

A DOZEN WAYS TO

PROMOTE & CELEBRATE WORLD COMMUNION SUNDAY



DEAR CHURCH LEADER,

“World Communion Sunday is an event that bridges denominations and spotlights our commonality in the body of Christ,” says the Rev. Timothy McClendon. “We look for that which we hold in common rather than our differences. Holy Communion, rightly observed, reunites the church. This is the pastor’s hope when he or she holds up the loaf of bread and says, ‘Because there is one loaf, we who are many, are one body because we all partake of the one loaf. The bread which we break is a sharing in the body of Christ.’”

“This is one reason that today when we celebrate the Lord’s Supper, we attempt to focus more on Christ’s marvelous work of grace than on our power to reform ourselves.”

In connection with World Communion Sunday, The United Methodist Church encourages churches to pursue Christian unity and ecumenical cooperation and receive an offering to support the educational and career goals of racial and ethnic students pursuing various avenues of ministry in the United States and around the world.

As you prepare to celebrate World Communion Sunday on the first Sunday in October, we are providing 12 tips for promoting and celebrating World Communion Sunday, along with basic information about the observance. We hope you will find this resource helpful as you plan for this important day in the life of the church.

Thank you for participating in World Communion Sunday. Our students rely on your gifts to help them achieve their educational goals and do their part in living out the mission of The United Methodist Church. We are grateful for your generosity.

Because there is one loaf, we who are many are one body in Christ.

Gratefully,

Allyson Collinsworth, executive director, Loans and Scholarships, General Board of Higher Education and Ministry

Lisa Katzenstein, administrator, Scholarship/Leadership Development Office, General Board of Global Ministries

FACTS ABOUT

WORLD COMMUNION SUNDAY



Your World Communion Sunday offering provides scholarships for U.S. (racial and ethnic) and international students.



Average scholarships range from \$500 to \$12,500 a year and cover tuition and fees, books, room and board, daily transportation, medical expenses and more.



Students who receive scholarships study in a wide variety of fields, including ministry, family pastoral care, clinical psychology, peace and governance, crop production, law, health, rural development and more.



Historically celebrated on the first Sunday in October, World Communion Sunday supports World Communion Scholarships (General Board of Global Ministries) and the Ethnic Scholarships, Journey Toward Ordained Ministry Scholarships, and Ethnic In-Service Training Programs (General Board of Higher Education and Ministry).



Ask children to decorate your church with handmade flags and banners representing various countries and cultures. Invite members to wear clothing that represents their heritage.

Collect greetings, via the Internet, from churches around the world and share them with the congregation during worship.





Photo by: Lane Camp

Contact your annual conference chair of Christian Unity and ask him or her to share what The United Methodist Church is doing with other Christian denominations. CUIC chairs strive to unite Christian denominations for a more Christlike and compassionate dialogue around our faith.

Coordinate a church potluck with an international theme and invite people to bring a favorite main dish or dessert from another country. At the potluck, collect a love offering and add the receipts to the Special Sunday offering.

Photo by: North Springs UMC





Divide the congregation into seven sections, one for each continent, and ask them to pray for people and needs in each place. Ask participants to do a corporate (group) prayer, with each participant adding a line to the prayer.

Download ready-made resources to enhance your World Communion Sunday celebration at your church. Download the pastor's kit (sermon starters, litany and videos, PowerPoint worship background and other resources) at www.umcsgiving.org/WCS.





Encourage children and adults to become pen pals or email friends with a World Communion Ethnic, or Journey Toward Ordained Ministry Scholar. Contact the General Board of Global Ministries at www.umcmmission.org and the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry at www.gbhem.org for student contact information.

Find a World Communion, Ethnic, or Journey
Toward Ordained Ministry Scholar in your area
who can visit with your congregation. Invite that
student to speak on Sunday morning, participate
in a Sunday school class or join your congregation
for a special get-acquainted time or mission
moment.

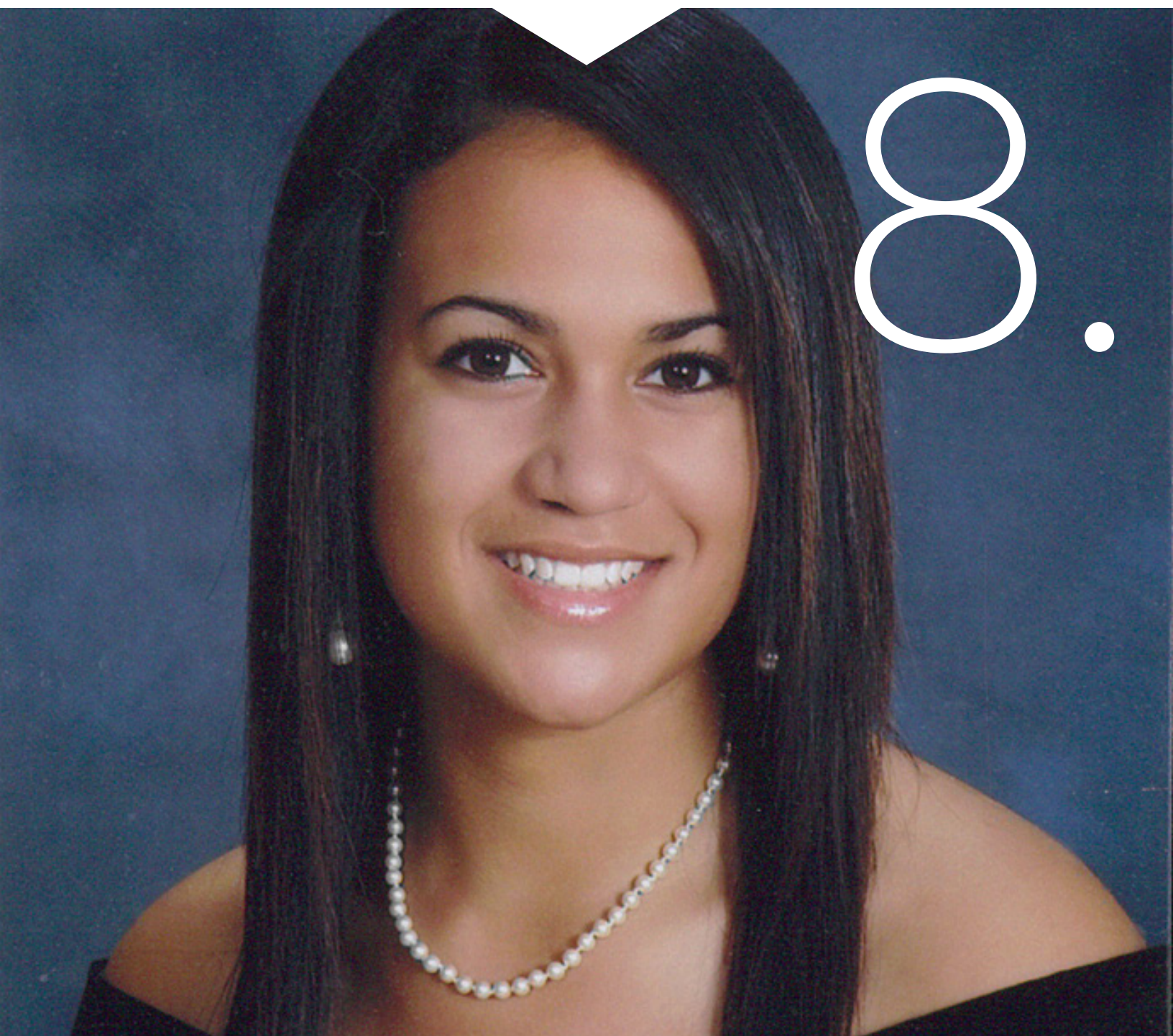




Photo By: CIA

Lay a large world map on a table near the Communion table and ask worshippers to name countries from which their ancestors came. Light votive candles to place on each country named.

Tell them that Christians everywhere are celebrating Communion on this day. Pray for people in all the countries named, especially those in situations of unrest around the world. Remind worshippers that the light of Christ is everywhere.

Sponsor an international bake sale. Ask members of the congregation to share recipes and baked goods — especially breads — from other countries. Add the proceeds from this fundraiser to your Special Sunday offering.



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Use traditional prayers and litanies for different parts of the liturgy. This includes the use of the Apostle's Creed as the most ancient faith statement of the church and an adaptation of one of the oldest existing eucharistic prayers, the Prayer of Hippolytus. If you prefer, use expressions that are more contemporary. For worship resources, go to <http://www.gbod.org/planning-calendar/world-communion-sunday>.

Worship ecumenically with people from other churches. Sponsor joint services or send representatives to commune with another congregation and invite that congregation to do likewise.

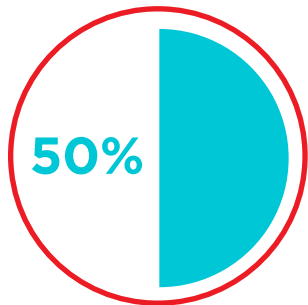
Photo by: GBHEM



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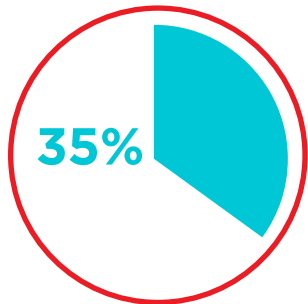
WHAT SCHOLARSHIPS DO MY WORLD COMMUNION SUNDAY

GIFTS SUPPORT?



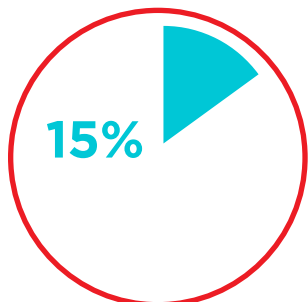
World Communion Leadership Scholarships (General Board of Global Ministries)

50 percent: At least half of this amount designated for ministries beyond the United States; all of the offering supports graduate national and international United Methodist scholars and students directly related to Global Ministries' mission partners so that they may do their master's or doctoral studies at universities or seminaries. Candidates should have the probability of offering five years of service to their churches and/or communities after graduation.



Ethnic Scholarships, Journey Toward Ordained Ministry Scholarships (General Board of Higher Education and Ministry)

35 percent: Ethnic Scholarships assist national and international undergraduates studying within the United States. Journey Toward Ordained Ministry Scholarships assist ethnic students pursuing a call to ordained ministry in The United Methodist Church. The program includes a ministry mentoring component for students to learn from leaders and peers within their ethnic communities.



Ethnic In-Service Training (General Board of Higher Education and Ministry)

15 percent: Recruit, train and retain ethnic United Methodist women and men in leadership positions in every level of the church and its ministry. Encourage and provide grants for partnerships and collaborative efforts between and with campus ministry, chaplaincy and institutions of higher education and general agencies.

LEARN MORE AT:
www.umcgiving.org/wcs

General Board of Global Ministries
www.umcgiving.org/wcs

General Board of Higher Education
www.gbhem.org

Barbara Dunlap-Berg, general church content editor, United Methodist Communications.



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