

Miracle Sunday Devotion

Bishop Dan Schwein, Northern Illinois-Wisconsin

We United Methodists respond to the Holy Spirit as we **love boldly, serve joyfully, and lead courageously.**

On May 17th, every United Methodist Church in the world will celebrate **MIRACLE SUNDAY** to endow global theological education in the United Methodist Church.

What is the value you would place on spiritual leadership in the church?

How many of us are disciples today because there was someone at the appropriate time by God's grace who guided us? Like the Ethiopian in Acts 8:26-40, who encountered Philip, who apparently was puzzled by the scripture he was reading, inquired of Phillip, "How can I understand unless someone guides me?" We rejoice today with deep gratitude for those along the way who served as our guides.

Now we have the opportunity to increase and grow trained clergy or "guides" across the Regional Conferences of Africa, Europe, and the Philippines.

Clearly, there is an overwhelming need for training United Methodist clergy outside the United States. Within the USA, 71% of United Methodist clergy have a master's degree in theology. However, outside the USA, fewer than 5% hold such. Thirteen of the United Methodist seminaries in the U.S. have a combined \$1.2 billion of endowment; in contrast, over 20 seminaries outside the USA have little to no endowment.

The goal of this initiative is to grow the Endowment for Theological Education to the level that annually, 500 clergy outside the USA would be granted funds to further their ministerial training, as well as for generations to come.

The Northern Illinois-Wisconsin Area already enjoys gifted clergy leadership raised up in the regional conferences, places like the Philippines, Africa, or Europe. I believe everyone who wants to serve as clergy deserves a church who will support them.

Introducing Our 2026 Graduates!

Collin B.

I am very excited to graduate, but I will miss the memories I have made at school. During high school, I was a part of the drama club, forensics, Day of Caring, and art club. It's really bittersweet to be graduating. As a freshman, I thought graduation was going to be in 20 years. I feel like it went fast, and I wish I had just a little more time to spend with my friends. I have changed so much since I was a freshman, and I am very proud of the person that I am today. I have a summer job lined up, and I will be going to Mid-State to do my Gen Eds and then transferring to UWSP for psychology. I'm looking forward to this new chapter in my life, and I'm very excited I get to finally chase my dreams.

College: Mid-State Technical College

Major/Minor: University Transfer Associate of Arts Program



Ethan B.

Right now, I'm counting down the days until graduation. This is because I'm excited for summer and to further pursue my education at Mid-State for arbory once summer comes to an end. But looking back, there are things I'm going to miss about high school. Obviously, I'm going to miss sports and other extracurricular activities. Whether it was being a captain on the football team, a leader on the baseball field, or playing basketball and running track for the first time. I also served as president of the Spanish club. I also helped tutor our middle schoolers and participated in a new program called Blackhawk Buddies, which helped kids who could benefit from a friend due to several different reasons. I also participated in our drama club, forensics, and math league. And this basically sums up what I have done for the school.

College: Mid-State Technical College

Major/Minor: Arbory



Melanie S.

I'm grateful to share that I have graduated from Des Moines Area Community College with an Associates of Applied Science degree in Funeral Service. This journey has challenged me

academically, emotionally, and spiritually, and I thank God for the strength and support he has provided through each step. I feel called to use this degree to serve families during some of the most difficult moments of their lives by offering compassion, dignity, comfort, and care through funeral service. In the future, I hope to continue growing in this profession while being a light to others, showing Christ's love through kindness, respect, and service to those who are grieving. Thank you all for your prayers, encouragement, and support throughout this journey.



CHORAL ANTHEM

Congregational Part *(when instructed)*

First Time:

South Side:

North Side:

Second Time:

North Side:

South Side:

We will sing to
and wor - ship
the One who
is wor - - thy!
And we will love
and a - dore Him
a - dore Him
and we will bow
down be - fore Him!

You are LORD of lords.
You are KING of kings
You are MIGHT-y God.
Lord of everything!

You're Em-MAN-uel.
You're the GREAT 'I am!'
You're the PRINCE of Peace,
who is the Lamb!

We will sing to
and wor - ship
the One who
is wor - - thy!
And we will love
and a - dore Him
and we will bow
down be - fore Him!

You're the LIV-ing God.
You're my SAV-ing grace.
You will REIGN forever.
You are Ancient of Days.
You are Alpha! Omega!
Beginning and End!
You're my Savior! Messiah!
Redeemer and Friend!

ALL:

You're our Prince of Peace,
and we will live our lives for You!

TRIVIA NITE

A G.R.A.C.E.

fundraiser - THIS
AFTERNOON: 4-6 PM

First Congregational
Church - Rapids

Fun afternoon of trivia /
socializing / bake sale
(freewill) / silent auction!

All proceeds go to paying
off student debt in area
schools.