

Youth Annual Gathering/Annual Conference Prayer Walk

This walk is designed to start at Broadway United Methodist Church and travel along Broadway St. until you reach the Paducah Riverfront. However, you can do this walk from any starting point with 4 middle stops and ending at the river. Each of the stops below are suggestions.

Starting Point: Broadway UMC (701 Broadway St.)

Psalm 46:10 – Be Still and know that I am God.

Take a deep breath and name the worries and stressors you are carrying. Be still and intentionally hand them over to God before you start your walk. (One way to symbolize this in your body is by starting with a close fist, and as you let go of the worries and stressors unclench your fist and lay your open palms face up ready to receive what God will show you.)

Stop 1: Somewhere near Innovations Branding House (612 Broadway St.)

Isaiah 43:18-19 – Do not remember the former things, or consider the things of old. I am about to do a NEW THING; now it springs forth, do you not PERCEIVE it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.

This year we celebrate 50 years of God's work in and through the United Methodist Church. Countless lives have been transformed and disciples made over these years. We cannot help but acknowledge, though, that we are in a painful season as a church. At this stop, give God thanks for the work that God's done through the UMC. Ask God to open your heart and mind to perceive the innovative ways the Holy Spirit is calling United Methodists forward to be faithful in the new thing God is doing.

Stop 2: Somewhere near Columbia Theater (504 Broadway St.)

Psalm 46:4-5 – There is a river whose streams gladden God's city, the holiest dwelling of the Most High. God is in that city. It will never crumble. God will help it when morning dawns.

Our conference is in a season of transition as we prayerfully consider the ways God is working in both the Memphis Conference and the TN Conference and how we might be stronger together. While there are serious administrative and financial details to consider with this decision, use this time to pray for the roots of connectional ministry. Pray for the youth and young adults that are rising up as leaders and prophetic voices. Pray for all of the extension ministries that reach the neighborhoods and populations that may be overlooked. Pray for Bishop Bill McAlilly, our cabinet and other conference lay and clergy leaders in their strategic and missional work. Pray for peace and confidence that God is at work among our conference in whatever new morning dawns.

Stop 3: Somewhere near Paducah Antique Mall, notice mosaic tiles next door (407 Broadway St.)

Ephesians 4:2-3 Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.

Our districts represent our most localized connectional relationship. Our Districts are mission fields that invite us beyond the doors of our local churches and help us to build relationships with other disciples living out their callings in our geographic region. Our districts help us to practice surrendering to God's calling to participate in something bigger than ourselves. At this stop, pray for the connection of our Districts. Pray for our District Superintendents that are stewards and mission strategists in our Districts. Pray for our District leaders, both laity and clergy that work to unite us as we seek to be faithful disciples of Jesus Christ. Pray in particular for the Purchase District – giving thanks for all they have done to welcome us here for Annual Conference, and praying for strength and stamina for the leaders working countless hours over the next several days to ensure we are able to gather.

Stop 4: Somewhere near Gazebo in River Parking lot (128 Broadway St.)

Joel 2:28/Acts 2:17 – ... I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy. Your young will see visions. Your elders will dream dreams.

Here we recognize the local church. Our local church family raises us up and teaches us the faith. In the local church we are invited to discover our Spiritual gifts and space is made for us to participate in the body of Christ. It is often at the local level where we first begin to feel our callings (because we are ALL called into ministry for God's Kingdom) and start to dream of the ways Jesus will use us to transform the world. At this stop pray for our local churches. Pray for pastors, staff and lay leadership – especially for those churches who are experiencing transition in leadership. Pray for the members of our local churches to feel the empowerment of the Spirit. Pray for our churches to have the eyes to SEE ALL THE PEOPLE who aren't in the body. And pray that they may have the courage to go outside their walls to participate in the Kingdom God is building.

Stop 5: Paducah Riverfront

Psalms 46:10 – Be Still and know that I am God.

Here we must self-reflect and self-locate. The church, from the denomination down to the local church is first and foremost made up of individual disciples. For the whole church to function in health, the individual must be self-responsible for her or his faith. We must have the courage to honestly answer the question, "How is it with your soul?" In this moment of self-reflection consider: *how is it you're your soul?* Pray that God will reveal to you the barriers between you and God. Ask God to give you the eyes to SEE ALL THE PEOPLE and recognize God's image in each of them. As you pray here, be still and listen for the ways God is trying to speak your calling, your gifts and your ministry into your life.