



General Commission on the Status and Role of Women

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



Connellsville District Office
ATTN: Installation Committee
232 N Pittsburgh Street, Suite B
Connellsville, PA 15425

Dear members of the Installation Committee:
Greetings in the name of our Savior!

Congratulations on receiving Robert Zilhaver as your new District Superintendent. I am sure that you share my joy in celebration of the gift which you have received of a leader who is a true child of God, who sees neither male nor female, and who lives the gospel message that we are all one in Christ.

In 2013, I was elected General Secretary of the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women. One of the first documents that I read as I studied and researched my role in the church, was an Amicus Brief prepared and sent to the Judicial Council at the 2012 General Conference in Tampa after the General Conference voted to end the ministry of our commission. Much of that brief was adopted in the decision that allowed GCSRW to continue its ministry of seeking the full inclusion of women and for the prevention of sexual misconduct in the church. The author of that brief was Robert (Bob) Zilhaver. I was on a mission to meet this saint, this champion, this purveyor of justice. My search did not take long.

One of the key events of our work each quadrennium is the mandated organization of the Interagency Sexual Ethics Task Force and the presentation of the international training event known as “Do No Harm.” In 2015, one of the highlights of that event was a panel consisting of Bishops, District Superintendents, Response Team Members, Advocates for the Church, and Advocates for the Accused. Bob took on the challenge of being the voice of the advocate for the accused on that panel and led follow-up educational events. He was (and is) outstanding in this work due in no small part to his combined legal and theological backgrounds.

At the 2016 General Conference, Bob was once again a true advocate for our mission and ministry, including his help in strategizing with us when issues that compromised our ministry were proposed. When our board of directors for the 2017-2020 quadrennium was elected, the nomination and election of Bob Zilhaver was a “no-brainer.” Since he began service on our board, he has led our Finance Committee, served on our Executive Committee, and has gone above and beyond the call of duty to continually ponder ideas for expanding our mission and ministry both within your district and annual conference as well as throughout the greater church.

I celebrate with you the installation of Robert Zilhaver as your new District Superintendent and I trust that you will accept the challenge within the Connellsville District and your annual conference to work for the full inclusion of women throughout all power structures within the church. If there is any way that we can help, please let us know. You have a direct line of communication to us!

Blessings

Dawn Wiggins Hare,
General Secretary