IV. Daily Proceedings

THE ROAD TO DISCIPLESHIP
FIRST DAY
Thursday, June 9, 2016

CLERGY SESSION

ORDER – Bishop Thomas J. Bickerton called the Clergy Session to order at 9:41 AM.

CALL TO WORSHIP – Bishop Bickerton led the body in the call to worship, followed by the congregational singing of “And Are We Yet Alive.” He then introduced Amy Wagner to begin leading the body in the work for the morning.

MOMENT OF PRIVILEGE -- Amy Wagner reminded the body that this is the 60th anniversary of full ordination rights of Clergy women.

MOMENT OF PRIVILEGE -- Janet Lord reminded the body that this is also the 20th Anniversary of the Order of Deacons.

PROVISIONAL MEMBERSHIP AND COMMISSIONING – Received on motion of Janet Lord, on behalf of the Board of Ordained Ministry, according to ¶324.4 a,b or 324.6, 322.4: Provisional Deacons: Rebekah R. Clapp, Matthew F. Howe, Anais L. Hussain, and Sean R. Lewis; Provisional Elders: Angelique O. Bradford, Megan Y. Berkebile, Robert V. Ellson, Nathanael J. Fugate, James T. Golla III, Paul A. Harman III, Jonathan J. Hartland, Melody L. Kimmel, Darryl S. Lockie, Hannah M. Loughman, C. Drew Myers, Keith T. Mcgarvey, Eric M. Oliver, Derek R. Platt, Angela M. Rishell, James T. Roberts, Thomas R. Scott, and Adam J. Stump.

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS – Received on motion of Janet Lord, on behalf of the Board of Ordained Ministry, according to ¶322: Joni Williams.

FULL MEMBERSHIP AND ELDER’S ORDERS – Received on motion of Edward A. Schoeneck, according to ¶335: Kathleen A. McCoy Schoeneck.

Received on motion of Janet Lord, on behalf of the Board of Ordained Ministry, according to ¶335: Chad J. Bogdewiecz, Larry G. Dunn.

Received on motion of Ronald J. Geisler, according to ¶335: Melissa I. Geisler.

Received on motion of Janet Lord, on behalf of the Board of Ordained Ministry, according to ¶335: Dianne D. Glave.

Received on motion of John W. Seth, according to ¶335: Julie S. Kolacz.
Received on motion of Janet Lord, on behalf of the Board of Ordained Ministry, according to ¶335: Scott D. Lawrence.

Janet Lord asked all those who were ordained by Bishop Bickerton to stand, and a word of appreciation was extended to the Bishop for his leadership in this area.

CERTIFICATION IN SPECIALIZED MINISTRY – Received on motion of Janet Lord, on behalf of the Board of Ordained Ministry, the following candidates were approved for specialized ministries: Patricia M Nelson (Older Adult Ministries), Leah R. Bergstrom (Christian Education), Janet F. Lord (Music Ministry), Gary R. Jones (Youth and Camping & Retreat Ministries), and Deborah A. Dennick-Ream (Christian Education).

PASTORS FROM OTHER ANNUAL CONFERENCES APPROVED FOR APPOINTMENT IN OUR CONFERENCE WHILE RETAINING THEIR CONFERENCE MEMBERSHIP – Terry G. Shaffer, secretary of the Board of Ordained Ministry, reported, according to ¶331.8 & ¶346.1: name (credentials, annual conference membership): David S. Dempsey (RE, from Upper New York AC), Arnold G. Husk (RE, from West Virginia AC), Jay C. Sowers III (FD, from Missouri AC), Carole J. Bergman (RE, from California/Nevada AC), and Dirk A. Wooten (PE, from Virginia AC).

CLERGY FROM OTHER DENOMINATIONS – Terry G. Shaffer, secretary of the Board of Ordained Ministry, reported, according to ¶331.8 & ¶346.2: name (credentialing denomination): Denise R. Mason-Bullitt (United Church of Christ).

CLERGY TRANSFERRED FROM OTHER METHODIST DENOMINATIONS – Received on motion of Janet Lord, on behalf of the Board of Ordained Ministry, according to (¶347.2): Darryl S. Lockie.

AFFILIATE MEMBERS IN ANOTHER UM ANNUAL CONFERENCE – Terry G. Shaffer, secretary of the Board of Ordained Ministry, reported, according to ¶586.4, With vote: (none); according to ¶334.5 & ¶344.4, Without vote: Jane Ellen Nickell (West Virginia AC).

The Bishop called for a ⅔ vote to properly receive Jane Ellen Nickell from the West Virginia AC (without vote).

SCRIPTURE – Bishop Bickerton shared First Corinthians 2:9-10 with the session and led the body in the hymn “Come, Let Us Dream”: “… No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love Him’-- but God has revealed it to us by His Spirit. The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God.”

HYMN -- “Come, Let Us Dream” was sung by the body.
IV Business of the Annual Conference


PRAYER – A prayer was offered by the body for those who are entering into transitional leaves.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE, VOLUNTARY, PERSONAL – Granted on motion of Terry G. Shaffer, according to ¶354.2.a, 354.3: Edmond C. Gresick, (FE) 1st year, S. Bruce Mould (FE) 5th year, D. Lynn Yeso (FE) 5th year, Stephen A. Tiffany (FE) 6th year, Chul S. Park (FE) 7th year, Ronald E. Thomas (FE) 15th year, and David R. Lewis (FE) 17th year.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE, VOLUNTARY, FAMILY – Granted on motion of Terry G. Shaffer, according to ¶354.2.b, 354.3: Nathan W. Carlson (FE) 1st year, Beth A. Cooper (FE) 1st year, Patricia A. Fuller (FD) 3rd year (effective 7/1/2014), Laura A. Puleo (FE) 3rd year (effective 7/1/2014), Barbara A. Turpish (FE) 11th year, Deborah A. Ackley-Killian (FE) 17th year.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE, VOLUNTARY, TRANSITIONAL – Granted on motion of Terry G. Shaffer, according to ¶354.2.c: Bruce W. Griffith, Jr. (FE) 1st year.

VOLUNTARY LEAVE OF ABSENCE SINCE THE LAST SESSION OF THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE – David P. Zona was placed on a leave of absence on October 12, 2015.

David P. Zona was terminated from leave of absence on December 1, 2015.

PRAYER – A prayer was offered by the body for those who are entering into less than full time service.
LESS THAN FULL TIME SERVICE – Approved on motion of Terry G. Shaffer, according to ¶338.2, ¶342.2, ¶1506.4b: name (credential, fraction of full time service, year # of less than full time service): Willard C. Adkins (AM, ¼ time, year 14), Kenneth L. Bossart (FE, ¼ time, year 7), Emily A. Byrd (FE, ½ time, year 6), Ralph P. Cotten (FE, ¼ time, year 6), Harold J. Dangel (AM, ¼ time, year 6), Todd M. Davis (FE, ½ time, year 3), Sharon M. Hamley (FE, ¼ time, year 8), J. Mark Hurst (FE, ¾ time, year 3), Tina G. Keller (FE, ¾ time, year 8), In Ki Lee (FE, ½ time, year 5), Darlene K. Ryniec (AM, ½ time, year 11), John R. Wilson (FE, ¾ time, year 23), Joe K. Samalenge (FE, ¾ time, year 3), Cynthia K. Schneider (FE, ¼ time, year 3), Thomas V. Chacko (FE, ¾ time, year 2), Penelope F. Lyon (FE, ¾ time, year 1), K. David Chin (FE, ¾ time, year 1), Barbara J. Stoehr (FE, ½ time, year 1), Pamela S. Armstrong (FE, ¼ time, year 1), Joni K. Williams (AM, ¾ time, year 1), and Debra L. Pisor (FD, ½ time, year 1).

TRANSFERRED FROM OTHER ANNUAL CONFERENCES OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH -- Approved on motion of Terry G. Shaffer, according to ¶347.1, 416.5, 635.2m name (credential, transferring from): Matthew F. Price (FE, West Virginia), Jerome S. Kennedy (FE, Liberia), Joe K. Samalenge (FE, S. Katanga DR Congo).

PRAYER – A prayer was offered by the body for those who are serving in other Annual Conferences.

APPOINTED TO SERVE IN OTHER ANNUAL CONFERENCES – Terry G. Shaffer reported, according to ¶331.8 and ¶346: name (credentials, conference where appointed): Tracey L. Henderson (FD, West Ohio), Gary W. Jones (FD, East Ohio), Ralph P. Cotten (FE, Florida), Richard O. Feagin (FE, Pacific Northwest), Timothy C. McConville (FE, Alaska Missionary Conf.), In Ki Lee (FE, California/Pacific), Rebekah R. Clapp (PD, West Ohio), and Debra L. Pisor (FD, South Carolina).

MEDICAL LEAVE – Terry G. Shaffer reported, according to ¶357: name (credentials, date of medical leave): LaMar E. Carlson (FE, 12/31/2008), Mark A. DeBaise (FE, 03/01/1996), Shawn L. Goodwin (without benefit) (FE, 05/01/2012), Debra Anne Groeger (FE, 02/01/1997), Floyd A. Hall (FE, 07/01/2007), Connie B. Hoeke (without benefit) (FE, 07/01/2000), Austin P. Hornyak (without benefit) (FE, 05/01/2012), Bonnie Tyack Friend King (FE, 07/01/2006), Thomas J. Michalko (FE, 03/16/2007), Stanley D. Nixon (AM, 02/01/2005), Kenneth J. Peters (FE, 01/31/2007), Randall R. Roda (FE, 03/01/2005), Thomas F. St. Clair (FE, 11/01/2009), Susan E. Sphar-Calhoun (without benefit) (FE, 11/23/2009), David K. Means (without benefit) (FE, 12/01/2012), Bruce K. Northey (FE, 01/31/2013), John V. King (FE, 05/01/2015), and David S. Hampson (without benefit) (FE, 10/01/2015).

PRAYER – Bishop Bickerton offered a prayer for David Hampson and his family.

LOCAL PASTORS: DISCONTINUED -- On motion of Jeffrey D. Sterling, according to ¶320.1: name (district): Michael B. Airgood (Washington).
IV Business of the Annual Conference

PROBATIONARY (PROVISIONAL) MEMBERS, DISCONTINUED -- On motion of Jeffrey D. Sterling, according to ¶327.6: name (date effective): Amy L. Chelsea McLendon (06/30/2016); Earl C. Killian (07/01/2016).

RETIREMENTS: DEACONS – On motion of David D. Janz, according to ¶358: name (years of service) effective date: Linda M. Williams (19) August 1, 2016; Deborah A. Dennick Ream (12) April 1, 2016.


RETIREMENTS: ASSOCIATE MEMBERS – David D. Janz, reported, according to ¶358.1, name (years of service) effective date: Darlene K. Ryniec (11) July 1, 2016.

RETIREMENTS: LOCAL PASTORS – On motion of David D. Janz, according to ¶358.1, name (years of service) effective date: Michael C. Garvey (8) July 1, 2016; Herbert D. Phar (4) July 1, 2016; Earl C. Killian II (21) July 1, 2016.

DECEASED MEMBERS – Terry G. Shaffer highlighted those clergy who have died since Annual Conference 2015. A full listing is included in the Memorial Service liturgy.

ORDER OF BUSINESS: Jeffrey Sterling offered to the members of the Clergy Session the following policy change that has been discussed and adopted by the Board of the Ordained Ministry.

Whereas the Western PA Conference Board of Ordained Ministry is in the process of improving and enhancing its Provisional Residence in Ministry Program, with a goal of more effectively preparing Elders and Deacons for the leadership roles they will assume in a changing society and church;

And whereas the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry now requires an ordination project that demonstrates a ministry aimed at making disciples of Jesus Christ;
And whereas the transitional nature of many appointments served by provisional pastors often necessitates that some itinerate during the provisional program;

The Board of Ordained Ministry therefore has approved, and asks for your vote of affirmation, expanding the Provisional Residence in Ministry Program to three years after completion of educational requirements;

Furthermore, due to many candidates taking extra years to finish her or his required graduate degree, the Board will approve for commissioning only those Elder or Deacon candidates who are within one year of graduation from their required graduate program.

Following the reading the body affirmed this policy change.

**PENSION CREDIT REPORT** -- On motion of Gary L. Grau, pension credit was granted to Terry G. Shaffer for the period of April 1, 1974 through September 1, 1975.

**COMPREHENSIVE MOTION** – On motion of Jeffrey D. Sterling, members of the Clergy Session approved a comprehensive motion to receive and approve the report of the Board of the Ordained Ministry.

**APPROVAL OF CHARACTER OF PASTORS** – Each of the District Superintendents approved the character of the pastors serving on their respective districts.

**APPROVAL OF CHARACTER OF THE SUPERINTENDENTS** – Bishop Bickerton affirmed each of the Superintendents’ character and integrity. He then personally thanked them for the hard work and continuing collegiality they share as they minister together as a cabinet.

**EPISCOPAL COMMENTS** – Bishop Bickerton shared the concern he had of John Wilson, conference secretary. He then asked a prayer of healing for John and his family.

Bishop Bickerton discussed the way forward which was proposed by the Council of Bishops and adopted by the General Conference at the meeting in Portland, Oregon. He highlighted the following summary from that document/action: 1) The Council of Bishops are absolutely and without hesitation committed to the unity of The United Methodist Church. 2) The Council of Bishops are committed to leading the church throughout the world in intentional times of worship, study, discernment, Christian conferencing, conversations, confession, and prayer for God’s guidance. 3) The Council of Bishops are clearly aware of the depth of disagreement around matters of human sexuality. 4) The Council of Bishops has been authorized by the General Conference to form a Commission to study all of the paragraphs in our Book of Discipline regarding human sexuality and other proposals submitted regarding the direction and potential re-ordering of our life together as United Methodists. 5) The Council of Bishops may call a special session of the General Conference to deal with any proposals and recommendations made by the
Commission. 6) The Council of Bishops are committed to having intentional conversations about how the church can best live in grace with one another as we wade into these next few years and as we give this special Commission a chance to do their work. 7) The Council of Bishops are committed to upholding the current Book of Discipline while these conversations continue. 8) All provisions of the 2012 United Methodist Book of Discipline remain as they are currently printed until a future General Conference changes them. Bishop Bickerton asked the Clergy Session to surround the Council of Bishops, the Commission, and the whole church in serious and intentional times of prayer.

Bishop Bickerton urged the clergy to 1) offer people the opportunity to accept Christ, and 2) continue to make connections with the people of God.

Bishop Bickerton closed with a word of appreciation for those who served in partnership with him in a number of different ways during his 12 year tenure in Western Pennsylvania – especially: those who have been members of the Conference Board of Ordained Ministry, David Morse, Jeff Sterling, and Amy Wagner (chair/co-chairs of the Conference Board of Ordained Ministry), Bill Mock, Bob Higginbotham, and William Meekins (assistants to the bishop), Larry Homitsky, Lisa Grant, and Greg Cox (directors of Connectional Ministries), the District Superintendents who have served during the past 12 years, Norma Coast and Tina Wilson (Administrative Assistants), and all those whom he has ordained as deacons and elders. Bishop Bickerton closed his remarks with a reading from II Timothy 1:6-14.

CLOSING – Amy Wagner, Jeffrey Sterling, and Bishop Bickerton lead the body in the Covenant Prayer. The body united in voice as they sang “Go to the World”. The final blessing (Ephesians 3:20) was offered by Bishop Bickerton.

RECESS – The clergy session was recessed at 11:39 am.
OPENING WORSHIP – At 12:45 pm, the Conference Praise Band shared some pre-service music. The Conference then lifted praise to God by singing, “Holy, Holy, Holy”, “To God Be the Glory”, and “Praise to the Lord, the Almighty.” An offering was received for the Bishop’s Discretionary Fund. Bishop Bickerton preached a sermon entitled “The Way Through”, based on the text from Micah 6:1-8. “We are to do justice … we are to love kindness … we are to walk humbly with our God … these are time-tested answers to the hard realities of the church and the world in 2016.” The sacrament of Holy Communion was celebrated. Participants in the service included Bishop Thomas J. Bickerton, Vicki Stahlman, Nancy Denardo, Rev. William Meekins Jr., Rev. John Seth, Paul Morelli, Richard Hoffman, Diane Miller, Rev. Robert Zilhaver, Rev. Kevin Haley, Rev. Dr. Jonathan Bell, Rev. Wade Barto, Evan Snyder.

LEGISLATIVE SECTIONS – Following worship, the Annual Conference divided into legislative sections.

EVENING SESSION

CALL TO ORDER – Bishop Bickerton called the conference to order at 7:00 pm. He introduced Dayton Mix, representing Conference Secretary John R. Wilson, who is seriously ill and hospitalized. The Bishop expressed his appreciation for John’s work along-side him for 12 years, and then led in a prayer of healing.

PERSONAL PRIVILEGE – Bishop Bickerton introduced the body to Sally, his wife, and James, his father.

SESSIONS COMMITTEE – Vicki Stahlman, chair of the Conference Sessions Committee, highlighted logistical information to make this week a more pleasant experience for everyone.

BAR OF THE CONFERENCE - Dayton Mix, representing Conference Secretary John Wilson, moved that the bar of the conference be set to include “members who are seated at the tables within the plenary hall.” The motion to set the bar was APPROVED.

ROLL CALL - Dayton Mix, representing Conference Secretary John Wilson then explained the roll call of members. Members were guided through the completion of the attendance card and the seating designation card. Laity 646 in attendance, Clergy 536 in attendance plus 60 excused Clergy. Total 1242.

ELECTION OF TELLERS - Dayton Mix, representing Conference Secretary John Wilson, nominated tellers to serve during this year’s annual conference, as listed in the pre-conference booklet (page 11) with one substitution: Under Butler district, replace Dan Miller with Donna Doutt. He also nominated Daryl Mains as Head Teller. With those additions, the tellers were elected.
CONFERENCE RULES -- Amy Bentz, Chancellor, reported that, unlike many past years, there was no late legislation for this Annual Conference. Therefore, there was no need to suspend the rules. Also, the rules subcommittee had no other recommended rules changes to propose.

WELCOME -- Dr. Paul McNulty, President of Grove City College, expressed greetings to the Annual Conference. He also thanked the body for their patience in light of the ongoing construction on campus.

CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATES OF SOUTHWEST PA -- Rev. Liddy Barlow, Executive Minister, shared the ecumenical ways Christians can collaborate to build bridges in our communities. She directed people to their website at www.casp.org or Facebook for more information.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA -- Alan Morrison, Agenda Coordinator, moved for the setting of our published agenda as printed on page 15 in the pre-conference Journal. APPROVED.

QUADRENNIAL ELECTIONS: SECRETARY -- On nomination from Bishop Bickerton, John R. Wilson was unanimously elected Conference Secretary for the 2017-2020 quadrennium.

QUADRENNIAL ELECTIONS: CHANCELLOR -- On nomination from Bishop Bickerton, Amy Bentz was elected Conference Chancellor for the 2017-2020 quadrennium.

QUADRENNIAL ELECTIONS: LAY LEADER -- On nomination from the District Lay Leaders of our Conference, Sharon Gregory was elected Conference Lay Leader for the 2017-2020 quadrennium.

QUADRENNIAL ELECTIONS: TREASURER -- On nomination from Paul Ritchie, chair of the Conference Finance and Administration (CFA), Larry Bridge was elected Conference Treasurer for the 2017-2020 quadrennium.

ELECTION OF AUDITOR -- Paul Ritchie, Chair of CFA, nominated the firm of McCall, Scanlon, & Tice, LLC, be elected as the auditors for the 2017 annual audit. APPROVED.

GENERAL COUNCIL ON FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION (GCFA) -- Jodie Chriswell, representing GCFA, congratulated and thanked the conference for its support of the General Church at 100% of all apportionments asked of our conference.

AFRICA UNIVERSITY -- The Bishop also reported that we received a banner recognizing our faithfulness for the ongoing ministry of Africa University.
JURISDICTIONAL POOL – Bishop Bickerton explained the process of nominating potential members of jurisdictional and General Church boards and committees. Annual Conference members may use the forms on pages 556-557 in the Daily Journal to nominate someone to be considered for potential service in boards and agencies as needed. Our conference can nominate between 15 and 45 people to serve. Forms must be submitted to the Conference Secretary’s office by Friday, June 10th, by the close of evening session to be considered.

KEYSTONE UNITED METHODIST FEDERAL CREDIT UNION -- Kasi DiVinney, C.E.O., highlighted the work of the credit union and presented the Bishop with a check from the Credit Union VISA program of over $2600.00 towards new church starts.

COKESBURY – Cheryl Cotton, Community Resource Consultant for Western PA, highlighted Cokesbury resources to help local church ministries and presented the Bishop with a going away gift. She also introduced the new United Methodist Hymnal project, recently approved by General Conference.

UNITED METHODIST FOUNDATION – Rev. Ed Bailey, Executive Director, emphasized how churches of any size can benefit from the financial planning and strategies offered by the Foundation.

CONGREGATIONAL DEVELOPMENT – Amy Wagner underlined efforts to develop and redevelop congregational ministries, especially in reaching out to establish new places and new opportunities for new people to be able to worship.

THE STATE OF THE CHURCH – Bishop Bickerton reminded the members of the long and short term effects of the various meetings and conferences this season. Jurisdictional Conference, in July, will assign him to a different annual conference and determine who our next bishop will be. This week’s Annual Conference sessions serve as a time of reconnecting and refocusing on what are the most essential ministries we do in our regional and local churches. Last month’s General Conference redefined our focus as a Global Church in many areas, yet he stressed that in terms of human sexuality, we still have many with anxieties and concerns. General Conference tasked the Council of Bishops to explore ways to move forward as a united church while addressing those anxieties and concerns.

RECESS – Following announcements by Bill Patrick, Floor Manager, the Bishop shared the latest score from the Stanley Cup playoffs and declared the body in recess until Friday morning.
Having just completed General Conference, this is a good time to look at the representation of women at General Conference. Each annual conference elects an equal number of clergy and lay delegates. The number of delegates varies every four years based upon the number of lay and clergy members within an Annual Conference. The largest conferences of the United Methodist Church based upon membership are North Georgia, Virginia, Western North Carolina, Texas and Florida Annual Conference. Most annual conferences delegations tend to be representative proportionately to the number of female lay and clergy in the annual conference, however there are exceptions. Looking at some of these largest conferences, despite the large memberships, the percentage of female delegates in North Georgia’s delegation was only 27% female and the Texas delegation was only 16% female. Two of the largest conferences in the United States elected some of the lowest percentages of female delegates to General Conference according to the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women (GOSRW).

This causes GOSRW to ask the question “Do women want to be proportionately represented? Do women want to challenge the church for a more equal representation at the table with a more even 50/50 split between the genders? Is proportional representation the best women can and should strive to do? What would our delegations look like in a world which promoted “a continuing commitment to the full and equal responsibility and participation of women in the total life and mission of the Church, sharing fully in the power and in the policy-making at all levels of the Church’s life.”


Today, Bishop Bickerton gave the same type of challenge in his sermon, “The Way Through”. He asked the attendees to the 2016 Western Pennsylvania Annual Conference “What does the Lord require of me?” as posed by the prophet Micah. There were three answers: Do Justice, Love Kindness and Walk Humbly with God. Doing justice means that we as Christians must level the playing field for all whether this be women, the powerless, orphans, etc. To Love Kindness means to that we must abandon ourselves and love others more than ourselves. To Walk Humbly with God means that we need to take time to be with God and walk step by step on a daily basis.

The Bishop’s message was a refreshing reminder of a message shared over and over again by United Methodist Women. It was good to see the inclusion of the Conference President of United Methodist Women in the liturgy for communion. It is important that female leadership both laity and clergy be highlighted at Annual Conference.

The opening worship of Annual Conference set the tone for the weekend. The processional was plain with just a procession of district banners, Cabinet and District Lay Leaders, the Bishop and Conference Lay Leader. This procession had both female and male clergy and laity. This enabled the body to focus on the Road to Discipleship. Stripped of the trappings of high church with little decorations, the focus was Jesus Christ. The hymns focused on the holiness of God and the sacrifice of God’s son for our salvation. Let us continue this focus as we celebrate the ministry of our Bishop as he leaves our Annual Conference.

Barbara Hess (for Peggy Ward)
2016 Western Pennsylvania Conference

DAY TWO
Friday, June 10, 2016

MORNING SESSION

ORDER – Bishop Thomas J. Bickerton called the conference to order at 8:00 a.m.

CELEBRATING THE RETIRING CLASS OF 2016 – David Janz led the conference in recognizing this year’s retiring clergy and celebrating their ministries.

BISHOP’S DISCRETIONARY FUND – Bill Patrick, Floor Manager, reported that the body gave $8,344.83 to the Bishop’s Discretionary Fund to assist in emergencies.

MOTION – William Meekins, Jr. moved that the secretarial staff be instructed to send greetings to John Wilson, Conference Secretary. The motion was unanimously adopted.

FIRST EPISCOPAL BALLOT – Sharon Gregory, representing the delegation to General and Jurisdictional Conference briefed the conference concerning the process of nominating Episcopal candidates from Western Pennsylvania to the 2016 Northeastern Jurisdictional Conference. The delegation did not raise up any candidate as an episcopal nominee.

Bishop Bickerton briefed the conference on the rules regarding the balloting process (conference rule 2.3.10.7). All elders who have not yet reached the age of 68 are eligible as nominees and ballots were distributed. Eligible elders are listed in the Daily Journal on pages 504-512. The following elders, whose names were not listed, are also eligible (along with their ballot number): Rita Platt (297), Nancy Zahn (298), David Stains (299), David Streets (300), Emily Byrd (301), and Fred Monk (302). Sharon Gregory led the conference in prayer and then the first ballot for an episcopal nominee was cast.

CONSENT CALENDAR – Joel Garrett presented the Legislation and Corporation Consent Calendars (Daily Journal pages 605-608) with one correction: On page 605, delete lines 23-27. He also gave instructions for removing items from the calendars for debate.

PA COUNCIL OF CHURCHES – Sandra Strauss, representing the Pennsylvania Council of Churches, gave an overview of the ecumenical ministries we are a part of through our cooperation with other churches throughout the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

READING OF APPOINTMENTS: CABINET – Bishop Bickerton formally introduced the cabinet members for the 2016-2017 ministry year and fixed their appointments.
READING OF APPOINTMENTS: BUTLER DISTRICT – Bishop Bickerton read the new appointments to the Butler District while Joel Garrett, District Superintendent, and all current Butler District pastors welcomed and greeted each other.

GENERAL/JURISDICTIONAL CONFERENCE REPORT – Sharon Gregory, Chairperson of the General and Jurisdiction Conference delegations led in the report of the General Conference with the delegation standing behind her. Following Sharon’s report, the members of the Jurisdictional delegation were asked to come to the front of the plenary room. The Northeast Jurisdictional Conference will be held in Lancaster, Pa., from July 10-15, 2016. The Bishop called upon Louise Patterson, who led the body in prayer for the continuing work of our delegation.

FULL RIGHTS AND ORDINATION OF WOMEN – Bishop Bickerton drew attention that 2016 marks an historical milestone: It has been 60 years since women were granted full rights and ordination. Bishop Bickerton affirmed the importance of our women clergy.

READING OF APPOINTMENTS: CONNELLSVILLE DISTRICT – Bishop Bickerton read the new appointments to the Connellsville District while Bill Blair, District Superintendent, and all current Connellsville District pastors welcomed and greeted each other.

BUDGET PRESENTATION – Paul Ritchey, representing the Conference Council of Finance and Administration, offered a report on behalf of the council and presented the proposed budget for 2017.

READING OF APPOINTMENTS: ERIE-MEADVILLE DISTRICT – Bishop Bickerton read the new appointments to the Erie-Meadville District while Joseph Patterson, District Superintendent, and all current Erie-Meadville District pastors welcomed and greeted each other.

RS 304 BASE CASH COMPENSATION FOR PASTORS – Jim Kimmel, representing Section Three moved concurrence as amended by the section (Daily Journal, page 608, lines 20-27). It was approved.

FIRST EPISCOPAL BALLOT: RESULTS – Bishop Bickerton announced the results of the first Episcopal Ballot: 923 ballots were cast. 914 were valid ballots (9 invalid). There were 130 clergy that received at least one vote. To be elected, 458 votes were needed. There was no election.

SECOND EPISCOPAL BALLOT – After prayer, the house cast their second Episcopal ballot.

RECESS – Bill Patrick shared some announcements and then the body was recessed until 1:00.
AFTERNOON SESSION

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

SECOND EPISCOPAL BALLOT: RESULTS – Bishop Bickerton announced the results of the second Episcopal Ballot: 878 ballots were cast. 877 were valid ballots (1 invalid). There were 60 clergy that received at least one vote. To be elected, 439 votes were needed. There were no elections.

MOTION TO DISCONTINUE BALLOTING – On motion of Alan Morrison and support by the body, no additional ballots for Episcopal candidates were cast.

ANTI-RACISM MINISTRY TEAM – The team performed a skit about a modern-day Blind Bartimaeus who finds his eyes being opened by Jesus… and discovers he really hasn’t been able to see his own role in racism. Following the skit, Don Blinn challenged the conference to invite Jesus to really open all of our eyes to our own blindness to racism.

STUDY – Rev. Adam Hamilton shared insights regarding Effective Church Leadership and Ideas for Preaching and Worship he has learned from his ministry with The Church of the Resurrection, in Kansas City. Rev. Hamilton’s hope is to inspire, encourage, and equip the pastors of the conference to do God’s work. He emphasized the three areas of vital congregations: leadership, prayer & worship, and missional outreach to the community (evangelism). During his time with us, Rev. Hamilton inspired pastors and laity alike with multiple concrete ideas and translatable principles.

RECESS – Following Rev. Hamilton’s addresses, the body was in recess until the evening session.

EVENING SESSION

WORSHIP CELEBRATION – At 7:00 p.m., the conference gathered together for “A Celebration of our Journey Together with Bishop Thomas J. Bickerton.” During the service, personal testimonies were shared by the Rev. James Tubbs (Former Dean of the Cabinet), Laura Grace Orner (Youth Ministry Team President), The Rev. Gregory Cox (Director of Connectional Ministries), Sharon Gregory (Conference Lay Leader), Rebekah Swineford Clapp (New Provisional Member), and the Rev. Alyce Weaver-Dunn (Dean of the Cabinet). Other participants in the service were: The Rev. Ross Pryor, the Rev. Karen Trask, the Rev. Chris Kindle, Brenda Thompson, the Rev. Eric Park, Tara Park, the Rev. Darrell Greenawalt, Mary Urso, the Rev. Matt Judd, the Rev. Joel Garrett, the Rev. William B. Meekins Jr., Evan Snyder, and the Rev. Kevin Haley. An offering for Discipleship Initiatives was received. Following the worship service, a reception was held for Bishop Bickerton, Sally (his wife), and Jim (his father).
Today at Annual Conference this morning the 60th anniversary of females being ordained as full clergy was celebrated. All female clergy members were recognized from the conference floor and needless to say, it is about time. According to the General Commission on the Role and Status of Women (GCSRW) in their August 2015 issue of Women by the Numbers, only 27% of all clergy are female and 33% of all district superintendents are female. Compare this to the membership of the UMC which is 57% female according to the December 2015 issue of Women by the Numbers.

Initial observations of our Annual Conference by COSROW indicate that in legislative sections, both women and men spoke. According to monitor reports, 24.38% of those attending Annual Conference spoke during legislative sections. Of those that spoke, 34.5% were female and 65% were male. In addition, 30.8% of those that spoke were identified as clergy with 18% being female clergy and 81% being male clergy. This means that male clergy spoke 4.5 times more than female clergy. This is down from the high of male clergy speaking 6 times as many times as female clergy but there has not been much movement in the ratio of the number of male clergy comments versus female clergy comments in the past 5 years. Female clergy speak at the lowest rate overall with only 5.6% speaking during legislative section compared to 25% of male clergy who speak during legislative sections. These statistics for female clergy have remained consistent over the past several years.

Besides noting who spoke, monitors also noted the type of interactions during the legislative sections. Of the females who made contributions during legislative section 54% were questions while only 21% of male contributions were questions. Amongst females only 13.5% of the contributions were speeches for/against resolutions, amendments to resolutions, motions to accept or call for the question while 35.7% of male contributions were of this type. One male in one section interrupted without being called on and attempted to dominate the conversation. Among racial/ethnic persons attending Annual Conference only 1.8% spoke during legislative sections and only 8.4% of youth spoke.

Talking about what people are saying, it has also been noticed that sometimes what we say or who we include or do not include may have an impact at Annual Conference. We say things without thinking about how we may be hurting or excluding persons. Several times during Annual Conference participants have been asked to stand either to vote in a legislative section, to receive a ballot, or to be recognized to speak. Yet, it should be noted that we have participants at Annual Conference that cannot stand. I know that persons do not mean to be thoughtless but as pointed out by a gentleman in my legislative section when we were asked to stand, he added “And if you are not able to stand, please raise your hand.” He was sporting Canadian crutches.

So today, let us think about who we include (female clergy), who we exclude (Bishop Bickerton publicly apologized to Rev. Lisa Grant for omitting mentioning her when introducing leadership. Thank you Bishop.) and what we say. Even though what we say may not be meant to be hurtful or exclusionary, it is only when someone points out to us, that we become more aware how thoughtless we sometimes are.

Barbara Hess (for Peggy Ward)
DAY THREE  
Saturday, June 11, 2016

MORNING SESSION

COMMISSIONING SERVICE – The day’s activities began at 8:00 a.m. with the Commission Service. Rev. Tracy Cox brought God’s word to the body using Luke 10:1-12 as her text and entitling her sermon “Lost in Distraction.”

After the sermon, the following Elder candidates were presented to the body for examination: Megan Yvonne Berkebile, Angelique O’Dette Bradford, Robert Vernon Ellson, Nathanael Joel Fugate, James Terry Golla III, Jonathan Joseph Hartland, Melody Lynn Kimmel, Hannah Marie Loughman, Keith McGarvey, Christopher Drew Myers, Eric Martin Oliver, Derek Ronald Platt, Angel Marie Rishell, James Taylor Roberts, and Thomas Roy Scott.

The following Deacon candidates were presented to the body for examination: Rebekah Ruth Swineford Clapp, Matthew Francis Howe, Anais Lura Hussian, Sean Robert Lewis.

The following Provisional Members as Elders were presented to the body for examination: Paul Ambrose Harman III, Darryl S. Lockie, and Adam Joseph Stump.

An offering was received for the Conference Regional Mission Agencies.


ORDER -- Bishop Bickerton called the body to order at 9:48 a.m.

CONSENT CALENDAR ADOPTION -- Joel Garrett moved adoption of the consent calendar as amended. APPROVED.

PRIVILEGE – Bishop Bickerton introduced his son T.J. Bickerton, and shared updates about his family.

ADOPTION OF MINUTES – Mark Goswick moved adoption of the minutes as published in the Daily Journal pp. 609-619 and 623-625 for Thursday, June 9th and Friday, June 10th. Part of the body had not yet received the minutes, so their adoption was postponed until a later time.

PRIVILEGE – Bishop Bickerton called Adam Hamilton to the stage and expressed his deep appreciation for Adam’s ministry to the Church of Jesus Christ.
STUDY – Adam Hamilton then led the conference in his 3rd and final study.

AFTERNOON SESSION


ORDER -- Bishop Bickerton called the afternoon session to order at 3:15 p.m.

PRIVILEGE -- Pat Nelson introduced Scott Gallagher & Justin Judy. They were presented a golden sneaker award for their 500 mile walking journey to Annual Conference. Scott and Justin were given the opportunity to address the conference.

APPOINTMENT AND PRAYER FOR THE GREENSBURG DISTRICT -- Bishop Bickerton read the new appointments to the Greensburg District while Pat Nelson, District Superintendent, and all the Greensburg District pastors welcomed and greeted each other.

ADOPTION OF MINUTES -- The minutes of Thursday, June 9th and Friday, June 10th were APPROVED by the body.

ADOPTION OF MINUTES -- Mark Goswick moved that the conference secretary and staff be given the authority to record, print, and publish the minutes of today (Saturday, June 11th) and tomorrow (Sunday, June 12th). APPROVED.

JURISDICTIONAL POOL BALLOT -- Bishop Bickerton presented the “Western Pennsylvania Annual Conference 2016 Jurisdictional Nominations BALLOT” and made appropriate corrections. He then instructed the conference to complete their individual ballots and hand them to the tellers.

DISABILITY CONCERNS COMMITTEE -- Debbie Hills addressed the conference concerning the reality of mental health issues. She asked the conference to
work with the Disability Concerns Committee to make each church a place where everyone can find God’s grace.

CONFERENCE BOARD OF PENSIONS -- Gary Grau introduced Tom Parkinson to report on the Wellness program of the conference. He thanked the conference for responding so positively to the Wellness program. Tom introduced Christian Gabarda who presented the 2016 Wellness Champions award to Rev. & Mrs. Denton & Cathie Lester.

Tom Parkinson gave the conference a health care outlook and some of the plan design changes. Still, though, there is a possibility of a 12-15% increase in health care cost for 2017. Also, clergy should prepare for higher out-of-pocket costs, higher deductibles, and less HSA and HRA funding from the Conference.

In the area of pensions, all funds continue to be fully funded. He referred the conference to a Pension booklet which was distributed to the body.

APPOINTMENT AND PRAYER FOR THE INDIANA DISTRICT -- Bishop Bickerton read the new appointments to the Indiana District while Jim Pond, District Superintendent, and all the Indiana District pastors welcomed and greeted each other.

UMW -- Diane Miller told the conference about the mission of and through the United Methodist Women. Diane presented the first Friend of United Methodist Award to Brad Lauster.

UNSTOPPABLE -- Denise Nicole Stone told of Unstoppable event (9th grade to age 25). Unstoppable is to help young women to learn the issues, find a voice, change the world. Unstoppable will be held at California University of Pennsylvania on July 21st through July 24th.

BLACK COLLEGE FUND -- Faith Geer introduced Kadrien Wilson, a 2016 honor graduate from Bennett College. Kadrien told her story of how she has benefited from the Black College Fund.

MISSION AMBASSADOR -- Geraldine Truog presented a PowerPoint of her Mission Ambassador trip to Haiti, Nicaragua, and Bolivia.

MISSION AMBASSADOR -- Jodale “Jody” Barnhart spoke about her trip to South America, sharing her story through narration and slides. She also told about what Mission Ambassadors can do for the local church, and also what one should do to support the Mission Ambassador program.

BUDGET -- Paul Ritchey made a simple statement and then turned the process over to Sue Hutchins, Tom Kendig, and Larry Dunn. RS 401 “Funding for Ministry 2017 Budget” to the body (this is actually a substitute motion due to the changes made at General Conference). The motion from the Legislative Section was for concurrence (160 - 5 - 2).
IV Business of the Annual Conference

Tom Parkinson offered a substitute amendment. On page 513, substitute lines 28-34 with the following:
The Annual Conference directs the Council on Finance and Administration to set the Base Percentage “P” for the 2017 Connectional Shared Ministry budget at 12.0%.
In the event of changes in the 2017 Connectional Shared Ministry budget, the Council on Finance and Administration may reduce the Base Percentage “P,” but may not raise it above 12.0%.

Jennifer J. Craig offered an amendment to the amendment -- substitute 12.75% for the 12%.

Alan Brooks moved to refer the Parkinson and the Craig amendments to CFA for a report at the 2017 Annual Conference on the 2018 budget. APPROVED.

Seth McPherson offered an amendment to add 513 -- line 35
Be it further resolved that the CLT in consultation with the Personnel Team complete a comprehensive study of the WPA Conference staffing structure to creatively address:
1) The need for our Conference staffing structure to reflect a sustainable ministry honoring the local church’s faithful stewardship,
2) The scope and efficacy of the Conference staffing structure, and
3) Continuing the full utilization of the gifts of our Conference Staff, in concert with the Cabinet, to benefit the local church.
Report and recommendations will be given to Annual Conference 2017.

The McPherson amendment was APPROVED.

Following prayer, RS 401 was APPROVED as amended.

YOUTH AWARDS & PRESENTATIONS -- The youth delegation energized the conference with their presentation and their love for Jesus. They gave the Pineapple Award to Seward United Methodist Church and the Youth Worker’s Award to California United Methodist Church (accepted by Tosha Crawford and Joel Crawford). They presented Bishop Bickerton with a very unique gift -- a Chewbacca mask -- which the Bishop promptly donned.

APPOINTMENT AND PRAYER FOR THE JOHNSTOWN DISTRICT -- Bishop Bickerton read the new appointments to the Johnstown District while Alyce Weaver-Dunn, District Superintendent, and all the Johnstown District pastors welcomed and greeted each other.
RECESS -- Dinner recess was called at 5:30 p.m.

EVENING SESSION

ORDER -- Bishop Bickerton called the body to order at 7:00 p.m.

EVANGELISM – Paul Morelli, representing the Evangelism Team, shared the newest “Good News” video clip produced by About Face Church Outreach Consultants.

DENMAN AWARDS – Al Kimmel announced this year’s recipients of the Denman Awards, which recognize outstanding work in the area of evangelism. Bill Hebenthal received the laity award and David Stains received the clergy award.

CONFERENCE EVANGELISTS – Doug Burns, representing the Evangelism Team, introduced the approved Conference Evangelists: Luella Krieger, Christine Rogan, and John and Christine Zimmerman.

APPOINTMENT AND PRAYER FOR THE KANE DISTRICT -- Bishop Bickerton read the new appointments to the Kane District while J. Patrick Lenox, District Superintendent, and all the Kane District pastors welcomed and greeted each other.

JURISDICTIONAL POOL BALLOT: RESULTS – Bishop Bickerton reported that 765 ballots had been cast. The Clergy selected as our nominees for the Jurisdictional Pool are: Tracy J. Cox, Larry G. Dunn, Scott L. Gallagher, Pam Gardner, and Sara J. Wrona. The youth selected were: Ally Benn, Andrew Chung, Daniel J. Craig, Sarah Gallagher, and Mollie Landman. The young adults selected were: Laura Grace Orner, Joel Peterson, Sarah N. Raptosh, Rebecca Eimers, and Grant Shelfstall. Upon request from the Bishop, the conference affirmed ALL nominees as listed in the Jurisdictional Nomination Pool.

COMMITTEE ON THE EPISCOPACY -- Matt Judd, representing the Episcopacy Committee, recognized the members of the Bishop’s family in attendance. They presented gifts to Bishop Bickerton and Sally, his wife, along with Jim and Marlene, his parents. With donations from the local churches of the conference, a check was presented in honor of the Bishop for the Imagine No Malaria campaign in the amount of $75,638.51. Judd commented that, including the $2,000.00 given by the Youth Ministry Team earlier today, this check brings the total amount contributed from our conference to the Imagine No Malaria program to $2,126,158.90.


APPOINTMENT AND PRAYER FOR THE PITTSBURGH DISTRICT -- Bishop Bickerton read the new appointments to the Pittsburgh District while Paul Taylor,
IV Business of the Annual Conference

District Superintendent, and all the Pittsburgh District pastors welcomed and greeted each other.

CABINET REPORT – Alyce Weaver Dunn, Dean of the Cabinet, led the District Superintendents and extended cabinet members in presenting this year’s cabinet presentation.

JOINT STAFF PRESENTATION – Greg Cox, Director of Connectional Ministries, led the conference staff in sharing creative updates on the various conference ministries they are able to help lead.

APPOINTMENT AND PRAYER FOR THE WASHINGTON DISTRICT – Bishop Bickerton read the new appointments to the Washington District while Braford Lauster, District Superintendent, and all the Washington District pastors welcomed and greeted each other.

FIXING OF APPOINTMENTS – At 9:25 p.m., Bishop Bickerton declared all appointments for the upcoming year fixed.

LAITY REPORT – Sharon Gregory, Conference Lay Leader, with the lay leaders of the individual districts, shared reminders of some of the themes and projects we have set our sights on as a conference in the past four years and challenged the conference to continue on as we step into the next four.

PRIVILEGE – Nancy DeNardo, delegate to General Conference, reported that Sharon Gregory, Conference Lay Leader in Western Pennsylvania, was elected as president of the Association of Annual Conference Lay Leaders while at General Conference 2016 last month.

KOREAN MINISTRY PLAN -- Nancy DeNardo and Sung S. Chung, delegates to General Conference, shared the General Conference’s renewed commitment to its ongoing ministries in Korea. They also presented specially made crosses to each of our six Korean pastors in Western Pennsylvania.

DEACONS ANNIVERSARY – Bishop Bickerton introduced a video highlighting the ministry of United Methodist Deacons in celebration of the creation of the order of Deacon 20 years ago.

WESTERN PA - NICARAGUA PARTNERSHIP ANNIVERSARY – Bishop Bickerton introduced a video celebrating 30 years of ministry partnership between our conference and Nicaragua.

MONITORING REPORT – Peggy Ward presented the monitoring report praising the ways that women and people of color were woven into the fabric of our conference sessions, while challenging all to do even better as we step into the future as a
conference. She closed with ways that members of conference can intentionally become even more inclusive: 1) Listen. 2) Learn, and 3) Act.

GRATITUDE – Bishop Bickerton thanked the members of the Conference Sessions Team, the secretarial staff, and the floor managers.

RECESS -- Bishop Bickerton dismissed the conference for the evening at 10:15 p.m. to reconvene tomorrow morning at 9:00 a.m. for the Ordination Service.

DAY FOUR
June 12, 2016

MORNING SESSION

ORDINATION – The conference gathered at 9:00 AM for a service of Reaffirmation of Baptism, Ordination, and Holy Communion. Bishop Thomas J. Bickerton was the preacher. Participants in the service were Bishop Thomas J. Bickerton, Sharon Gregory, the Rev. Janet Lord, Evan Snyder, the Rev. Kelley Schanely, the Rev. Kevin R. Haley, the Rev. Wade Barto, the Rev. Dr. Jonathan Bell, Katie Gascoine, Amy Haley, the Rev. Charles Hildbold, Conference Youth, the Rev. Seth McClymonds, Bill Jacka, the Rev. Barbara J. Moore, the Rev. Dr. Edward Saxman, and the Rev. Mark E. Goswick.

Received as Full members and Ordained as Elders: Chad J. Bogdewic, Larry G. Dunn, Melissa I. Geisler, Dianne D. Glave, Julie S. Kolacz, and Scott D. Lawrence.

Received as Full member Kathleen A. McCoy Schoeneck.

Received as Associate member Joni K. Williams.

ADJOURNMENT – Following the ordination service, Bishop Bickerton adjourned the conference.
IV Business of the Annual Conference

COMMISSION ON THE STATUS AND ROLE OF WOMEN (COSROW)
Saturday, June 11, 2016

We have come to the end of another Annual Conference. It has been a time largely focused on endings and new beginnings.

I thank Barbara Hess for stepping up to help this year. She has written the reports for the past 2 days, if you haven’t read them, please look in the daily journal, pages 620 and 626.

Worships have had inclusion of gender, race/ethnicity and age. I have heard inclusive language from a variety of people. We have been challenged to deal with racism and awareness of mental health issues. Monitoring reports of the legislative committees show we continue to struggle with including all the voices. Our legislation plenaries had several women at the mic’s making statements and amendments as well as a youth.

So you have heard the numbers and we have reflected back how Annual Conference is progressing toward full inclusion.

Now we ask you:
Have women, People of Color come far enough?
Should women/People of Color want to be proportionally represented?
Is this the best we can do and should strive for?

If you answer “no” to this questions, then it is time for all of us to begin to do something. Each of us needs to become an ally to the marginalized in our midst.

How to be an ally

1. Listen -- To the words and message of this report, to marginalized colleagues, congregation members, friends and family. Seek them out and then listen. Listen, do not debate, do not look for errors or faulty logic, simply listen. Realize that there is a perspective, a lived experience that may be different from yours. Do not make it conform to yours, listen.

2. Learn -- Read, Watch, Listen -- There is so much information out there. Intentionally put yourself in the presence of those that will address issues. Form intentional groups that give the opportunity to further your insights. But first you have to be willing to be open, vulnerable and to see what you may not have seen before.

Observe the language you use- is it accessible for everyone, does it marginalize anyone, who is the unspoken ‘normal’ person, if you changed the pronoun/group would it make you uncomfortable?

3. Act -- Be aware that maybe you don’t know, what you don’t know. Let that guide you to look, listen and wait before jumping in, taking over and behaving in ways that push others aside.

Make physical, emotional and mental space for marginalized people. The Bishop shared a strategy he uses of post it notes- strategies such as these attempt to give everyone equal access and voice to input and decision- making. How else can we shift the standard operating procedures to be more inclusive? We track how many speeches for/against, what about who is making those speeches?

Think about it- churches send their delegates and clergy here to participate and represent them. But truly, when we as an Annual Conference sideline, marginalize and trivialize input based
on gender, race/ethnicity, ableisms, ageism, or sexual orientation, we also do that to the churches they represent.

Stand up against language that demeans those on the margins, subtle attitudes that don’t take them seriously, and socialization that keeps us all in rigid boxes.

Posted on March 2008 by Ross Wantland  adapted 6/11/16 by Peggy Ward
http://publici.ucimc.org/from-the-inside-out/


You have heard powerful messages from women and People of Color during our time together- do not fall into the trap of exceptionality; while extraordinary individuals, they are not unique. Do not silence voices and limit opportunities by perpetuating the myth of Male and White as ‘normal’ and the few visible as unique. Think of it, each time a white male preaches a powerful message, chairs a committee, gives a report, if we have any reaction at all it is treated as matter of fact, normal, nothing to be noted. However, change the gender, race, age, etc. and we marvel at the exceptional skill of the unique individual.

I have one cautionary reminder to us as we struggle with the issues that the church as a whole, and we in Western Pennsylvania, face, especially the unity of the church. As we think about those times we have been up against split or unity, I want to remind us, in the most neutral way possible, that they have generally been over issues of who can be included and who cannot, and how we value ‘others’. Marginalization led to the establishment of the AME church, and the Central Jurisdiction, far from proud moments in our history. Our efforts at correcting prior wrongs- Full clergy rights for women, women as delegates, elimination of the Central Jurisdiction, while noble in word, have continued to be marginalizing in deed. I believe, that we cannot maintain unity without dealing with our sins of marginalization.

So we are at a time of change. COSROW was reorganized and restarted during Bishop Bickerton’s time here. This week we have celebrated his ministry in Western Pennsylvania as we have begun looking to the future and the changes that will come. We passed legislation to look at our staffing, etc. seeing this time of change as an opportune time to do so. I encourage us to embrace this time of change and to direct that change. Let it be a time for us to change the way we have related to each other. Let us make this a change to intentionally focus on eliminating the marginalization of others and to fully embrace our call to be people of God and light to the world. We can do this, individually and corporately. We can reshape the world, by reshaping our relationships right here in Western Pennsylvania, right now. You know what you need to do to begin this journey. Just do as Jesus said, “Follow Me.”

May it be so

Peggy Ward, Chairperson
Western Pennsylvania Commission on the Status and Role of Women
CERTIFICATION OF MINUTES

Bishop Thomas J. Bickerton
President

Rev. John R. Wilson
Secretary
CERTIFICATE OF COMMISSIONING

This is to certify that on Saturday, June 11, 2016 at Grove City College, Grove City, Pennsylvania, I received as Probationary Members and Commissioned as Ministers:

DEACON TRACK

Rebekah Ruth Swineford Clapp, Matthew Francis Howe,
Anias Lura Hussian, Sean R Lewis

ELDER TRACK

Megan Yvonne Berkebile, Angelique O’Dette Bradford,
Robert Vernon Ellson, Nathanael Joel Fugate, James Terry Golla III,
Jonathan Joseph Hartland, Melody Lynn Colver Kimmel,
Hannah Marie Loughman, Keith Thomas McGarvey,
Christopher Drew Myers, Eric Martin Oliver, Derek Ronald Platt,
Angela Marie Rishell, James Taylor Roberts, Thomas Roy Scott

ELDERS as Probationary Members

Paul Ambrose Harman III, Darryl S. Lockie, Adam Joseph Stump

Bishop Thomas J. Bickerton
Resident Bishop
CERTIFICATE OF MEMBERSHIP

This is to certify that on Sunday, June 12, 2016 at Grove City College, Grove City, Pennsylvania, I Received as Associate Members:

Receiving Associate Membership was:

Joni Kay Williams

Bishop Thomas J. Bickerton

Resident Bishop
CERTIFICATE OF ORDINATION

This is to certify that on Sunday, June 12, 2016 at Grove City College, Grove City, Pennsylvania, I ordained as ELDERS:

Receiving Full Membership and Elder's Orders were:

Chad Jeremy Bogdewic, Larry Gene Dunn, Melissa Irene Geisler, Dianne Dawn Glave, Julie Sparks Kolacz, Scott Daniel Lawrence

Receiving Full Membership as an Elder

Kathleen Ann McCoy Schoeneck

Bishop Thomas J. Bickerton
Resident Bishop
Elders Class 2016

Chad Bogdewic
Dianne Glave
Kathleen Schoeneck
Larry Dunn
Julie Kolacz
Associate Member
Melissa Geisler
Joni Williams
Full Member Received

Permission for photos should be sent to Jackie.Campbell@wpaumc.org or 1-800-886-3382 x 229
Provisional Members 2016 Shown from left to right,
4th row - James Roberts, Darryl Lockie and Adam Stump.
3rd row - Keith McGarvey, Paul A. Harman III, Derek Platt, and Eric Oliver.
2nd row - Megan Berkebile, Hannah Loughman, Melody Kimmel, and Matthew Howe.
Front row, are Rebekah Clapp, Angela Rishell, Anais Hussian, Angelique Bradford.

2016 Course of Study Graduates Shown from left are Bruce A. Anthony, Joni Williams, Rebecca L. Edwards, Harold W. Blair, and Jerrold Pawloski. Missing from photo is Dawn E. Krishart.