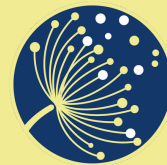


FAQ



Envisioning a New Michigan Conference

WHY IS A NEW FREE METHODIST CONFERENCE BEING CONSIDERED IN MICHIGAN?

- **Statewide decline:** Over the past several decades, the three Michigan conferences have experienced a collective decline regarding the number of churches and the number of people attending our churches. Fewer communities in the state of Michigan have a Free Methodist presence than a generation ago. We are at an intervention point.
- **Elimination of historical barriers:** The three Michigan conferences were formed due to the historical limitations of travel and communication. Today, these barriers no longer exist, making it possible to create a stronger, unified conference.
- **Emerging denominational vision:** Our current Board of Bishops envision a new network of larger conferences, led by leadership teams with diverse gifts, that provide robust resources and support for pastors and local churches to carry out the mission of Jesus in their unique contexts.

WHAT ARE THE PRIMARY GOALS OF THE NEW CONFERENCE?

We believe that a new conference will help us:

- Strengthen pastoral formation and leadership development
- Release new leaders into the mission
- Multiply new congregations
- Combine resources for greater Kingdom impact

HOW WILL THIS CHANGE BENEFIT PASTORS AND CHURCHES?

- By providing specialized, contextual training, a stronger conference will be able to provide better resources and support for every pastor and local church
- By providing a structure of collaboration and deeper connection, this will ensure stronger accountability and spiritual connection.
- By providing regional and affinity groups, will strengthen morale and enhance collaboration
- By providing more opportunity for greater connection and voice for younger leaders with one another

WHAT ARE THE FINANCIAL BENEFITS OF A UNIFIED CONFERENCE?

Aligning our conferences will reduce redundancy in administrative operations and finances, allowing more funds to be directed toward leadership development and church planting.

WILL THE FORMATION OF A NEW CONFERENCE HELP US REACH MORE PEOPLE FOR THE KINGDOM?

We recognize that structural changes do not bring people to Christ. People come to know Jesus because the Spirit draws them, and followers proclaim and demonstrate God's love. However, we believe that structure can help build a strong missional culture enabling a new conference to develop and implement a fruitful statewide multiplication plan. We also recognize that our current structure has not enabled us to geographically saturate our state with the gospel. The sad fact is that there are many cities, towns and counties in Michigan with no Free Methodist presence. We believe the formation of a new conference can powerfully move us into a season of greater effectiveness.

HOW WILL LEADERSHIP BE STRUCTURED IN THE NEW CONFERENCE?

The new conference will be able to form a comprehensive leadership team to offer robust resourcing and support to pastors, churches and to plant new congregations. It will have one elected Superintendent and two assistant superintendents overseeing our leadership pipeline and multiplication efforts. In addition, every pastor and congregation will exist within a thriving ecosystem with a regional superintendent, district leaders and/or affinity groups.

HOW CAN WE PARTICIPATE IN THIS NEW OPPORTUNITY?

Leaders and congregations are encouraged to join in prayer, discussion, and planning as the vision for the new conference takes shape. Our goal is to mobilize and align the power of our laity regarding our vision for the geographic saturation of the gospel. We are all called to go and make disciples. We have all been equipped with spiritual gifts to build up the body of Christ "until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ." Join with us in prayerfully discerning your specific part in this new opportunity to spread the fragrance of Christ throughout the state of Michigan.