

Lay Empowerment Team Report

We are “all things laity”

Only three years ago we held our Inaugural North Georgia Annual Conference of the Global Methodist Church, and in that same three years the Lay Empowerment Team has sponsored programs that provide opportunities for laity to learn about the Global Methodist Church, the many resources available through the conference to enhance local church leadership, find one's place to serve whether enhancing a laity role in leadership or seeking a clergy path to ordination. Through three educational programs sponsored by the Lay Empowerment Team we seek to equip, educate and inspire laity to strengthen, plant and revitalize churches and to become personally involved in the making of disciples who make disciples.

Each program leads to further knowledge and advancement. Adopting the expectation of the Ministry and Higher Education Commission for clergy in the GMC, we encourage life-long learning for laity of the NGA Annual Conference

Lay Empowerment Institute

LEI is a series of 9 workshops developed to provide laity with knowledge of the GMC, history of Methodism and the birth and development of the Global Methodist Church, the utilization of conference resources to strengthen the local church, opportunities to serve in mission and ministry within the community and around the world, our conference vision and the important of becoming an individual witness in the outreach to a world that needs to know Jesus ~”so that the world may know!” That is what *LiveSent*, our annual conference theme entails.

We invite you to attend the graduation of 30 participants from the 2024 and 2025 classes at 2:00 p.m. on Friday at this 2026 Annual Conference when the LEI diploma and LEI pins will be presented.

We offer the LEI program series annually, March through November, 5 in-person workshops at a local church and 4 workshops by zoom. We have exciting plans for the upcoming class as we continue to offer new information in a program that is unique to the NGA conference; this updated curriculum has proven for many years to develop leaders that collaborate with clergy to focus on spiritual growth, discipleship and leadership development.

Visit our LEI website: <https://ngagmc.org/lei/> or contact Jane Finley, our Conference Director of LEI at mjfarm100@aol.com.

Certified Lay Minister

CLM ~ This program equips laity who feel called to pulpit supply or even the possibility to serve as an interim pastor in a local church for one year as well as those who desire to take the Lay Ministry curriculum courses for self-education or preparation for church staff or volunteer positions. For the past three years, the North Georgia Lay Ministry Program has partnered with the South Georgia Lay Ministry Program for the CLM curriculum training. On Friday afternoon, the delegates of the 2026 Annual Conference will officially vote to approve the certification of 13 new Lay Ministers who have met the program's requirements and will receive their official certification. These candidates have passed a background check and received approval by their local pastor and charge conference to become certified. They join 18 Lay Ministers who were initially certified in 2025. Through the program, we have 3 Lay Ministers serving as an interim pastor having been approved by our Conference Superintendent Rev. Andy Postell. We recognize Kenneth Bradley at Saint James, Toccoa; Victor Kovac at Pleasant Valley Church, Monroe and Jay Allred at Manchester Methodist in Manchester. Lay Ministers not only serve in the pulpit but are active in a variety of other ministries in the local church, conference and general church.

Visit the Lay Ministry page of the conference website under Lay Empowerment Team or contact our Conference Director of Lay Ministry, Kin McKinnon, for additional information: ngagmclsm@gmail.com.

ANNOUNCEMENT: Our exciting news comes with the announcement that the North Georgia Conference has begun formulating plans to offer our own CERTIFIED LAY MINISTRY CERTIFICATION PROGRAM to begin in January 2027. The program will be guided by the Lay

Empowerment Team and will be managed by the CLM Certification Supervisory Team led by Dan Parr in conjunction with the Board of Ministry. More information will be provided on the website as we receive guidance from the decisions made by delegates at the 2026 General Conference about the Certified Lay Ministry Program.

Answering God's Call

AGC ~ The Lay Empowerment Team continues to build support for laity with an opportunity to discern the meaning of God's call on one's life through this one-day workshop.

Now in its second year, **Answering God's Call** builds around the spiritual gifts inventory that is administered through the **PLACE**® Profile. The results of this tool can help laity to understand how uniquely God has created you and how you can use this information in discerning how you might best fit into God's plan for service in the Kingdom here on earth.

In addition to the on-line assessment and an interaction workshop, participants receive one-on-one coaching by a trained facilitator, allowing them to go deeper into the results of their inventory.

We will recognize 29 participants who have completed the program and our video will highlight a couple of individual experiences resulting from participation in the AGC program

For more information, check out the North GA GMC website at <https://ngagmc.org/gods-call/> or contact our Conference Director Susan Young at syoung.agc@gmail.com.

Visit our Lay Empowerment Team display table at annual conference to learn more about the programs offered to all North Georgia GMC laity and speak with the conference directors of each program.