



## Michigan Annual Conference

May 30 – June 1, 2024 • Clergy Day May 29, 2024  
Grand Traverse Resort, Acme Michigan

**Fearless: Embracing a New Future** is the theme of the 2024 Annual Conference, based on Isaiah 41:10, *“Do not fear, for I am with you, do not be afraid, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my victorious right hand.”*

It is time to boldly turn a page and welcome exciting new chapters in our conference journey. We return to the critical missional and ministry needs of the world that surround us and fearlessly go forth making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

### CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS

Clergy will attend the Clergy Session on Wednesday, May 29 at 2:00 pm. Annual Conference begins with Opening Worship with a Memorial Service on Thursday, May 30 at 1:00 pm and concludes at 5 pm on Saturday, June 1. Bishop David Bard will preach for Thursday afternoon’s Opening Worship and Memorial Service as well as for the Service of Recognition, Commissioning and Ordination on Friday night. A block schedule is posted at [2024.michiganumc.org](https://2024.michiganumc.org). Registration is open March 1 – April 30, with limited late registration.



### GUEST TEACHER AND PREACHER

In 2014, Rev. Ginger Gaines-Cirelli became the first woman to serve as Senior Pastor of the historic Foundry United Methodist Church in Washington, D.C. Since Ginger’s appointment, Foundry has reenergized its work for racial justice, become a founding member of the Sanctuary DMV movement, and created a Sacred Resistance Ministry Team to mobilize consistent action in response to troubling current events. [Read more here](#). Rev. Ginger Gaines-Cirelli will be a panelist answering questions during Thursday’s Laity Perspective, she will teach on Friday afternoon and preach during Saturday morning worship.

## MISSION FESTIVAL

Join the fun Thursday night during the Board of Global Ministries' Mission Festival. Much like a community fair, you'll have a chance to stroll through exhibits of mission opportunities currently available through our [EngageMI](#) program. These are solid ministry opportunities to support and implement at your local congregation. Enjoy live music, dessert, snacks, and much more. Who knows, you might be able to pet a goat or two!

## WHERE TO STAY – ONSITE LODGING OPTIONS

Options at the Grand Traverse Resort include newly remodeled Hotel Rooms and modern Tower Rooms (both attached to meeting spaces), and Condos (connected by a complimentary shuttle service). [See room photos](#). If you're young and fully mobile, consider staying offsite, or not registering on March 1, to allow those with more mobility concerns to stay onsite.

If family members are staying with you and are not members of AC, please have them register as a visitor and select a double room. You are encouraged to find a roommate to share a double room (2 beds) so fewer members to annual conference need to make a daily commute.

You can lower your cost by having a triple or quadruple occupancy in some of these rooms. Complete your registration online, then contact AC Registrar Sarah Vollmer at [svollmer@michiganumc.org](mailto:svollmer@michiganumc.org) to finalize arrangements. Shared rooms/roommates must stay the same nights, or the full single rate will apply. The hotel requires a valid credit card per room when you arrive. Photo ID is needed at Registration check-in.

**Hotel:** 210 Rooms in a six-story hotel attached to meeting space | Newly remodeled | Standard Hotel Room with WIFI | New single-step into shower | 2 Queen Beds or 1 King Bed and a sofa bed (no sofa beds in ADA-compliant rooms) | All rooms have a mini fridge | Rates per night include lodging tax \$145.

**Tower:** 180 modern rooms with WIFI, attached to meeting space | 2 Queen Beds or 1 King Bed | Single-step into shower | All rooms have a mini fridge | Rates per night Include lodging tax: \$198.

**Condo:** Spacious and quiet | Detached from the meeting space, distances vary | Most have stairs | Access to free shuttles, furnished dining area, kitchenette, living room, WIFI | Perfect for those with special dietary needs who need to prepare their own food | Rates vary based on the number of bedrooms, and include per night lodging tax.

## OFFSITE LODGING OPTIONS

Once the Grand Traverse Resort is full, other hotel blocks will open. You can take a free door-to-door shuttle to select area hotels on the Cherry Loop and avoid taking and parking your car! The full list will be posted at [2024.michiganumc.org](https://2024.michiganumc.org). You must make your own arrangements and follow stated cancellation policies.

[Airbnb](#), [VRBO](#) and other online booking sites have condos on their site that are part of the Grand Traverse Resort complex. These owners are listing them independently and are not part of the rental pool in our contract. If they are on the Grand Traverse Resort property, free shuttle service will be included.

## Camping Options

[Keith J. Charters Traverse City State Park](#)  
[Everflowing Waters Campground](#)

## MEALS

We've worked very closely with the Grand Traverse Resort's Food & Beverage Manager and Chef to craft delicious meals. Grand Traverse Resort has committed to providing complete menus for those with special dietary needs. If you avoid any of the seven main allergens (dairy, egg, tree nuts, peanuts, shellfish, fish, wheat/gluten), you can select from the special allergen-free buffet line – located outside of the Michigan Ballroom and in the Tower/Mackinac/Peninsula Room pre-function space. Outdoor seating does not have a special dietary needs buffet line. Check the special dietary meal option checkbox to receive this throughout the conference. If you have concerns, please see Grand Traverse Resort staff.

Meal prices include a 24% gratuity for servers. Breakfast is \$15 | Lunch is \$18 | Dinner is \$22 | Wednesday Night Burger Bar is available for \$18. There are also four onsite restaurants. Other onsite breakfast options include Sweetwater American Bistro, hotel coffee shop, Hotel and Tower room service, or grab-and-go from Campus Ministries Snack Station. See [menus on the website](#).

## THURSDAY PRE-CONFERENCE OPTIONS

**Golf Tournament - 4-Person Scramble | 9 Holes | Shotgun Start @ 8 am | \$75 per person**

Proceeds benefit Campus Ministries of the Michigan Conference. See the [golf flyer](#) for more information, or contact Rev. Rich Burstall at 734.915.6058, or [gvnit2god@yahoo.com](mailto:gvnit2god@yahoo.com) to register and pay.

**LET'S GET MOVING FUNDRAISER 10:30 am Start | \$35 per person | Registration includes a T-Shirt**

Through generous support from the Conference Board of Pension and Health, a new healthy kind of fundraiser is occurring on Thursday, May 30 at 10:30 am. The **Zero K – Moving to End Child Hunger** provides the opportunity for everyone – regardless of fitness level – to participate and support this important effort to help children. With a 0K, you choose how to move your body at a pace that works for you. Even your pet can get involved in a Wag! For those wishing to run/walk/ride/wag we will hold a traditional 5K where you choose your distance and method for completing it. Go the whole 5K or choose shorter loops. For those wanting to move other ways, we will offer options from chair aerobics to counting steps during annual conference. This is easily replicated at your local church, organize a fun walk/run locally and receive any donation to relieve child hunger in Michigan. All funds will be distributed to agencies supporting every county in Michigan for immediate hunger relief! Registration will open after March 1, here: <https://2024.michiganumc.org/0kchildhunger/>

## CHILDCARE

Limited onsite childcare will be available for children of members to annual conference. Childcare will be held onsite in a hospitality suite. Space is limited. We ask that parents bring toys and activities to share. Registration and payment is secured through the Annual Conference registration form. Note: Registration for childcare closes on April 15 to allow time to hire staff based on enrollment.

## SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

We are partnering with [Midwest Mission](#) to assemble rice meal bags for those in need. Last year, meals were sent to support families in the Ukraine. Rice meal bags will be assembled at Annual Conference in hands-on mission on Thursday, May 30 from 9 am - noon, before Annual Conference begins. Each rice meal bag contains rice, vitamin pack, dehydrated vegetables, and soy, and provides 6 meals. The supply cost is \$2 per bag. You can help! Donations will be collected on the AC Registration form for Rice Meal Bags at \$2/each. In addition, 250 people are needed for 3 hours for assembly. Standing and sitting jobs are available in assembly line fashion. You don't need to assemble to donate for material costs. Check your interest on the AC Registration form. Groups can sign up to provide a team of workers, or give a group donation here: <https://miumc.swoogo.com/rice24>.

## VOLUNTEER

Volunteers are also needed to serve as Ushers & Tellers, 5K timekeepers, Grace Patrol, Registration Desk Help, Choir Members and Stagehands. Sign up to volunteer through the registration system.

## CLERGY RETIREES & CONFERENCE EQUALIZATION MEMBER RATES

Retired Clergy will have the \$200 cost of registration waived for Annual Conference. You are responsible for all other expenses. The fee is automatically deducted in the registration system, so the balance, including any late fee, is your responsibility.

## CONFERENCE EQUALIZATION MEMBERS

Those persons who are seated because of their positions of conference leadership or selected by the Board of Laity shall have their basic expenses paid by the Annual Conference. Please “take what you need” but also “use what you take.” Once onsite lodging is sold out, offsite hotel blocks will open. Equalization Members can receive a reimbursement up to \$75 per night with a receipt. Reimbursement forms are available at the Registration Desk.

### Expenses covered for Equalization Members

- \$200 Registration.
- Onsite lunches and dinners between the opening and closing of the conference.
- 2 nights lodging in a shared hotel room at Grand Traverse Resort, or \$75 per night reimbursement for offsite lodging with receipt.

### Expenses NOT covered for Equalization Members

- Travel expenses or bus shuttle from the East Side.
- Wednesday meals, Thursday lunch, Saturday dinner and any breakfasts.
- Offsite meals or meals at the Grand Traverse Resort restaurants.
- Housing expenses that exceed \$75 per night (i.e., the additional cost for a Hotel Single or Tower room.)
- Registration Late Fees.

If you select a more expensive room option, or meals not included in the Equalization package, the balance for those expenses will appear at the end of your registration. You are responsible for paying them either immediately with a credit card, or by mailing a check, received by April 25.



## STATEMENT OF CARE

As a body, lay members and clergy are called from every shore to convene at the 2024 Michigan Annual Conference, each bringing our own unique being to become one body. In this gathering, let us be mindful to care for each one in this body by bringing our best, rested presence to this year’s conference. Those employed to service (serve us) are also called. Our impact on the area is not only financial; we leave a lasting reminder of who the renewed Michigan United Methodists claim to be.

Traveling, health, and strains from home press on us. A full conference schedule, lively debate, speakers, and worship can engage our spirits, but also wear our physical selves. We’re not used to waiting in line with 1,500 for a nourishing meal. These are the moments that try us. We’re not all Petoskey Stones, gracefully held

together with many for eternity. Should we crack, let it reveal in us a sparkling center like the Lake Superior Amethyst Agate.

Let us be reminded it is a privilege to gather and serve in this capacity. We have a contractual agreement of good conduct with Grand Traverse Resort staff, and a covenant with the body to care for each other. Should the need arise, a member of the Commission on the Annual Conference will remind you of your covenant to care for one another. You, or we, may find that your beauty might best be revealed by the splashes of your local shores.

By completing your registration, you've assessed that your personal wellness is suited for this gathering, you are committed to care for self and others, and you agree to conduct yourself with integrity for the blessing of the body of Christ, gathered by the shores of the Grand Traverse Bay. Glow on, you glorious Yooperlite!

### **HEALTH AND SAFETY AT ANNUAL CONFERENCE**

The Commission on the Annual Conference Session will monitor infection rates and CDC health and safety guidelines. We encourage safe distancing to prevent the spread of illness. At this time masking is not required yet strongly encouraged if you are immune compromised in any way. The Michigan Conference reserves the right to amend this directive based on guidelines from the State of Michigan's Department of Health and Human Services regarding COVID-19, RSV, or other communicable diseases.

### **MORE REGISTRATION NEED-TO-KNOW (aka, the fine print)**

**Registration opens March 1 at 9:00 am EST.**

Watch your email for a link to register.

**General registration ends April 30, 2024 at 11:59 pm EDT.**

All cancellations incur a \$50 cancellation fee. There are no cancellation refunds after May 1 as food and housing orders have been placed. Registration reopens May 1, with a \$50 late fee, not covered for equalization members or retirees.

**Payments by check for registration must be received in the Treasurer's office by April 25.**

To validate your registration, funds must be received by April 25th otherwise your registration will be cancelled, and onsite housing given to the next person on the waiting list. Re-registration will incur the \$50 late fee and there is not guarantee you will be on resort property.

**Registration remains open until May 19.**

Your balance must be paid in full to participate in Legislative Committees. *Those registering after May 19 will not be able to participate in Legislative Committees scheduled online for May 21-22.* Meals are not guaranteed with late registration as meal counts have already been submitted to the resort on May 1. Limited late registration is available beginning May 23.

### **CONTACT US!**

Email your Annual Conference questions to Conference Events Planner Nancy Arnold at: [narnold@michiganumc.org](mailto:narnold@michiganumc.org). Send registration questions to Annual Conference Registrar Sarah Vollmer at: [svollmer@michiganumc.org](mailto:svollmer@michiganumc.org)