

**The United Methodist Church**  
**Special Sundays and Special Offerings Observed by the Iowa Annual Conference**  
 (Revised 9/15)

Mission Moments are found at:

<http://www.umciving.org/pastors/mission-moments>

**Six Special Sundays with offerings designated by the General Conference**

**Local Church access to information and materials:** Available materials include posters, bulletin inserts, worship materials, and offering envelopes. The local church may order the items, in the quantity it needs, in order to observe the Special Sunday and the Special Offering through [www.umciving.org](http://www.umciving.org). *There is no charge to the local church for these materials.*

Name	Suggested Date of Observance	Purpose of the Observance	Disposition of the Offering	Iowa Conference Group Responsible for Promotion
Human Relations Day	Sunday before Martin Luther King, Jr. Observance (January)	Helps to overcome injustice and empowers those struggling to survive.	90% to General Board of Global Ministries for the Community Developers Program and the United Methodist Voluntary Services Program. 10% to General Board of Church and Society for Youth Offender Rehabilitation Program.	Conference Board of Global Ministries
One Great Hour of Sharing	Fourth Sunday in Lent (March or early April)	Calls United Methodists to share the goodness of life with those who hurt.	100% to United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR). The offering provides administrative support for the United Methodist Committee on Relief as it responds to disaster survivors and people in need around the world. UMCOR receives no apportionment dollars.	Conference Board of Global Ministries
Native American Ministries	Second Sunday after Easter (April or early May)	Empowers local outreach and educates Native American seminary students to serve God faithfully. The offering also helps preserve a rich cultural heritage	25% to General Board of Higher Education for scholarships for Native Americans attending UM schools of theology. 25% to General Board of Global Ministries to support the Native American Urban Initiative. 50% retained by the Iowa Annual Conference to support Iowa Native American Ministries.	Conference Native American Ministries Committee (Also responsible for disbursing IAC share of the offering.)

Peace with Justice	First Sunday after Pentecost (late May or June)	Empowers peacemakers to mediate disputes and promote cooperation through the love of Christ by seeking peaceful solutions, creating and supporting peace-related ministries in their conference and learning about peaceful, just efforts around the world.	50% to General Board of Church and Society for support of peace and justice ministries. 50% retained by the Iowa Annual Conference to support restorative justice initiatives and other peace and justice efforts.	Conference Board of Church and Society (Also responsible for disbursing IAC share of the offering.)
World Communion	First Sunday in October	Provide scholarships for graduate national & international students; scholarships for national and international ethnic undergraduate students within the U.S.; and Ethnic In-Service training (non-degree).	50% for World Communion Scholarships 35% for Ethnic Scholarship Program 15% for Ethnic In-Service Training Program	Conference Board of Global Ministries
United Methodist Student Day	Last Sunday in November	Empowers students preparing to help the suffering while speaking the truth in love. Provides scholarships and student loans for United Methodist students	100% to General Board of Higher Education and Ministry to support United Methodist Scholarships and the United Methodist Student Loan Fund.	Conference Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministry.

## Five Special Sundays with offerings designated by the Annual Conference

**Local Church access to information and materials:** For offering envelopes, please contact the Conference Center at 515-974-8900. The only envelopes we have are: Golden Cross, Christian Education, Rural Life and Disabilities Awareness. Available until supplies run out *and there is no charge for envelopes*. Bulletin inserts can be printed from the Rainbow Covenant website: <http://www.iaumc.org/rainbow>.

Name	Suggested Date of Observance	Purpose	Distribution of Funds	Iowa Conference Group Responsible for Promotion and Supervision
Disabilities Awareness	Second Sunday in February	To celebrate gifts and graces of persons with disabilities and promote their full inclusion in the community	100% retained by the Iowa Annual Conference to provide educational opportunities, and to provide grants to local churches which will assist in removing architectural and attitudinal barriers to accessibility	Conference Commission in Ministry with Persons with Disabilities
Golden Cross Sunday	First Sunday in May	To celebrate health and welfare ministries and their role in spiritual wellbeing.	100% retained by the Iowa Annual Conference to fund grants to local churches and community groups for health and welfare ministries	Conference Board of Global Ministries
Rural Life Sunday	Third Sunday in May	To celebrate and support rural life and rural ministry	100% retained by the Iowa Annual Conference to fund grants to enrich ministries in towns and rural areas	Conference Board of Global Ministries
Christian Education Sunday	Any Sunday in September	To celebrate and promote Christian education and spiritual formation.	100% retained by the Iowa Annual Conference and used as follows: 52% granted to Iowa Religious Media Services for the purchase of resources 38% used to support camperships at Iowa United Methodist Camps 10% used to fund scholarships for continuing education for salaried United Methodist Christian Educators.	Conference Board of Discipleship
Neighbor Helping Neighbor	Date set by the local congregation	To assist persons who have unmet needs due to economic hardship	100% retained by the Iowa Annual Conference and may be requested by local church pastors and/or district superintendents	Conference Board of Global Ministries

**Four Special Sundays without offerings designated by the General Conference:**

**Local Church access to information and materials:** The Iowa Annual Conference group listed as responsible for promotion (working with the Conference Communications Services and Resources Department) is responsible for promoting and publicizing these Sunday observances, including making available interpretive material and worship resources.

Name	Suggested Date of Observance	Purpose	Iowa Conference Group Responsible for Promotion
Heritage Sunday	Sunday on, or immediately before, Aldersgate Day (May 24 <sup>th</sup> )	To provide an opportunity for reflection on heritage, celebration of where the Church has been, how it understands itself as it shapes us today, the meaning of Christian conferencing, and to remember the past by committing itself to the continuing call of God.	Conference Commission on Archives and History. Resources available at <a href="http://www.umcdiscipleship.org/worship/church-civic-holidays/heritage-sunday">http://www.umcdiscipleship.org/worship/church-civic-holidays/heritage-sunday</a>
Organ and Tissue Donor Sunday	Second Sunday in November	A time to come together, during a season of thanksgiving, around the issues of life-giving gifts	Conference Board of Church and Society. Resources available at <a href="http://www.umcsgiving.org/mission-moments/november-9-organ-tissue-and-donor-sunday">http://www.umcsgiving.org/mission-moments/november-9-organ-tissue-and-donor-sunday</a>
Laity Sunday	Third Sunday in October	To celebrate the ministry of all lay Christians as their lives are empowered for ministry by the Holy Spirit	Conference Board of Laity. Resources available at <a href="http://www.umcdiscipleship.org/resources/laity-sunday-2015-worship-helps">http://www.umcdiscipleship.org/resources/laity-sunday-2015-worship-helps</a>
Men's Ministry Sunday	Date designated by local congregations	To celebrate men's ministry, including formal and informal units of United Methodist Men, male Emmaus reunion communities, work teams, prayer groups, Bible studies, study and enrichment groups, and other places and organizations where men of The United Methodist Church join together for fellowship, nurture, spiritual development, witness, and outreach	Conference United Methodist Men. Resources available at <a href="http://www.gcumm.org/resources/page.6/">http://www.gcumm.org/resources/page.6/</a>