

COSROW report for 6-12-2015

Day two of the monitoring process for the voices from the margins included several events that reflected increased diversity. The day included plenary sessions filled with ministry reports and the balloting process. The day was capped with the Laity Worship Service.

Ministry reports offered today included those from the Anti-racism team, United Methodist Women, Unstoppable, Disabilities Awareness, Advocacy, and the Black College Fund among others.

Balloting:

Those called upon to pray for the various votes included female and male, lay and clergy, people of various ages and ethnicities.

Laity led the way by electing an African American female as their first delegate followed by two female delegates and a male on the next ballot. In all, laity elected four female and two male delegates for General Conference.

Clergy elections began with a white male delegate followed by a female and male delegate on the next ballot. Several ballots later, the second female delegate was elected. In all, clergy elected two female delegates and four male delegates. The one clergy of color elected did not come until the fifth spot on the clergy delegation.

Worship:

The Laity Worship Service included inclusive language as well as a large participation of laity. The prayer of confession was centered around the sin of racism.

Bishop Holston preached about being a Church filled with people who are “all in.”

Today we witnessed the difference that intentional inclusion makes in what we do as the Kingdom of God, for example, an intentional plan for participation versus spontaneity. But when we lose that intentionality and shift focus, such as in the voting process, we may miss what it is God is calling us to do.

So, what do we have to get out of our way? We need to remove anything that stands in the way of intentionally including the voices of Chloe. The voices of people of color, people differently abled, young people, older folks, and those for whom life is constantly lived on the margins. We can only reach higher when everyone is included in vital active ways.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy K. Shute
Co-chair of COSROW

SECOND DAY
Friday, June 12, 2015

MORNING SESSION

ORDER – Bishop Thomas J. Bickerton called the conference to order at 8:00 a.m. by leading the body in singing “This is the day.” He then recognized Eleanor Handler whom he believed to be the oldest member of this year’s Annual Conference. Handler is 95 years of age.

INTRODUCTION – Bishop Bickerton introduced Dr. Kevin M. Watson, the conference study leader. Watson is an assistant professor of Wesleyan and Methodist studies at Candler School of Theology at Emory University. Dr. Watson is also author of *Pursuing Social Holiness: The Band Meeting in Wesley’s Thought and Popular Methodist Practice*.

STUDY – Dr. Watson’s address was on the Wesleyan concept of Christian Conferencing, or the more contemporary term of Holy Conferencing. Watson defined Christian conferencing in terms of asking “how is it with your soul?” which opens a discussion about your personal journey with Jesus. Christian Conferencing is not meant to be an informational Bible study nor an exercise in producing shame and guilt. Instead, it invites people into a relationship with each other through a discussion of their personal relationship with Jesus. Watson’s study session challenged the conference to see the danger of an isolated search for holiness. Additionally, he challenged the conference to grow in small ways, with small groups, to develop a larger sustainable growth and connection to the grace of God.

ORDER – Bishop Bickerton called the conference to order at 9:07 a.m.

RESULTS OF FIRST LAITY BALLOT – Bishop Bickerton announced that 619 laity ballots were cast, 79 were invalid, 271 votes were needed to elect a delegate. There were no elections.

SECOND LAITY BALLOT – At 9:17, following prayer by Greg Spencer, the Laity cast their second ballot. Bishop Bickerton closed the ballot at 9:34 a.m.

RESULTS OF SECOND CLERGY BALLOT -- Bishop Bickerton announced that 357 clergy votes were cast, 8 were invalid. 175 votes were needed to elect a delegate. There was one election: Eric S. Park.

THIRD CLERGY BALLOT – At 9:39, following prayer by Wanda Ross, the clergy cast their third ballot. Bishop Bickerton closed the ballot at 9:48 a.m.

GREETING – Dr. Paul McNulty, President of Grove City College, greeted the members of the conference.

APPOINTMENT AND PRAYER OF THE BUTLER DISTRICT – Bishop Bickerton read the new appointments to the Butler District while Joel Garrett, Superintendent, and all the Butler District pastors welcomed and greeted each other.

CONSENT CALENDAR – Bishop Bickerton introduced Kellie Wild, who presented the consent calendar.

KEYSTONE UNITED METHODIST FEDERAL CREDIT UNION -- Patty Columbe, C.E.O. and Treasurer of the Credit Union, informed members of the advantages of being a member of the credit union. She warned members about security concerns, online safety, and combatting identity theft. She also presented a check for \$3,500 for New Church Starts.

UNITED METHODIST FOUNDATION – Ed Bailey, Foundation Director, described how the United Methodist Foundation helps churches fund various ministries through grants, endowments, capital projects, and investments

COKESBURY – Cheryl Cotten, Community Resource Consultant, highlighted ways and resources to help local church ministries which are available through Cokesbury, Abingdon Press, The United Methodist Publishing House, and the *Common English Bible*.

APPOINTMENT AND PRAYER OF THE CONNELLSVILLE DISTRICT – Bishop Bickerton read the new appointments to the Connellsville District while Bill Blair, Superintendent, and all the Connellsville District pastors welcomed and greeted each other.

CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATES OF SOUTHWEST PENNSYLVANIA – The Rev. Liddy Barlow, Executive Minister of Christian Associates, explained information about the ecumenical ministries we share. Members are directed to www.casp.org for more information.

UNITED METHODIST ADVOCACY – Bishop Bickerton introduced the members to the joint advocacy efforts of the three Pennsylvania Annual Conferences. This includes the recent hiring of Western PA United Methodist pastor, Dai Morgan, as the coordinator. Morgan was given the opportunity to share ways that United Methodists collectively can educate our elected representatives about our faith and our Social Principles.

PENNSYLVANIA COUNCIL OF CHURCHES – Bishop Bickerton introduced Sandra Strauss, Director of Advocacy and Ecumenical Outreach. She described how the PA Council of Churches has been able to work together for over 100 years for the cause of Christ.

RESULTS OF SECOND LAITY BALLOT -- Bishop Bickerton announced that 594 laity ballots were cast, 13 were invalid, 291 votes were needed to elect a delegate. There were three elections: Sharon Gregory, Nancy Denardo, and Rich Hoffman.

THIRD LAITY BALLOT – At 11:03 a.m., following prayer by Steve Marsh, the Laity cast their third ballot. Bishop Bickerton closed the ballot at 11:11 a.m.

ALLEGHENY COLLEGE BICENTENNIAL – Bishop Bickerton introduced Dr. James H. Mullen, Jr., President of Allegheny College. Dr. Mullen shared how the relationship between Allegheny College and The United Methodist Church dates back to 1833 and has shaped the way the college looks even today. He also announced that Allegheny has started offering a 50% tuition discount for children of United Methodist clergy.

RESULTS OF THIRD CLERGY BALLOT -- Bishop Bickerton announced that 333 clergy ballots were cast, 11 invalid, 162 were needed to elect a delegate. There were two elections: Robert F. Zilhaver and Alyce Weaver Dunn.

FOURTH CLERGY BALLOT – At 11:15 a.m., following prayer by Matt Williams, the Clergy cast their fourth ballot. Bishop Bickerton closed the ballot at 11:28 a.m.

RECESS – Bishop Bickerton called for a lunch recess at 11:30 a.m.

AFTERNOON

ORDER – Bishop Bickerton called the conference to order at 1:00 p.m.

CELEBRATING THE RETIRING CLASS OF 2015 – David Janz led the conference in recognizing this year’s retiring clergy and celebrating their ministries.

RESULTS OF FOURTH CLERGY BALLOT – Bishop Bickerton announced that 296 clergy ballots were cast, 3 invalid, 147 were needed to elect a delegate. There were no elections.

FIFTH CLERGY BALLOT -- At 1:39 p.m., following prayer from Susan Urbassik, the clergy cast their fifth ballot. Bishop Bickerton declared the ballot closed at 1:48 p.m.

RESULTS OF THIRD LAITY BALLOT – Bishop Bickerton announced that 592 laity ballots were cast, 5 invalid, 294 were needed to elect a delegate. There were two elections: Paul Morelli and Diane Miller.

FOURTH LAITY BALLOT -- At 1:50 p.m., following prayer by Eric Park, the laity cast their fourth ballot. Bishop Bickerton declared the ballot closed at 1:58 p.m.

LAITY ADDRESS – Sharon Gregory, Conference Lay Leader, shared the state of lay ministries in our conference and the Board of Laity’s efforts to strengthen our lay leadership in local churches, districts, and throughout the conference.

EPISCOPACY COMMITTEE – Matthew Judd, chair, introduced the members of the committee who honored Bishop Bickerton and Sally with their words of appreciation and gifts. Bishop Bickerton then shared with the conference family updates.

RESULTS OF FIFTH CLERGY BALLOT – Bishop Bickerton announced that 264 clergy ballots were cast, 0 invalid, 133 votes needed to elect a delegate. There were no elections.

SIXTH CLERGY BALLOT -- At 2:21 p.m., following prayer by Corona McKee, the clergy cast their fifth ballot. Bishop Bickerton declared the ballot closed at 2:33 p.m.

UNSTOPPABLE – Denise-Nicole Stone, on behalf of United Methodist Women, shared about Unstoppable, a summer event geared toward mentoring young women ages 14-23 in leadership roles.

MISSION U – Michael Airgood invited the members of the conference to this year’s mission education event at California University of Pennsylvania.

UNITED METHODIST WOMEN – Diane Miller introduced Jodale Barnhart, Mission Ambassador to Central America. Barnhart shared some of her experiences during her trip.

STOP HUNGER NOW – Andrew Moser, Area Representative for Stop Hunger Now, challenged the members to help in this ministry. Conference members are invited to visit the Stop Hunger Now area to help package meals.

RESULTS OF FOURTH LAITY BALLOT – Bishop Bickerton announced that 584 laity ballots were cast, 3 invalid, 291 were needed to elect a delegate. There were no elections.

FIFTH LAITY BALLOT -- At 2:50 p.m., following prayer by Bob Zilhaver, the laity cast their fifth ballot. Bishop Bickerton declared the ballot closed at 3:00 p.m.

RESULTS OF SIXTH CLERGY BALLOT – Bishop Bickerton announced that 318 clergy ballots were cast, 2 invalid, 159 votes were needed to elect a delegate. There was one election: Amy R. Wagner.

SEVENTH CLERGY BALLOT -- At 3:10 p.m., following prayer by Debra Webb, the clergy cast their seventh ballot. Bishop Bickerton declared the ballot closed at 3:17 p.m.

APPOINTMENT AND PRAYER FOR THE ERIE-MEADVILLE DISTRICT – Bishop Bickerton read the new appointments to the Erie-Meadville District while Joe Patterson, Superintendent, and all the Erie-Meadville District pastors welcomed and greeted each other.

DISABILITY AWARENESS – Debbie Hills shared a video presentation entitled “To Hug or Not To Hug?” showing three people in our Annual Conference describing their struggle with neurological differences. Not all disabilities are visible.

GENERAL BOARD OF GLOBAL MINISTRIES – David Johnson, missionary with Global Mission Fellows (US-2), shared about ways to engage in mission. He further challenged the members to look for ways to engage young adults in reaching out to their world. As churches we can be the prayer support for our many mission programs. He further encouraged the members to go out of their way to support campus ministries to college students, who are often rethinking and reevaluating their life's direction and the role of faith in their lives.

BLACK COLLEGE FUND -- Kadrien Wilson was introduced to the conference. Wilson is the 2015 Rising Senior from Bennett College (N.C.) and a member of St. Matthew United Methodist Church. She congratulated and thanked the Annual Conference for their ongoing support of the Black College Fund and for our history of paying 100% of our apportioned monies to this fund.

ANTI-RACISM TASK FORCE – Heather Burch explained the group's mandate to tackle racism, a missional priority. In addition to the programs provided by the task force, we need to go beyond mere head knowledge and actually create a culture of inclusiveness.

RESULTS OF FIFTH LAITY BALLOT – Bishop Bickerton announced that 581 laity ballots were cast, 9 invalid, 287 votes were needed to elect a delegate. There was one election: Vicki J. Stahlman. This completes the General Conference laity delegation.

SIXTH LAITY BALLOT -- At 3:40 p.m., following prayer by Alice Weaver Dunn, the laity cast their sixth vote; this time for Jurisdictional delegates. Bishop Bickerton declared the ballot closed at 3:48 p.m.

RESULTS OF SEVENTH CLERGY BALLOT – Bishop Bickerton announced that 300 clergy ballots were cast, 5 invalid, 148 votes were needed to elect a delegate. There were no elections.

EIGHTH CLERGY BALLOT -- At 3:50 p.m., after prayer from Dan Miller, the clergy cast their eighth ballot. The ballot was declared closed at 4:01 p.m.

BUDGET INTRODUCTION – Paul Ritchie, chair of the Conference Council of Finance and Administration, gave an overview of the proposed budget. The complete audit will be available in the *Journal*. After his report, Ritchie moved the firm of McCall, Scanlon, and Tice LLC be responsible for the 2016 annual audit. The motion was approved.

APPOINTMENT AND PRAYER FOR THE FRANKLIN DISTRICT – Bishop Bickerton read the new appointments to the Franklin District while Allan Brooks, newly appointed Superintendent, and all the Franklin District pastors welcomed and greeted each other.

RESULTS OF EIGHTH CLERGY BALLOT – Bishop Bickerton announced that 280 clergy ballots were cast, 3 invalid, 138 votes were needed to elect a delegate. There was one election: William B. Meekins, Jr.

NINTH CLERGY BALLOT -- At 4:34 p.m., following prayer from Paul Huey, the clergy cast their eighth ballot. Bishop Bickerton declared the ballot closed at 4:41 p.m.

RESULTS OF SIXTH LAITY BALLOT – Bishop Bickerton announced that 570 laity ballots were cast, 13 invalid, 273 votes were needed to elect a delegate. There were two elections: Don Blystone and Tina Whitehead. They will serve not only as delegates to Jurisdictional Conference, but also as alternates to General Conference.

SEVENTH LAITY BALLOT -- At 4:43 p.m., after prayer from Amy Wagner, the laity cast their seventh ballot. Bishop Bickerton declared the ballot closed at 4:52 p.m.

RECESS – Bishop Bickerton declared a dinner recess until 7:00 p.m.

EVENING SESSION

RESULTS OF NINTH CLERGY BALLOT – Bishop Bickerton announced that 255 clergy ballots were cast, 3 invalid, 127 votes were needed to elect a delegate. There was one election: John W. Seth.

TENTH CLERGY BALLOT – At 7:05 p.m., after prayer from Louise Patterson, the clergy cast their tenth ballot. Bishop Bickerton declared the ballot closed at 7:13 p.m.

RESULTS OF SEVENTH LAITY BALLOT – Bishop Bickerton announced that 567 laity ballots were cast, 23 invalid, 267 were needed to elect a delegate. There was one election: Faith Geer.

EIGHTH LAITY BALLOT – At 7:19 p.m., after prayer from John Seth, the laity cast their eighth ballot. Bishop Bickerton declared the ballot closed at 7:24 p.m.