

VI. Daily Proceedings

HUNGERS OF THE HEART

FIRST DAY

Thursday, June 9, 2011

CLERGY SESSION

ORDER – Bishop Thomas J. Bickerton called the Clergy Session to order at 9:30 AM with a call to worship, reading of scripture, and singing.

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS – Received on motion of Janet Lord, Registrar of the Board of Ordained Ministry, according to ¶322- 2004 *Book of Discipline*: Harold James Dangel, Jr, and Charles James Kutz.

PROVISIONAL MEMBERSHIP AND COMMISSIONING – Received on motion of Janet Lord, according to ¶¶324.41c: Elizabeth Stanton Cooper, David Lawrence Ewing, Anthony Steven Fallisi, Heidi Marie Helsel, Leslie Alexander Hutchins, D. Renee Mikell, and Ross Todd Pryor.

FULL MEMBERSHIP AND DEACON'S ORDERS – Received on motion of Janet Lord according to ¶330: Deborah Louise Hills

FULL MEMBERSHIP AND ELDER'S ORDERS – Received on motion of Janet Lord according to ¶335: Judith Elayne Winston-Thomas, Kellie Diane Wild, John Robert Virgin, Robert Brian Trask, Jason Eric Schweinberg, Kelley Marie Schaney, Corben Michael Russell, Douglas Benton Myers, Jr, Christopher Alan Morgan, Katrina Marie Laude, Brian Robert Keller, Keith Charles Kaufold, Justin Robert Judy, (on motion of Bruce Judy) Gretchen Marie Hulse, Erik Andrew Hoeke (on motion of Thomas and Connie Hoeke), Scott Lee Freshwater Gallagher, Brett Matthew Dinger, John Francis Bargar. Received on motion of Janet Lord according to ¶309.2 Penelope F. Lyon.

REAFFIRMATION OF THE CALL INTO REPRESENTATIVE MINISTRY – Kathy Mikesell, the Convener of the Chairs of the Orders and the Fellowship of Local Pastors & Associate Members, Patricia Ciampa and Debra Pisor Co-Chairs, the Order of Deacons, William Pieringer, Chair, the Order of Elder, and Anthony Fallisi, Chair, Fellowship of Local Pastors and Associate Members led the session in a time of reaffirmation.

CLERGY SERVING IN WPA FROM OTHER ANNUAL CONFERENCES AND METHODIST DENOMINATIONS – On motion of Patricia Nelson, Secretary, Board of the Ordained Ministry, approved according to ¶¶331.8, 346.1: David S. Dempsey (RE) Troy, Sharletta M. Green (FE) West Virginia, Arnold G. Husk (RE) West Virginia, Ronald J. Geisler (FL) Free Methodist.

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CLERGY SERVING IN WPA FROM OTHER CHRISTIAN DENOMINATIONS – On motion of Patricia Nelson according to ¶¶331.8, 346.2: Bramwell Kjellgren, Salvation Army; Denise R. Mason, United Church of Christ.

CLERGY RECEIVED FROM OTHER CHRISTIAN DENOMINATIONS AS LOCAL PASTORS – On motion of Patricia Nelson according to ¶347.3a: Kathleen McCoy-Schoeneck (Presbyterian Church USA), John L. Miller (National Association of Christian Churches).

FIRST CLERGY BALLOT – After Bishop Bickerton addressed the Clergy Session concerning the responsibilities of delegates to General and Jurisdictional Conferences, John R. Wilson gave instructions on how to complete ballots. After prayer, the first clergy ballot was cast. The ballot was closed at 10:52 AM.

CANDIDACY REGISTRAR – Faith Geer, Candidacy Registrar, gave the report and instructions as to how to become a Clergy Mentor for those in the process of becoming Certified Candidates.

COURSE OF STUDY GRADUATES – Patricia Nelson announced the 2010 graduates of the Course of Study: Jackie Condon, Anthony Fallisi, Susan Hoover, Susan Pickering, and Ed Pope.

LOCAL PASTORS LICENSING SCHOOL – Margaret Foreman presented the names of the Residential and Commuter School graduates.

READMITTED AS FULL MEMBER (Retired) – On motion of Patricia Nelson according to ¶365 – 367: Gerald Michel.

DIACONAL MINISTERS RETURNED TO ACTIVE STATUS – On motion of Patricia Nelson according to ¶313.1a,c,d 1992 *Discipline*: Melissa Geisler

RETURNED TO EFFECTIVE STATUS AFTER VOLUNTARY RETIRMENT – On motion of Patricia Nelson according to ¶358.7: Barry Weyant

LEAVE OF ABSENCE, VOLUNTARY – On motion of Patricia Nelson according to ¶¶354.2a: Stephen A. Tiffany (FE) year one; Chul S. Park (FE) year two; Ernest L. Perry (FE) year three. According to ¶345.2a: Ronald E. Thomas (FE) year eleven; David R. Lewis (FE) year thirteen; Gordon Barry Davis (FE) year seventeen. According to ¶354.2b: Vicki L. Oliver (PE) year two. According to ¶354.2b: Barbara A. Turpish (FE) year eight; Deborah A. Ackley-Killian (FE) year fourteen. According to ¶354.2c: Bruce W. Griffith, Jr, (FE) year one.

RETURNED FROM LEAVE OF ABSENCE – On motion of Patricia Nelson according to ¶354: Austin Hornyak (effective 03/15/11); Brett Probert (effective 01/08/11); and Jay P. Tennies (effective 07/01/11)

LESS THAN FULL TIME SERVICE – On motion of Patricia Nelson according to ¶¶338.2, 342.2, 1506.4b: Willard C. Adkins AM, ¼ time, year nine; Clara D. Belloit FE, ½ time, year twelve; Jerry D. Belloit FE, ¼ time year sixteen; Kenneth L. Bossart FE, ¾ time, year two; Emily A. Bryd FE, ½ time, year one; Harold J. Dangel AM, ¾ time year one; Todd M. Davis FE, ½ time, year four; Allen O Grimm, III FE, ½ time, year four; Sharon M. Hamley FE, ½ time, year three; Patricia S. Harbison FE, ½ time, year one; J. Mark Hurst FE, ¾ time, year eight; Tina G. Keller PE, ½ time, year three; Linda D. Landers PE, ¾ time, year five; Katrina M. Laude FE, ¾ time, year one; Alice M. McClymonds AM, ½ time, year six; Seth A. McClymonds FE, ½ time, year six; Alice Jean Parker AM, ¾ time, year one; William M. Pieringer FE, ¾ time, year nine; Darlene Ryniec AM, ½ time, year six; Bruce E. Stollings FE, ¾ time, year seventeen, Jay P. Tennies FE, ¾ time, year one; John R. Wilson FE, ¾ time, year eighteen.

INCAPACITY LEAVE SINCE LAST ANNUAL CONFERENCE – On motion of Patricia Nelson according to ¶357: Andrew P. Spore (effective 03/01/11), Linda G Harrison (effective 07/01/10).

On motion of Robert Zilhaver, the Clergy Session approved: “The Western Pennsylvania Annual Conference Clergy Session set Andrew Spore’s status as Incapacity Leave Resulting from Health Matters and Disabling Conditions ¶357, and that this matter be immediately referred to the Joint Committee on Incapacity for review to insure that the exclusions of ¶3.11 of the UM Life Options Plan of the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits of the United Methodist Church have been honored.”

Robert Zilhaver turned over to the Conference Secretary a file containing documents to aid the Joint Committee on Incapacity in their investigation. The Conference Secretary immediately turned the file over to the Chair of the Joint Committee on Incapacity.

On motion of Robert Zilhaver, the Clergy Session approved: “That Clergy Session recommend to the Annual Conference Council on Finance and Administration that \$25,000 be moved from the Annual Conference Reserve Fund to a fund directed by the cabinet for the sole purpose of accomplishing Supervisory Follow-Up and Healing in accordance with ¶361.1.e.”

INCAPACITY LEAVE GRANTED THIS ANNUAL CONFERENCE – On motion of Patricia Nelson according to ¶357.1: Jamie P. Alvarez FE, Raymond H. Beal FE, LaMar E. Carlson FE, Mark A. DeBaise FE, Debra Anne Groeger FE, Floyd A. Hall FE, Connie B. Hoeke (without benefit) FE, Earl C. Killian II PM, Bonnie Tyack Friend King FE, Thomas J. Michalko FE, Stanley D. Nixon AM, Kenneth J. Peters FE, Randall R. Roda FE, Thomas F. St. Clair FE, Susan E. Sphar-Calhoun FE, F. Jayne Verner PE.

HONORABLE LOCATION – On motion of David Morse according to ¶359.1: John R. Roble FE (effective 03/01/11)

WITHDRAWAL FROM COMNFERENCE MEMBERSHIP – On motion of Patricia Nelson according to ¶360.2, .4: Donald O. Hornsby.

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RETIREMENTS – On motion of Patricia Nelson according to ¶¶358.2a,b,c: Elders: Suzanne DeVore Bennett, Myles Thomas Bradley, Howard Franklin Burrell, Bertram Domineck, James Arthur Durlesser, Mary Jane Fullerton, Robert James George, Jr, Jon Crawford Gulnac, Richard Keith Harry, J-LaVon Kinkaid, Sr. (12/31/10), Linda Diane Landers, Paul Reed Milliken, Duane Lavern Morford (12/31/10), Paul Bruce Morris, Steven Robert Rich (05/01/11), Charles Lawrence Shaffer, Frank Melvin Sherman, John Vickers Spahr, Sr., Thomas Alexander Topar (09/01/11), James LuVerne Tubbs, Paul Everett Wilson, Sr. (04/01/11). Associate Members: According to ¶358.2c William Roy Green. Local Pastors: According to ¶320.6: Terry Wayne Collins, Ralph Atlee Mostoller, Harrietta C. Serrins, Brenda J. Shaffer.

Involuntary Retirement: After a sustained call for the previous question by Al Kimmel, on motion of Patricia Nelson according to ¶358.3: Lee Andrew Moore

ELECTION OF COMMITTEES ON INVESTIGATION, ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW, AND (DIACONAL MINISTER'S) INVESTIGATION COMMITTEE – On motion of Patricia Nelson the committees were elected.

MOTION ON CHARGE CONFERENCE RELATIONSHIPS – Approved on motion by David Morse: “When a member of the annual conference is on any form of leave, location, or involuntary retirement, placement of that member’s charge conference relationship shall not be in a charge where an immediate family member is the pastor in charge.”

COMPREHENSIVE MOTION FOR APPROVAL OF THE BOARD OF ORDAINED MINISTRY REPORT - On motion of Patricia Nelson, the clergy session approved all matters contained in the report but not specifically voted on.

APPROVAL OF THE CHARACTER OF THE CLERGY – Each District Superintendent reported there are no complaints or charges against the clergy serving on the districts. Bishop Bickerton reported there are no complaints or charges against the District Superintendents.

EPISCOPAL COMMENTS – Bishop Bickerton cautioned clergy members to use discretion when using social media websites. The Bishop also encouraged the clergy to celebrate the itineracy. “It is what we have. We will use it to spread scriptural holiness throughout the land.” Bishop Bickerton complimented the clergy members on their integrity and the spirit with which they worked during the clergy session.

RECESS – After a time of covenant renewal, the Clergy Session recessed at 12:25 PM.

AFTERNOON SESSION

OPENING WORSHIP AND MEMORIAL SERVICE – The conference gathered at 1:00 PM for Opening Worship, Holy Communion, and the Memorial Service.

Bishop Thomas J. Bickerton was the preacher and celebrant. Assisting in the service were: Kevin Haley, Seth McPherson, Judith Winston-Thomas, Robert W. Higginbotham, Tammy Falcsik, Anette Gerber, Jude Urso, the Conference Choir, Steve Bane, Beverly Hazlett, and the Pittsfield UMC Worship Team. Dale Reese read the names of the honored dead:

Clergy: Herbert A. Peterson, Ralph B. Kilburn, Wayne B. Price, Allen O. Grimm, Jr, Charles A. Renshaw, Jacob Brumbaugh, Nelson E. Stants, Gale W. Cook, Russell Perry, Robert Lee Peters, William Jay Gill, Gilbert Hoffman, Paul Thomas Pullen, Leonard D. Adams, Wesley Edward Blaha, Ferd Brownlee Park, Mary Catherine Burton, Carol Richey Adcock, John C. Cox, G. Donald McAfoose, John Harper Creeks, William Fenstermaker, J. Richard Hackenberry

Clergy Spouses: Pauline Hankey, Roberta Boyd, Ellen Downing, Nancy Hinderliter, Vivian S. Troutman, Howard Davis, Charlotte Burns Zeigler, Catherine O. Merz, Sara Ann Howes, Averill Gay, Glengail Stephens, Grace Shaffer, Genevieve M Zimmerman, Marion Eckert, Jenny Boyd

Laity: David L. Dinger, Paul Richard McCormick, Eleanor Graham Sally Ernst, Leland Chandler, Clarice Bittner, Jill Trunick

Other: Ruth Peelor, Harry Peelor, William Berninger

WELCOME – Dr. Richard Jewell, President of Grove City College, was introduced who welcomed members of the conference to the campus.

ORDER – Bishop Thomas J. Bickerton called the conference to order at 3:45 PM.

AGENDA – Jude Urso, Chair of the Sub-Team on Agenda, presented the agenda and moved adoption. It was adopted.

BAR OF THE CONFERENCE – On motion of John R. Wilson, Conference Secretary, the bar of the conference was approved as those seated at tables.

RULES – On motion of Amy Bentz, Conference Chancellor, Conference Rule 2.3.8.1 was suspended in order to consider legislation received after the deadline.

ROLL CALL – John R. Wilson gave instructions for completing attendance cards and the roll call was taken. Laity 665 in attendance (compared to 2010 of 568) Clergy 582 in attendance (compared to 2010 of 580) plus Excused Clergy 66 (compared to 2010 of 96) Total 1,313 (compared to 2010 of 1,244).

SESSIONS – Barbara Moore, Chair Conference Sessions Ministry Team gave information concerning the sessions of Annual Conference.

FIRST LAITY BALLOT – After Bishop Bickerton spoke to the conference concerning the responsibilities of delegates to General and Jurisdictional Conferences,

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John R. Wilson gave instructions on how to complete ballots. After prayer, the first laity ballot was cast. The ballot was closed at 4:40PM.

FIRST CLERGY BALLOT – Bishop Bickerton announced the results of the first clergy ballot. 386 ballots cast, 351 valid, 176 needed for election, there were no elections.

SECOND CLERGY BALLOT – After instructions and prayer, the second clergy ballot was cast. The ballot was closed at 4:55PM.

STATE OF THE CHURCH 2011 – WHAT’S RIGHT WITH THE CHURCH – Bishop Thomas J. Bickerton

The talk about the future of the church and its long-term unsustainability has definitely escalated in all circles of the church’s life since we last gathered here in Grove City. The talk is happening within some of our local churches that no longer have the privilege of drawing upon endowments for financial stability or growing memberships for increased and sustained involvement. The talk is happening within the Annual Conference as we continue to discuss how to make meaningful and lasting connections with the local church through leadership, connections and resources. The talk is happening on the General Church level with active discussions about the reduction in the numbers of General Agencies and the decrease of apportionment askings.

But the talk is not confined to The United Methodist Church. Mainline denominations across this country are all facing uncertain times and an increased inability to draw upon the comforts of popularity and respect. The number of nonbelievers in the USA is now over 15%. In the May 16th edition of the USA Today, Oliver Thomas wrote in an article entitled, “Faith in America: Get Ready for Change,” *“Young adults appear largely uninterested in our denominational jousting over “correct” doctrine. They seek opportunities to worship, serve and become part of a nurturing community that cares deeply for one another.”* Later on he writes, *“It will be interesting to see whether a new generation of church leaders can begin speaking about their faith in a way that will appeal to modern audiences.”*

Large and small membership churches are each facing increased competition and not necessarily from other churches. That competition is with a world and a culture that, on its best day, actually embodies some of the theology we preach about and, on its worst day, tempts people to embrace ideas and movements that are, quite frankly, more appealing than attending an 11:00 a.m. worship service full of tradition and liturgy but empty of spirit and meaning.

All of these conversations around the future sustainability of the church has begun to center around an effort we call “The Call to Action” and a paragraph we call the “Adaptive Challenge.” The “Adaptive Challenge” is:

*To redirect the flow of attention, energy, and resources to an intense concentration on fostering and sustaining an increase in the number of vital **congregations** effective in making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.*

The key is whether or not we as a church can stay on point. We are so easily distracted by sidebar issues when, in reality, no issue will mean anything if there is no vital denomination or church within that denomination to support those issues. We are at a critical junction in the church’s life. A period of time we can no longer take the “let’s wait and see what happens” or “surely something will happen that will help us turn the corner” attitude. We’ve waited and seen our church continually decline. We reached the corner and in order to cross the street we are going to have to be bold and focused in our leadership both within and outside the church.

What that will require from us is a willingness to change. While it’s not a blanket statement, it can be argued that in many places of the church’s life what we are doing and the manner in which we are doing it just isn’t working. This is not the appropriate time to say “Oh, it’s the General Church’s fault or the Annual Conference’s fault or the local church’s fault.” There are things that are working in significant ways on all levels of the church’s life. But there are things that are not working, not blessing, and not meaningful enough to make new disciples in our quest to transform the world.

Did you know that there was a movie made depicting the United Methodist Church’s position on change? Take a look and whether or not it reminds you of anyone you know?

(BUG’S LIFE VIDEO – opening scene of the procession beginning right after the clump of grapes falls on the ant’s head).

I know how hard it is for some of you to think about changing the manner in which you do church. I've heard the many stories that reflect that difficulty. We're all for change just as long as we don't have to change our worship time. We'll change just as long as we can stay in our building. We want to change but we won't share a pastor.

I truly believe that if Jesus were to come back tomorrow he wouldn't say, "My, my you've done a really nice job preserving your building and maintaining your tradition." I am convinced that he would ask, "How have you built the kingdom since I've been gone? How have you offered grace to a broken soul and ministered to the least of these since I've been gone?"

I am well aware of a grim reality represented in this room today. Given the realities of an unsustainable future in our current form I know that some of the churches represented here will rise to the challenge, embrace the adaptive challenge, stay on point, and make meaningful and inspirational changes. But I also am well aware of the opposite as well. Some churches represented in this room, for whatever reason (and there are many), cannot/will not change. Resistance will rise, opposition will mount, and you will dig in and preserve what you have. With that spirit, within ten years, a significant number of our 860 churches will be no more. The institution will not close them. They will just fade away and die.

This is a grim report of a grim future to be sure. But we have a choice to make today. Reality is staring us in the face but the determining factor in our future is not reality alone. It's what we do with reality once we embrace it.

You see if you combine reality with the word resignation then the resulting action is death. But if you combine reality with the word hope then the resulting action is determination.

Much of our future will be determined in how we convert the reality of our decline into our opportunity to rise again into new life and vitality. If we can't convert that reality into an opportunity we will drown in a sea of negativity and when you think about it, who would want to be a part of any of our churches in specific or our denomination in general if all we talk about is "Why not?" instead of "Why?"

VIDEO (REASONS WHY PEOPLE DON'T COME TO CHURCH)

That's what I really want to address in this report today. We can spend all day with statistics and projections and get ourselves real depressed over a grim reality of an unsustainable future OR we can talk about what we have to do to give it our best shot over these next 4 or 5 years to see whether or not we can invest our resources and conversations and energies into local church vitality, renewal and revitalization.

The way to address an unsustainable future is to talk about what will it take to make us sustainable and to talk about sustainability requires us to address one key question – "What's right with the church?"
What IS right with the church?

Our Theology

This friends must be the foundation of any "Adaptive Challenge" or "Call to Action" or program for revitalization that we initiate. There has to be a reason behind the action and we have that reason. It is our theology – our belief structure about God and God's call upon our lives as individuals and our churches as communities gathered to praise AND witness.

Our theology of grace has enabled broken and despicable people like you and me find a place in the kingdom of God. That theology begins at baptism when an infant who cannot express their love for God is embraced by a God whose love is not dependent on us. That same theology confirms us as children of God in spite of our inability to ever get it all right and claims us throughout the journey as worthy enough to tell the story of God's love until Christ comes again in final victory and we feast at his heavenly banquet.

Our theology makes peace an order of the day because of God's call to love our neighbors at all costs and our theology brings a word of hope in the midst of despair and brokenness because our theology believes that God will see us through. Our theology affirms that we were created for joy and nothing less and that when we are tempted with anger or a conviction that will alienate another, our theology will trump that attitude and call us back to our center. Our theology sings out, "We shall overcome," "My Hope is built on nothing less," "On Christ the solid rock I stand," and "Amazing Grace how sweet the sound." That's what's right with the church!

VIDEO – "Amazing Grace"

Our Outreach

In his USA Today article that I referenced earlier entitled, "Get Ready for Change," Oliver Thomas writes, *As soon as a religion fails to meet human needs – or even to connect with its audience – it begins to die. History is strewn with the wreckage of once vibrant faiths that became irrelevant.*

Even though we have much evidence of churches that have turned inward in an attempt to preserve themselves and have or are dying, one of the hallmarks of the people called Methodist is our ability to reach out. In a world where there is a growing perception that United Methodists are out of touch, there is a constant

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surprise among those naysayers when a disaster strikes and a need is expressed because the people of The United Methodist Church is always there.

The Rev. Tom Hazelwood has a fancy title with the United Methodist Committee on Relief, but essentially he heads the denomination's response to domestic disasters. In his 13 years in the role, he has seen winds whip the asphalt off roads and floodwaters wash away towns. He also has seen the remarkable legitimacy of the church as a connectional institution.

"Our ability to reach and connect quickly almost anywhere in the United States is a unique thing to our denomination and is so powerful," he said.

In a recent story on the United Methodist response to the tornadoes in Joplin, Missouri, Jan Synder wrote, *"It's stunning to see just how powerful that old United Methodist edifice can be when the storm hits because it really isn't about a building but about being a church. There is a connectional foundation that is strong, worthy of respect and extremely relevant in a frantic world."*

I really think we surprise ourselves when a need arises. We spend a lot of time telling ourselves and others we can't and then when a disaster strikes we prove to the world that we can.

What I really need us to think about is that if a sustainable future for our church is an impending disaster, how can we employ the same kind of determination to turn our church around? Or even more important, how can we begin to realize that there are people in our communities who are experiencing the disaster of not knowing Jesus Christ who need us to implement a disaster response that will offer them hope and a way through the storm.

What's right with the church is our Outreach – let's use it even more.

Our People.

I have been pretty transparent about the fact that in my office I receive letters. I am not the first bishop to receive letters. I will not be the last. Many of those letters are just nasty. The tone is evil. I receive phone calls. This spring one person called my house & the office 14 times – the tone was ugly. I hear stories of church meetings where someone will stand up and shout profanities over decisions that are being made. This all from people who claim the title Christian.

But I would report to you that those stories, calls and letters are from a loud minority. They do not represent depth and breadth of our people. They, like the stories we read and hear about in the newspapers and on CNN, garner the headlines but do not reveal the whole story. Our story is a tale of good people who do great things with a deep faith in God who has called us into this work. Our story is a witness of wonderful people who can do anything when they put their mind to it.

Let's go back to the tornado in Joplin, Missouri. A reporter documented the work of the people of The United Methodist Church: *"I watched an army of United Methodists from outside the area arrive with chain saws and tarps.*

"Spread out in the neighborhood; do whatever anyone needs," barked one of those United Methodist leaders as the trained Volunteers in Mission emergency responders donned hard hats and work gloves. They didn't know anyone here, but they understood immediate needs."

Later in the same article she writes, *Just as quickly as the Joplin tornado struck, the United Methodist connection came into play. On a local level, church members checked on one another and circulated throughout the stricken neighborhoods to help; the district superintendent gathered her well-trained clergy; and Missouri Bishop Robert Schnase offered his prayerful support by walking hand-in-hand with his flock.*

The issue is providing the opportunities and vision before our people so that they can channel their God-given energies and faith in the right direction. This is the critical role of leadership as we move forward into this uncertain future. Our leaders must work harder than ever to be spiritually sound, theologically motivated, visionary and positive about the future so that we can create possibilities for transformation rather than allow shallow visions to limit our future. This is not a time for leaders to go on tangents or lose focus on the task at hand. In Joplin if the pastor, the DS, and the Bishop would have said, "This disaster is a time for us to talk about pensions or to talk about our position on this social issue," they would have garnered little response. It is time for us to keep the main thing the main thing. If we have ten years of sustainability left, I need our leaders to lead in a way that will demonstrate that we are giving it our best shot at transformation and renewal. This is not a time to re-trench but a time to push forward with hope and possibility. We can do it. I know we can because I believe that one of things right with our church is Our People.

What's right with the church IS YOU.

You have come to this Annual Conference as a leader from your local church to create this community of faith and witness from throughout Western Pennsylvania. We are here this week to try our best to set the course and find motivation for what we must do to give God glory and demonstrate God's love. We are here to make our best effort to send the very best leaders we have to represent us at our General & Jurisdictional Conferences. We need leaders to go to these meetings who have demonstrated that they can grow the church,

rally people around them, speak eloquently of their faith, and lead out of a sound & rational spirituality. While there are issues that we will discuss while we are here, our main purpose, the main thing, is to have a time of holy conferencing where we can continue to keep the main question before us: how can we best witness God's love and focus our attention on the adaptive challenge of bringing vitality to our local churches. Let's not any issue or matter before us dominate our emotions more than the call to bring renewed energy and vitality to as many places as we can and as will! What's right with the church is you especially when you take your leadership skills, combine those skills with God's call upon your life, and channel your life into a lifestyle that will show the world nothing less and nothing else except the awesome love of God and a beautiful witness of love for one another.

There are a lot of potential movements surfacing throughout the church. Among the Council of Bishops there is a movement of accountability and a resolve to lead. The bishops of the church are keenly aware that leaders must lead and we are committed to holding ourselves more accountable than ever to the opportunity before us to turn around our decline and use our reality as our advantage not our demise.

In our Annual Conference, significant work has been done to re-align our staff and our ministries around our Mission, Vision & Core Values, most especially our vision to *"provide leadership, connection, and resources to local church in order to make disciples of Jesus Christ."* Keys to the re-alignment are moving lay and clergy leaders into ministry groups for conversation, study, prayer, and strategy. The staff is being re-aligned and at a major fall retreat, our conference staff will be presented with new measures of accountability focusing not on the events that they plan but the manner in which they impact and complement ministry in the local church. I am very grateful to Greg Cox, our new DCM, and Pat Morris, our Conference Treasurer, for their excellent and bold leadership to create a staff that understands its role and implement a staff that understands our mission. The cabinet has decided to re-evaluate the multitudes of institutional forms that are required at the charge conference in order to clear the way for conversations, strategies, and goal setting around the "Call to Action" and the future of the church. It cannot be business as usual.

And what about you? What would it look like if we committed ourselves in this room to a moratorium on business meetings in our local churches and replaced those meetings with conversations, strategies, Bible studies, and prayers actively seeking, surrendering, and inviting the Holy Spirit back into our lives and our churches? What would it look like if we held our local church leaders in place, did what we needed to do to care for our buildings and our finances, and focused every other conversation on what we need to do to equip ourselves for making new disciples, providing renewed opportunities for strengthening existing disciples, and discovering once again what God's REAL call is for our church in ministry and mission to the communities where we are placed?

That will not happen if leaders, both lay and clergy, do not lead. We do not need to lead our people in any other way except to focus on whether or not my local church can accept the adaptive challenge and whether or not we are willing to position ourselves around the renewal and revitalization of the church as a disciple-making, God-bearing, witness-giving, body of Christ once again. A body with vitality, passion, and purpose. Realistically, I know that some of our churches will respond while some will not. Realistically, some of our churches will find vitality and purpose while others will lose focus, wither and die. Realistically, I know that the "Call to Action" will be perceived as yet another failed church "program." But I also know that if we don't do something, in ten years the vitality of The United Methodist Church will be gone.

But I hope! Why? Because I believe in YOU. You are what can be right about the Church?

VIDEO – "What is the Church?"

I pray that you will join me in this focused time of discernment and resolve. I pray too that you will let our theology, our belief in the undying love of God and the ever sustaining presence of the Holy Spirit, guide us all into whatever it might be that God has in store for us.

"For I know the plans I have for you declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." Jeremiah 29:11

"We have been given a brand new life and have everything to live for including a future in heaven but the future starts now." 1 Peter

Do you believe it?

Amazing grace how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me. I once was lost but now am found, was blind but now I see."

"T'was grace that taught my heart to fear, and grace my fears relieved. How precious did that grace appear the hour I first believed."

"Through many dangers, toils, and snares, I have already come; Tis grace that brought me safe thus far and grace will lead me home."

"When we've been there 10,000 years bright shining as the sun. We've no less days to sing God's praise than when we first begun."

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RECESS – the conference was in recess at 5:42 PM

SECOND DAY **Friday, June 10, 2011**

MORNING SESSION

BIBLE STUDY – The conference gathered at 8:00 AM for the Bible Study led by Shane Stanford, Pastor of Gulf Breeze UMC in the Alabama/Florida West Annual Conference and soon to be appointed to Christ UMC in Memphis, TN.

Speaking from Daniel 3 the question was posed, “What does it take to run into the fire? 1. Look forward instead of looking back – do not become a slave to legacy. 2. Look forward instead of looking down – build self-esteem by focusing on what we can be. 3. Look up instead of looking in for answers – we have much to gain by loving God and walking with Jesus. Do we have the courage to run into the fire and make a difference?

RETIREMENT MOMENT – Bishop Bickerton presented retiring pastor Duane Morford with a certificate and pin in recognition of his years of service as a pastor. Duane spoke to the conference and led in prayer.

RESULT OF THE FIRST LAITY BALLOT – Bishop Bickerton announced the results of the first laity ballot. 639 ballots cast, 576 valid, 63 invalid, 289 needed for election. There were no elections.

SECOND LAITY BALLOT – After prayer, the second laity ballot was cast. The ballot was closed at 9:32 AM.

RESULTS OF THE SECOND CLERGY BALLOT – Bishop Bickerton announced the results of the second clergy ballot. 390 ballots cast, 371 valid, 19 invalid, 186 needed for election. There was one election: Eric S. Park.

THIRD CLERGY BALLOT – After prayer, the third clergy ballot was cast being instructed to vote for six nominees. The ballot was closed at 9:44 AM.

KEYSTONE UNITED METHODIST FEDERAL CREDIT UNION – Patty Columbe, Director of the Keystone United Methodist Federal Credit Union, enlightened and thanked the conference for the difference we make through investment and use of the credit union. Arnold Rhodes, President of the Board of Directors presented Bishop Bickerton with a check in the amount of \$5,000 to be used for new church starts. The check includes 10% of the profits from the credit union Affinity Visa Card. Total KUMFCU contributions to date for new church starts is \$38,000.

CONSENT CALENDARS – Kellie Wild presented the Legislation and Corporation Consent Calendars and gave instructions for removing items for debate. Items P22, P23, RS303, RS308 have already been removed from the Consent Calendar.

CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATES – Donald Green, Executive Director of Christian Associates of Southwest Pennsylvania addressed the conference, thanking us and encouraging our continued involvement in ecumenical ministries.

BUDGET PRESENTATION – Paul Ritchey, Chair Conference Council on Finance and Administration presented a video and information concerning the 2012 connectional budget.

RECOGNITION OF OUTGOING DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT – Bishop Bickerton recognized Frank Sherman who is finishing eight years as Superintendent of the Connellsville District and entering retirement, and his wife Becky. The Bishop thanked Frank and Becky for their work as a team and the generous way they have supported us throughout the years.

2011 ANNUAL CONFERENCE CABINET REPORT -William B. Meekins, Jr, Dean of the Cabinet and Patricia Morris, Conference Treasurer, presented the Cabinet report.

Dear Brothers and Sisters in the Faith:

Grace and peace to you in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who extends to us the gifts of grace, mercy, and peace. We are grateful for the opportunity to serve in this shared and mutual ministry as lived out through The United Methodist Church in Western Pennsylvania.

The Cabinet of Western Pennsylvania includes the Director of Connectional Ministries, Director of Administrative Services (Treasurer); ten District Superintendents, the Assistant to the Bishop, and the Resident Bishop, Thomas J. Bickerton.

We begin our report with a word of gratitude for the support we have received over the year. We celebrate with all those congregations who made sacrifices in order that we, as an Annual Conference, were able to receive a little over 85% of our Mission Share asking. We fully realize this came with a willingness to facilitate ministry through this venue and to help us, as a church, engage in ministry in places where the Christian witness would not be as great if it were not for the spirit of connectionalism.

We celebrate with members of the Annual Conference the incredibly significant amount of over \$ 1.2 million raised for the Imagine No Malaria Campaign. Bishop Bickerton has shared numerous stories about how children here have organized events and programs to raise funds so that a little child in Africa would stand a better chance at life. When the campaign began, we learned that a person was dying from the effects of malaria every 30 seconds; now the rate has been slowed to one in every 45 seconds. We thank you for your willingness to join with brothers and sisters from around the world with the hope of eradicating malaria by the year 2015. Let us continue our commitment to the cause.

At another level, we as a Conference continue to be a pace-setter in demonstrating our love for both God and neighbor through the Advance. Especially, in times of natural disasters, we pull together, we make the sacrifice, and we go the extra mile for a brother or sister anywhere in the world. We do this by reaching deeply into our pockets to contribute financially. As a result, we are ranked third among annual conferences in the United States in our giving to UMCOR and other ministries of the Advance. And yes, let us not forget the countless hours and the self-giving efforts of the many who served and continue to serve as Volunteers-in-Mission in our communities and around the world, building relationships, caring for one another, living the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

We, as your Cabinet, work along with others to interpret the mission of the church, to give life and breathe to the church. The Director of Administrative Services and members of her team have used a portion of their time conducting workshops/seminars, explaining and sharing best practices for Finance Committees. All of us recognize the need for accountability in every area of ministry, thus enabling the church to be a good steward of the resources provided through God's grace and to be more effective and efficient in ministry.

The Director of Connectional Ministries joined us in October. He continues in the process of interfacing with pastors and congregations, sharing the vision and providing assistance to better equip pastors and laity for ministry in an era of Post-Christendom.

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One of our five foci is creating New Places for New People. The need also exists to revitalize many of our congregations. Therefore, the Cabinet met on a regular basis with the Parish and Community Development Team (PCD). We brain-stormed, developed definitions to clarify the concept of revitalization and mission churches, as well as how to identify potential pastors for New Church Starts. Through our joint effort, the PCD Team developed a working document to use for funding revitalization projects; we also adopted a Mother/Daughter (parent/child) model for New Church Starts. We are, however, discussing the need for alternative models; we cannot use just one methodology to connect with new people. We will continue to meet together for follow-up conversation.

Critical in strengthening and revitalizing our congregations is having well equipped laity committed to ministry. Towards this end, Bishop Bickerton created a Laity Cabinet which includes the Conference Lay Leader along with the ten District Lay Leaders. We met several times to dialogue about how to further equip laity for ministry. We discussed the need for us to have reverse mentors, a concept where those who are older connect with a younger person, in order that both might learn and grow from each other. If we as a denomination want to reach younger folks and to be a more relevant church, then we must be intentional in developing relationships with those we are seeking to join with us in ministry.

In the spirit of connectionalism, members of the Cabinet traveled to Zimbabwe to experience the life and breath of The United Methodist Church in one country in Africa. We attended both the Zimbabwe East and West annual conferences. We shadowed our Zimbabwean counterparts. (DS, DCM). We visited and worshipped with congregations and discussed ministry and mission projects. The church is well and alive spiritually in Zimbabwe. People are filled with great joy and deeply committed to Christ. They are not afraid to use their life experiences as a means to witness, with the goal of leading people to want to commit their lives to Christ. We can learn a great deal from our friends in Zimbabwe through our partnership. We can share our resources with them and they can share their deep sense of spirituality with us. Together we can grow into all that God longs for us to be as Christian disciples.

Last year, we kicked off the partnership by having Bishop Eben Nhwatiwa come to us on behalf of his two annual conferences. He and Bishop Bickerton signed the partnership agreement. On Monday, ten laity from our annual conference will head to Zimbabwe to share in leadership at a Lay Ministry Academy---further strengthening the bonds that bind us together as one body in Christ.

Through our partnership and through our mutual ministry we seek to live into that passage which comes from the biblical narrative:

The Valley of Dry Bones

The hand of the LORD was on me, and he brought me out by the Spirit of the LORD and set me in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones. He led me back and forth among them, and I saw a great many bones on the floor of the valley, bones that were very dry. He asked me, "Son of man, can these bones live?" I said, "Sovereign LORD, you alone know." Then he said to me, "Prophecy to these bones and say to them, 'Dry bones, hear the word of the LORD! This is what the Sovereign LORD says to these bones: I will make breath enter you, and you will come to life. I will attach tendons to you and make flesh come upon you and cover you with skin; I will put breath in you, and you will come to life. Then you will know that I am the LORD.'" So I prophesied as I was commanded. And as I was prophesying, there was a noise, a rattling sound, and the bones came together, bone to bone. I looked, and tendons appeared on them and skin covered them, but there was no breath in them. Then he said to me, "Prophecy to the breath; prophecy, son of man, and say to it, This is what the Sovereign LORD says: Come, breath, from the four winds and breathe into these slain, that they may live." So I prophesied as he commanded me, and breath entered them; they came to life and stood up on their feet—a vast army. Then he said to me: "Son of man, these bones are the people of Israel. They say, "Our bones are dried up and our hope is gone; we are cut off. Therefore prophecy and say to them: "This is what the Sovereign LORD says: My people, I am going to open your graves and bring you up from them; I will bring you back to the land of Israel." Then you, my people, will know that I am the LORD, when I open your graves and bring you up from them. I will put my Spirit in you and you will live, and I will settle you in your own land. Then you will know that I the LORD have spoken, and I have done it, declares the LORD." (Ezekiel 37:1-14 NIV)

We, the Cabinet, like you, are working to assist in the effort to bring life to "them dry bones" found in the church.

The Appointive Cabinet includes ten District Superintendents, the Assistant to the Bishop, and the Resident Bishop. In ¶419, of *The Book of Discipline 2008*, we find these words:

The District Superintendent shall oversee the total ministry of clergy and of the churches in the communities of the district in their missions of witness and service in the world:(a)by giving priority to the scheduling of time and effort for the spiritual leadership, pastoral support, supervision, and encouragement to the clergy and to the churches of the district: (b) by encouraging their personal, spiritual, and professional growth: (c) by encouraging their commitment to the mandate of inclusiveness in the life of the church: (d) be promoting,

supporting, and modeling generous Christian giving, with special attention to teaching the Biblical principles of giving....

In the area of providing spiritual leadership to both clergy and lay: Superintendents rely upon their own giftedness. Some seek to bring a deeper relationship with Christ through a variety of worship services which range from weekly to almost quarterly. Others may offer Bible or book studies. The L3 Covenant groups or derivatives are in place.

When gathering as a Cabinet, we are engaged in similar venues. We begin each meeting with a time of devotion. The Sacrament of Holy Communion is served at least once during our monthly or bi-weekly gatherings. We are bound by our covenantal relationship to lift pastors and congregations in prayer, practicing the spiritual disciplines we are asked to model. We as a cabinet hold ourselves accountable in the area of giving as well. We celebrate with you if you have reached the step of faithful giving through tithing and second-mile giving. We encourage you to become tithers if you are not tithing. We are called upon to celebrate the joys and shoulder the burdens of one another in this shared and mutual ministry.

Through One-to-Ones (one-on-one), each year we engage in conversation with pastors about their plans for continuing education. In order for pastors, whether licensed or ordained, to remain effective as they live out their call to ministry, given the complexities of the day, continuing education is imperative. With this in mind, we ask SPPR Committees to hold appointed pastors accountable as they outline their plans for spiritual, personal, and professional growth. The SPPR Committee will assist the pastors in their efforts to implement those plans. The Cabinet cannot be the sole gatekeeper in this vital area of ministry; we are dependent upon each other to bring out the very best for the sake of building the Kingdom of God.

As a part of our supervision of congregations, we as a corporate body are willing to join in visioning sessions with congregations and to resource congregations in practical ways. We, therefore, call upon each congregation to engage in some quality assessment of ministry. In cases where need is determined, then ¶213 of *The Book of Discipline* will be implemented so that an assessment of ministry can be conducted. In an era of shrinking resources and changing demographics, we can ill afford to be haphazard in our approach in making disciples for the transformation of the world.

As mentioned, each of us is to be encouraging in the mandate for an inclusive church. Is each pastor addressing the responsibility to develop and implement plans for a ministry intended to prepare our congregations to receive a woman or a person of color as pastor? We were asked this question at our ordination in The United Methodist Church. Preparation is critical in creating the best atmosphere, the best climate to receive a pastor who reflects the inclusive nature of The United Methodist Church.

On another front, in a study initiated by the Council of Bishops and the Connectional Table on the state of The United Methodist Church entitled "A Call to Action", it notes that many of our congregations do not reflect the communities which surround their buildings. We are living in a state of constant change, and we as a church need to be at the forefront in reaching out to all of God's people, offering Christ. We call upon pastors to lead in this area and, in cases where pastors are not leading; we pray that laity will show us the way so that we might be the church of Jesus Christ. We are in step with the report and affirm its importance in the life and witness of The United Methodist Church. Each congregation is asked to complete a strategic plan to present at Church/Charge Conferences this Fall. If we want to stem the tide of numerical or spiritual decline, then we must be intentional in developing a course of action for 'our' congregation. A lack of direction limits the potential for enhanced ministry in the future.

Foundational in United Methodism is the deployment of clergy, known as itineracy. We, as a Cabinet, cannot dismiss ourselves from the present day reality that when we ask folks to itinerate, many families find it a great challenge. As a Cabinet, when we ask a clergy family to serve in another place, we do take our responsibility seriously, realizing we have a responsibility to both congregation and clergy to make the best possible appointment, through the discernment of the Holy Spirit, for the sake of providing the greatest opportunity to give breath to those bones. The issue of itineracy is a complex one in today's context, with spouses employed outside of the home, the needs of children, and the care of parents. Yet, it is the covenantal relationship we freely accepted when we sought our ordination to Word, Order, and Sacrament. It is the system that we live by, and each of us is to uphold the covenant if we are to be a church where justice abounds in this aspect of connectionalism.

We realize, as a Cabinet, great challenges are in our midst. More and more congregations are finding it difficult to support salary packages. Much of our time each year is utilized finding new charge alignments which maximize the opportunities for ministry, while sustaining compensation packages. This pressing need often limits the possibility of travel on the avenue of creativity or strategic planning. Congregations, sensing and understanding where they are, have to be willing to find their way into cooperative ministry ventures or shared ministry relationships. Vital ministry demands that we as a people of faith move away from a survival mentality that says "as long as the church is here for my needs then I and we are satisfied." We as a cabinet believe that an

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attitude that does not recognize the urgency of departing from a position of complacency limits the potential of making disciples of all the nations. We have to understand that, as a people of faith, we are in this shared and mutual ministry together; we are inextricably tied together. When one member of the body of Christ is hurting, then we all are hurting.

The demographics in many of our communities have changed. And, yes, we need to find ways to connect with this reality. We, as a Cabinet, are committed to working alongside a congregation, its laity and pastors to find ways that we can be vital in the midst of our context. John Wesley shared these words:

"I am not afraid that the people called Methodists should ever cease to exist either in Europe or America. But I am afraid lest they should only exist as a dead sect, having the form of religion without the power. And this undoubtedly will be the case unless they hold fast the doctrine, spirit, and discipline with which they first set out."

Friends, we, your cabinet, are in partnership with you, holding fast to the doctrine, the spirit, and the discipline of the church -- so we might be filled with God's power and strength, believing that while the context has changed, if we are faithful, our best days, though they may be different, are ahead.

Blessings,

The Cabinet

Patricia A Morris, Director of Administrative Services, Gregory D. Cox, Director of Connectional Ministries, Robert W Higginbotham, Assistant to the Bishop, Thomas J, Bickerton, Resident Bishop, Dean D. Ziegler, Butler District, Frank M. Sherman, Connellsville District (Secretary), William J. Blair, Incoming District Superintendent Connellsville District, Patricia S. Harbison, Erie-Meadville District (Treasurer), Joseph W. Patterson, III, Incoming District Superintendent Erie-Meadville District, George E. Porter, Jr, Franklin District, William B. Meekins, Jr, Greensburg District (Dean), Sharon Schwab, Indiana District, Alyce Weaver Dunn, Johnstown District, Thomas Q. Strandburg, Kane District, Donald G. Scandrol, Pittsburgh District, Eric S. Park, Washington District.

CONFERENCE BOARD OF PENSIONS – Terry Lyon, Franklin Kelly, and D. Edward Bailey spoke to the conference with updated information on the United Methodist pension plan and health insurance plan.

RESULTS OF THE SECOND LAITY BALLOT – Bishop Bickerton announced the results of the second laity ballot. 579 ballots cast, 531 valid, 48 invalid, 266 needed for election, there were four elections: Patricia A. Morris, Tina A. Whitehead, Diane M. Miller, and Larry Beatty.

THIRD LAITY BALLOT – After prayer, the third laity ballot was cast. The ballot was closed at 11:38 AM.

EPISCOPACY COMMITTEE – Howard Greenfield and Joel Garrett, representing the Conference Committee on Episcopacy, presented Jim and Marlene Bickerton, parents of the Bishop, and Bishop and Sally Bickerton with gifts of appreciation and love for their presence and service to Western Pennsylvania. Bishop Bickerton introduced his son T. J. Bickerton, home from serving with the Peace Corps in Honduras.

RESULTS OF THE THIRD CLERGY BALLOT – Bishop Bickerton announced the results of the third clergy ballot: 354 ballots cast, 343 valid, 11 invalid, 172 needed for election, there were two elections: Robert F. Zilhaber and Alyce Weaver Dunn.

FOURTH CLERGY BALLOT – After prayer the fourth clergy ballot was cast. The ballot was closed at 11:59 AM.

RETIREMENT MOMENT Bishop Bickerton presented retiring pastor Ralph Mostoller with a certificate and pin in recognition of his years of service as a pastor. Ralph spoke to the conference and led in prayer.

RECESS – The conference was in recess at 12:07 PM.

AFTERNOON SESSION

ORDER – Bishop Bickerton called the conference to order at 1:32 PM

RETIREMENT MOMENT - Bishop Bickerton presented retiring pastor Chuck Shaffer with a certificate and pin in recognition of his years of service as a pastor. Chuck spoke to the conference and led in prayer.

RECOGNITION OF OUTGOING DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT – Bishop Bickerton recognized Patricia Harbison, who is finishing seven years as Superintendent of the Erie-Meadville District, and her husband Dan. The Bishop thanked Patricia for her generosity of spirit and theological insight during her years of service on the cabinet.

RESULTS OF THE THIRD LAITY BALLOT – Bishop Bickerton announced the results of the fourth laity ballot. 598 ballots cast, 576 valid, 22 invalid, 289 needed for election, there were no elections.

FOURTH LAITY BALLOT – After prayer, the fourth laity ballot was cast. The ballot was closed at 1:55 PM.

RESULTS OF THE FOURTH CLERGY BALLOT – Bishop Bickerton announced the results of the fourth clergy ballot. 326 ballots cast, 313 valid, 13 invalid, 157 needed for election, there was one election: William B. Meekins, Jr.

FIFTH CLERGY BALLOT – After prayer, the fifth clergy ballot was cast. The ballot was closed at 2:05 PM

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT – Bradford Lauster and Duane Thompson spoke to the conference concerning the leadership development team and upcoming Ignite events.

DIRECTOR OF CONNECTIONAL MINISTRIES ADDRESS TO THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2011 – Gregory Cox, Director of Connectional Ministries presented the connectional ministries report.

Grace to you and peace from him who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty! Good afternoon Church!

What a joy it is to be with you today and share in the Ministry of The United Methodist Church in Western Pennsylvania. If we have not met before or if this is the first time that you have been to conference, my name is Greg Cox and I am your Director of Connectional Ministries.

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In his letter to the people of Philippi, Paul writes: *I thank my God every time I remember you, constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you because of the sharing in the gospel from the first day until now. I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ. And this is my prayer, that your love may overflow more and more with knowledge and full insight to help you determine what is best, so that in the day of Christ you may be pure and blameless, having produced the harvest of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ for the glory and praise of God.*

Last year when I stood before you to make a presentation for United Methodist Communications, you may remember that I was pretty beat up. Last May, I was hit by an automobile while riding my bike training for an event and I was pretty wounded. Just before Annual Conference I had surgery to correct several breaks with significant displacement in my scapula. Following Conference, I endured some pretty grueling hours of rehabilitation. Throughout that entire experience, I had only one thing in mind - being as healthy and vital as I could be.

With God's healing power and the power of the Holy Spirit - I knew that I could overcome that time in my life. It is all because of Jesus that I'm alive! It is all because of Jesus that you are alive!

Those events in my life have caused me to reflect a lot about who we are and about the ways in which Christ invites all of us and all of our churches to be made well and to live a life of abundance. I am reminded that God continues to work within each of us and our churches to bring about restoration and a harvest of righteousness.

One of the messages that I have shared across the connection is my conviction that God is not done with The United Methodist Church in Western Pennsylvania. While there are challenges before us, I believe that people throughout our Annual Conference are leveraging their strengths in ministry so that lives can be transformed through the power of Jesus Christ.

Our work in the ministries of the connection continues to be driven by our mission of providing leadership, connection and resources so that your local churches have everything that they need to make disciples of Jesus Christ. The vision of igniting and sustaining a passionate spiritual connection with Jesus Christ motivates us in our work.

While our five areas of focus center us even further, you will continue to hear about the Adaptive Challenge that will redirect the flow of attention, energy and resources to an intense concentration on fostering and sustaining an increase in the number of vital congregations effective in making disciples of Jesus Christ.

There are many vital congregations and ministries throughout Western PA. While more than 50% of our churches worship under fifty on Sunday morning, size and shape of churches is not a measure of vitality. Vital congregations come in all shapes and sizes and reach every corner of our Annual Conference. However, while vitality is present in some of our churches, many of our churches are fractured, broken, and in need of restoration. Vital congregations who spread the good news of Jesus Christ and share a message of restoration must be our focus.

We are currently re-aligning our staff to meet the needs of our changing needs. The staffing puzzle is now being put together. We will be hiring a Director of Congregational Development and Revitalization. This position is designed to give oversight to the formation of new places for new people as well as helping people use tools to discover their strengths. We will be hiring a Director of Discipleship and Spiritual Formation to shape our work as churches desire to be devoted followers of Christ. The work of restoration will take passionate followers. Our new Coordinator of Camping and Retreat Ministries, Jessica Gamache is already working to revitalize our ministry to young people through our camps at Wesley Woods, Camp Allegheny, and Jumonville. Jessica has experience and background working not only in United Methodist Camps, but in camps across denominational lines. As our churches become more vital, camping will walk alongside our coordinator of youth and young adult ministries.

Our Communications department is staffed to meet the needs of the local church as well as sharing the messages both internally and externally. If you are having trouble deciding if you should send that picture on Twitter, please call our office. Finally, our ministry through missions is shaped by our Partnership with Zimbabwe as well as our Volunteers in Mission opportunities. We are sending people on VIM opportunities throughout our region and our country, responding to needs every day. And on Monday, we will be sending a team of laity to foster our partnership and relationship with the Annual Conferences in Zimbabwe.

Your conference staff is being shaped and designed to meet the needs of the local church. While our offices and our address may be located in Cranberry Township, our ministry is going to be focused in every church and every community throughout Western PA.

Our desire is to see that all of our churches, pastors, lay members and our agencies to be restored to the vision that Christ has for all of us. Our desire, my prayer is that your love may overflow more and more with

the knowledge and full insight to help you to determine what is best, so that in the day of Christ you may be pure and blameless, having produced the harvest of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ.

Friends - your conference center staff is here for you. Please do not hesitate to call on us as we seek to be vital in our ministry for the sake of Christ and his Kingdom. We look forward to working with you!

LAITY REPORT - DO GOOD – Harry Barbus, Conference gave the Laity report, which began with a reading from the United Methodist Social Creed. How many here would like to move on toward Christian Perfection?

Once caught, fish become sheep, Peter's Commission which represents the call to all who minister— both Laity and Clergy-- is to not merely catch fish, but to care for Jesus' Flock. How many here are willing to do what it takes, to move on toward Christian Perfection? (wait)

John Wesley taught

1. To do no Harm—"by doing no harm, by avoiding evil of every kind, especially that which is most generally practiced."
2. Do Good—"by doing good; by being in every kind merciful after their power; as they have opportunity, doing good of all possible sort and as far as possible, to all!"
3. Stay in Love with God—"by attending upon all the ordinances of God."

I would like to focus on Number 2---DO GOOD. Simple enough as Christians, right? BUT—not just to those you know, friends, neighbors, and co-workers: Mr. Wesley wrote "here are poor families to be relieved; here are Children to be educated.....here are the Prisons and therein a complication of all human wants!"

Now how simple does it sound? We should not have to wait to be asked, to do a good deed or help someone; we should not wait for an "emergency", to help those that suffer or need assistance. This has to be a way of life. If we as WPA United Methodists are going to grow, we have to live-- Jesus and John Wesley's teachings. We are called here this week to "Hungers of the Heart"-- *Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.* (Matthew 5:6)

Does that mean that we have only come here for ourselves to be fed? No, we have come here to rejoice in each other, Yes; to relax with each other, Yes; to restore with each other, Yes; but also to learn how to feed the people; both spiritually and physically.

For us to be more like Jesus and John Wesley, we need to carefully and continually assess our lives and the world around us. Sometimes that means giving up control of things, turning the control over to Jesus, roll out of bed in the morning and say, "Okay Lord here I am, what would you have me do today!"

John Wesley believed that Jesus is God's means of grace; for John Wesley "means of grace" were also "works of piety" -- spiritual disciplines (Prayer, Bible Study and Fasting) and "works of mercy" -- doing good to others (doing good, visiting the sick, feeding and clothing people).

John Wesley preached that we must do both works of piety and works of mercy in order to move on toward Christian Perfection. Here we thought if we show up for church one hour a week, give a little bit in the offering plate and go to Bible study on Wednesday evening, when you can, that we were moving on toward Christian Perfection...wrong! John Wesley believed that we as Christians must grow in God's grace which first prepares us for belief, then accepts us when we respond to God in Faith, and sustains us as we do good works and participate in God's mission, he not only preached it; he "practiced" it!

Live modestly and give all you can to help people who were poor; help at Food Banks; give to Soup Kitchens; give out clothing and blankets to homeless; learn that there are Homeless close to you; they are closer than you think, if you ask about it in your neighborhood: city or small town or rural, you will be surprised at the numbers and closeness!

Visit people in prison and provide spiritual guidance, provide food and clothing to them. We have prison ministries in place, find out how you can help, you don't have to be the one that actually goes to the prison, there are a lot of other ways to help, but going there is rewarding.

Speak out against social wrongs. Do not be afraid to speak out, to protest against wrongs to people or to help correct social injustices, silence is like saying no I will not help.

And, practice healthy living. If we as Christians are not taking care of God's Temple (our body) how can we help others to live as Christians, we have Healthy Living programs available. Learn how to care for yourself.

John Wesley believed that Christians could not have authentic personal holiness without social holiness. In Sermon 91 on Charity, he wrote "and this cannot be denied, our Lord himself hath said "ye shall

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know them by their fruits". By their works ye know them that believe and them that believe not." We are saved by Faith alone; however, our works of mercy are the fruits of faith.

This is a Challenging way to live: to love God with your whole being, to love your neighbor as yourself was never declared to be easy; but it was declared to be essential to our Christian Life.

We must take care to live the way God wants us to, Every Day, Every Hour, Every Minute, not just when we think of it, not just when it seems like the right thing to do, but always. And by doing so, we teach others who watch us, and yes they are watching us "Christians," we teach them that doing Good works is a part of our WAY of Life, not just something we do to be "noticed."

Roll out of bed tomorrow morning and say "Here I am Lord, what would you have me do today?" Now: How many here are willing, to do what it takes, to move on toward Christian perfection?"

CHURCH AND SOCIETY - Donna Burkhart reported on behalf of Church and Society that grants have been awarded for \$1,000 to Tina Whitehead for her work towards peace in the Middle East, and \$500 for Conference Prison Ministries.

GENERAL BOARD OF GLOBAL MINISTRIES – POVERTY FOCUS UPDATE - Larry Hygh, representing the General Board of Global Ministries, brought greetings from General Secretary Thomas Kemper, and spoke to the conference about being in ministry with the poor. A new website www.ministrywith.org has been established to begin the dialogue and discover more about being in ministry with the poor. Practice the Wesleyan Code in your zip code!

RETIREMENT MOMENT - Bishop Bickerton presented retiring pastor James L. Tubbs with a certificate and pin in recognition of his years of service as a pastor. Jim spoke to the conference and led in prayer.

RESULTS OF THE FOURTH LAITY BALLOT – Bishop Bickerton announced the results of the fourth laity ballot: 623 ballots cast, 601 valid, 22 invalid, 301 needed for election, there was one election: Luella Krieger.

FIFTH LAITY BALLOT – After prayer, the fifth laity ballot was cast. The ballot was closed at 3:59 PM.

P21 ALIGNING INVESTMENTS WITH RESOLUTIONS ON ISRAEL PALESTINE – Rita Platt-Anderson, Chair Section 2, moved non-concurrence by action of the section, 49-54-4. The conference supported the action of the section of non-concurrence.

RESULTS OF THE FIFTH CLERGY BALLOT – Bishop Bickerton announced the results of the fifth clergy ballot: 334 ballots cast, 323 valid, 11 invalid, 162 needed for election, there was one election: Sharon L. Schwab.

SIXTH CLERGY BALLOT – After prayer, the sixth clergy ballot was cast. The ballot was closed at 4:32 PM.

PRIVILEGE – Bishop Bickerton introduced Bishop Sally Dyck, Episcopal leader from the Minnesota Area, who will be the Friday evening preacher.

P22 CIVIL EQUAL RIGHTS PARAGRAPH 162 – Rita Platt-Anderson moved non-concurrence by action of the section, 20-87-4. After a failed motion to extend the time by Doug Dyson, and prayer by Dennis Westbrooks, the conference supported the action of the section of non-concurrence.

Motions:

By Rex Wasser: Page 408, line nine, remove the words, “civil marriage.” Not approved.

P23 OFFERING BLESSINGS TO HOMOSEXUAL COUPLES PARAGRAPHS 341.6 & 2702.1 – Rita Platt-Anderson moved non-concurrence as amended by the section, 16-93-5. After prayer by Michelle Wobrak, the conference supported the action of the section of non-concurrence.

RETIREMENT MOMENT - Bishop Bickerton presented retiring pastor Thomas Topar with a certificate and pin in recognition of his years of service as a pastor. Thomas introduced his wife Donna, and spoke to the conference concluding with prayer.

RECESS – The conference was in recess at 5:18 PM

EVENING SESSION

ORDER – Bishop Bickerton called the conference to order at 7:15 PM.

RESULTS OF THE FIFTH LAITY BALLOT – Bishop Bickerton announced the results of the fifth laity ballot: 561 ballots cast, 544 valid, 17 invalid, 273 needed for election, there was one election: Donna Burkhart.

SIXTH LAITY BALLOT – After prayer, the sixth laity ballot was cast. The ballot was closed at 7:25 PM

RESULTS OF THE SIXTH CLERGY BALLOT – Bishop Bickerton announced the results of the sixth laity ballot: 328 ballots cast, 321 valid, 7 invalid, 161 needed for election, there were no elections.

SEVENTH CLERGY BALLOT – After prayer the seventh laity ballot was cast. The ballot was closed at 7:32 PM.

MISSIONS NIGHT – At 7:35 PM the conference entered into a time of worship and celebration of Missions Night. Bishop Bickerton led in worship and Bishop Sally Dyck was the preacher. The message, “A Heart for Ministry” concluded with the question, “To whom is God calling you to reach out and risk your whole self for someone else because that’s what disciples do?” Larry Hygh spoke representing UMCOR.

Assisting in the service were: Jude Urso, Mira Singhal, The Pittsfield Otterbein UMC Worship Team, Katie Gascoine, Chuck Hildbold, Debbie Hills, Rebekah Swineford, Diane Miller, and a children’s choir composed of children from around the conference. At the conclusion of worship the conference was in worship at 9:22 PM.

THIRD DAY
Saturday, June 11, 2011

MORNING SESSION

BIBLE STUDY – The conference gathered at 8:00 AM for Bible Study. Shane Stafford was the Bible study leader using Acts 2:42-47 as a text. You can't do everything but everyone needs to do something. The Church needs to do their something. It will take sacrifice, obedience, maturity, and effort. When everyone is doing their something, anything becomes possible.

ORDER – Bishop Bickerton called the conference to order at 9:00 AM.

RETIREMENT MOMENT – Robert George received a pin and certificate in recognition of his years of service as a pastor. Robert spoke to the conference and led in prayer.

RESULTS OF THE SIXTH LAITY BALLOT – Bishop Bickerton announced the results of the sixth clergy ballot. 560 ballots cast, 548 valid, 12 invalid, 275 needed for election, there were no elections.

SEVENTH LAITY BALLOT – After prayer, the seventh laity ballot was cast. The ballot was closed at 9:28 AM

RESULTS OF THE SEVENTH CLERGY BALLOT – Bishop Bickerton announced the results of the seventh clergy ballot. 267 ballots cast, 258 valid, 9 invalid, 130 needed for election, there were two elections: Seth McPherson and John Ciampa.

EIGHTH CLERGY BALLOT – After prayer, the eighth clergy ballot was cast, beginning the process of electing delegates for Jurisdictional Conference. The ballot was closed at 9:37 AM.

COURTESY – Jim Bickerton, father of Bishop Bickerton, was introduced and addressed the conference. Jim told a story about taking time to take Rose to the cemetery to visit the grave of her husband on Memorial Day. “With Jesus everything is about people...with the Church everything is about people.”

IMAGINE NO MALERIA – Sandra Matoushaya, Zimbabwe Partnership Coordinator, Julie Scott, and Hugh Hughes presented a skit acting out effective response in efforts to end malaria related deaths as an expression of Christ's love in the world. Bishop Bickerton spoke about Imagine No Malaria as experiencing Christ's call to love our neighbor and shared news concerning a 50% reduction in malaria related deaths, 600 million lives have been saved, 300 million bed nets have been distributed through The United Methodist Church the most trusted delivery system on the continent of Africa. The Saving Lives in Sierra Leone has resulted in the request for fifteen new church starts

in that country. WPA has saved 150,000 lives by raising 1.5 million dollars in cash and pledges.

Laura Meengs offered heartfelt thanks to WPA, not only for our response to Imagine No Malaria, but for our enriching her faith which has brought her back to the church. Laura announced she has doubled her gift and laid a \$1,000 in cash on the altar, inviting members of the conference to give as well. Imagine a God who is great, mighty, and with whom nothing is impossible.

RESULTS OF THE SEVENTH LAITY LAITY BALLOT – Bishop Bickerton announced the results of the seventh laity ballot. 597 ballots cast, 586 valid, 11 invalid, 294 needed for election, there was one election: Rebekah Swineford.

EIGHTH LAITY BALLOT – After prayer, the eighth laity ballot was cast. The ballot was closed at 10:51 AM

CONSENT CALENDAR ADOPTION – Kellie Wild moved adoption of the Consent Calendar. It was adopted.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Dayton Mix moved approval of the Thursday and Friday proceedings of the annual conference and authority be given to the Conference Secretary to correct and approve the Saturday and Sunday proceedings of Annual Conference. Approved.

LEADERSHIP RECRUITMENT AND NOMINATIONS TEAM REPORT – Donna Vizza and Gregory Cox presented the report pointing out how people can volunteer to serve on conference ministry teams.

RESULTS OF THE EIGHTH CLERGY BALLOT – Bishop Bickerton announced the results of the eighth clergy ballot. 315 ballots cast, 287 valid, 28 invalid, 144 needed for election, there were no elections.

NINTH CLERGY BALLOT – After prayer, the ninth clergy ballot was cast. The ballot was closed at 11:13 AM.

RS401 CONNECTIONAL APPORTIONMENT BUDGET 2012 BUDGET – Donna Burkhart moved concurrence by action of section four, 115-6-1. It was approved.

P25a EPISCOPAL TERM PARAGRAPHS 50 & 337.1 – Dennis Westbrooks moved concurrence by action of section two, 96-0-0. After a sustained call for the previous question by Gregory Spencer and prayer, the action of the section was approved.

P25b EPISCOPAL TERM PARAGRAPHS 50 & 337.1 – Dennis Westbrooks moved concurrence by action of section two, 83-6-2. After a sustained call for the previous question by Jude Urso and prayer, the action of the section was approved.

VI. Daily Proceedings

YOUTH PRESENTATION – Emily Deyarmin, Youth Ministry Team President greeted the conference and talked about YMT events and work throughout the year. Kimberlyn Bloise described her January trip to China with Mission of Peace and offered prayer for Mira Singhl who will be going on a similar trip to Nicaragua. Cierra Noel presented the Pineapple Award to Beth Nelson. Courtney Kunselman presented the Youth Worker of the Year Award to Shelly Rhodes from Clarion First UMC. After receiving a balloon hat from Isaac Fugate, Bishop Bickerton offered a prayer of blessing for the youth.

RETIREMENT MOMENT – Jon Gulnac received a pin and certificate in recognition of his years of service as a pastor. Jon spoke to the conference and led in prayer.

RECESS – The conference was in recess at 12:17 PM

AFTERNOON SESSION

ORDER – Bishop Bickerton called the conference to order at 1:38 PM

RETIREMENT MOMENT – The Bishop introduced Paul E. Wilson, Sr. and presented him with a certificate and pin in recognition and appreciation for his years of service in pastoral ministry as he now enters into retired relationship. Paul led in prayer and shared words of thanks and exhortation with the annual conference.

RESULTS OF THE NINTH CLERGY BALLOT – Bishop Bickerton announced the results of the eighth clergy ballot for Jurisdictional Conference delegates. 301 ballots cast, 285 valid, 16 invalid, 143 needed for election, there were two elections: John Seth and Dale Shunk.

TENTH CLERGY BALLOT – After prayer, the ninth clergy ballot was cast. The ballot was closed at 2:03 PM

RESULTS OF THE EIGHTH LAITY BALLOT – Bishop Bickerton announced the results of the eighth laity ballot. 605 ballots cast, 538 valid, 67 invalid, 270 needed for election, there were two elections: Sharon Gregory and Tracy Merrick.

NINTH LAITY BALLOT – After prayer, the ninth laity ballot was cast. The ballot was closed at 2:21 PM.

PRAYER – Bishop Bickerton offered prayer for service personal who serve in harm's way making special mention of conference member Jonathon Bell who is about to be deployed.

IMAGINE NO MALARIA OFFERING AND PLEDGES – Bishop Bickerton announced since the morning session \$94,798 has been received in cash and pledges for Imagine No Malaria.

NEW DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENTS – Bishop Bickerton introduced Joseph Patterson, the new Superintendent of the Erie-Meadville District and William Blair, the new Superintendent of the Connellsville District.

GOLDEN SNEAKER AWARD – Kathy Mihoerek and William B. Meekins, Jr, presented the Golden Sneaker award to the Kane District.

CONFERENCE DISMANTLING RACISM TEAM – Peggy Ward, Bob Wilson, William B. Meekins, Jr, Donna Anderson, Deb Steiokus, James W. Hamilton, Lola Turnbull, Deb Rogosky, Don Blinn, Jr, members of the Conference Dismantling Racism Team, introduced themselves and explained why they are members of the team. Team members led in a litany of dismantling racism. Additional information was given on the history and activities of the team, including how we need to work on removing the “log from our own eyes before we remove the speck from our neighbor’s” if we are to dismantle systemic racism in the annual conference.

DENMAN AWARD – Jesse Geyer received the award for youth. Bob Green received the award for laity. Craig Smith received the award for clergy.

RESULTS OF THE NINTH LAITY BALLOT – Bishop Bickerton announced the results of the ninth laity ballot. 559 ballots cast, 525 valid, 34 invalid, 263 needed for election, there were three elections: Joseph Emigh, Faith Geer, and Peggy Ward.

TENTH LAITY BALLOT – After prayer, the tenth laity ballot was cast. The ballot was closed at 3:33 PM

RESULTS OF THE TENTH CLERGY BALLOT – Bishop Bickerton announced the results of the tenth clergy ballot. 288 ballots cast, 273 valid, 15 invalid, 137 needed for election, there were two elections: Stephanie Gottschalk and Roy Gearhart.

ELEVENTH CLERGY BALLOT – After prayer, the eleventh clergy ballot was cast. The ballot was closed at 3:44 PM.

P27 LAY SERVANT MINISTRY PARAGRAPH 266 – Michelle Wobrak moved concurrence by action of section two, 88-12-4. After a sustained call for the previous question by George Porter and prayer, the action of the section was not approved.

RS308 REPORT OF THE REALIGNMENT TASK FORCE – moved concurrence by action of section three, 101-27-3. On a sustained call for the previous question and prayer, it was approved.

Motions:

Mark Blair: Extend time by five minutes. Approved

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Joseph Stains: Page 635, line 32-35, substitute, “In the spirit of good faith, mutual trust, and mutual accountability, all personnel realignment proposals shall be developed under the regular supervision of the full Conference Connectional Network, and subject to final approval at the next session of Annual Conference.” Not approved.

RS303 DISTRICT MINISTRY FACILITATORS AND OVERSIGHT TEAM – Cindy Bloise moved concurrence by action of section three, 111-17-2. On a sustained call for the previous question by Joel Peterson and prayer, it was approved.

RS304 BASE COMPENSATION FOR PASTORS – Mark Stewart moved concurrence as amended by section three, 91-34-7. After a sustained call for the previous question and prayer, it was approved as amended by Stephanie Gottschalk.

Motions:

Stephanie line 35, after the word ministry add, “and also prayerfully consider giving a matching amount to the Western PA Conference Equitable Compnesation Fund, Mission Support Fund, or the Central Conference Pension Fund in Keeping with the Spirit of Acts 2:42-47. Approved.

Emily Byrd: line 42, delete the word “local.” Not approved.

Connie Hoeke: Page 422, Line 39-40, delete the whole sentence. Not approved.

RESULTS OF THE TENTH LAITY BALLOT – Bishop Bickerton announced the results of the tenth laity ballot. 548 ballots cast, 531 valid, 11 invalid, 266 needed for election, there was one election: Vicki Stahlman.

ELEVENTH LAITY BALLOT- After prayer, the eleventh laity ballot was cast. The ballot was closed at 5:03 PM. A motion of Dan Miller and Karen Corey that those in the top three ballot positions on the eleventh laity ballot would complete the Jurisdictional Conference delegation and fill the two alternate positions was not approved.

RESULTS OF ELEVENTH CLERGY BALLOT – Bishop Bickerton announced the results of the eleventh clergy ballot. 308 ballots cast, 297 valid, 11 invalid, 149 needed for election, there was one election: Joan Reasinger.

TWELFTH CLERGY BALLOT – After prayer, the twelfth clergy ballot was cast. The ballot was closed at 5:19 PM.

RETIREMENT MOMENT – Miles Bradley and his wife Joan were introduced and greeted by the conference. Miles received a certificate and pin in recognition and thanks for his years of service as a pastor. Miles spoke to the conference and led in prayer.

RECESS – The conference was in recess at 5:35 PM.

EVENING SESSION

MINISTRY NIGHT WORSHIP – The conference gathered at 7:30 PM for the Ministry of the Laity, Recognition of Retiring Pastors, Commissioning of Provisional Members, the Fixing of Appointments, and the Wesleyan Covenant.

Bishop Bickerton led in worship assisted by Bill Starr, Louise Patterson, David Morse, the District Superintendents, the Conference Choir, and The Pittsfield/Otterbein UMC Praise Team. Bishop Sally Dyck was the preacher.

Harry Barbus, Conference Lay Leader, recognized district lay leaders. David Morse recognized Local Pastors. Bishop Bickerton led in prayer for the laity.

Bishop Bickerton and Bishop Dyck recognized the 2011 class of retiring clergy. Received into membership and commissioned as Provisional Members were: Elizabeth Stanton Cooper, David Lawrence Ewing, Anthony Steven Fallisi, Heidi Marie Helsel, Leslie Alexander Hutchins, D. Renee Mikell, and Ross Todd Pryor.

Bishop Bickerton announced the appointment of each District Superintendent and introduced each District Lay Leader by District. Returning pastors were invited to come forward to greet the superintendent while the Bishop read the names of those being newly appointed to each district. The new appointees also came forward to greet the superintendent, lay leader and returning pastors. Bishop Bickerton announced all appointments fixed for 2011-2012 as printed and corrected.

ELEVENTH LAITY BALLOT – Bishop Bickerton announced the results of the eleventh laity ballot. 497 ballots cast, 489 valid, 8 invalid, 245 needed for election, there was one election: Louise Patterson. Approved, a motion that alternates will be selected in descending order from those not elected on the eleventh laity ballot. Alternate lay delegates for Jurisdictional Conference: Courtney Kunselman, Annie Lee Fiffick, Eric A. Duda, Deborah J. Webb, Donald C. Blystone, Richard C. Hoffman, David P. Rembold.

TWELFTH CLERGY BALLOT – Bishop Bickerton announced the results of the twelfth clergy ballot. 261 ballots cast, 257 valid, 4 invalid, 129 needed for election, there were two elections: Gregory Cox and Mark Stewart. Approved, a motion that alternates will be selected in descending order from those not elected on the twelfth clergy ballot. Alternate clergy delegates for Jurisdictional Conference: Joel S. Garrett, Steven S. Tuell, Jeffrey T. St. Clair, Randall W. Bain, Thomas Q. Strandburg, Michelle L. Wobrak, John K. Jefferis.

RS404 ANNUAL CONFERENCE RULES – Gregory Spencer moved referral to the conference rules committee by action of section four, 51-10-1. It was referred as amended by Robert Zilhaver and Thomas Carr.

Motions:

By Robert Zilhaver, “I move that this motion be referred to the Conference Connectional Network who *could** report to the 2012 Annual Conference a review on rules concerning District Conferences and conference connectional structure with an additional commission that the Conference Connectional Network establish a study team to report its findings to the 2013 Western Pennsylvania Annual Conference. This team’s

VI. Daily Proceedings

purpose shall be to review the nomination and election process for General and Jurisdictional Conference Delegates and recommend any appropriate recommendations for change to the 2013 Western Pennsylvania Annual Conference.

By Thomas Carr, Change “could*” to “would.” Approved.

ADJOURNMENT – After prayer, the conference was adjourned at 10:43 PM.

FOURTH DAY

Sunday, June 12, 2011

BAPTISM, REAFFIRMATION OF BAPTISM, ORDINATION, AND HOLY COMMUNION – The conference gathered at 9:00 AM for worship and a celebration of Baptism, Reaffirmation of Baptism, Ordination, and Holy Communion. Bishop Thomas J. Bickerton led in ordination assisted by Bishop Sally Dyck, Resident Bishop, Minnesota Area. Also assisting in the service were: Kevin Haley, Beverly Peterson, the Pittsfield/Otterbein UMC Praise Team, Harry Barbus, David Morse, Janet Lord, and William Starr.

Receiving the Sacrament of Christian Baptism was Isaac Amos Russell. Bishop Bickerton also recognized all in attendance that had been confirmed in 2011.

Received as an Associate Member: Harold James Dangel, Jr. and Charles James Kutz.

Ordained as a Deacon: Deborah Louise Hills

Ordained as Elders were: John Francis Bargar, Brett Matthew Dinger, Scott Lee Freshwater Gallagher, Erik Andrew Hoeke, Gretchen Marie Hulse, Justin Robert Judy, Keith Charles Kaufold, Brian Robert Keller, Katrina Marie Laude, Penelope Field Lyon, Christopher Alan Morgan, Douglas Benton Myers, Jr, Corben Michael Russell, Kelley Marie Schanely, Jason Eric Schweinberg, Robert Brian Trask, John Robert Virgin, Kellie Diane Wild, and Judith Elayne Winston-Thomas.

Miles Bradley represented the 2011 class of retiring clergy in the Passing of the Mantle with Brent Dinger receiving the Mantle on behalf of the 2011 class of Elders while other members of the class of Elders led in a responsive reading. Additional members of the new class of Elders led in the celebration of the Sacrament of Holy Communion. The service concluded and the conference was adjourned at 11:25 AM.

CERTIFICATION OF MINUTES

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Bishop Thomas J. Bickerton". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small cross at the beginning.

Bishop Thomas J. Bickerton
President

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "John R. Wilson". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Rev. John R. Wilson
Secretary

CERTIFICATE OF COMISSIONING

This is to certify that on Saturday, June 11, 2011 at Grove City College, Grove City, Pennsylvania, I Received as Probationary Members and Commissioned as Ministers:

Elizabeth Stanton Cooper, David Lawrence Ewing, Anthony Steven Fallisi, Heidi Marie Helsel, Leslie Alexander Hutchins, D. Renee Mikell, Ross Todd Pryor

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Thomas J. Bickerton". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small cross at the beginning of the first name.

Bishop Thomas J. Bickerton
Resident Bishop

CERTIFICATE OF ORDINATION

This is to certify that on Sunday, June 12, 2011 at Grove City College, Grove City, Pennsylvania, I ordained as ELDERS:

Receiving Full Membership and Elder's Orders were:

*John Francis Bargar, Brett Matthew Dinger, Scott Lee
Freshwater Gallagher, Erik Andrew Hoeke, Gretchen
Marie Hulse, Justin Robert Judy, Keith Charles Kaufold,
Brian Robert Keller, Katrina Marie Laude, Penelope
Field Lyon, Christopher Alan Morgan, Douglas Benton
Myers, Jr, Corben Michael Russell, Kelley Marie
Schanely, Jason Eric Schweinberg, Robert Brian Trask,
John Robert Virgin, Kellie Diane Wild, Judith Elayne
Winston-Thomas*

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Thomas J. Bickerton". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small cross at the beginning of the first name.

Bishop Thomas J. Bickerton
Resident Bishop

CERTIFICATE OF ORDINATION

This is to certify that on Sunday, June 12, 2011 at Grove City College, Grove City, Pennsylvania, I ordained as DEACON:

Receiving Full Membership and Deacon's Orders were:

Deborah Louise Hills

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Thomas J. Bickerton". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small cross at the beginning of the first name.

Bishop Thomas J. Bickerton
Resident Bishop

CERTIFICATE OF MEMBERSHIP

This is to certify that on Sunday, June 12, 2011 at Grove City College, Grove City, Pennsylvania, I Received as Associate Members:

Receiving Associate Membership were:

Harold James Dangel, Jr. and Charles James Kutz

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Thomas J. Bickerton". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small cross at the beginning of the first name.

Bishop Thomas J. Bickerton
Resident Bishop

MEMBERS ELDER CLASS OF 2011



John F. Bargar



Brett M. Dinger



Scott L. F. Gallagher



Erik A. Hoeke



Gretchen M. Hulse



Justin R. Judy



Keith C. Kaufold



Brian R. Keller



Katrina Marie Laude



Penelope F. Lyon



Christopher A. Morgan



Douglas B. Myers, Jr



Kelley M. Schanely



Jason E. Schweinberg



Robert B. Trask



John R. Virgin



Kellie D. Wild



Judith E. Winston-Thomas

**MEMBER DEACON
CLASS OF 2011**



Deborah L. Hills

**Associate Member
CLASS OF 2011**



Harold J. Dangel

**Associate Member
CLASS OF 2011**



Charles J. Kutz

COMMISSIONED AND PROVISIONAL MEMBERS



Provisional Members & Commissioned Ministers

Left to Right: Ross T. Pryor, D. Renee Mikell, Leslie A. Hutchins, Heidi M. Helsel, Anthony S. Fallisi,
David L. Ewing, Elizabeth Stanton Cooper

Permission and praise for photos should be sent to communications@wpaumc.org or 1-800-886-3382 x 227

Incoming District Superintendent

Photo by Olan Mills



William J. Blair, Connellsville



Joseph W. Patterson III, Erie-Meadville



The annual conference in prayer