XII REPORTS

Stories & Dreams:
A WPAUMC Report on Past Progress and Future Plans in Dismantling Racism
To the Northeastern Jurisdiction of the UMC College of Bishops

But speaking the truth in love, we must grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by every ligament with which it is equipped, as each part is working properly, promotes the body’s growth in building itself up in love. Ephesians 4:15-16 (New Revised Standard Version)

Our Stories
When I was baptized, the Methodist Church was segregated. At that time, an African American could not have served as Bishop of this Episcopal Area. Thankfully, The United Methodist Church desegregated in 1968 and an African American bishop was the first to serve the newly organized Western Pennsylvania (WPA) Annual Conference. We have come a long way since Bishop Roy C. Nichols was assigned to serve the Western PA Conference. But we still have a long way to go as an annual conference. There are places in our annual conference where persons of African descent are not welcomed. My husband and I have experienced racism in this region. Members of this annual conference have confessed to me they struggle with their own racism. Our annual conference membership is 98.7% white in spite of the fact that our geographic region is 89% white. We still have much work to do.

But I have also witnessed persons of every hue worshipping together in this annual conference. I have witnessed persons earnestly wrestling as they recognized for the first time the privileges they have enjoyed because of their race. I have experienced an annual conference that in many ways is ready and willing to struggle with issues of racism, and how that impacts their ability to attract and make disciples for Jesus Christ. I am looking forward to our continued journey together as we act to show the world that Black Lives Matter to the United Methodists of WPA.

Introduction
At the 2016 Northeastern Jurisdictional Conference, the College of Bishops outlined a Call to Action for the Northeastern Jurisdiction (NEJ) as a body to further dismantle racism. Bishop Sandra Steiner Ball shared Ephesians 4:15-16, shared in the opening of the report, as the theological foundation of the call: the church is like parts of a body, much like the NEJ and WPAUMC. Both organizations rely on ligaments or connections to one another to help to coordinate the whole. Together, we are called as followers of Jesus Christ, as the body or church, to continue anti-racism initiatives. In doing so, we continue to challenge ourselves and others in this renewed action. (Statement From the Northeastern Jurisdiction College of Bishops, Delivered at the Opening of the 2016 Northeastern Jurisdiction
Conference by Bishop Sandra Steiner Ball, President of the NEJ College of Bishops, Wednesday, July 13, 2016)

The Call to Action:
The College of Bishops Outlined Desired Outcomes to Dismantle Racism in the NEJ
Each conference will have a plan by January 2018 for addressing the systemic and structural forms of racism in their conference and state. And each conference will report their progress at each annual conference session and at the 2020 Jurisdictional Conference. The plan (outcomes) will include:
1. New paradigms and a new way of life of the conference for addressing structural and systemic forms of racism
2. How clergy and lay leadership will be trained and taught to engage the plan with their congregation and community
3. The number of new Black and ethnic faith communities to be started
4. Partnerships with area resourcing agencies to assist in the effort
5. Accountability steps

WPAUMC Stories . . . Dreams . . . Assessment
In response to the exhortation by the NEJ bishops, the WPAUMC will continue to dismantle racism through reporting and action with: Our Stories--narratives of past progress through anti-racism initiatives; Our Dreams--future plans; and Assessment--evaluation of the progress of our institution. Through stories, dreams, and assessment, we will hold the institution and one another accountable. The WPAUMC’s report and ongoing progress will be shared by Bishop Cynthia Moore-Koikoi at the 2018 and 2019 WPAUMC Annual Conferences, and the 2020 Jurisdictional Conference.

Our Team
Several individuals and groups in the WPAUMC, including conference committees, contributed to the report as they focused on defining racism, identifying the WPAUMC’s goal, celebrating past efforts, making action plans; and identifying assessment tools to continue to dismantle racism: Bishop Cynthia Moore-Koikoi; the Anti-Racism Team; Board of Ministry; the Cabinet; Council on Finance & Administration; Conference Programming Staff; Amy Wagner, Office of Congregational Development and Revitalization; Dianne Glave, Office of Diversity Development and Inclusion; Ethnic Local Church Concerns; Parish and Community Development; Liz Lennox, Conference Center Communications; John R. Wilson, Conference Secretary; and the Episcopal Office.

Racism Defined
The Stories & Dreams Team define racism as:
- Prejudice + Having the power and influence to negatively impact people of color through institutions and structures that include the WPAUMC
• Incorrectly assuming that a person with a different skin color is inferior in some way

We exhort laity and clergy to keep this definition at the forefront of our conversations as we continue to dismantle racism in the name of Jesus Christ. He advocated for justice throughout His ministry, which for the WPAUMC includes institutional racism. In tandem with the definition, one of the WPAUMC focus areas is dismantling institutional racism. Ultimately, we are all affected by the damage done by racism though people of color are repeatedly and directly impacted by racism.

Our Goal
As we acknowledge the debilitating effects of racism in the Christ-centered tradition of justice, the team identified our goal for the WPAUMC: becoming an Antiracist Multicultural Institution--fully inclusive and has overcome systemic racism--by dismantling systemic and structural racism highlighting past progress, planning for the future, and assessing ongoing efforts.

Our Challenges
With our goal in mind, the WPAUMC has fallen short in dismantling racism including the following challenges we must continue to overcome:

• Low interest in dismantling racism:
  ○ Some clergy and laity feel too over-extended to participate in dismantling racism and others are not interested in ethnic diversity and inclusion
  ○ White privilege and white fragility brings some conversations and action to a halt
  ○ Some clergy and laity claim that racism does not exist or is not a problem because there are so few persons of color in our region
  ○ Others claim to be colorblind

• Few laity/people of color in congregations; numbers are low particularly in rural areas

• Few and struggling racial/ethnic clergy: many face isolation, racism, and/or dislocation from other persons of color

• Lack of preparation for those serving in and receiving cross-cultural racial/ethnic appointments, which limits being welcoming and building an inclusive environment

Our Stories: Past Progress (see Appendix A)
Our team shared many inspiring stories that highlight past work dismantling institutional racism in the WPAUMC. The following is an overview with more details in the appendix:

• Planned, launched, and supported Roots of Faith, a new multi-ethnic faith community
• Developed intentional plans to support new ethnic clergy in cross-cultural racial/ethnic appointments
Continued to support racial/ethnic clergy through the Office of Diversity Development and Inclusion including a racial/ethnic clergy retreat

- Supported ethnic communities and churches including the Fijian Community in the Washington District
- Offered diversity, inclusion, and anti-racism training throughout the annual conference
- Offered leadership development in diversity and inclusion, and cultural competence including Board of Ministry committee members
- Provided grant money for racial/ethnic clergy retreats; ethnic local churches; the Fijian community; safe places for diverse teens in Pittsburgh’s North Boroughs; Roots of Faith, a multi-ethnic new faith community; and Native American initiatives

With all we have accomplished much is left to be done.

Our Dreams: Future Plans/Outcomes (see Appendix B)

Through the creativity of the team, we thought big as we continue to dismantle racism. Many of the dreams or plans overlap with one another and reflect our commitment to dismantling institutional racism. The following is an overview with more details in the Appendix B:

- Launch and support new multi-ethnic faith communities
- Revitalize existing African American churches
- Strengthen Conference hiring practices for more ethnic diversity
- Provide cultural sensitivity training including specific groups like provisional clergy, and with our counselors and deans of our Camps
- Improve leadership development so that many across the conference can lead in dismantling racism
- Support racial/ethnic clergy
- Seek and provide grant money for the purpose of supporting racial/ethnic clergy and developing outreach

With these and other dreams, our strength in anti-racism awareness has long and heavily depended on education through reading and watching films, which included discussions. We need to continue education while shifting to more action, for example, launching new multi-ethnic faith communities.

Assessment

Turning to assessing our goals and plans, the primary emphasis must be institutional. Broadly and institutionally, we will evaluate the WPAUMC’s progress using the Crossroads Antiracism Organizing and Training Continuum on Becoming Antiracist Multicultural Institution. The assessment is both quantitative and qualitative with a scale ranging from 1 to 6 (1 is the lowest and 6 is the highest)
Our next step as an institution is to continue to dismantle racism moving fully into 3: “Symbolic Change: A Multicultural Institution.”

One way to gauge institutional progress moving into phase 3 is increasing the number of our ordained racial-ethnic clergy, strengthening African American congregations, and starting more new multi-ethnic faith communities. Continuing into 2018, we have set many goals through 2020:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>Goal for 2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ordained Racial/Ethnic Clergy</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Add 5 additional ordained racial/ethnic clergy for a total of 20, which will be a 33% increase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American Faith Communities</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Strengthen 1 existing church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic Faith Community</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>No Increase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-ethnic Faith Communities</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Add 2 additional churches for a total of 6, which is a 50% increase</td>
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The second institutional assessment would focus on leadership in the Conference using the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI), https://idiinventory.com, to build intercultural competence in ethnic diversity and inclusion. Those initially assessed would include the cabinet, conference committee members, and programming staff. After this first wave of assessments, an expansion could include clergy and lay leaders. We will turn to the General Commission on Religion and Race who is IDI certified to do the assessments.

Finally, the Stories and Dreams Team has identified specific plans as part of a broader institutional change detailed in Appendix B. Each plan is unique to each team calling for unique assessment methods.
Assessment Methods

- Time frame and/or deadline completion of task
- Qualitative (stories, exit interviews, open-ended questions, focus groups, observations)
- Quantitative: (standardized evaluations, demographics, institutional data)

Institutional Deadlines In Writing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Report Submission</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>June 2018 WPAUMC Annual Conference</td>
<td>Share the Initial Report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 2019 WPAUMC Annual Conference</td>
<td>Share Update of Progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020 Northeastern Jurisdictional Conference</td>
<td>Share the Initial Report and Provide Update of Continued Progress</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We Remember

We would be remiss as we continue our work if we did not remember so many who have and continue to do anti-racism work in the WPAUMC. In particular, we honor those who have been in the trenches for decades, whose work has not always been publicly acknowledged: William B. Meekins, Jr., Peggy Ward, Tracy Merrick, Bob Wilson and Don Blinn.

Our Dreams

I dream of a day when the racial demographics of the laity and clergy of The United Methodist Church in Western Pennsylvania mirror the demographics of the region. I dream of the day that when we gather for worship we respond as did a church musician in conversation with a parishioner who complained about the use of drums in one song during worship. The musician said, “We sing each other’s hymns because that’s what disciples do for one another.” I dream of a day when the Cabinet will not have to ask if it is safe to appoint a person of color to any of the churches in Western Pennsylvania. I dream of a day when the concerns and issues of any of our children become our collective concerns and issues for which we actively seek change.

Blessings,

Bishop Cynthia Moore-Koikoi
Stories: Past Progress (Appendix A)

Anti-Racism Team (ART)

Story 1: 2 ½ Day Anti-Racism Training by Crossroads
After previous attempts of offering anti-racism training, Crossroads Antiracism Organizing & Training was hired to present “Analyzing and Understanding Systemic Racism,” a 2 ½ day training, to 40+ lay and clergy in our Conference. From this intensive exploration of institutional racism, a team of twelve members organized to begin the process of dismantling racism within the conference. ART became an official organization of the conference under the authority of Ethnic Local Church Concerns (ELCC).

Story 2: Shelly Tochluk Witnessing Whiteness
Shelly Tochluk, author of Witnessing Whiteness: The Need to Talk About Race and How to Do It, was brought to WPA to meet with the cabinet to engage them in dialogue and discussion concerning “whiteness” as explored in her book. She stirred the waters and caused much soul-searching, which led to further initiatives for addressing systemic racism within the annual conference.

Other Anti-Racism Initiatives
- District cluster events – basic concepts presented by ART members:
  - Franklin District – participants had a choice; sessions well-received
  - Kane District – participation required by DS; significant push back by some participants
- Shelly Tochluk Witnessing Whiteness
  - Three venues: Cabinet & Conference Center staff; Conference-wide event at Monroeville UMC; evening session for ART and First United Methodist Church Pittsburgh (FUMC) Wrestling with Racism
  - Responses to all sessions were extremely positive; some Cabinet members expressed an interest in inviting Shelly back
  - Shelly’s meeting with the Cabinet was the catalyst for the Kane, Washington and Erie-Meadville Districts anti-racism programs
- Implicit Bias seminars
  - Presentations at Lay Academy
  - Two seminars led by David Harris, Law Professor at the University of Pittsburgh and expert on implicit bias – very well received
  - ART developed seminars presented in Ellwood City and Johnstown
  - Included in provisional candidate training
- Lenten Devotional written by Steve Tuell, Professor at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary
- Annual Conference:
  - 2016 - Skit written by Jim Walker; now available at www.wpaumc.org/colorblind
  - 2017 – Three videos – one recorded in house
  - Previous years – basic lay academy classes
● Various studies/videos:
  ○ COSROW – the book *Power, Privilege and Difference* by Allan G. Johnson
  ○ Dismantling racism book studies
  ○ Video program at Ambridge UMC
● (Lisa and Ed) Rhymes seminars: about 8-9 years ago
  ○ Two series of required conference-wide training, primarily to clergy
● Crossroads beginning 6-7 years ago, and continues
  ○ Two 2.5 day trainings
● Weekend retreat with Garlinda Burton, General Commission on Religion and Race (GCORR) – October 2016
  ○ How to develop relationships with allies and with partners who are already performing anti-racism work
● Witnessing Whiteness conversations in Erie-Meadville and Washington Districts
● Wrestling with Racism:
  ○ FUMC Pittsburgh started a Wrestling with Racism Team about 8-9 years ago
  ○ Viewed films and read books together
  ○ 3-4 years ago, members of Warren United Methodist Church (WUMC) and Anne Ashley United Methodist churches started to meet with the group
  ○ In December 2015, the group met at Warren United Methodist Church for the first time and has gathered there every month since
  ○ In addition, some members of WUMC and FUMC have been reading with children in the after school program at Warren
  ○ The Pittsburgh District Superintendent asked members of the team to lead four regional meetings in the Pittsburgh District to encourage conversations and studies around race. The group also met with two churches individually: St Paul’s United Methodist Church and Christ Church Bethel Park. During these gathering, ideas were shared with approximately 120 people from across the district. Another session is being planned with Monroeville United Methodist Church. The overall response was extremely encouraging.

**Board of Ministry (BOM)**

*Story 1: Training with the General Commission on Religion and Race (GCORR)*

At our January 2017 combined meeting with the Cabinet, a representative from GCORR facilitated training on cultural competency and implicit bias. This was just a start but it is indicative of our desire as a board to eliminate institutional racism and the impact of implicit bias from our work. We believe this is essential as we interview and recommend candidates, and work with pastors at moments of significant transition in their ministry.

*Story 2: Leadership in the Work of the Board*

We have been intentional about raising diverse leadership among the membership of our board. Though we were unable this past year to include diversity among the co-chairs of the Board, David Janz and Eric Raygor, they, along with the executive committee, are committed to diverse leadership in every area of our work. The first step was to be intentional about persons of color leading devotions and prayer. We hope this demonstrates
to our Board, and to the candidates who are with us at these meetings, that we value diversity, and desire to listen to all voices, and leadership by people from different cultural backgrounds. By beginning with something as simple as devotionals and prayer, our hope is to develop a culture for the Board that does not naturally default to the stereotypical white male leadership.

Cabinet

Story 1: Witnessing Whiteness: The Need to Talk About Race and How to Do It by Shelly Tochluk

The cabinet read Dr. Tochluk’s book and then had the privilege of two-days of teaching and dialogue with Dr. Tochluk. It was an eye-opening and mind-opening time discussing racism and how white culture and white privilege are part of the underlying structure that supports racism in the U.S. It was a powerful, even difficult time, of learning and sharing as we had in depth discussion about systemic racism. We had open, honest discussion in a place where we could be brave enough to trust one another with some very straightforward sharing about racism. Dr. Tochluk’s book and in her dialogue with us talked about the need for “brave spaces” rather than just “safe places” for working on dismantling racism.

Story 2: Cross-Cultural Racial/Ethnic Appointments

The cabinet undertook the initiative to work harder at setting our racial/ethnic pastors up for success and being proactive about cross-cultural racial/ethnic appointments rather than reacting later. We started addressing the obvious reality that it is not enough to simply make a cross cultural appointment. We needed to make some investment of teaching and equipping our pastors and congregations even before the appointment was announced or at least before the pastor moved in. We made a marked effort to continue to walk with the pastors and congregations through the first year of the appointment to offer further educational help and to facilitate dialogue to help congregation, community, and pastor to work together in living out the Gospel.

Other Anti-Racism Initiatives

- Held mandatory trainings regarding racism to raise awareness and offered suggestions for action steps to help congregations work towards dismantling racism
- Hosted events on our districts with our conference dismantling racism teams including ART

Conference Program Staff

Story: Multiple - Guided and Modeled Conversations Around Race and Racism

Conference program staff continues to model dismantling racism and to lead conversations throughout the annual conference. We continue to promote awareness and will also continue to expand our efforts with action. Some of the work in awareness includes
facilitated conversations during Confirmation Tours and SPARK. Our work in awareness includes:

- Clergy Excellence: facilitated conversation in Clergy Communities of practice based on *Why Are all the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria*
- Young People’s Ministry: facilitated conversations by youth on anti-racism
- Confirmation Tours: conversations about empathy towards kids of color
- Staff conversations: Shelly Tochluk visit and Vital Conversations small group
- Individual staff developed cultural competence:
  - Book studies in jurisdictional and national gatherings
  - Leader training conversations about bias and cultural competency

**Office of Congregational Development & Revitalization**

*Story 1: Roots of Faith / Faith UMC in Fox Chapel*

Roots of Faith in Sharpsburg began as an outreach ministry of Faith UMC in Fox Chapel. The two communities are part of a joint school district that had—at the time of Roots of Faith’s launch—the largest income gap between neighboring towns in the state of Pennsylvania. The vision of Roots of Faith was to build relationships across socio-economic differences, and they soon realized that also meant including racial diversity. Faith UMC continues to be the most fully invested congregation in the Mosaix Multiethnic Conversations cohort and has initiated intentional conversations around race in their congregation and by the extension of Roots of Faith.

The image that reflects their story is of a young African American girl introducing a white member of Faith UMC to other neighborhood children, calling her “my first friend here at Roots of Faith.”

*Story 2: Fijian Faith Community*

Several years ago, a growing number of native Fijian people came to rural southwestern Pennsylvania to work in the natural gas industry. A couple of people came to Point Marion United Methodist Church, and met their pastor, Beverly Roscoe. She welcomed them and helped the congregation to welcome them, as well. In time, a Fijian-language worship service began at Point Marion, led by Fijian lay persons and Pastor Roscoe, through a translator. Relationships between the rural white congregation and the Fijian community have grown in ways that recognize the strengths of each, and together they have developed new ministries to the community (GED tutoring, food pantries, etc.). They also took a short-term relationship-building trip to Fiji in the summer 2017.

*Other Anti-Racism Initiatives*

- Ethnic Local Church Concerns and Parish and Community Development partnership to budget up to $300,000 for the launch of a black or multi-ethnic new faith community
Intentional inclusion of diverse voices, as authors and presenters, in training opportunities offered through the Office of Congregational Development, including a session focused specifically on multi-ethnic ministry in the New Church Academy

Mosaix Multiethnic Conversations cohort of clergy and lay people

Participation in GCORR trainings, staff Vital Conversations, and Cabinet/staff Witnessing Whiteness event

Inviting congregations to look carefully at the diversity of their community, and consider ways to connect to persons of other ethnicities in their communities

Office of Diversity Development and Inclusion

Story 1: Anti-Racism Video at 2017 Annual Conference
Together, the Office of Diversity Development and Inclusion and the Anti-Racism Team worked for several months on an in-house video for the 2017 Annual Conference. The collaborative work drew on the many gifts of individuals: one was compellingly creative, another was skillfully administrative, and yet another was an inspiring leader. Would we have a video after many months of planning, coming up with a script and filming? Ultimately, the 2017 Annual Conference “Let’s Talk About Race” was completed: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B6-UNrl2k10&feature=youtu.be. The planning team was also concerned about the reception of the video because of past resistance to anti-racism initiatives in our conference. Many responded positively to the video. Others responded negatively including a debate on Facebook. Anti-racism work is often a struggle including facing negative feedback. Whether positive or negative, we were grateful for the dialogue. Through it all, we understood that Jesus’ ministry was challenging as He sought justice for people who were marginalized. Looking to His ministry as a model, we worked collaboratively, produced a well-crafted video, and encouraged others to challenge injustice.

Story 2: Multi-Ethnic Clergy Retreat
In 2015, William B. Meekins, Jr. first initiated the yearly racial/ethnic clergy retreat to support clergy who are isolated and experience racism in our conference. Working with Pastor Meekins over the last few years, Pastor Dianne Glave witnessed and personally experienced how the gathering of racial/ethnic clergy has been a space to lament and express joy serving in the WPAUMC, a predominantly white conference. We discussed racism and practice contemplation without having to defend experiencing racism. Deeper connections between Korean and black clergy, and African and African American clergy continue to develop. Such relationship-building must be considered in the context of intergroup tensions between various ethnic groups common across the U.S. The clergy continue to strive to come together supporting one another.

Other Anti-Racism Initiatives
- Support clergy in new and existing cross-cultural racial/ethnic appointments
- Visits to churches with cross-cultural racial/ethnic clergy appointments including some Sundays participating in worship, and one-on-one on a weekday
Participate in worship services in predominantly white churches across the conference including preaching and other liturgical practices, focusing specifically on diversity, anti-racism, and inclusion.

- Support racial/ethnic congregations (African American and Latino)
- Develop cultural competencies through conversations and direction to resources for gatherings and events like small groups and worship by consulting with clergy organizing services
- Support committees that focus on diversity, anti-racism, and inclusion including the Anti-Racism Team, Ethnic Local Church Concerns, Commission on Religion and Race, Nominating Committee, and Personnel Committee
- Conduct and participate in church-wide programs and workshops some of which are organized by the Anti-Racism Team including provisional clergy and Implicit Bias Workshops
- Assist with crisis management and conflict, and conflict resolution
- Develop and maintain content for website
- Organize events including racial/ethnic clergy retreats for the Conference Center

**Ethnic Local Church Concerns**

**Story 1: New Faith Communities**

Established a start-up fund for a new black or multi-ethnic faith community in the Pittsburgh District.

The primary focus was to establish an African American congregation. The demographics clearly indicate we are not connecting with the African American community of WPA. The absence of strong African American congregations in our conference also limits our ability to attract potential African American clergy to this area.

**Story 2: Ethnic Clergy Retreat**

For the past 3 years, we have sponsored retreats for racial/ethnic clergy.

**Other Anti-Racism Initiatives**

- Sponsor and support the WPAUMC Anti-Racism Team (ART)
- Brought in Rudy Rasmus to meet with clergy and non-profits in the Pittsburgh District urban ministries. He visited and met with clergy. He was available for two days.
- Re-establish the Native American Ministries Team in WPA. They had awareness programs around Wounded Knee and a healing circle.
- Annually provide small grants to congregations of color in the conference to support and expand ministries
- Provided funding to support the NEJ Black Methodists for Church Renewal (BMCR) program to help revitalize the WPAUMC BMCR
Council on Finance and Administration (CF&A)

Story: Budget Process

In the Fall 2016, the committee changed the process of meeting with committees to discuss budget requests: committees engaged in a similar focus were grouped together. One such focus was dismantling racism. We learned that the committees needed space for initial and continued conversation to hear and learn from one another to vision together. Committees interviewed included: Ethnic Local Church Concerns, Commission on Religion & Race, and Parish & Community Development.

Some of the questions we asked were: What ministries have you done? If money were not an object, what would you do?

Our Goals: to encourage committees to vision together in new ways to engage in ministry—rather than continuing to do the same thing each year—to eliminate duplication. In doing so, we expect to learn about the work of other teams and to encourage committees to become more collaborative recognizing our efforts are stronger together.

Another Anti-Racism Initiatives

- Funding work areas of Ethnic Local Church Concerns and the Commission on Religion & Race

Parish & Community Development (P&CD)

Story 1: Point Marion UMC Fijian Ministry

P&CD has been honored to partner with Point Marion United Methodist Church (PMUMC) in Fayette County in their anti-racism ministry. PMUMC submitted a grant request to P&CD in the years 2014 and 2015. Their grant application focused on leaders in churches who desire to be in ministry with the Fijian community growing rapidly in the region. In order to increase this ministry, the local church leadership desired to increase Pastor Beverly Roscoe, their pastor, to full-time. The local church needed financial assistance in order to accomplish this. A $7,000 grant was awarded in 2014 and a $10,000 grant was awarded in 2015. This increase in the church’s ability to minister led to ministry that provided resources to the Fijians who were experiencing racism at work within the local gas and oil industry. We supported the Fijian community with WPAUMC resources. The extra resources the grant provided helped PMUMC to offer relevant worship and community times to the Fijian community.

Story 2: The Cove After School Art Center

P&CD has been honored to partner with Greenstone UMC in Allegheny County in their anti-racism ministry. GUMC submitted a grant request to P&CD in the years 2016 and 2017. Greenstone discerned the need to provide a safe place for teenage youth in Pittsburgh’s North Boroughs. The vision to provide an after-school arts program to fill this need was launched last year, which would not have been possible without P&CD’s partnering. We hoped this ministry would reflect the racial diversity of the Bellevue and Avalon neighborhoods as well as provide a safe place for youth across diverse
cultures/races to “play” and learn together. That has happened beautifully as a result of this ministry and P&CD’s partnering.

Another Anti-Racism Initiative

- P&CD has partnered with the WPAUMC’s Ethnic Local Church Concerns committee to prepare financially for multi-ethnic church new faith communities.

Dreams: Future Plans (Appendix B)

Anti-Racism Team (ART)

Dream 1: Crossroads 2½ Day Training for Cabinet and Conference Staff

As part of the preparation for serving on the newly appointed Cabinet and hired Conference Staff there would be a component of participation in the Crossroads 2 ½ day training module, “Analyzing and Understanding Systemic Racism.” Money would be requested for 2019 as part of the Annual Conference budget to send persons to receive this training. The cost would be approximately $6,000 for five people ($1,200/person) plus travel. ART will collaborate with the cabinet (Dean of cabinet) and programming staff (DCM) on budget and planning.

This project would offer a new way of life for the Conference to address systemic racism as well as offer training for leadership to engage the plan for dismantling racism with their community.

NEJ Outcome #: 1

Assessment: The deadline for achieving this would be Spring 2019, following the appointment of new District Superintendents, and recent and newly hired staff.

Other Dreams

- Explore Crossroads 2 ½ day anti-racism training as part of the Provisional Program
- Set-up regular dialogue between the Cabinet and ART on a semi-annual basis
- Have the Bible study leader for Annual Conference address “Race and the Bible”
- Expand the Pittsburgh District initiative “Wrestling with Racism” to other districts
- Initiate official dialogue within the Methodist family (AME, AME Zion, CME, UMC, Salvation Army) for the purpose of addressing systemic racism

Board of Ministry (BOM)

Dream 1: Continued intentional training with General Commission on Religion and Race (GCORR)

In January 2017, GCORR provided training during our meeting. It was the start of an intentional focus, naming and working through issues of racism, implicit bias, and cultural competency. The plan is to make this an accepted part of BOM’s work, and not a “temporary project.” We value the voices of outside groups like, but not limited to, GCORR to help the Board in this.
NEJ Outcome #/s: 1, 2 and 4
Assessment:
Schedule more anti-racism training for the board in Fall 2018.
  BOM Nominations team will recommend a person of color for a co-chair position in the next quadrennium.

Dream 2: Work with the NEJ Committee on Ministry
The co-chairs of BOM are by virtue of office on the Northeastern Jurisdictional Committee on Ministry (NEJBOOM). At the NEJBOOM formative meeting in April 2017, this group decided to focus some of our work for the quadrennium on dismantling racism. We will be sharing statistics, experiences, and practices so the Boards from different Annual Conferences can learn from one another and do our work in a way that better enables us to recruit, encourage, and retain a diverse body of pastors. NEJBOOM plans to engage in intentional training in which BOM has committed to participate. The hope is by discussing this at the Jurisdictional level, concrete actions will filter to the Conferences, and that our various Conference BOMs can speak with a united voice about our determination.

NEJ Outcome #/s: 2 and 4
Assessment:
Share best practices and training from NEJBOOM with BOM after the next meeting with NEJBOOM.

Cabinet
Dream 1: Building Relationships
We want to encourage cross-cultural and cross-racial experiences to help build diverse relationships because some of our white communities are rather isolated and monolithic. Our hope is that through building relationships, people will be able to recognize our need for each other and begin to see the great strengths that come to us when we are in relationship with one another. To help enable these diverse relationships we will partner with others to develop opportunities, work projects, studies, resources, etc. to facilitate bringing diverse groups together.

Assessments:
- Cabinet will insure that at least three of these cross-cultural and/or cross-racial events/projects/education opportunities happen for each district each year through 2022 (at minimum)
- Cabinet will see that debriefing and evaluations of each event are conducted asking how cross-racial and intercultural awareness and relationships were impacted through the event/project
- Cabinet will encourage ongoing relationship building among the persons involved via social media and helping plan for continued work together
- Cabinet will seek to increase the time racial/ethnic clergy remain in appointments by preparing congregations, naming why and how churches push racial/ethnic clergy out (i.e. they can hide behind complaints about visitations rather than admitting racism), and providing support for clergy
- Cabinet will continue to intentionally develop their cultural competence by getting assessment as a group (individual included), so they are better equipped to deal with their own biases as clergy and laity
- Cabinet will make a commitment to include time at one meeting each month (when meeting) to share what each District Superintendent is doing to dismantle racism in their district
- An appointive cabinet representative will serve on the Anti-Racism Team (ART) so the two groups can work jointly and seamlessly (Brad Lauster already/currently fulfills this role)
- Every cabinet member confers by making an appointment with the Coordinator of Diversity Development and Inclusion to concretely discuss the continuation to increase awareness and action in their respective work areas
- At each one-on-one, DS’s will encourage (exhort) clergy to take a full year with their congregation to develop cultural competence in diversity/inclusion directing them to the Office of Diversity Development and Inclusion for support. After the completion of the full year of cultural competence building, the DS will check annually with pastors to see what ongoing work is being done to continue to build cultural competence.

**NEJ Outcome #/s:** 1, 2, 3, and 4

**Cabinet Outcomes:**
- New and strengthened cross-cultural and cross-racial/ethnic relationships
- Increased awareness of the gifts each person and group has to offer
- Increased awareness of institutional racism and how to dismantle it

**Dream 2: NEW Multi-ethnic Congregations**

We are committed to launching a multi-ethnic congregation by 2019, and we will support the birthing of three more from other congregations by 2022.

**Assessment**
- Cabinet will work with our Director of Congregational Development and Revitalization, Parish and Community Development, and other related teams to discern locations and personnel for these multi-ethnic congregations
- Cabinet will set a high priority on recommending to our Bishop pastoral leadership for the multi-ethnic congregation(s)
- In collaboration with the other teams, Cabinet will announce each year, starting in 2019, the new multi-ethnic congregations
NEJ Outcome #/s: 3

Cabinet Outcomes:
- New multi-ethnic congregations
- New congregations that better reflect the diversity of the communities in which they are located

Dream 3: Celebrate Our Historically Black Congregations
To celebrate the ministry of our historically Black congregations while also offering ongoing support for the ministry and presence they offer in their community settings.

Assessment:
- Cabinet will work with our Director of Congregational Development, Coordinator of Diversity Development and Inclusion, Ethnic Local Church Concerns, and Black Methodist Church for Renewal to make a presentation at the 2019 session of our Annual Conference to celebrate the vital ministry our historically Black congregations have done, are doing, and will be doing.
- Cabinet will make an onsite visit to one or more of these congregations to gain a better understanding for and appreciation of the community in which the congregation is ministering.
- Cabinet will identify resources and ways to strengthen strategically vital historically Black congregations and recruit and develop principled spiritual leaders.

NEJ Outcome #/s: 4

Cabinet Outcomes:
- New and strengthened connectional, cross-cultural, and cross-racial relationships and cooperative ministries
- Increasing awareness of the vital ministry these congregations offer

Conference Program Staff
In order to dismantle institutional racism, programming will continue to focus on awareness and education. As an annual conference we need to more fully move from awareness to action, from aspiration to institutional change. But much like the rest of the conference, we must continue to include awareness and expand on action.

Dream 1: Camping and Youth
As an annual conference, we will focus attention on our camping and youth programs increasing diversity and awareness in our institution.

In 2018, as part of the Bishop’s Camping and Retreat Initiative, we are further developing our camping and retreat ministries by expanding our racial/ethnic diversity
offerings and demographics of racial/ethnic children and youth reached in our programming:

- HVLI (Healthy Village Learning Institute) is becoming an integrated part of our camping and retreat leadership team to focus time, energy, and resources into the underserved community of McKeesport. Through this new relationship, we are redefining the image of “camping” and “retreats” into an urban setting. By not imposing what we view as traditional camp (i.e. the forest) onto folks who will not be interested in that sort of experience, we are able to provide holy space for God to use the fullness of his Creation to transform the world. HVLI is gifted in reaching and building up leaders within the African American community. The philosophy of–*It takes a healthy village to raise a healthy child*–and space of this urban retreat center will serve as a point of education and immersion into African and African American culture for individuals from across the WPA Conference, while bringing together folks from different ethnicities into relationship with one another. This urban retreat center and the rural retreat centers will mutually support one another professionally, spiritually, and in the pursuit of increasing diversity at all of our camping and retreat locations.

- ZimCamp will continue to expand our understanding of the international community and partnership relationship with Zimbabwe. We will recruit, offer scholarships, and increase participation of ethnic youth in the offering.

- Day Camp offering in Western Pennsylvania will launch in the summer 2018 with four sites, all diverse and underserved by our present camping and retreat model.

- We will be intentional about the ways we are offering opportunities and scholarships to diverse populations in WPA. Part of that intentionality will be an increase in cultural competencies trainings available to each sites’ boards, leadership, and summer staff. This will include but is not limited to: Implicit Bias Trainings and Crossroads Trainings.

- We will continue to explore trips to historic places with our youth and young adults, and experiences that continue conversations about who God is calling us to be in Jesus Christ as a church as it relates to eradicating systemic racism. Further exploration of a youth historical tour for 2018 or 2019 are underway.

*Dream 2: Communications Department*

In 2018, we will model conversations with at least one article per month addressing issues of race and racism in our conference publications written by staff and not simply shared articles from the denominational body.
Dream 3: Nominations and Recruitment
Intentionally recruiting and training of diverse volunteers:
- In the 2018 nominations process, we will commit to no less than 10% of all teams and agencies moving towards more fully reflecting the demographics of diversity in WPA
- Nominating and Recruitment team will develop a diversity pool of potential leaders and servants in spring 2018
- Effective January 2018, we added our diversity officer to our nominations team ex-officio to monitor and guide in our processes
- In 2018, we will gather information about our diverse churches and develop strategies for recruiting and training volunteers to serve on WPAUMC agencies and committees

Dream 4: Funding
- Council on Finance and Administration will prioritize funding for ethnic faith communities and assess funding sources for a launch as early as 2019
- Budget Team will incorporate priorities into the 2019 budget for adoption at Annual Conference

Dream 5: Discipleship
- Develop opportunities for conversations including dismantling racism, one of the five focus areas of the WPAUMC, in the local churches
- District Superintendents will provide opportunities for small group conversations using the Vital Conversations curriculum

Dream 6: Personnel Team
- Diversity officer has been appointed ex-officio to the team assisting in developing hiring practices in diversity and inclusion
- We will develop strategies for increasing diverse pools of candidates prior to any new hire in 2018

NEJ Outcome #/s: 1-4
Assessment:
- Increased Diversity/Inclusion/Anti-racism training from 2018 to 2020.
- Increased ethnic membership/participation on conference committees through the Nominating Committee recruiting process comparing numbers from 2017 with 2018, 2019, and 2020.
- Supporting the development of new multi-ethnic faith communities as outlined by bishop.
Office of Congregational Development & Revitalization

Dream: An Urban Multi-ethnic Church Plant

We dream about investing conference resources in a new urban multi-ethnic church, led by a diverse planting team. I pray this congregation will not only be diverse in membership, but also intentional in modeling and teaching us all about how to build authentic relationships among persons of different ethnicities.

**Primarily supports NEJ Outcome: 3**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Anticipated date of completion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Use MissionInsite as a tool to identify areas of the Annual Conference with stable and growing African American and Hispanic population centers</td>
<td>Director of Congregational Development &amp; Revitalization, Conference Secretary &amp; Statistician</td>
<td>March 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discern (1) ability of existing UMC clergy and congregations near these population centers to reach their diverse communities, and (2) where new places for new people need to be developed</td>
<td>Director of Congregational Development &amp; Revitalization, Coordinator of Diversity Development &amp; Inclusion, Coordinating Cabinet, Ethnic Local Church Concerns (ELCC), Parish &amp; Community Development (P&amp;CD)</td>
<td>Spring/Summer 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify location for new multi-ethnic church plant</td>
<td>Coordinating Cabinet in consultation with above persons/groups</td>
<td>September 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop job descriptions for leadership team of new church plant</td>
<td>Coordinating Cabinet in consultation with Coordinator of Diversity Development &amp; Inclusion</td>
<td>Fall 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appointment &amp; hiring process for church planting team</td>
<td>Appointive Cabinet in consultation with Director of Congregational Development, Coordinator of Diversity Development &amp; Inclusion, and Personnel Team</td>
<td>Winter/Spring 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development of initial Ministry Action Plan (MAP) for multi-ethnic church plant, including budget and timeline</td>
<td>Planting Team in consultation with Director of Congregational Development &amp; Revitalization and Supervising District Superintendent</td>
<td>Spring 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team training in cultural competency and multi-ethnic church planting</td>
<td>Funded by ELCC/P&amp;CD, attended by Planting Team and (possibly) supervising District Superintendents and supporting staff</td>
<td>Spring 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appointment of clergy leadership and launch of new faith community</td>
<td></td>
<td>July 1, 2019 appointment, with launch goal by year-end 2019</td>
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**Dream 2: WPAUMC Revitalization Process**

I dream of developing an effective revitalization process for existing congregations that would intentionally challenge them to confront their own racism and prejudice, in order that they may genuinely welcome persons in their own neighborhoods who are different from them, and ultimately reflect fully the community around them.

**Primarily supports NEJ Outcomes: 2 and 4**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Anticipated date of completion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pilot the use of the book <em>Multiethnic Conversations</em> in five local congregations in WPAUMC</td>
<td>Mosaix participants</td>
<td>Spring 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meet with 2017 Mosaix participants to discern individualized next steps, and evaluate the benefits and limitations of the Mosaix experience</td>
<td>Director of Congregational Development &amp; Revitalization</td>
<td>Spring 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research local and regional agencies in WPA and nearby areas to identify local training options that might be incorporated into a new process</td>
<td>Director of Congregational Development &amp; Revitalization Coordinator of Diversity Development &amp; Inclusion</td>
<td>Spring 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop new congregational process for increasing local church racial diversity to better reflect their community</td>
<td>Director of Congregational Development &amp; Revitalization in consultation with Coordinator of Diversity Development &amp; Inclusion</td>
<td>Summer/Fall 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pilot new process with at least five WPAUMC congregations</td>
<td>Director of Congregational Development &amp; Revitalization, and identified leadership partners</td>
<td>January 2019</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Office of Diversity Development and Inclusion**

**Dream 1: Anti-Racist Intervention/Response Workshop: Moving from Awareness to Action**

The workshop would give people, particularly whites, tools to respond to others around them using racist language. It is difficult to confront family, friends, and co-workers who use racial slurs but with some tools anyone can inform others and push back. We all owe persons of color the support, so they do not stand alone.

Pastor Sarah Roncolato will lead, coordinating with the Office of Diversity Development and Inclusion and ART, to develop and implement this workshop.

**NEJ Outcome #/s: 2**

**Assessment:** Offer a workshop by December 2019; participants complete an evaluation.

**Dream 2: Supporting Existing and/or New Multi-ethnic/Multi-racial Faith Community**

We have learned that many clergy and laity have noble intentions shifting existing congregations to being multi-ethnic or launching a new faith community. Yet in some instances, leaders lack some basic cultural competence in diversity and inclusion, and are
ill equipped to lead, work with, and serve people of color. Our hope is to work with one new multi-ethnic faith community to deepen the leaders’ cultural competence.

**NEJ Outcome #/s: 3**
**Assessment:** Begin to work with one community by 2019; support clergy in that community.

**Dream 3: Encourage Young People to Become Active as Leaders in Dismantling Racism**
Recruit young people to serve as facilitators in anti-racism training.

**NEJ Outcome #/s: 2**
**Assessment:** Have in place at least three young people facilitating by 2019.

**Ethnic Local Church Concerns**

**Dream 1: Implement a new multi-racial or multi-cultural faith community.**

**NEJ Outcome #/s: 3**
**Assessment:** One new multi-racial or multi-cultural faith community by 2020.

**Dream 2: Work with the NEJ Committee on Ministry to Strengthen Existing Multi-cultural and African American Congregations**
Challenge our multi-cultural and African American congregations to look deep inside themselves and identify how they can address the systemic racism within or experienced by their churches and offer insight on addressing systemic racism across our conference. Leadership from these congregations may be able to offer wisdom to homogeneous congregations that are bypassing the reality of systemic racism in their day-to-day operations.

**NEJ Outcome #/s: 1**
**Assessment:** Additional training by 2020.

**Dream 3: Continue to Support Clergy of Color**
We must take steps to empower white clergy to speak to issues of racism and privilege, rather than continuing to rely on clergy of color to raise these issues.

**NEJ Outcome #/s: 1 and 2**
**Assessment:** Continue the racial/ethnic clergy retreat, continue conversations, and encourage training for whites to serve as allies to persons of color through 2020.

**Dream 4: Empower Laity of Color in the Conference**
Develop intentional ways and means for our current limited number of persons of color to unite and feel less lonely; and place them in strategic locations so their impact may be as fruitful as possible while avoiding burnout. We must stop exploiting persons of color; and nurture others to come on board. White people must authentically continue to develop anti-racist lenses, enable race to be authentically addressed even when no person of color is present.
NEJ Outcome #/s: 1 and 2  
Assessment: Additional training by 2020.

Council on Finance and Administration (CF&A)  
**Dream: Multi-Ethnic / African-American Leadership Development**

Many churches desire or would be open to diversity in leadership positions but need assistance recruiting or creating a culture of openness. The dream is to provide funding for persons of color to serve in leadership positions in local churches including administration, youth, work, music ministry, etc. These positions would be both clergy and laity.

**Goals:**
- Collaborating with District Superintendents and Director of Congregational Development, local churches would identify specific leadership expectations for potential interns.
- In 2019, the goal would be to place paid interns in at least five of our districts by the end of the quadrennium.
- Collaborating with the Board of Ministry, Board of Laity, Director of Ethnic Diversity, and Director of Clergy Excellence to identify a pool of interns.
- When the intern is placed, a mentor, Coordinator of Diversity Development and Inclusion, and others will provide support to the intern.
- The support for the church would come from the District Superintendents, Office of Diversity Development and Inclusion, and WPAUMC committees with similar interests like Ethnic Local Church Concerns.

NEJ Outcome #/s: 1 and 4  
Assessment: Place five interns by 2020.  
Tell the stories of success on the district level and in the conference e-news.

Parish & Community Development (P&CD)  
**Dream 1: Multi-Ethnic / African-American Church Faith Communities**

This dream is directly connected to Outcome #3, starting a multi-ethnic faith community. It is our dream to partner fully with this effort to make new multi-ethnic church plants a reality in our Annual Conference.

NEJ Outcome #/s: 3  
Assessment:
- Quantitative:
  - One revitalization of an existing African American Church by year 2020
  - One new multi-ethnic church community by year 2020
- Qualitative assessment by means of storytelling/reporting (when applicable)

**Dream 2: Fostering the Conference’s Focus Area of Dismantling Racism**

It is the committee’s dream to help with outcome #’s 1 & 2 by asking all those seeking grant monies through P&CD to demonstrate how their efforts to start new communities of...
faith, or a church revitalization, will assist the Annual Conference in dismantling racism. P&CD could also be a consulting/advisory group to help develop a new ministry plan for dismantling racism. This could include awareness building, bridge building and fundraising within the WPAUMC.

*NEJ Outcome #/s: 1, 2, and 4*

**Assessment:**

- **Quantitative:**
  - six consultations with churches that are in the vision casting/planning stages of creating new places for new people. (note: there very well may be overlap with the Office of Congregational Development)
  - twelve funded projects annually that have clearly identified an intentional plan to dismantle racism in that church’s context

- **Qualitative assessment by means of storytelling/reporting when applicable**

  Dianne Glave, Diversity Development Coordinator
Camping & Retreat Corporations Committee

The past year has been an exciting time for camping and retreat ministries in Western PA. The Bishop’s initiative on camping announced at the 2017 Annual Conference has grown into the Deeply Rooted/Upward Reaching campaign. The Camping & Retreat Corporations Committee played a significant role in the early stages of the campaign, including the feasibility study and the formation of a steering committee. Through the campaign, efforts are underway to revitalize camping and retreat ministries through the refurbishment of our facilities, increasing the number of participants through both immediate camperships and a campership endowment, and increasing our diversity.

The Healthy Village Learning Institute in McKeesport will be coming into our family of camping and retreat corporations in Western PA. This will help us in our goal of greater diversity and offering the experience of intentional Christian community in an urban setting. Also, At the Lake Ministries in Erie is working toward offering ministry this summer. This will help us to serve special needs families and individuals with the gift of sacred space in the outdoors. We will also be offering several day camp opportunities in various locations throughout Western PA, bringing the experience of camp to children who have never participated. And the Bishop’s Small Church Initiative is providing the resources for congregations who have not been actively involved in camping and retreat ministries to offer that opportunity to their young people.

At its heart, camping and retreat ministries are still providing the same experience: Sacred time and space apart from the stress and “busy-ness” of daily life. At summer camp and on retreats, children, youth, and adults experience faith formation and spiritual renewal through intentional Christian community, hospitality, and the beauty of God’s creation. Every year, thousands of people are blessed through our sites. Children hear the gospel and come to faith. Youth are challenged to grow in their life of Christ-following. Young adults are challenged to become leaders in the church and world. And adults are given sacred space for healing and renewal. These opportunities are available year round, but summer is the heart and soul of camping and retreat ministries. In 2017, our camps and retreat centers served approximately 20,933 including 2,703 summer camp attendees.

Scott Hamely, Chair

Camp Allegheny

Praise the Lord! 2017 had so much to celebrate. First is that we could provide both a program and a facility that gave others the opportunity to grow and mature in faith and love. We lived up to the goal of our mission; To provide a safe, sacred space with excellent facilities, Christian hospitality, and disciple making programs. This is only possible because of the significant love, prayers and support that this conference provides.

Camp Allegheny is pleased to share that our retreat usage was up a full 10% from the previous year. We had nearly 70 groups with over 3,800 persons. I believe this is because our reputation of great food and tremendous hospitality is gaining a solid standing.

We can also celebrate a very safe year. We did not have single injury during summer camp that required outside care and no significant injuries during our entire retreat season. We have now gone five full years without a single property, liability or medical claim on our insurance.

We also had the opportunity at our Spring Booster Dinner on April 23 to celebrate the retirement of the debt on Heartwood center. The gym and dining hall are a focal point
of the entire camp. We cannot thank enough the churches and individuals who supported
the construction of this building.

In 2017 we began reaching out to new communities by visiting the Coopersdale
area of Johnstown. This area has a great deal of section eight housing and many children
who are underserved. One of the highlights was to provide pony rides to children who have
not even seen a pony. This small beginning has led Camp Allegheny with plans to begin a
traveling day camp program in 2018.

2017 was also a year that we made many improvements to our facility. We began
a program of tree removal around our lodges. This was to allow the sun and air more access
to our buildings. This will require a great deal of cleanup in 2018/2019 but will eventually
provide significantly improvement to the appearance and landscaping of our lodges. Our
water and septic treatment plants are operating better than they ever have because of some
improvements made this year. We also made many improvements to the farmhouse, added
new furniture to several lodges and thanks to a generous donor we could add an outdoor
gazebo to our lodge area.

Our summer program of ministry had an impact on so many. Our program event
attendance was up 20 from the previous year. Our overall overnight attendance through the
summer was up over 200 from the previous year to a total of 1,225. Our parents and
campers gave our Food Service a rating of 100% as excellent or very good. The parents
also reported that 96% of camper’s plan on returning the next year.

The very best way to inform everyone is to share with you how large of an impact
the Western PA Conference has had on so many is to share just a few quotes from our
parents;

  My children love camp. This was their first year here...did camps at other
locations in years past. I was very very impressed with the camp and the kids can't stop
talking about it. ...They were very very happy with all aspects of camp and talk about the
"raves" as they put it...and they want to pray and talk to God at various times in the day.
It was very enlightening for them. Thank you.

  He also shared how much he LOVED worship.... My 14 yo, Ian, is pretty buttoned
up about sharing...normally. At Saturday pick up he came and found us, was happy to see
us and said he can't wait to come back! He shared how powerful Thursday night worship
was and how he would love to participate with a youth worship band as drummer. He loved
everything and didn't complain-a first time for my touchiest kid. Finally, we sent another
12 yo, Faith. She comes from a very challenged family. Her mother is currently
incarcerated. The trials and violence she has walked through would break your heart. We
trusted you and the Lord to send her for the first time this year. She was smiling and said
she had a great time. To see her smile is a gift. Please know that many children come to
camp carrying burdens only a loving God can sort out. Your care and His spirit were
evident.

  ...As I reported to my church congregation, I was able to see firsthand the positive
effects of attending camp - learning about Jesus and becoming disciples, being proud of
their faith and not being afraid to share it with others. The relationships they develop and
being without electronics for a whole week! ...

  This was the first time my kids went to an overnight camp and they absolutely
loved It! They can't wait to come back next year. With all the technology that surrounds
kids in the world today, I am grateful that my kids could enjoy meaningful moments spent
in nature, with God and with new friends without being tethered to technology.

My child came home and told me that she was like clay and that God was our
potter. This made me feel like my child was in good hands at Camp Allegheny. Thank you!

The counselor really went above and beyond to make sure that my child was
embracing the call experience. Even on those days that she struggled with being homesick
the counselor’s words of encouragement were welcomed.

Kids have always loved camp Allegheny. Thanks for helping me on funding all so
they can go. They really do grow spiritually and it is very rewarding to see as a
grandparent raising grandchildren.

The Camp Allegheny board of Directors, Staff and dedicated volunteers cannot
thank the Western PA Conference enough for their support.

Dennis D. Tawney, President/CEO

Healthy Village Learning Institute

It is customary at the Healthy Village Learning Institute for all those that serve in
the capacity as a Christian Leader and a follower of God’s word that we begin by giving
thanks to God for granting us another day of life to make a difference.

This devotion of delivering “service” has a deeper significance at the Healthy
Village Learning Institute, especially in the year 2017 where we witnessed a record number
of homicides in McKeesport. Certainly, losing lives as a result of gun violence is never
life-affirming, however, nothing has shaken our Village more than losing a 14 year old
child. One week before this child was murdered, one of our youth leaders walked with his
best friend to the alter on Easter Sunday to accept Christ and to be baptized.

The Healthy Village Learning Institute is witnessing transformation on so many
levels and our quest to do more and be more to the McKeesport area is becoming infectious.
In this unique place we expect to redefine the notion of an Urban Camp and Retreat Center.
While we have some local parks and wooded areas available for us to do some outdoor
activities, it is what we do inside our sacred space that we take great pride in. Camping is
sometimes considered a process of challenge, reflection, cleansing, and survival and we, at
the Healthy Village, respond to this process by offering great challenges connected to
living and life. With our focus on life vs. death, we believe this to be the structural
foundation of God 1st for achieving “Healthy Village” living.

In 2017 the record number of murders has upped our urgency for doing more. The
trauma of the violence cannot be accepted as a normal or natural process. At the Healthy
Village Learning Institute we want to provide as many “life” opportunities as possible. Our
level of community engagement includes: hosting Baby Showers, Graduation dinners,
Retirement Celebrations, Health and Wellness programming, Narcotic Anonymous
Monthly Regional Meetings, African Drumming, Technology programs (including
coding), Art opportunities, and hosting School field trips showcasing African history
through our extensive Art exhibits. We offer the best of the technology experience as part
of our S.T.R.E.A.M. (Science-Technology-Research-Engineering-Arts-Math) process to
assist in creating student believers and achievers.

Our quest to become a great United Methodist agency and provider of community
needs is our purpose. Our vision for the future is just as ambitious, which some have already
seen the design. Our participants are predominantly black, economically poor, yet filled
with promise and faith for a better tomorrow. While we still need to do some renovations to our current structure we walk in faith knowing that God will guide us to our destiny. While we have no financial debt (i.e., mortgage, or lease, etc.) as a result of owning the building, but it is United Methodist support that keeps our doors open. We are thankful to being a part of the United Methodist Conference and we are proud to claim United Methodism as our core supporter. We also engage in community events such as: Church Connected Activities with UM 1 Church 6 Campuses in McKeesport, Community Clean-up activities, Assisting Community Elders, College Tours, Cultural Tours, and Art projects.

Some of our visitors have found themselves immersed in the experience at the Healthy Village as a result of being in the physical presence of often talked about artifacts and being able to touch certain artifacts. Here are a few testimonies:

- Going into this endeavor, not fully prepared, allowed me to keep an open mind and embrace the raw emotions that enveloped me. Learned concepts through typical education were utterly shattered by the visuals of slavery and lynching leaving me speechless, ashamed of our past, and determined to align myself further towards social justice.

- I enjoyed the start of the tour. Witnessing the chains used to enslave my ancestors was a powerful moment for me. I felt a sense of renewed strength in understanding how they spiritually and emotionally prevailed through an indescribably horrific experience.

- Keith greeted us warmly and spoke passionately about the importance of the health of a village as a whole and how necessary that is to raise healthy individuals. He then tied that back to the African cultural emphasis of healthy villages. Keith was very knowledgeable and used the artifacts in the first level of the HLVI to tell a story. The story Keith told was of the evils and brutality that African American people faced when they were sold as slaves and arrived in this country to be treated as less than human. This is a story that I believe most Americans know well, but Keith brought a new reality to the story through the interaction with artifacts, photographs, and artwork he had collected.

- The experience was truly moving. I especially enjoyed the comprehensive scope of the HVLI – making unique resources accessible to those entering the doors! I enjoyed learning about the deep historical and cultural influences within the HVLI; whether it’s subtle or obvious – a connection within the various rooms/exhibits/classrooms was always present and meaningful.

- In our 2017 year we witnessed over 1,700 people come through our doors engaging in some communal process that has stimulated many to do more and to love more. Our core group of children and youth was 163 and we expect to double this number in 2018.

Keith Murphy, Executive Director

Jumonville

2017 was a year of transitions. It was not a particularly easy year, however, I remain extremely grateful for the Jumonville friends and family that continue to allow the Jumonville Mountaintop to be a special place where disciples are still being made and where lives continue to be transformed by personal encounters with Jesus Christ.

We were thrilled with the support of our new Western PA Conference Bishop Cynthia Moore-Koikoi for the camping and retreat ministry at Jumonville and other conference camps and retreat facilities. Her enthusiasm has led to a capital campaign with a stretch goal of $5 million dollars to help with capital campaign needs of the individual
facilities as well as financial aid funds to help make camp affordable for all. She made that announcement at Annual Conference in Grove City in June with a rather dramatic entrance (rappelling) onto the floor of conference! The announcement was met with great enthusiasm and a spontaneous offering was taken when one member of conference walked to the front of the general session and put down their gift directly on the stage.

As excited as we are about Bishop Cynthia’s support for camping and retreat ministries and raising some much-needed funds, we are even more excited about her promotion of the life changing power of a Christian Camp/Retreat experience. The renewed enthusiasm and emphasis is so encouraging! We have all seen lives transformed and know that this increased focus will bring new and diverse guests to experience the Jumonville mountaintop.

We were also blessed to have Bishop Cynthia be the speaker for our 2017 Sponsors Dinner that was held at South Hills Country Club.

Jumonville’s Spring Dinner highlighted Jumonville’s Adventure program where we honored Jumonville adventure deans. We also had wonderful testimonies shared with us from long time Jumonville summer camper and dean, Brandon Corless & summer camper and counselor Sydney Cipriani. We also awarded the Jumonville Certificate of Appreciation to Jeff Painter. Jeff and Larry Beatty led worship in Whyel Chapel prior to the dinner in Asbury Dining Hall.

The transition is continuing in our season of staff changes on the mountaintop. Jude Urso is now serving as Jumonville’s Director of Business and Operations. Jude spent the first half of the year serving part time as pastor of Windover Hills UMC while orienting part time in the new position to learn the many aspects of the day to day operations. Beginning in 2018, I will continue to serve as Jumonville’s President but will be moving into a new role. I will spend the majority of my time in building donor relationships and partnerships with current and potential guest groups and working on strategic planning initiatives. I will continue to explore opportunities with other organizations that will help to move Jumonville into a position for future ministry opportunities and growth.

Jim Thomas resigned in August after serving for two and a half years as Jumonville’s Program Director. We have created two new positions to serve those needs. Emily Urso has a lot of retail and camp experience, and she is serving part time as Guest Services Coordinator. She is working with the Welcome Center, Jumonville sponsored program events, and also HOPE Camp. Rebekah Greenawalt also has extensive camp experience as a former summer staff member, Jumonville board member and current summer camp dean. She was hired to serve full time as Program Coordinator, starting in January 2018. Rebekah was serving as a teacher in Virginia when she answered our call to return to Jumonville as a staff team member.

It continues to be a blessing to serve as Jumonville’s President and to be a part of this awesome ministry. At a recent Christian concert at PPG Paints Arena, where Jumonville was a local sponsor and had a display booth, I was deeply moved. About a half dozen people specifically sought us out to share how they committed their life to Christ at Jumonville. Their individual stories of transformation were so encouraging. Some made that commitment as youth on their church retreat, some made that commitment as young adults, some as summer campers, and some attending as an adult after years of struggling with various addictions. This amazing place continues to give the opportunity to experience God’s love and grace in such a special way. How awesome that we get to see God continue
to work in the lives of our summer campers and retreat guests. I am so blessed that each of you are a part of this wonderful journey!

After seeing an increase in usage of 8% in 2016 it was frustrating that our attendance was down 7% in 2017. We lost a very large summer camp group and were not able to fill that space in the middle of summer. Despite some very sacrificial giving by our Jumonville family, we ended the year with a deficit for just the third time in my 35 years as Jumonville President. We are praying for God’s favor to grow our ministry opportunities in the years to come. There are so many that need to hear of the transforming power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Praise God for God’s many provisions!

I was astounded this year at the generosity of our donors. We saw an amazing increase in giving of over $65,000 from 2016. I am so grateful for those that were willing to make sacrificial gifts in response to our urgent appeal to help with the projected shortfall. I was also thrilled for core donors who made a commitment to give $75 a month for our Kidz2Kamp Fund to replenish it due to the many needs of our Jumonville summer campers and retreat guests. A special thank you to those that accepted my challenge of monthly recurring gifts.

For me, another blessing this past year was the major renovation of the deck area around the bell at Asbury Dining Hall. This work was done with estate gift money from my mother, Elva Beatty. She ran the kitchen for 10 years while my father, William Beatty served as Jumonville’s first year-round director. Their love and faithfulness remains in my life and the legacy of Jumonville.

I would challenge each of you reading this report, to consider including Jumonville in your estate plans. If your life has been positively influenced by your Jumonville experience, an estate gift can go a long way to continue to make these opportunities possible for future generations.

This new deck is a significant improvement that continues to improve accessibility for our guests, whether young parents with strollers, or those with different abilities or limitations. We were able to make a number of significant upgrades to Asbury Dining Hall. We were pleased to learn that we were granted $7,500 from Fayette County Tourism Association to help with accessibility upgrades in 2018. We continue to be committed to making our facilities as welcoming as possible for all.

We keep improving Jumonville’s presence on social media. Our Facebook page continues to grow in popularity, and we now have over 7,300 “likes” of our Facebook page.

We did discover this past year how to get a tremendous boost on social media. Here are the simple steps: Have an armored truck drive up the mountain, catch on fire, and turn into the entranceway, and then burst into flames. Next, add the arrival of the fire department to put out the fire, and while hosing down the truck, have the water force blow out some of the coins all over the asphalt by the entranceway. This caused a great deal of excitement, and disappointment, because all the paper money turned to ashes. Yes, that really happened this past August and as a result our Facebook reach hit almost 50,000 that week! Rarely is life dull at Jumonville!

Our Jumonville Instagram account has about 3,300 followers, thanks primarily to Jumonville Foundation Board member, Marty Martinosky. This is a new social media outreach for Jumonville that has really taken off this past year.

Marty has also begun a new ministry called Game Changer Sports Ministry in partnership with Jumonville’s summer camp program. We will be offering a wrestling
camp, a tennis camp, a softball camp and a golf camp for the summer of 2018. These camps will all feature top athletes and coaches that will offer first-class training for athletes with a strong Christian focus. We are excited about this new ministry outreach.

I continue to be grateful to work with an extremely supportive board and staff. Our donors, deans and counselors, group leaders and guests, and friends of Jumonville make our mountaintop a truly special, faith-filled place. Thank-you Jesus and thank-you all for your vital part in continuing to support making disciples for Jesus on this sacred mountain.

Larry Beatty, President

At the Lake Ministries

At the Lake Ministries, originated and supported by the Western PA Conference of The United Methodist Church, purchased and will operate the vessel, JoAnn M, to provide fishing/lake experiences to those with special needs who many times find themselves underserved in the communities in which they live. This ministry is intended to be a blessing to those in Western Pennsylvania. ATLM hopes to also invite people with special needs from our neighboring states of New York and Ohio. This ministry is open to all people with special needs and is in no way restricted to those within The United Methodist Church. Basically, 10-12 passengers with special-needs, along with wrap-around Therapeutic Support Staff (TSS) or close family members present to assist the special-needs guests will take trips into Lake Erie or Presque Isle Bay in order to fish and/or simply experience the wonderful natural resources the region has to offer. This ministry is being created to serve those with special needs with the hope that they and their families will have an opportunity to experience the beauty of God’s creation, build supportive relationships with others who also understand life with special needs, and to provide an enjoyable setting in which guests will feel valued and welcomed in Christ’s love.

Essentially, the scope of this ministry is as follows: to provide fishing/lake experiences that specifically cater to those with special needs. These individuals include but are not limited to children and adults with autism, Down’s syndrome, physical and developmental needs, emotional challenges, disabled veterans, and assisted living residents. Charters will set sail roughly two times a week, for twenty weeks (May through September) each year. The vessel will be maintained in accordance with the safety standards of the U.S. Coast Guard, Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission, and with the Safe Sanctuary Policy of The United Methodist Church (Criminal and Child Abuse Background Checks). The vessel will provide secure enclosure for all guests. The only openings available for fishing will be monitored by TSS or family members who are present and caring for guests with special needs. A quiet area, equipped with an accessible toilet facility, will be provided for guests who might become overwhelmed and need time alone.

Licensed captains will be employed to pilot the vessel, ensure the safety of all on board, and care for the basic maintenance of the vessel. Trained deckhands will also be employed to aid the captain before, during, and after each outing.

Throughout the last year, ATLM has been working hard to repurpose the vessel so that we will be able to welcome guests by mid-summer 2018. Much progress has been made and many instances of ministry have been experienced and celebrated as we
anticipate the 2018 season. Please feel free to learn more about the latest ATLM developments by visiting athelakeministries.com!

Robert “Rob” H. Wilson, ATLM Director

Olmsted Manor

Olmsted Manor is beginning its 49th year as a Retreat Center. We continue to be an active and effective facility for many individuals on personal retreat, as well as to groups across western Pennsylvania and beyond. We provide a quiet and secluded place of rest and renewal for many people. In an effort to increase usage and occupancy, we continue to seek new groups and market these services through our website, www.olmstedmanor.org, as well as other social media sites.

Officers of the Olmsted Manor Board of Directors are: Jeff Sterling, President; Bill Kemp, Vice President; Jackie Campbell, Secretary; Karen Trask, Assistant Secretary; Tom Ball, Treasurer; and Sue Wilson, Assistant Treasurer.

In 2017, the board of directors welcomed newly elected members, Tyler Hannah Esq., Sara Wrona, and Jeff Sterling. Our retiring members were Joe Streett and Eric Leonard. We thank God for their gifts and talents that helped guide our ministry.

The Olmsted Manor Capital Campaign is coming to a close since last year’s report. The theme of the campaign is Honoring Our Past, Preparing For Our Future was very successful. We nearly reached our goal of $750,000 to make improvements and renovations to Groves Lodge and the Manor. Construction began in August 2017 and we are anticipating completion in mid-March 2018.

We are grateful to the Olmsted staff for their patience and extra work during the months of construction. The work has disrupted our daily routines and has often made greeting and settling our residential and day use guests a bit of a challenge. Also, we are thankful for our guests and their willingness to adjust to our temporary disruptions.

We round up the year 2017 with strong residential and meal income numbers. Many of our repeat groups returned, as well as some new groups, to use our facilities. Our programs were also well attended in the past year. It is our hope that we experience similar or greater numbers as we move into 2018.

With the approach of the retreat center’s 50th anniversary, we must consider how Olmsted will carry on its legacy of sacred space and Biblical hospitality for years to come. How will we maintain our strong traditions while learning to provide quiet space in a not-so-quiet world? As we continue to manage our lives in a busy world, it is more important than ever to take time away and reflect on our spiritual selves. Olmsted is a place well suited for that to take place.

Finally, at Olmsted, we invite you to come away in prayer, study, fellowship, and retreat. We invite Disciples of Christ to come and renew their spirit, so they might go forward better equipped to serve. And now, we invite you to join us in our ministry, to honor the Manor’s legacy, and to prepare for the future of Olmsted.

Jody Z. Larson, Executive Director

Wesley Woods

Change is inevitable and good but sometimes change is hard. Change requires us to adapt our thinking and action to new situations and challenges. Ultimately change causes growth. 2016 was a year of change in the heart of our staffing. The changes of 2016 brought
changes to how we functioned as a staff in 2017. All in all, we have endured much, and I think we will eventually be better for it.

**Guest Services**

We had an off year in both summer camping and our retreat season groups. In total we hosted 1,708 guests. We hosted 508 registered campers in our summer camping program in 2017. During the Wesley Woods’ programmed events, 109 individuals stated that they made first time commitments to faith in Jesus Christ! We hosted 447 guests throughout the summer that were not part of our camping program. These guests rent our facility and use our food service but run their own programing. Our retreat season saw 473 guests on site. This is an area we are seeking to improve and capitalize on by offering more programmed retreats. In 2018 we are hosting a Spring Youth Retreat, Man Camp, a Fall Women’s Retreat and others all programmed by our team with the help of some volunteers. We also hosted 239 guests for single day events with no overnight. Finally, for hunting season we hosted 31 different hunters for portions of the hunting season. In all we hosted over 6,500 total guest days in 2017.

**Lipinski Update**

We have renegotiated our contract with Lipinski Logging and have reengaged in the contract. Active timbering began in January 2018.

**Finance and Fund Development**

Giving was down in 2017 compared to the previous year. The booster fund experienced a decline of nearly $4,000 as we ended the year with a total of $107,000 in gifts that were undesignated. We also received over $30,000 from our pledges for the Capital Campaign. This is a problem. I expect the Bishops camping initiative along with our increased efforts in fundraising to improve this giving number in 2018. We finished 2017 with a balanced budget. We are working to pay down our mortgage on the Maintenance Director’s residence and build a cash reserve.

**Maintenance**

Last year was a significant year for maintenance. We updated the bathrooms in Wesley Cabin. We are set to install the backup generators for the water system and McKnight Dining Hall once the concrete pads are poured. The Chapel received a new ramp, stair case and sidewalk. All the ramps on main camp have received a coat of stain. The Office received new siding. The camp store has been remodeled to improve product movement and create a welcoming atmosphere. We are preparing to install a water filtration system for our wells to remove the iron and calcium.

**Personnel**

Babies change everything! We have welcomed two new members to the Wesley Woods family since the beginning of September 2017. Rachael and I welcomed a baby boy, Joshua, in early September. Kira and Matt also welcomed a baby boy, Chace, in mid-October. They are a joy to have with us but additions like these always make life and work a little more interesting. This team is in its second year together now. We are still learning how to cooperatively function, however we are continually improving. I look forward to seeing how we function in the coming months.

We still have much work to do. It is also clear that we are doing good work. Our biggest head wind is the retreat season usage. The increase in that market segment is critical for our growth into the future.

Nate Greenway, Executive Director
Mission Ambassador Program
In 2017 the two Conference Mission Ambassadors, Cyndi Bloise and Pam Gardner, visited Missionary Conferences within the United States. Their travels took them to Alaska, Oklahoma, and Kentucky. Cyndi and Pam are available to speak to church groups and can be contacted at revbloise@gmail.com and revpamelasgardner@gmail.com. Also, please check out the Facebook posts listed at Cyndi Bloise WPA Mission Ambassador, and Pamela Gardner Western Pennsylvania Mission Ambassador.

Applications for new Mission Ambassadors will be solicited in the fall 2018. Contact Jodale Barnhart at jodalebarnhart@gmail.com for more information.

Jodale Barnhart, Chair

Eastbrook Mission Barn
In 2017 Eastbrook Mission Barn had a busy year of outreach ministry:
• We received our 501c3 status
• We collected, prepared, verified and packaged and shipped 16,579 UMCOR kits. 11,218 kits were shipped to areas affected by natural disaster through UMCOR. 1,000 kits were distributed throughout WPA flash floods, 10,218 – were sent to UMCOR Sager Brown – including in this number 3,000 buckets during the Hurricane season. We have already restocked our bucket supply with 2,568 in stock. We also have 2,311 hygiene kits, and 482 school kits in stock.
• UMCOR has discontinued collecting four of their kits and are reevaluating what is working best in the three remaining kits. PLEASE VISIT THE UMCOR.ORG FOR THE MOST UPDATED LIST OF WHAT GOES IN EACH KIT.
• UMCOR kits and supplies can be delivered to any of the following sites, with the donor’s name on them:
  o Eastbrook Mission Barn
  o WPA Conference center
  o Park UMC, Northeast PA
  o Smithport UMC, Glen Campbell PA
  o Connellsville Community Area Ministries
  o Harrisville UMC, Williamsburg, NY
• We built 14 ramps, serviced 1 ramp and repurposed 5 ramps.
• We had 300 groups of volunteers, 2,300 volunteers of all ages gave 5,850 hours to help people in need.
• We increased our number of monthly groups volunteering from 3 groups to 8 groups, plus several other 1-3 times a year groups and individuals from a variety of churches and organizations.

Thank you for your continued prayers and support for Eastbrook Mission Barn, our WPA advance number is MS002009B. Katie Peterson, missionary GBGM Advance is 982942. If you would like to have someone come share with your church or group about the mission barn, or you would like to come volunteer – please email missionbarn@gmail.com or call 724-856-8241.

Katie Peterson, Missionary
Nicaragua Partnership

In January 2017, Ruben Zeledon, the pastor of our partner church in Jinotega, Nicaragua, was elected president of the Nicaragua Methodist Church. In February 2017, a delegation that included Bishop Moore-Koikoi, the Conference Mission Coordinator, the Encounter with Christ in Latin America & the Caribbean Director, several other clergy, and myself, made a visitation trip to Nicaragua. President Ruben Zeledon graciously postponed his installation service in order to meet with the delegation at his church, Jesus is Coming Soon, in Jinotega. The delegation also went with Pastor Ruben to bring food to the local home for the elderly and fellowship with the staff and residents. That night, they visited several house churches. The highpoint of the visit to Jinotega for David Stains was a service and reception at the Reconciliation Church, Fountain of Peace, which he and I helped to build in 1993.

After visiting Jinotega, the delegation made a long trip over a dirt road that sometimes looked like a roller coaster to a remote section of the Rio Bocay. We traveled down the river in motor powered dug out boats to a base camp in Kayaskita. From there we visited school construction and drinking water supply projects that TMS Global [formerly The Mission Society] is supporting in cooperation with local communities. After the Rio Bocay the delegation returned to Managua, where they met with some of the GBGM Missionaries in Nicaragua and shared faith journey stories with some of the Nicaraguan pastors. The most memorable part of the meeting was when the delegation, led by David Stains, prayed over Ana Patricia Udiel, Pastor of the Roberto Clemente Church. She had been struggling with a long-term illness and lost the space where she was conducting her youth ministry.

In April, a couple representatives from WPAUMC, attended the Nicaragua Connection in Franklin, TN. We spoke to the Connection about the microloan project that we had begun in Nicaragua, that followed the 50/50 partnership guidelines.

In June 2017, President Ruben Zeledon and his wife, Maryuris, addressed the WPAUMC Annual Conference, and spoke at a small reception where he outlined his vision for the Nicaragua Methodist Church for the next four (4) years.

In November 2017, a joint delegation from WPAUMC and eastern Germany partnered with Pastor Ruben's church and the Jinotega government to do a reforestation project. Afterwards, a small delegation from WPA visited Nicaragua to finalize the Eco-Stove Microloan Project. They went to the Eco-Stove factory in Esteli, established by the Stove Team International group from Washington State. Later, they met with Nicaragua Methodist Church pastors to explain the project, encouraging them to set up cooperatives in their communities. The Stove Team International group shared with us that we are the only group using the micro loan model to distribute the stoves in Nicaragua and asked us if they could use us as a role model for the other groups. Our goal was to distribute 100 stoves by May 2018 but we have already passed that mark and are planning to distribute an additional 100 stoves. This will generate $400 per month to purchase additional stoves. Please contact me if you or your church would like to support this project.

It was a great joy to visit Ana Patricia's new ministry for the street children in her neighborhood, Oasis of Peace. She has a new and larger porch to host her program for more than 30 children and has started a soccer and volleyball ministry for 100 older youth. God's timing was perfect for our visit with donated sports equipment as the children had no baseballs left and the youth were using a child-size basketball for their soccer ball. It was
a blessing to see the joy in her face and the love that the children have for her. She is also training several of the older youth in leadership to help her and to take over the program in case she has a relapse in health.

Richard Schall, Director

Russia Initiative

Western PA Conference has worked with the United Methodist Russia Initiative of the General Board of Global Ministries and with the Russian Church in various capacities since 1991. Having finished our partnership with the now closed Embassy of Love United Methodist Church in Syktyvkar, Komi Republic, Bishop Eduard Khegay of Russia, after consulting with his cabinet, suggested continuing our connection through a partnership with the District Superintendent of Kaliningrad, Rev. Igor Doronin, and his three churches. Rev. Doronin immediately invited representatives of our Conference to come to Kaliningrad for orientation and a sharing of vision. We will begin a process of mutual sharing and begin to write a plan of partnership, in accordance to the 50/50 partnership document provided by the General Board of Global Ministries. When we have a proposal for partnership we will present to the Conference Board of Missions for review and approval. There is also a meeting of the Russia Initiative consultation in August 2018 in Moscow, Russia.

In November Dr. Sergei Nicolaev, President of the Russian United Methodist Seminary in Moscow, visited Pittsburgh to attend a Conference. We took the opportunity to greet and welcome him to Pittsburgh, sharing remembrances and discussing possible future endeavors.

Clergy and laity of our Annual Conference who have interest in Russian ministry are invited to be in contact with John Flower or any member of the committee for further information. Please convey this invitation to those who may be interested and especially those who have skills in Russian language.

John E. Flower, Jr. Chair

United Methodist Women

The PURPOSE of United Methodist Women: United Methodist Women shall be a community of women whose purpose is to know God and to experience freedom as whole persons through Jesus Christ; to develop a creative, supportive fellowship; and to expand concepts of mission through participation in the global ministries of the church. In Western PA we take that purpose seriously, encouraging and praying for each other, sharing the spiritual journey, growing and serving together.

Within Western PA, United Methodist Women are organized for mission locally and globally. With a particular emphasis on ministries and mission for women, children and youth, local UMW organizations support outreach within their churches, their communities, and with their mission giving, in the wider world. They raise funds to support designated people and projects of their choosing, and through their Pledge to Mission, send undesignated funds to the national office to be used across the U.S. and worldwide. Those funds not only support outreach to sustain women, children and youth, but mission education, justice advocacy and empowerment. In 2017 WPA Conference United Methodist Women exceeded their pledge of $160,000, sending over $175,000 to the national office for UMW mission and ministry.
Within Western PA, in January 2018 the Conference UMW disbursed over $65,000 through Elizabeth A Bradley Fund grants to programs that make a positive impact in the lives of women, children, and youth in Western Pennsylvania. Grants were made to 11 projects in seven districts. In addition, funds were given to Children’s, Youth, and Middle School Mission u, to the Mission Ambassador Program, and to UMW Scholarships.

Offerings from Local UMW organizations in WPA provide scholarship assistance to men and women preparing for full time Christian Service. Three students were awarded scholarships of $1,000 each for the Spring Term (2018) from the UMW Scholarship Fund and Mary Jewell Fund:

- **Michael Airgood**, pastor of Pine Run UMC near Pittsburgh, is in his second year at the Methodist Theological School in Ohio.
- **Grace Killian** is in her second year at Harvard Divinity School.
- **Victoria Moody** is in her final year at Asbury Seminary.

Believing that study enhances efforts of prayer, giving and service, each year the United Methodist Women organize and run Mission u, in partnership with the Conference Board of Global Ministries. At California University of PA, July 12-15, 2018 (July 10-15 for youth Mission u) three courses will be offered (geographic mission study, issue study, spiritual growth study), with worship, music, workshops, and displays to enhance the experience. Barbara Hess is the dean for 2018.

The third annual Mini Mission u will be offered at Olmsted Manor Retreat Center April 15-17, 2018 with Rev Lisa Grant facilitating the Spiritual Growth study, and Diane Miller and Dara Sterling providing one hour overviews of the geographic and issue studies.

United Methodist Women mentor younger women (ages 14 through 25), providing funding and assistance as they plan and implement programs for their peers. They call themselves “unstoppable” and have a goal to “learn the issues, find your voice, and change the world.” Their fourth annual event will be a retreat at Olmsted Manor Retreat Center, July 6-8, 2018. The planning committee for this group includes high school and college women with Denise Nicole Stone serving as Chair and Diane Miller as mentor. These young women make a powerful witness.

Diane Miller, President

**Zimbabwe Partnership**

Last year the Zimbabwe Partnership had two successful trips to Zimbabwe. The first trip was the on-going successful ZimCamp experience for our youth. Ten youth and four Chaperones visited Great Zimbabwe and learned about the history of the county as well visited partner projects throughout the Zimbabwe Episcopal Area. Youth were able to interact with other youth as well as see how The United Methodist Church is connected and the impact of missions worldwide.

The Partnership also co-sponsored a Lay Academy with the Zimbabwe Episcopal Area. We had three Laity from Western Pennsylvania (PA) that were presenters for some of the classes. Sean Lewis presented on Technology as an Evangelism tool in the 21st Century- A special look at social platform; Todd Bush presented on Cancer-what are the possible causes of the high prevalence and how can we reduce it; and Sam Richardson presented on Camping and Retreat Ministries. As reported by a participant, “It was a great experience, it showed how connected we are as a church. I loved the camping and retreat ministries presentation because it was great knowing that there is more into that ministry
and it lifted my spiritual life. I also realized that our church has great ways and a spirit of installing knowledge and wisdom to laity as well as giving them information on changes that take place.” - Cuthbert Mukandiona. Masvingo District United Methodist Youth Fellowship President.

The Partnership also has its ten ongoing projects with its Sister Districts in Zimbabwe. These projects range from Teachers houses, churches, clinics, school buildings, assisting with education and helping out orphans and vulnerable children. Most of these projects are almost complete and this would not have been possible without the continuous support from all our churches in WPA. As of January 2018, we have raised $297,768.

Despite Zimbabwe being 8,000 miles away, people will realize that we are all the same. We are brothers and sisters created in God’s image. In the community spirit of Chabadza we are coming alongside each other to fulfill the work that God has set for us to do. We are not saying one does it better than the other, but we are meeting each other halfway. We hope that through the partnership people will find ways to grow within their faith.

Sandra Matoushaya, Coordinator

Young People’s Ministry

Young People’s Ministry has had a busy year in 2017. The conference youth ministry team has been hard at work with events such as SPARK (which brought in over 500 youth and adults from across the connection), providing pages and youth delegates to annual conference, and serving our conference though Uth 4 Missions where we helped several United Methodist churches and community members. Our youth are also very active in the Northeast Jurisdiction Council on Youth Ministry with several serving on the steering team. The Youth Ministry Team also attended a retreat at Jumonville where we learned more about what it means to be a Biblical leader. In addition to our youth, we have also rebooted the Young Adult Council and we have held several meetings this year with plans for a few events in 2018. The Youth Ministry Team and Young Adult Council continue to open up communication and are always happy to come to local churches and share what we do and how to join us.

Amanda Gilligan, Coordinator

Conference Treasurer

My work with all of you is ending with my retirement on June 30. I deeply appreciate the richness of our relationship through the years. My life and that of my family is so much better for having known you all. I move on in God’s grace and love, knowing that you remain God’s people.

My greatest pleasure as I leave is the knowledge that a superb team of professionals remains in place to continue our ministry with you. Roger White is announced as my successor, subject to election by the Annual Conference. Roger brings exceptional skills and two years as Assistant Treasurer to this position. The team will benefit greatly from his leadership.

This last year, 2017, we have much for which to be grateful. The faithfulness of all of you to the ministry of the Conference and the General Church is the highlight. It is not always easy to commit to and meet financial goals. Your effort is very much appreciated.
We are very much a behind the scenes group but we touch everyone in some way or another. Your Finance Team of Roger White, Jervais Carr and Holly Sawyer, the team in Benefits of Kathleen Lasky and Alexis Soohy, IT Services – Ben Harsch, Facilities – Michael Schaeffer, and Administrative Support of Sue Browne and Kerry Cantner form a superb platform for us to deliver service to you.

During the year, we process cash ins and outs of over $20 million. This includes Connectional Apportionments, registration fees and other sources of income. In addition, most of what comes in goes out, so we write many checks. These cash distributions support ministries and missions that address every one of our Five Areas of Focus.

Our benefit plans cover 370 active employees and 620 retirees. Each year the benefits team responds to hundreds of questions and issues from members. Working closely with the Board of Pensions they provide administrative support for our health insurance and pensions plans. In addition, they are ready to be responsive to your questions on a daily basis.

We continue to progress in the systems that support our finance and benefits work. A digital filing process has been introduced and is being populated by Conference and District staff, moving toward a paperless system. Recently, an analytical and reporting tool titled Power BI is making the work of sharing information with various committees and the Cabinet in a dynamic way.

Our effort remains focused on enhancing our systems and support while containing cost.

We all look forward to another year of working side by side to follow God’s way and make Disciples of Jesus Christ to transform the world.

Larry Bridge, Treasurer and Director of Administrative Services

**Director of Connectional Ministries**

Throughout my tenure as Director of Connectional Ministries, I have often talked about the need for organizations to operate out of a servant leadership model. Servant leadership is embodied by putting others before yourself and outsiders at the center of your thoughts and actions.

Servant leadership coupled with spiritual leadership causes us to realize that all of us are gifted by the Holy Spirit and sent out into leadership, to use those gifts, and to serve God and the kingdom to come as well as here on earth.

Encouraging people to know where they are, where they serve, current context for ministry and just the overall position of ministry now is a valuable starting point. Moving away from assumptions to real understanding of current state or position in an organization is important. It is from that current position that one can properly understand where God is leading you and where God wants you to be.

But as I have often said in local churches, the hardest part of moving forward is moving past what you have always done and taking the first steps. It is not so hard to articulate vision, but it is hard to get people convinced that they need to leave where they are now.

Casting vision is hard. Casting vision is risky. But there is a difference between recklessness and taking risks. Calculated risks allow for organizations to grow and thrive.

As part of our understanding of where we are and the gaps that need to be filled, connectional ministries and communications ministries finalized an approach to continue
to communicate broadly within the annual conference. A vacant position in the program ministry was filled after a new job description on Social media and media design was developed. We are pleased to have a new team member that has already added strength to the emerging vehicles of communication.

Later in 2017, we received word that there would be a vacancy in our current staff with the departure of our Volunteers in Mission Coordinator in January 2018. Her departure is giving the personnel team an opportunity to evaluate the overall needs of the annual conference as it relates to missions engagement in the annual conference and throughout the world.

Our annual conference remains committed to serving the local church and the annual conference as we provide leadership, resources, and connection so that Disciples can be made and lives can be changed throughout Western Pennsylvania. We continue to serve the local church and provide for connection and much needed leadership throughout the conference. Our staff is only a phone call away.

As the Connectional Leadership Table evaluates where we stand and where we need to be, there is always a need for us to improve structures of our teams and agencies. Continuing to press our organizations to meet regularly and openly remains a challenge. New approaches of communication and shared calendars and approaches will be something that we address on an ongoing basis. Many of our teams do not function well, and sometimes meeting and setting goals and priorities will alleviate some of that dysfunction.

Lack of structure, regular meeting schedules, and dysfunction proves to be the ongoing challenge when we recruit for positions and volunteer servants to participate in the ministry of the annual conference. The leadership recruitment and nominations team continues to address issues of leadership development and recruitment as they work to provide leadership for our teams and agencies.

Diversity and inclusion remains a high commitment for all of our teams. As the Northeastern Jurisdiction of The United Methodist Church demands more from our annual conferences as it relates to diversity and inclusion with the Call to Action, our annual conference has spent time in setting goals and priorities in the area of inclusion. We must continue to do better at broadening participating of our diverse populations and creating space for leadership development, new places for new people, and training in our areas of cultural competency. We must remain committed to our role in the annual conference at eliminating systems that disparage, discourage, and prevent diversity and move to intentional development of systems that reflect a better vision of what God has for us.

At the annual conference session of 2017 in Grove City, Bishop Moore Koikoi shared a vision for a better future with camping and retreat ministry. The Bishop’s Initiative on camping and retreat ministries has been a focal point of developing stronger camps and retreat ministries, increasing overall participation in our camping and retreat ministries, as well as a strong commitment to capital improvements, campership endowments, and diversity. The camping and retreat ministries has been deliberate in its plans and is taking the very intentional steps at setting aggressive goals and objectives of the initiative.

Funding for ministry in 2017 has been a challenge as we understand the changing landscape of western Pennsylvania. Our funding for ministry was down slightly from the past years of record receipts of connectional dollars and intentional steps were taken to address our funding streams. The annual conference, Conference Finance and Administration, the Bishop and the Cabinet remain committed to funding General
Apportionments at 100%. This demands that we address ways that we are intentional in our own stewardship in the annual conference and in the local church.

The state of the church, the landscape of our area, and the future of the denomination demand that we continue to shape our future by understanding where God is calling us to be. We must remain committed to shape ourselves through intentional steps forward. We must remain committed to sharing the abundance that God has given to us as we remain faithful stewards of the vision God shares. We must always be looking to our Lord and Savior to discern where we are being led now and into 2018.

We remain committed to seeking God through all that we do.

Gregory D. Cox, Director of Connectional Ministries

**Office of Diversity Development and Inclusion**

Much of what has been accomplished in the Office of Diversity Development and Inclusion over the past year has grown out of relationships and collaboration. Two stories reflect the work:

Together, the Office of Diversity Development and Inclusion and the Anti-Racism Team worked for several months on an in-house video for the 2017 Annual Conference. The collaborative work drew on the many gifts of individuals: one was compellingly creative, another was skillfully administrative, and yet another was an inspiring leader. Would we have a video after many months of planning, coming up with a script and filming? Ultimately, the 2017 Annual Conference “Let’s Talk About Race” was completed: [https://youtu.be/B6-UNrl2k10](https://youtu.be/B6-UNrl2k10). The planning team was also concerned about the reception of the video because of past resistance to anti-racism initiatives in our conference. Many responded positively to the video. Others responded negatively including a debate on Facebook. Anti-racism work is often a struggle including facing negative feedback. Whether positive or negative, we were grateful for the dialogue. Through it all, we understood that Jesus’ ministry was challenging as He sought justice for people who were marginalized. Looking to His ministry as a model, we worked collaboratively, produced a well-crafted video, and encouraged others to challenge injustice.

In 2015, William B. Meekins, Jr. first initiated the yearly racial/ethnic clergy retreat to support clergy who are isolated and experience racism in our conference. Working with William Meekins over the last few years, Dianne Glaive witnessed and personally experienced how the gathering of racial/ethnic clergy has been a space to lament and express joy serving in the WPAUMC, a predominantly white conference. We discussed racism and practice contemplation without having to defend experiencing racism. Deeper connections between Korean and black clergy, and African and African American clergy continue to develop. Such relationship-building must be considered in the context of intergroup tensions between various ethnic groups common across the U.S. The clergy continue to strive to come together supporting one another.

Many initiatives continue:

- Supporting clergy in new and existing cross-cultural racial/ethnic appointments.
- Visiting the churches with cross-cultural racial/ethnic clergy appointments including some Sundays participating in worship, and one-on-one on a weekday.
Participating in worship services in predominantly white churches across the conference including preaching and other liturgical practices, focusing specifically on diversity, anti-racism, and inclusion.

- Supporting racial/ethnic congregations (African American and Latina/o).
- Consulting on developing cultural competencies through conversations and direction to resources for gatherings and events like small groups and worship by consulting with clergy organizing services.

Dianne Glave, Coordinator

Office of Clergy Excellence

The Office of Clergy Excellence has engaged in exciting work with clergy and laity throughout 2017. We continue to be motivated by the belief that by equipping clergy to flourish and grow, we see the flourishing and growth of communities. This year we provided leadership, connection and resources aimed at making disciples through initiatives in the following areas:

- Clergy Communities of Practice: The first round of CCOPs—a form of peer learning emphasizing bringing learning into practice which also includes accountability and covenant relationships—wrapped up in December. As part of the ongoing evaluation we have heard stories of clergy who felt supported and less isolated, as well as clergy who were able to speak with one another well across theological divides. Even more, clergy were able to share ways the groups impacted their local ministry. Examples include: deeper worship planning, study groups and new methods of evangelism, and conversations about mission and vision. These groups continue to show immense promise for our future and we are grateful how the Spirit is at work in CCOPs.

- Coaching: After completing an initial pilot program, we have moved to a resourcing model around coaching. Coaches have guided clergy through conflict transformation, as well as conversations around leadership and new ministry ideas. Coaching as a tool in ministry continues to gain ground in Western PA and we are actively assessing how to broaden this conversation across our connection.

- Pastoral Transitions Seminar: This Conference-wide seminar continues to be offered to all pastors experiencing a reappointment. Practical and relational aspects are addressed with the hope that clergy and congregations will be better equipped to send and receive pastors. Pastors have expressed gratitude for this support and continue to follow up asking for resources related to transition.

- Young Clergy Initiative: We were awarded a grant through the Young Clergy Initiative and General Board of Higher Education and Ministry to fund Ministry Discernment Internships for college students. Planning began with a team dedicated to this process. The first round will happen in the coming year, the aim of which is to encourage young people to enter ministry.

- Continuing Education: The leadership event offered on the Day of Preparation continued to grow, leading us to offer two options in 2017. The Clergy Excellence webpages provide current listings and resources for clergy and laity looking for learning opportunities. Check the site often and let us know when you have an event to add. www.wpaumc.org/leadershipdevelopment

- Connectional Work: The Office of Clergy Excellence continued to lend support with a number of Conference bodies including the BOM (clergy evaluation, continuing
education and residency program), Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministry, BOL (lay excellence), and the CLT. Staff support was provided for Conference Seminary internships, as well as planning and preparation for clergy ethics trainings.

We continue to prayerfully discern where God will lead us next and look forward to the ways we are growing together as disciples. If you would like information about any of these initiatives or want to be a part of this work, please contact us.

Susan Moudry, Coordinator

Office of Congregational Development & Revitalization

The Office of Congregational Development and Revitalization exists to resource and connect congregations in the work of creating new places for new people, so that more people, more diverse people, and more young people might become disciples of Jesus Christ. In the 2017-2018 program year, 12 congregations and 36 clergy participated in ongoing training cohorts; 14 congregations received onsite coaching or consulting; and 15 congregations received funding for new ministries. In addition, the Congregational Development Office supports and resources the connectional work of the Cabinet, Parish & Community Development Committee (P&CD), Ethnic Local Church Concerns Committee (ELCC), and Conference Leadership Team (CLT).

Programs and resources available through the Office include:

• **Church: New Academy**, a clergy cohort that reads, prays and studies together around topics of congregational leadership, connecting with the community, and strategic planning for ministry.

• **Mosaix Multiethnic Conversations**, a 9-month conversation in which lay and clergy leaders learn to build intentional Christian community across racial lines. Our goal is to equip congregations to better reflect the racial diversity of the communities in which we live. Mosaix is also part of laying the groundwork for planting one or more new multiethnic churches in WPA.

• **SHIFT Network**, a year-long process in which congregational teams receive training and on-going coaching in five areas, including discipleship, stewardship and generosity, hospitality, worship and service. The goal is to re-orient the congregation’s sense of mission and ministry both inwardly – toward deepening discipleship – and outwardly – into their community.

• **MissionInsiste**, a demographic research tool that provides census data, targeted mailing lists, and ministry application guidelines for local communities.

• **Real Discipleship Survey**, a measure of growth in discipleship practices that provides a way to track spiritual growth both individually and as a congregation.

The Office of Congregational Development & Revitalization also stewards the vision of planting new churches in the Annual Conference, and in particular, the development of new multiethnic congregations within Western Pennsylvania. To that end, and in accordance with the 2018 Call to Action report from WPAUMC, we are laying the groundwork to launch a new multiethnic congregation by 2019, and additional congregations thereafter.

It is my deep joy to share in this ministry of multiplication with lay and clergy colleagues across Western Pennsylvania, and especially with the members of the Cabinet, Program Staff and Parish & Community Development Committee.

Amy Wagner, Director
**Parish & Community Development**

The WPAUMC Parish & Community Development Committee’s primary task & work is to provide resourcing to those local churches across the Annual Conference that are intentionally seeking to grow their parish through community connections by means of offering new places of engagement for new people. The resources the committee brings to bear are: monetary funding, connection to additional resourcing, and advisory consultation.

Monetary funding is granted to local church through Parish & Community Development’s (P&CD) “New Places for New People” grant. Any church that has developed a vision and plan for the creation of new ministry that seeks to engage their community in new & fresh way are encouraged to apply for this grant. The grants are made possible through the Connectional Apportionments paid to the Annual Conference by local churches. P&CD provided monetary funding for the following churches in 2017 (with “New Place” projects in italics):

- Avery UMC: *Trinity West After School Tutoring*
- Eight Avenue Community Ministries: *Swissvale - New Day campus*
- Faith UMC of Fox Chapel: *Roots of Faith (satellite in Sharpsburg)*
- Faith Community UMC: *Faith on 68 campus*
- First UMC of Blairsville: *Connect Church (satellite in Blairsville)*
- First UMC of Kittanning: *Outreach Immersion*
- First UMC of McKeesport: *One Church/Six Campuses*
- Freeport UMC: *Summer Community Outreach*
- Greenstone UMC: ‘*The Cove*’ After-School Arts Center
- Grove Avenue UMC: *Moxham Neighborhood Church & Community Worker*
- John Wesley UMC: *Alpha Program Community Outreach*
- Laketon Heights UMC: *Summer VBS*
- Manorville UMC: *Praise by the River*
- Table of Grace UMC-Erie, PA: *Urban Revitalization*
- Trinity UMC of McMurray: *Ministry w/ the Deaf*

The Parish & Community Development Committee embraced working through the Annual Conference’s Five Areas of Focus with greater intentionality & dedication. The committee is asking all churches that partner with P&CD to outline how their ‘New Place’ will help the Annual Conference carry out the Five Areas of Focus.

Whereas in past years, P&CD utilized a rolling/monthly format for receiving grant applications, the committee has changed to receiving grant applications twice annually (first half of the year/second half of the year). Grant application information can be found on the WPAUMC.org website.

David Ewing, Chair

**Commission on Archives & History**

The Commission on Archives and History have been busy since we moved into our new facility in August 2016. Through the efforts of Dave Grinnell, our Archivist, we have been trying to document and label all boxes and contents that are already there and the receiving of new materials. All of the committee members are assisting one way or another in this project.
Naomi and Merle Horner, and John Wilson have spent many hours attempting to log the information on a computer with the goal of having a directory of all documents online. This will allow people to determine if they need to make a trip to the facility for information they request.

Members of the committee have traveled to the center on Fridays and Saturdays to work and we appreciate each hour given.

We continue to field requests for information and have answered over thirty inquiries during the year.

Seven of us traveled to Charleston, WV in May to attend the annual NEJCAH meeting. Some were there for the first time. We will also be attending the annual meeting this May at Lancaster PA. We are doing so as we prepare to host the meeting in 2019. Preliminary plans will have us hosting at Johnstown First Church, the only historical landmark in the Conference boundaries.

Edwin J. Herald, Chair

Commission on Christian Unity & Interreligious Relationships (CUIR)

In 2017, the Commission on Christian Unity and Interreligious Relationships continued our ministry of maintaining ecumenical and interfaith connections on behalf of the Western PA Conference, while making significant advances in our goal of increasing awareness about how local churches can make disciples of Jesus Christ through Ecumenical and Interfaith partnerships.

CUIR continued our ecumenical partnerships with the Pennsylvania Council of Churches, Christian Associates of Southwest Pennsylvania, Inter-Church Ministries of Erie County, and Christians United of Beaver County through both monetary support and dialogue. Individual CUIR members also participated in the Pittsburgh Interfaith Coalition, Interfaith Dialogues at the Jewish Community Center of Greater Pittsburgh, as well as local Ministerial organizations. CUIR Chair, Scott Shaffer, and member, Dai Morgan, both attended the National Workshop on Christian Unity (NWCU) and United Methodist Ecumenical and Interfaith Training (UMEIT), for which Dai serves as a member of the planning committee. Scott also attended the Council of Bishops Ecumenical Plunge, visiting world ecumenical sites in Geneva, Switzerland and Taize, France.

CUIR sponsored several new initiatives at the 2017 Annual Conference, including a vendor display booth with materials equipping local churches for ecumenical and interfaith ministry; a skit during a plenary session exploring practical ways that churches of every size can utilize ecumenical partnerships to make disciples of Jesus Christ; and a new Ecumenical Achievement Award which was presented to Calvary United Methodist Church in Somerset, PA in recognition for their exemplary ecumenical work, including a $500 grant to continue this vital ministry.

Scott A. Shaffer, Chair

Commission on Equitable Compensation (CEC)

It has been an honor and a privilege for the CEC to walk along with our local churches of Western Pennsylvania during the 2017 year. CEC is our conference committee providing support of full-time clergy serving as pastors in the charges of the annual conference. This is done through various avenues including recommendation of conference standards for pastoral support as well as administering funds to be used in base
compensation supplementation. These avenues are evidenced through yearly legislation, mailed documentation, and grants with applications due May 1st and November 1st of every year with each application deadline covering a 6-month period.

As CEC has walked with local churches we have been able to help strengthen the connectional system between our WPA Conference and our local churches in 2017 through more than 40 grants to aid local churches help pay their pastor’s salary. In 2016 there was 28 regular grants plus several specialized grants. From 2015 to 2016 there was a 15% increase and now for 2017 there was a 30% increase from 2016 to 2017. This is significant in so many ways. Our local church needs have doubled in one year. The ministry landscape we find ourselves in is ever changing. Statements like “we have always done it that way” are a thing of the past because we cannot even hold on to the way we have done things just a couple of years ago and not just from the distant past. This is why we are making changes to upcoming grant application process and looking into revising our minimum salary recommendation format. For CEC these changes and our landscape is not something to lament but rather an opportunity to refocus on Jesus because there is hope. Hope in our Lord and Savior who has provided us with this blessed connectional system because we are not alone. We receive letters of churches growing and being encouraged by our grants which are only possible through your generous Mission Share support. Our CEC’s purpose is lived out through so many avenues, especially grants, as we being faithful with the task that we have been given and resources we are privileged to share.

Corben M. Russell, Chair of Commission on Equitable Compensation

Commission on Status & Role of Women

The Conference Commission on the Status and Role of Women (COSROW) has been active this conference year. There has been a large change over in membership and so this year has been spent examining the mandates that are in the Book of the Discipline about COSROW.

COSROW has restructured into three different committees, an education and resource committee, a data collection and monitoring committee, and a sexual ethics committee. Each of these committees has been working on different projects throughout the year. The education and resource committee has led COSROW in book study on Powerful and Free: Confronting the Glass Ceiling for Women in the Church by Danny Silk. The data and monitoring committee has studied the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women’s (GCOSROW) study on clergy pay by gender <http://www.gcosrw.org/Portals/13/Archives/WBTN/2017/B.-2015-Salary-Study-Part-II-1-2018.pdf?ver=2018-03-07-051441-497> and completed a study of our annual conference’s clergy pay by gender (see report below). The sexual ethics committee has studied GCOSROW’s study on sexual harassment across the church and worked with the episcopal office to study how to develop response teams in the conference. The commission is grateful for the work that has been accomplished on boundary training for the conference leadership.

COSROW also had the opportunity to send a group of to Chicago for training by GCOWROW. The training covered disciplinary mandates, planning, and training in each of the areas of monitoring, sexual ethics and educational resources. The commission is looking forward to implementing these learnings in the coming year.

Angela Rishell, Chair
**WPA Gender Demographics and Salary Compensation Disparities**

{Source 1: UMC clergywomen still receive substantially less compensation: Length of service, age, seniority, and regionality account for some gaps in pay, Magaela C. Bethune, MS, MPA, September 2017}  
<http://gcsrw.org/MonitoringHistory/Archives/2017/2017-09.aspx>

In 2011, it was reported by the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women that clergywomen, on average, make 13% less than did clergymen.

Four years later in 2015, full-time, active clergypersons who were women make a salary that is 16% less that of men.

**The trend is similar in the Western PA Conference.**

A recent study of U.S. clergy salaries, led by the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women examined gender disparities in compensation using 2015 national data provided by Wespath Benefits and Investments. [Wespath Benefits and Investments is an agency of The United Methodist Church.]

The study in the Western Pennsylvania Annual Conference by our Conference Commission on the Status and Role of Women includes data provided by the 2016 *Official Journal* and additional data from Conference databases: EZRA and Brick River.

**Demographics**

A sample of compensation for the year 2015 for 11,235 full-time clergypersons across the U.S. was reported by Wespath to the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women. The membership types of all clergypersons in the sample were 43.4% full-time local pastors; 3.4% deacons; 50.3% elders; and, 2.9% associate members.

In the Western PA Conference, the membership types of clergypersons includes a total of 1,047 clergypersons with 71.1% elders (including those in extension ministries), 3.2% provisional elders, 5.5% associate members, 18.2% licensed local pastors (full-time and part-time), and 1.9% deacons. Of these 1,047 clergypersons, 23.2% are female and 76.8% are male. These numbers in the Western PA Conference are similar to the numbers from the study by the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women.

Among the 11,235 clergypersons included in the [national] study, 28.4% were women, and 71.6% were men. Gender composition also differs significantly across membership types.” [Chi-square analysis was used to examine proportional differences in the gender composition of clergy across membership types.] Clergywomen have greater than average representation among elders (34.4%) and deacons (65.2%), but are significantly underrepresented among full-time local pastors (19.1%) and associate (22.4%) members.
Clergywomen in the Western PA Conference range from 17.2% to 80% by membership type and have a greater than average representation among deacons (80%), part-time licensed local pastors (39.9%), full-time licensed local pastors (27.3%), and provisional elders (32.4%). Clergywomen in the Western PA Conference are underrepresented among elders (18.1%) and associate members (17.2%). [See Chart 1 below “Distribution by Gender and Role”]

Gender and Compensation

In 2015, women [nationally] received substantially and significantly lower salaries than did men. [An independent samples t-test was performed to compare the 2015 salaries, housing allowances, parsonage, and total compensation in clergywomen and clergymen. There was a substantial and significant difference in the 2015 salary for women (M=$50,572.92, SD=$13,119.26) and men (M=$60,268.67, SD=$23,388.50); t(11,223)=23.90, p=<.001.]

{Source 2: Geographic trends associated with gender composition and compensation for UMC clergy: Regional variations determine the extent of gender pay gaps, Magaela C. Bethune, MS, MPA, August 2017} <http://gcsrw.org/MonitoringHistory/Archives/2017/2017-08.aspx>

Women, [nationally] who make up 28.4% of UMC clergy, received 24% of the $822 billion in compensation (e.g., salary, housing allowance, parsonage) paid to UMC clergy in 2015. With few exceptions, a significant pay gap characterizes most jurisdictions across all types of compensation. [Independent sample t-tests were performed for each jurisdiction to examine is the mean difference in clergywomen and clergymen’s salaries, housing allowances, parsonage, and total compensation were statistically significantly different.]

Factors, such as length of service, age of clergy, and membership type might contribute to how clergy members are compensated. Overall – when length of service, age, membership type, and jurisdiction are all held steady - clergywomen still receive, on average, a salary that is almost $4,000 less than clergymen. [Multiple regression analysis was used to test if, when controlling for age, years of service, membership type, and jurisdiction – gender was still a significant predictor of 2015 salary for all UMC clergy. Results of the regression indicate that ten predictors were all significant, and explained 23.9% of the variance in salary, (R2=.24, F(10, 11,225)=354.40, p<.001).]

In the Western Pennsylvania Annual Conference, clergywomen make up 23.2% of our clergypersons. The average salaries for full-time clergywomen (elders, provisional elders, licensed local pastors) are 29.5% lower than the average
salaries for full-time clergymen (elders, provisional elder, licensed local pastors). [See Chart 2 below “Salary Distribution by Gender and Role Totals”] The range of salaries for clergymen as full-time elders (not in extension ministries) is $37,904 to $65,741 with an average salary of $47,015 while the range of salaries for clergymen as full-time elders (not in extension ministries) is $37,169 to $125,000 with an average salary of $53,845. The average clergywoman salary (not in extension ministries) as full-time elder is 12.6% less than the average clergymen salary (not in extension ministries) as full-time elder. The range of salaries for clergywomen as full-time provisional elder is $37,504 to $40,734 with an average salary of $38,981 while the range of salaries for clergymen as full-time provisional elder is $36,769 to $53,000 with an average salary of $39,727. The average clergywoman salary as full-time provisional elder is 1.9% less than the average clergymen salary as full-time provisional elder. The range of salaries for clergywomen as full-time licensed local pastors is $35,167 to $41,794 with an average salary of $37,010 while the range of salaries for clergymen as full-time licensed local pastors is $18,084 to $69,147 with an average salary of $38,387. The average clergywoman salary as full-time licensed local pastor is 3.6% less than the average clergymen salary as full-time licensed local pastor. [See Chart 3 below “Salary Distribution by Gender and Role”]

The average salaries for part-time clergymen (elders, provisional elders, licensed local pastors) is 19.8% lower than the average salaries for part-time clergymen (elders, provisional elders, licensed local pastors). The range of salaries for clergymen as part-time elders is $9,600 to $34,675 with an average salary of $24,841 while the range of salaries for clergymen as part-time elders is $20,772 to $43,500 with an average salary of $34,963. The average clergywoman salary as part-time elder is 12.6% less than the average clergymen salary as part-time elder. The range of salaries for clergywomen as part-time provisional elder is $14,560 to $36,769 with an average salary of $24,728 while the range of salaries for clergymen as part-time provisional is $18,540 to $52,982 with an average salary of $29,714. The average clergywoman salary as part-time provisional is 16.8% less than the average clergymen salary as part-time provisional. The range of salaries for clergywomen as part-time licensed local pastors is $5,425 to $39,960 with an average salary of $23,924 while the range of salaries for clergymen as part-time licensed local pastors is $3,600 to $46,150 with an average salary of $23,407. The average clergywoman salary as part-time licensed local pastor is 2.2% more than the average clergymen salary as part-time licensed local pastor. [See Chart 3 below “Salary Distribution by Gender and Role”]

The range of salaries for clergywoman as associate member is $3,535 to $10,400 with an average salary of $6,967 while the range of salaries for clergymen as associate member is $20,214 to $49,712 with an average salary of $42,030. The average clergywoman salary as associate member is 93.5% less than the average clergymen salary as associate member but the factor of full-time and part-time is
the reason behind the percentage difference in salary. [See Chart 3 below “Salary Distribution by Gender and Role”]

**Conclusion**

The Western PA Conference has made strides toward equality. By recruiting and empowering women to follow the call to ministry, the number of clergywomen has increased and will continue to increase. This data is a baseline, a starting point, but it will continue to change as we recognize the disparity that occurs in our conference and take strides to create change.
## Chart 1

### Distribution by Gender and Role

*(data from the 2016 Conference Journal)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number of Clergy in Category by Gender</th>
<th>2016 Journal</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Active Distribution by Gender &amp; Role</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Female Elders</td>
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<tr>
<td>Male Elders</td>
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<td>Female in Extension Ministries</td>
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<td>Male in Extension Ministries</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Male Associate Members</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Chart 2

#### Salary Distribution by Gender and Role Totals

(salary data from Ezra and Brick River)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Active Salary Distribution by Gender and Role</th>
<th>Lowest Salary</th>
<th>Highest Salary</th>
<th>Average Salary</th>
<th>Percentage difference in salary</th>
<th>Total Number of Clergy in Category by Gender</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female FT (Elders, Provisionals, Licensed Local Pastors)</td>
<td>$35,167</td>
<td>$65,741</td>
<td>$50,454</td>
<td>29.5%</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male FT (Elders, Provisionals, Licensed Local Pastors)</td>
<td>$18,084</td>
<td>$125,000</td>
<td>$71,542</td>
<td></td>
<td>279</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female PT (Elders, Provisionals, Licensed Local Pastors)</td>
<td>$5,425</td>
<td>$39,960</td>
<td>$22,693</td>
<td>19.8%</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male PT (Elders, Provisionals, Licensed Local Pastors)</td>
<td>$3,600</td>
<td>$52,982</td>
<td>$28,291</td>
<td></td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Chart 3

**Salary Distribution by Gender and Role**

*(salary data from Ezra and Brick River)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Active Distribution by Gender and Role</th>
<th>Lowest Salary</th>
<th>Highest Salary</th>
<th>Average Salary</th>
<th>Percentage difference in salary</th>
<th>Total Number of Clergy in Category by Gender</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female Elders(FT)</td>
<td>$37,904</td>
<td>$65,741</td>
<td>$47,015</td>
<td>12.6%</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male Elders(FT)</td>
<td>$37,169</td>
<td>$125,000</td>
<td>$53,845</td>
<td></td>
<td>236</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female Elders(PT)</td>
<td>$9,600</td>
<td>$34,675</td>
<td>$24,841</td>
<td>29.0%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male Elders(PT)</td>
<td>$20,772</td>
<td>$43,500</td>
<td>$34,963</td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female Provisionals (FT)</td>
<td>$37,504</td>
<td>$40,734</td>
<td>$38,981</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male Provisionals (FT)</td>
<td>$36,769</td>
<td>$53,000</td>
<td>$39,727</td>
<td></td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female Provisionals (PT)</td>
<td>$14,560</td>
<td>$36,769</td>
<td>$24,728</td>
<td>16.8%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male Provisionals (PT)</td>
<td>$18,540</td>
<td>$52,982</td>
<td>$29,714</td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female Associate Members</td>
<td>$3,535</td>
<td>$10,400</td>
<td>$6,967</td>
<td>93.5%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male Associate Members</td>
<td>$20,214</td>
<td>$49,712</td>
<td>$42,030</td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female Licensed Local Pastors (FT)</td>
<td>$35,167</td>
<td>$41,794</td>
<td>$37,010</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male Licensed Local Pastors (FT)</td>
<td>$18,084</td>
<td>$69,147</td>
<td>$38,387</td>
<td></td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female Licensed Local Pastors (PT)</td>
<td>$5,425</td>
<td>$39,960</td>
<td>$23,924</td>
<td></td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male Licensed Local Pastors (PT)</td>
<td>$3,600</td>
<td>$46,150</td>
<td>$23,407</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Angela Rishell, Chair
Board of Laity

The Board of Laity continues to be faithful in their work with the District Superintendents and local church leadership in developing strategies and engaging in deep conversations which are needed and beneficial in building excellence in lay leadership throughout our Western PA Conference. The Board of Laity remains committed to holding in the highest regard the importance of strong and trusting relationships not only with laity in our churches and communities, but also with our clergy who serve the local churches in our districts. Our ongoing pursuit is to demonstrate to the Coordinating and Appointive Cabinet that their WPA Conference Board of Laity Team (CBOL) has the passion and desire to be in partnership together by searching for the “untapped” gifts and talents of the laity throughout our conference and seeing where those gifts and talents can be most effective in working together to bring the Light and Love of Jesus Christ to the World.

As your Conference Lay Leader, in January 2017, I was asked to lead a breakout session at SPARK 2017. Anyone who has never attended SPARK should take time to attend this magnificent event planned each year by the Youth Ministry Team. Attending SPARK is like a mountain top experience…. listening to the many voices and being in fellowship with the future…. OUR YOUTH. I encourage you to spend a day, evening, or the entire weekend at a SPARK event! To see 600 or more young people, move forward in the direction of being transformed into Disciples of Jesus Christ, is a Blessing! Thank you Mollie Landman, Kendra Shoffstall and Amanda Gilligan for your leadership in the planning another excellent SPARK event. YMT Rocks!

In February 2017, the Association of Annual Conference Lay Leaders (AACLL) and the Association of Conference Directors of Lay Servant Ministries (ACDLSM) held a joint convocation at Discipleship Ministries in Nashville, TN. As President of the Association of Annual Conference Lay Leaders I saw the importance of AACLL and ACDLSM building and maintaining connectional relationships at the national level as well as within our annual conferences. Since this was a first for a joint convocation, our guest speaker for the event was Demi L. Prentiss, program officer for discipleship and leadership in the area of lay and baptismal ministry of the Episcopal Church. Both AACLL and ACDLSM membership have committed to supporting one another as we continue to serve and provide leadership that will make a difference in our annual Conferences and beyond.

For the 2017 WPA Annual Conference, instead of offering the ten separate Lay Academy sessions, your WPA Conference Board of Laity (CBOL), in conversation with Bishop Cynthia Moore-Koikoi, held its first Laity Session. This session was designed so all laity would gather together in one setting. Our time together covered the “Why” of Annual Conference, “What” to expect at annual conference and “How” to report back to your about Annual Conference. District Lay Leaders gave a Powerpoint presentation about H.O.P.E. (Tools for Lay Ministry) and left the members with the question, “How is your congregation making disciples and offering hope to their communities?” The Conference Board of Laity has invited the Junius B. Dotson, General Secretary (Chief Executive Officer) of Discipleship Ministries, Nashville, TN to the 2018 Annual Conference Laity Session. We hope that you will join us.

In September 2017, District Lay Leaders joined with me in attending the Northeastern Jurisdiction Annual Conference Lay Leaders meeting hosted by the West Virginia Annual Conference. Our Theme was “Sharing our Faith”. It was good for us to
gather again with our colleagues in the NEJ. The focus of this gathering was on practical learning and insights that hopefully we as leaders were able to bring back and implement in our congregations throughout our conferences in the Jurisdiction. We had the opportunity to do hands on Mission Work at Scott’s Run Settlement House stuffing over 800 lunch back packs and after school meals.

Lastly, for the 2017 conference year, your Board of Laity was able to award approximately $4,500+ in scholarships. Laity scholarships assist our youth and young adults in attending Spark 2017, UM Spiritual Retreats, UM Mission Trips, UM Leadership Training Events throughout our annual conference and beyond. The Conference Board of Laity Team is proud to be a part of the development and nurturing of Christian Leaders!

In closing and on behalf of the WPA Conference Board of Laity Team, we thank you for your continued prayers and especially for your support each and every time we reach out to you!!

Sharon Gregory, Conference Lay Leader

Board of Ministry

During this past year, we have been busy with the many things the Discipline calls us to do. We have offered two “Orientation to Ministry” events for individuals who are exploring the call to credentialed ministry. We have interviewed and approved candidates for Provisional Membership and Commissioning, as well as those seeking Associate Membership in our Annual Conference. We have conducted training sessions for District Committees on ministry and resourced people serving as Group Mentoring guides and Clergy Mentors. We have spent time in prayer and conversation with the Cabinet about how to help our clergy live out their call in the most effective ways possible. So much of this work with our candidates depends on the dedication and faithfulness of Janet Lord, Director of Ministerial Services. We are deeply grateful for her.

Along with this work in accompanying candidates through the process of entering ministry, the Board has other responsibilities that are not so obvious to the clergy and laity of the Conference. We have worked with clergy as they seek a leave of absence, and we are a part of the discernment process for when a clergy on leave seeks to return to an appointment. Several Board members were trained and then led training across our Conference for all clergy on issues of ethics and boundaries. Board members are working on responding to a new Disciplinary requirement for an eight-year cycle of intensive assessment of every pastor. The Board works with clergy from other Conferences and from other denominations who seek to be in ministry in the Western PA Conference. The BOM is part of a Conference team responding to a call from the Northeastern Jurisdiction for every Annual Conference to intentionally work on eliminating racism from our systems. The Board of Ministry is active in many ways, and in everything we do, the goal is to strengthen the ministry of the Annual Conference and its churches by providing for faithful, effective, fruitful clergy leaders.

Eric Raygor and David Janz, Co-Chairs

Personnel Team

In 2017, the Conference Personnel Team updated our Employee Handbook. It was updated to include the following sections: Introduction; Equal Opportunity Employment; Diversity; Prohibiting Discrimination and Sexual Harassment of Employees; Classification
This year, the Conference Personnel Team is focusing on updating job descriptions for all Conference staffing. Each job description is formatted with the following sections (Purpose, Functions, Expectations and Qualifications). Once this work is completed, each staff member will receive their updated job description.

Our 2017 hiring policy was utilized by the Personnel Team for the hiring of two new District Administrative Assistants. The Personnel Team is also actively involved with the search teams for the hiring of our new Treasurer/Director of Administrative Services and the Director of Connectional Ministries.

The Personnel Team continues to take an active role in all other staff changes and vision for staff changes. This year, we were happy to have Jessica Gamache move to our full-time Coordinator of Camping and Retreat Ministries, with the additional work as Campaign Director of the “Deeply Rooted, Upward Reaching” campaign.

We also added the additional duties of Director of Personnel for the Conference Staff to Kathleen Lasky. Kathleen will assure compliance with our Employee Handbook, and provide oversight of staff compensation, benefits and employee records.

Lori Deal, Chair

**Board of Evangelism**

We are excited, alive and full of passion for the spiritual gift of evangelism that God has blessed our church with. Our vision is to see the gift of evangelism fully empowered by God's spirit and enabled in people's lives throughout the conference. Our mission is twofold. We have a desire to help those God has gifted with evangelism to discover their call and to develop it so that they can work effectively within the conference. Secondly, we want to help Christians who may not have the gift of evangelism to effectively be a witness of Christ in their everyday life. It is everyone's responsibility to share the Good News with those they rub shoulders with each day. All of our processes are to help people come to a point where they can say, "I can do this."

In the past our team implemented two main events on a rotational schedule. We have traditionally alternated between a Clinic on Evangelism one year and a Congress or School on the other years. Because of General Conference 2016 we missed an event in the fall of that year. Because of this, last year, we implemented two events.

The first event was a Clinic with Allyn Ricketts presenting an apologetic seminar on evangelism. The Clinic was opened by an inspiring talk from Greg Cox, Director of Connectional Ministries. Our evangelism team has worked from a foundational teaching over the last several years that there are six major styles of evangelism and our Clinics in the past have emphasized several of these. Allyn Ricketts emphasized the intellectual approach. Allyn currently is the Professor of Apologetics and Philosophy at the Biblical Life Institute near Freeport.

The fall event was our school on evangelism with Evangelist Ron Hutchcraft as keynote. Ron Hutchcraft Ministries (RHM) is all about "spiritual rescue." The mission statement of Jesus is "to seek and to save the lost." (Luke 19:10) RHM seeks to join Jesus
in this mission, by sharing the unchanging Gospel message of Jesus to a world of lost people. As an intrinsic part of the Youth for Christ movement, Ron Hutchcraft was both a pioneer and leader in cross-cultural youth ministry. Ron Hutchcraft Ministries expresses itself through "A Word With You", "A Life That Matters" and "On Eagles Wings". The emphasis of the school was "A Life That Matters", making the greatest possible difference with the rest of your life.

On Eagles' Wings® is the Native American outreach of RHM. On Eagles Wings® is a leading youth ministry to the Indigenous young people of the United States and Canada. For 25 years, On Eagles' Wings® has trained and equipped Native American young people to reach their people for Jesus. Through the annual Warrior Leadership Summit discipleship conference, and the Summer of Hope reservation tour, thousands of Native lives have been impacted for Christ.

Your generosity has allowed us to once again fulfill our mandate in ¶630.3.c that states ... to provide for ... the distribution of promotional materials ... We provided local church laity and pastors with a variety of promotional evangelism materials at no cost. These materials are not just left on the table for "grabs" but are given out during conversations about practical evangelism at our table in the Vendor's room. We also distributed a book by Skye Jethani titled "The Divine Commodity" to many in leadership around the conference. This book if taken to heart is life and ministry changing!

General Evangelist, John Zimmerman with the help of others on the team has developed a series of inspirational and teaching videos called Good News Clips. Money was provided in last year's budget for these and we hope to continue to develop this ministry and place them on our website, social media, YouTube, and other places people congregate electronically. These clips are short (usually less than four minutes) and make the point that "I can do this."

Our team is responsible for certifying and recertifying General and Conference Evangelists. We currently have three. John Zimmerman (General Evangelist) and his wife Christine are working as consultants and move onsite at the local church living in their 5th wheel trailer. Their emphasis is Relational Ministry and Relational Evangelism and they help the local church discover the ministry often right outside their door. They have presented a seminar in the Indiana District earlier this year which focused on pre-evangelism prayer walks in Kittanning. This approach at evangelism is far more effective than just randomly talking. God's Holy Spirit often opens your eyes to opportunities that you never even knew existed. New ministry has been implemented in Kittanning through this event. We are working with AF180 to possibly present an internship opportunity in 2018 during one of their three month consultations. The conference provides retirement and health care benefits for the Zimmermans through our budget.

Conference Evangelist (Lay) Luella Krieger and her husband Jim, who have been in active ministry for over 24 years, presented many events through "Voices from the Past" while tending to their daughter dealing with cancer. The conference provides retirement and health care benefits for the Kriegers through our budget.

General Evangelist Christine Rogan retired in the fall 2017 and is discerning how she will do evangelistic ministry in retirement.

Our team partnered with CLT to purchase approximately 500 flash drives which are imprinted with WPA conference evangelism and discipleship logos and populated with evangelism and discipleship tools. These drives will be given out at our evangelism events
and other conference events during the next couple years as opportunities present themselves.

Our team continues to have the honor of selecting the winners of the coveted Denman awards in the categories of Clergy, Lay and Youth. These are people who are setting the bar for personal and professional evangelism in our conference.

John Seth of the conference evangelism team will present an opportunity in five of our districts in April 2018, for churches to “See All The People” (Embracing our Community) in collaboration with General Evangelist John Zimmerman from AF180 and Amy Wagner from conference staff (Congregational Renewal/Development). The team will implement five events across the conference to help people discover the uniqueness of their communities, to break out of the church and into the community and how churches can “grow younger.”

We have had a busy year and the team already has two major events planned for 2019. Evangelism is the front door to discipleship and we hope to help the local church create healthy and spirit empowered evangelistic efforts to reach all people throughout our annual conference.

We covet your prayers as we seek to fulfill our responsibilities in the Western PA Conference and thank you for providing resources that allow us to develop passionate disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world through an effective evangelistic outreach.

Paul Morelli, Chair

Justice Ministries

2017 Legislative Session

On January 7, 2017 we accepted the final editing of Electronic Recording of Juveniles in Pennsylvania. This proposal is an extension of the SR 304 Advisory Committee on Juvenile Justice. It specifically addresses the Reid Technique of interrogation as detailed in the SR381 Advisory Committee on Wrongful Convictions.

On February 10, 2017 the Best Practices Committee of the Allegheny County Bar Association discussed our eyewitness identification proposal and their new Protocol. The focus of their proposal pertains to police liability, litigation, and certainty of conviction. Our, very consistent, proposal extends to juvenile protection and rehabilitation.


Lassen Community College, Coastline College and Christian Bible College & Seminary are facilitating inmates seeking degrees during their incarceration. Bakersfield College has begun holding classes in the penitentiaries to this same end. Sentences are reduced 14 days for each completed class and six-months for each completed degree. The objective is to develop resumes that will make them more employable upon their release.

On April 17&18, 2017 we met with 12 members of the Pennsylvania General Assembly. They made commitments consistent with our 2016 Annual Conference Campaign Disclosure Resolution P101.

SB560 was reported out of the Senate on May 10, 2017, 48-0. It passed the House of Representatives on June 20, 2017, 185-9. Gov. Wolf signed the Bill on July 7, 2017 as Act 22 of 2017. Police are now expected to use body cameras when on call, and those tapes are presumed admissible in court.

On June 29, 2017 SB529 passed the Senate 50-0. This Bill was first adopted by our Annual Conference in 2008. The Bill would expunge misdemeanor convictions from public records after seven years of good time. The conviction would remain in police files, but would no longer be available to employers or landlords. The Bill is still sleeping in the House Judiciary Committee.

On December 11, 2017 we testified to the Democratic Women’s’ Caucus regarding Gov. Wolf’s “It’s On Us” Pledge regarding sexual harassment in schools.

Roger Thomas

Poverty Team

The Poverty Team of the Annual Conference continues to work hard and diligently to address the systems and situations that impact people in their daily lives.

The Value, Vision and Mission of the Team is:

Core Value: Love

“What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such a faith save them? Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to them, ‘Go in peace; keep warm and well fed’ but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead. James 2: 14-17

Vision of the Poverty Team: The Western PA Conference is a community of churches that provides for all of God’s children where poverty, hunger and homelessness will not be tolerated. Racism and all forms of discrimination will be eliminated by an all-inclusive spirit of sisterhood and brotherhood.

Mission of the Poverty Team is to build the community of our vision so that every Charge in WPA will have a ministry with those living in poverty.

Highlights:

• Following the recommendations of the Connectional Table our team has strived to collaborate with other relevant groups. We now include Dai Morgan as the Advocacy Representative, Kasi DeVinney from the Credit Union, and Katie Peterson from the Mission Barn, on our team. We held one meeting at the Mission Barn when the Conference Center was too busy that day.

• Our meetings are usually scheduled bi-monthly at the Conference Center, and on opposite months by conference call.

• We distributed $9,600 to five area ministries:
  o New Salem UM to renovate space to provide a feeding program to a very rural community
  o Seward UMC for a Getting Ahead program in partnership with the local school district
o Erie UM Alliance for their emergency shelter services
o Greensburg UMC SPARK program
o We had more funds we could have shared, but not enough requests came in. We hope to do a better job in 2018 of promoting this resource.

- $200 scholarships were given to Elizabeth Bjerke and Glenna Wilson, team members, to attend a Board of Global Ministries workshop, The Welcoming Table, at Haywood Street UMC in Asheville NC. The outcome of this is that two speakers will be coming for the event scheduled in 2018.
- The team was granted presentation time at the Annual Conference Session where we shared our mission and vision, and how we are available to the conference for support. We also had a display area and gathered an Offering of Letters for Bread for the World.
- The biggest part of our work this year was beginning a collaboration with the other Outreach Teams of the Connectional Table to plan a major event for 2018, The Many Faces Of Poverty, which will emphasize how poverty impacts a cross section of all people; how we can break some of our stereotypes of who are poor, and inspire participants to go home and do something.
- We are learning that there are a good number of churches who have ministries with the poor and we are not always aware of them. We try to collect this information for a data base, but it is tedious and often inaccurate reporting.
- We have resource people on the team who are willing and eager to assist churches, communities, and districts in the area of alleviating poverty. We can provide speakers, retreat leadership, tangible materials, and financial support.

We are grateful to the Annual Conference for the financial and other assistance they provide so that we can strive to fulfill our vision and mission.

Glenna Wilson, Chair

Board of Trustees

The Conference Board of Trustees manages annual conference property, receives and holds in trust bequests and endowments, and serves as the Board of Directors of the Annual Conference Corporation (Book of Discipline ¶2512). The Conference Board of Trustees is amenable to the Annual Conference to which it reports annually.

Conference Properties

The Trustees oversee the maintenance of the United Methodist Center in Cranberry Township and the maintenance of the two conference owned parsonages for clergy serving on Conference staff who do not receive a housing allowance.

In 2017, the Trustees completed a contract to expand the Center’s parking and make the entrance from Freedom Road safer by relocating it further to the west. The total project cost of $508,966 (incurred over multiple years) was substantially funded by liquidating the Trustees Capital Improvement Fund (UM Foundation Account). The Trustees had the boiler system rebuilt, and secured a contract that included a ten-year warranty on parts and labor. Brick pointing was done to discontinue recent water intrusion and security updates were completed.
District Parsonages

The Conference Board of Trustees oversees the maintenance of conference owned parsonages for the District Superintendents and their families. The District Boards of Trustees identify maintenance needs and manage any required work. Each district maintains a Discretionary District Parsonage Maintenance Fund. The purpose of this fund is to care for routine maintenance needs within the discretion of the District Boards of Trustees. Each year the districts provide an accounting of the use of these discretionary funds and the Conference Board of Trustees replenishes the funds. After replenishment, the opening balance for 2018 for each district’s discretionary maintenance fund was $4,000.

Also, from time to time the District Boards of Trustees may identify major maintenance needs and submit requests for funding to the Conference Board of Trustees. The Conference Trustees prioritize these requests and make awards from available funds. For example, in 2017 the siding on the parsonage that houses the Assistant to the Bishop was replaced, and the deck on the Franklin District parsonage was replaced.

A new Connellsville District parsonage was purchased during 2017; $239,900 of the $299,900 purchase price was financed with a mortgage. The annual servicing costs (principal and interest payments) for all District Parsonage mortgages (see below) are funded by the Connectional Apportionment budget. From a transition and timing standpoint, the old Connellsville District parsonage will be sold during 2018; proceeds from the sale will be utilized to pay down or pay-off the outstanding mortgage balances, as applicable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Washington</th>
<th>Butler</th>
<th>Connellsville</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mortgage Balances, December 31, 2016</td>
<td>$132,116</td>
<td>$72,720</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Loans</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$239,900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regular Principal Payments</td>
<td>($10,304)</td>
<td>($5,396)</td>
<td>(2,034)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refinancing / Other Principal Payments</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mortgage Balances, December 31, 2017</td>
<td>$121,812</td>
<td>$67,324</td>
<td>$237,866</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Abandoned Churches and Cemeteries (Book of Discipline ¶2549).

When a congregation closes, responsibility for the abandoned property rests with the Conference Board of Trustees. When possible, the Trustees redeployed the property for continuing use in United Methodist ministries, and when no such use exists, the Trustees sell the property. Typically, these properties are in declining or rural settings and the aging buildings are in need of major maintenance. This means these properties typically sell at distressed values. The net proceeds from these sales are split between the Conference Board of Trustees and the Cabinet Abandoned Church Fund.

At the beginning of 2017, the Trustees had four abandoned properties it was either evaluating for potential redeployment or was marketing for sale. All four of these properties were eventually sold. One of the properties the Trustees sold was in an urban center (population > 50,000) and the net proceeds of that sale have been set aside for use to develop ministry within that urban community in accordance with ¶2549.7 and Conference Rule 3.4.7. During 2017, the Cabinet notified the Trustees of a continuing listing of properties that local churches abandoned, one of which is in an urban center. Therefore, the Trustees continued the work of processing abandoned properties by either
evaluating them for potential redeployment for United Methodist ministry or for marketing for sale.

**Trustees Capital Improvement Funds** (Conference Rule 3.4.7)

**Trustees Major Maintenance Fund (Conference Account)**

Opening Balance (December 31, 2016) ................................................................ $420,340

- Connectional Apportionment designated for major maintenance .............. $0
- Funds used for major maintenance ......................................................... ($70,011)
- Net proceeds or (loss) from sale of abandoned church properties .......... $141,553
- Redistribute net sale proceeds to Cabinet Abandoned Church Fund .... ($1,134)
- Redistribute net sale proceeds for urban ministry development
  (per ¶2549.7) .................................................................................. ($139,284)
- Clearance of Conference Properties budget deficits ........................... ($36,017)

Closing Balance (December 31, 2017) ................................................... $315,447

**Trustees Capital Improvement Fund – T1591 (UM Foundation Account)**

Opening Balance (December 31, 2016) ................................................................ $299,874

- Realized Gains / Reinvested Earnings ..................................................... $11,818
- Proceeds from Account Liquidation
  (Conference Center Parking Lot funding) ............................................. ($311,692)

Closing Balance (December 31, 2017) .......................................................... $0

**Total Trustees Accounts (December 31, 2017)**........................................... $315,447

When preparing the Connectional Apportionment budget for 2017, it was determined that no budget would be requested for major maintenance since a healthy surplus existed in the Trustees Major Maintenance Fund (Conference Account).

The cost of acquiring new Conference property as well as expenditures on existing properties exceeding $5,000 that extends the property’s useful life are capitalized and are depreciated over the property’s useful life. At the discretion of CF&A, capitalized assets are funded either through available Conference Funds, Trustees Capital Funds, or are financed with a mortgage or other type of secured loan. In 2017 capital expenditures totaled $848,553, utilizing all of the aforementioned funding sources.

The Conference Board of Trustees thanks the Annual Conference for the financial support of its work. The Board also appreciates the cooperation and assistance of the Office of the Bishop, the District Superintendents, the Treasurers Office, the Conference Chancellor, the Facilities Manager, the Council on Finance & Administration, the Conference Parish and Community Development Committee, the Episcopal Residence Committee, and the District Boards of Trustees. The Church truly is of God and will be preserved until the end of time.

Thomas R. Hallman, Chair
Board of Pensions

This past year (2017) has been one of many changes for the Board of Pensions, most notably several turnovers in Board membership, officers, and committee chairs as well as the Cabinet Staff assigned to serve with the Board. With the assistance of the Conference Staff relating directly to this Board, the transition has been smooth. The WPA Conference continues to be diligent in stewardship of funds for clergy pensions and health insurance. The Board of Pensions would like to especially thank Conference Treasurer, Larry Bridge, for his many years of consistent and faithful service to the Board; we wish him Godspeed in his well-earned retirement.

The summaries of the work of the three standing Board committees can be found below.

Dara Sterling, Board Chair

Administrative Committee Summary

The work of the Board has gone very well thanks to the competent and capable finance and administration staff. We want to thank especially our Conference Treasurer Larry Bridge, our Conference Benefits Officer Kathleen Lasky and our Sr. Benefits Coordinator, Alexis Soohy. The team has worked diligently on behalf of our Board and our Conference to administer the complex pension and benefit plans.

Due to the dynamic nature of pension and healthcare benefits, it is especially important for our staff to remain current in their knowledge and trainings. Therefore, in 2017, Kathleen Lasky and Alexis Soohy attended the Association of United Methodist Conference Pension and Benefits Officers (AUMCPBO) Annual Meeting in New Jersey and the Annual Wespath Conference Forum in Chicago.

The Administrative Committee continues to oversee the availability and dissemination of information pertaining to benefits by way of events, seminars, and communications. An opportunity for current-year retirees to discuss their retirement options at a local seminar in cooperation with Wespath was provided. This event was held at Salem UMC (Wexford) in the Spring 2017 and the response of the event was overwhelmingly positive. Additionally, we have approved the 2018 Biennial Pre-Retirement event, which will be held in the Fall 2018. This event will provide opportunity for participants to meet on a one-on-one basis with a Wespath representative to discuss their personal retirement projections. Many other presentations pertaining to retirement will be on the agenda, along with meals and fellowship.

Additionally, in 2017, the Committee was happy to offer up to ten young clergy a scholarship opportunity to attend the Rev It Up Conference in November 2017. Three WPA clergy attended this educational event sponsored by Wespath. The Committee plans to continue to provide this scholarship in the future.

Linda Dinger, Committee Chair

Finance Committee Summary

The guiding principle of the Finance Committee continues to be that we must work diligently to ensure that the resources entrusted to us are managed with faithfulness and integrity to meet the healthcare and retirement needs of those who serve our congregations. We have focused our efforts in the following areas: the utilization of the
Pre-82 plan overfunding, the adequacy of our reserves for active and retiree medical, investment and investment manager review, and assisting struggling congregations to meet their healthcare obligations.

The strengthening of the financial markets that began in 2016 ran throughout 2017 and into 2018. Although the markets have become more volatile in the early part of 2018, our financial position remains strong, and the asset allocation across our entire investment portfolio remains appropriate. We continue to be blessed with an overfunded pre-1982 pension plan which has allowed us to use portions of this overfunding to meet post 1/1/2007 pension obligations in lieu of billing the local churches for this liability. In 2017 we used $2,298,194 of this overfunding to meet current year pension needs. From 2013 to 2016, we have accessed nearly $36.4 million of the overfunding through exchanges with other conferences to build our reserves in order to meet future years’ obligations. In 2017, we suspended our exchanges with other conferences; however, our plan is to utilize our remaining overfunding, as well as reserves, to meet our 2018 Advance Contribution of $270,738, and our 2018 and 2019 pension obligations of $2,285,565 and $2,211,191 respectively.

With respect to active and retiree medical reserves, our current-year comprehensive funding plan indicates that we have sufficient reserves to cover potential unexpected medical costs. Given the rapid changes that we face in the healthcare arena, we regularly monitor our financial needs and seek to maintain a conservative posture with respect to these potential liabilities.

Matthew Moudry, Committee Chair

Healthcare Committee Summary

The task of maintaining an effective healthcare plan for our active participants continues to be a daunting one. With appropriate changes in plan design and increasing participation in wellness initiatives, we are seeing impacts in our claims and consequently our premiums. As noted at Annual Conference 2016, we undertook an in-depth review of our insurance program and potential providers selecting UPMC to continue in that role. As a result of member efforts in reducing claims costs, our premiums increased only 5% for 2018. Given the extensive review in 2017 we now have fixed rates provided by UPMC for the next two-year period.

Our members participated in our Take a Healthy Step incentivized wellness program in 2017 which reduces our claims cost and the cost of chronic care. We continue to offer incentivized wellness programs and encourage our participants to utilize the appropriate level of care. It was determined in 2017 members would cost share in 2018 with a three tier rate structure; single, two persons and family. From a retiree perspective we are reviewing the appropriate coverage to be offered to our retirees in light of the UPMC/Highmark consent decree ending in 2019.

We recognize that the ever-increasing cost of healthcare places a burden on many of our participants as well as our congregations. Consequently, we continue to focus on ways that we may mitigate these hardships beyond the cost containment initiatives mentioned above.

Steve White, Committee Chair
Greetings from the Council on Finance and Administration. One of the duties of the Council on Finance and Administration is to be stewards of the Connectional Apportionments. The churches of the Annual Conference entrusted us with $8,468,378 which is 87.5% of the 2017 Connectional Apportionment budget of $9,682,164, for the ministry of the Annual Conference. These resources enabled us to pay 100% of the General Conference and Jurisdictional Apportionments. This is the seventh consecutive year our Annual Conference has achieved this 100% milestone, which in turn has contributed to the success of the Northeast Jurisdictional as a whole (10 of 10 Annual Conferences paid 100% in 2016 and 9 of 10 in 2017).

Each year, as we receive your Connectional Apportionments, Council of Finance and Administration is intentional about making sure that our approach to financial stewardship is responsible and rooted in scripture. Throughout this process, Matthew 22:15-22 has offered great insight. This scripture is the narrative of the religious leaders asking Jesus about the legality of paying taxes to the Roman government. You can find the same narrative in Mark 12 or Luke 20.

Jesus’ answer to the religious leaders, “So give back to Caesar what is Caesar’s, and to God what is God’s.” is the key to this narrative. There are many times when we end the discussion at the first part of Jesus’ response. The second half, “give to God what is God’s” is the challenging part to disciples of Jesus Christ. The religious leaders asking the question knew that tithing should be a part of their lives. They knew about the importance of the Temple tax. They were a part of the system that sold the animals for the sacrificial offerings. Still, Jesus told them to give to God what is God’s. This leads to a difficult and personal question, “Am I giving to God what is God’s?”

In today’s world, there is so much demanded of our finances. It seems that everyone wants a share. The different levels of government want their taxes paid. The banks want their loans repaid. The next generations want their needs and desires met. There does not seem to be enough to meet the demands. How can I give to God what is God’s?

This is where the local church can help. The local church can provide ways for people to give to God what is God’s. Our local churches are filled with disciples who are doing this themselves. Throughout the years, they have learned to see the resources given to them as gifts from God. Our local churches teach what it means to give with a cheerful heart. They instruct on the meaning of tithing and budgeting. The local church models how to give to God what is God’s.

The Council on Finance and Administration wants to support and encourage the local church to continue to teach and model giving to God what is God’s. Our connectional system enables us to be collectively stronger, as an Annual Conference, as a Jurisdiction, and as United Methodists. As such we thank you for your ongoing faithfulness and financial stewardship efforts.

Seth A. McClymonds, Chair

ENDOWMENTS (Unaudited)

This report is a complete listing of endowments, investments and special pension accounts of the Western PA Conference. Special thanks to Edward Bailey and the United Methodist Foundation for their management of the large majority of these funds. The
endowments are designed to preserve the integrity of the original capital as directed by the
trust agreements under which they were endowed.

Special appreciation is extended to the individuals who possessed and shared the
vision that funded these endowments which support our connectional ministries.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Market Value as of December 31, 2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discipleship</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Camping</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martin Prytherch Memorial Campership Fund</td>
<td>$5,894</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earnings are available for Camping Ministries within the Creative Arts Camp and any successor program.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Christian Outdoor Education</strong></td>
<td>$93,015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fund was created in 1993 from accumulated funds of United Methodist Outings. Earnings to be used for camperships.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>George &amp; Carolyn Bashore Campership Trust Fund</strong></td>
<td>$33,374</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The proceeds of gifts received upon Bishop Bashore’s retirement, to provide camperships to economically disadvantaged children and youth.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Gascoine Camping Fund</em></td>
<td>$14,389</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income is available beginning 4/2002 for Camping Ministries within the Creative Arts Camp and any successor program.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conway Trust</strong></td>
<td>$51,989</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proceeds of the former Conway United Methodist Church sale 1996.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Thomas &amp; Sally Bickerton Campership Trust Fund</strong></td>
<td>$3,845</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proceeds to provide camperships to economically disadvantaged children and youth</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hawke-Petit Endowment</strong></td>
<td>$15,312</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Created in 2007 as a Gift Opportunity by Richard and Marybelle Hawke in memory of the tragic deaths of daughter Jennifer Hawke-Petit and granddaughters, Hayley and Michaela Petit; committed to preserving the Christian Spirits and fulfilling their lives of promise for the future. All were devoted to the lives of children and youth. Funds are to be used for Camperships.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Elizabeth McCorkle Campership Trust Fund</strong></td>
<td>$5,816</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proceeds to provide camperships to children and youth.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Evangelism

Earl J. Patterson Fund
Fund was established by the Will of Earl J. Patterson. Principle and income is to be used for Clinic on Evangelism with no more than $1,500 to be distributed in any one calendar year.

Richard M. Burns Endowment
Income from the fund to be used for the purpose of helping further the work of evangelists in the Western PA Conference

Patterson: Pastors Fund
Unknown source – Income is to be used for Pastors’ School on Evangelism.

Age Level – Youth

Homer N. Clark
Fund was established in 1958 by Conference Youth Fellowship. Income is to be used for scholarships enabling youth to attend events.

*Cutshall Youth Trust
Fund was a gift of Keith B. Cutshall in 1990. Income is to be used by Conference Youth ministries but cannot be used for the Youth Service Fund.

Youth Ministry Scholarship Fund
The income beneficiary of the fund shall be the Youth Ministry Team of the Western PA Conference for the purpose of funding Youth Ministry programs. One half of the interest of the fund is to be distributed to the Youth Service Fund for scholarships to any approved youth event, mission of peace, mission trip, or Conference camping program. Scholarships may also underwrite the cost of an event provided that it appropriately lowers cost for all participants. One half of the interest shall be reinvested.

Age Level—Singles

Mark Baumann Memorial Fund
Fund was created in 1989 by Young Adult Council and Mars United Methodist Church. Income is to be used for such purposes as are determined by the Young Adult Council.

Christian Singles
Fund was created in 1995 by the Christian Singles Fellowship of the Western PA Conference and Mars United Methodist Church. Income is to be used for such purposes as determined by the Christian Singles Fellowship.
**Age Level – Campus Ministry/Higher Education**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Educational Society</td>
<td>$176,148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Created in 1889, the income from invested funds is to be used for the purpose of awarding college or vocational school scholarships to children of low income clergy. <em>(See 1996 Conference Journal page 605)</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edinboro Campus Ministry</td>
<td>$204,911</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funds are the proceeds of the sale of campus ministry property and pastor’s home. Income to be used for the purpose of providing programs of training and leadership development for lay and clergy of the Western PA Conference for outreach and local church ministries to higher education.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Schall Memorial Trust</td>
<td>$37,371</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust created as a Memorial to Ruth Zitzman Schall by son Richard. The Trust provides financial assistance to women in the Western PA Conference who are commencing their freshman year at certain accredited colleges or universities and have demonstrated financial need, academic achievement and vocational promise.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allegheny College Endowment</td>
<td>$1,182,864</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The endowment was established to establish and support a Chair of Religion at Allegheny College. Income from the fund is to be distributed to the Treasurer of Allegheny College in an amount requested by the Board of Trustees of the College in order to maintain the Chair of Religion, but in an amount not to exceed income of the fund in the current year.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Alberta Dorsey Education Scholarships</td>
<td>$267,327</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The fund was established for the purpose of providing funding for undergraduate students pursuing a degree in elementary education or education that is intended to prepare quality elementary teachers for public or private schools. No distribution from fund is to be made until income reaches $1,000.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wesley Foundation</td>
<td>$38,395</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fund was created from the proceeds of the sale of the former Wesley Foundation House in Pittsburgh. Income from the fund shall be for campus ministries.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Smith Memorial Scholarships</em></td>
<td>$349,169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The fund was created by a gift from Andrew W. and Jane S. Smith in memory of their children, Christopher and Sarah Smith. The Board of Higher Education of the Western PA Conference shall receive fifty percent of the income of the fund for its use in providing the Christopher Smith Memorial Scholarship. The scholarship is granted to an entering candidate to a two or four-year accredited degree program at an accredited college or university and shall give preference to students enrolled at Point Park College of Pittsburgh and The Art Institute of Pittsburgh. Other specific guidelines developed by the united Methodist Foundation apply.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
IUP Campus Ministry
$94,499
The fund was created from the proceeds of campus minister’s house sale in 1996. Income to be paid to IUP United Ministries for three years, then income will be distributed to the Board of Higher Education of the Western PA Conference for purposes they deem appropriate.

New Church Starts

WPAC Custody Account
$245,919
Fund was established by donor for New Congregational Development in the Upper Allegheny River Region, for capital expenditure only. A portion of these funds are held at the United Methodist Foundation ($226,255) and the remainder ($19,665) is held at Keystone United Methodist Federal Credit Union.

Urban Ministry Fund
$267,864
In accordance with the Book of Discipline (¶2549.7), if a church in an urban center with a population > 50,000 is closed, the proceeds from the sale of its property must be used for new and/or existing ministries within urban transitional communities, as described in ¶212.

Global Ministries

Consolidated Mission Fund
$83,927
Proceeds for the purpose of providing support for mission projects as directed by Global Ministries (The following funds were consolidated during 2009 to form the Consolidated Mission Scholarship Fund)

Rupert Trust; Gifford Mission Fund; Blairsville District Fund

Hester Munden Mission Fund
$289,092
Fund was created as an endowment from the estate of Hester Munden. Income from the endowment is to be used for missions as directed by Global Ministries

Browning Mission Trust
$81,555
Trust was established by Scott D. Browning in memory of his wife, Ruth Anna Wright Browning. Income from the trust is to be used to help provide mission tour travel experiences to spouses who accompany persons from the Western PA Conference who are being aided by other funds to visit United Methodist mission programs.

Merritt Edder Memorial Mission Education Scholarship Trust
$1,806
The trust was created by the Annual Conference. Income from this fund is to be used further Mission Education Events and to help supplement mission education projects (e.g. Mission Ambassador Program, School of Missions, and Work Teams etc.) See 1981 Journal page 342, paragraph 2.
Native American Scholarship Fund  $35,968
This fund was created by Community UMC. Income and principle from this fund is to be directed by the Committee on Native American Ministry to provide funds scholarships for higher education to Native American people of our region.

**Spiritual Leadership**

**Laity**

Consolidated Laity Scholarship Fund  $78,314
Proceeds for the purpose of proving funds for laity scholarships (The following funds were consolidated during 2009 to form the Consolidated Laity Scholarship Fund) Renton Brown Fund; Idella Smith Fund; Whetsel Fund; First United Methodist Church of Duquesne Thomas Fund

**Board of Ordained Ministry**

Consolidated Ministerial Scholarship Fund  $1,493,187
Proceeds for the purpose of providing scholarships for candidates pursuing the educational requirements for ordained ministry (The following funds were consolidated during 2009 to form the Consolidated Ministerial Scholarship Fund) Grace S. Kreiling Fund; Sugar Grove Trust; North Avenue and Arch Street Fund; Earl J. Patterson Fund; Raymond W. Faus Fund; Ministerial Training Scholarship Fund; Julie Niebaum Fund; Frances Kees Fund; Dashiel Grant; Brookline Scholarships; Leonard Nolf Fox Memorial Fund; Straw Fund; Bunyan Fund; *Smith Seminary Scholarship Fund

Carl F. Koch Grant  $21,954
This is a grant to provide financial assistance to United Methodist graduate students pursuing fulltime theological education at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary to equip them for fulltime ministerial careers.

*Cramer Seminary Scholarship Fund  $6,343
The fund was created by a gift from Leo C. and Mona L. Cramer. Income from the fund is to be used to provide scholarships to seminary students who intend to pursue pastoral ministry. Funds shall be distributed at the discretion of the Board of Ordained Ministry.

First United Methodist Church of Duquesne Woody Fund  $64,048
The fund was created by a gift from the First United Methodist Church of Duquesne, PA. Income will be distributed as requested by the donor and former congregation for the purpose of educating ministers of The United Methodist Church.

First United Methodist Church of Duquesne Cora & J. Wayland Thomas Scholarship Fund  $55,738
The fund was created by a gift from the First United Methodist Church of Duquesne, PA. Income will be distributed as requested by the former congregation for the purpose of educating ministers of The United Methodist Church.
Timothy Project $49,683
This fund was established by the Board of Ordained Ministry to receive donations in memory of beloved pastors. Income from the fund is to be used to help seminary students to defray the cost of ministry training and education.

Brookshar Family Ministry Scholarship Fund $322,929
The fund was established by the Brookshar Family. Income from the fund is to be awarded as a scholarship to a prospective student at an accredited United Methodist Seminary to prepare for ministry. Award is to be based on financial need and a true enthusiasm and commitment in bringing people to Christ.

General Education Scholarship Fund $1,236
The fund was established in the memory of William L. Chamberlain for the purpose of supporting basic educational expenses of candidates seeking ministry credentials in The United Methodist Church.

Pension & Medical

Pension Permanent Annuity $12,700,112
This fund was established in 1898 for pastors’ pensions in the former Pittsburgh Conference. Pittsburgh Conference Funds were merged with Erie Conference Funds at the time of union. Subsequent gifts and bequests have been added to the fund for the purpose of pension support. Funds are deposited with the United Methodist Foundation. The income only from this fund is available for distribution by the Board of Pensions.

Health Insurance Reserve Fund $726,296
This fund was established by the Board of Pensions to provide reserves to help cover future liabilities and is intended for retiree health insurance. Funds are deposited with the United Methodist Foundation.

Health Insurance Reserve Certificate of Deposit $317,538
This fund was established by the Board of Pensions to provide reserves to help cover health insurance liabilities. The fund is invested with the Keystone United Methodist Federal Credit Union.

Retiree Health Insurance Aggressive Fund $5,027,308
The Board of Pensions established this fund in 2015 by transferring funds from the Wespath Retiree Health Insurance Fund to further diversify the overall asset allocation of the pension and medical reserves. This fund provides reserves to help cover future liabilities and is intended for retiree health insurance. Funds are deposited with the United Methodist Foundation.

Carnahan Fund $1,658,345
This fund was established by the will of William E. Carnahan. The income only shall be applied by the Board of Pensions to supplementing payments to beneficiaries of any annuity or pension plan adopted by the Western PA Conference. Funds are held by The Bank of New York Mellon.
### Board of Pension Special Accounts

*(Investments held by Wespath Benefits Investments (“Wespath”) in Glenview, IL. Unless otherwise noted all balances are as of December 31, 2017)*

#### Supplement 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Funding</th>
<th>Liability</th>
<th>Funded Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Pre-82 Plan</em></td>
<td>$77,289,664*</td>
<td>$71,652,335*</td>
<td>$5,637,329*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Funds are held as a part of the Clergy Retirement Security Program (CRSP) and are restricted for payment of Pre-82 pension liabilities, and other defined benefit pension liabilities that now or in the future may be part of CRSP.

*Funding, liability and funded status is as of January 1, 2017, as presented in the most recent actuarial report from Wespath for this Plan.

#### Deposit Account

$23,855,203  
$24,833,326**  
$8,453,401**

Funds restricted for retiree benefits and intended for retiree health insurance. The funded status is also net of the Health Insurance Reserve Funds of $5,753,604 held at the United Methodist Foundation and the Retiree Health Insurance Fund of $8,485,160 held at Wespath. See above description of the Health Insurance Reserve Fund.

** Liability and funded status is as of January 1, 2017, based on the most recent actuarial report from AON Hewitt.

#### Medical Reserve Account

$3,527,077  
N/A

Funds restricted for health insurance liabilities.

#### Retiree Health Insurance Fund

$8,485,160  
N/A

Funds restricted for retiree health and dental insurance liabilities.

#### Benefit Reserve Account

$43,882,195  
N/A

Funds restricted for future CRSP defined benefit unfunded liabilities or other retiree benefits needs.

#### Carnahan Income Account

$1,128,285  
N/A

This fund was established by the Board of Pensions to invest accumulated unspent income from the William E. Carnahan Fund. This fund is restricted under the same terms as the above described Carnahan Fund.

### Endowments

#### District Superintendents

*Allaman Trust*  
$53,899

The trust was a gift of Samuel L. Allaman in 1991. Income from the trust shall be to provide a permanent source of funds for emergency grants in times of crisis to clergy and clergy families of the Western PA Conference at the discretion of the Cabinet. Priority shall be
given to, though not necessarily restricted to, younger clergy within the first ten years of their ministry.

**Patterson Fund** $58,643
The fund was created by a Centenary Fund Gift of Oliver B. Patterson. Income from the fund is restricted to use by the discretion of the District Superintendents.

**Washington District** $1,594
The fund was created by a gift of Centenary Fund. Income from the fund is to be used for district programs.

**Franklin District Horace Thompson Fund** $7,628
The fund was created by a gift of Horace Thompson to be used by the Franklin District for the purpose of meeting the needs of pastors in that district on Incapacity Leave or in a Retired Relationship with the Western PA Conference

**Abandoned Church Fund** $155,302
This fund was created by an allocation of funds generated from the sale of Conference property. This fund can be used for such purposes as designated by the Cabinet.

**Trustees**

**Trustees Capital Improvement Fund** $0
This fund was created by an allocation of funds generated from the sale of Conference property. This fund can be used for such purposes as designated by the Conference Board of Trustees. This fund was liquidated in February, 2017, and the proceeds ($311,692) were used to support the completion of the Conference Center parking lot renovation project.

**Council on Finance and Administration**

**Memorials** $1,912
This fund was created in 1992 from a number of small gifts in memory of various conference pastors. Income from this fund is to be made available for the Bishop’s Discretionary Fund. Due to the small amount of current interest, this fund is being reinvested.

**Conference Fixed Fund** $500,127
This fund was established by the Council on Finance and Administration (CF&A) to support a reserve of 5% of annual Conference budget.

**Ethel K. Braun Fund** $393,328
This fund was established by a bequest from the Estate of Ethel K. Brauns. Funds may be designated to any line item in the Annual Conference budget as recommended by CF&A. For 2018, the income is targeted for shoring up the Poverty Team (3700), Conference Reserve (5400) and Bishop’s Leadership Initiatives (6100) budget lines. For 2019, CF&A recommends that it be used to shore up the Diversity Development & Inclusion (3300),
Conference Reserve (5400), and Bishop’s Leadership Initiatives (6110, 6130, 6150 and 6170) budget lines.

**Maude Murray Fund**

$282,416

The fund was created by a bequest to the former Erie Conference by the Estate of Maude A. Murray. Funds may be designated to any line item in the Annual Conference budget as recommended by CF&A. For 2018, the income is targeted for shoring up the Poverty Team (3700), Conference Reserve (5400) and Bishop’s Leadership Initiatives (6100) budget lines. For 2019, CF&A recommends that it be used to shore up the Diversity Development & Inclusion (3300), Conference Reserve (5400), and Bishop’s Leadership Initiatives (6110, 6130, 6150 and 6170) budget lines.

**Kilpatrick Fund 040**

$529,361

The income from this trust shall be paid to the Pittsburgh Conference of the Methodist Protestant Church in perpetuity to be used for the interests of the church as it may from time to time direct. For 2018, the income is targeted for shoring up the Poverty Team (3700), Conference Reserve (5400) and Bishop’s Leadership Initiatives (6100) budget lines. For 2019, CF&A recommends that it be used to shore up the Diversity Development & Inclusion (3300), Conference Reserve (5400), and Bishop’s Leadership Initiatives (6110, 6130, 6150 and 6170) budget lines.

**Kilpatrick Fund 265**

$729,068

The income from the residuary estate shall be paid to the Pittsburgh Conference of the Methodist Protestant Church in perpetuity to be used for the interests of the church as it may from time to time direct. For 2018, the income is targeted for shoring up the Poverty Team (3700), Conference Reserve (5400) and Bishop’s Leadership Initiatives (6100) budget lines. For 2019, CF&A recommends that it be used to shore up the Diversity Development & Inclusion (3300), Conference Reserve (5400), and Bishop’s Leadership Initiatives (6110, 6130, 6150 and 6170) budget lines.

**Worthington Trust**

$232,375

Will of Edgar D. Worthington 6/27/67 in memory of Anna M. Worthington (mother), Carrie E. Worthington (sister) and Alice K. Worthington (sister). Income may be designated to any line item in the Annual Conference budget. For 2018, the income is targeted for shoring up the Poverty Team (3700), Conference Reserve (5400) and Bishop’s Leadership Initiatives (6100) budget lines. For 2019, CF&A recommends that it be used to shore up the Diversity Development & Inclusion (3300), Conference Reserve (5400), and Bishop’s Leadership Initiatives (6110, 6130, 6150 and 6170) budget lines.

**Pittsburgh District Kaighin Fund**

$19,974

Bequest of Albert B. Kaighin - For 2018, the income is targeted for shoring up the Poverty Team (3700), Conference Reserve (5400) and Bishop’s Leadership Initiatives (6100) budget lines. For 2019, CF&A recommends that it be used to shore up the Diversity Development & Inclusion (3300), Conference Reserve (5400), and Bishop’s Leadership Initiatives (6110, 6130, 6150 and 6170) budget lines.
XII Reports

**Charles O. Rall Trust**  
$1,025,094  
The Annual Conference became the beneficiary of this trust in 2014.

**Miles Beale Fund**  
$535,733  
The Annual Conference was a named beneficiary for the Estate of Miles Beale, receiving a $534,741 distribution in 2017. This fund will be used at the discretion of CF&A.

**Mortimer Fund**  
$0  
The Annual Conference was a named beneficiary for the Estate of R. Lee Mortimer and received $79,569 upon his death. This fund was fully utilized in the construction of the Labyrinth at the Conference Center; a plaque honoring R. Lee Mortimer was installed.

*Note: The trustee of the funds marked by an asterisk is not our Annual Conference. However, income from these funds has come to Conference entities over recent years. So, the listing for this year is for informational purposes only.*

Lawrence D. Bridge, Treasurer

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**General Board Higher Education & Ministry**

GBHEM launched a new mission and vision in August 2017. The updated mission and vision simplify GBHEM’s role as the primary leadership development agency for The United Methodist Church.

**Mission:** Build capacity for United Methodist lay and clergy leaders to discover, claim and flourish in Christ’s calling in their lives, by creating connections and providing resources to aid in recruitment, education, professional development and spiritual formation.  
**Vision:** Generations of thriving, diverse and compassionate Christian leaders for The United Methodist Church and the world.

**OUR WORK THROUGHOUT 2017**

The Office of Discernment and Enlistment at GBHEM hosted Exploration, a biennial event for young adults ages 18-26 to hear, discern, and respond to God’s call to ordained ministry as a United Methodist deacon or elder. More than 350 attended the event in Portland, Oregon in November 2017.

The Young Clergy Initiative (YCI) funded 34 innovative projects across the church in 2017 to attract young people to ordained ministry. Since its inception, more than 100 projects have been funded through YCI.

GBHEM works with the Commission on Central Conference Theological Education (CCTE) to distribute grants for the theological education of pastoral leaders in the Central Conferences. In 2017, the CCTE awarded 67 grants totaling more than one million dollars to the seven Central Conferences of The United Methodist Church.

The Publishing Ministry, established to engage, nurture, and advocate for the intellectual life of The United Methodist Church, released 13 books in 2017, reaching more than 10,000 people.

In 2017, GBHEM’s Office of Loans and Scholarships awarded 2,000+ students with $4.1 million in scholarships and 350 students with $1.4 million in low-interest loans. More than $1.6 million was awarded to 200 recipients of the Excellence in Clergy Leadership Scholarship, which helps United Methodist clergy avoid excessive educational loan debt, minimize financial stress and build financial acumen.
To aid pastors in their ministry journey, GBHEM’s Candidacy Office introduced EM360. A formation guide to help pastors and congregations meet mission and ministry goals, EM360 is a tool to help clergy leaders identify and gauge pastoral effectiveness. In 2017, 1,438 candidates enrolled in UMCARES to seek certified candidacy for licensed or ordained ministry. A total of 589 candidates were certified.

The Black College Fund distributed more than $9.68 million in 2017 to the Historically Black Colleges and Universities related to The United Methodist Church for faculty development, infrastructure maintenance, academic programs and scholarships.

Clergy Lifelong Learning led African-American, United Methodist pastors who lead predominantly white churches in cross-cultural diversity training in South Korea in 2017. Continuing education and coaching opportunities are available through the innovative, multilingual platform, UMC Cyber Campus.

In 2017, Schools, Colleges, and Universities established the Siri S. Gadbois Fund in partnership with the National Association of Schools & Colleges of The United Methodist Church (NASCUMC) for mentoring among institution leaders (kickoff in 2018). The Cutting-Edge Curriculum Award was created to recognize 10 exceptional faculty members who are building effective and innovative academic courses (winners announced at the end of 2018 spring semester).

In partnership with Discipleship Ministries, GBHEM provides e-readers to theological schools in remote areas of Africa and Asia, offering access to the latest textbooks and references books. The E-Reader Project distributed 667 e-readers in 2017 and nearly 2,500 devices to 22 theological seminaries since the program inception in 2013.

In 2017, GBHEM and the Association of United Methodist Theological Schools (AUMTS) hosted two academic theological colloquies. Initiated in service to the intellectual life of the church, the colloquies are intended to be a resource for the church. The first colloquy (March 2017) focused on human sexuality and church unity, the second (November 2017) reflected on the practice of Missio Dei. Both events produced a study guide and book.

Beth Neil, Communications

Methodist Theological School in Ohio

Thank you for this opportunity to bring you news from MTSO. Here are a few highlights from a productive year.

Healthy Congregations Inc. moves in

MTSO entered into a mutually beneficial partnership with Healthy Congregations, an interfaith organization that equips leaders for thinking more clearly about families, relationships and faith communities. The MTSO campus now hosts Healthy Congregations’ staff and offices, as well as many of its events. The relationship affords MTSO’s students, faculty and staff the opportunity to participate in Healthy Congregations events at reduced cost.

MTSO and Ohio State unite around innovative food hub

The Ohio State University Initiative for Food and AgriCultural Transformation (InFACT) awarded MTSO a $35,000 grant, which will help fund the development and testing of a new food hub model in Franklinton, a low-income Columbus community. This work brings together residents of Franklinton, the Franklinton Farms urban gardens, and faculty, staff and students from Ohio State and MTSO, including the staff of MTSO’s
Seminary Hill Farm. To increase Franklinton residents’ access to affordable, local food, the project will use an online food ordering interface – a departure from the traditional brick-and-mortar model of food hubs.

*Homiletics events encourage prophetic preaching*

The year provided MTSO with two major opportunities to contribute to the craft of preaching. Women from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds gathered in September for Chloe’s Circle, presented by MTSO’s Theological Commons and WomanPreach! Inc., an organization founded by MTSO Interim Academic Dean Valerie Bridgeman to bring preachers into full prophetic voice. Participants explored the ways preachers can share truth in the face of disparity and injustice. In February, the Schooler Institute on Preaching featured lectures and preaching by Wil Gafney, associate professor of Hebrew Bible at Brite Divinity School and author of “Womanist Midrash: A Reintroduction to Women of the Torah and of the Throne.”

*Students take cross-cultural trip to South Africa*

Cross-cultural immersion is a key part of MTSO students’ preparation for ministry. Every Master of Divinity student at MTSO takes a cross-cultural immersion trip before graduating. In January, a group of students and faculty visited South Africa for 18 days. Among the stops was Soweto’s Regina Mundi Catholic Church, which was central to the anti-Apartheid movement.

Danny Russell, Director of Communications

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**United Theological Seminary**

*Now to him who by the power of god at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine...* Ephesians 3:20

United Theological Seminary in Dayton, Ohio, celebrated a 77% increase in new students for the fall 2017. While 71 new students enrolled in September 2016, 126 new students enrolled in September 2017. This was made possible by increasing student aid opportunities and empowering faculty members, trustees and administrators to personally recommend candidates for a $5,000 grant toward tuition. United experienced God’s provision, trusting what God said through St. Paul: “[God] is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine” (Ephesians 3:20).

Many of the seminary’s new students are current pastors who want to become more effective leaders for the Church through a Doctor of Ministry degree. United’s Doctor of Ministry program has 170 students enrolled this year from 29 states, 2 non-US countries and 27 Christian denominations. The average number of doctoral students in all Association of Theological Schools (ATS) is 60 students, making United one of the largest Doctor of Ministry programs among ATS member schools.

The Doctor of Ministry program provides academic rigor, peer group support, spiritual growth and practical application. Pastors identify a need within their community and, with the support of a peer group, mentor and United faculty, they develop a model of ministry that will resolve the challenge in their congregations or communities.

Rudy Rasmus, pastor of the 9,000-member St. John’s United Methodist Church in downtown Houston is a current doctoral student, who says he has been both challenged and supported in the DMin program.

“The program is rigorous,” Rasmus says. “It is contextual, it is intentional and the professors and staff are at the top of the form.”
United also has 212 students enrolled in the Master of Divinity degree program who usually seek to serve as pastors in local congregations. 88% of entering students are ordained or seeking ordination to serve a local congregation compared to 56% in other ATS member schools.

United also provides a two-year Master of Arts in Christian Ministries degree, which many persons serving as Directors of Christian Education or other local church positions pursue.

United provides flexible course options: 90% of students take at least one course online, and courses are also available as traditional on-campus courses, week-long on-campus intensive classes and virtual courses that meet simultaneously on campus and in the cloud via webcast.

If you are interested in pursuing further seminary education, contact United’s Office of Admissions at admissions@united.edu or call 800-322-5817.

Kent Millard, President, United Theological Seminary

Boston University School Of Theology

• Students: Our entering students were the most diverse in our history, creating remarkable opportunities for in-depth exchange and fruitful collaboration.
• Faculty: We welcomed three amazing faculty this year: Rebecca Copeland in Theology (focus on environmental theology); Theodore Hickman-Maynard in Black Church Studies; and Cornell William Brooks as Visiting Professor of Social Ethics, Law, and Justice Movements. Thanks to loyal alums, we also endowed the Harrell Beck Professorship in Hebrew Scripture and installed Kathe Darr as the first Beck Professor.
• Congregations: The Lilly Endowment awarded the Center for Practical Theology $1.5 million to create an innovation hub, which will foster creative vocational reflection in congregations, and a sharing of the congregations’ wisdom.
• Doctor of Ministry: The DMin in Transformational Leadership is soaring with lively student cohorts that are broadly ecumenical, culturally diverse, and global. The model includes intensives, online courses, and faculty mentoring.
• Scholarships: We continue our offer of free tuition to UMC registered candidates for ordained ministry, and we continue to build student scholarships and housing as a central campaign priority. New scholarships include the Dale Andrews Scholarship in Practical Theology and Race, Korean Student scholarship, and the Bishop John H. Adams and Dr. Dolly D. Adams Scholarship for candidates for ordained ministry in the AME, AMEZ, and CME churches.
• Arts Initiatives: Recent exhibits and events include “Symbols and Art of China, Korea, and Japan” and “Bridging Divided Communities through the Arts”

PARTNERING FOR MINISTRY AND TRANSFORMATION: Preparing students for ministry means meaningful partnerships with the local spiritual community.
• Congregational courses: Courses in congregations with church leaders and students learning together.
• Religion and Conflict Transformation Clinic: Internships and workshops that foster justice and reconciliation.
• Travel seminars: Courses engaging local communities on Arizona-Mexican border, Israel and Palestine, India, spiritual life centers, and Serbia and Croatia (with focus on interreligious dialogue).
• Ecumenical partnerships: Continuing close work with UMC, AME and other Wesleyan denominations, while launching robust Communities of Learning with the Episcopal Church and United Church of Christ.
• Partnership with Hebrew College: Joint courses and public events, plus co-sponsoring The Journal of Interreligious Studies. The focus is on enriching theological education with interreligious learning and leadership opportunities.

COMMITMENT TO JUSTICE: Celebrating differences while joining in action.
• Faculty and students have led and participated in service for victims of hurricanes and fires, protests on behalf of Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, protests of white supremacist movements, protests and services on behalf of immigrants and DACA young people, and ecumenical and interreligious witnesses for justice in the city of Boston.
• The community (often student-led) has had deep conversations on issues that divide (including theological issues). We seek to foster respectful listening that builds community life and communal action.

Mary Elizabeth Moore, Dean

Candler School of Theology

For more than 100 years, Candler School of Theology at Emory University has prepared real people to make a real difference in the real world. Since our founding in 1914, more than 10,000 students have graduated from Candler, where they have been shaped as thoughtful, principled, and courageous Christian leaders dedicated to transforming the world in the name of Jesus Christ.

One of 13 official seminaries of The United Methodist Church, Candler has been included on a list of “Seminaries that Change the World” for five years running, and was recently named a “Bright Spot in Theological Education” by Auburn Seminary.

Candler is also one of seven graduate professional schools of Emory University, a top-tier research institution offering extensive resources and a demonstrated commitment to service. Our location in Atlanta provides a hands-on learning environment rich with opportunity: The General Board of Global Ministries is headquartered here, as are numerous public health, international development, and social service organizations. Simply put, there is no better place to prepare for ministry that engages our major denominational priorities: developing leaders, starting and growing churches, ministry with the poor, and improving global health.

In order to keep pace with the needs of the church and the world, Candler offers 16 degrees: six single degrees and ten dual degrees pairing theology with bioethics, business, international development, law, public health, or social work. One of our newest degrees is a Doctor of Ministry that is 90 percent online, so students can remain in their places of ministry as they study and immediately apply to their context what they learn in class. Our Teaching Parish program allows eligible United Methodist students to serve as pastors in local churches while they’re enrolled—they earn a salary as they earn course credit and pastoral experience, plus they are mentored by an experienced United Methodist elder.

Candler’s student body continues to reflect the diversity and breadth of the Christian faithful, with an enrollment of 455, reflecting 49 percent women, 35 percent people of color (U.S.), and a median age of 30. Students represent 39 denominations, with
half coming from the Methodist family. 82 percent of students are seeking a degree to prepare them as ministry professionals.

Candler has a deep commitment to alleviating student debt and employs a multi-pronged approach to tackle this issue. In 2017-2018, we awarded $5.3 million in Candler scholarships, with 97 percent of MDiv students receiving aid and the average scholarship covering 75 percent of tuition. Plus, our comprehensive “Faith & Finance” program teaches money management skills that serve our students now and will continue to serve them—and the churches they lead—well into the future.

Half of Candler’s faculty are United Methodist and 58% come from traditions within the larger Methodist family. This year, we welcomed fellow United Methodist Helen Jin Kim to the faculty as Assistant Professor of American Religious History, and we sent best wishes along with our colleague Mary Lou Greenwood Boice as she retired after 25 years of remarkable service to Candler.

Candler draws considerable strength and inspiration from its relationship with The United Methodist Church. Our ability to fulfill our mission of educating faithful and creative leaders for the church’s ministries throughout the world depends upon your support, gifts, and prayers. Thank you for the countless ways you advance this vital ministry in the life of our denomination. Visit us in person in Atlanta or online at candler.emory.edu to see firsthand how Candler prepares real people to make a real difference in the real world.

Jan Love, Dean

Duke Divinity School

Under the leadership of Elaine A. Heath, dean and professor of missional and pastoral theology, Duke Divinity School has continued to work on our strategic planning process. In the academic year 2017–2018, the strategic planning committee was assembled, composed of representatives from the faculty, staff, student body, and Duke Divinity’s Board of Visitors. The committee has sought extensive feedback from stakeholders, including alumni, church leaders, and donors as well as our community of faculty, staff, and students; and it is paying close attention to developments within theological education and the cultural changes affecting both church and academy. The committee anticipates presenting a framework document in the spring of 2018 with a strategic plan submitted for approval in November 2018.

This year we launched several new programs to equip laypeople and to support students. The Neighborhood Seminary, a partnership with the Northern Piedmont District of the Western North Carolina Conference, is a two-year, noncredit training program that began this year with a cohort of 18 people. The cohort participates in four team-taught courses per year led by faculty, staff, and graduate students from Duke Divinity School in partnership with local practitioners and ministries. The cohort also undertakes an intentional, contemplative model of spiritual practice combined with sequenced contextual learning experiences with local practitioners throughout the two-year program. Heidi Miller, Ph.D., directs the Neighborhood Seminary program.

We also launched a new academic support program to help incoming students learn how to think and write theologically. The Refresher and Intensive for Scholarly Enrichment (RISE) program began with a two-day pre-orientation workshop for new students this August. Over half of the incoming class—83 students—registered for this
self-selecting program that includes lectures, panels, and workshops to help them navigate academic work and succeed at seminary. Academic support continues throughout the year, with Divinity School professors and preceptors as well as academic support staff in contact with each other and struggling students to develop plans to help them.

This year we welcomed students from a range of backgrounds who are called to serve God and the church. In 2017, our total enrollment was 606 students: 369 are enrolled in the M.Div. degree program; 58 in the M.T.S.; 10 in the Th.M.; 46 in the Th.D.; 83 in the D.Min.; 23 in the M.A.C.P.; 4 in the M.A.C.S.; and 10 who are special students or auditors. Thirty-seven percent of our students are United Methodist, with an additional 3 percent from other Wesleyan traditions, and 46 percent of our M.Div. students are United Methodist. Eleven percent of all students are Baptist, 8 percent are Anglican or Episcopalian, 4 percent are Roman Catholic, 10 percent are Presbyterian or Reformed, with the rest from 21 other denominations or faith traditions.

Three new certificates were approved this year. The Certificate in Missional Innovation, which can be earned as part of a M.Div., is intended for students interested or involved in innovative forms of ministry. They will receive training in contextual evangelism and church planting with the goal of converting, gathering, and discipling people who are often neglected or unreached by existing church structures. The Certificate in Theology and the Arts, which can be earned alongside the M.Div., M.T.S., or Th.M., aims to help students appreciate and articulate the mutual enrichment of theology and the arts and to create opportunities to involve local churches and communities in the arts. The Certificate in Theology and Health Care is a new fully accredited residential graduate program that provides robust theological and practical engagement with contemporary practices in medicine and health care. The certificate aims to equip Christian health care practitioners with foundational courses in Christian theology, Scripture, and the practical issues they encounter.

We remain deeply grateful for the relationships among the United Methodist Church, this Annual Conference, and Duke Divinity School. We look forward to working with you in the task of preparing men and women for Christian ministry. To learn more about Duke Divinity School, please visit our website at www.divinity.duke.edu.

Elaine A. Heath, Dean

Gammon Theological Seminary

Gammon Theological Seminary, located in Atlanta, GA, is the United Methodist constituent member of the Interdenominational Theological Center (ITC), a consortium of historically African-American theological schools. Gammon/ITC is a co-educational, professional graduate school of theology. Its faculty personifies vigorous scholarship, rigorous academic discipline, and significant research in the service of the church and other communities in the world. Gammon/ITC is the world’s premier resource for black church scholarship and faith-based solutions to the spiritual and socio-economic challenges confronting the African American community and beyond.

Founded in 1883 by the Methodist Episcopal Church and with assistance from the Freedman’s Aid Society, today Gammon Theological Seminary is one of the 13 theological schools of the United Methodist Church. The faculty and administration of Gammon/ITC create an environment in which critical thinking, investigative reflection, decision making, and responsible action are fostered. Gammon/ITC is a member of the Atlanta University
Center Complex, the world’s largest enterprise of African American higher education. It is also a member of The University Center of Georgia and the Atlanta Theological Association. The school is fully accredited by the Association of Theological Schools and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

Gammon/ITC offers the following degree programs: the Master of Divinity, the Master of Arts in Christian Education, and the Doctor of Ministry. Admission is open to qualified men and women of The United Methodist Church.

The support of this Annual Conference helps Gammon/ITC students carry on a proud tradition. They are taught to think independently and communicate effectively. They are also challenged to become involved in finding solutions to problems that affect the human condition, and to become active in the community beyond this campus. Additionally, graduates of this institution are encouraged to maintain a lifelong desire for intellectual growth, spiritual development, and the acquisition of skills for the practice of ministry.

Gammon/ITC has had a very exciting and busy year living out its mission, which is to recruit, support and educate pastors and leaders for the United Methodist Church. Gammon Theological Seminary is extremely grateful to this Annual Conference for your support of theological education, and for your commitment to ensuring that God’s church will be served by persons who are called and trained to lead us forward.

Ken J. Walden, President-Dean

Wesley Theological Seminary

Wesley Theological Seminary, located in Washington, D.C., continues to equip the next generation of Christian leadership for the church and the world. As a United Methodist seminary, we form students to lead innovative ministries while remaining grounded in our biblical and theological traditions.

Whether you are clergy or laity, an alumnus or a prospective student, looking for master’s or doctoral work or continuing education or simply deeper biblical knowledge, Wesley wants to support you in your current and future call to ministry. Here are a few ways Wesley can help you grow in faith, wisdom, and ability.

Expand your leadership skills

Wesley’s internationally respected Lewis Center for Church Leadership is a key resource for cutting-edge church research and disciple-growing strategies for the local church. Under the directorship of the Rev. Dr. F. Douglas Powe, Jr., the Lewis Center’s Leading Ideas e-newsletter, reaching almost 20,000 people in ministry each week, has launched its new podcast – Leading Ideas Talk. Sign up or listen at www.churchleadership.com/

The Institute for Community Engagement at Wesley continues its innovative online Health Minister Certificate Program from Heal the Sick to prepare congregations for public health work in their parishes. Some scholarships are available for this program. Contact Tom Pruski at tpruski@wesleyseminary.edu for more information or to register for future certificate classes.

Wesley also offers opportunities for individual study without pursuing a degree. The Certificate in Faith and Public Life explores the foundations of public theology, religious freedom, and civil discourse through graduate courses. For more information, visit www.wesleyseminary.edu/fpli.
A Certificate in Wesleyan Studies is available online via the Wesley Theological Seminary Lay Academy. Topics include United Methodist identity, early church history, Christian ethics, interfaith relations, and the intersection of faith and science. The courses can also be taken for personal education and enrichment. More information can be found at www.beadisciple.com/wesley/.

Take your ministry to the next level

Wesley continues to be a leader in Doctor of Ministry programs, offering practical and spiritually renewing tracks in theological education. Wesley announces an exciting new 2019 Doctor of Ministry track, in partnership with Wesley House in Cambridge, UK: “Winds of the Spirit and Ministries for a Changing World.” Other 2019 tracks will include Church Excellence, Spirituality and Story, a 13th Global Asian Church track and Public Engagement: Healing Communal Brokenness and Despair. Find out more or apply at www.wesleyseminary.edu/doctorofministry/.

We look forward to continuing to serve you and your community as we seek to live into God’s dream together. Blessings to you for a fruitful and faithful Annual Conference.

David McAllister-Wilson, President

WPA Advance Special List

What are Advance Specials? Our WPA Conference Advance system, like the General UM Advance, is designed for voluntary, designated, second-mile giving. Because our Conference structure is supported by Apportionments, United Methodist districts, local churches, and organizations, as well as individuals and families, can support mission programs or mission personnel with their financial gifts and 100% of that gift goes to that project. Each Advance project is approved by our Conference Board of Global Ministries.

How do I apply for an Advance Special Number? Complete the WPA Advance Special Request Application (available at www.wpaumc.org/missionfiles). You may also choose to contact the Conference Center to request that one be sent to you.

Where do I send my donations? There are two options. First, you can donate online by going to www.wpaumc.org/OnlinePayments and selecting Local Church Remittances. You can also send checks, payable to The Western PA Conference, to The Conference Center, PO Box 5002, Cranberry TWP, PA 16066. Be sure to include the Advance Special number on the Memo line of the check. The addresses listed below are the contact information for each agency. NOTE: If there are ANY ADDITIONS OR CORRECTIONS, please contact Sandra Matoushaya, Interim WPA Missions/VIM Coordinator at sandra.matoushaya@wpaumc.org

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<td>Camp Allegheny, Inc.</td>
<td>814-754-5122</td>
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<td>Camping &amp; Retreat Ministries – Bishop’s Initiative</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jessica.gamache@wpaumc.org">jessica.gamache@wpaumc.org</a></td>
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<td>Campus Ministry – UPJ</td>
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<td>Campus Ministry at California University of PA</td>
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<td>Cherry Run Camp (Franklin District)</td>
<td>814-473-3470</td>
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<td>China Outreach Ministry - C/O Rev Ken Wagner</td>
<td>717-591-3500</td>
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<td>Chosen, Inc. Christian Hospice</td>
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<td>City Mission: Living Stones Inc. Homeless Shelter</td>
<td>724-439-0201</td>
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<td>Connellsville Area Community Ministries</td>
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<td>Disaster Response Team (WPAUMC)</td>
<td>724-776-2300 ext. 241</td>
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<td>Disciple Ministries of Western PA, Inc.</td>
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<td>Eastern Germany Partnership</td>
<td><a href="mailto:mgarber1989@aol.com">mgarber1989@aol.com</a> Ph: 412-531-7131</td>
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<td>Eighth Ave Place</td>
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<td>Encounter w/Christ in Latin America &amp; Caribbean (WPA)</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jodalebarnhart@gmail.com">jodalebarnhart@gmail.com</a> Ph: 724-753-2821</td>
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<td>First Charities, Inc. at Pittsburgh: First UMC</td>
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<td>First Food &amp; Friends Ministry at Pittsburgh: First UMC</td>
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<td>Habitat for Humanity: Cambria County</td>
<td><a href="mailto:hfhcc@atlanticbb.net">hfhcc@atlanticbb.net</a> Ph: 814-539-5965</td>
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<td>Habitat for Humanity: Washington County</td>
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<td>Interfaith Volunteer Caregivers of Fayette County</td>
<td><a href="http://www.interfaithvolunteer">www.interfaithvolunteer</a> caregivere.org Ph: 724-438-0709</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.jumonville.org">www.jumonville.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Lakeview Helping Hands Center, Inc.</td>
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<td>Light of Life Ministries, Inc.</td>
<td><a href="http://www.lightoflife.org">www.lightoflife.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merritt Edder Memorial Education Fund (Mission)</td>
<td>email: <a href="mailto:stephanie.gottschalk@wpaumc.org">stephanie.gottschalk@wpaumc.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mission Barn, Inc. (Eastbrook Mission Barn)</td>
<td><a href="http://www.eastbrookmissionbarn.org">www.eastbrookmissionbarn.org</a></td>
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<td>Mission Barn Cleaning Buckets</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nicaragua - Methodist Church Projects</td>
<td>email: <a href="mailto:rschall.mschall@gmail.com">rschall.mschall@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicaragua Task Force General Fund</td>
<td>email: <a href="mailto:rschall.mschall@gmail.com">rschall.mschall@gmail.com</a></td>
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<td>Nyadire Connection (Zimbabwe)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Russia Initiative New Church Partnership</td>
<td>Email: <a href="mailto:jflower5@verizon.net">jflower5@verizon.net</a></td>
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<td>Ruth M. Smith Center</td>
<td><a href="http://www.ruthsmithcenter.org/">www.ruthsmithcenter.org/</a></td>
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<td>Second Harvest Food Bank of Northwest Pennsylvania</td>
<td><a href="http://www.nwpafdbank.org">www.nwpafdbank.org</a></td>
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<td>Shepherd Wellness Community (Pittsburgh)</td>
<td><a href="http://www.swconline.org">www.swconline.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Solar Samaritans</td>
<td>Email: <a href="mailto:somersetfirstumc@gmail.com">somersetfirstumc@gmail.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Tina Whitehead – Conference Missionary Support</td>
<td>Email: <a href="mailto:tinawhitehead2@hotmail.com">tinawhitehead2@hotmail.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Toba Village Food Clinic</td>
<td>Email: <a href="mailto:jodalebarnhart@gmail.com">jodalebarnhart@gmail.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Truck Stop Ministries I-80</td>
<td>Email: <a href="mailto:rickdot2@windstream.net">rickdot2@windstream.net</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>UM Church Union (Greater Pittsburgh area)</td>
<td><a href="http://www.umchurchunion.org">www.umchurchunion.org</a></td>
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<td>Visitors From the Past</td>
<td><a href="http://www.visitorsfromthepast.org/">www.visitorsfromthepast.org/</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Volunteer in Mission (WPA VIM General Funds)</td>
<td>Email: <a href="mailto:stephanie.gottschalk@wpaumc.org">stephanie.gottschalk@wpaumc.org</a></td>
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<td>Volunteer in Mission Scholarships – WPA</td>
<td><a href="http://www.wpaumc.org.missionsresources">www.wpaumc.org.missionsresources</a></td>
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Highlighted General Church Advance Specials from Global Ministries

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<td>Kathleen E. (Katie) Peterson, missionary at Eastbrook Misson Barn</td>
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Our 2017-2019 Mission Ambassadors Recommend these General Advances

**Kentucky**
Red Bird Missionary Conference Church and outreach Ministrieas | #773978
Henderson Settlement | #773365

**Alaska**
Willow Church and Community Ministry | #931520

**Oklahoma**
Clinton Indian Church and Community Center | #3020757
Cookson Hills Center United Methodist Mission | #582161

Our 2017-2019 Mission Ambassadors Recommend these other projects that no longer have General Advance Status

**Alaska**
Nome Community Center - [http://www.nomecc.org/about-us.html](http://www.nomecc.org/about-us.html)

**Haiti** - Sustainable Integrated Community Development | #3021657
Covenant Partnership Between WPAUMC and the East German Conference

History
The partnership between the United Methodist Church's Western PA Conference and the East German Conference was formed by Bishops George Bashore (retired) and the late Ruediger Minor and has resulted in numerous exchange visits by musical groups, work teams, youth and local church members, as well as the formation of joint Volunteers in Mission teams that have traveled to Russia and Latin America to do projects. On an annual basis, the partnership publishes an Advent devotional and New Year's prayer, for use in all our churches.

The following activities have served to strengthen our partnership:
• Encouragement of church-to-church partnerships, such as that which exists between Mt. Lebanon U.M. Church and Evangelisch-methodistische Friedenskirche, Zwickau.
• Regular exchange of visiting delegations to each other's conference session since 1996.
• Visits to WPAUMC by Die Schmetterlinge children's choir in 2005 & 2017.
• Continued publication of the annual Advent devotional and New Year's prayer, written by members of our two conferences.
• Participation in joint volunteer in mission projects, most recently in Nicaragua in 2017.
• Special financial appeal in Western Pennsylvania in support of the East German Conference's ministry among its Syrian migrant population.

Mission Statement
The mission of the Eastern German partnership is to build relationships between the Western PA Conference and the East German Conference. We do this by promoting visitations of each other's churches, annual conferences, cultural exchanges, and joint mission projects. We have supported each other's programs in music, missions, prayer, church and friendship visits.

Organizational Structure
The East German Partnership Committee meets at least four times per year to discuss and initiate plans of action for the program of the partnership.

WPA Co-chairs: MARY GARBER, Thomas Strandburg
WPA Committee: Dean Byrom, JOY CONTI, LEONA LOGAN, John Mize, Rick Russell, Joe Stains
East German Chair: Lutz Brueckner
East German Committee: Werner Phillip, Michael Wetzel, VERONA LASCH

Future Plans (and corresponding WPAUMC area of focus)
• Continued exchange visits between our churches and our people. (Developing Principled Christian Leaders; Create New Places for New People; and Renew Existing Congregations)
• Continued partnership in world mission projects. (Engage in ministry with the Poor; Improving Global Health; Dismantling Racism)
• Encourage the formation of new church-to-church partnerships. (Create New Places for New People; and Renew Existing Congregations)
• Explore a new relationship with the Hope Center in Latvia, a residence for young single mothers and their babies, operated by the General Board of Global Ministries. (Engage in Ministry with the Poor; Improving Global Health; Developing Principled Christian Leaders)

• Continued publication of the Advent devotional and New Year's prayer and encouraging its use by congregations in both conferences. (Developing Principled Christian Leaders)

Covenant Partnership Between WPAUMC and Latin America

Encounter with Christ in Latin America and the Caribbean: the Western PA Conference Involvement

Introductory Statement:
The United Methodist mission program, Encounter with Christ in Latin America and the Caribbean, was created by vote of the 1992 session of General Conference. Encounter was created primarily as a mission funding movement, to gather donations for Permanent Fund #025100. As that fund grew, the plan was to distribute the interest income through CIEMAL (the Council of Evangelical Methodist Churches in Latin America and the Caribbean) for use in (1) leadership training, (2) health promotion, (3) ministries to women, children, and youth. CIEMAL regularly creates an administrative committee to receive applications from its member conferences and allocate grants to advance ministries in the specified areas of concern. At the next session of General Conference, it was strongly recommended that each annual conference name a liaison to advocate for the Encounter program.

The Western Pennsylvania response to these initiatives began in earnest when Bishop Bashore named David Stains to be the Conference Liaison for Encounter in 1998. This appointment was based upon the fact that David Stains had provided leadership for 12 years in the Conference Covenant with Nicaragua. In the ensuing months, Stains expanded his Latin American experiences and knowledge of Encounter by participating in a GBGM organized visit to Guatemala and Mexico, and a mission to Bolivia. By the 2000 session of the Western PA Conference, legislation was proposed and adopted that (1) set a $100,000 support goal for Encounter, and (2) expressed a desire to foster UMVIM missions in Latin American countries on an ongoing basis. Since that time, the $100,000 support goal has been met and surpassed. Interest income from the Encounter Permanent Fund has been distributed to member conferences of CIEMAL at a normal rate of $60,000 per year. Our Conference Encounter committee has fostered at least two UMVIM missions each year to countries including Nicaragua, Paraguay, Colombia, Honduras, Guatemala, Bolivia, and Mexico.

Declaration of proposed collaboration:
Because the range of activity involves collaboration with any of the member conferences of CIEMAL, this portion of the Partnership Agreement must reflect the possibilities of ministry contemplated with the conference of each country:

Statement of Continued Effort:
As with the areas of "proposed collaboration" this state will need to be specific to the conference with which we cooperate.
Specific to Honduras:

The position of The United Methodist Church of Honduras with respect to Encounter with Christ in Latin America and the Caribbean requires some special attention and clarification. The United Methodist Church of Honduras began as a response to the positive experience of work teams with United Methodist churches during the Hurricane Mitch recovery period at the turn of the century. Prior to that time there had been no Methodist presence in Honduras. Since then, a number of congregations have been growing in numbers and facilities. The GBGM has taken the initiative of organizing Honduras as a "mission field" and has been providing GBGM missionaries to give supervisory leadership. CIEMAL, the body with which Encounter normally works, provides Episcopal leadership by sharing administrative responsibilities with one of the neighboring conferences. Bishop Galvan currently serves in that capacity. In effect, The United Methodist Church of Honduras is being treated as a special case by both GBGM and CIEMAL.

With this background in mind, we propose forming a partnership with The United Methodist Church of Honduras, working through our Conference Committee on Encounter with Christ. We believe that this partnership should be formed, and move forward for the following reasons:

1. Significant numbers of Honduran people have responded to the humanitarian aid following Hurricane Mitch and have embraced active discipleship with The United Methodist Church.
2. There is need for material and educational service among the present and expanding ministries of The United Methodist Church of Honduras.
3. There have been great numbers of UMVIM teams already doing service in Honduras, assuring us that the Honduran church is well equipped to receive UMVIM teams, and administer their safe and effective service.
4. The presence of GBGM missionaries Pablo and Claudete Mora as Supervising Missionaries in Honduras assures us of gifted and experienced leadership in said partnership.
5. Several visits on the part of David Stains in recent years to present educational seminars has created a personal contact with all of the pastors of The United Methodist Church of Honduras, that would lend itself to such a partnership.
6. Christ will be honored, and His people served, by the formation of this partnership.

Funding Statement:
A. In any project that involves construction, these guidelines shall apply, so as to satisfy the goal of a 50/50 partnership in collaboration:
   1. In any building project, it is the responsibility of the host conference to purchase the lot, provide a detailed building plan (including materials and tools to be purchased), and cost estimate (specific to the project).
   2. It is expected that, in the actual construction work, sufficient native workers/leaders be on site to assure compliance with local techniques.
   3. It is further expected that arrangements should be made for secure housing, meals, and transportation and the total cost should be conveyed to the UMVIM team leader in a reasonable time for the cost to be collected from each team member. Arrangements as to how and when payment should be made should accompany this communication.
4. Arrangements for any excursions, tours, etc. should also be part of this communication. Clear commitment to the tour should be communicated by the UMVIM team leader prior to the team's arrival.
5. Arrangements for first aid or other medical needs should be cared for by the hosts, including arrangements for storage of medications, disposal of syringes, etc.
6. It is the responsibility of the UMVIM team to recruit and train team members, collect and submit expected fees, and care for travel arrangements, insurance fees, passports, etc.
7. UMVIM teams are expected to contribute financially to the project. Financing a project for the time of the team's visit shall be arranged and remitted prior to the team's arrival, if possible.
8. Ongoing financial needs to support a project may be communicated to the Western Pennsylvania Conference, and the needs of other projects. Nevertheless, it remains the responsibility of each partner to decide to support a given project, and at no time may one partner bind the other to ongoing financial commitments.

B. In any project whose focus is education, visitation, or fellowship these guidelines shall hold:
1. The purpose of the visit, including the locations involved, cost of room, board, and travel will be specified as clearly as possible. Translators should be offered by the host conference to facilitate the visit.
2. Visitors shall assume financial responsibility for the expense of the visit.
3. Hosts will assume responsibility for the logistics of the visit. If, for example, the purpose of the visit is to offer seminars, the host will contact the participants, provide a meeting place, and cover incidental expenses.

Term/Execution Date of Agreement:
Any Latin American of Caribbean Conference that comes to a formal partnership with the Western Pennsylvania Conference should expect to have that partnership reviewed four years after formalizing the agreement.

Institutional Declaration/Support:
Because Encounter with Christ in Latin America and the Caribbean is an ongoing ministry of the General Conference, partnerships shall be created by the Western Pennsylvania Encounter with Christ Committee and the specific Latin American or Caribbean Conference in question. Support from the Western PA Conference shall come from 1.) Funds assigned by the Conference Budget to the Partnership portions of the Global Ministries budget and 2.) any funds generated through the Conference Advance Special system. Such funds will be given by the Conference Treasurer to the financial accounts of the partner conference, using the voucher system employed for such financial transfers.

Primary Contacts:
The Primary Contacts for the Western PA Conference will be the current Liaison for Encounter with Christ. The Primary Contacts for any partnership will be the Bishop of that conference and any conference officers so designated.
Legal Considerations:
From the Western Pennsylvania side, any ministry projects planned and conducted shall conform to the current United Methodist Discipline. The partner conference will be expected to adhere to its ministry standards. The laws of the United States, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and the country of the partner conference will not be violated in any partnership ministries.

Statement of Alteration:
Any unforeseen development or difficulties that arise in our shared ministries should be discussed and if necessary, stipulated in amendments listed here, with the date of their adoption.

Signatories and Dates:
Western Pennsylvania Conference Liaison____________________
Partner Conference Bishop_________________________

Covenant Partnership Between WPAUMC and Honduras
Partnership Statement between the Western Pennsylvania Conference and the United Methodist Mission in Honduras

I. History of the Relationship.
The Western PA Conference has an enduring history of relationship and projects with Latin American Methodist Churches. Seminal moments in witness to this include the formation of the Nicaragua Partnership in 1986 and the formal commitment to the Encounter with Christ in Latin America and the Caribbean in 2000. Scores of missions and official visits have testified amply to the ongoing involvement.

Involvement with the United Methodist Mission in Honduras to date has included a series of seminars for the Pastors of Honduras, conducted by David Stains at the United Methodist Mission Headquarters in Tegucigalpa. The first series was on the subject of Baptism and featured the first ever Spanish translation of Wesley's "Tractate on Baptism." The second seminar was a celebration of Aldersgate Sunday that featured both seminars and a conference rally. History of our Conference involvement would certainly be incomplete without noting that Bishop Cynthia Moore-Koikoi made an official visit to Honduras in 2017. The Bishop's visits to Latin American Methodists has created a new wave of optimism with respect to our relationships with Latin American Methodists. Her visit included a presentation of the Spanish translations of the Disciple Bible Study materials, produced by the Prison Outreach Ministry mission of the Western PA Conference, in cooperation with the Bishop's office.

The United Methodist Mission in Honduras itself represents a history informed by the best of mission involvement. During the recovery from Hurricane Mitch in the late 90's, mission teams from various denominations came to Honduras like armies of ministering angels. Honduran Christians had not been exposed to United Methodists on a first-hand basis before. Association with the UMVIM teams aroused interest in developing new churches around the Methodist experience of the faith. To date, many of the pastors of these young congregations have come from other Latin American conferences, but younger Honduran pastors are advancing in their training. The United Methodist Mission
in Honduras is now a mission initiative under the General Board of Global Ministries with 21 congregations, and new ones developing.

II. Leadership format.
Ultimately, we look to the bishops of each conference for inspiration and approval. From the Western PA Conference, we look to the Committee for Encounter with Christ in Latin America and the Caribbean to organize and approve of mission projects in Honduras and monitor their success. As we are aware, the Encounter Committee works in cooperation with the Conference Partnership Committee and reports ultimately to the Conference Global Ministries Committee. All financial arrangements are conducted with the Conference Treasurer's office, relying on the established voucher system. We organize any mission team in compliance with the Conference UMVIM office.

From the standpoint of the Honduran Mission, we would look to their leadership for identification and organization of any project undertaken, and continued maintenance and usage of facilities thereafter. Such organization should include securing the legal ownership of any properties involved in a project, securing the commitment of those who will be using the facility to provide ongoing programming in keeping with its intended use, arranging for any staffing such programming would involve, and maintaining a system of accountability to the United Methodist Mission in Honduras. We also look to the Honduran mission to arrange for the safe transportation, housing, meals, and medical care if necessary for visitors from the Western PA Conference, and provision of translators, if necessary.

III. Persons in Leadership.
Allowing for the changes in personnel that even a short span of years could bring, and working with the understanding that such leaders will work within the context of respective conference leadership described above, specified leaders would include:
   Jodale Barnhart, Chair, Conference Committee on Encounter with Christ
   David Stains, Secretary, Encounter Committee
   Pablo Mora, GBGM Missionary to Honduras
   Sandy Raasch, UMVIM Coordinator for the United Methodist Mission in Honduras

IV. Ongoing and future projects.
A. Providing of seminars for the training and/or edification of the Methodist pastors of Honduras and other church leaders, upon request.
B. UMVIM teams to help with the construction of church or community service facilities This should happen upon request and with a maximum effort to recruit local involvement with the labor, costs, and accommodations on the part of the Honduran Mission.
C. The project in the near future is the completion of a church building for a new congregation in northern Honduras. Future projects yet to be determined.

V. Long term vision for the partnership.
The United Methodist Mission in Honduras is a small but growing mission initiative, under the supervision and administration of the General Board of Global Ministries. It is a young church, reflecting the issues often associated with a church "in formation". Other Latin American conferences have sent experienced pastors to give terms of service. Congregations in the United States have also upheld supportive relationships -- some from
the time of Hurricane Mitch. The Western PA Conference is in a unique position to offer an enduring influence on the Honduran Mission. To date, that influence has primarily manifested in official visits and pastoral training, with a goal to achieve a situation wherein a majority of pastors will be native Hondurans, well qualified for pastoral service. We remain open to invitations to provide seminars toward that end.

Material aid for the construction of facilities for church and/or community service will be organized in keeping with the patterns described above. Perception of the need for such facilities should always be initiated by leaders of the Honduran Mission, with the ongoing use and ownership of such facilities a matter of their responsibility.

VI. Time frame for reassessment.
We propose a normal four years pattern for review of the accomplishments of the partnership, with the possibility of renewing same.

Signatures in Ratification:

Covenant Partnership Between WPAUMC and Nicaragua
Western Pennsylvania-Nicaragua Partnership

History of the Relationship:
In the mid-1980's, Nicaragua was embroiled in a civil war, with the United States and the USSR backing opposing sides. The Western PA Conference planned to witness for peace by forming a covenant with a congregation in Nicaragua. By 1986, the Fuente de Paz congregation expressed a desire to enter into such a relationship, and in March 1987, a visit by David Stains in company with the West Virginia Conference, sealed the pact. Over the next few years, a program of communications and visits made an effective witness for peace, as the tragic war wound down.

In 1993, the David Stains led a group from Western PA Conference to help construct a parsonage and classroom building for the Fuente De Paz Church. The Nicaraguan part of the trip was organized by CEPAD as there were no Methodist churches in Nicaragua at the time. In addition to the church construction, they visited a Habitat for Humanity project at the edge of town that was being built to house people who had been displaced during the Contra War from the Rio Bocay area near the Honduras border.

The local church group provided the land and most of the labor, as well as the construction supervision and finished the project after the WPA group returned home. They also fed and housed the WPA group in their very modest homes and prepared a fellowship meal for the two groups each day. The two groups worshipped together for several nights a week. This became the model for future joint projects. In following trips, WPA did three joint reforestation projects in the area. Two of them included a group from Eastern Germany.

The disaster of Hurricane Mitch in the late 1990's animated the relationship to serve in Disaster Relief. Funds were sent to repair damage in Jinotega, and our covenant partners worked with us to rebuild a rural village in Paso Real. As the recovery work came to completion, we discovered that there was a growing Methodist presence in Nicaragua, with whom we shared a few projects, including the building of the first Methodist church building in Mateare.
In 2010, a delegation from WPA visited the various churches of the newly formed Iglesia Evangelica Metodista en Nicaragua (IGLEMEN). At their following Annual Conference in January 2011, the WPAUMC was asked to partner with the "Jesus is Coming Soon" Methodist Church in Jinotega. In addition, several churches from WPA have partnered with the Methodist Church in Condega and the Roberto Clemente Church in Ciudad Sandino near Managua. One of the major obstacles facing IGLEMEN is the lack of coordination between churches and conferences in the USA and the churches in Nicaragua. For this reason, the WPA Conference hosted the first National Nicaragua Connection in 2011. The Connection continues to meet annually the week-end after Easter. Delegates from US and Nicaragua churches and GBGM worship and fellowship together and share visions for ministry in Nicaragua for the coming year.

In February 2017, Bishop Moore-Koikoi and a delegation from WPA were hosted in Jinotega by the new President of IGLEMEN, the Rev. Ruben Zeledon. They visited the preschool and several house churches. They also visited the Rio Bocay, where we are partnering with TMS Global and local communities to supply water and schools, as well as health care and medical training. The Rev. Zeledon addressed the WPA Annual Conference in June 2017 and helped to celebrate 31 years of partnership in Nicaragua.

In the past two years, the Nicaragua Partnership in cooperation with IGLEMEN has been focusing on microloans and community development ministries and less on construction projects. Last year we helped the Roberto Clemente church start a "latch key" youth sports ministry that serves more than 140 youth and children in their barrio--without investing in any building.

We are also partnering with Stove Team International and IGLEMEN to distribute ECO stoves to local communities through low cost microloans. Each community forms a co-op that decides what the monthly payment should be and how the payments should be reinvested in their community. Since the stoves have an immediate and lasting positive impact on the health, safety and financial stability of the families that use them, local communities are eager to form co-ops to acquire them. We are praying that the ECO Stove project will enable IGLEMEN to reach out to new communities and to cooperate with other Methodist-related agencies and component to the project.

Structure
The Nicaragua Partnership shares the same board as the WPA UMC Encounter with Christ in Latin America and the Caribbean Committee and the Director reports to them on a semi-annual basis. In addition, the Nicaragua Connection consults with an ad hoc advisory panel on particular issues in Nicaragua. Some of the advisors have included:

- John Flower, Director the Russia Initiative
- Rick Larson, President Larson & Associates Architects
- Mark Winer, Risk Management Officer (Retired), Fannie Mae
- Ronnie Hopkins, TMS Global, Missionary in Nicaragua
- Kurt Dudt, Microloan Ministries in Tamil Nadu, India

Principal Partner in Nicaragua
The principal partner in Nicaragua is the Methodist Church (IGLEMEN), and we communicate and plan with the President of the governing board of IGLEMEN on a regular basis to set goals and report on progress. IGLEMEN is in the process of becoming a
missional conference of the UMC and GBGM has assigned a full-time missionary to help with the process.

**Funding**
The Nicaragua Partnership is currently funded by conference apportionment funds and advance special contributions from several churches and individuals. Some of these advance special funds are designated for specific ministries or programs; we try to honor the intent of the donor whenever possible.

**Guidelines**
The Nicaragua Partnership follows the guidelines set forth in the Encounter with Christ Partnership for 50/50 partnership in collaboration with our partner groups. We take special care that “Christ will be honored, and His people will be served” in all of our projects.

Nicaragua Partnership, Richard Schall, Director

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**Covenant Partnership Between WPAUMC and Russia**

Western Pennsylvania Conference Russia Initiative Covenant Relationship

**Brief History and Purpose**
In 1991 the Soviet Union under Gorbachev fell, giving rise to the Russian Federation under Boris Yeltsin. There was a late staying winter followed by an early arriving winter, and the crops were not able to be harvested. A famine occurred in Russia that pervaded all economic classes of citizens. Not acknowledged by the Russian government, due to the severity of the famine the Russian Orthodox Church bypassed the government and went to the World Council of Churches to ask for international food relief.

1991-1993 The WPA Conference Board of Missions asked John Flower, then the Washington District Missions Chair, to implement a Conference wide food relief effort, in response to a plea from UMCOR director Bruce Weaver. WPA responded with truck-loads of food, which received local newspaper and television coverage. Flower continued to work with the program, assisting UMCOR in assessing and improving the food delivery system. The UMCOR system again became a model for other nations and for the US government.

1994 - Flower read in the *UM Reporter* that UM churches were partnering with newly forming Russian UM congregations, and with permission from the Conference Board of Missions called Bruce Weaver for more information. During fall of 1994 WPA Board of Missions invited and hosted Weaver to present the Russian Initiative vision to clergy and laity at five geographic centers, all of which unanimously endorsed the idea of participation. The last meeting was at the Conference Center with the Cabinet.

Feb 1995 Weaver asked Flower to accompany him to Russia for orientation and for deployment in a fact finding mission to the Kami Republic of Russia, at the request of the Komi Branch of the Russian Peace Fund, home office being in Syktyvkar. The Peace Fund was working with the Russian UMC. Flower met with a joint committee of Komi government and humanitarian leadership requesting United Methodist partnership. Because their request was for the Kami Republic broadly, Weaver requested WPA Conference consider partnership, since the program until then had specialized in local church pairings, and a Conference would be better equipped to respond to the need.
May 1995 Flower returned to Kami Republic with an eleven-person assessment team, all with graduate degrees, half of which were doctorates. Due to the lengthy experiment with communism, Russia and Kami was behind in many ways, especially in the social sciences and in small business development. And there was a hunger for Christ everywhere we went. The group voted to recommend partnership.

Summer 1995 the Conference partnership was signed by WPA Bishop George Bashore and Russian Bishop Rudigor Minor, Bruce Weaver, and the President of the Russian Peace Fund.

1995-2002 WPA Conference sent multiple teams annually, totaling hundreds of WPA UMs, working in many disciplines with a value near or over one million dollars, including the areas of medicine, education, orphanage support, social work, forestry, small business development, etc. We worked in the cities of Syktyvkar, Ukhta, Inta, Pechorra, Vorkuta, the villages of Emva, Koiden, and a number more.

These visits included then high school student Stephanie Gottschalk (1996 Conference Youth in Mission team), who often returned. She, and later Michael Airgood, both did summer-long college immersion events in Syktyvkar as part of their major's requirements. Stephanie later joined Conference Staff as a mission coordinator, and Airgood became a GBGM missionary first to Mongolia and then the Ukraine. Joe Stains led a joint team of WPA, German, and Russian UM's to do needed renovation at the only UM camp, Camp Crystal. Other UM's including Dennis Henley and Mary Garber served multi-week duties as teaching exchange with the Pedagogical Institute, which became part of the University of Syktyvkar. James Salmon provided needed medical instruments to equip a regional hospital. WPA's new bishop, Thomas Bickerton, asked for the opportunity to travel on a team. This team worked in Moscow at the United Methodist seminary, which also houses the Russian Episcopal offices. Working beside the bishop on this team were Conference clergy such as Eric Park, Greg Cox, Scott Gallagher, and others. Stopping work cutting floor tiles to speak before a seminary class, the Russian students noted the several Band-Aids on Bickerton's hands, and with sincere awe commented, "Look, a bishop bleeds for us!" Richard and Mary Schall realized that Russian adoption by Russians could be facilitated by providing grants to renovate homes of Russians, thereby coming into compliance with adoption regulations. This successful model they implemented was adopted by the Russian government. Of further note, Terry Collin's team to Syktyvkar was temporarily stranded in Moscow on September 11, 2001, when their flight home was cancelled due to the terror attack in New York.

Reciprocally, Komi sent teams to WPA. The 1996 team included the cabinet level member of the Komi government, the Minister of Social Protection. This team was introduced to church, county, state, and federal social work programs, and also Corporate non-profit social work. This early delegation of senior Russian leadership was highly impressed at the levels of care and excellence seen rendered by church agencies, which gave our presence in Komi a heightened credibility. Emilia Pershiana, Dean of the English department at the Pedagogical Institute, twice came to WPA and taught as an exchange teacher in several Western Pennsylvania school districts, including United, Homer City, and a private school.

Four students of the first ever class of social work majors at the University of Syktyvkar spent a summer immersion experience in our Annual Conference, studying
2002 - 2015 Until this era there was no United Methodist Church in the Komi Republic. Our teams were able to travel to five cities and dozens of villages throughout Komi introduce their faith by humanitarian involvement, personal witness, class room cultural sharing, television and newspaper, reaching hundreds of thousands of Komi Russians. WPA members of the Russian Initiative Board regularly attended GBGM trainings and consultations, and in 2002 were told at a consultation that there was a new UM congregation meeting in Syktyvkar, Komi Republic. Weaver encouraged us to continue our valuable partnership with the Komi Government and Peace Fund, but to also meet with and partner with the Samaritan Woman United Methodist Church, which later changed its name to the Embassy of Love United Methodist Church. Our fund raising now included salary support of the pastors and structural improvements of the church. In 2009 a fire razed the church, requiring a rebuilding and a large infusion of cash from the WPA Conference, largely through local church donations. In 2015 the pastors of the Embassy of Love Church retired and relocated a distance away. The remainder of the church either followed them or scattered. The church building was closed and sold. At this sale there was a problem with funds taken by the pastors, a substantial part of which WPA had provided, but which now belonged to the Russian Annual Conference. The pastors have agreed to repay the Russian Annual Conference and have already begun making payments.

Fall 2015 Flower attended the Consultation in Moscow. Several Russian UM entities approached to ask if WPA might consider them as a new partner.

Spring 2016 Flower wrote Russian Bishop Eduard Khegay, with whom he has a working relationship, and asked the Bishop's wisdom in regards to a potential partnership. After meeting with his cabinet, Bishop Khegay suggested a partnership with the Kaliningrad region, which consists of three United Methodist Churches under one District Superintendent. An overture has been made to the DS of Kaliningrad towards beginning a conversation of potential partnership, which shall follow GBGM and Russian Annual Conference and WPA Conference guidelines.

2017, May 4 and 5th , John Flower, Stephanie Gottschalk, Michael Airgood, and Alex Evanoff attended the Russian Consultation held at the Baltimore Washington Conference Center. Bishop Khegay took the initiative to greet Flower and to thank him for the continued interest of our Conference in exploring a continuing of partnership with the Russian Annual Conference.

With the dissolution of the UM Church in Kami Republic,(800 miles NE of Moscow), we currently report and take direction from the Bishop of Russia, Eduard Khegay, with the recommendation that we consider partnering with his District Superintendent of Kaliningrad, the Igor Doronin. Kaliningrad District has three United Methodist Churches. Kaliningrad is situated on the Baltic Sea between Lithuania and Poland, (West of Belarus), and is 774 miles SW of Moscow.

In this era of changing governments and changing laws, and uncertain economic times, it is a great encouragement to the Russian church that there are partners of longevity. The United Methodist Church, which has been in ministry in Russia since the 1800's and is thereby grandfathered in Russian law as "a Russian church", has much to offer in a land that is secular or Orthodox. Secular Russians need faith. Practicing Orthodox Russians have a wonderfully deep and fervent faith, from which we may learn. However, it is nearly
void of social action. It is this social action of humanitarian work that many Russians have seen and admire in the United Methodist teams. It gives a value to faith where piety alone has not been found sufficiently helpful in times of great need. When we began ministry in Russia there was no Russian word to translate our word of "volunteer". For twenty-six years the WPA Conference and Russians have worked side by side, volunteering, praying, worshiping, praising, fellowshipping, celebrating both deep grief and sincere joy. Let us now pray for this new era in our relationship, with a new principal area of mission, with our new episcopal leader. God willing, our dialogue will progress towards renewed partnership and be ready to present to our Bishop, the Conference Board of Missions, and the Annual Conference.

John E. Flower, Jr., Chair

Structure of the WPA Conference Russia Initiative
The Russia Initiative falls under the general oversight of the General Board of Global Ministries (GBGM). Realizing that cross cultural ministry has natural pitfalls, the GBGM has prepared a working document called the "50/50 Partnership" as a general guide for cross-cultural ministry. The WPA Conference Russia Initiative has a Board of Directors that meets to further the ministry of partnership of our Conference with entities in Russia, principally, the Russian Annual Conference. The Chair of the Board reports regularly to the Chair of the Conference Partnership Committee, and to the Conference Board of Missions. The Chair informs the Partner Chair and the Conference Center Steward {DCM} of all visitations to and from countries, including names of delegates, flight numbers, and dates. The Chair copies the Bishop at least annually on ministry summaries and solicits the Bishop's guidance on matters of sensitivity. The WPA Conference Russian Initiative reports annually to the Annual Conference, as found in the Annual Conference Journals.

Reports are due each March 1"for publication in the June Conference Journal.

Western Pennsylvania Conference
Chair: John E. Flower, Jr.
Members of the Board:
Barbara Davis, Alex Evanoff, Stephanie Gottschalk, Dennis Henley, Mary Schall, Richard Schall, Carol Smith, Jessica Speer, Gary Grau
Being nominated as a new member to the Board at the next meeting: Michael Airgood

Russian Annual Conference
With the dissolution of the UM Church in Komi Republic, (800 miles NE of Moscow), we currently report and take direction from the Bishop of Russia, Eduard Khegay, with the recommendation that we consider partnering with his District Superintendent of Kaliningrad, the Igor Doronin. Kaliningrad District has three United Methodist Churches. Kaliningrad is situated on the Baltic Sea between Lithuania and Poland, (West of Belarus), and is 774 miles SW of Moscow.

Near Future Plans
In 2018 we will begin dialogue with District Superintendent Igor Doronin to obtain Kaliningrad's vision for our partnership. We will discuss this vision in accordance with the General Board of Global Ministry's template known as the "50/50 Partnership" and with
guidance from the Western PA Conference Board of Missions. As a matter of orientation and a sharing of vision, Kaliningrad has invited Western Pennsylvania representatives to visit in 2018, and we anticipate inviting Kaliningrad to visit Western Pennsylvania. As projects become known, we recruit spirit-led persons with specialized skills to work with us to accomplish stated tasks. At this time, we are interested in adding persons to our committee who know the Russian language and also persons of younger ages who are interested in gaining spiritual and cultural experience in the Kaliningrad region of the Russian Federation.

We anticipate attending the August Russian Consultation, which meets approximately every eighteen months. The next one is scheduled for August 2018 in Moscow.

Long Term Vision And Plans
These will arise from the new conversations with Doronin, Kaliningrad District, as ultimately approved by Bishops Khegay and Moore-KoiKoi and our respective Annual Conferences.

Time Line Of Action
2018 Representatives of WPA and Russian Annual Conferences plan a partnership agreement, in accordance to guidelines of GBGM and the Annual Conferences, and submit these for review to the WPA Partnership Committee, the WPA Board of Missions, and the Bishops.

2019 The Partnership Agreement is submitted and approval sought at the respective Annual Conferences. If approved, plans continue to move forward with regular (at least) annual review by committees, Bishops, and Conference reports, and then, in five year intervals presented to Annual Conference for renewal and continuation of partnership, the first renewal being in 2025.

Covenant Partnership Between WPAUMC and Zimbabwe
Zimbabwe Partnership
Chabadza Covenant

Community Spirit of Helping someone who is already at work.
In the Spring 2009 Joel Garrett was asked to head up a team that would be charged with forming a partner relationship with a country in Africa. Initially it was thought we would be forming a relationship with Sierra Leone. However, at a subsequent meeting with GBGM and UMCOR personnel we were asked to focus on Zimbabwe since we already had a footprint there in Nyadire with The Nydire Connection.

In July 2009 Robert Higginbotham and Joel Garrett attended what was called a world partnership summit at Africa University. To this summit were invited all churches, conferences, or countries who were either in partnership with Zimbabwe or contemplating such a relationship. At this summit Bishop Eben Nihwatiwa shared with us the masterplan for the Zimbabwe East and West Conferences. Along with this presentation was introduced the concept of "chabadza" and all were asked to assist in helping the UM Church in Zimbabwe in accomplishing their masterplan.
The initial design of our partnership with Zimbabwe is based on objectives in that masterplan and the five areas of focus. In May 2010 Bob and Joel returned to Zimbabwe to be part of an UMCOR training for health care teams. At this training event Bob and Joel met with Bishop Nihwatiwa to review the elements of our partnership. After review and conversation, the Bishop approved the partnership agreement. In June 2010 Bishop Nihwatiwa attended our annual conference session and he along with Bishop Bickerton approved and signed the partnership agreement.

Since that time, we have made some adjustments in how we seek to carry out this partnership, but the basic agreement has remained intact. An important thing to remember: although the partnership is between the conferences, it is the Bishops of the two areas that have final say concerning the basic form and elements of the partnership.

A Covenant Partnership Between
The Western Pennsylvania Annual Conference and The Zimbabwe Episcopal Area of The United Methodist Church

In the spirit of "Chabadza" (a Shona word meaning partnership in which a passerby stops to help one already at work) we will work together to:

*Develop Principled Christian Leaders by:*
- Collaborative Lay Leadership schools in both Western Pennsylvania and Zimbabwe.
- A Zimbabwe Immersion Program for adults from Western PA to experience Zimbabwean culture and learn about best practices in ministry and church.
- ZimCamp, a journey that affords Western PA youth the opportunity to visit and fellowship with young people in Zimbabwe while fostering relationships.

*Create New Places for New people and Renew Existing Congregations by:*
- Assisting in the strategic funding and/or construction of churches, clinics, and other facilities to make the good news of God's love real in Zimbabwe.
- Cabinet sharing of best practices in developing intentional discipleship programs such as class meetings, etc.

*Engage in Ministry with the Poor by:*
- Assisting with young people's empowerment programs

*Stamp Out Killer Diseases of Poverty by Improving Health Globally by:*
- Assisting in the provision of safe water by drilling boreholes within health facilities.
- Working with The United Methodist Church- Zimbabwe Health Board to achieve their goals and objectives for a healthier Zimbabwe.

*Dismantling racism*
- Partnering and assisting with the Albinism ministry in Zimbabwe

We will seek to respond to future calls of support as the Bishops of Zimbabwe and Western Pennsylvania might liaise and determine. We will channel communications between our two conferences through the agreed structures of The United Methodist

Church. This covenant partnership is open to review, evaluation, and adjustment as seen fit through mutual agreement.

Partner Resident Bishops
Bishop Cynthia Moore-koikoi - Western Pennsylvania
Bishop Eben K. Nhiwatiwa - Zimbabwe Episcopal Area Zimbabwe

Partnership Committee
Erik Hoek - Zimbabwe Partnership Chair
Renee Mikell - Assistant to the Bishop
Greg Cox - Director of Connectional Ministries
Sandra Matoushaya - Zimbabwe Partnership Coordinator
Donna Doutt-Butler District Representative
Drew Harvey - Pittsburgh District Representative and TNC chair
Sara Dickey - Pittsburgh District Representative
Donna Vizza - Johnstown District Representative
Dora Farrior - Connellsville District Representative

Cabinet. At Large Members:
Joel Garrett - Butler DS
Pat Nelson - Greensburg DS
Pat Lennox - Kane DS
Alyce Weaver Dunn - Johnstown DS
Brad Lauster - Washington DS
Bob Zilhaver - Connellsville DS
Paul Taylor - Pittsburgh DS
Joseph Patterson - Erie-Meadville DS
Jodie Smith - Franklin DS

Zimbabwe Partner Representatives.
Austin Chepiri - Projects Coordinator
Oscar Mukahanana - Harare East DS
Diana Matikiti - Makoni-Buhera DS
Daniel Mutidzawanda - Mutasa Nyanga DS
Pauline Nyamudzura - Marange DS
Philip Mushur - Harare West DS
Elias Mutasa - Mutoko-Mudzi DS
Farirayi Nyabote - Bulawayo-Midlands DS
J.W. Mafondokoto - Masvingo DS
Daniel Chitsiku - Mutare DS
Josephine Bopani - Harare Central DS
Covenant Partnership Between WPAUMC and Fiji
Bl-Lateral Relationship Agreement Between the Western PA Conference Of The United Methodist Church And The Methodist Church In Fiji And Rotuma
"As the Father as sent me, I also send you" John 20:21b

I. Introductory statement regarding our shared commitment to mutual ministry
God has called us as members of one body in Christ, regardless of our geographic locations. God's love continually reaches across all boundaries and calls us into mutual ministry and mission together in faithfulness, as found in scripture. It is with joy that we come together in faithful response to Jesus call, as found in Matthew 28:18-19, All Authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations....

Because of this call to make disciples for the transformation of the world, and through the example of Jesus Christ, we begin the journey of intentional partnership between the Western PA Conference of The United Methodist Church and the Methodist Church in Fiji and Rotuma. In such partnerships we are reminded of the unique and enduring vision of John Wesley, "the world is our parish."

We enter into these agreements with one another to define our commitment and to provide a basis of accountability as partners in ministry. Our mutual goal in this partnership is to work together to cultivate a more intentional and effective mission with and for the Fijian Community of Western Pennsylvania and with the mission of the Methodist Church in Fiji and Rotuma.

II. Key values undergirding this agreement
a. Commitment from both conferences to join together in engaging in mutual ministry to further the work of Christ in this world.
b. To share in respect and appreciation of the unique and diverse ways the Methodist Church around the world is called to be in ministry together.
c. Commitment to clear, transparent, and open communication.
d. That both conferences would commit to surrounding this partnership in prayer.

III. Key agreements
A. Mission efforts from the Western PA Conference of The United Methodist Church directed to Fiji
i. Projects and team coordination
All mission projects to Fiji will be organized as Volunteers in Mission projects and will use the UMVIM guidelines for work. This includes a formal invitation from the church in Fiji for the project after mutual agreement has been made about the details of the mission project.
ii. Mission site identification: Mission sites may be identified in a variety of ways, including:
1. Through family and relationship ties established by and through members of the Fijian Community of WPA.
2. Members of the Western PA Conference who feel called to share their particular gifts and skill sets through our commitment to partnership with Fiji.
3. Sites designated by the General Secretary's office of the Methodist Church in Fiji.
Special fundraising efforts by Western PA Conference designated for work in Fiji

1. Conference initiated fundraising: Projects will be identified by the Methodist Church in Fiji in conversation with the Western PA Conference Volunteers in Mission Coordinator, the Fijian Ministry Steering Committee, and the Bishop. Any conference-wide appeals shall be approved annually by the conference.

2. Fijian Community initiated fundraising: If the local Fijian congregation wishes to engage in fundraising for specific needs within Fiji, it shall be reviewed and approved by the Steering Committee and in consultation with the Methodist Church in Fiji and Rotuma.

B. Fijian Leadership development in Western Pennsylvania
   i. Training of laity
   Lay leadership has deep roots in Wesleyan theology and plays an important role in our Methodist churches around the world today. The Western PA Conference of The United Methodist Church will undertake steps to create a leadership development program that will foundationally utilize the lay leadership program that currently exists in Fiji and incorporate United Methodist history, polity, and practice. The District and Conference Lay Leaders and Directors of Lay Servant Ministries will work with the pastors of the Fijian Language Ministries to develop a training program for missional, evangelistic, and/or leadership training purposes.

   ii. Training and assignment of Vakatawas
   We recognize and agree that laity who are placed in leadership as the Vakatawa for Fijian Ministries in an United Methodist Church within the Western PA Conference of The United Methodist Church shall be certified
      a. By the Methodist Church in Fiji and Rotuma.
      b. Completed additional training in United Methodist history, doctrine, and polity as confirmed by the District Director of Lay Servants School.

C. Supervision of Fijian Congregations in Western Pennsylvania.
   i. The role of the District Superintendent
   The District Superintendent in The United Methodist Church functions as an extension of the superintending role of the Bishop within geographic boundaries of the annual conference. Their role is to exercise oversight and support of the Church in its mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

   Anything that impacts a church's ability to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world is first a concern of the local church Pastor and church Lay Leader. The Fijian Language Ministry of Western PA is located in an established United Methodist Church. Therefore, should any concerns or issues arise regarding the health, wellbeing, or effectiveness of the Fijian ministry that should come to the attention of the Methodist Church in Fiji and Rotuma, efforts should be made to consult directly with the local church Pastor and District Superintendent. Together, a strategy will be developed to fully understand the situation and to respond.

   Great care will be taken to utilize the knowledge and advice of the Fijian Methodist leadership while understanding and respecting the authority and roles of our United Methodist District Superintendents and Bishop.
ii. The Role of the Methodist Church in Fiji and Rotuma within the Western PA Conference of The United Methodist Church

The primary role of the Methodist Church in Fiji and Rotuma to the Western PA Conference is to support and advise United Methodist leadership in its efforts to supervise and maintain Fijian ministry in United Methodist settings.

We understand that the Methodist Church in Fiji and Rotuma takes seriously its pastoral responsibility to Fijians who are living within the bounds of the Western PA Conference. Conference leadership welcomes the gifts and insights of the Methodist Church in Fiji and Rotuma. Whenever possible these gifts and insights will be utilized to assist us in the supervision of United Methodist Churches and related ministries.

iii. The recognition of congregations from the Methodist Church in Fiji and Rotuma within the boundaries of the Western PA Conference.

We request that the Bishop be consulted whenever a request comes to the Methodist Church in Fiji and Rotuma from Fijians related to The United Methodist Church for recognition or registration as a Methodist Church in Fiji and Rotuma. Further we respectfully request that the Methodist Church in Fiji not establish a Fijian Methodist Church within the bounds of the Western PA Conference. Similarly, the Western PA Conference agrees not to establish a United Methodist Church within the bounds of the Methodist Church in Fiji and Rotuma.

iv. Steering Committee

A steering committee made up of laity and clergy from the Western PA Conference and the Fijian Language Ministry of Western Pennsylvania be developed to guide the ministry within Western Pennsylvania and missions to Fiji. The proposed steering committee includes:

Bev Roscoe, a Connellsville District Superintendent, or other Superintendents if Fijian Language Ministries should establish within the boundaries of Western Pennsylvania,
Saundra McKee, Karen Smyth, Joyce Dennis, the Conference VIM coordinator or other representative,
Maraia Gonelevu, Tevita Matuataumada, Rusila Matuataumada

v. Communications

In order to maintain effective communication between the Western PA Conference of The United Methodist Church and the Methodist Church in Fiji and Rotuma, clear communication channels will be designated and maintained particularly in the areas of mission project development, leadership development, local church supervision, and over all mission partnership collaboration.
Africa University

Africa University is deeply thankful to the Western Pennsylvania Conference for investing in the Africa University Fund (AUF) apportionment at 100 percent in 2017. Western Pennsylvania’s interest in and support for global mission is truly humbling. Thank you, Western Pennsylvania United Methodists, for leading by example, and for your record of faithfulness to Africa University.

Africa University enjoyed a banner year in 2017, thanks to United Methodists in the Western Pennsylvania Conference and throughout the connection who spearheaded special events to mark the university’s 25th anniversary. These efforts brought Africa University’s contributions to the forefront and encouraged congregations to reaffirm their commitment to the institution’s mission of nurturing global leaders who transform communities.

Institutional Update:

- Currently, Africa University hosts a vibrant campus community of 1,417 full-time students and faculty and staff from 31 African nations. In addition, 392 students are pursuing degree programs on a part-time basis. Amidst a transition in the governance of Zimbabwe, teaching and learning activities at Africa University have continued uninterrupted.
- Africa University’s annual operating budget of just-under $10.5 million prioritizes student access and retention, with more than $2.2 million in scholarships and financial aid awards disbursed in 2017.
- A new academic structure, which includes the Institute of Theology and Religious Studies, is encouraging more flexible, multidisciplinary programs and enhancing Africa University’s relevance to The United Methodist Church and to sub-Saharan Africa.
- Through teaching and research, Africa University is making trailblazing, regional contributions in migrant and refugee protection, in child rights, and in Africa’s efforts to eradicate malaria and other insect-borne diseases.
- More than 8,000 graduates are involved in efforts to make disciples, alleviate poverty, improve global health, and better the quality of life in communities across sub-Saharan Africa.

The Western Pennsylvania Conference’s engagement with Africa University represents hope and transformation for young women and men who are answering the call to meaningful discipleship.

On June 9th, more than 600 young women and men will receive their degree certificates during Africa University’s 24th Graduation Ceremony.

James H. Salley, Associate Vice Chancellor for Institutional Advancement
United Methodist Foundation

The Board of Directors and Staff of the Foundation continue to deliver excellent services and information to support and enrich the stewardship ministry of individuals, congregations and agencies of the Annual Conference.

As one of its services, the Foundation provides professional funds management that adheres to the Social Principles of the Denomination. With over 78 million dollars under management, the oversight of this activity is closely monitored by our professional managers, outsourced investment office, and engaged volunteer directors. Congregations of all sizes were able to use the income from these funds to achieve capital projects, grow their ministry, and maintain ongoing program needs. The 85 basis administrative fee charged to the accounts supports the overall ministry of Christ through the Foundation. To this end the following outlines the highlights of our 2017 activities.

During the early winter months two clergy tax seminars were held. Also, an educational webinar was offered to assist local church treasurers in completing their pastor’s IRS Form W2. Throughout the year the Foundation’s Pastors’ Leadership Academy for Leadership Stewardship Formation class number five met. One of their modules took place at Lakeside Chautauqua, in Lakeside, Ohio where they participated in an August “Generosity” event. Other timely educational webinars and events were held throughout the year to compliment the stewardship ministry of the churches and agencies of our Conference.

The Annual Meeting was held at Grove City College in June around the theme, “A Celebration of Endowments.” A special emphasis was placed upon the Robert M. Stewart Endowment which provides the funding for the UM Foundation’s Grants Program. Since a gift was received in 2001 over $700,000 in nearly 400 grants have been given to benefit United Methodist churches and agencies. Also, the Foundation’s financial and investment summaries were reviewed.

In November the Foundation celebrated its traditional celebration of Founders Day. The recipient of the 2017 award was N. James Sekel, Past Chair of the Foundation. Jim’s leadership was important in leading the transition of Executive Directors. Additionally, he has had a significant impact on the Foundation as well as other charitable organizations.

The Foundation is proud to be a supporting organization of a connectional church such as the Western Pennsylvania Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church. We look forward to continuing to provide, through our commitment to the principles of Christian Stewardship, responsible and faithful investment management for churches and agencies, planned giving opportunities through which individuals can support Christian ministries, and education and support in financial stewardship and leadership through which can respond as disciples of Jesus Christ.

Richard Thomas, Board Chair
Ed Bailey, Executive Director
Annual Report of the District Superintendents

Good morning, friends, and welcome to your Western Pennsylvania Coordinating Cabinet Annual Eye Exam. Your participation today may not earn you any “Take A Healthy Step” points if you are part of the Annual Conference healthcare plan, but it will certainly help you to better see the mission and ministry of the Annual Conference. Our goal is to help bring into focus the ways in which the Coordinating Cabinet has been supporting and fulfilling the Five Areas of Focus that we have adopted as a Conference.

So, now for the Eye Exam. If you have ever been to the optometrist, you know what to expect. Imagine we have been ushered into the exam room and the doctor has arrived to determine what lens, if any, will help us to see more clearly our mission “to make disciples for Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world” and how to be better equipped to fulfill that mission. Imagine the doctor slipping some lens into the machine and saying, “Tell me: is number 1 or number 2 better?” And we have to select the best option. And so goes the process until the doctor can find the lens that will permit us to have as close to 20/20 vision as possible.

So, are you ready to take the WPA Cabinet eye exam together? (Show slide) Which is better in focus? Number 1? Or Number 2? (Conference answers) OK, here comes the next selection. Number 3 or Number 4? (Response) Great! Let’s try one more. Number 5 or number 6? (Response) Congratulations! You are doing very well! You seem to be able to distinguish what is in focus and what is not in focus. I think there is hope that we will ace the rest of this exam and see more clearly our mission as a United Methodist people!

So, let us move on to the next part of the eye exam. The Coordinating Cabinet would like to highlight what we have been doing as a Cabinet in each of the Five Areas of Focus. Every time we meet as a Coordinating Cabinet, our reporting and time of discussion are framed around the Five Areas of Focus. This process has helped us to remain focused on the mission and ministry we have agreed upon as we strive to lead the Annual Conference and impact the world in the name of Jesus Christ.

As this part of the exam unfolds, we are going to see 2 different images for each of the Areas of Focus – and we have to determine which image best reflects the achievement of the goal.

Developing Principled Christian Leaders (Pat Lenox)

Our first area of Focus is “Developing Principled Christian Leaders. Which image do you think best reflects the fulfillment of this area? Number 1? Or Number 2? You are correct! Number 2 is the best image for Developing Principled Christian Leaders.

This area of focus begins with our own desire as a Coordinating Cabinet to be the best leaders God calls us to be. The most important part of our leadership development is participation in worship every time we meet. We alternate leadership so every member of the Coordinating Cabinet has the opportunity to lead worship but more importantly, we have the opportunity to simply sit and worship, to absorb God’s Word and grow in our own faith. During each session of Cabinet, we hold an “All Building Worship” in which all staff and anyone who happens to be in the Conference Center at the time can join us for worship that includes Holy Communion. Following all building worship, Bishop Cynthia leads an “all staff” meeting so that important information and principles can be communicated.
The Coordinating Cabinet members read *The Anatomy of Peace* by the Arbinger Institute this past year and have committed to modeling hearts of peace in our work with clergy and laity in our Conference. We challenge each other to grow deeper in our faith and stronger in our leadership so that we can best reflect Christ in all we do and say as your Coordinating Cabinet.

With significant turnover in the members of our Coordinating Cabinet this year, we decided to update our WPA Cabinet Policy Manual. This online [intranet] resource will put at our fingertips all policies and procedures that guide the Cabinet in our work together. As we strive to be principled Christian leaders, it is vital to have an accurate and informative resource so that we are unified in our mission and its implementation.

As the Coordinating Cabinet has oversight of clergy and laity in our Annual Conference, a key component in our work is recommending leadership training events that will enhance and increase the number of principled Christian leaders across the Annual Conference. Over the last year, the Coordinating Cabinet has worked with various Conference Staff and volunteers to hold Boundaries Training for all appointed clergy, as well as offering the annual Transition Seminar for all clergy moving to new appointments. In addition, the Coordinating Cabinet often recommends clergy and laity to attend various leadership development seminars and conferences, and as resources permit, support them financially in these endeavors.

*Creating new and renewed Congregations (Paul Taylor)*

The next area of focus is “Creating New and Renewed Congregations.” Which image do you think best reflects the fulfillment this area”? Number 1? Or Number 2? You are doing well! Number 1 is the best image for Creating New and Renewed Congregations.

In November 2017, the Coordinating Cabinet devoted two working days to identifying some Strategic Locations across our Annual Conference for which we would support and resource these sites in the coming year. Amy Wagner, the Coordinator of Congregational Development and Revitalization, guided us in this effort as we used MissionInsite© to gather [demographic] data, as we shared with one another hopes and dreams, as we prayerfully selected nine locations that we discerned were strategic places for something new to emerge in ministry or for revitalization to occur. We have covenanted to provide resources and support for these nine locations, and frequently touch base about the progress of these locations during Cabinet meetings. The hope is that as these nine locations flourish and deepen their impact of mission and ministry, new strategic sites will be discerned and supported by the Cabinet in like manner.

Part of the ongoing dialogue about creating new congregations and revitalizing existing congregations is to ensure that resources are available to our local churches to assist in strengthening ministry. The Coordinating Cabinet has the opportunity to recommend Equitable Compensation grants for churches who may be struggling financially but who are offering ongoing or new ministries that are making a great impact on their communities. Likewise, the Cabinet is part of the approval process for churches seeking ministry and mission support grants from various boards and agencies in our Annual Conference. The Cabinet takes seriously its responsibility to help support and nurture ministry in places where the gospel of Jesus Christ is proclaimed in powerful ways.
Engaging in ministry with the poor (Amy Wagner)

The third area of focus is “Engaging in Ministry with the Poor.” Which image do you think best reflects the fulfillment of this area of focus? Number 1? Or Number 2? You are doing awesome! Number 1 is a good example of Engaging in Ministry with the Poor.

On September 12, 2017, the Coordinating Cabinet visited the Healthy Village Learning Institute in McKeesport for the purpose of engaging in a day of mission work. We donned painting clothes and spent the day painting classrooms in the building in order to provide a place for children and youth in McKeesport to grow in faith and develop important life skills. As the Healthy Village is located in a community that has deep economic struggles, the Coordinating Cabinet donated a day of labor, so a positive impact could be made as lives are being transformed.

In lieu of a gift exchange at the Cabinet Christmas celebration this past year, Cabinet members shared a monetary donation to provide furnishings for the new girl’s classroom at the Healthy Village Learning Institute.

As part of our oversight responsibilities of the mission and ministry of the Annual Conference, the Cabinet strives to support and pray for the regional mission agencies that are affiliated or connected with our Annual Conference. These organizations are accomplishing significant ministry in the area of engaging with the poor. Most often, at least one Cabinet member sits on the various Boards of these agencies so that the voice of the mission agency can be heard as the Coordinating Cabinet cares for the overall ministry of the Annual Conference.

Promoting Abundant Health (Greg Cox)

The next area is “Promoting Abundant Health.” Which image do you think best reflects the fulfillment of this focus? Number 1? Or Number 2? You are seeing really well! Number 2 is the correct answer for Promoting Abundant Health.

In August 2017, the Coordinating Cabinet began the 2017-2018 year by gathering at Olmsted Manor for a Spiritual Retreat. As we prepared to begin a new year of coordinating the mission and ministry of the Annual Conference, we deemed it important to give attention to our individual and corporate health. We centered the retreat on the book by Matthew Sleeth entitled 24/6: A Prescription for a Healthier, Happier Life. We were blessed to have the Chris Kindle, Coordinator of Discipleship and Spiritual Formation, lead us in the discussion about “Sabbath keeping” and to challenge us to include seasons of rest in our typically busy, stressful work.

In keeping with this concept, Bishop Cynthia has reminded us throughout the year, to care for ourselves so that we can better care for others. Some of our best practices at Cabinet meetings now include: work conversations are banned during lunch breaks so that we can clear our hearts and minds and be refreshed; we have made a valiant attempt at bringing healthier snacks for our Cabinet consumption; and we have nurtured an atmosphere of support and encouragement and prayer as Cabinet members have faced health concerns or have vowed to lead healthier lifestyles.

In recognition that one of the greatest health crises facing our region is the Opioid Epidemic, the Coordinating Cabinet devoted an afternoon to discussing the matter, aided by two guest presenters who shared what their organizations are doing to combat this deadly problem. Addressing this issue needs to be a vital part of our ministry together at all levels: local, District and Conference.
Dismantling racism (Jodie Smith)

Our final area of Focus is “Dismantling Racism.” Which image do you think best reflects the fulfillment of this area of focus? Number 1? Or Number 2? Wow! You are on a roll! Number 1 is the best image for Dismantling Racism.

At the July 2016 Northeastern Jurisdictional Conference, a Call to Action was adopted to challenge the ten Annual Conferences in our region to address and eliminate the sin of racism. In response to this Call to Action, the Western PA Conference has gathered a team to create and implement our plan to carry out this critical work. The Cabinet invested time in working on our portion of the Plan, including the recording of our stories, that which we have already done, and the dreaming of our dreams, that which we hope to accomplish in the near future. The immediate dream of our Coordinating Cabinet is that each of our ten Districts would sponsor three cross cultural events in the upcoming year. It is also the dream of the Coordinating Cabinet that a new multi-ethnic congregation would be launched in 2019.

One of the confessions of the Cabinet is that Cross-Cultural Appointments have not always been effectively implemented and supported, thus hampering excellent ministry between pastor and congregation. During this current appointment season, the Cabinet has partnered with the Dianne Glave, the Coordinator of Diversity Development and Inclusion for our Annual Conference, to better support and resource cross-cultural appointments. This process includes offering cross-cultural training for the congregation, providing mentoring and coaching opportunities for the pastor, and creating more avenues of support and encouragement for all parties involved in the appointment.

Dianne Glave also has led the Coordinating Cabinet and the entire Conference Center staff in Diversity Training, particularly in the area of identifying and responding to micro-aggressions which are “indirect, subtle or unintentional acts of discrimination against marginalized groups, such as a racial or ethnic minority.” As part of our training, we entered into covenant with one another, that when a micro-aggression occurs, we will speak up and name what has happened and will receive notice of the occurrence without anger or malice. We are committed to breaking patterns of conversation and behavior that bring harm to our brothers and sisters of color.

(Alyce) Thank you for participating in the Western Pennsylvania Coordinating Cabinet Annual Eye Exam. We hope that you can see the difference between what is out of focus - and what is in focus – as together we shape our ministry around the Five Areas of Focus and as we strive to “make disciples for Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world!”

Alyce Weaver Dunn, Dean
WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA CONFERENCE
THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEARS ENDED
DECEMBER 31, 2017 AND 2016
&
INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT

McCall Scanlon & Tice, LLC
Certified Public Accountants
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<th>Page</th>
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</tbody>
</table>
INDEPENDENT AUDITORS’ REPORT

To the Council of Finance and Administration of the Western Pennsylvania Conference - The United Methodist Church:

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of the Western Pennsylvania Conference – The United Methodist Church (the “Conference”), which comprise the statements of financial position as of December 31, 2017 and 2016, and the related statements of activities and cash flows for the years then ended, and the related notes to the financial statements.

Management’s Responsibility for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America; this includes the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditors’ Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audits. We conducted our audits in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor’s judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity’s preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity’s internal control. Accordingly, we express no such opinion. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.
Opinion

In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Conference as of December 31, 2017 and 2016, and the changes in its net assets and its cash flows for the years then ended in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

McCall Scanlon & Tic, LLC

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
June 19, 2018
WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA CONFERENCE - THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION
DECEMBER 31, 2017 AND 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ASSETS</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CURRENT ASSETS:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash and cash equivalents</td>
<td>$2,675,694</td>
<td>$2,185,756</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certificates of deposit</td>
<td>$317,538</td>
<td>$667,835</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accounts receivable</td>
<td>$118,593</td>
<td>$70,526</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepaid expenses</td>
<td>$189,500</td>
<td>$171,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total current assets</td>
<td>$3,301,325</td>
<td>$3,095,617</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INVESTMENTS (Notes 2 and 3)</td>
<td>$72,737,563</td>
<td>$63,470,979</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NET POST-RETIREMENT BENEFIT PLAN OBLIGATION ASSET (Note 6)</td>
<td>$14,650,738</td>
<td>$8,453,401</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT, Net (Note 4)</td>
<td>$4,404,833</td>
<td>$3,784,038</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>$95,094,459</td>
<td>$78,804,035</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS |            |            |
| CURRENT LIABILITIES:       |            |            |
| Current portion of mortgages payable (Note 5) | $38,772  | $33,199    |
| Accounts payable           | $1,645,777| $1,122,310 |
| Total current liabilities  | $1,684,549| $1,155,509 |
| LONG-TERM DEBT,            |            |            |
| Mortgages payable (Note 5) | $665,146  | $466,053   |
| Total long-term debt       | $665,146  | $466,053   |
| Total liabilities          | $2,349,695| $1,621,562 |
| NET ASSETS:                |            |            |
| Unrestricted               | $20,007,201| $13,711,494|
| Temporarily restricted (Notes 7 and 9) | $67,612,623 | $58,346,039|
| Permanently restricted (Notes 8 and 9) | $5,124,940  | $5,124,940 |
| Total net assets           | $92,744,764| $77,182,473|
| TOTAL                     | $95,094,459| $78,804,035|

See Notes To Financial Statements

- 4 -
# Western Pennsylvania Conference - The United Methodist Church

## Statement of Activities

**For the Year Ended December 31, 2017**

### Revenues, Support and Other Sources of Funds

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>UNRESTRICTED</th>
<th>TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED</th>
<th>PERMANENTLY RESTRICTED</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>From primary operations:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connectional apportionment from local churches</td>
<td>$ 8,468,378</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>$ 8,468,378</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advance special and other designated donations</td>
<td>1,705,444</td>
<td>6,000</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1,711,444</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct fees and program revenues</td>
<td>1,249,361</td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1,249,361</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other miscellaneous income</td>
<td>144,634</td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>144,634</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net assets released from restrictions</td>
<td>832,409</td>
<td>(832,409)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revenue and support from primary operations</td>
<td>12,400,426</td>
<td>(828,409)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>11,574,017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From medical and retirement benefits</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pension premiums</td>
<td>1,464,630</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1,464,630</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical premiums</td>
<td>6,696,628</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>6,696,628</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Redirection of Pre-62 assets (Note 12)</td>
<td>5,316,196</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5,316,196</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gain or (loss) on post retirement benefit plan assets</td>
<td>575,416</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>575,416</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investment income on post retirement benefit plan assets</td>
<td>1,390,098</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1,390,098</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other miscellaneous income</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net assets released from restrictions</td>
<td>110,000</td>
<td>(110,000)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revenue and support from medical and retirement benefits</td>
<td>15,952,971</td>
<td>(110,000)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>15,842,988</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total revenues, support and other sources of funds</td>
<td>27,963,397</td>
<td>(938,412)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>27,024,985</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Expenses and Other Uses of Funds

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>UNRESTRICTED</th>
<th>TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED</th>
<th>PERMANENTLY RESTRICTED</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>For primary operations:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General church appointments</td>
<td>2,500,707</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2,500,707</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grants and contributions</td>
<td>2,500,952</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2,500,952</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personnel</td>
<td>3,425,023</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3,425,023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taxes</td>
<td>212,802</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>212,802</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supplies and materials</td>
<td>341,478</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>341,478</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration and program</td>
<td>441,053</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>441,053</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel, lodging, regulation, and meals</td>
<td>804,253</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>804,253</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipment repairs and maintenance</td>
<td>297,044</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>297,044</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depreciation</td>
<td>297,044</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>297,044</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilities</td>
<td>247,706</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>247,706</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance and repairs</td>
<td>75,903</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>75,903</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest and bank charges</td>
<td>31,488</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>31,488</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other miscellaneous expense</td>
<td>28,039</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>28,039</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expenses and other uses of funds for primary operations</td>
<td>12,165,282</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>12,165,282</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For medical and retirement benefits</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical insurance</td>
<td>7,815,529</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7,815,529</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pension payments</td>
<td>1,666,199</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1,666,199</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOP HSA funding</td>
<td>173,500</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>173,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expenses and other uses of funds for medical and retirement benefits</td>
<td>9,655,228</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>9,655,228</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total expenses and other uses of funds</td>
<td>21,820,510</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>21,820,510</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OTHER INCOME AND (EXPENSE):</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investment income</td>
<td>5,785</td>
<td>1,794,975</td>
<td>10,592</td>
<td>1,811,352</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net investment gains or (losses)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8,408,021</td>
<td>(3,592)</td>
<td>8,404,429</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other income or (expense)</td>
<td>147,035</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>(7,000)</td>
<td>140,035</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total other income and (expense)</td>
<td>152,820</td>
<td>10,202,996</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>10,355,816</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INCREASE (DECREASE) IN NET ASSETS</td>
<td>6,295,707</td>
<td>9,266,584</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>15,562,291</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NET ASSETS, BEGINNING OF YEAR</td>
<td>13,711,494</td>
<td>58,346,039</td>
<td>5,124,940</td>
<td>77,182,473</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRANSFERS</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NET ASSETS, END OF YEAR</td>
<td>$ 20,007,201</td>
<td>$ 67,612,623</td>
<td>$ 5,124,940</td>
<td>$ 92,744,764</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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See Notes to Financial Statements

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## XII Reports

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REVENUES, SUPPORT AND OTHER SOURCES OF FUNDS:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>From primary operations:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connectional apportionment from local churches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advance special and other designated donations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct fees and program revenues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other miscellaneous income</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net assets released from restrictions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revenue and support from primary operations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| From medical and retirement benefits:          |
| Pension premiums                               | $ 1,478,703 | - | - | $ 1,478,703 |
| Medical premiums                               | $ 6,233,730 | - | - | $ 6,233,730 |
| Redirection of Pre-82 assets (Note 12)         | $ 1,634,861 | $ 8,359,683 | - | $ 8,359,683 |
| Gain or (loss) on post retirement benefit plan assets | - | - | - | - |
| Investment income on post retirement benefit plan assets | - | - | - | - |
| Change in post retirement benefit plan obligation | - | - | - | - |
| Other miscellaneous income                     | $ 81,451 | - | - | $ 81,451 |
| Net assets released from restrictions          | $ 310,367 | $ (10,367) | - | - |
| Revenue and support from medical and retirement benefits | $ 10,587,637 | $ 8,049,316 | - | $ 18,646,953 |
| Total revenues, support and other sources of funds | $ 22,188,876 | $ 7,856,950 | - | $ 30,045,826 |

## EXPENSES AND OTHER USES OF FUNDS:

| For primary operations:                        |
| General church apportionments                  | $ 2,447,620 | - | - | $ 2,447,620 |
| Grants and contributions                       | $ 2,532,008 | - | - | $ 2,532,008 |
| Personnel                                     | $ 3,254,440 | - | - | $ 3,254,440 |
| Taxes                                         | $ 198,827 | - | - | $ 198,827 |
| Services                                      | $ 465,018 | - | - | $ 465,018 |
| Insurance (excluding medical)                 | $ 686,126 | - | - | $ 686,126 |
| Operation and program                         | $ 552,355 | - | - | $ 552,355 |
| Travel, lodging, registration, and meals       | $ 674,625 | - | - | $ 674,625 |
| Supplies and materials                        | $ 184,221 | - | - | $ 184,221 |
| Equipment repairs and maintenance             | $ 261,880 | - | - | $ 261,880 |
| Depreciation                                  | $ 199,738 | - | - | $ 199,738 |
| Utilities                                     | $ 224,464 | - | - | $ 224,464 |
| Maintenance and repairs                       | $ 238,044 | - | - | $ 238,044 |
| Rent                                          | $ 75,439 | - | - | $ 75,439 |
| Interest and bank charges                     | $ 29,197 | - | - | $ 29,197 |
| Other miscellaneous expense                   | $ 55,790 | - | - | $ 55,790 |
| Expenses and other uses of funds for primary operations | $ 12,079,312 | - | - | $ 12,079,312 |

| For medical and retirement benefits:          |
| Medical insurance                             | $ 8,331,418 | - | - | $ 8,331,418 |
| Pension payments                              | $ 1,387,820 | - | - | $ 1,387,820 |
| BOP HSA funding                               | $ 609,733 | - | - | $ 609,733 |
| Expenses and other uses of funds for medical and retirement benefits | $ 10,328,971 | - | - | $ 10,328,971 |
| Total expenses and other uses of funds        | $ 22,408,283 | - | - | $ 22,408,283 |

## OTHER INCOME AND (EXPENSE):

| Investment income                             | $ 11,406 | $ 1,616,664 | $ 10,660 | $ 1,638,730 |
| Net investment gains or (losses)               | - | $ 2,592,103 | $ 951 | $ 2,593,054 |
| Other income or (expense)                      | $ 529,846 | - | (1,000) | $ 528,846 |
| Total other income and (expense)               | $ 541,252 | $ 4,208,767 | $ 10,611 | $ 4,760,630 |

## INCREASE (DECREASE) IN NET ASSETS

| NET ASSETS, BEGINNING OF YEAR                   | $ 321,845 | $ 12,086,717 | $ 10,611 | $ 12,398,173 |

## TRANSFERS

| NET ASSETS, END OF YEAR                        | $ 13,711,494 | $ 58,346,039 | $ 5,124,940 | $ 77,182,473 |

See Notes To Financial Statements

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### WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA CONFERENCE - THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

**STATEMENTS OF CASH FLOWS**
**FOR THE YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2017 AND 2016**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase (decrease) in net assets</td>
<td>$15,562,291</td>
<td>$12,398,173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjustments to reconcile increase (decrease) in net assets to net cash provided by (used in) operating activities:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depreciation</td>
<td>227,759</td>
<td>199,738</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Realized and unrealized (gains)/losses on investments</td>
<td>(8,404,429)</td>
<td>(2,593,054)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Redirection of Pre-62 assets</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>(8,359,883)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Increase) decrease in:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accounts receivable</td>
<td>(48,067)</td>
<td>112,956</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepaid expenses</td>
<td>(18,000)</td>
<td>443,945</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net post-retirement healthcare benefits obligation asset</td>
<td>(6,197,337)</td>
<td>(1,004,197)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase (decrease) in,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accounts payable</td>
<td>523,467</td>
<td>103,347</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net cash provided by (used in) operating activities</td>
<td>1,645,684</td>
<td>1,301,225</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchases of property and equipment</td>
<td>(608,654)</td>
<td>(175,998)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investment/Other income reinvested</td>
<td>(1,811,567)</td>
<td>(1,627,474)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net change in certificates of deposit</td>
<td>350,297</td>
<td>95,209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proceeds from assets released from restrictions</td>
<td>949,412</td>
<td>503,883</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net cash provided by (used in) investing activities</td>
<td>(1,120,512)</td>
<td>(1,204,380)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal payments on mortgages payable</td>
<td>(35,234)</td>
<td>(31,943)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net cash used in financing activities</td>
<td>(35,234)</td>
<td>(31,943)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NET INCREASE IN CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS</strong></td>
<td>489,938</td>
<td>64,902</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS, BEGINNING OF YEAR</strong></td>
<td>2,185,756</td>
<td>2,120,854</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS, END OF YEAR</strong></td>
<td>$2,675,694</td>
<td>$2,185,756</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SUPPLEMENTAL DISCLOSURE OF CASH FLOW INFORMATION:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest paid</td>
<td>$24,579</td>
<td>$20,891</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SUPPLEMENTAL DISCLOSURE OF NON CASH INVESTING AND FINANCING ACTIVITIES:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchases of fixed assets financed by mortgage payable</td>
<td>$239,900</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

See Notes To Financial Statements - 7 -
1. NATURE OF OPERATIONS AND SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

OPERATIONS

The Western Pennsylvania Conference - The United Methodist Church (the “Conference” or “WPAUMC”) is a not-for-profit corporation organized under the provisions of the Non-Profit Corporation Law of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The Conference is the primary level judiciary above the local church within the United Methodist denomination. The Conference is the enabling and administrative body to approximately 800 churches located within the geographic boundaries (Western Pennsylvania) of the Conference. It is subdivided into ten geographical districts managed by clergy district superintendents (who, together with the resident Bishop constitute the “Cabinet”) who connect the Conference to the individual churches in each respective district. The “primary function” of the Conference is equipping spiritual leaders to lead congregations as they seek to serve “for the sake of transforming the world through Jesus Christ.” The Conference, through the Cabinet, appoints pastors to lead congregations (churches) within the Conference, meets annually to review and pass legislation to further the mission and ministry of the church, and maintains administrative and financial records relative to its clergy members, member churches, and related organizations. The Conference implements its mission and ministry through its established councils, ministry teams, boards, and agencies.

The Conference organizes its activities in order to achieve its vision, mission, and goals, namely:

- Our vision is to ignite and sustain a passionate, spiritual connection with Christ among all people in Western Pennsylvania.

- Our mission is to provide leadership, connection and resources to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

- Our core value is love: We love the Lord our God with all our hearts, souls, minds and strength and our neighbors as ourselves. This value is commanded by Jesus, inspired by our Wesleyan heritage including to spread scriptural holiness over the land, and witnessed through our integrity, accountability and inclusiveness.

The Western Pennsylvania Annual Conference, also known as the Western PA Conference or WPAUMC, includes all or part of 23 counties in the western third of Pennsylvania. The Conference has 10 districts and is entirely within the region known as Northern Appalachia.
The Conference Connectional Network, which embodies all ministry teams of the Annual Conference, and all local churches, are directing their work toward the Four Areas of Focus of the United Methodist Church. Over this quadrennial, the church will seek to focus the work of making disciples for Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world around these areas of ministry:

- Combating the diseases of poverty by improving health globally.
- Engaging in ministry with the poor.
- Creating new places for new people and revitalizing existing congregations.
- Developing principled Christian leaders for the church and the world.
- Improving race relations and dismantling systemic and institutional racism.

**Basis of Presentation**

The Conference is required to report information regarding its financial position according to three classes of net assets: unrestricted, temporarily restricted, and permanently restricted.

Net assets of the Conference are reported in the following categories:

- Unrestricted net assets consist of resources available for the various programs and administration of the Conference, which have not been restricted by a donor or grantor.

The designated funds are established by the Conference and represent unrestricted funds which are used for future retiree healthcare benefits, campus ministry, educational assistance, and various other programs.

- Temporarily restricted net assets consist of donor-restricted contributions. Amounts restricted by the donor or grantor for a particular purpose are reported as temporarily restricted net assets in the statement of financial position. When a donor restriction expires, that is, when a stipulated time restriction ends or purpose restriction is accomplished, temporarily restricted net assets are reclassified to unrestricted net assets. The Conference does not imply a time restriction on gifts of long lived assets. The donor restriction expires when the assets are placed in service.

- Permanently restricted net assets represent endowments which require that the principal be invested in perpetuity and only the income be used as designated by the donor.
USE OF ESTIMATES

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities and disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements and the reported amounts of revenues and expenses during the reporting period. Actual results could differ from those estimates.

INCOME TAXES

The Conference is a tax-exempt not-for-profit organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code under a denominational group filing exemption granted to the United Methodist Church. This filing exemption may extend to affiliates who meet applicable Internal Revenue Code requirements as Supporting Organizations. Accordingly, no provision for federal and state income taxes is recorded.

CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS

The Conference considers all highly liquid investments with an original maturity date of three months or less that are readily convertible to cash to be cash equivalents.

ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE

The Conference administers the medical insurance and benefits program internally, sending bills to and collecting from individuals and local churches their portion of the medical insurance. The Conference pays the medical insurance premium directly to the insurance carriers.

Accounts receivable are reported at net realizable value. Amounts are written off when they are determined to be uncollectible based upon management’s assessment of individual accounts. The allowance for doubtful accounts is estimated based upon periodic review of individual accounts. There was no allowance for doubtful accounts considered necessary as of December 31, 2017 and 2016.

INVESTMENTS

Investments in marketable securities with readily determinable fair values and all investments in debt securities are recorded at fair value in the statement of financial position.
Although the Conference’s investments are invested in a variety of financial instruments managed by investment advisors, the fair values, reported in the statements of financial position, are subject to various market risks including changes in the equity markets, the interest rate environment, and economic conditions. Due to the level of risk associated with investment securities and the level of uncertainty related to changes in the fair value of investment securities, it is reasonably possible that the fair value of investments reported in the accompanying statements of financial position could change materially in the near term.

**Fair Value Measurements**

The Conference follows Accounting Standards that define fair value, establish a framework for measuring fair value and enhance disclosures about fair value measurements. Fair value is defined as the price that would be received to sell an asset or paid to transfer a liability in an orderly transaction between market participants at the measurement date. The framework for measuring fair value includes a hierarchy used to classify the inputs used in measuring fair value. The hierarchy prioritizes the inputs used in determining valuations into three levels. The level in the fair value hierarchy within which the fair value measurement falls is determined based on the lowest level input that is significant to the fair value measurement. The levels of the fair value hierarchy are as follows:

Level 1 – Fair value is based on unadjusted quoted prices in active markets that are accessible to WPAUMC for identical assets. These generally provide the most reliable evidence and are used to measure fair value whenever available.

Level 2 – Fair value is based on significant inputs, other than Level 1 inputs, that are observable either directly or indirectly for substantially the full term of the asset through corroboration with observable market data. Level 2 inputs include quoted market prices in active markets for similar assets, quoted market prices in markets that are not active for identical or similar assets, and other observable inputs.

Level 3 – Fair value is based on significant unobservable inputs. Examples of valuation methodologies that would result in Level 3 classification include option pricing models, discounted cash flows, and other similar techniques.

**Property and Equipment**

Property and equipment are reported at cost, net of accumulated depreciation. When determination of cost between land and building was unknown, ten percent of the cost or appraisal value was allocated to land value. Depreciation is provided over the estimated useful lives of the respective assets on a straight-line basis.
WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA CONFERENCE
THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

POST-RETIREMENT HEALTHCARE BENEFITS

Accounting Standards require WPAUMC to recognize the overfunded or underfunded status of a defined benefit postretirement plan as an asset or liability in the statements of financial position and to recognize changes in that funded status in the year in which the changes occur through changes in unrestricted net assets.

The Standards require postretirement benefit plan obligations other than pension plans (as applies to WPAUMC) to be measured as the accumulated benefit obligation (“ABO”).

ENDOWMENT AND BOARD DESIGNATED FUNDS

Accounting Standards provide guidance on the net asset classification of donor-restricted endowment funds for a not-for-profit organization that is subject to an enacted version of the Uniform Prudent Management of Institutional Funds Act of 2006 (“UPMIFA”) and also improves disclosures about an organization’s endowment funds (both donor restricted endowment funds and board designated endowment funds) whether or not the organization is subject to UPMIFA.

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has not adopted UPMIFA and instead follows PA Act 141. The Conference is governed by the Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church. The Conference has determined that the majority of its contributions are subject to the provisions of the Book of Discipline. Certain contributions are subject to other gift instruments, or are subject to specific agreements with the Conference.

Under terms of the Book of Discipline and in conjunction with the United Methodist Foundation (“Foundation”), the Conference has the ability to distribute a percentage of the corpus of any trust, separate gift, bequest, or fund as it shall determine. As a result of the ability to distribute corpus, all contributions not classified as temporarily restricted or permanently restricted are classified as unrestricted net assets for financial statement purposes.

Temporarily restricted net assets consist of restricted contributions receivable and the remaining portion of donor-restricted endowment funds that are not classified as permanently restricted net assets. When donor restrictions expire, that is, when a time restriction ends or a purpose restriction is fulfilled, temporarily restricted assets are reclassified to unrestricted net assets and reported in the statements of activities as net assets released from restrictions.

Permanently restricted net assets represent the fair value of the original gift as of the gift date and the original value of subsequent gifts to donor-restricted endowment funds.
The Conference in conjunction with the Foundation have adopted investment and spending policies for endowment assets that attempt to provide a predictable stream of funding to programs supported by its endowments while seeking to maintain purchasing power of the endowment assets. The Conference’s spending and investment policies work to achieve this objective. The investment policy establishes an achievable return objective through diversification of asset classes. The current long term objective is a return of 7%, net of investment fees. Actual returns in any given year may vary from this amount.

The current spending policy utilizes a “total return” approach, as contemplated by Pennsylvania Act 141, to determine the amount of its quarterly distributions. This methodology bases income distributions upon the combination of interest, dividends, other earnings and capital appreciation/depreciation. Annual distributions can be between 2%-7% of the average unit value of the trailing twelve quarters. The actual distribution is determined by the Board of Directors of the United Methodist Foundation (which serves as the trustee for the Conference’s endowment accounts) at the end of each calendar year. The annual distribution was 4.25% for 2017 and 4.35% for 2016. This is consistent with the primary objective of the endowment policy to provide for current income as well as long-term growth consistent with the conservation of principal.

**ADVERTISING**

Advertising costs are expensed as incurred. Advertising expense was $813 and $4,080 for the years ended December 31, 2017 and 2016, respectively.

**RECLASSIFICATIONS**

Certain reclassifications were made to the 2016 financial statements to conform to the 2017 presentation.

**SUBSEQUENT EVENTS**

In preparing these financial statements, the Conference has evaluated events and transactions for potential recognition or disclosure through June 19, 2018, the date the financial statements were available to be issued. No events or transactions were required to be recognized or disclosed in these financial statements.
2. INVESTMENTS

Investments consist of the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Money market funds</td>
<td>$1,629,554</td>
<td>$1,149,672</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domestic equities</td>
<td>$25,778,040</td>
<td>$22,625,035</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International equities</td>
<td>$20,463,398</td>
<td>$17,217,110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fixed income</td>
<td>$24,866,571</td>
<td>$22,479,162</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$72,737,563</strong></td>
<td><strong>$63,470,979</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Investment return is comprised of the following for the years ended December 31, 2017 and 2016:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dividends and interest income</td>
<td>$1,811,352</td>
<td>$1,638,730</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net unrealized gain (loss) on investments</td>
<td>$8,177,439</td>
<td>$2,510,979</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net realized gain (loss) on investments</td>
<td>$228,990</td>
<td>$82,075</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total investment return (loss)</strong></td>
<td><strong>$10,215,781</strong></td>
<td><strong>$4,231,784</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. FAIR VALUE MEASUREMENTS

The Conference measures its investments on a recurring basis with the following inputs at December 31, 2017:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Quoted Prices In Active Markets (level 1)</th>
<th>Other Observable Inputs (level 2)</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Money market funds</td>
<td>$338,354</td>
<td>$1,291,200</td>
<td>$1,629,554</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domestic equities</td>
<td>$2,175,483</td>
<td>$23,602,557</td>
<td>$25,778,040</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International equities</td>
<td>$657,318</td>
<td>$19,806,080</td>
<td>$20,463,398</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fixed income</td>
<td>$928,484</td>
<td>$23,938,087</td>
<td>$24,866,571</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$4,099,639</strong></td>
<td><strong>$68,637,924</strong></td>
<td><strong>$72,737,563</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Conference measures its investments on a recurring basis with the following inputs at December 31, 2016:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Quoted Prices In Active Markets (level 1)</th>
<th>Other Observable Inputs (level 2)</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Money market funds</td>
<td>$87,205</td>
<td>$1,062,467</td>
<td>$1,149,672</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domestic equities</td>
<td>1,997,360</td>
<td>20,627,675</td>
<td>22,625,035</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International equities</td>
<td>626,081</td>
<td>16,591,029</td>
<td>17,217,110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fixed income</td>
<td>1,018,915</td>
<td>21,460,247</td>
<td>22,479,162</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$3,729,561</strong></td>
<td><strong>$59,741,418</strong></td>
<td><strong>$63,470,979</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Conference does not have any investments measured using level 3 inputs.

4. **PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT, NET**

Property and equipment consist of the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Land</td>
<td>$462,390</td>
<td>$432,390</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building &amp; improvements</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(useful lives 10-40 years)</td>
<td>$6,202,803</td>
<td>$5,415,781</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction in progress</td>
<td>168,174</td>
<td>136,642</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(useful lives 5-15 years)</td>
<td>$186,483</td>
<td>$186,483</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>7,019,850</td>
<td>6,171,296</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less accumulated depreciation</td>
<td>2,615,017</td>
<td>2,387,258</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Property and equipment, net</strong></td>
<td><strong>$4,404,833</strong></td>
<td><strong>$3,784,038</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Depreciation expense for the years ended December 31, 2017 and 2016 was $227,759 and $199,738, respectively.
5. MORTGAGES PAYABLE

Mortgages payable consist of the following at December 31:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mortgage payable to United Methodist Foundation of Western Pennsylvania, payable in monthly installments of $1,230 with the balance due and payable in September 2027, at an annual interest rate of 3.50%. The mortgage is secured by the land and property at Dyer Stone Drive, Eighty-Four, Pennsylvania.</td>
<td>$ 121,812</td>
<td>$132,116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mortgage payable to United Methodist Foundation of Western Pennsylvania, payable in monthly installments of $2,162 with the balance due and payable in April 2028, at an annual interest rate of 3.50%. The mortgage is secured by the land and property at 1034 Route 288, Fombell, Pennsylvania.</td>
<td>67,324</td>
<td>72,720</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mortgage payable to Lucro Commercial Solutions, LLC, an affiliate of Keystone United Methodist Federal Credit Union, payable in monthly installments of $2,533 with the balance due and payable in September 2029, at an annual interest rate of 4.50%. The mortgage is secured by the land and property at 303 Scenic Ridge Court, Mars, Pennsylvania.</td>
<td>276,917</td>
<td>294,416</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mortgage payable to Lucro Commercial Solutions, LLC, an affiliate of Keystone United Methodist Federal Credit Union, payable in monthly installments of $1,163 with the balance due and payable in June 2032, at an annual interest rate of 4.125%. The mortgage is secured by the land and property at 114 Lopez Drive, Uniontown, Pennsylvania.</td>
<td>237,865</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Portion</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Current portion</td>
<td>703,918</td>
<td>499,252</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long-term portion</td>
<td>38,772</td>
<td>33,199</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>$ 665,146</td>
<td>$466,053</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Scheduled principal payments on mortgages payable are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years ending December 31,</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>$ 38,772</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>40,366</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>41,891</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2021</td>
<td>43,745</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2022</td>
<td>45,527</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thereafter</td>
<td>493,617</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>$ 703,918</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. Post-Retirement Healthcare Benefits

The Conference maintains a defined benefit post-retirement healthcare plan for clergy and their spouses. The eligibility for receiving benefits depends upon the retiree’s length of service (ranging from 10 to 40 years) with the Conference and whether or not the retiree or spouse has reached Medicare eligibility. The plan provides for various percentages of cost sharing by the retiree and spouses. Contributions by the Conference after the retiree becomes Medicare eligible are based upon a Medicare supplemental program.

Annual costs are recognized when billed by the respective insurance companies (pay-as-you-go). Plan amounts as of January 1, 2018 and 2017, (for December 31, 2017 and 2016) respectively, were as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Projected benefit obligation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active participants</td>
<td>$ 15,326,797</td>
<td>$ 15,642,432</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retirees and beneficiaries</td>
<td>11,551,328</td>
<td>12,488,517</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Projected benefit obligation</td>
<td>26,878,125</td>
<td>28,130,949</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accumulated benefit obligation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active participants</td>
<td>11,891,900</td>
<td>12,344,809</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retirees and beneficiaries</td>
<td>11,551,328</td>
<td>12,488,517</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accumulated benefit obligation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plan assets at fair value</td>
<td>23,443,228</td>
<td>24,833,326</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>38,093,966</td>
<td>33,286,727</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funded status over (under)</td>
<td>$ 14,650,738</td>
<td>$ 8,453,401</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The accumulated benefit obligation ("ABO") and the changes in the ABO do not reflect any amounts associated with the Medicare Prescription Drug, Improvement and Modernization Act of 2003 (the "Act") because the plan is not directly entitled to the Act's subsidy. The Conference is not able to determine whether benefits provided by its plan are actuarially equivalent to Medicare Part D.1.

Net periodic service cost was $442,015 for the 2017 plan year and will be $418,287 for 2018.

Expected benefit payments for the 2017 plan year were $1,441,700, and estimated to be $1,304,092 for 2018.

Weighted Average Discount Rate Assumptions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accumulated benefit obligation</td>
<td>3.50%</td>
<td>4.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net periodic benefit cost</td>
<td>4.00%</td>
<td>4.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expected long term rate of return on plan assets</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Estimated Future Benefit Payments**

The following benefit payments, which reflect expected future service, as appropriate, are expected to be paid.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years Ending December 31:</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>$ 1,304,092</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>1,503,853</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>1,583,787</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2021</td>
<td>1,601,614</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2022</td>
<td>1,588,954</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2023-2027</td>
<td>7,626,236</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>$ 15,208,536</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Western Pennsylvania Conference
The United Methodist Church
Notes to Financial Statements

Assumed Healthcare Cost Trend Rates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Medical and Drug Combined</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Healthcare costs trend rate assumed for 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rate to which the cost trend rate is assumed to decline (ultimate trend rate)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year that the rate reaches ultimate trend rate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Plan Assets

The plan assets are primarily invested with Wespath Benefits and Investments ("Wespath"), formerly the General Board of Pensions and Health Benefits of the United Methodist Church) in a Multiple Asset Fund which is comprised of various equities and fixed income securities including alternative investments such as real estate investment trusts. Lesser amounts of plan assets are invested in the Core Balanced Fund, as well as an Aggressive Growth Fund, maintained by the United Methodist Foundation of Western Pennsylvania.

The following table sets forth the asset allocation for plan assets at December 31:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Equity securities</td>
<td>68.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fixed income</td>
<td>30.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Investment objectives for the Conference’s plan assets are to:

- protect the integrity of the plan and to assist the Conference in meeting its obligations to the plan participants;
- prudently invest assets in a high quality, diverse manner;
- achieve an optimal return, within specified risk parameters;
at a minimum, preserve the inflation-adjusted value of the Plan;

• attempt to produce investment results which achieve the Plan’s actuarial assumed rate of return;

• adhere to the established guidelines.

Investment managers have been selected based on their offering of balanced investment funds which approximate asset allocation targets and operate in accordance with the Social Principles of the United Methodist Church with respect to investment selection.

The Conference measures the plan assets at fair value on a recurring basis with the following inputs as of December 31, 2017:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Other Observables (level 2)</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Plan assets</td>
<td>$ 38,093,966</td>
<td>$ 38,093,966</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Conference measures the plan assets at fair value on a recurring basis with the following inputs as of December 31, 2016:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Other Observables (level 2)</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Plan assets</td>
<td>$ 33,286,727</td>
<td>$ 33,286,727</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7. Temporarily Restricted Net Assets

Temporarily restricted net assets have been restricted by donors for the following purposes at December 31:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pension and benefits support</td>
<td>$ 55,951,882</td>
<td>$ 47,426,351</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education assistance</td>
<td>4,593,857</td>
<td>4,085,017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Various Programs</td>
<td>7,066,884</td>
<td>6,834,671</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>$ 67,612,623</td>
<td>$ 58,346,039</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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8. PERMANENTLY RESTRICTED NET ASSETS

Permanently restricted net assets consist of various trusts on which the income has been designated for the following purposes at December 31:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pension and benefits support</td>
<td>$3,417,056</td>
<td>$3,417,056</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education assistance</td>
<td>461,706</td>
<td>461,706</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Various Programs</td>
<td>1,246,178</td>
<td>1,246,178</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$5,124,940</strong></td>
<td><strong>$5,124,940</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9. ENDOWMENT NET ASSETS

Changes in endowment net assets for the year ended December 31, 2017 are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Temporarily Restricted</th>
<th>Permanently Restricted</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beginning Endowment net assets</td>
<td>$58,346,039</td>
<td>$5,124,940</td>
<td>$63,470,979</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investment income</td>
<td>1,794,975</td>
<td>10,592</td>
<td>1,805,567</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net appreciation/(depreciation)</td>
<td>8,181,031</td>
<td>(3,592)</td>
<td>8,177,439</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Realized gains/(losses)</td>
<td>226,990</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>226,990</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Redirection of Pre-1982</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contributions</td>
<td>6,000</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>6,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assets released from restrictions</td>
<td>(942,412)</td>
<td>(7,000)</td>
<td>(949,412)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transfers</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change in endowment assets</td>
<td>9,266,584</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>9,266,584</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ending Endowment net assets</td>
<td>$67,612,623</td>
<td>$5,124,940</td>
<td>$72,737,563</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Western Pennsylvania Conference
The United Methodist Church
Notes To Financial Statements

Endowment net asset composition by type of fund as of December 31, 2017 is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fund Type</th>
<th>Temporarily Restricted</th>
<th>Permanently Restricted</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Donor designated funds</td>
<td>$ 67,612,623</td>
<td>$ 5,124,940</td>
<td>$ 72,737,563</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other designated funds</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total endowment funds</td>
<td>$ 67,612,623</td>
<td>$ 5,124,940</td>
<td>$ 72,737,563</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Changes in Endowment net assets for the year ended December 31, 2016 are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Temporarily Restricted</th>
<th>Permanently Restricted</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beginning Endowment net assets</td>
<td>$ 46,280,322</td>
<td>$ 5,114,329</td>
<td>$ 51,394,651</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investment income</td>
<td>1,616,664</td>
<td>10,660</td>
<td>1,627,324</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net appreciation/(depreciation)</td>
<td>2,510,028</td>
<td>951</td>
<td>2,510,979</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Realized gains/(losses)</td>
<td>82,075</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>82,075</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Redirection of Pre-1982</td>
<td>8,359,683</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8,359,683</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contributions</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assets released from restrictions</td>
<td>(502,883)</td>
<td>(1,000)</td>
<td>(503,883)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transfers</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change in Endowment assets</td>
<td>12,065,717</td>
<td>10,611</td>
<td>12,076,328</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ending Endowment net assets   | $ 58,346,039           | $ 5,124,940            | $ 63,470,979 |
Endowment net asset composition by type of fund as of December 31, 2016 is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fund Type</th>
<th>Temporarily Restricted</th>
<th>Permanently Restricted</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Donor designated funds</td>
<td>$ 58,346,039</td>
<td>$ 5,124,940</td>
<td>$ 63,470,979</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other designated funds</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total endowment funds</td>
<td>$ 58,346,039</td>
<td>$ 5,124,940</td>
<td>$ 63,470,979</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Conference has no unrestricted endowment net assets.

10. SERVICES TO AFFILIATES

The Conference treasurer’s office performs bookkeeping and accounting services as to the collecting, disbursing, and recording of funds for various affiliated corporations. The Conference performs these services at no charge (which are not material) to the affiliates because these programs are considered to support the Conference’s mission and ministry.

11. FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES

The Conference incurred expenses in the following functional areas during the years ended December 31, 2017 and 2016:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ministerial programs</td>
<td>$ 11,033,007</td>
<td>$ 10,926,331</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ministerial support</td>
<td>1,132,275</td>
<td>1,152,981</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical and retirement benefits</td>
<td>9,655,228</td>
<td>10,328,971</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>$ 21,820,510</td>
<td>$ 22,408,283</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

12. PENSION AND OTHER BENEFIT PLANS

The Conference participates in several multi-employer defined contribution and defined benefit pension plans for ministers and lay employees administered by Wespath. The plans qualify as “church plans” under Sections 414(e) and 403(b) of the Internal Revenue Code.

The following plans are separate multi-employer plans and accordingly the respective plan assets and corresponding benefit obligations are not recorded on WPAUMC’s financial statements.
CLERGY RETIREMENT SECURITY PROGRAM ("CRSP")

CRSP includes both a defined benefit and defined contribution plan. The defined benefit component is based on either denominational average compensation, as defined, or actual compensation, as defined.

The defined contribution component provides for a contribution of at least 3% of actual compensation. CRSP covers all US United Methodist clergy appointed within annual conferences. Contributions to CRSP from WPAUMC were $683,522 in 2017 and $688,296 in 2016.

The defined benefit contributions due were $2,298,194 for 2017 and $2,252,942 for 2016. For 2017 and 2016, in accordance with plan provisions and an election made by the Conference, this contribution was funded by allocating to the CRSP an equivalent amount of overfunding from the "Pre-82 Plan".

SUPPLEMENT ONE TO THE CLERGY RETIREMENT SECURITY PROGRAM ("PRE-82 PLAN")

The Pre-82 Plan covers substantially all United Methodist clergy for service prior to 1982. Wespath determines contributions to the Plan. As a multi-employer plan, all assets of the Plan are available to pay all benefits of the Plan, regardless of the annual conference from which contributions came or under which benefits were accrued. Each conference controls certain benefit provisions of the Plan and may elect to fund faster than required. Consequently, funding requirements are determined separately for each conference. There were no contributions to the Pre-82 plan required or made by WPAUMC for 2017 and 2016; however, a $270,738 Advance Contribution for 2018 was due, and paid, from the Wespath Deposit account as of December 31, 2017.

The Conference did not have a redirection during 2017. During 2016, $8,359,683 was redirected from the Pre-82 Plan assets to the Conference's benefit reserve account which is used to offset various benefit obligations.

The following summarizes the funding status of WPAUMC as of January 1, 2017 and 2016 with respect to the Pre-82 Plan:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>January 1, 2017</th>
<th>January 1, 2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Pre-82 plan assets</td>
<td>$77,289,664</td>
<td>$87,932,122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liabilities</td>
<td>(71,652,335)</td>
<td>(75,574,416)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funded status</td>
<td>$5,637,329</td>
<td>$12,357,706</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funded ratio</td>
<td>108%</td>
<td>116%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SUPPLEMENT THREE TO THE CLERGY RETIREMENT SECURITY PROGRAM – MINISTERIAL PENSION PLAN (“MPP”)

The Ministerial Pension Plan (MPP) provided benefits for US Clergy from 1982 through 2006. It is primarily a defined contribution retirement plan, with the requirement that clergy must convert at least 75% of their total account balance to an annuity at retirement. The annuity is a defined benefit feature. The plan was terminated in 2006 with respect to further contributions for service and was combined with the CRSP-DB. Wespath adopted a Corridor Funding methodology for managing CRSP-DB and MPP Annuites. Under this approach, the benefit programs’ assets and liabilities are combined to determine a combined funded ratio, which indicates the corridor that the combined plan is in. The corridor establishes both the general investment allocation for assets supporting MPP Annuites and the method for determining the combined contribution. The general investment allocation for assets supporting CRSP-DB remains constant at 65% equities. The combined funded ratio of 106% was used to determine contributions for the year beginning January 1, 2018.

In determining contributions for the year beginning January 1, 2018, the Conference’s portion of this liability is $90,585,732 for the MPP Annuites and $31,188,780 for the CRSP-DB. The Conference does not expect to make a contribution during 2018 for MPP.

There were no contributions to the MPP by WPAUMC for 2017 and 2016.

UNITED METHODIST PERSONAL INVESTMENT PLAN (“UMPIP”)

WPAUMC participates in The United Methodist Personal Investment Plan (“UMPIP”) administered by Wespath. UMPIP is a participant directed defined contribution plan. Participants may contribute a percentage of their compensation on either a before-tax or after-tax basis. WPAUMC may also make contributions on behalf of each participant.

WPAUMC contributions to UMPIP were $161,565 in 2017 and $157,014 in 2016.

COMPREHENSIVE PROTECTION PLAN (“CPP”)

WPAUMC participates in Clergy Protection Plan (“CPP”) administered by the Wespath. The CPP provides both a disability and death benefit for active clergy and a death benefit for retired clergy.

WPAUMC contributions to CPP were $639,429 for 2017 and $653,494 for 2016.
13. Benefit Reserve Fund (“BRF”)

The Conference also receives contributions to a Benefit Reserve Fund ("BRF") for possible future Clergy Retirement Security Program ("CRSP") DB unfunded liabilities and other retiree needs. Contributions to the BRF are made by the churches and other participating salary paying units, and amounted to $117,512 in 2017 and $118,261 in 2016. The balance of the BRF is $43,882,195 and $37,129,853 as of December 31, 2017 and 2016, respectively, is maintained under the direct control of the Conference, acting through its Board of Pensions, outside any particular benefit plan.

WPAUMC has investments designated as temporarily and permanently restricted net assets to provide pension benefits for its clergy. Please see Notes 7 and 8 for the value of temporarily and permanently restricted net assets designated for pension support as of December 31, 2017 and 2016.

14. Health Savings Account – Board Of Pension Funding

Beginning January 1, 2016, the Conference’s medical benefit plan for active clergy and lay employees was changed to a High Deductible Health Plan ("HDHP"), with a Health Savings Account ("HSA") or Health Reimbursement Account ("HRA"), depending on eligibility. The Conference Board of Pensions ("BOP") may distribute funds (e.g., contributions to participant accounts, administration fees) to the HSA Administrator (Keystone United Methodist Federal Credit Union) that are applicable to the upcoming medical plan year. For the years ended December 31, 2017 and 2016, $189,500 and $171,500, respectively, are recorded as prepaid expenses on the statements of financial position.

15. Concentration Of Credit Risk

The Conference maintains cash accounts, which, at times, may exceed federally insured limits. The Conference has not experienced losses from maintaining cash accounts in excess of federally insured limits. Management believes it is not subject to any significant credit risk on its cash accounts.
2018 Annual Conference Voting