



Dear Friends,

Grace and peace to you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Michigan Bishop David Alan Bard has asked me to serve our Conference as Coordinator of Miracle Sunday – a Sunday of miracles to raise funds in support of the Endowment for Theological Education for Africa, Europe, and the Philippines. As your senior pastor and a clergy person from Africa, I am honored to say “yes!” And I ask you to consider investing in this initiative to strengthen the United Methodist Church across the world. I hope you will prayerfully make a commitment that will lead the congregations of the Michigan Conference on Miracle Sunday. My own education was a miracle made possible through the faithful support of United Methodist congregations in Florida and North Carolina in the 1980s.

Together with United Methodists from around the world, our congregation is invited to participate in the **Love Boldly, Serve Joyfully, Lead Courageously – Miracle Sunday Initiative**, a global effort that will extend the vision of The United Methodist Church and equip a new generation of clergy leaders for the church in some of the most challenging parts of the world where the church is experiencing its fastest growth. We will promote Miracle Sunday over the next three weeks in worship on May 3, 10, and 17. This initiative comes at a critical time in the life of the church, uniting **30,000 congregations worldwide** who will be praying and joining in a shared mission to strengthen theological education across Africa, Europe, and the Philippines. Through this effort, we seek to address a long-standing disparity: **71% of U.S. clergy hold a master’s degree**, compared to **only 5% outside the U.S.** While the General Conference allocates more than **\$50 million** for 13 U.S. seminaries, only **\$5 million** is provided for more than 20 seminaries in other regions of the world. This initiative is an opportunity for us to help close that gap and support the development of strong, well-prepared leaders across our global connection.

Birmingham and Berkley First United Methodist Church has a vital part to play. When we unite our prayers, our generosity, and our hearts, God works miracles. May our congregation participation not only bless those far beyond our local community, may it also deepen our own sense of mission, purpose, and connection with the world-wide body of Christ.

We are setting aside Sunday, May 17 as Miracle Sunday across our congregation to raise funds for this initiative. Let us begin to pray boldly and hope faithfully that God may work through our generosity and participation as the Spirit leads.

May Miracle Sunday be a moment when we step forward in faith, together, trusting that God will multiply what we offer for the transformation of lives and for the strengthening of Christ’s church around the world. Together, we can and will make a difference.

With faith and commitment,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "C. S. G. Boayue, Jr." with a stylized flourish at the end.

Rev. Dr. Charles S. G. Boayue, Jr.