

# 2016 DETROIT ANNUAL CONFERENCE

## HISTORICAL REPORTS

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## DISTRICT LEADERSHIP COUNCILS

### ANN ARBOR DISTRICT REPORT

John Wharton, Ann Arbor District Lay Leader

The **ANN ARBOR DISTRICT** continues to have a climate of growth, both numerical and spiritual. We have 72 churches and 74 total clergy; across the district we are growing in membership and worship attendance. We encourage and enable others to seek the will of God through worship, church programming, Christian Education, and the Holy Spirit. We seek to enhance and broaden our outreach ministries for the transformation of our community and with God's help, the world. There is a strong partnership of the clergy and laity in making disciples for Jesus Christ. A continued emphasis is on equipping both laity and clergy by offering training programs and opportunities to work together on missions and ministries.

**Paragraph 213 SUCCESS:** In accordance with the *Discipline*, a paragraph 213 team was formed last year for a church in the Ann Arbor District. The congregation was struggling with finances and not sure how to move forward. The team worked to discern God's call for the congregation, which was formed as a community church. As a result of an outstanding stewardship campaign for 2016 and a revitalized focus on the community, the team determined that the congregation was both vital and viable.

**AA DISTRICT LEADERSHIP TRAINING DAY** was held on Feb 28 at Saline FUMC with a theme of *Creating An Atmosphere for Hope*; over 250 people attended. This event is used to provide training workshops for both clergy and laity. In addition to six great workshops, Rev Jeff Nelson of Redford Aldersgate UMC was the Keynote Speaker. The 2016 Leadership Training Day will be held on Saturday, February 27, at First UMC of Howell, with a theme of *At the Intersection of Ministry and Need*. In addition to six workshops, the keynote speaker will be Rev. Melanie Carey.

The Ann Arbor District continues to have a strong **LAY SERVANT MINISTRIES** program (formerly called **LAY SPEAKING MINISTRIES**) with courses offered twice a year. The Spring 2015 School was held Mar 14 and Mar 28 at South Lyon FUMC. In addition to the basic and refresher classes, two advanced courses were offered. The Fall 2015 School was held Oct 24 and Nov 7 at Milan Marble Memorial; over 45 students attended. In addition to the basic class, three advanced courses were offered. The Spring 2016 School will be held March 5 and 19 at Howell First UMC. In addition to the basic class, three advanced courses will be offered.

**UNITED METHODIST WOMEN** are very active in the Ann Arbor District, furthering the mission work of UMW and supporting their local congregations and communities. They hosted their Spiritual Growth Retreat on Friday and Saturday, April 17 & 18 at Judson Collins Retreat Center. The theme for the Retreat was "Soulful Living" and was led by Deb Mantel. The Ann Arbor District United Methodist Women will have their spring prayer brunch at Saline First UMC on April 9. The keynote speaker will be Rev. Beth Li-Brande.

**LIBERIA TASK FORCE:** The Ann Arbor District Liberia Task Force continues to be very active; our partnership includes four partner districts. Rev. Roosevelt Goah, the District Superintendent of the St. John's District of the Liberian Annual Conference, visited in November. Rev. Spaw and the Liberia Task Force showed him around the district and

they attended the National Liberia Partners Summit on November 13-14. In addition to financial support for districts, there are a number of mission projects. Of note for the Liberia Task Force is the **John Dean Town Initiative**. The **HAITI TASK FORCE** continues to be very active in the Ann Arbor District. The Haiti School Project VIM trip to Cap Haitien and Tovar was on October 9-16.

**ANN ARBOR DISTRICT PICNIC** was held on July 25<sup>th</sup> at Tecumseh UMC. Everyone brought a dish to share and our own District Superintendent, Rev. Mark Spaw, cooked hot dogs. We welcomed six new clergy appointments in the district. The **ANN ARBOR DISTRICT ANNUAL MEETING** was held on Monday, Oct 19th at Brighton UMC. Over 150 people attended, sharing, learning, and enjoying fellowship together; the evening started with fellowship and a meal, followed by reports from the District.

Churches within the Ann Arbor district are creative and outgoing in reaching disciples for Jesus Christ in their area. To learn more about the ministries occurring in the Ann Arbor District, check the monthly newsletter at the district website: **AADistrict.org**.

### **BLUE WATER DISTRICT**

“Where visions are cast, objectives are defined and Christ is honored!”

2015 was a year of exciting changes for the Blue Water District. We gathered at the Bay Shore Family Camp for our Annual Clergy Retreat on March 16th and 17th. Dr. Joe Connelly, the lead pastor of Wesley UMC in Baton Rouge, LA. was the guest speaker. His areas of concentration are grant writing, community based initiatives, non-profit development, turnaround strategies, capacity building, church and community strategic planning.

We celebrated Rev Dr. Joanne Bartelt and Rev. Duane Miller's servant leadership as our District Superintendent, before welcoming Rev. Elizabeth Hill in July.

The Blue Water District is the first one in the Detroit Annual Conference to certify lay speakers. We now have two: Michael Schlusler and Craig Gormley, both of Lapeer: Trinity UMC. Two sessions of both Basic and Advanced Lay Servant classes, spring and fall, were offered throughout the District. In 2015, the Blue Water District had 17 participate in basic classes. Forty-four people were certified for participating in the following classes: Leading Public Prayer, Delivering Effective Sermons, Discovering Your Spiritual Gifts, Method of our Mission, Social Principles of UMC, and Story Telling. Classes were offered in several different locations spread throughout the District.

This year the district showed strong support for our Christian education program. The program is continuing to grow and change with the needs of our district volunteers.

More training programs, materials, and new methods of communication are starting to evolve with the needs of the district church programs. Our resource room has many up to date materials available for use, our churches are utilizing the programs and resources available for training and doing background checks on volunteers, and the youth ministry programs are continuing to grow.

The District was able to purchase a building to house the Blue Water Free Store and a future Ministry on the same site. It is hoped that the property will help us provide services, ministry and goods for people in the Port Huron area.

## Historical Reports 2016

On Saturday, September 19th, over 50 church leaders from across the Blue Water District gathered at Port Huron: First UMC for our annual training day. This year our training day was paired with our district charge conference. The theme for the day was Healthy Body, Mind and Spirit. The morning classes offered participants to hear from both clergy and laity on such topics as: parish nursing ministry, church finance, personal finance, personal and staff retreats, finding time for fitness, building strong youth groups and building new relationships in our communities.

The highlight of the event was having Rev. Dr. Jerry DeVine, Detroit Annual Conference Director of Connectional Ministries, as our guest speaker. Rev. Dr. DeVine challenged those gathered to continue looking outside the walls of our churches for new opportunities for ministry. Rev. Dr. DeVine used the example of the Canaanite women from Matthew 15 as way to get us thinking and talking about those who are on the margins of society that have been forgotten about or misunderstood. The day could not have happened without our gracious hosts, Port Huron: First UMC. Rev. William Wright, his staff, the United Methodist Women and the volunteers made sure all of us were greeted, welcomed, fed and made to feel right at home. We look forward to more opportunities for all of us to connect more often in 2016!

The Blue Water District United Methodist Men (UMM) held two rallies a year. The spring rally, held at Lexington UMC on May 3rd, featured Frank Turner, a former Detroit television news anchor who resigned to become a full-time evangelical Christian minister and Bible teacher. Music was by the talented Brooks Solterman. The fall rally was held at held at Central Lakeport UMC on October 11th.

The United Methodist Women Mission Team met in North Branch, Cass City, Snover: Heritage, and West Goodland (in place of Imlay City) UMCs, and we were warmly received by all the units. Most units were given new shepherds as Zone were restructured, making cluster meetings with several units at the same time a more efficient way to share information and affirm units that are continuing to do amazing work for women, children and youth. There were several key events in the life of our District: Spiritual Growth Retreat with Living Truth 2, "Practical Steps for Christian Growth – exploring 4 Spiritual 'Rs'"; as always we had a great time at the Lions Bear Lake Camp north of Lapeer for our annual retreat; and our Prayer Breakfast at Cass City UMC with Rev. Linda Fuller, pastor at Caseville UMC serving as speaker and Debi Ackerman & Lora Aldrich providing the music. We were also hosted at Snover: Heritage fUMC for our District Annual Meeting, where our speaker was Diana Miller on "Living the Vision". With over 130 women in attendance at the Annual Meeting, the District UMW decided to ask for a spur of the moment offering to for help with the United Methodist Community House in Grand Rapids. Over \$1,000 was received to help the Community House! I am always in awe of the mighty work United Methodist Women do to help women, children and youth, and this collection certainly confirmed my faith in the Blue Water District. Praise God for all the generous donors, no matter how much each person gave!

Respectfully by Rev. Dr. Margie R. Crawford,  
on behalf of the Leadership Team

## **CROSSROADS DISTRICT LEADERSHIP TEAM**

The people of the Crossroads District have envisioned a transformed network of connected spiritual leaders and churches fully reflecting the Kingdom of God. Never could we have imagined the ways in which we have been challenged to experience that transformative work in the past year. Issues related to the health and wellness have indeed transformed our thinking and caused us to look with fresh eyes at our staffing and our mission focus. As the Flint water crisis unfolded the Urban Ministries Task Force and the District Leadership Team worked together to contract with Peter Plum to coordinate a response. Rev. Paul Perez, Conference Director for Mission and Justice Engagement and Leadership Recruitment along with our friend Rev. Becky Wilson helped connect us with UMCOR. We are grateful for the connectional system as we worked to keep up with the demands of processing donations, establishing resource centers, and connecting with the people in the communities served by our Flint churches. The work is ongoing, and are grateful for your prayers and your gifts.

Bonnie Potter, and our Board of Laity continue to offer fresh opportunities for equipping the laity through Tools for Ministry, Lay Servant Training, and specialized events to encourage and empower local church leaders. We look forward to "A bead and a Prayer" workshop to be led by Rev. Karen Williams in September. Brian Kelley, Youth Director for Swartz Creek UMC has been standing in the gap to coordinate the district youth activities, including UNITE (our winter youth lock-in), a weekend event for both beginning and advanced Lay Servants, and a skate-a-thon to raise funds for the Flint water crisis. We continue to "Take it To the Streets!" 2016 will be our fourth year as we expand our urban ministry focus to include the rural Owosso area as we spread out in service to our communities on this mission immersion day. Folks will have the opportunity to be part of a food distribution, to plant or tend community gardens, to place benches, to tackle blight, to visit nursing homes, or to help with minor repair work, among other things. They might want to join the prayer team for on-sight prayer walks, or to cover the event in prayer from wherever they are. In order to emphasize the connection of churches in the Crossroads District.

Our discipleship ministries team offered a Life in the Spirit seminar hosted by Flushing UMC working through Aldersgate Ministries. Leaders continue to be developed through Lay Servant training offered in the spring and the fall. Rev. Dr. Tara Sutton, our district superintendent continued to challenge local churches to expand or develop signature ministries. The leadership team sponsored three packing days with Kids Against Hunger to help provide nutritious meals for emergency situations in country and around the world.

We continue to pray for Dr. Sutton who requested medical leave in the spring of 2016. In her absence, we have continued to draw on that transformed network of connected spiritual leadership in our churches as serve, celebrate, and seek to fully reflect the Kingdom of God. We continue to benefit from the service of Cheryl Rentschler, our dedicated and caring Administrative Assistant who has gone above and beyond in shepherding the people of our district. We thank God for the kind support provided to all persons who seek information or answers through our conference and district staff, both paid and volunteer. I thank my God every time I remember you!

It is truly a blessing to see individuals who make up this body of Christ exercising their gifts with grace to the glory of God. May we be attentive to the Spirit of the Lord who

leads us and illumines our understanding. May we make the most of every opportunity as we spread everywhere the fragrance of Christ (2 Cor 2:15).

Grace and Peace to you,  
Rev. LuAnn Rourke, Chairperson  
Crossroads District Leadership Team  
Flint, Michigan

## MARQUETTE DISTRICT

The Marquette District continues to celebrate mission and ministry as we seek new ways of being the church in our area! The highlights of 2015 include:

**Annual District Learning Fair** was held in September at the Ore Dock Brewery in Marquette. "A brewery," you might ask? Yes, a brewery! Our guest for the day was the Rev. Jerry Hershops, pastor at AfterHours Denver. Jerry gave us some insight into the ministry of AfterHours and challenged the pastors and laity of our district to imagine what ministries our churches might initiate in order to be the church in our part of the world. Together we made sack lunches for various missional agencies in Marquette, and dialogued with each other about possibilities for new ministries.

**God's Country Cooperative Parrish** continues to serve the people and their needs within their 2500 square mile area. Church and Community Worker Randy Hildebrant and his team converted a trailer into a mobile distribution vehicle for warm clothing giveaways. This eliminates much of the set up and take down time so the team can focus more of their attention on the people they are serving. With the help of several VIM teams, many improvement projects were completed in the community. A new ministry for teens, Breakfast with a Purpose, was initiated this year with excellent results! High School students are invited once a month to enjoy a delicious and hearty breakfast before school begins. The ministry began at Newberry Schools and is now happening at Engadine Schools as well.

**Camp Michigamme** is moving in a positive direction under the leadership of Executive Director Renée Deroche, and the Board of Trustees. 361 campers enjoyed camp during the summer. A new session called Harmony Retreat was added to the schedule and was a success! Improvements are being made to Grace Hall and Hampton Chapel, as well as other areas on the grounds. The Board continues to plan for the future of Camp Michigamme.

**Lay Servant Ministries**, under the leadership of Sandy and Bob Hampton, continue to call forth new servants and expand the skills of those who already serve. Several people took advantage of Basic and Advanced Lay speaking courses offered across the district. Participants logged a combined total of 9002 miles on their quest for the training and development that will enhance their ability to serve God!

**District Superintendent** Elbert Dulworth went on a renewal leave in the summer and undertook the challenge of traveling, on foot, the Camino de Santiago in Spain. We were blessed as he shared his adventures and insights with our congregations during our charge conferences.

The people of the Marquette District of the United Methodist Church look forward to continuing our faithfulness to God as we seek new ways of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world!

Respectfully submitted,  
Rev. Susanne Hierholzer  
Chair, District Executive Coordinating Council

### **SAGINAW BAY DISTRICT**

The Saginaw Bay Council on Ministries coordinates the many, and frequently overlapping programs of the district. The DCOM initiated meetings that were conducted at cluster levels to better communicate all District assets available to them; and encourage clusters to work together on mission projects. One cluster project resulted in the formation of a non-profit organization that raised more than \$8,000 for two charitable organizations in Saginaw.

**Lay Servant Ministries** – The board had many changes in 2015. Changes have been made in the offering of courses, using a two Saturday format for adult courses. They will be offered twice a year, at two different locations. The youth weekend will be the second weekend of April each year. The winter/spring 2015 courses offered were basic and the advanced course Leading Worship. More than 15 participants enrolled. In April, a youth lay servant retreat was held at Pinconning UMC. The youth experienced The Lord's Supper in many different ways, including a love feast sitting on the floor around tables in the sanctuary. The adult fall course, 'Let the Whole Church Say Amen' (prayer) was attended by 17 students in two locations.

We also focused on improving communication. Newsletters & personal letters to clergy will be informative and encourage people to participate. We plan to add a Lay Servant Ministries tab to the Saginaw Bay District website, and are taking steps to add a Lay Servant Ministries tab to the new conference website.

—**Lay Servant Ministry Director, Joan Morrow**

**Youth Ministries** – Our teams have partnered together for our 2 big events this past year. We worshipped, ate, and tail gated before the district Loon's game this summer. We brought in the rock wall from "The Rock" youth center in Midland. This past January we had our best "Snow Kidding" event in years! Over 80 people gathered at Oscoda UMC from around the district to worship, laugh, eat and play! We welcomed Rod Snow, a local ventriloquist and chalk arts for our worship leader for the day.

—**Youth Chairperson, Cathy Christman**

**2015 Keeping it Safe Trainings** – Reducing the Risk of Physical Injury, Sexual and Physical Abuse

Since compliance to create a policy is nearly complete, most churches have moved beyond creating their new policy to implementing and maintaining their safe sanctuary policy. It is imperative we stay vigilant to provide safe, loving facilities to all in our care.

—**Ministry and Education Facilitator, Melene Wilsey**

**TO GO Ministries** –Now in our 11<sup>th</sup> year, the Visual Resource and Prop Center, is the home of the To Go Ministries. The first To Go Ministry was Vacation Bible School. The concept was simple. A warehouse of quality visual resources (a variety of themed props, backdrops, puppets, curriculum for V.B.S., etc) would be utilized by churches throughout our District by offering extra support to their leaders, while saving the church time and money. This concept continues to be embraced with the expansion of the To Go Ministries that include, the Game Show To Go and Worship Arts To Go.

—**Ministry and Education Facilitator, Melene Wilsey**

**TASC (Training and Supporting Congregations)** provides training (methods) and opportunities, which are timely, relevant, innovative, out of the box, and immediately applicable.

Featured speaker for our annual spring event as Lance Ford. He very passionately walked us through how to resource and equip not only ourselves but also each of our churches to develop missional lifestyles. Our day concluded with a Mission Brainstorming session complete with an ice cream social. The Clusters worked together as a team to discuss what they were currently doing and looked forward to additional possibilities for mission work both within and beyond their clusters. The winning cluster would receive \$500 and be awarded a traveling trophy to be placed at each of their churches throughout the following year. These prizes were awarded at the District Conference.

TASC is also TASC To Go. We produce, schedule and publicize training events for all person in, or exploring leadership roles in their congregations. Churches select the date, and the training topic. They select from our menu of 17 topics. TASC To Go provides the leader for each topic. Each event day is a 3 hour fellowship, learning and interactive time. Learn more about TASC on our web page at [saginawbaydistrict.com](http://saginawbaydistrict.com) or check out our video: written, produced, and starring members of the TASC Force. You can find the video on UTube.

—**T.A.S.C. Chairperson – Mary Fox**

Respectfully submitted by  
Merry Henderson,  
Chairperson, District Council on Ministries

### **CONFERENCE LEADERSHIP TEAM – PERSONNEL COMMITTEE**

During 2015 the Detroit Annual Conference Leadership Team Personnel Committee assisted in the development of the Michigan Area Covenant of Sexual Ethics Policy that was presented and approved at the May, 2015 DAC Annual Conference.

Each Personnel Committee member serves as a liaison to either a program director or support staff member and is available to that person for discussion regarding work related matters. We met with our program directors and support staff members in September of 2015. This annual review allows our Personnel Committee to give constructive and supportive feedback to the Director of Connectional Ministries, the Rev. Dr. Jerome DeVine.

The Personnel Committee remains deeply grateful for the many gifts and graces that each staff member brings to strengthen the ministries of the conference and local churches.

The highly regarded, Rev. Dr. James Parkhurst - Director of Outdoor and Retreat Ministries, accepted a position in the Oregon-Idaho Conference. This was an opportunity that has always been his "dream job." Because his time with the DAC was extremely fruitful we said, "farewell" during March, 2015 with mixed emotions.

We are grateful to Rev. Thomas Macaulay for his willingness to temporarily fill this position until the approved 2015 resolution submitted to the DAC and WMC to create a Michigan Area Board to Oversee United Methodist Camp and Ministries was implemented. The implementation was finalized during the 4th quarter of 2015.

At the request of the DAC Director of Connectional Ministries and with the collaboration of his WMC counterpart, there has been a realignment of responsibilities for some program director positions and support staff positions. The changes will allow these persons to work in the areas of their specialty throughout the entire Michigan Area. The Director of New Church Development – Dirk Elliot, the Director of Congregational Excellence – Gary Step and the Associate Director for Discipleship – Naomi Garcia.

As the DAC and WMC work toward becoming a single conference, we make every attempt to evaluate the eventual impact of staff changes on the Michigan area. In all cases, we consider efficiency, effectiveness and if the changes are equitable. We are focused on continuing to staff our annual conference in such a way as to help us more effectively live out our mission statement "to create and nurture dynamic and fruitful congregations who make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world."

The DAC and WMC Personnel Committees have begun joint meetings and are presently reviewing and developing a review of Program Staff and Support Staff Guidelines and Procedures.

Respectfully submitted by  
Rev. Jean Snyder,  
Chairperson Personnel Committee

**DIRECTOR OF CONNECTIONAL MINISTRIES, Rev. Dr. Jerome R. DeVine**

*Jesus said to them, "Let us cross over to the other side of the lake." So they left the crowd and took him with them in the boat where he had been sitting; and there were other boats accompanying him." Mark 4:35-36, NEB*

Ministry is almost always better as a collaborative initiative and effort. We often miss the notation in the Gospel of Mark story where it says "*there were other boats accompanying him.*" To move to a new arena for ministry requires a flexible flotilla of leaders, agencies and ideas to help bring the healing presence of Jesus Christ to the world. The work of the Detroit Conference Leadership Team [CLT] and the Director of Connectional Ministries [DCM] is such a collaboration. Both hold a responsibility for stewarding the vision of the annual conference and aligning the resources around the vision. One does so as a semi-governance body, the other as the primary staff person with oversight of the vision and implementation.

On June 10, 2015 we all learned that the overwhelmingly vision of the two annual conferences in the Michigan Area was to become one body in ministry. Much of this year has now been given to helping create multiple areas of new program collaboration, while

strengthening existing shared work and caring for the individual responsibilities of the DAC. We have begun joint CLT meetings with the West Michigan CLT. As we make decisions on budget, staffing, organization and goals we do so with the awareness that with our WMC counterparts in ministry we are moving away from a familiar shoreline with a vision of a new shoreline of vitality. The boats are all on the water and moving forward!

During this past year we supported the motion of creating one new board for camp and retreat ministries across Michigan, and the motion to create a new area annual conference. We continued strong support of the Vital Church Initiative, new church starts, expanded intern experiences for college age young adults, a transformed approach to networking youth and workers with youth across the DAC, and even reaching out to youth workers in the WMC. We have continued supporting the strengthening of racial ethnic ministry leadership and cross-cultural competency training for all leaders, as well as training local church lay and clergy for growth strategies and practices. The DAC is proud of our long term relationship with the US-2, Church and Community Worker and National Hispanic Plan missionary placements within our conference. With gifted and dedicated staff, key partnerships and an adaptive leadership approach we continue to respond to emergent needs within Michigan, whether it be the ongoing need for flood recovery or the more recent water crisis.

Our budget shows our realignment around the three Vision Pathways, while recognizing the need to contain expenses in partnership with our local churches. Together we will *create and nurture dynamic and fruitful congregations that make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.* As details for a new annual conference emerge we will faithfully and collaboratively build a new tomorrow with all United Methodists across Michigan.

In Christ's service,  
Rev. Amy Mayo-Moyle  
Rev. Dr. Jerome (Jerry) DeVine

**UNITED METHODIST MEN**  
To Help Men Grow in Christ,  
So That Others may Know Christ.

Men need a purpose! What better purpose than the one stated above – the purpose of the United Methodist Men. Meet and eat seems to me a UMM tradition, but so is studying the Bible, working to help others everywhere, supporting the local church and pastor, and connecting with other UMM. The problem is that not all churches have a chartered UMM group. Why not? With the charter comes a connection to the largest best organized men's ministry in the country providing training, a supportive organization from district to conference to jurisdiction to national, and links to affiliations with over 15 other national organizations.

Let's take a look at what we did (and what you missed) in 2015. Meetings were held in districts that included speakers like Frank Turner (TV personality), District Superintendents, Religious singing groups, representatives from JFON (Justice for our Neighbors), UM Children's Home Society, CONAM (Committee on Native American Ministries), Samaritan Counseling Centers, Man in the Mirror, and United Methodist Missionaries. Other speakers discussed domestic violence, immigration issues, life in Palestine/Israel,

and youth and young adult programs. Besides the meetings there was action. Making of PET vehicles – Personal Energy Transportation, working on Flood Recovery Project in Detroit, unloading and delivering water in Flint, refurbishing the Saganing Indian Cultural Center, and making bus stop benches in East Detroit.

As President, I have been part of the Board of Laity. I have received a series of questions from the New Conference Design Team relating to how the UMM will complement to Conference. Since they suggested that these questions be answered jointly with the West Michigan UMM President, I found out that there is no UMM President in WM Conference. I have located a District President in WM and will be working with him and the district presidents of Detroit Conference to answer the questions.

John Walls  
Detroit Conference UMM President

### UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

Our 2015 activities began with a United Methodist Women Detroit Conference team building retreat / business meeting at the Birch Run Comfort Inn. This was a wonderful experience and gave the team the opportunity to meet me, as the new UMW Detroit Conference president, and gave me the opportunity to meet a great group of hard working ladies, all sharing the same goals as we work in “mission”.

The United Methodist Women, Inc. presented the 2015 Voices: A Transformative Leadership event that was scheduled for the weekend of February 27 – March 1, 2015, and located at Scarritt-Bennett Center in Nashville, TN. The purpose of this event was to address the needs and resources needed to strengthen the mission with our sisters whose preferred or primary language is other than English. Another opportunity to interact with the national office of the United Methodist Women was a conference call with Harriett Olson, chief executive officer, and other conference presidents throughout the U.S. Much of the conversation was an open discussion around the younger ladies and the “Limitless Program”.

The 1st Annual UNITED METHODIST WOMEN DAY OF GIVING to the **Legacy Fund** was introduced on March 22, 2015. This was an initiative and fundraiser that was created as part of a five-year 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration of the United Methodist Women. The **Legacy Fund** is a permanent endowment to support the work of future generations of United Methodist Women.

The UMW Detroit Conference celebrated many new activities that involved young ladies.

- Flushing UMW provided pictures of their young women’s group
- We had young people at the one day Mission u event at Lake Huron in August
- St. Matthews UMW in Livonia, MI proudly shared that their young ladies group actually conducts their meetings online
- Scott Memorial’s UMW young ladies group coordinated and facilitated their annual Prayer Breakfast event
- The Blue Water District UMW have decided to take their meetings on the road and conduct business at various venues throughout the city (for example: the museum, the Star Bucks, at the library and in the park).

These are exciting times and a great way to learn new ideas of how to work in mission in a new way. The young ladies throughout the UMW Detroit Conference are truly using the term "Make It Happen!" and have made it a reality.

The United Methodist Women in the Detroit Conference and West MI Conference met and formed a team to work on a team building and future property owner relationship of the United Methodist Community House, Inc. (UMCH) in Grand Rapids. This historic building is a national mission institution of the United Methodist Women.

There is a team of 8 members (4 members from each conference) that are working to understand what it means to be the property owners, how to achieve the and maintain the repairs and general upkeep of the structure of the UMCH, which includes providing and raising the needed funding for that maintenance, and shaping what it will look like to have the Detroit Conference UMW become more involved in the various programs of the UMCH.

Mission u events in 2015 were: a one-day session July 18 at Milan: Marble Memorial United Methodist Church; a Mission u Sampler August 13 at the Lake Huron Retreat Center (LHRC); Hands On Mission Experience (H.O.M.E.) August 13 in the Port Huron area; a two-day Mission u by the Lake August 14-15 also held at the LHRC (with a concurrent children's study at no charge); and Mission u of the North October 19-20, at Gaylord UMC. Mission u topics were: Spiritual Growth study - Created for Happiness, a second year of The Church and People with Disabilities, and the Geographic study - Latin America. Our study leaders were Rev. Beth Librande, Mary McCully, Sonya Luna, Rev. Dr. Joseph A. Perez and Joanne Perez.

The 2015 National Seminar was held in Chicago, IL from July 29, 2015 through August 2, 2015. The theme of the Seminar was "Interrupting Indifference: Jesus, Justice, Joy". The topics/issues for the Seminar were: Climate Justice, Maternal and Child Health, Racial and Gender Justice, and Economic Justice. The scripture study for the 5 days that we spent together came from Luke 19:1-28.

This was an opportunity to meet a great group of leaders from the UMW, Inc., and women across the national map. We took part in a town meeting (public action) that was held at Hartzell Memorial UMC on Chicago's south side. The host churches were Hartzell UMC and St. James UMC. This was a collaboration of community leaders and others called the "Community Renewal Society". Their purpose was: To gain commitments from the Southside leaders (Alderman and Commissioners on their "Reclaim" campaign) and Chicago Police Accountability Platform. There were three site visits: Little Village Toxic Tour, ARISE Chicago/ROC Chicago/Coalition of Chicago Housekeepers, and Gallery 400 (University of Illinois of Chicago Museum). There were also 7 skill-building workshops.

Prior to district officer specific training Friday, October 23, at Ferndale: First UMC, Jeanne Long, Be Just Be Green (BJBG) Guide for the North Central Jurisdiction, provided a presentation on "Be Just Be Green". Jeanne focused on the environment and the 13 principles of BJBG, the "How Tos" and "Resources". The 13 principles can be found on line by going to the United Methodist Women website at <http://www.united-methodistwomen.org/>.

Our Annual Celebration Saturday, October 24, also at Ferndale: First, featured Rev. Faith Green Timmons, the pastor of Flint: Bethel UMC, as keynote speaker on the topic

“To Develop A Creative, Supportive Fellowship”. Our ingathering project collected various items needed and donated to the Methodist Children’s Home Society located in Redford, MI.

For the third year, we sent nine district and conference officers of United Methodist Women to Leadership Development Days in St. Louis, Missouri or Tempe, Arizona in November for training, presented and partially funded by the National Office.

Our planned events for 2016 are:

- 14th Annual Keep Making Peace - Saturday, April 16, 2016 - University UMC East Lansing
- North Central Jurisdiction Quadrennial Meeting in Grand Rapids, MI, June 24-26, 2016. The Theme is: “A Fresh Wind Blowing”
- Saturday, July 19 at Erie United Methodist Church – a one day Mission u study
- Thursday, August 18 at Lake Huron Retreat Center -- H.O.M.E. and one day Mission u study
- Friday & Saturday, August 19 & 20 at Lake Huron Retreat Center – a two day Mission u study
- October 22, UMW District and Local Church Officer Training & Leadership Development – Marquette: First UMC
- October 23, Annual Meeting and Celebration – Marquette: First UMC

Marchelle “Micki” Phelps  
President  
United Methodist Women Detroit Conference

### **STANDING RULES COMMITTEE**

The Committee on Standing Rules believes it assists conference agencies to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world by ordering the life of the annual conference for effective ministry through its continued work of perfecting the conference rules and structure.

The committee met twice during the past year, on October 21<sup>st</sup>, 2015 and on January 20<sup>th</sup>, 2016. The following actions were taken as a result:

1. Discussed and approved a request by Nominations to move agencies with terms defined by Quadrennium to 4-year terms, save those that are tied to the term of the Bishop.
2. Reviewed differences between West Michigan Rules of Order and DAC Standing Rules.
3. Discussed how Standing Rules may be involved with the work of creating Rules and Structure for the New Conference. Concluded that the Structure Task Force of the Design Team should do the initial version, and that our Committee, with the Rules of Order committee, could improve and perfect the work of the design team on behalf on the new Annual Conference.
4. Discussed the role and responsibilities of the Standing Rules committee at the 2016 Annual Conference in East Lansing, Michigan.
5. Made an editorial correction to Rule 2.A.1.b.3, changing the number of members required to send additional delegates to annual conference to 213 (instead of 300), or fraction thereof. The 2014 Annual Conference approved this.

6. In the face of scheduling constraints for the 2016 Annual Conference, the committee voted to change Rule IX.D.4 from 24 hours to 4 hours, to facilitate episcopal nominations. A
7. Reviewed and approved a Draft of Joint Session Rules of Order, which was forwarded to West Michigan Rules of Order committee and agreed to with minor corrections.
8. Addressed various questions raised by other agencies on interpretations of the Rules and Structure.

We also welcomed Shannon Reynolds to the committee this year, and look forward to her participation in the life of the Committee.

We anticipate a challenging year ahead, due to the many changes to rules and structure being introduced as a result of creation of our new Michigan Area Conference. We will assist in the development of the new Rules and Structure with our colleagues in West Michigan as we are asked to by the Design Team. In the meanwhile, we will continue our work of perfecting the Rules and Structure on behalf of the Annual Conference.

Todd L. Price,  
Chairperson  
Conference Committee on Standing Rules

### **COUNCIL ON FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

2015 was another great year in Michigan. Economic growth and job recovery continues to impact, not only the business community, but families and churches. CFA was pleased by apportionment receipts of 80.8% that marked the first increase in giving that we have experienced since 2012.

CFA appreciates how hard each congregation worked in 2015 to pay their apportionments. 282 churches of every size – approximately 66.19% of the 426 congregations in our Annual Conference – paid 100% of their apportionment contribution. Many other congregations endeavored to pay at least something beyond their pension apportionments. 27 congregations made no payment toward their common budget apportionments in 2015.

As we consider our financial commitment to the general church, an additional amount of \$76,673.94 was added to the Episcopal Fund to bring the total to 100%. All other general church apportionments were paid at 76.98% the actual level of receipts.

Encouraging churches to meet their apportionments has always been a challenge for CFA. Through the years, numerous strategies have been employed, but none were more effective than the 2015 Apportionment Project led by Rev. Jeff Reagan. Originally, 14 churches were identified as possible participants by their district superintendents. Jeff contacted six churches and their pastors, inviting them to be a part of the project. Each church was assigned a reduced apportionment amount, approximately 10% more than they contributed in 2014. They were also asked to seek approval and assistance from their governing board, Church Council or Finance Committee. Five of these churches made their goal for 2015 and are considered 100% apportionment supporters.

In the midst of this process, CFA learned:

1. Pastoral leadership is very important to setting the priority for connecting in mission through our apportionment system.
2. Personal contact from a conference leader outside of their congregation is very important.
3. Bringing an encouraging message and incentives with attainable goals helped to create a positive giving environment.

CFA is encouraged by the success of the Apportionment Project and will continue to invite congregations to participate.

2015 brought some changes to the Treasurer's Office. After more than 17 years of faithful service, "Bulldog" Ralph Remick retired. The Detroit Annual Conference will miss his diligent work and his black Corvette in the parking lot. We are pleased to hire Nancy Wyllys to assume the responsibilities of Accounts Payable. Nancy's warm spirit and careful attention to detail make her a wonderful addition to our financial team.

In 2015, the Detroit and West Michigan Annual Conferences voted to merge. Each conference brings to the merger a unique financial approach to funding and administration. The two CFA's are beginning to work on the various financial issues and I have been pleased by the openness and transparency of those discussions. It is possible that we will move to one Treasurer's Office for the Michigan Area before the official merger date in 2019, and perhaps, implement similar operations procedures as well.

It has been a privilege to be a part of the Council on Finance and Administration for the last 12 years. I cannot end my term without expressing my appreciation for the talented committed people who provide extraordinary leadership for our annual conference as part of CFA. We are also blessed to have David Dobbs, Becky Emmert and Nancy Wyllys leading our professional financial team. I leave grateful that we are in a strong financial position and appreciative of the faithfulness and support of the churches of The Detroit Annual Conference. May God continue to bless you.

Carol J. Johns  
President of the Council on Finance and Administration  
(see full report in chapter 7)

## **BOARD OF ORDAINED MINISTRY**

So the West Michigan and Detroit Conferences have decided to become one new Conference. Conference Boards and Agencies across the state are talking with each other, meeting with each other, and exploring what it means to experience a shared existence. The two Boards of Ordained Ministries have sent representatives to each other's retreats. Our Executive Committees have met to discuss how the "two shall become one."

We have been sharing how each other has accomplished their responsibilities in certain ways, and how we can wed those efforts into the new marriage. One focus question example would be: "How do we combine two boards with forty-two members each, into one board with forty-two members?" It is a good question – a practical question – but these housekeeping questions should not be the only questions. Thankfully, our con-

versations have been about more than logistics. I have really appreciated the leadership of Sherri Swanson, Chair of the West Michigan Board of Ordained Ministry.

Last fall, the DAC BOM dedicated a day to hear the Rev. Dr. Lovett Weems, distinguished professor of church leadership and director of the Lewis Center for Church Leadership at Wesley Theological Seminary. He led us into looking at the bigger picture of the role of the Board of Ordained Ministry. He challenged us with the vision: **“The Board of Ordained Ministry does it work so that the Conference receives clergy leaders that create and nurture dynamic, vital and fruitful congregations that make disciples who transform the world.”** This is a slightly bigger vision than the combining the pieces of two annual conferences.

As we peek into the future we know that there will be fewer churches and fewer pastoral charges in the State of Michigan. There will be a smaller percentage of churches served by full-time pastors. There will be fewer churches served by ordained Elders. There will be fewer churches averaging one hundred or more in worship. There will be fewer churches able to afford an ordained elder, or a full-time pastor. There will be a bigger demand for Local Pastors.

We need to put in place the essential elements for leadership growth (challenge, support and accountability), as we seek to provide nurturing mentoring, supportive covenant groups, challenging continuing educational opportunities and supervisory accountability between peers. Realistically, this needs to be accomplished for both the candidates who are preparing for ministry, as well as those currently in ministry.

With my retirement I am stepping down as the Chair of the BOM. Laura Speiran will be the new Chairperson. It has been my privilege to have served on the BOM twice during the ministry. I have the highest respect for the men and women, clergy and laity, who have been willing to hold the decision of a candidate's acceptance in the palm of their hand. It is not an easy task.

I also want to highly thank David Eardley for his service and incredible competence as our Registrar. He is amazing. Tim Ziegler will be our new Registrar. My appreciation also goes out to the other members of the Executive Committee (Doug Paterson, Jan Brown, Pam Buchholz, Joy Barrett, Billie Lou Gillespie, Scott Harmon, Sue Platt, Mary McInnes, Carole Wesner and Mark Spaw), as well as to the entire Board of Ordained Ministry. And, of course, my gratitude goes to Nancy Arnold, who is the master of effectiveness and collegiality always!

Dale Miller, Chair

## **CONFERENCE BOARD OF PENSION AND HEALTH BENEFITS**

### **I. Pension Apportionments & Health Insurance**

2015 was a very respectable year for Detroit Conference benefits. 395 of our 424 local churches (93.2%) remitted their pension apportionments at 100%. Although there were 6 churches at the opposite end of the spectrum (0%), both totals moved in a positive direction compared to 2014. Even more significant was the conference-wide unpaid pension apportionments total of \$36,878, the lowest uncollected dollar amount in many years. An additional \$79,664 was received for prior year balances which greatly assisted in containing and lowering the cumulative total for all prior years.

## Historical Reports 2016

While the high cost of health care continues to be a national concern, the CBOPHB reaffirms its commitment to providing a comprehensive, sustainable group health care plan for both actives and retirees. 2016 marks the third year in a row without an increase in health insurance premiums. Local churches with subscribers in the conference health care plan, overall are doing very well staying current with the monthly premium payments. The CBOPHB is grateful to all local churches for their continued support in our shared ministries.

As required, permanent records of outstanding balances for both pension apportionments and health insurance balances are kept on file by the CBOPHB with the intention to recover the balances. If left unaddressed, these balances must become part of a local church's financial plan when a local church considers building expansion, merger, or closure. Please contact the Conference Benefits Officer, Rev. Donald Emmert, for further details or to discuss payment options for prior year pension and health insurance balances.

<b>Outstanding Pension Balances</b>				
	<b>Church Name</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2014-2000</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Ann Arbor</b>				
1015	AA Korean	0	94,806	94,806
1018	London	0	1,294	1,294
1024	Wellsville	800	840	1,640
1027	Canton Cherry Hill	0	5,626	5,626
1032	Deerfield	800	549	1,349
1041	Hartland	0	4,450	4,450
1048	Plainfield	2,270	0	2,270
1053	Milan Marble Mem	0	9,838	9,838
1059	Morenci	0	10,052	10,052
1071	Samaria Grace	1,500	0	1,500
1074	Stony Creek	548	0	548
1080	Whitmore Lk Wesley	1,660	2,477	4,137
1082	Lincoln	0	1,330	1,330
1134	Amen Korean	0	5,178	5,178
<b>District Total</b>		<b>7,578</b>	<b>136,440</b>	<b>144,018</b>

Historical Reports 2016

<b>Detroit Renaissance</b>				
9018	Det Cass Community	0	45,862	45,862
9019	Detroit Central	0	2,208	2,208
9021	Detroit Conant Ave	0	18,423	18,423
9024	Detroit Mt Hope	0	32,519	32,519
9029	Detroit St Pauls	0	28,122	28,122
9038	Four Towns	0	15,207	15,207
9046	Madison Heights	0	3,742	3,742
9047	Grace & Peace	0	2,530	2,530
9053	Pontiac St John	0	1,400	1,400
9147	New Baltimore	0	11,000	11,000
9160	Sterling Heights	795	0	795
9515	Dearborn Hts Stephens	1,244	0	1,244
9518	Detroit Calvary	1,629	27,253	28,882
9519	El Buen	1,044	5,475	6,519
9522	Det Ford Memorial	0	1,424	1,424
9525	New Beginnings	656	250	906
9526	Detroit Peoples	0	37,047	37,047
9530	Det St Timothy	0	11,678	11,678
9532	Det Second Grace	0	5,698	5,698
9533	Det Trinity Faith	0	3,788	3,788
9543	Garden City	3,876	0	3,876
9550	Melvindale New Hope	201	0	201
9561	Westland St James	1,980	21,598	23,578
9564	Det Resurrection	1,830	6,313	8,143
9655	Romulus	3,220	0	3,220
9569	Wayne First	0	1,422	1,422
	<b>District Total</b>	<b>16,475</b>	<b>282,959</b>	<b>299,434</b>

Historical Reports 2016

<b>Crossroads</b>				
4001	Birch Run	0	346	346
4005	Burton Christ	0	12,297	12,297
4010	Corunna	0	20,899	20,899
4011	Davisburg	0	5,012	5,012
4028	Vernon	0	4,363	4,363
4039	Flint Eastwood	1,795	12,399	14,194
4040	Flint Faith	570	33,615	34,185
4042	Flint Charity	0	33,003	33,003
4055	Argentine	0	3,915	3,915
4064	Pittsburg	0	8,120	8,120
4065	Bennington	0	535	535
4067	Mt Morris	0	38,954	38,954
4072	Carland	0	2,838	2,838
	<b>District Total</b>	<b>2,365</b>	<b>176,296</b>	<b>178,661</b>
<b>Marquette</b>				
5004	Crystal Falls Christ	379	0	379
5021	Painesdale	0	770	770
5024	Zeba	0	136	136
5032	Negaunee Mitchell	572	0	572
5047	Republic	0	462	462
5048	WMCP Woodland	0	2,155	2,155
5051	Algonquin	0	532	532
	<b>District Total</b>	<b>951</b>	<b>4,055</b>	<b>5,006</b>

Historical Reports 2016

<b>Blue Water</b>				
6004	Ruby	910	730	1,640
6029	Harbor Beach	196	1,560	1,756
6033	Imlay City	2,500	7,991	10,491
6035	West Goodland	2,380	1,300	3,680
6037	Central Lakeport	465	4,303	4,768
6042	Lakeville	0	1,382	1,382
6063	Gagetown	440	0	440
6066	Buel	0	1,842	1,842
6067	Melvin	0	635	635
6072	Pinnebog Grindstone	0	2,658	2,658
6075	Washington Ave	0	3,893	3,893
6079	Richmond	0	6,342	6,342
6084	St Clair first	0	3,090	3,090
6087	Heritage	493	0	493
6096	New Hope	0	2,949	2,949
6101	Yale	0	1,480	1,480
6103	Unionville	0	1,128	1,128
	<b>District Total</b>	<b>7,384</b>	<b>41,283</b>	<b>48,667</b>
<b>Saginaw Bay</b>				
7067	Gordonville	945	0	945
7083	Standish Community	1,180	8,310	9,490
	<b>District Total</b>	<b>2,125</b>	<b>8,310</b>	<b>10,435</b>
<b>Total Pension Outstanding</b>		<b>36,878</b>	<b>649,343</b>	<b>686,221</b>

Historical Reports 2016

OUTSTANDING HEALTH INSURANCE PREMIUMS					12/31/2015
	Church	Pastor	Current Appoint-ments	Previous Appoint-ments	Total
1059	Morenci	Galloway	4,195	0	4,195
9530	Detroit St Timothy	Grimes	11,103	0	11,103
1134	Amen Korean	Yoo	0	100,680	100,680
1023	Britton Grace	Burstall	0	8,769	8,769
1059	Morenci	Burstall	0	8,066	8,066
4067	Mt Morris	Vincent	0	48,221	48,221
6035	West Goodland	Mosher	0	25,152	25,152
6070	Port Austin	Freeland	0	4,110	4,110
7083	Standish	Wojewski	0	6,285	6,285
9029	Detroit St Paul	Williams, H	0	20,380	20,380
9515	Dearborn Hts Stephen	Won	0	1,517	1,517
9526	Detroit Peoples	Williams, G	0	38,196	38,196
<b>Total Premiums Outstanding</b>			<b>15,298</b>	<b>261,376</b>	<b>276,674</b>

**II. 2015 Benefits-Related Special Grants/Payments of the CBOPHB**

Grants approved for:

Prior Year Pension Apportionments	\$53,170
Special Financial Hardship Situations	58,538
Medical Leave Compensation:	
During CPP disability application process	99,508
Less CPP disability reimbursements	(82,080)

Subtotal \$129,136

Grants to Churches whose clergy were granted Temporary Medical Leave

Albert Paine Mem	\$1,600	Jeddo	2,400
Atherton	1,600	Livingston Trinity	800
Bentley	1,200	Roch Hills St Luke	800
Beverly Hills	300	Stephenson	1,600
Crossroads Dist	1,400	Vernon	150
Elkton	1,200	Woodland	1,400

Subtotal \$14,450

Historical Reports 2016

Grants approved for:	
Prior Year/Appointment Outstanding Health Balances	9,050
Special Medical Hardship Situations	<u>8,800</u>
Subtotal	\$17,850
<b>Total 2015 Special Grants/Payments from all CBOPHB accounts</b>	<b>\$161,436</b>

**III. Clergy Changes in Conference Relationship**

Disciplinary Question #22: Who have been discontinued as local pastors (§320.1)?

Bledsoe, Danny	10/31/15
Branstrom, Terri L	04/20/15
McMunn, Marianne	02/01/16
Sayers, Thomas	07/01/16

Disciplinary Question #44: Who have been granted the status of honorable location-retired (§359.3)?

Boyd, Gordon	01/01/16
Carruth, Hayden K	07/01/15

Disciplinary Question #52: Who have been granted medical leave due to medical or disabling conditions (§357)?

<u>Name</u>	<u>Effective Date</u>
Barnett, Pamela	07/01/14
Bartelt, Joanne	12/01/14
Brown, Colon R	02/01/06
Gentile, Michelle A	06/15/90
Liles, Lynda B	07/01/11
Macaulay, Elizabeth A	05/01/13
McBride, William	11/01/14
Mehl Jr., John M	01/01/09
Neumann, Fredrick D	07/01/13
Stover, Colin P	01/01/11
Taylor, Thomas L	02/01/13

Disciplinary Question #53: What members in full connection have been retired (§358)

**A. Deacons**

**B. Elders**

Bacon, Eugene K	07/01/16
Bennett Stiles, Susan	07/01/16
Engler, Janet	10/01/15
Frazier, Lynda	12/01/15
Hamilton, John	07/01/16
Hasley, Lynn	07/01/16
Hunter, Gerald	10/15/15
Haynes, Gloria	08/01/15
Kingsley, Susan	07/01/16

## Historical Reports 2016

Kummer, James	07/01/16
Lewis-Lakin, Barbara	09/01/15
Maxwell, Jeffrey	07/01/16
May, Judith	07/01/16
Miller, Dale	07/01/16
Powers, Linda Jo	10/01/15
Rowe, Gregory	07/01/16
Six, Jay	07/01/16
Tuttle, James	07/01/16
Walls, Suzanne	07/01/16
White, Robert	07/01/16

Disciplinary Question #54: What Associate Members have been retired (§358)?  
None

Disciplinary Question #56: Who have been recognized as retired local pastors (§320.5)?

Chapman, Mary	07/01/16
Phillips, Kathy	07/01/16
Pratt, David	03/01/16

### **IV. Steps To Retirement**

The following information should be examined by anyone contemplating retirement within the next five years. Often it takes significant time to correct a special situation or service record error.

1. Attend a pre-retirement seminar within 10 years of retirement.
2. Review the 2012 Book of Discipline pertaining to retirement
3. Notify in writing, at least 120 days prior to retirement, the following:
  - A. Resident Bishop
  - B. Your District Superintendent
  - C. Rev. Don Emmert, Conference Benefits Officer
  - D. Rev. Doug Paterson, Chairperson of Committee on Conference Relations of the Board of Ordained Ministry
4. Once a participant's intention to retire is confirmed in writing by the Office of the Bishop, the Benefits Officer notifies the General Board of Pension & Health Benefits and materials are sent directly to the participant from the General Board detailing pension payment options. A pension projection is available anytime through the General Board of Pension & Health Benefits at 800-851-2201 or [www.gbophb.org](http://www.gbophb.org) (Benefits Access).
5. **Health Insurance:** At age 65, you are eligible for Medicare. **You MUST enroll in Part A and B to qualify for the Conference Retiree Group Coverage. If you opted out of Social Security earlier, you must arrange to purchase Medicare Benefits in order to be eligible for coverage under the Conference Retiree Group Coverage. PLEASE REVIEW THE INSURANCE RULES RELATING TO THE RETIREE GROUP COVERAGE!**
6. Send photocopies of Medicare cards for you and your spouse to the Conference Benefits Officer as soon as they become available. This is essential in order to coordinate health care coverage and avoid lengthy delays and/or denials of medical claims.
7. Review and update all beneficiary designations on your Retirement and Welfare Accounts at the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits.

General Information:

1. Each pastor is advised to check with the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits periodically to make certain that his/her service record is accurate. This is especially important with respect to pre-1982 service and the post-2006 Clergy Retirement Security Program (CRSP) Plans since these benefits are calculated based upon years of service.
2. Each person is encouraged to check his/her own Social Security record every 3 years to be certain that all payments have been properly credited. The Social Security Administration is not required to correct errors over 3 years old.

**V. Detroit Conference Group Health Care Policy**

The Detroit Annual Conference Group Health Plan is designed to safeguard the health and wellbeing of covered subscribers and their families. Medical coverage is provided through Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan. Dental coverage is provided through Guardian Insurance, with an optional subscriber annual election for vision coverage. Prescription drug coverage is provided through CVS Caremark. A prescription mail order program through Global Health Management is encouraged for recurring/maintenance prescriptions. All available benefits are at all times subject to and may be limited, denied, or terminated based on applicable underwriting provisions, contract terms, eligibility rules, and premium payment requirements.

*Active Plan Benefits:* The medical, prescription drug, dental, and vision (optional) plans are designed to cover active subscribers and their eligible dependents during their working years.

*Retiree Plan Benefits:* Blue Cross/Blue Shield Complementary Medical Coverage is provided for secondary medical expenses of retirees and their eligible dependents as a supplement to Federal Medicare (Part A and Part B). Dental, prescription drug, and vision (optional) coverage is also available to retirees. Full details regarding retiree eligibility, requirements, and funding appear in the Retiree Group Health Care Plan section of this report.

*Plan Administration:* Both the Active and Retiree plans are centrally administered by BenePro, Inc. 1423 E Eleven Mile Road, Royal Oak, MI, 48067 where enrollment and premium billings are processed. BenePro and/or the Conference Benefits Officer are available to answer questions about the plans.

**ACTIVE GROUP HEALTH CARE PLAN**

*Enrollment/Effective Date of Coverage:* Health Care eligibility begins the first day of a new appointment/hire, change in appointment/employment status, or a life-qualifying event (i.e. loss of other health coverage), provided all required submissions, underwriting, and payments have been timely made. All available benefits are at all times subject to and may be limited, denied, or terminated based on applicable underwriting provisions, contract terms, eligibility rules, and premium payment requirements. It is the responsibility of the subscriber to submit enrollment forms

in a timely manner. If the enrollment process is not completed within 30 days of eligibility, the subscriber must wait until the next open enrollment period.

*Eligible Subscribers:* **Active Plan eligible classes include the following:  
(Full-time for health coverage eligibility is defined as working at least 30 hours per week)**

1. **Full-time Clergy (Ordained Ministers and Local Pastors) under Episcopal appointment with the Detroit Annual Conference as the responsible agency for providing benefits.**
2. **Full-time Lay Employees of the Detroit Annual Conference and its approved, related agencies.**
3. **Full-time Lay Employees of a local church (including District Superintendent Assignments) until the employee turns age 65 provided the local church lay employee policy offers health care to all eligible full-time lay employees. All conference eligibility requirements must be observed. The local church is the responsible agency for all lay employee health insurance premiums. Premium-sharing schedules may be determined by local church employee policies.**
4. **Clergy and Conference/Related Agency Lay Employees on Disability Leave, provided the subscriber was enrolled in the Detroit Conference Group Active Health Care Plan at the time they were granted disability leave.**
  - a. **The subscriber must enroll in Medicare Part A and Part B at the date of first eligibility.**
  - b. **The subscriber is responsible for submitting a copy of the subscriber's Medicare card to the Conference Benefits Officer at the time of Medicare enrollment to assure the proper coordination of benefits.**
5. **Dependents of deceased Clergy and Conference/Related Agency Lay Employee subscribers provided the dependents were enrolled in the group active health care plan at the time of the subscriber's death.**
  - a. **Dependents of a retired subscriber will continue health coverage under the same eligibility and funding provisions as the subscriber.**
  - b. **A surviving spouse that remarries will continue to receive the health care benefit. However, the new spouse is not eligible for coverage.**
6. **Enrolled dependents of deceased Local Church employee subscribers as allowable by the health care plan if continued coverage is a provision of the local church employee policy, and if the local church maintains responsibility for the health insurance premiums.**

*Eligible Dependents:*

1. **Spouse.**
2. **Children and Legal Dependents under age 26.**
3. **Qualifying Adult Children with disabilities. (Per insurance regulations, Adult Children with disabilities may not continue on the conference plan after the subscriber is deceased.)**

*Changes in Eligibility:* **All changes in appointment, employee, or family status that affect eligibility in health coverage must be submitted within 30 days of the date the change occurs, otherwise loss, lapses, or gaps in coverage may occur. Subscribers are responsible for providing family status changes (including marriages, births, adoptions, legal guardianships) in writing to the Conference**

**Benefits Officer. A delay in notification could mean a delay or denial of coverage until the next open enrollment period.**

*Working Aged 65: Active Clergy* under eligible Detroit Conference Appointment and Conference Lay Employees in Conference/Related Agency employment retain eligibility status in the conference active group health care plan.

1. The conference active group plan continues to be the subscriber's primary coverage.
2. Subscribers and dependents must enroll in Medicare Part A at the time they turn age 65, but are not required to enroll in Medicare Part B until the time of the subscriber's retirement.
3. The subscriber is responsible for submitting a copy of the subscriber/dependent Medicare card to the Conference Benefits Officer at the time of Medicare enrollment to assure the proper coordination of benefits.

*Funding of Active Health Care Policies:*

1. **Active Clergy and Conference/Related Agency Employees:** Health insurance premiums are shared by the salary-paying unit (Detroit Conference, Conference Related Agency, or Local Church) and the subscriber according to the contribution schedule established by Detroit Annual Conference action.
2. **Disabled Clergy and Conference/Related Agency Employees:** Health insurance premiums are paid by the Detroit Annual Conference to the extent established by Detroit Annual Conference action.
3. **Dependents of deceased Clergy and Conference/Related Agency Lay Employee subscribers:** Health insurance premiums are paid by the Detroit Annual Conference to the extent established by Detroit Annual Conference action.

*Termination:*

1. A subscriber may voluntarily terminate a subscriber's health insurance policy at any time by submitting a request in writing to the Conference Benefits Officer.
2. Health insurance policies are terminated the date of a subscriber's termination from an eligible Clergy Appointment or Conference/Related Agency employment.
  - a. Coverage for terminated employees may be extended up to three months as a severance package provision.
  - b. Under special provisions of the Conference Board of Pension & Health Benefits, a policy will be extended for up to one year for a clergyperson subsequently appointed to an eligible leave of absence status.
3. Health Insurance policies for a local church employee are terminated effective:
  - a. The termination date of local church employment. Coverage may be extended up to three months as a severance package provision.
  - b. The first of the month in which the subscriber turns age 65. Existing policies for working aged 65 local church employees as of December 31, 2013 are exempt from this provision.
4. Health Insurance policies will be terminated for non-payment of premiums according to the following schedule:
  - a. Health insurance premium payments are due the fifteenth of every month for the current month's coverage.

- b. A delinquency notice is issued when an account is two months in arrears.
  - c. A second delinquency notice is issued at three months in arrears.
  - d. A third delinquency and pending termination notice is issued at four months in arrears.
  - e. Policy will be terminated at six months in arrears.
    - i. Policy may be reinstated within 30 days of termination if the outstanding balance has been remitted in full.
    - ii. In a delinquency situation involving a clergyperson appointed to a local church, a repayment plan must be submitted to and approved by the Executive Committee of The Board of Pension & Health Benefits to extend coverage past the six month period.
5. COBRA coverage is not offered through the Detroit Annual Conference.

*Waiver of Coverage:*

1. Eligible Clergy and Conference/Related Agency Lay Employees that waive conference health care coverage must have a Waiver of Coverage form on file in the Detroit Conference Benefits Office.
2. Persons waiving coverage have opportunity to enroll themselves and eligible dependents in the conference health care plan annually during open enrollment or at the time of a life-qualifying event.

RETIREE GROUP HEALTH CARE PLAN

*Introduction:*

This section describes the provisions and requirements of the Detroit Annual Conference group retiree health care plan. All available benefits are at all times subject to and may be limited, denied, or terminated based on applicable underwriting provisions, contract terms, eligibility rules, and premium payment requirements. All required submissions, underwriting, and payments must be timely made. It is the subscriber's responsibility to understand the specific rules relating to eligibility for coverage in retirement prior to the subscriber's retirement date. Questions may be directed to the Conference Benefits Officer or conveyed in writing to the Board of Pension & Health Benefits. Do not rely on verbal responses to general questions raised in informational meetings or provided by representatives other than the Board of Pension & Health Benefits.

It is crucial that clergy who have served appointments during their career in Extension Ministries or another Annual Conference are knowledgeable regarding years of service credit, coverage, and cost sharing in order to effectively plan for retirement.

*Definition of Terms:*

1. Years of Service Credit for Health Benefits in Retirement: **Years of Service in Eligible Detroit Conference Episcopal Appointments used to calculate eligibility and funding levels for health benefits in retirement.**
2. Eligible Detroit Conference Episcopal Appointment: **An Episcopal appointment is defined when the Detroit Annual Conference is the responsible agency for the clergyperson's benefits.**

- a. **Some Extension Ministry Appointments will be eligible for credit toward health benefits in retirement. Others will not, depending on the agency responsible for the clergyperson's benefits.**
- b. **Appointments to other conferences/agencies while maintaining membership in the Detroit Annual Conference are not eligible for credit toward health benefits in retirement.**
- c. **Reciprocal Agreement with West Michigan Conference**
  - i. **A Detroit Conference clergy member will receive credit toward health benefits in retirement for Eligible Episcopal appointments in the West Michigan Conference.**
  - ii. **A West Michigan Conference Eligible Episcopal Appointment is defined when the West Michigan Conference is the responsible agency for the clergyperson's benefits.**
  - iii. **A Detroit Conference clergy member serving a West Michigan Conference appointment must serve a Detroit Conference Eligible Episcopal Appointment and be enrolled in the Detroit Conference Active Group Health Care Plan immediately preceding retirement in order to be eligible for retiree health benefits. (reference: *Eligible Subscribers* 1.b. below)**
3. **Mandatory Retirement: Defined as retirement on July 1 after having attained age 72.**
4. **Full Retirement: Defined as retirement at age 65 or with 40 years of service under appointment as an ordained minister or local pastor. The years of service for retirement may or may not be the same years of service used to calculate health benefit credit depending on the type of appointments served.**
5. **Early Retirement: Defined as retirement at age 62 or with 30 years of service under appointment as an ordained minister or local pastor. The years of service for retirement may or may not be the same years of service used to calculate health benefit credit depending on the type of appointments served.**
6. **20 Year Rule: Defined as retirement under age 62 with 20 years of service under appointment as an ordained minister or local pastor. The years of service for retirement may or may not be the same years of service used to calculate health benefit credit depending on the type of appointments served.**

*Medicare Enrollment/Coordination of Benefits:*

**The retiree medical health care plan is a supplemental plan to Medicare for all eligible subscribers age 65 and over.**

1. **In retirement, the subscriber and dependents must enroll in Medicare Part A and Part B effective the date of first eligibility.**
2. **The subscriber is responsible for submitting a copy of the subscriber/dependent Medicare cards to the Conference Benefits Officer at the time of Medicare enrollment to assure the proper coordination of benefits.**

*Eligible Subscribers:*

1. **Retired Clergy (Ordained Ministers and Local Pastors):**
  - a. **Subscriber must be a Clergy Member of the Detroit Annual Conference at the date of retirement.**
  - b. **Subscriber must be enrolled in the Detroit Conference Active Group Health Care Plan at the time of their retirement. For clergy not participating in the conference active group health care plan, in most situations the final opportunity for a clergy and/or dependents to enroll will be during the Open Enrollment Period prior to the subscriber's retirement date.**

- Annual Open Enrollment is in December for a January effective enrollment date.
- c. Subscriber must have served under Eligible Detroit Conference Episcopal appointments for the ten years immediately preceding retirement.
2. Retired Conference/Related Agency Lay Employees:
    - a. Subscriber must be enrolled in the Detroit Conference Group Active Health Care Plan at the time of their retirement. For employees not participating in the conference active group health care plan, in most situations the final opportunity for an employee and/or dependents to enroll will be during the Open Enrollment Period prior to the subscriber's retirement date. Annual Open Enrollment is in December for a January effective enrollment date.
    - b. Subscriber must have been employed by the Detroit Conference/Related Agency for the ten years immediately preceding retirement.
  3. Dependents of deceased Retired Clergy and Conference/Related Agency Lay Employee Detroit Conference group retiree health care plan subscribers provided the dependents were enrolled in the group retiree health care plan at the time of the subscriber's death.
    - a. Dependents of a retired subscriber will continue health coverage under the same eligibility and funding provisions as the subscriber.
    - b. A surviving spouse that remarries will continue to receive the health care benefit. However, the new spouse is not eligible for coverage.
  4. Retired Local Church Lay Employees are not eligible to enroll in the Detroit Conference Group Retiree Health Care Plan. Existing retiree policies in this category as of December 31, 2013 are exempt from this provision.

*Eligible Dependents:* Eligible dependents are determined as of the date of the subscriber's retirement. All dependents must be enrolled on the subscriber's group active health care policy at the time of subscriber's retirement date in order to be considered for coverage eligibility. These include:

1. Spouse.
2. Children and Legal Dependents under age 26.
3. Qualifying Adult Children with disabilities. (Per insurance regulations, Adult Children with disabilities may not continue on the conference plan after the subscriber is deceased.)

New dependents through marriage or other family additions subsequent to the subscriber's date of retirement are not eligible.

*Funding of Retiree Health Insurance Policies:*

1. Clergy that received their first Detroit Conference Appointment prior to 2007:
  - a. Retiring under Mandatory, Full, or Early Retirement
    - i. The Detroit Annual Conference will pay 4% per year of credited service in an Eligible Detroit Conference Episcopal Appointment toward the retiree's health insurance premium (including eligible dependents)
    - ii. If the subscriber has less than 25 years of credited service, the subscriber will be billed monthly for the balance of the health insurance premium.
  - b. Retiring under the 20 Year Rule
    - i. The subscriber may retain coverage through the Detroit Conference Health Care Plan if they meet eligibility requirements as applicable from time to time.

- ii. **The subscriber is responsible for the entire insurance premium until age 65. At age 65, the Detroit Conference will pay a portion of the health insurance premium according to the funding provisions for mandatory, full, or early retirement.**
        - iii. **If the subscriber terminates their policy prior to age 65, they cannot re-enroll at a future date.**
- 2. Conference/Related Agency Lay Employees hired prior to 2007**
  - a. **The Detroit Annual Conference will pay 4% per year of employment toward the subscriber's health insurance premium (including eligible dependents).**
  - b. **If the subscriber has less than 25 years of employment, the subscriber will be billed monthly for the balance of the health insurance premium.**
- 3. Clergy that received their first Detroit Conference Appointment in or subsequent to 2007:**
  - a. **Retiring under Mandatory, Full, or Early Retirement**
    - i. **The Detroit Annual Conference will pay 3% per year of credited service in an Eligible Detroit Conference Episcopal Appointment toward the subscriber's health insurance premium (including eligible dependents).**
    - ii. **The maximum payment by the Detroit Annual Conference is 90%.**
    - iii. **The subscriber will be billed monthly for the balance of the health insurance premium.**
  - b. **Retiring under the 20 Year Rule**
    - i. **The subscriber may retain coverage through the Detroit Conference Health Care Plan if they meet eligibility requirements as applicable from time to time.**
    - ii. **The subscriber is responsible for the entire insurance premium until age 65. At age 65, the Detroit Conference will pay a portion of the health insurance premium according to the funding provisions for mandatory, full, or early retirement.**
    - iii. **If the subscriber terminates their policy prior to age 65, they cannot re-enroll at a future date**
- 4. Conference/Related Agency Lay Employees hired in or subsequent to 2007:**
  - a. **The Detroit Annual Conference will pay 3% per year of employment toward the subscriber's health insurance premium (including eligible dependents).**
  - b. **The maximum payment by the Detroit Annual Conference is 90%.**
  - c. **The subscriber will be billed monthly for the balance of the health insurance premium.**

*Termination:*

- 1. A subscriber may terminate their health insurance policy during retirement at any time. However, the termination is non-revocable and a subscriber cannot re-enroll at a future date.**
- 2. The health insurance policy of a retired ordained minister whose clergy membership is terminated with the Detroit Conference for any reason will be terminated the effective date of the termination of the subscriber's clergy membership. Existing retiree policies in this category as of December 31, 2013 are exempt from this provision. However, Detroit Conference funding for all such policies will cease December 31, 2013, and the subscriber will become responsible for all premiums.**

3. **Health insurance policies will be terminated for non-payment of premiums according to the following schedule:**
  - a. **Health insurance premium payments are due the fifteenth of every month for the current month's coverage.**
  - b. **A delinquency notice is issued at two months in arrears.**
  - c. **A second delinquency notice is issued at three months in arrears.**
  - d. **A third delinquency and pending termination notice is issued at four months in arrears.**
  - e. **Policy will be terminated at six months in arrears.**
    - i. **Policy may be reinstated within 30 days of termination if the outstanding balance has been remitted in full.**
    - ii. **Since termination of a retiree policy is permanent following the 30 day window for reinstatement, subscribers in a delinquency situation are strongly encouraged to initiate communication with the Executive Committee of The Board of Pension & Health Benefits to negotiate a realistic repayment schedule prior to the date of termination.**

In the event any of the above provisions need to be interpreted, **the Committee on Health Benefits is authorized to make any needed interpretation which will be considered final unless appealed to the full Detroit Conference Board of Pension & Health Benefits, which will have the final authority to decide any issue. In the event of any dispute or disagreement by a participant, the Committee on Health Benefits is authorized to negotiate and settle the matter subject to the terms and conditions of the underwriter of the coverage and review by the Board of Pension & Health Benefits.**

Presented by The Detroit Conference Board of Pension & Health Benefits  
Mr. Fred Gray, President  
Rev. Donald J. Emmert, Conference Benefits Officer

## **BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

Since the last session of the Annual Conference, the board has held two meetings with a third scheduled for the spring of 2016.

Our officers are: Rev. Brent Webster, chairperson; Mr. Rob Long, vice-chairperson; Rev. Faith Timmons, secretary. We have eight other hard-working board members as well as three conference staff members to help us with our work.

In October we held a risk management meeting with Church Mutual Insurance Company. This meeting helps us identify areas where churches may reduce their potential for losses.

At the current time the board has title to three former United Methodist Churches that have been declared closed/abandoned. Title to two of these churches will soon be transferred to enable new ministries to serve the surrounding neighbors. The third property is one for which we may have a buyer. This third property was one that we had to go through the long legal process of quieting the title. Fortunately, we knew who the family was, and they were not interested in reclaiming the property. We thank them for their generosity.

We have sold the former Iron River Wesley parsonage and church building.

By the end of February we should have closed on the former Amen Korean property.

We have continued to have meetings with the West Michigan board of trustees to discover how each board functions, especially with the sale of closed/abandoned property, and what adjustments will need to be made so that when the new conference form is established, we are ready to serve. The two boards have also been meeting together to discuss the legal documents that will be needed in order for the new board of trustees to function.

As we go forward toward annual conference time, we will be having our conference-owned parsonages inspected and begin addressing any new maintenance issues.

Rev. Brent L. Webster  
Chairperson, Conference Board of Trustees

### **BOARD OF JUSTICE, ADVOCACY AND EQUITY**

The Board of Justice, Advocacy and Equity (BJAE) is the result of the Conference restructuring process initiated by the Conference Leadership Team and approved by the 2014 Annual Conference. The Board of Church and Society, the Commission on the Status and Role of Women, and the Committee on Disability Concerns have successfully united into this one new board.

Our purpose is to be an advocate for social justice within the Detroit Annual Conference working tirelessly for the full inclusion of all people without regard to race, sex, preference, age, economic status, or disability, giving witness to the love of God in Christ in all creation. We will accomplish this by calling attention to issues within the church and community, providing workshops trainings, and resources to the conference, districts, and congregations, and funding for projects throughout the conference.

Our officers are:

Chairperson: Rev. George Covintree  
Staff Liaison: Rev. Paul Perez  
Church and Society Liaison: Rev. Eric Stone  
COSROW Liaison: Rev. Kristi Hintz  
Disability Concerns Liaison: James Walker  
Peace w/Justice Coordinator: George Jonte-Crane  
General Board of Church and Society (GBCS): Rev. Saul Trinidad

At Annual Conference last year, we sponsored a panel on mental health issues with Community Mental Health and the Samaritan Counseling Center. Our panelist included Coleen Wilsdon, Robert Martin. The Rev. Faith Fowler and the Rev. Jackie Rowe. Paul Perez served as the moderator. We provided resources, educational materials, mental health first-aid training information at that session for the local congregations.

We will continue to seek out tools and resources to equip congregations to be more welcoming to families who have a family member who is physically or mentally disabled.

And again, this year at Annual Conference, we will be sponsoring a workshop on the Prison Ministry. Our goal is to encourage greater participation by our districts and congregations in prison ministries. We will be providing information and "how to's on prison ministry, family supportive ministries, and prison reform.

This past year the Board of Justice, Advocacy, and Equity funded the Bridges Out of Poverty Retreat, the Truth and Reconciliation Project of the Michigan Area of the United Methodist Church, the Children's Defense Fund Program at Second Grace United Methodist Church in Detroit, the Redford One Project of Redford Aldersgate United Methodist Church in Redford, and the Michigan Area's Keep Making Peace conference (this year's theme was Mass Incarceration: locked in, locked up, locked out). We continue to support Justice for Our Neighbors (JFON) and the Wesley Foundation's UN/Washington Seminar.

We were pleased to present the Harold Stanton Peace With Justice Award for 2015 to the Rev. Dr. Chris Momany, chaplain and director of church relations at Adrian College for his outstanding contributions in the fight against human trafficking. Today it is estimated some 27 million people are held as slaves throughout the world. Chris is recognized as a national leader within the college and church arena on this issue.

Poverty and racism continue to be on-going concerns of the Board. In early October, BJAIE called together a meeting of Flint area UM leaders that helped to catalyze a coordinated response to the Flint Water Crisis and the distribution of filters and bottled water by the Crossroads District. We continue to work with the Flint UM churches, their Urban Task Force and the UMCOR/Crossroads District Emergency Water Crisis Coordinator, Peter Plum.

Our long term focus has put an emphasis on education, hospitality, and advocacy. We will work with the conference and our local congregations to develop models of care and compassion to all people regardless of theological or ethical stances which would divide us on issues such as sexual orientation, race, or status.

On a final note, we have begun meeting with the West Michigan Board of Church and Society. We have much in common. As such, we decided to bring the conference resolutions from both our boards and present them to this Annual Conference as our shared concerns. We feel good about this ongoing partnership and union with our brothers and sisters on the West side of the State. Together we will focus on the issue of poverty, jobs, and economic justice, and the environment. There is an energetic spirit of unity and vitality afoot here. Together we will continue to 'speak up for the people who have no voice, for the rights of all the down- and-outers. Speak out for justice! Stand up for the poor and destitute!" (Prov. 31:9, The Message)

The Rev. George Covintree, Chairperson,  
on behalf of the Board of Justice, Advocacy, and Equity  
(the Justice League)

**REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
TO THE UNITED METHODIST UNION OF GREATER DETROIT**



Life is full of adventures, surprises and transitions that lead to all kinds of changes. We say to each other often that change is inevitable! I love that phrase when I am holding my new Apple iPhone or driving a turbo charged automobile. But I am not so sure about it when I look in the mirror in the morning and wonder who I am looking at? How do you look in the mirror in the morning? Do you know anyone who looks the same as they did ten years ago? As a 68 year old woman standing in front of the mirror, I often find myself thinking; “God really does have a sense of humor.” Fortunately we, United Methodists are creatures of hope and possibility.

I am not sure that I was feeling much hope and possibility on that day in Egypt when I climbed onto a camel. I didn't want any of my fellow travelers to see how nervous I was. So, I just stepped forward and got on. Holding my breath as the camel stood up, I said to myself, “Lord, help me to hang on .... and next time, could we try one of those horses instead?” The motion of the camel at first seemed a bit awkward. The saddle was uncomfortable. I have never had a *Lawrence of Arabia* fantasy. But early that morning, running across the desert on a camel, surprisingly made my heart soar and provided a whole new glimpse of life in what seemed at first glance, a barren place. Who would have thought that before the ride ended, I would be laughing, comfortable, and actually enjoying the view from the back of a camel!

Adventures, surprises and transitions often lead to change. Whenever I see this photo of me on a camel, I am reminded how our perspective is altered as we step out on faith, where we did not ever intend to go. It makes me think of something Bishop Charlene Kammerer, one of my seminary colleagues said long ago:

**The sign of God is that we will be led where we did not plan to go.**

You'll find that phrase on a needlepoint in my office at the Union. That truth has served me well through the years, and I am sure it will be part of my journey now as the Executive Director of the United Methodist Union. I never envisioned that the transition we fondly call “retirement” would include for me a season at the Union. But here I am, sitting at, what I call affectionately, Dr. Bill Ritter's desk, learning what it means to share in the ministry that God has entrusted to the Union. As I contemplate what that ministry might look like in the future, three short phrases continue to resonate with me.

**1. Connected to the Past**

The Union trustees meet in the parlor of Metropolitan United Methodist Church. It is conveniently located right across from our office. On every wall in the parlor are portraits of the pastors who served that congregation for over 100 years. The fireplaces at each

end of the room are anchored by pictures of those two great men of faith and vision, Merton Rice and Charles Allen, who built that magnificent church and had a legendary ministry in the city from 1903 to 1952.

Looking at those pictures, I am reminded that though I am not a member of Metropolitan UMC, I am connected to their past and to the past of all the churches and people who have been a part of the Detroit Metropolitan Area. We are connected together; as the Bible describes it, to that *great cloud of witnesses* who have gone before us, not only blazing a trail, but providing some of the resources we invest in mission and ministry initiatives and all kinds of church extension projects. Their witness, leadership and faithfulness encourages and inspires us to provide faithful ministry too. I am also grateful for all the Executive Directors of the Union, especially Rev. Dr. Bill Ritter who cast a vision of transformational ministry that will shape the direction of the Union for years.

## **2. Creating the Future Together**

A book that I have read more than once is Thomas Friedman's *The World is Flat*. He writes of a world brought together through technology and asks some profound questions about the future as our world continues to change. One has only to look across the religious landscape to catch a glimpse of all the changes happening to United Methodist Churches in our District. What will our future look like?

No one truthfully knows the answer to that question. But the United Methodist Union remains committed to working together with churches to create a future of hope and possibilities. We take the apportionment dollars we receive from our District churches and reinvest them in mission and ministry that continue to make a difference. It is our goal to strengthen and revitalize United Methodist congregations and missions to serve their communities. In that service, in that ministry, we will find our future, together.

## **3. Leaving a Legacy**

Last Sunday morning, I stood in the kitchen and discussed the possibility of creating a charitable foundation with my brother-in-law, Bill Blakemore. He is considering setting aside some of his assets to support missional endeavors that are important to him and my sister, Shirley. Bill wants to leave a legacy. Most people do in one way or another. Everyone wants to be significant. Churches do, too .... but the legacy they are seeking is a bit different.

A church finds its legacy not in a magnificent building, but in the hearts and minds of people of faith. The Union wants to join them in that legacy as we help congregations care for the business responsibilities of church extension and the missional opportunities that transformational grants provide. We seek to support churches as they strive in their own unique way to be vital congregations that make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. What a wonderful legacy that would be!

These three phrases continue to resurface as my knowledge and vision of the ministry of the Union continues to grow. I am grateful for the kindness and support of Connie Perrine, Audrey Mangum, our professional consultants as well as our officers and Board members as they seek to answer my one-thousand-and-one questions. Being the Ex-

Executive Director of the United Methodist Union is a journey of faith. Fortunately, God goes with us.



Blessings & Joy,  
Rev. Carol J. Johns, Executive Director

## **REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR (RETIRED) TO THE UNITED METHODIST UNION OF GREATER DETROIT**

### **Yet One More Time Around the Block**

I was rather surprised to learn I was expected to write a portion of this year's annual report. I thought I had laid that responsibility aside last October with the announcement of my impending retirement. But it was correctly (and kindly) pointed out to me that of the 52 weeks between October 2014 and October of 2015, I had served all but 9 of them at the helm of the Union. So I am happy to add my last word to Carol's first words, even as I join you in anticipating her leadership in the months and years to come. Rev. Carol Johns was the right choice at the right time. No, let me say it more strongly, Carol Johns was the obvious choice, the perfect choice, and, quite possibly, the only choice for this job. My last remaining task is to make sure the baton is well-passed.

I have decided to limit my remarks to a detailed summary of two major Board of Trustee decisions. Both were made in the seven months preceding my retirement. Both offered great challenges. Both required much research. Both entailed some risk. Both asked more of the Union than had any other proposals in my memory. And both discussions reflected my philosophy about who we are and what we need to be about.

I could also reprise the long list of "thank-you's" with which I traditionally conclude this report. But there is no way I could do it with the same feeling I did in my retirement remarks, which can be read on-line at [www.umunion.org](http://www.umunion.org) Now, it's time for the body of this narrative.

### **The Story That Dwarfed Every Other Story**

This year's primary challenge involved the decision to underwrite the monthly mortgage payments of Southfield: Hope United Methodist Church to its principal lender. The amount owed was in excess of 4.2 million dollars. Monthly payments were \$31,296. Earlier attempts to renegotiate terms of the loan were successful only to the degree of lowering summer payments to interest only. The burden of the church's debt had become unmanageable. Many Detroit area United Methodists know pieces of the back story. Few, if any, know them all. I will surface only those which make the Union's decision understandable.

Southfield: Hope (as it was then constituted) had known only one pastor in its history. That pastor took a small building on Civic Center Drive, viewed it as a new-church start, built a new congregation while delivering short-term ministry to the remnant membership, and then purchased the former North Congregational Church building on Northwestern Highway. After serving for 31 years, he was the only pastor any current member at Hope had ever known. His preaching was exceptional. His personality was engaging. And his approach to “doing church” was inviting. The membership swelled and, as late as 2013, the church claimed 4,000 members. Major building programs up-sized the building and major staffing additions up-sized the ministry. A large number of black preachers currently serving in the Detroit Annual Conference were either once members of, or employed by, Hope Church.

But cracks were becoming visible in the walls of Paradise. Questions about leadership style, financial prioritization and denominational accountability became difficult to ignore. After a painstaking period of consultation, the pastor was offered a different appointment. He chose to retire instead. A new pastor was appointed, even as the previous pastor began preaching in a rented facility less than three miles away. Those transitions took place in July of 2014. Many members went elsewhere, with the majority following the previous pastor.

The remaining membership is probably less than 800. Worship attendance on most Sundays is in the mid-300's. The new pastor is working very hard with church leaders to right-size the budget and staff, even as he addresses issues that relate to trust and confidence. In the initial months of his pastorate, the Union made a substantial grant to help underwrite mediation and consultation services offered by the Lombard-Mennonite Peace Center. At its present level of giving and attendance, Hope is still the largest predominantly African-American congregation of United Methodists in the State of Michigan. But financial realities continue to be overwhelming. Without substantive assistance, mortgage requirements would have put this congregation out of existence. But if budget down-sizing is not done carefully, the church's membership will continue to erode.

Enter the Union. Beginning in October of 2014, a few of us began consulting with Hope's leaders. Those meetings continue to this day. The January 2015 meeting of the Union's trustees wrestled with the problem. Virtually every member attended. And the decision was made to assume major responsibility for the church's mortgage for a period up to three years. Several trustees called it the most moving church meeting they had ever attended. While one member, choking back tears, called it a Spirit-filled moment.

To date (October 8, 2015), the Union has spent \$260,335 in this effort. At the Union's invitation, the Extension Fund of the Detroit Annual Conference has agreed to support the Union with 25% of each payment. It is further expected that the Hope congregation will right-size its budget and begin paying 33.3% of each monthly payment beginning February 1, 2016, increasing to 66.7% of each payment beginning February 1, 2017, so as to prepare the church to assume full mortgage payments on February 1, 2018. The Union wants this to work. But underscoring everything that has happened, Union trustees believed (and still believe) that the people of Hope deserve a chance.

### **On Being Pregnant With Triplets**

The other major challenge of 2015 involved Canton: Friendship United Methodist Church (on the Ann Arbor District) and their plan to launch three new congregations in

the next five years. The first of those congregations has been planned at the site of the former New Hope UMC in Shelby Township, taking over an unoccupied church building presently being managed by the Union. The proposal, which was discussed by our Trustees in April of 2015 and approved in May, calls for the Union to grant (not loan, but grant) up to \$250,000 to Canton: Friendship to start three new congregations, with the first \$100,000 earmarked for the Shelby Township launch, and \$75,000 each for two additional congregations, once they move from the drawing board to actualization.

Canton: Friendship UMC owes its beginning to the Conference-wide “Pass It On” Campaign (which I co-chaired with Jay Hook in 2003-2005). In addition to major camp renovations and a new Retreat Center at Lake Huron Camp, the plan was to fund six new churches at \$600,000 per start. At the end of the day, only four churches were launched, of which two remain. What is amazing is that Canton: Friendship moved between temporary quarters for 14 years before building its new facility on North Beck Road. Since moving into a permanent building, the church has thrived. More than 300 worshipers gather each Sunday and a recent addition has increased its space for ministry. The pastor, Rev. Mike Norton, has sold his vision for a trio of satellites to his congregation. He has also sold his vision to the New Church Start Committee of the Detroit Annual Conference and the Ann Arbor District Board of Missions and Church Extension. Both organizations will partner with the Union by making financial commitments. The parent congregation (Friendship UMC) has requested affiliation with our Union, which is permissible for a non-Detroit Renaissance District congregation to do. And while the Shelby Township site is already on our district, it remains unclear where launch #2 and launch #3 will be located. But people are excited, financial feasibility has been studied, and a coach who is experienced with this kind of “planting” has been hired.

Why are we involved? First, because we have resources. Second, because we trust the leader and his model. Third, because we hated to watch New Hope UMC go under. Fourth, because we believe Shelby Township is a “ripe” location. And fifth, because anybody familiar with the first 50 years of the Union’s history knows that long before we were ever a loan office, we were deeply into the church planting business. Look it up. It’s part and parcel of our DNA.

### **One Final Word on my Way Out the Door**

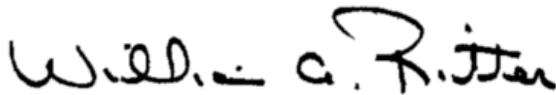
Anybody who has watched me tackle this job knows that bailing out terminally ill churches was never my passion. I did it when necessary, only because the thought of people worshipping in January in an unheated sanctuary was something I couldn’t reconcile with the gospel. But what really punched my buttons and incited my passions were programs, pastors and parishioners that offered both promise and potential. I wanted to do something more than keep further decline at bay. And it was my great delight (and modest surprise) to discover that Union trustees felt similarly. The other day, I clipped the following by my Presbyterian colleague, John Buchanan (whom I admire greatly) from his editorial in the *Christian Century*:

“Somewhat like the Earl of Grantham in *Downton Abbey*, I have difficulty accepting the fact that something I love and to which I have given my life is changing right in front of my eyes. When I was ordained, the mainline church was a growth industry with shiny new corporate headquarters on Riverside Drive in Manhattan. New churches were being planted and were thriving in burgeoning suburbia. There was money to fund creative mission. Church leaders were minor celebrities. Presbyterian stated clerk Eugene Car-

son Blake was on the cover of *Time* for collaborating with Episcopal Bishop James Pike on a bold ecumenical initiative. That era is gone now.”

I, too, watch *Downton Abbey*...with similar feelings about the denomination I have loved and served for over 50 years. When I started in 1965, anything was possible. Yes, anything. And I have never once let any of my churches (or, in later years, any of my students) believe otherwise. The world of “possibilities” is where I put my time. It was where I put my prayer. It was where I put my energy. And, since coming to the Union, it was where I put your money. Whether it has been enough, time will tell. Whether it has been noticeable, you tell me. And whether it has been contagious, I leave in your hands. Onward!

To God be the Glory!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "William A. Ritter". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Rev. Dr. William A. Ritter  
Executive Director

#### **CONFERENCE BOARD OF GLOBAL MINISTRIES – CBGM**

The following reports highlight the 2015 work of the CBGM. Through these efforts, the hand of Christ was extended to those who experienced suffering locally and globally. Because of these efforts, commitments were kept, and lives were impacted. In these faithful works, the love of Christ was made known as people engaged in life-changing mission, the Kingdom of God was increased, and the reputation of the people in the Detroit Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church was reinforced.

Humbled, and amazed,  
Rev. Don Gotham, Chair

#### **THE ADVANCE – REV. KAREN WILLIAMS**

The many projects and ministries of The ADVANCE provide opportunity to create, equip, and engage the people of the United Methodist Church for the transformation of the world.

Because of the generous giving and support to The ADVANCE, communities around the world have experienced the love of Christ through kindness and good works; health, justice, areas of education, and compassionate response are just a few of the effective ministries provide by the people of the Detroit Annual Conference.

In 2015 \$721,472.16 was given to the Advance by the churches in the Detroit Annual Conference.

## Historical Reports 2016

Disaster Response International \$47,442; Liberia Pastor & District Superintendent Salary Support \$11,040; Disaster Response, USA \$15,407; Bishop Judith Craig Children's Hospital \$46,829; Missionary Support \$127,175.

All of these contributions are in addition to those given by local churches to Apportionments, District Projects, and local projects in our communities.

The Spotlight Church program is designed to raise awareness to the many Missions, Ministries, and Missionaries in the DAC. Many of our churches strive to go the extra mile in giving and are designated a Spotlight Church by fulfilling eight steps.

This year 133 churches in the Detroit Annual Conference have been designated as a Spotlight Church.

Thank you for your support to the Mission and Ministries of the Advance, and congratulations to each of the 2015 Spotlight Churches.

### **ANN ARBOR**

Adrian First  
Ann Arbor First\*  
Azalia  
Chelsea First  
Commerce  
Dexter\*  
Dixboro  
Erie  
Fowlerville: Trinity\*  
Highland  
Lulu  
Manchester: Sharon\*  
Milan: Marble Memoria\*  
Milford  
Monroe: St. Paul's  
North Lake  
Northville First  
Petersburg  
Plymouth First  
Saline First  
South Lyon First  
Weston  
Ypsilanti First

### **BLUE WATER**

Akron  
Bass: Bethel  
Capac First  
Forester  
Hayes\*  
Howarth  
Jeddo

Kilmanagh  
Kingston  
Lapeer: Trinity  
Lexington  
Mayville  
Omo: Zion\*  
Owendale  
Paint Creek  
Peck  
Port Huron First  
Richmond First\*  
Sandusky First  
Sutton: Sunshine

### **CROSSROADS**

Bancroft\*  
  
Capac First  
Forester  
Hayes\*  
Howarth  
Jeddo  
Kilmanagh  
Kingston  
Lapeer: Trinity  
Lexington  
Mayville  
Omo: Zion\*  
Owendale  
Paint Creek  
Peck  
Port Huron First  
Richmond First\*

Sandusky First  
Sutton: Sunshine

**CROSSROADS**

Bancroft\*  
Chesaning: Trinity\*  
Clarkston  
Clio: Bethany\*  
Davison  
Duffield  
Fenton  
Flint: Asbury  
Flint: Bethel  
Flint: Court Street\*  
Flushing  
Fostoria  
Gaines\*  
Genesee  
Grand Blanc  
Laingsburg  
Lennon  
Linden  
Middlebury  
Millington\*  
Montrose\*  
Morrice  
New Baltimore Grace\*  
New Lothrop First\*  
Otisville  
Owosso First  
Owosso Trinity\*  
Pittsburg  
Richfield\*  
Seymour Lake  
South Mundy  
Swartz Creek\*  
Waterford: Central\*  
Waterford: Trinity\*  
West Forest  
West Vienna

**DETROIT RENENSANCE**

Beverly Hills  
Birmingham First  
Dearborn: Good Shepherd  
Farmington First  
Farmington: Orchard  
Grosse Pointe  
Livonia: St. Matthew's  
Royal Oak First\*  
Trenton: Faith  
Troy: Big Beaver

Utica  
West Bloomfield  
Wyandotte First

**MARQUETTE**

Engadine  
Faithorn\*  
Gladstone: Memorial  
Greenland  
Gwinn\*  
Hancock First  
Ironwood: Wesley  
L'Anse  
Manistique First\*  
Marquette First  
Munising  
Norway: Grace  
Ontonagon  
Paradise  
Rockland: St Paul's  
St Ignace\*  
Stephenson  
White Pine Community

**SAGINAW BAY**

Alpena First\*  
AuGres  
Bentley  
Caro  
Coleman: Faith  
Essexville: St. Luke's  
Fairgrove  
Gladwin First\*  
Houghton Lake  
LaPorte  
Mapleton\*  
Midland: Aldersgate  
Mio\*  
Pinconning\*  
Roscommon: Good Shepherd\*  
Saginaw First  
Sanford  
Tawas\*  
Wagarville Community  
Watrousville  
West Branch First  
Whittemore  
Wisner

**TOTAL 133**

**\*New Spotlight Church**

## **SECRETARY OF GLOBAL MINISTRIES – JACQUELINE EUPER**

Our Michigan area was blessed to host GBGM Missionaries, Rev. Alex and Brenda Awad, in September 2015 for almost three weeks. They began their itineration in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, speaking in Engadine & St. Ignace UMCs. The week of Labor Day, they were hosted by West Michigan churches: Lansing Mt. Hope UMC and speaking engagements in the Traverse City area which included Christ & Central UMCs, a radio interview and a class at Northwestern Michigan College. The days following included Frankenmuth (2 groups), Detroit Renaissance District UMM, Petersburg, Zion, Okemos, West Deerfield, St. Clair Shores Good Shepherd, Chelsea Retirement Community, Lapeer Trinity, Clarkston and Rochester St. Paul's. It was a full and exciting schedule.

The Awads' message of God's work in Bethlehem is a powerful testimony to their many years of faithful service. They are retiring in 2016 to the state of Oregon. They will remain in our prayers, as will the ministries at Bethlehem Bible College and the Israel-Palestine conflict. New missionaries will be assigned to that area, including Kristen Brown who has already begun work in Jerusalem.

Thank you, Detroit and West Michigan hosts, for opening your doors to the messages of Brenda and Alex Awad and for saying "thanks" to them for their years of serving Christ in Israel.

In November, I attended the Global Ministries Summit in New York City. I had the opportunity there to serve on a panel, discussing our covenant partnerships with Haiti and Liberia. A special luncheon was held, observing the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of UMCOR.

Thank you for supporting our General Board of Global Ministries Missionaries, both in Michigan and in the uttermost parts of the world. They are serving Christ on our behalf. They appreciate our prayers, our gifts and our listening ears.

In preparing for our new conference, I join with others as we meet with West Michigan counterparts to ensure a smooth transition in the area of Global Ministries. God is paving the way. Thanks be to God!

## **HEALTH AND WELLNESS – MARY SOLTERMAN**

### Environmental Health & Accessibility Grants

1. The budget as listed in the Spotlight Church 2015 book for 2015 was \$5,000.00 for the Environmental Health & Accessibility Grant. Each grant is limited to \$500.00 or less. In 2015, we approved three grants at \$500.00 per grant.
1. Our challenge is to maintain a balance of money to cover grant applications and to advertise the existence of the grant and the method for applying for the grant. To date, we have not turned any grants down due to lack of money. However, we need to ensure that we have adequate funds to cover further grant applications. These donations need to come from local churches in our Conference. To this end, I am working with Cheryl Warren who is writing an article for MIConnect in which information about the grant will be available along with the need for donations from local churches.

### **VOLUNTEERS IN MISSION – REV. TOM ANDERSON**

In 2015, 18 churches sponsored VIM experiences in Michigan and four foreign countries. Over 185 people including youth, and adults participated. Contributions to the causes supported reached almost \$139,000, plus another \$6300 in-kind donations.

### **MICHIGAN AREA HAITI TASK FORCE – REV. DON GOTHAM**

2015 had numerous teams serving in Haiti. In the month of August, the Rev. Jean Lesly Dorcelly and family came to Michigan and shared with United Methodists about the needs in Haiti, and in particular, the Harry and Ella Brakeman School in Petit Goave, Haiti.

The main focus of the task force in 2015 was the Local Preacher's Training Academy. Courses on Old Testament, and New Testament were taught by clergy from the Michigan Area, along with clergy from the Haiti District of the Eglise Methodiste d'Haiti (EMH). Two areas of training remain for 2016, those being: Worship and Preaching, and Christian Doctrine. Both remaining areas are scheduled, and teachers have been enlisted. Nearly 300 Local Preachers are expected to be consecrated at the 2017 Annual Conference of the EMH. This consecration will also occur as the EMH celebrates their 200<sup>th</sup> year of ministry in Haiti.

### **THE UNITED METHODIST FOUNDATION OF MICHIGAN**

The United Methodist Foundation of Michigan is privileged to serve so many congregations and United Methodist organizations throughout the Michigan Area. The Foundation has continued to partner with an ever-growing number of churches. Together with these local churches, we seek to assist and to inspire congregations in fulfilling their ministry. The Foundation offers a wide continuum of financial stewardship, socially responsible investment management, and donor-focused services for local churches, districts, conferences, agencies, and institutions and their constituents.

During the past year, we have experienced some significant signs of growth and depth for the Foundation. We are experiencing both our services reaching a wider constituency and penetrating the Church at a deeper level. United Methodist Foundations across the United States are making a difference collectively in the lives of constituents. Our focus is on furthering the mission and expanding the vision of the Church. One of the ways we are able to accomplish this goal is by asking, "How may we help you?" We ask across the many cross-sections of the Church. We have witnessed micro-grassroots ways and macro-denominational invitations to walk alongside the Church. Consider some of the ways our staff has been helping:

- Coaching in the areas of leadership and financial stewardship
- Facilitating church leaders with strategic planning and visioning for their local church
- Educating new pastors on personal finance, clergy taxes, and the denominational pension plan
- Setting policies for long-range fund development with conference-affiliated ministries

- Serving on the Design Team for the new United Methodist conference to be created in Michigan
- Teaching pastors nearing retirement about retirement planning, housing, and pension investments
- Aligning with VCI churches as they develop financial sustainability plans
- Striving to make a difference in the lives of young and new clergy – offering multiple seminary scholarship grants, partnering with the United Methodist Higher Education Foundation, promoting and providing direct grants for Michigan Area clergy to attend Revitup! and the Clergy Benefits Academy
- Launching the inaugural Wayne C. Barrett Steward Leader Award and recognizing six local churches demonstrating outstanding stewardship practices.
- Adding an interactive platform to our website which is helpful to individual constituents exploring planned giving opportunities and which provides an excellent opportunity for churches to link to these resources at no cost
- Working with Lilly Endowment, Inc. and the General Board of Pensions and Health Benefits to address clergy personal financial literacy
- Answering the request from the NCJ bishops to be a partner in leadership training for the NCJ College of Bishops

We are grateful to be a ministry partner with pastors, laity, and local churches. Together we shall be stronger. Together a difference is made for the glory of God. Together we are “making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.”

Respectfully Submitted,  
David S. Bell, President & Executive Director

### **UNITED METHODIST RETIREMENT COMMUNITIES (UMRC) AND UMRC FOUNDATION**

2016 marks the 110<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the formation of United Methodist Retirement Communities. In 1906, our Methodist founders envisioned a new way to provide a lifetime of caring and dignity for older adults. We are so proud that, today, UMRC’s faith-based roots continue to provide the support and nurturing needed for our organization to grow and thrive. In embracing our Christian mission and Guiding Beliefs, we are welcoming of ALL, and we reaffirm our commitment to caring for the needs of tomorrow’s expanding senior population. From growing our Benevolent Care Fund; to pursuing EAGLE, the country’s only faith-based healthcare accreditation program; to offering Michigan’s most diverse housing options and services to seniors of all income levels; our Christ-centered history keeps UMRC focused on providing the highest quality care possible for older adults – both now and in the future.

Over the last six years, the UMRC Board and leadership team have taken great strides to strategically position UMRC to meet the needs of a senior population that is expected to double in the next few decades.

- Today, UMRC provides both **market rate and affordable independent and assisted living options** in Chelsea, Dexter, and Detroit.
- Our **Kresge Skilled Nursing and Rehabilitation Center** is consistently rated “5-Star” in terms of quality, the highest ranking given by the State of Michigan.

- **Towsley Village Memory Care Center** provides exceptional and loving care for residents with Alzheimer's disease and dementia.
- A collaboration between UMRC and Glacier Hills Senior Living Community, **Caring Partners Home Health** offers high quality home healthcare and has grown in the number of individuals served by more than 50% since January 2015.
- UMRC has partnered to create three **Programs of All-inclusive Care for the Elderly, or PACE**, in Ypsilanti, Lansing, and Jackson. Today, our PACE programs are allowing 186 frail, low-income seniors to receive all the medical care and attention they need while living independently and with dignity in their homes and communities. At capacity, this number will grow to 625.
- The Edward N. and Della L. Thome PACE in Jackson opened on March 1, 2016. We were thrilled to receive two grants totaling \$2.5 million from the Thome Memorial Foundation in support of this exciting endeavor.

***In six years, UMRC has expanded from three locations to nine, providing services to older adults across twelve Michigan counties, and caring for more seniors than ever before.***

**But, even with UMRC's tremendous growth, there is still much to do.** Every day, 10,000 Baby Boomers turn 65. This exploding senior population must not be ignored. Indeed, for UMRC, it is the driving force that will offer many opportunities to grow and expand our continuum of care to increase the number of seniors we serve.

We are pleased to share some of the exciting plans that lie ahead for UMRC in 2016, particularly at our historic, flagship campus in Chelsea.

In October 2015, the UMRC Board of Trustees approved a Master Plan project that will take several years to complete and will have significant positive impact at our historic, flagship campus in Chelsea and the residents we serve there. The Master Plan includes:

- Expanded and renewed Kresge Skilled Nursing and Rehabilitation to provide all private rooms and enhanced leisure space for residents to enjoy;
- Addition of 40 Independent Living cottages on the Chelsea campus near Glazier Commons;
- A "Living Well" center, including fitness area, all-accessible swimming pool and therapeutic pool for use by our residents;
- Updates to the Garden Homes.

As the senior population grows, so, too, will the need for Benevolent Care. **In 2015, the UMRC Foundation provided Benevolent Care totaling \$1.1 million for residents who have outlived their savings.** In 2016, we anticipate Benevolent Care needs to increase by 15%. The UMRC Foundation continues its diligent efforts to grow the Benevolent Care Fund to ensure that future residents will not have to worry about outliving their savings.

In July, the UMRC Foundation netted over \$190,000 at its annual **Garden Party** fundraising event. These proceeds helped create beautiful therapeutic gardens for our residents at Towsley Village Memory Care Center. The next day, we welcomed over 100 United Methodist Women, representing 17 churches from both Conferences, to our **UMW Tea Party** at Chelsea Retirement Community.

We were also excited to host Bishop Deb Kiesey and her husband, Brad, for their first visit to Chelsea Retirement Community as they delighted our residents by performing at the evening Hymn Sing. A “Meet and Greet” reception followed.

UMRC has been diligently preparing for EAGLE accreditation through the United Methodist Association (UMA) Health and Welfare-Related Ministries, Inc. EAGLE, or Educational Assessment Guidelines Leading toward Excellence, is the only faith-based healthcare accreditation program in the United States. UMRC has begun its self-assessment and plans to submit its application for EAGLE review in 2016. This process recognizes and strengthens the work we are doing at UMRC, and we believe it will take our faith-filled mission to even greater heights.

UMRC Foundation has worked with the Detroit Annual Conference to draft and finalize UMRC’s church relationship statement.

UMRC is committed to expanding its programs and services to meet the ever-changing needs of a growing senior population. However, at the heart of each new project and initiative, behind each new renovation and expansion, is the philosophy of our faithful founders who knew that providing for the needs of the elderly was the right and compassionate thing to do.

Thank you very much for your commitment to our mission: ***to promote the wellness, dignity, and independence of older adults by providing high quality and innovative residential and supportive services.*** Visit our website at [www.umrc.com](http://www.umrc.com).

Respectfully submitted,

John Thorhauer  
President and CEO, UMRC  
Ph: 734-475-1020  
Email: [jthorhauer@umrc.com](mailto:jthorhauer@umrc.com)

Wendy Brightman  
President, UMRC Foundation  
734-475-7209  
[wbrightman@umrc.com](mailto:wbrightman@umrc.com)

## **BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND CAMPUS MINISTRY**

Purpose:

The purpose of the Detroit Annual Conference Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministry will be to raise up the next generation of Christian disciples and leaders who will enliven the United Methodist movement and transform the world.

Our Task:

The Board of Higher Education and Campus ministry will:

1. Strengthen the historic United Methodist connection of the annual conference with United Methodist colleges, campus ministries, and the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry.
2. Partner with West Michigan Conference in interpreting and promoting United Methodist colleges and campus ministries with youth and local churches across the state.

## Historical Reports 2016

3. Initiate new campus ventures in campus ministry and care for the oversight of campus ministries as outlined in the 2012 Book of Discipline, ¶634.4.d.
4. Participate with other conference agencies in fulfilling the Pathway 2 goal of developing effective Christian leaders for the Church and the world, and creating a “culture of call” for ordained ministry within the churches of the annual conference.
5. Encourage support of ministries in higher education through the apportionments and special Sunday offerings of the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry.
6. Fulfill duties as outlined in the 2012 Book of Discipline ¶ 634.4.

### Membership:

The Board will be comprised of 12 members nominated by the annual conference Committee on Nominations and elected by the annual conference for terms of four years with a maximum of two terms, and members of the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry for the Detroit Conference. The following will be ex officio with voice but no vote:

1. College students representing Adrian College, Albion College, and the campus ministries of the annual conference.
2. Director of Wesley Foundations and campus ministries.
3. Chaplains of Adrian College and Albion College.
4. District Superintendent assigned by the cabinet.
5. Persons elected by the annual conference as trustees at Adrian College and Albion College.

The Chairperson shall be nominated by the annual conference Committee on Nominations and elected by the annual conference. Other officers will be elected by the Board.

### Meeting:

The Board will meet at least twice per year. Committees and task forces will meet as necessary to complete the work of the Board.

### Accountability:

The Board will be accountable to the Conference Leadership Team in matters of program and budget, and will annual provide a written report to the annual conference.

The Board will continue to review our current commitments to determine the best way to fulfill its purpose and the tasks with the resources available.

In past year The Board has provided funding to support the following:

1. Wesley Foundation at University of Michigan,
2. Partial funding for several students to attend Exploration.
3. Wesley at Saginaw Valley State University
4. Adrian College pre-seminary program.
5. Northern Michigan University relaunched their Foundation.
6. Motor City Wesley

The Board is continuing to seek new campus ministries. Eastern Michigan University, Oakland University, Northwood University, and several Community College through Motor City Wesley have been our target campuses.

The Board has met with our counter-parts in the WMC with members from GBHEM to discuss campus ministry models for both meeting and funding. Rev. Jeff Williams (WMC BHECM chair) and I have been present at each others board meeting and looked at how each of our board function and what the future hold.

Our greatest challenge before the merger is how each of the 9 total campus will operate with reduced funding (particularly in WMC) and how to maintain the level of excellence with less financial support.

The Board continues to look for ways to connect with youth groups at the local church level in order to encourage new college students to participate in campus ministries. This will be a priority for 2016.

I want to thank this Board for its commitment to serving young adults and for making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Respectfully submitted by:  
Rev. Richard E. Burstall, Chairperson BHECM

### **WESLEY FOUNDATION CAMPUS MINISTRIES IN THE MICHIGAN AREA**

#### **Ferris State University Wesley House**

628 S. Warren, Ave. Big Rapids, MI 49307

Tel: 231-796-8315

Email: Devonherrell@gmail.com

Web: <http://www.fsuwesley.org/>

Chaplain-Director:

#### **Wesley @ Central Michigan University**

1400 S Washington St, Mt Pleasant, MI 48858

Tel: 989-545-1761

Email: [director@CMU.MiWesley.org](mailto:director@CMU.MiWesley.org)

Web: <http://cmu.miwesley.org/>

Chaplain-Director: Charles Farnum

#### **Wesley @ Saginaw Valley State University**

7400 Bay Rd. University Center, MI 48710

Tel: 989-835-5050

Email: [SVSUWesley@gmail.com](mailto:SVSUWesley@gmail.com)

Web: <http://www.svsuwesley.org>

Chaplain-Director: Josh Blanchard

#### **Wesley Fellowship at Grand Valley State**

4539 Luce St. Jenison, Michigan 49428

Tel: 616-805-5407

Email: [wesleygv@mail.gvsu.edu](mailto:wesleygv@mail.gvsu.edu)

Web: <http://www.gvwesley.org>  
Chaplain-Director: Greg Lawton

**Wesley @ Michigan State University**

1118 South Harrison Road, East Lansing, MI 48823  
Tel: 517.332.0861  
Web: <http://msuwesley.org/>  
Chaplain-Director: Bill Chu

**Wesley of Kalamazoo** (Western Michigan University)

2101 Wilbur Ave Kalamazoo, MI 49006  
Tel: 269.344.4076  
Email: [wesleyofkalamazoo@gmail.com](mailto:wesleyofkalamazoo@gmail.com)  
Web: <http://wmu.miwesley.org/>  
Chaplain-Director: Lisa Batten

**Wesley Foundation at The University of Michigan**

602 East Huron Street, Ann Arbor, MI 48104-1594  
Tel: 734-668-6881  
Email: [teamwesley@umich.edu](mailto:teamwesley@umich.edu)  
Web: <https://sites.google.com/site/umichwesley/home-1>  
Chaplain-Director: Robert Roth

**Motor City Wesley**

8000 Woodward Ave, Detroit, MI 48202  
Tel: 313-643-5965  
Email: [info@motorcitywesley.org](mailto:info@motorcitywesley.org)  
Web: <http://www.motorcitywesley.org/>  
Chaplain-Director: Carl Gladstone

**Northern Michigan University Wesley Foundation**

Marquette Hope Campus Connection  
111 E. Ridge St., Marquette, MI 49855  
Tel: 906-225-1344  
Email: [office@mqthope.com](mailto:office@mqthope.com)  
Web: <http://www.mqthope.com>  
Chaplain-Director: Kristi Hintz

**ADRIAN COLLEGE**

Adrian College continues its nationally-recognized theological leadership in several ways. We are committed to student-centered ministry, and we combine this movement with academic depth. It is a rare integration among United Methodist colleges and universities.

There are eight different spiritual life groups on campus and weekly chapel services. Our staff includes one chaplain and seven student ministers. Chaplain Chris Momany teaches as a member of the philosophy/religion department and publishes in both academic and popular church journals.

Dr. Momany is a regular columnist for *The United Methodist Reporter*. He continues to write for the United Methodist Publishing House's *Daily Bible Study* and for *Adult Bible Studies: Teacher*. In March of 2015, he presented to the annual meeting of the Wesleyan Theological Society. His book on Christian Holiness is used in a variety of classes and workshops. Over the past year, Dr. Momany has served with the National Council of Churches on the "convening table" dedicated to "Joint Action and Advocacy on Issues of Justice and Peace," and he is serving on the denominational review of our United Methodist Social Principles. In this later capacity, he is among a select group of writers tasked with drafting preliminary updates to the Social Principles.

The Adrian College Chaplaincy is grounded in a theological commitment to the "intrinsic worth" of all people. This conviction guides our approach to campus community and drives our current witness against "human trafficking" or modern-day slavery.

Highlights Include:

- A Wednesday Noon Chapel Series
- A Nationally-Respected Pre-Seminary Program that Unites Student Discernment with Formal Academic Study. Adrian College fielded a large contingent of students at "Exploration 2015," Orlando, Florida.
- Adrian College students presented to the Second Formal Conference of "Historians Against Slavery," September 26, at the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center, Cincinnati, Ohio, and Dr. Momany presented to this body regarding the relationship between moral theory and contemporary slavery.

Currently, Adrian College is working toward becoming a "fair trade" institution – a place where resources and products are available from honest "supply chains" that respect human dignity.

You, too, can join our movement. Contact Dr. Chris Momany at 517-265-5161, X4211.

## **AFRICA UNIVERSITY**

*James H. Salley, Associate Vice Chancellor for Institutional Advancement*

The Africa University story is one of faithfulness and generosity. Every chapter—from the dream, to Africa University's founding, to its current, vibrant reality—documents the strong commitment of the members, local congregations, and annual conferences of The United Methodist Church.

**In 2015, the Detroit Conference invested 86.41 percent of its asking to the Africa University Fund apportionment. Africa University is thankful to the local congregations of the Detroit Conference for maintaining a strong level of support for Africa University. Thank you for choosing to transform lives and communities. Your gifts educate principled, global leaders who are answering the call to serve. We urge you to continue working towards the goal of a 100 percent investment in the AUF and we hope to celebrate that milestone with you in 2016.**

**Institutional Update:**

Under the leadership of the Vice Chancellor, Dr. Munashe Furusa, Africa University increased its focus on student success in 2015. New staff development strategies are being implemented to ensure that the majority of the faculty have terminal degrees in their various disciplines. Academic programs are being restructured to make them more relevant and marketable and by 2020, fulltime student enrollment is projected to grow by 60 percent. A new strategic plan, (2017-2020), is in development. The plan assigns resources more effectively, while ensuring that fiscal responsibility and accountability are maintained. In addition, the university is increasing its friend-making and fundraising efforts in Africa and among its core beneficiaries—the graduates and their families.

**Enrollment:** Currently, Africa University has a total enrollment about 1,500 full-time students who represent 26 of Africa's 54 countries. An additional 770 students are gaining new skills and knowledge as they pursue undergraduate and graduate degrees on a part-time basis.

**Alumni:** Africa University graduates number around 6,200. They are dispersed across the continent and engaged in vigorous efforts to improve public health, food security, peace, stability, and the enjoyment of economic prosperity in Africa. Africa University graduates are leaders and role models who inspire a new optimism and they are advancing the mission of The United Methodist Church in Africa.

**Looking ahead:**

The ongoing support of local churches in the Detroit Conference, and across The United Methodist Church, is crucial to Africa University's ministry and its impact within Africa. Thank you for your enthusiasm and dedication. Every dollar you invest changes a life. As you journey with Africa University, know that you are part of a ministry that equips Africans to do for themselves and grow the experience of God's promised abundance in the world.

*Submitted by:*

Africa University Development Office  
P O Box 340007  
Nashville, TN 37203-0007  
Tel: (615) 340-7438  
Email: [audevoffice@gbhem.org](mailto:audevoffice@gbhem.org)  
[www.support-africauniversity.org](http://www.support-africauniversity.org)

**AFRICA UNIVERSITY: Changing Africa: Learning here. Living here. Leading here. Serving God. All the time. Everywhere.**

**CANDLER SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY**

For more than 100 years, **Candler School of Theology** at Emory University has prepared *real* people to make a *real* difference in the *real* world. Since our founding in 1914, over 10,000 students have graduated from Candler, where they have been shaped as Christian leaders who put faith and love into action, transforming the world in the name of Jesus Christ.

One of 13 official seminaries of The United Methodist Church, Candler is also one of seven graduate professional schools of Emory University, a top-tier research institution offering extensive resources and a rich context for study. Our location in Atlanta provides a learning environment that reflects the highly diverse communities of the 21st century. Simply put, there is no better place for ministry preparation that addresses our major denominational priorities: developing leaders, starting and growing churches, ministry with the poor, and improving global health.

In order to keep pace with the needs of the church and the world, Candler now offers 17 degrees: seven single degrees and ten dual degrees pairing theology with bioethics, business, development practice, law, public health, or social work. One of our newest degrees is a retooled Doctor of Ministry that is 90 percent online, so students can remain in their places of ministry as they study—and apply what they learn in real time. We've also partnered with the University of Georgia's School of Social Work to create an MDiv/MSW where students learn to maximize their effectiveness by combining pastoral skills such as spiritual counseling with social work practices such as family therapy and community assessment.

Our student body continues to reflect the diversity and breadth of the Christian faithful. 466 students are enrolled, with 48 percent women, 34 percent people of color (U.S.), and a median age of 29. Students represent 44 denominations, with 51 percent coming from the Methodist family. 82 percent of students are seeking a degree to prepare them as ministry professionals.

Candler has a deep commitment to alleviating student debt and employs a multi-pronged approach to tackle this issue. In 2015-2016, we awarded nearly \$5.5 million in Candler scholarships, with 92 percent of MDiv students and 84 percent of all students receiving support. And our comprehensive financial literacy program teaches money management skills that serve our students now and will continue to serve them—and the churches they serve—well into the future.

At the end of the 2015-2016 academic year, Candler says goodbye and Godspeed to a handful of noted faculty as they retire: Barbara Day Miller, Luke Timothy Johnson, Steve Tipton, and Bishop Woodie White. Yet even as these legends take their leave after distinguished careers of scholarship and service, we look forward to welcoming a new crop of scholar-leaders who will join us in the coming months and grow with us in the coming years. We are especially pleased to welcome Bishop Larry Goodpaster, who will join the faculty as bishop-in-residence in the fall of 2016.

Candler draws considerable strength and inspiration from its relationship with The United Methodist Church. Our ability to fulfill our mission of educating faithful and creative leaders for the church's ministries in the world depends upon your support, gifts, and prayers. Thank you for the countless ways you advance this vital ministry in the life of our denomination. Visit us in person in Atlanta or online at [candler.emory.edu](http://candler.emory.edu) to see firsthand how Candler prepares *real* people to make a *real* difference in the *real* world.

Jan Love, Dean and Professor of Christianity and World Politics  
Candler School of Theology

## **DUKE DIVINITY SCHOOL**

The academic year 2015–2016 has been one of transition as Dean Richard Hays was diagnosed with cancer and forced to step down from his role as dean a year sooner than anticipated. Ellen Davis, Amos Ragan Kearns Distinguished Professor of Bible and Practical Theology, accepted the invitation from Duke University President Richard Brodhead to serve as interim dean this year. A robust search committee to select candidates for the dean position had already been assembled, and they have spent this year conducting a thorough and thoughtful process to present final nominations to the president and provost of Duke University, who will make the final decision. The final slate of candidates was presented to the president and provost on Feb. 1, 2016, and we anticipate a final decision later this spring.

In the midst of this year of transition, we continue to engage with the church, academy, and society on important ecclesial and cultural issues. The heart of our work remains the preparation of men and women for Christian ministry and leadership within the church. This year we welcomed students from a range of backgrounds who are called to serve God and the church. In 2015, our total enrollment was 626 students: 449 are enrolled in the M.Div. degree program; 36 in the M.T.S.; 19 in the Th.M.; 44 in the Th.D.; 71 in the D.Min.; 33 in the M.A.C.P.; 16 in the M.A.C.S.; and 12 who are special students. Thirty-eight percent of our students are United Methodist, with an additional 4 percent from other Wesleyan traditions, and 43 percent of our M.Div. students are United Methodist. Fourteen percent of all students are Baptist, 8 percent are Anglican or Episcopalian, 3 percent are Roman Catholic, 8 percent are Presbyterian or Reformed, with the rest from 22 other denominations or nondenominational churches.

This year we made a number of strategic staffing decisions to ensure that we are meeting the priorities of the Divinity School. Lacey Warner, associate professor of evangelism and Methodist studies, has been named our senior strategist for United Methodist collaborations. Warner, whose background includes academic administration, parish ministry, theological teaching, and denominational leadership, will bring oversight, guidance, and new ideas about ways that the Divinity School can work with our United Methodist partners in the work of serving local churches and local pastors. She has been named interim regional director and head of Course of Study at Duke, one of the largest Course of Study programs. She will build on the strong existing curriculum to explore new forms of pastoral formation, as well as develop more formal assessments about the effectiveness of Course of Study to ensure that it delivers the best preparation for local pastors and churches.

Warner has also worked with Pastor David McNitzky of Alamo Heights UMC in San Antonio, Texas, to create a certificate program. People in the church were interested in learning more about theology, church history, and biblical studies. The church offers courses and helps people use this training to be transformational leaders in their church and community, and Duke Divinity School recognizes this training with an approved certificate.

Jeff Conklin-Miller, the E. Stanley Jones Assistant Professor of the Practice of Evangelism and Christian Formation and Royce and Jane Reynolds Teaching Fellow, has been named the new associate dean for academic programs. He is also the director of the master of arts in Christian practice (M.A.C.P.) program. Conklin-Miller is an ordained elder in the California-Pacific Conference and has served local churches as an associate

pastor, co-pastor, and senior pastor. In addition to his extensive church ministry, he has experience in academic administration and Christian formation. In his role as academic dean, Conklin-Miller draws on these various aspects of his experience in order to ensure that academic and other formation programs at the Divinity School equip our students to further God's work in the church and the world.

We are well aware of the changing landscape in theological education: fewer people express interest in pursuing theological degrees, and the costs of education continue to rise. As part of strengthening our commitment to the priorities of recruitment and financial aid, we have appointed Todd Maberry to the new position of senior director of admissions, recruitment, and student finance. Maberry, who earned an M.Div. from Duke Divinity School and an M.P.A. degree from North Carolina State University, has served in academic administration and church leadership. Most recently he was the community pastor at the Church of the Resurrection (Downtown) in Kansas City, Mo., and he comes to Duke under appointment of Bishop Scott Jones in the Great Plains Conference.

Another notable new hire is the appointment of Meghan Feldmeyer Benson as Divinity School Chaplain, following the retirement of Sally Bates. An ordained elder in the Rocky Mountain Conference, she served for nine years as Director of Worship at Duke Chapel. Shortly after Rev. Benson began her chaplaincy last summer, both Richard Hays and Professor Kate Bowler were diagnosed with cancer, and she immediately demonstrated her gift for offering comfort and guidance to the Divinity School community through both skillfully designed worship and pastoral care. In the months since, Benson has continued to foster a spirit of prayerfulness, while also overseeing the Divinity School's worship life and opportunities for spiritual formation.

Our initiatives, centers, and programs are a vital resource for us in connecting the work of Duke Divinity School with other disciplines and constituents. Our Thriving Rural Communities initiative hosted "Fan the Flame," a weekend retreat on growth and sustainability for small-membership churches. In partnership with the Western North Carolina and North Carolina Conferences, they also sponsored the 2015 Convocation on the Rural Church, "Living in Community," to discuss issues important for transforming rural churches and communities. The Hispanic House of Studies, supported by both North Carolina Conferences, hosted a retreat for pastors serving the Hispanic and Latino/a community. Duke Divinity School remains committed to supporting local churches and local pastors, particularly in under-resourced communities.

Spirited Life, a holistic wellness program and behavioral health study conducted by the Clergy Health Initiative, has concluded its direct services to pastors, after working with more than 1,100 United Methodist clergy in North Carolina since 2010. The program provided resources for improving mental, spiritual, and physical health through evidence-based programs, coaching, and support. The initiative will continue to conduct and publish research, and will continue to offer information for clergy, congregants, and denominational officials to support the well-being of pastors.

Since 1979, the Center for Studies in the Wesleyan Tradition has been a source of internationally acclaimed research and support for Methodist and Wesleyan studies. The Center hosts the Wesley Works Editorial Project, which this year published a new volume of the works of John Wesley and launched a new website. The new volume, *The Works of John Wesley Volume 27: Letters III (1756–1765)*, is the third of seven volumes devoted to Wesley's correspondence. The new website provides information on the pre-

viously published work as well as other resources for the study of John and Charles Wesley.

Several initiatives, specifically in the areas of health care, reconciliation, and the arts, provide opportunities for theological reflection to intersect with the pressing needs in our world today. Duke Initiatives in Theology and the Arts (DITA), Theology, Medicine, and Culture (TMC), the Office of Black Church Studies (OBCS), and the Center for Reconciliation (CFR) each sponsored numerous speakers and events during this past year. *Faith & Leadership*, the online magazine published by LEADD, continues to reach over 300,000 readers and provide a resource for theological reflection and “traditioned innovation” for all in ministry. Their continued excellent work was recognized again this year with awards from the Associated Church Press “Best of the Christian Press” contest.

Our faculty continue to be recognized for their scholarship and interdisciplinary expertise. Xi Lian and J. Kameron Carter were both named Henry Luce III Fellows for 2015–16. Ross Wagner, Kate Bowler, and Jennie Grillo each received prestigious research grants and fellowships to support their book projects. Faculty continue to be in demand as preachers, speakers, lecturers, and conference presenters all over the world, from academic conferences to leading Sunday school classes, to preaching in churches.

We remain deeply grateful for the relationships among the United Methodist Church, this Annual Conference, and Duke Divinity School. We look forward to working with you in the task of preparing men and women for Christian ministry. To learn more about Duke Divinity School, please visit our website at [www.divinity.duke.edu](http://www.divinity.duke.edu).

Respectfully submitted by Interim Dean Ellen F. Davis

### **ILIFF SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY**

*Rev. Dr. Thomas V. Wolfe, President and Chief Executive Officer*

Greetings from the Iliff School of Theology in Denver, Colorado. We wish you blessings as together we share the work of strengthening the Church and offering a compassionate presence to the World.

The Iliff School of Theology’s commitment to the Wesleyan ethos of providing hopeful, intellectually alive, and spiritually grounded theological education for each and every student over the course of their lifetime continues. Iliff’s identity is focused on educating leaders for three primary publics: the world, the church, and the academy. At Iliff, we refuse to choose between being a training home only for ministerial candidates, a center only for activists and scholar-activists, or a school only for academics. We believe all three are inseparable and enhance one another as we deliberately situate ourselves in the world and critically operate out of the world’s complexities.

As such, we recognize that the world’s religious landscape is changing and there is much at stake. Iliff recently completed its strategic plan, revised its curriculum, transformed its library, and initiated new relationships with other institutions. In collaboration with the people of Africa, we’ve started a discussion with Africa University (AU) to foster an educational alliance that will benefit Iliff and AU students. We have also joined a

multi-institutional collaboration facilitated by the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry and the HANA Scholarship to create a pipeline for Hispanic students from United Methodist related secondary schools and historically black colleges leading to graduate level theological education.

Iliff's enrollment continues to be strong with 365 students joining us this academic year, 60% female and 40% male, 35% Methodist – all actively engaged in a host of ministry contexts. Their interest continues to be strong in Iliff's online and hybrid classes. A concerted move by Iliff to reduce student debt and grow the ability of students to lead financially sound, engaged communities continues with many MDIV students participating in the Spiritually-Integrated Financial Resiliency Program, funded by a \$250,000 grant from the Lilly Endowment.

Iliff's numerous events for area clergy and supporters remains part of our foundation. Via forums and conferences on social justice, food justice, the role of faith in politics, environmental stewardship, theology and disability inclusion, and more. Campus speakers included Rev. Gerald Durley, nationally-known civil rights leader and this year's Jameson Jones Preacher, Heather Jarvis, student debt reduction advocate, and more. Our efforts were duly noted by McCormick Theological Seminary's Center for Faith and Service when we were named as one of the nation's "Seminaries That Change the World" and our Master's of Theology Program was ranked seventh in the nation by OnlineColleges.net.

We welcomed two new scholars to our faculty this year, Rev. Dr. Jennifer Leath, Assistant Professor of Religion and Social Justice and ordained in the African Methodist Episcopal Church, and Rev. Michelle Watkins-Branch, Gerald L. Schlessman Professor in Methodist Studies and Assistant Professor of Theology and ordained in the United Methodist Church.

We continue to look forward with a courageous theological imagination. We are sincerely grateful for your support of theological education and the Ministerial Education Fund.

[www.iliff.edu](http://www.iliff.edu) 1-800-678-3360

## **METHODIST THEOLOGICAL SCHOOL IN OHIO**

Thank you for this opportunity to bring an update from MTSO.

### **Keeping seminary affordable**

As part of MTSO's continuing commitment to make theological education a financial reality for promising students, we announced the creation of the Bishop Judith Craig Scholarship Endowment. Bishop Craig, who led conferences in the Michigan and Ohio West areas, is MTSO's bishop in residence and visiting professor of church leadership. One in three full-time MTSO master's students receives a full-tuition scholarship, and our average non-load aid award is \$8,600 per year.

### **Working for sustainable justice**

This year offered continuing evidence that social justice and the care of creation are core values for MTSO. We hosted “Faithful Justice: Confronting Mass Incarceration” in February and the Institute on Organizing and Preaching for Social Justice in April. A newly installed solar array began providing energy to Gault Hall, our main academic facility. And the Interfaith Center for Sustainable Development identified Methodist Theological School in Ohio as one of 25 exceptional North American seminaries (out of 231 surveyed) for faith and ecology. MTSO courses addressing ecotheology and sustainability include Ecological Religious Education; Food, Land and Faith Formation; and Dialogues in Faith and Science.

### **Celebrating 30 years of educating counselors**

Over the past three decades, hundreds of men and women have earned graduate counseling degrees with unique depth from MTSO. Our Master of Arts in Counseling Ministries degree integrates psychological and behavioral sciences with wisdom from religious tradition. The second most popular MTSO degree, the MACM offers tracks in Pastoral and Professional Counseling, Pastoral Care and Counseling, and Addiction Counseling.

Respectfully submitted,  
Danny Russell, director of communications

## **PERKINS SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY, SOUTHERN METHODIST UNIVERSITY**

### **Dean’s report**

Perkins celebrates our vital connections with the Detroit Annual Conference:

- One student affiliated with the Detroit Annual Conference is enrolled at Perkins: a Master of Divinity student.
- Qualifying students at Perkins receive \$6,000 each in need-based aid.

Enrollment at Perkins for the 2015-16 academic year totals 365 students, of which more than two-thirds are United Methodist and more than 40 percent are ethnic minority students. Master’s degree programs comprise approximately 53 percent male and 47 percent female students. The D.Min. program includes students from southern Asia taking classes in Singapore and Dallas. Our Ph.D. program has 32 students.

Please note the following faculty additions:

- Dr. O. Wesley Allen Jr. (Ph.D., Emory) joined the Perkins faculty as the Lois Craddock Perkins Chair in Homiletics in August 2015.
- Dr. Evelyn L. Parker (Ph.D., Northwestern), Associate Dean for Academic Affairs at Perkins, was appointed to the Susanna Wesley Centennial Chair in Practical Theology at Perkins.
- Dr. Priscilla Pope-Levison (Ph.D., University of St. Andrew’s) joined Perkins as the school’s Associate Dean for External Programs.

## Historical Reports 2016

- Dr. Tom Spann was named director of the Perkins Intern Program, succeeding Dr. Bill Bryan, who was named to the newly created position of Associate Dean of Student Affairs.
- Dr. Paul Barton (Ph.D., Southern Methodist University) was named director of the Mexican American and Hispanic-Latino/a Church Ministries Program.

Highland Park United Methodist Church provided a \$1.5 million gift to Southern Methodist University that endowed the Umphrey Lee Professorship in Methodist History at Perkins as well as support the HPUMC Future Church Leaders Program.

The Center for the Study of Latino/a Christianity and Religions at Perkins was awarded a \$500,000 grant by The Henry Luce Foundation's Theology program. The three-year grant will significantly expand the Center's work in promoting an understanding of the different religious expressions within the Latino/a communities in the United States and in Latin America.

Perkins unveiled a new degree option, the **Master of Theology (Th.M.)**, which began enrolling students in the Fall 2015 semester. The Th.M. degree is a second master's and requires 24 term hours within one of four divisions of study: The Biblical Witness, The Heritage and Context of Christianity, The Interpretation of the Christian Witness and The Theology and Practice of Ministry.

Additionally, Perkins revealed that it will begin offering a Spanish-language Master of Theology (Th.M.) degree beginning in fall 2017. The degree, the first of its kind among the 13 United Methodist-related schools of theology, will be a nonresidential program designed for experienced full-time pastors or church/academic leaders.

Perkins also announced the creation of a first-of-its-kind degree, the Doctor of Pastoral Music, which will begin enrolling students in 2016. Areas of focused study will include liturgy, congregational song, worship leadership, performance skills and the theological basis of church music.

Perkins thanks our many colleagues, friends, and alumni/ae across the connection for generous support in many ways, including referrals of prospective students, as we continue our vital mission of preparing women and men for faithful leadership in Christian ministry.

I will retire as Dean of Perkins School of Theology on May 31, 2016. It has been my privilege to serve in this capacity since 2002. In our mission to prepare women and men for faithful leadership in Christian ministry, the students who have passed through the halls of this school and into the world of ministry are the focus of our work. I am honored to have been a part of their journey.

Grace and peace,  
William B. Lawrence, Dean and Professor of American Church History

## **SAINT PAUL SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY**

Saint Paul School of Theology is a seminary of the United Methodist Church that educates leaders to make disciples for Jesus Christ, renew the Church, and transform the world. We are one institution with two campuses, in Oklahoma and Kansas.

This past academic year, Saint Paul enrolled 199 students from 14 annual conferences and 6 countries on both campuses. The Course of Study School at Saint Paul served 222 students in four Midwest locations.

The Saint Paul Board of Trustees named Dr. Nancy Howell, Saint Paul Professor of Theology and Philosophy, as the Acting President this spring. Her term began March 2 as Rev. H. Sharon Howell retired. Dr. Nancy Howell brings multiple years of experience serving in administration.

Saint Paul and Kansas Wesleyan University signed a Memorandum of Understanding for a 3+3 theological studies undergraduate-graduate program. The agreement is thought to be the first of its kind to be established between a United Methodist-based university and a United Methodist seminary. Under this arrangement, Kansas Wesleyan students condense the four-year course of study for the Christian Ministry major into three years, followed by the completion of the three-year Master of Divinity degree at Saint Paul. The 3 +3 program with Kansas Wesleyan will begin Fall 2016. 3+3 collaborations with other undergraduate institutions are currently in discussion.

Dr. Young-Ho Chun is serving as the Director of Asian Studies for Saint Paul. He is currently recruiting the 4th Korean Doctor of Ministry track of students. The model of theological education designed for this highly successful and unique program is currently being considered by other global communities.

Saint Paul will offer two fully online courses starting fall 2016 and two in the spring semester of 2017. We will continue to offer popular hybrid courses as well as video link every course between our two locations.

Two new components in the MDiv program are practicums taught by ministry practitioners and off-campus spiritual formation retreats. Practicum offerings include such real-life skill areas as budgets and finance, funerals and ministry with children. Spiritual formation retreats deepen students' spirituality for a lifetime of ministry.

The Fellows program equips candidates called to full-time ministry with academic formation and real-life pastoral experience. The award covers tuition, books and fees for three years. Each Fellow will receive a pastoral mentor and a student appointment with a stipend to cover living expenses.

The Oklahoma Campus had its second recognition dinner celebrating eight years of seminary excellence in Oklahoma. The Celebrate Saint Paul dinner has become an annual event including the Bishop Robert E. Hayes, Jr. Leadership Award

The trustees, faculty, staff, and students of Saint Paul thank you for your interest, prayers and support.

Submitted by: Heather Snodgrass, Director of Communications

## **SOUTHERN METHODIST UNIVERSITY**

### **President's Report**

Over the past five years, Southern Methodist University has celebrated the centennial of its founding in 1911 by the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and its opening in 1915. Highlights of recent developments follow:

- In fall 2015 SMU's total enrollment of 11,643 included 6,411 undergraduates and 5,232 graduate students. Ethnic minority students made up 26 percent of total enrollment. An international enrollment of 1,652 (14 percent of total enrollment) represented 92 foreign countries, with the largest numbers from China, India and Saudi Arabia.
- SMU ranks among the nation's top universities. In the 2016 *U.S. News & World Report* listings, SMU ranks 61st among 270 of the "best national universities." Several individual schools and academic programs also earned national rankings.
- SMU received \$26 million in external funding during 2014-15 for research in the U.S. and worldwide. Current research subjects include water quality, natural hazards, cyber security and treatments for cancer and other diseases.
- SMU Unbridled: The Second Century Campaign reached its \$1 billion goal ahead of schedule in Sept. 2015. It provided funds for 607 student scholarships; 62 endowed faculty positions, making a total of 114; 66 academic programs, including major endowment support for two schools; and 18 capital projects, including new and renovated facilities.
- The Meadows Museum at SMU celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2015 with exhibitions never before seen in the U.S. The museum houses one of the largest and most comprehensive collections of Spanish art outside of Spain.

SMU treasures its Methodist heritage, and we ask for your continued prayers and support.

R. Gerald Turner, President  
Southern Methodist University

## **WESLEY THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY IN WASHINGTON, D.C.**

### **Called. Answered. Sent.**

Wesley Theological Seminary has been equipping and sending forth prophetic preachers, teachers, and leaders into diverse ministries throughout the church and around the world. Near and far, our alumni point to God's love even as they join the Spirit in making disciples and shaping healthy communities.

- With more than 410 master's-level students preparing for leadership in the church and the world, Wesley remains one of the largest and most diverse theological schools in North America.
- The Lewis Center for Church Leadership informs more than 17,000 pastors and lay leaders on trends and ideas through its e-newsletter. The center has

influenced more than 5,600 church leaders through leadership assessments, sexual ethics trainings, and fundraising trainings.

- The new Institute for Community Engagement is forwarding Wesley's mission of raising prophetic leaders in the public square through classes, partnerships, conferences, and resources.

### **Wesley Students Are Answering God's Call**

Wesley provides **more than \$2 million dollars annually in scholarships** to our students thanks to the consistent support of alumni, congregations and friends of the seminary. The Ministerial Education Fund and conference partners help us equip a broad range of students to serve the church as pastors and leaders. These include:

- Two Master of Divinity students who are exploring ordination in the UMC have created outreach opportunities for people who ordinarily would not consider going into a church. **Zach Spoerl** and **Matt Wilke**, working with three United Methodist Churches and Wesley, have started Pub Theology in downtown D.C., drawing spiritual-but-not-religious young adults into Christian community.
- Master of Theological Studies student **Jane Adams** is working with denominations and congregations on issues of poverty and hunger in the U.S. As an intern at the Center for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships at the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, she provides tools for building on charitable activities such as food pantries and backpack ministries. As a member of a local United Methodist congregation, she's putting her knowledge to work in her local church and neighborhood, too.

***Christian leadership must innovate for greater faithfulness and be able to engage the full diversity of people within our society even while holding true to the foundations of our faith and tradition.*** The people named above – as well as so many more of our students – exemplify these aims. Read more about our students at [wesleyseminary.edu/stories](http://wesleyseminary.edu/stories).

### **Mourning the Loss of a Christian Leader**

The Rev. Clementa Pinckney was a Doctor of Ministry student at Wesley in the Leadership Excellence track. He was working on a research project on the combined role of pastor and statesman, when his life was taken along with eight others at Mother Emanuel AME Church in Charleston, S.C. **Pinckney exemplified the spiritually powerful and prophetic leadership that is at the core of our mission.**

To ensure Pinckney's legacy continues, Wesley has established scholarships in his name for Doctor of Ministry candidates seeking to empower their congregations, engage their communities, and influence public discourse. Additionally, **Wesley has developed a Doctor of Ministry track exploring the intersection between public life and church leadership.** This degree focus amplifies Wesley's mission and location and, we hope, will raise up leaders to continue Pinckney's legacy.

## Seeking Connection

We are on this journey of faith together. As you follow Jesus Christ, we pray and trust the Spirit will equip you to mentor future leaders and to help others identify God's call to ministry on their lives. Let us know about someone you feel has the potential for Christian leadership by emailing us [admissions@wesleyseminary.edu](mailto:admissions@wesleyseminary.edu). **And may God's transformative, creative Spirit lead all of us, as the body of Christ, to new and faithful ways of sharing God's grace and love with all God's people, for the redemption of the world.** Learn more at [wesleyseminary.edu](http://wesleyseminary.edu).

## COMMISSION ON EQUITABLE COMPENSATION

The laity and clergy persons who make up the DAC Commission on Equitable Compensation takes seriously the charge put before them and are grateful for the opportunity to serve our Church as we serve on this Commission. Salary grant requests for 2016 came in under and did not exceed our budget again for this last calendar year. Mostly this was due to re-assignments of pastors in the July time frame and the Bishops Cabinet being pro-active in recognizing, matching and shifting personnel and finances to better meet the needs of both clergy and congregations.

Grant requests have increased the last few years from an average of \$3,000-\$5,000 to \$5,000-\$10,000 for this current year. With the help of other conference agencies we have been able to provide much needed salary support to the churches that request them.

The CEC is blessed and prepared to continue to support the ministry of local congregations and ensure that a Pastor in our Conference receives the minimum salary set forth in our guidelines. The Commission met in December 2015 for grant requests for this upcoming year and January 2016 to recommend the Conference Minimum Salary Guidelines.

Submitted by:  
Rev. Mark E. Zender  
Chairperson-DAC Commission on Equitable Compensation

## COMMISSION ON ARCHIVES, HISTORY, AND MEMOIRS

The Commission held three meetings during the year - one in February at Flushing United Methodist Church, one in May at Annual Conference, and one in November at the Michigan Area Ministry Center in DeWitt.

Archivist Rebecca McNitt is still maintaining normal reference services, processing and describing archival collections, and creating exhibits for annual conference. Once again she has reduced the size of the processing backlog, even while new collections continue to arrive steadily.

Rebecca's greatest accomplishment this year was the completion and launch of a new website for the Conference Archives, complete with information about using the

Archives, finding aids to all manuscript collections, and links to digital resources such as old conference journals. The new site can be found at <http://adrian.edu/umcarchives/>

In the spring of 2015, the Archivist learned that the Conference Archives needed to be moved to another location within the Adrian College Library. Over the next several months, Rebecca, her volunteer assistant, and two student employees of the College Library moved all of the manuscript collections and books twice - first into a temporary holding area and then (after the shelving had been moved) into the new rooms. Although the Archivist managed to maintain some reference services throughout the move, it did reduce her time for processing and describing newly received collections.

The archives were open during Annual Conference from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on each day of the meeting. Several researchers made extended or repeat visits to examine a variety of topics and other individuals visited to donate materials.

In July, Commission Chair Mary Whitman, archivist Rebecca McNitt, and Commission members Della Wilder, Diana Miller, Linda Schramm, and Bill McNitt attended the North Central Jurisdictional Convocation on Archives and History meeting in Evanston, Illinois. Linda Schramm also serves as chair of that body and presided over the meeting. While at the convocation, the delegates visited historical sites and churches, and attended lectures and business meetings. Rebecca McNitt presented a review of the activities of the Commission and its archives.

It is the responsibility of the Commission on Archives and History to collect memoir information for the *Journal* when the death occurs of clergy, diaconal ministers, lay members of the previous annual conference, laypersons of the conference support staff and ministry team, dependent children of clergy members, missionaries related to the conference and others recommended by the Commission on Archives and History. This is accomplished by contacting family members through the use of the death notices published by the Detroit Annual Conference.

The committee also assisted with the presentation at the *Remember Time* during the opening service. Whenever possible, families provide adjectives to be read during the service and a brief statement to be published as a part of the Remembering Time. If the family is unable to provide this, a statement is prepared by the committee with the assistance of their obituary and their local church. Families are invited to attend and asked to RSVP so that we may have a committee member greet them in the chapel prior to the service.

A Memorial Program is published and distributed during the Opening Worship Service listing those who are being remembered and including the statements as provided. We also incorporate pictures, when they were available, in a Power Point presentation during the service as the adjective tributes were read.

The Commission appreciates the Conference's patience and support as we continue shaping this ministry into the blessing intended for those families experiencing a great loss in their lives.

The Commission on Archives and History expresses its sincere appreciation to archivist Rebecca McNitt as she continues to improve access to archival materials as well as responding to research requests.

We look forward to working towards our Michigan Area Conference and all that can mean for the future Archives and History of the United Methodist Church in Michigan.

Mary Whitman  
Chairperson

### **BOARD OF LAITY**

GROW Disciples was the emphasis for 2015 Annual Conference with the scripture "And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age." Matthew 28:18-20 (NRSV)

Individually and collectively, the members of the Board of Laity strive to empower laity so they are better able to partner with clergy in making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Rev. Scott Chrostek, Pastor of Church of the Resurrection- Downtown, provided the keynote address entitled "Practice Makes Perfect" describing his faith and journey in starting a new church in downtown Kansas City.

Ministry of the Laity session at 2015 Annual Conference was celebrated by John Walls, "Micki" Phelps , and Bridget Nelson. All concentrated on youth and young adult laity in ministry across our conference in mission outreach, mission interns, campus ministry, and special retreats and conferences.

We encourage all churches to celebrate Laity Sunday to recognize the work of the laity in the local church on the third Sunday in October or a Sunday of their choice. The theme in 2016 is Disciples Called to Action: Living Vital Worship.

The number of laity involved in conference leadership has declined. In 1995, laity chaired 14 Conference boards or agencies and clergy chaired 7. The 1995 journal did not list chairs of several areas. In 2015 laity chaired 14 boards or agencies and clergy chaired 21. The Board of Laity working with the Nominations Committee is making an increased effort to mentor and nominate laity for positions within our conference. The District lay leaders are in a unique position to identify and suggest laity who are making a difference in their district and have the capability to serve and bring energy to the Detroit Annual Conference.

John Wharton was nominated by the Board of Laity to become Conference Lay Leader 2016-2020 pending approval of the 2016 Annual Conference. We pray for him as he provides input from a lay perspective to the leadership of Detroit Annual Conference.

Our Methodist heritage includes active lay leadership in spreading scriptural and social holiness throughout the land. The DAC laity and clergy working together, using their spiritual gifts to love and serve God and neighbor, will transform lives of people in Michigan.

### **MICHIGAN AREA COMMITTEE ON THE EPISCOPACY**

The North Central Jurisdictional Committee on the Episcopacy asked all conferences within the jurisdiction to evaluate their bishop. The process for our committee began in April with the selection of 80 people in the Michigan Area who would participate in an on-line survey. The survey was completed by the end of July, compiled, and presented to Bishop Kiesey by December 1. After this report was completed, Bishop Kiesey announced her retirement. While her return to the Michigan Area would have been welcomed, especially in this transition time, we support Bishop Kiesey's decision completely. Her leadership will be missed. We are deeply grateful for the four years that we will have had with her and look forward to the new Episcopal leadership that God will bring to the Michigan Area

In July we said farewell to the Assistant to the Bishop, Rev. Dr. Bill Dobbs. The Michigan Area is grateful for his wisdom and guidance. Bishop Kiesey appointed Rev. Melanie Carey as the new Assistant to the Bishop. She has served the area with integrity and compassion. Rev. Carey has requested an appointment to the local church and has been granted that request by Bishop Deb. Rev. John Boley has been appointed to be the next Assistant to the Bishop.

The North Central Jurisdictional Conference will meet in Peoria, IL in July to conduct business and elect bishops. At that time the Michigan Area will be assigned a bishop who will assume those duties in our area in September. We will have an opportunity to honor Bishop Kiesey at Annual Conference in June. She will be moving to Iowa.

Bishop Deb has brought a spirit of healing and hope that was much needed. She came to Michigan listening to our needs. Her gentle, steady and wise guidance has allowed all to have a voice and be heard. She has been attentive to and open to the movement of the Holy Spirit. The Michigan Area has been blessed by Bishop Deb and we wish her all of God's blessings as she retires.

Genie Bank, chair  
Michigan Area Committee on the Episcopacy

### **COMMITTEE ON HISPANIC/LATINO MINISTRIES**

In 2015, the Conference Committee on Hispanic/Latino Ministries continued to work on three strategic directions:

1. Strengthening Leaders and Congregations
2. Strengthening Community Empowerment
3. Strengthening Cultural Connectional Relationships

### **Hispanic Youth Leadership Academy (HYLA)**

Twelve high school students from Michigan, Ohio and Iowa came together June 24-27, 2015 for the second year of HYLA at Adrian College, Adrian, Michigan. We enjoyed exploring more about Latino identity and what makes them unique as leaders. The first HYLA Michigan graduation was also celebrated.

### **Hispanic Christian Academy**

On August 10, 2015 classes started as part of the Hispanic Christian Academy.

A partnership with United Theological Seminary. Three students from the Michigan Area are taking these on-line courses, which is part of a three-year program of online biblical and theological courses for lay persons.

### **Centro Familiar Cristiano UMC**

The Conference Committee on Hispanic/Latino Ministries supported the start of a New Hispanic/Latino Church in Detroit, Michigan. The church started on February 1, 2016. Services are on Saturday nights and during the week there is a food pantry, immigration legal services, Bible Studies, Craft classes, and guitar lessons as well as special meals.

### **Spanish Language Challenge**

In the start of 2016, the Conference Committee on Hispanic/Latino Ministries gave a challenge to all the local churches in the Michigan Area to plan and run a *Who is Our Neighbor?* Spanish Language Study at their church. The study is a six-week study for learning Spanish as Church Hospitality. So far, six churches are participating in the challenge. The goal is for at least 10 churches to participate.

In 2015, the Detroit Conference Committee on Hispanic/Latino Ministries and the West Michigan Conference Committee decided to start meeting together, beginning in 2016 looking forward to being a part of one conference. The two committees plan on working together supporting the ministries previously mentioned and also supporting the development of new faith communities, outreach ministries, and leadership development.

Rev. Rey Mondragon, Chair

## **COMMITTEE ON NATIVE AMERICAN MINISTRY (CONAM)**

The Committee on Native American Ministry continues to promote recognition of Native American contributions to the culture and society, with emphasis on fostering a cooperative community of acceptance and appreciation for the spiritual gifts we all have to offer. In 2015, the scope of CONAM's presence expanded to include presentations to church groups in Detroit, South Lyon, and Sterling regarding the exciting progress of the Saganing Native American Center development.

The "facelift" began during the spring and summer with the creation of five flowerbeds which bloomed with an assortment of perennial and annual color. Volunteers hauled rocks to place around the borders and carried buckets of water from the kitchen most

of the summer to keep the flowers alive. In August, a mission group from Leighton United Methodist Church installed the new sign in front of SNAC and also painted the fence, did multiple repairs, and cleaned the cemetery grounds – as well as installing an outdoor spigot to facilitate the flower-watering process! A team of United Methodist Men from Renaissance District arrived in October to hang new blinds and varnish the window frames in the fellowship hall; and the sanctuary boasts new windows thanks to a grant from the General Board of Global Ministries.

Clara Lawrence, representative from CONAM, attended Mission Day in Troy in March and shared information with the committee at its quarterly meeting in April. Oscoda hosted the regular committee meeting in September, where team members reported the success of Oscoda's family camping experience at Camp Nissokone and discussed Pathway Funds, Conference merger, and further program planning for the Saganing site. The committee also proposed a non-food giveaway for Saganing and designated \$500 to provide "family care" packages for those in need. We filled 12 boxes with such items as dish detergent, shampoo, tissues, paper towels, razors, and laundry detergent. Ten families had gratefully accepted boxes by year's end.

In collaboration with the Bay-Arenac Diaper Bank Council, and with the help of a Pathway grant received from the Conference, the weekly *Saganing Diaper Pantry* distributed more than 2000 diapers in 2015. Committee members met August 29 at the Saganing site for the second annual Back-to-School Bonanza and spent the entire morning filling backpacks with school supplies donated by various churches and organizations. Recipients began lining up at 9 a.m. for the noon-to-2 p.m. event, and 213 children received backpacks during that two-hour period. Tables piled with clothing provided by *Kids' Klothesline* (an outreach program of Community UMC in Standish) were also a popular attraction.

Collection of \$6748.24 for Native American Ministry Sunday in 2014, approved by CONAM to be distributed for use in 2015 as quarter-shares for each ministry, will now be subject to annual reporting by each of these ministries. This requirement follows the former ruling agreed upon by committee members in 2014. Zeba Indian Mission, Oscoda Indian Mission, and the Saganing Native American Center each received \$1687.06, with the remainder retained in the CONAM fund.

Upcoming activities specific to Saganing Native American Center include continued community outreach through the Diaper Pantry program, coffee and donuts provided for visitors to the cemetery who attend the ceremony honoring veterans on Memorial Day, an Open House in June in conjunction with historical displays and Native art exhibit, Lay Servant Ministry classes in July, and third annual Back-to-School Bonanza in August, along with other community-focused events during 2016. The site still requires repairs and additional maintenance, but CONAM has identified and prioritized remaining concerns. Opportunities for use of this charming facility continue to be explored.

As for CONAM, the ministries and outreach accomplished through its efforts will be promoted throughout the Conference. The success of these efforts hinges upon building awareness among those in need of assistance and those capable of providing it. Visit [www.detroitconference.org/conam](http://www.detroitconference.org/conam) for more information about our mission, ministries, and upcoming activities.

On behalf of the Detroit Conference – Committee on Native American Ministry:  
Rose M. Bledsoe, Member

## NOTES