 20 participants from the Nigeria Episcopal Area (4 Annual Conferences and Senegal and Cameroon Mission Districts) were taught on topics ranging from news reporting to crisis communications
- Virtual trainings/informational meetings for communicators in Africa average 65 participants monthly



Regional Conference Support

Event participation and support

- "We Are UMC" Event — West Middle Annual Conference, Manila Episcopal Area
- "God's Restoration Painful Heart Healing" training Tanzania Annual Conference
- Africa College of Bishops meeting in Angola presentations and crisis communications overview
- GCFA Quadrennium Training in Mutare, Zimbabwe
- UM Broadcast Network's 10th anniversary celebration
- Attended and provided livestreaming support to all four African Central Conference Events, the Philippines Central Conference event, and attended the Germany Central Conference to assist in reporting the bishop election
- Philippines grant and support for the Manila, Baguio, and Davao Episcopal areas to host a comprehensive training for **50+ communicators**

Regionalization education

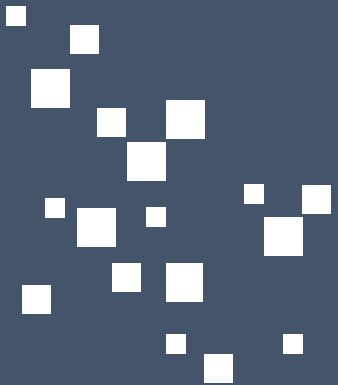
- Awarded **grants to four Episcopal Areas across Africa** to fund contextual communication and awareness efforts: the Sierra Leone Episcopal Area, Central Congo Episcopal Area, the Liberia Episcopal Area, and the Zimbabwe Episcopal Area each received grants to support Regionalization awareness campaigns at the local level

Equipment, connectivity, and communications

- Supported internet connectivity for Episcopal Offices across all Central Conferences in Africa and the Philippines
- Provided communication equipment — including laptop computers, printers, and office technology — to the North Katanga Episcopal Area (DRC) and the Baguio Episcopal Area (Philippines), and grant support to the Liberia Episcopal Area Communications and Radio
- Transitioned to Starlink internet in select Episcopal Offices
- Livestreaming **kits provided to all 17 Episcopal Areas** served by The United Methodist Broadcast Network in Africa and the Philippines
- Livestreaming event support in the Burundi Episcopal Area, Johannesburg, Nigeria, and Zambia.
- media equipment grants provided in the Philippines



Drive technology innovation to reach people
where they are



Innovation highlights

Digital and web initiatives resulted in significant improvements across UMC.org, UMNews.org and ResourceUMC.org, with enhanced user experience, data governance and search functionality to better serve the Church's global community.



Proposed enhanced episcopal site experience with new mockups designed to improve regional conference consistency and user engagement.



Unified data privacy policy deployment ensuring consistent data protection standards across all UMC digital properties.



Advanced search functionality launched across UMC.org, ResourceUMC.org, and UMNews.org with dramatically improved results and enhanced filtering capabilities.



Continued platform stability and performance optimization ensuring quality user experience across all web properties.

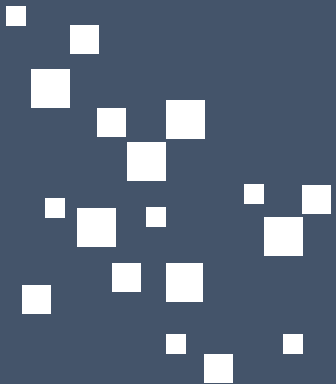


Denominational website alignment with W3C Web Content Accessibility Guidelines efforts include the introduction of a "listen to the article" feature, adjustment of font choices and sizes, closed captioning and transcripts, and photo caption reading.



Introduced the Asana platform to help in simplifying overall processes and save valuable time. Usage allowed staff to track work and see progress in real time, helping teams and cross-team groups to streamline campaign and editorial management.

Nurture our people and demonstrate good stewardship



COMMUNICATIONS

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THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Staff Care



👥 Regular town halls, team lead check-ins, and Slack updates



🧘 Wellness benefits & vacation time encouraged



🕒 Flexibility: ability to decline meetings to manage time



✅ Psychological safety prioritized across teams

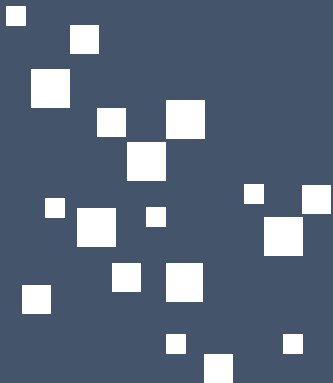
Fundraising

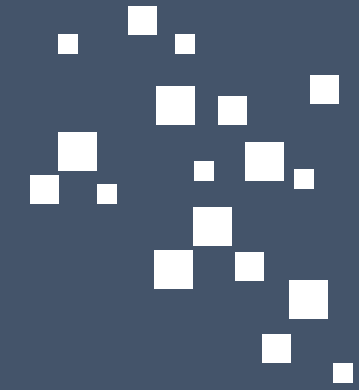


In 2025, UMCom emphasized a culture of philanthropy with staff and partners. The agency embedded fundraising and other non-profit practices that make it easier for people to support our work financially while also pursuing grant opportunities.

More than \$73,000 was raised for communications ministry.

United Methodist Communications is
expanding global reach, equipping
leaders, and strengthening
denominational identity.





Thank you for your support!

Brenda Smotherman, Public Relations Lead, bsmotherman@umcom.org

Andrew Schleicher, BI Analyst, aschleicher@umcom.org



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