

## ***“Make Disciples of Jesus Christ to Transform the World”*** **2012 General Conference Theme**

“What will be the task of Methodists in America?” When the Christmas Conference of 1784 answered that question, they reclaimed John Wesley’s words from the first London Conference in 1744 to declare their mission with bold, concise clarity: “To reform the nation and spread scriptural holiness across the land.”

In recent years, General Conferences have focused our attention on the command of the Risen Christ to “Go and make disciples of all nations,” (Matthew 28:19-20) by declaring that the mission of The United Methodist Church is “to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.” The General Conference has also said that “local churches provide the most significant arena through which disciple-making occurs.” (The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church—2008, p. 87) The Council of Bishops and Connectional Table have been leading us in aligning our resources and energies around this mission.

The theme for the 2012 General Conference will continue to focus our attention on the mission of the church as we gather around the theme: “Make Disciples of Jesus Christ to Transform the World.”

Our theme is a bold declaration of our mission that can help unite The United Methodist Church in a common calling. It grows out of our shared conviction that people across the connection are crying out for clarity about our mission that speaks to who we are, binds us together, and leads us in a common direction. Our hope is that it will enable us to set clear priorities for the use of our resources.

1. It is biblically grounded in the command of the Risen Christ in Matthew 28:1-20.
2. It is Christ-centered. The graphic image of the cross represents the presence of Jesus Christ at the center of our mission.
3. The circles that extend from the cross express energy and movement into ministry in the world.
4. The imperative verbs -- “make...transform” -- underscore the urgency of our mission and call for active response.
5. It aligns the General Conference with our mission so that the Conference is not a one-time event, but a part of the ongoing ministry of the church.
6. It affirms the “both/and” character of our Methodist identity with its emphasis on personal discipleship by which we participate in God’s transformation of the world.
7. The bright sun and blue water represents Tampa, Florida, as the site of the 2012 General Conference.

Our prayer is that the Spirit of God might unite and reenergize the United Methodist Church for its mission and ministry for Jesus Christ.

Make Disciples  
*of* Jesus Christ  
*to* Transform  
*the* World



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