

**DAY THREE**  
**Saturday, June 7, 2014**

**MORNING SESSION**

**COMMISSIONING SERVICE** – At 8:00 AM the members gathered in the plenary room for the commissioning of this year’s provisional members. Bishop James R. King, Jr. preached a message “Keep Moving” based on John 4:20-24. Bishop King related the story of a young woman who had physical limitations yet successfully ran, entirely on crutches, the Boston Marathon. Bishop King stated, “her handicapped limited her speed but not her determination.” He also proclaimed, “Life is movement and movement is life.”

Provisional elders that were commissioned were: Amy Chesla, Larry Dunn, Doug Dyson, Melissa Geisler, Dianne Glave, Randolph Landman, Scott Lawrence, James Sands, Kathleen Schoeneck, and Brittany Wooten.

**ORDER** – Bishop Bickerton called the body to order at 10:10 AM.

**EAST GERMAN PARTNERSHIP** – Bishop Bickerton recognized Werner Philipp, ordained elder from the East German Annual Conference and presented him with gifts from Western Pennsylvania. Werner then offered a prayer... in German.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS** – Floor manager Bill Patrick reported that the used shoes project has resulted (so far) in an estimated 30,500 pairs of shoes!

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES** – On motion of Mark Goswick, the minutes of the Thursday and Friday sessions of Annual Conference were approved. On motion of Mark Goswick, the conference secretarial staff is authorized to correct and approve the minutes for the Saturday and Sunday sessions of the Annual Conference.

**RECOGNITION OF OUTGOING DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT** – Bishop Bickerton recognized Tom and Kathy Strandburg. Tom is completing six years as Superintendent for Kane District. Effective July 1, 2014, he will return to pastoring a local church.

**AFFIRMING OF APPOINTMENTS TO THE KANE DISTRICT** – Bishop Bickerton welcomed Pat Lenox, incoming District Superintendent for Kane District, and then read the names of pastors being newly appointed to the Kane District for the coming year. As names were read, the pastors came to the front of the room and greeted each other.

**DISASTER RELIEF: RIDGWAY** – Roger Peterson updated the conference on the disaster relief efforts within our own conference following the flooding in the Ridgway area just two weeks ago. United Methodists have been in the forefront, ministering to 81 families. Help is still needed.

**CONSENT CALENDARS** – John Wilson moved approval of the corrected Legislation and Corporation Consent Calendars making note of items that had been removed for debate. The Consent Calendars were approved as corrected.

**AFFIRMING OF APPOINTMENTS TO THE WASHINGTON DISTRICT** – Bishop Bickerton welcomed Brad Lauster, District Superintendent for Washington District and then read the names of pastors being newly appointed to the Washington District for the coming year. As names were read, the pastors came to the front of the room and greeted each other.

**CALL STORY** –Alyce Weaver-Dunn introduced Jillian Schweigert, who shared the story of her call to pastoral ministry.

**LEGISLATION: RS612 PROTECTING THE CHILDREN** – (*Resolution on pages 484-485 of pre-conference journal. Item was included on consent calendar Daily Journal page 693, but was subsequently pulled.*) Larry Dunn, representing Section Six, presented RS612 and moved that the resolution be referred back to its author. Following prayer and a division of the house, the motion for referral was NOT APPROVED (874 votes cast: 405 for and 469 against).

Therefore RS612 was before the body as amended by the section.

Chris Cherry offered by amendment to “change the title of RS612 to PROTECTING THE CHILDREN AGAINST GUN VIOLENCE” After discussion, the amendment was APPROVED.

After discussion, and another division of the house, RS612 was NOT APPROVED (784 votes cast: 391 for, 393 against).

**YOUTH PRESENTATION** – Luke Fugate, Chairperson of the Youth Ministry Team (YMT) discussed the work of the YMT including SPARK which is scheduled each January. YMT is again offering RECESS, an extended child-care activity program for children attending Annual Conference.

Recently the Upper Room published a devotional from one of our youth, Trent Somes. Trent encouraged the members to subscribe to the Upper Room email devotionals at: [www.devotional.upperroom.org/email.devotional](http://www.devotional.upperroom.org/email.devotional).

Courtney Kunselman shared Matthew 5:3, the theme for this week’s youth Bible study.

Sydney Widdersheim presented the Pineapple Award to Sandra Matoushaya.

Laura Killby announced the Timothy Award, a new youth award presented for a student who models the characteristics of 1 Timothy 4:11-12 to their peers and others. The first Timothy award was presented to Kevin Jenkins, from Chippewa UMC. Accepting for Kevin was Eric Hoeke, his pastor.

Grant Shoffstall shared his involvement in the Zimbabwe trip this summer.

Youth Service Fund (YSF) chair Jonathan Beranek encouraged members to support the YSF through Tray Day and the annual YSF offering on the first Sunday of November.

**PRAYER & RECESS** – After prayer by Luke Fugate, the bishop declared a recess for lunch until 1:30 PM.

## AFTERNOON

**ORDER & WORSHIP** – The members were called to order for the start of the Memorial Service at 1:30 PM. Amy Wagner preached on the theme “We Had Hoped”, using Luke 24:13-35 as her text. Pamela Gardner read the role of the honored dead: Harry Applegate, Elva Beatty, Sylvan Berman, Barbara Blackstone, Dorothy Blank, John Boor, Dorothy Boyd, Donald Brown, Thomas Carr, Sr. George Cook, Dora Cox, Roger Cramer, Sr., Dolores Croyle, Lucille Dunkle, John Duvall, Richard Eddinger, Karen Enos, James Fogg, Jr., John Garvin, Myron Gramling, Lois Heiser, Margaret Hodges, Robert Higginbotham, Carol Kalp, Jean Lash, Daniel Long, Charlie “Smoky” Martin, Elsie McCollough, Kenneth McGowan, Jr., Irene Meuschke, Henry Morris, Homer Nevel, David Peary, Evelyn Perry, Jack Plowman, Harriet Porter, Barbara Reed, Grace Roberts, Doris Romine, Sarah Rummel, Marcia Smith, Mary Smith, Eileen Stoupe, Loretta Taylor, James Trusel, Samuel Weible, Faye Wion, and Marietta Woomer.

**COURTESIES** – Jim Bickerton, Bishop Bickerton’s father, spoke to the conference via telephone sharing his thoughts and appreciation for our hospitality and care for the Bishop, Sally and the family. He shared: “Put your faith in God and he will provide yesterday, today and forever.”

**UMCOR KITS** – Bill Patrick, floor manager, reported that the conference has gathered 2,277 kits for UMCOR ministries: health kits (1,346), school kits (459), birthing kits (234), cleaning buckets (96), sewing kits (85), layettes (48), and bedding kits (9). He also emphasized that there is still time to donate kits before the conference ends.

**DENMAN AWARDS** – Paul Morelli, the new chair of the Conference Evangelism Team, recognized this year's Denman Award recipients. Denman Awards are given to honor a person's evangelistic efforts. Thomas Verner received the award for youth, Michelle Polohonki received the award for adult laity and Randall Bain received the award for clergy. The Bishop congratulated and thanked these three for their efforts for the Kingdom.

**EVANGELISM** – Paul Morelli reported on the Conference Evangelism Team's work and opportunities throughout the year. He also recognized the three conference evangelists: Christine Rogan, John Zimmerman and Luella Krieger. The conference evangelists were approved with the consent calendar (RS301, RS302, RS303).

**AFFIRMING OF APPOINTMENTS TO THE ERIE-MEADVILLE DISTRICT** – Bishop Bickerton welcomed Joe Patterson, District Superintendent for Erie-Meadville District and then read the names of pastors being newly appointed to the Erie-Meadville District for the coming year. As names were read, the pastors came to the front of the room and greeted each other.

**CABINET REPORT** – William Meekins, Jr. and Alyce Weaver-Dunn spoke on behalf of the Cabinet and expanded on the Cabinet's written report found in the Daily Journal (page 676). They announced the new Cabinet officers for the 2014-2015 appointment year: Dean - Alyce Weaver-Dunn; Secretary - George Porter, Treasurer - Joe Patterson.

**LEGISLATION: RS401 FUNDING OF MINISTRY FOR 2014** – Rob Wilson, representing Section Four moved concurrence on behalf of Section Four. After prayer RS401 was APPROVED.

**CALL STORY** – Keith Dunn introduced John Koblosky, who shared the story of his call to pastoral ministry.

**DISABILITY CONCERNS** – Debbie Hills, chair of the Disabilities Concerns Team, shared a video that focused the members on the question "Who does God see?" Debbie challenged the conference to see people as Jesus sees them.

**GOLDEN SNEAKER AWARD** – Thomas Strandburg presented the following Golden Sneaker Awards: GOLD - Washington District, SILVER - Erie-Meadville District and BRONZE - Indiana District. Strandburg noted that this is the last year that Golden Sneakers will be awarded.

**AFFIRMING OF APPOINTMENTS TO THE JOHNSTOWN DISTRICT** – Bishop Bickerton welcomed Alyce Weaver-Dunn, District Superintendent for Johnstown District and then read the names of pastors being newly appointed to the Johnstown District for the coming year. As names were read, the pastors came to the front of the room and greeted each other.

**GENERAL CHURCH APPORTIONMENTS** – The conference watched a video in which Moses Kumar, the General Secretary of the General Council on Finance and Administration, congratulated and thanked Western Pennsylvania for our faithfulness in meeting 100% of our General Church Apportionments.

**BIBLE STUDY** – At 4:00, the Bishop again welcomed Dr. Joy Moore to lead us in a time of studying the Scriptures. She focused on "a story worth telling. A good story longs to be rehearsed over and over again." We get to share GOD's story!

**RECESS** – At 5:00, the Bishop declared a recess for supper until 7:00 PM.

**ORDER** – At 7:00, the Bishop called the body to order for our final evening session.

**AFFIRMING OF APPOINTMENTS TO THE CONNELLSVILLE DISTRICT** – Bishop Bickerton welcomed Bill Blair, District Superintendent for Connellsville District and then read the names of pastors being newly appointed to the Connellsville District for the coming year. As names were read, the pastors came to the front of the room and greeted each other.

**CLERGY HEALTH** – Scott Gallagher reported about ways to be more physically healthy and, in turn, more spiritually healthy.

**FOLLOW-UP TO JUDICIAL COUNCIL DECISIONS 1238 & 1241** – The conference members viewed a video of Isaac Sebit (East Africa Annual Conference). Following the video, Nancy Denardo and Bishop Bickerton updated the conference about the money that had been given to assist Isaac, although he had previously never received the funds. Nancy and the Bishop reported that due to our advocacy, this situation has been resolved.

**TRAIL OF TEARS** – Randy Sweet, a member of the Cherokee Nation, reminded the conference members of a dark chapter in our nation's history: the 1839 forced removal of Indians in order to free up prime lands for white settlers. During that forced removal to "Indian Territory" (now known as Oklahoma) hundreds of Indians died. Even more died because of the harsh conditions on the reservations once they had arrived in the territory. On this 175<sup>th</sup> anniversary of that brutal and cruel time, the Bishop and Randy called upon the body to be in prayer for healing and hope.

**AFFIRMING OF APPOINTMENTS TO THE FRANKLIN DISTRICT** – Bishop Bickerton welcomed George Porter, District Superintendent for Franklin District and then read the names of pastors being newly appointed to the Franklin District for the coming year. As names were read, the pastors came to the front of the room and greeted each other.

**FIXING OF APPOINTMENTS** – At 7:40 PM, Bishop Bickerton declared all appointments for the coming year fixed.

**UNSTOPPABLE** – Diane Miller and Denise Nicole Stone highlighted Unstoppable, this summer's event for young women being held at Grove City College from July 10-13.

**COSROW MONITORING REPORT** – Peggy Ward and Nancy Shute presented the monitoring report.

**WORDS OF GRATITUDE** – Bishop Bickerton thanked John Wilson and his secretarial staff. He also thanked Barbara Moore and the Conference Sessions Ministry Team for their work at this Annual Conference.

**RECESS** – Bishop Bickerton announced the conference was in recess at 8:05 PM.

## **DAY FOUR June 8, 2014**

### **MORNING SESSION**

**ORDINATION** – The conference gathered at 9:00 AM for a service of Reaffirmation of Baptism, Ordination and Holy Communion. Bishop Bickerton's message, "Drawn into Joy", was based on John 15:9-12.

Recognized as Associate Members were: Robert Lee Martin and Terence Anthony Teluch.

Receiving ordination as Elders were: Dawn Lynn Check, David Lawrence Ewing, William Theodore "B.T." Gilligan, Timothy James Goodman, Heidi Marie Helsel, Leslie Alexander Hutchins Jr., Thomas Arthur Phillips, and Nancy Kaye Shute.

**ADJOURNMENT** – Following the ordination service, Bishop Bickerton adjourned the conference.

Commission on the Status and Role of Women (COSROW)  
FINAL REPORT  
June 7, 2014

Grace Bragg, in 1944, presented the study "women in the church" which documented the widespread discrimination and lack of opportunities for women throughout the church. Moving on, women were granted full clergy rights. The Commission on the Status and Role of Women was established with the mission of helping us become a fully inclusive church. We have had our first female Bishop, the first female Bishop of Color and the first female Hispanic bishop. We see that across the denomination the numbers of female clergy has increased, our diversity within clergy is now proportional to the representation of diversity within the membership. During This Annual Conference we have experienced more diverse and inclusive worship and language. We have navigated differing theologies with civility.

Last year at this time we spoke a lot about intentionality and inclusiveness. That to live into God's vision for us we must begin to work intentionally to make that happen. Well, as we stand here we can see where some of our time together has really benefited from this intentionality. Being intentional about our inclusiveness in worship services has really shown how we can begin to be inclusive in our life together. We also have seen that something about the way we come together is not working well for us as it should. It is not allowing us to be the powerful voice and witness we are called to be. We have seen this as we look at legislative sections and those patterns seem to be holding in plenary sections as well. Though we are here, we do not all have a voice. Some reflection on why and how this happens is necessary

How do we move forward to becoming a more fully inclusive conference. We heard the most important ways here at Annual Conference.

1. Put ourselves in the company of the "Other", for they are your siblings. They too are a child of God. And God's Grace is extended to all. As we claim being made in the image of God, so let us BE the image of God to the world.
2. Find a way to be Drawn Deeper into our relationship with Jesus, each other and the world so we can Love each other across, through and because of our differences
3. Take my hand. Reach out your hand.
4. Speak with Jesus' voice.

And we need one more thing to be able to do this. We need to Listen. Listen to the small still voice within us all. Listen to the voice of God and Listen with God's ear to voices other than our own. If we are to move forward it will be together and that will require us to listen with God's ear and speak with Jesus' voice.

Now there are some other tools that will help us as we lean into full inclusion:

1. Read, Power, Privilege and Difference by Allan Johnson It may help us to understand why, despite our desires, we still have more to do
2. COSROW wants to hear from you- how you experience using your voice, at AC and places where we gather. We will be sending out a survey and hope you will all participate.
3. Step up your awareness when you are interacting, who is speaking, how and why.
4. Reach out a hand or take a hand

If we try these things, intentionally, then when we come together next year we may be more skilled. Not in speaking the language of males or the language of females. But in speaking the language of God's Love, with Jesus' voice. I love that reference we heard re: Ridgeway. "Call The United Methodist Church". What a witness it would be, if those looking to see how to be the light in the world, could "Call The United Methodist Church in Western Pennsylvania" to see how it is done!

Let us so order our lives, that it would be so.

let us pray

God of our weary years, God of our silent tears, God who has brought us thus far on our way, hear us as we lift up our voices to you. We know your will for us. We know your will for your people. We are gathered here as the Body of Christ, As the voice to your people in the pews, the communities and the world. Lord we come knowing

what it is you would have us to do for you have told us what is right. and still we fall short. But we keep moving Lord and lifting up our voices. Move in us. That we may see your face in every face, and extend your Love and Grace to all, each day, every encounter. Let us be so drawn to you that we listen with your ears, and when we walk, we walk in your ways and when we speak, we speak with your voice and when we reach, we reach with your hands and we take the hand, we hold your hand. We long to find ourselves drawn in, into the deepest parts of you. So can breathe us out as a fresh wind for your world.

Peggy Ward