

AGENCIES OF THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE (Listed alphabetically by area of accountability)

Archives and History

The new quadrennium brought largely new membership to the Commission on Archives and History. Except for four ex officio positions (director of the Annie Merner Pfeiffer Library, Wesleyan's archivist, and the president and secretary/treasurer of the Historical Society of the West Virginia Annual Conference) that replaced at-large positions on the commission, only two members from the previous quadrennium remain. Of great benefit in the transition to new membership has been information compiled, printed, and bound by Mary Virginia and Dewayne Lowther regarding activities of the commission in their eight years of service, 2008-2016, during Ginnie's tenure as chair.

The commission met at West Virginia Wesleyan College on July 30, 2016, and partially completed its organization. The commission elected Betty Nicholson as secretary but was unsuccessful in selecting a vice chair, whose major responsibility at present is to serve as the commission's contact person for actions relating to the Hamrick Barn and Cemetery. Since several new members were unable to attend, the Chair hopes to fill that position in 2017. Anita Tracy and Loretta Young were elected to serve along with the chair as commission representatives on the Rehoboth Board of Directors.

Brett Miller, West Virginia Wesleyan archivist, moved the Methodist Archives to a new space on the second floor at Annie Merner Pfeiffer Library at the beginning of the summer of 2016. During the move, the collection was reorganized, and the archivist made use of the collection and deaccession policies that the commission previously approved. Over the summer, an intern helped with organizing audio-visual materials. Questions about the Methodist Archives and proposed donations should be addressed to Brett Miller, Wesleyan Archivist, Annie Merner Pfeiffer Library, 59 College Avenue, Buckhannon, WV 26201.

Last year's annual conference approved a resolution recommending registration of the Scott's Run Settlement House at Osage as a United Methodist Historic Site, and the facility has become United Methodist Historic Site No. 518. The chair participated in the site marker dedication on September 11, 2016. Other participants included Jane Donovan, Kathy Hanko, Ginnie and Dewayne Lowther, Shay Petitto, and Richard Dumas.

The Commission on Archives and History provided a display on Methodist historic sites located within the West Virginia Conference for History Day at the Capitol on March 9, 2017. With the addition of the Scott's Run Settlement House, there are now 17 sites around West Virginia.

Continuing a practice of the previous chair, the commission recognized nine church anniversaries with the presentation of certificates: Forest Hill UMC in Forest Hill, 100 years in the current building; Ireland UMC in Walkersville, 125 years of ministry; John Wesley UMC in Lewisburg, 196 years of ministry; Logan Memorial UMC in Parkersburg, 150 years of ministry; Main Street UMC in Ronceverte, 136 years of ministry; Simpson Memorial UMC, 150 years of ministry; Stealey UMC in Clarksburg, 100 years in the current building; Summit Valley UMC in Vienna, 100 years of ministry; and Trinity UMC in Fairmont, 147

years of ministry. Please let the chair know of significant upcoming church anniversaries.

An important goal of the commission during this quadrennium is outreach to local churches regarding records. In the fall, the chair made initial contact with church historians whose e-mail was included in data collected at charge conferences in 2015, and additional contact is planned. The Commission intends to provide church historians and other church records-keepers with information on which documents should be retained for a specified period only and which are required to be saved permanently, what records are appropriate to send to the Methodist Archives, and how to care for historical records.

By annual conference, the commission will have hosted the annual meeting of the Northeastern Jurisdiction Commission on Archives and History in Charleston. In the past year, a committee of the local commission continued planning for the meeting, scheduled for May 9-11, 2017. Saint John XXIII has been reserved as the meeting location, and Bishop Sandra Steiner Ball will lead the opening worship service on May 9. The middle day, May 10, will be devoted to touring.

Mary Edith Johnson, Chairperson
Commission on Archives and History

Assistant to the Bishop **Rev. Dr. J.F. Lacaria**

Ten years ago, the longing to stand in the spot where my ministry began overcame my need to continue a long journey home as I climbed out of Webster Springs on my way to Cross Lanes. I thought, "I'll just turn in and drive by the spot, it won't take a second." And so, I drove into Camp Caesar, near Cowen, where I remembered lying in my bunk surrounded by other campers from Charleston District, listening to an invitation to sign a card and thus commit my life to Christian service in the church. The week of fun was over, the sawdust that had been spread around the sawhorse communion tables was marked with knee prints and tear dots, and we Christian high schoolers were being asked to take this one additional step, to make it known that we would heed the spirit's call and serve others as Christ served.

Only a small family reunion was using the camp and the way to the dorms at upper camp was wide open. I couldn't resist getting out of the car and checking if the door to my dorm was locked, when I found the door open I walked in, but left the lights off. In the stillness of the close of a day, I stood by the bed where, 52 years earlier, I signed my name on that card and began my journey in ministry. The whirl of time stopped for a moment, even the smell of the place had remained the same, I rested in Christ's peace and felt a deep joy to stand where it started.

I may have felt all alone when I responded to that invitation, but all my ministry has been life together, in fellowship with others. In December, I wrote my bishop to declare my intent to retire, and this is the last report I will prepare as a member of the conference staff. My journey on staff began when Tom Dunlap was the Council Director. He was so

gracious and patient with me, supporting my ministry as I explored new ways to serve the church as a diaconal minister. Randy Flanagan followed Tom as Council Director, but led us into a new structure that serves our conference to this day. He finished his course as Director of Connectional Ministries (DCM), and I was ordained a deacon just as soon as the church would let me. Next in line as DCM was my dear friend and brother in Christ, Bill Wilson. We shared the DCM responsibilities with Bill also appointed as the Assistant to the Bishop and me to a staff position for the Board of Ordained Ministry. We were in ministry together, life together in Christian fellowship.

In 2013 Bill retired and I began what I planned to be my final appointment as Assistant to the Bishop and DCM. I began this journey thanking God for Bishop Sandra, the bishop I was privileged to serve and I continue to give thanks for her and a marvelous staff of the WV Conference: Bonnie MacDonald, Amy Shanholtzer, Chris Ridgway, Thomasina Stewart, Felica Wooten Williams, Laura Allen, Deborah Coble, Adam Cunningham, Whitney Cherry, Tom Clark, Heather Withrow, Shea James, Amy Mullins, Karen Thaxton, Lisa Shafer, Andrea Holley.

I am blessed to serve with Jim Berner, who, more than a conference treasurer, cared for the program ministries of our conference through fiscal oversight and uncommon support. Myra Bess, Cheryl Sutton, and Lisa Priestly helped me acquire habits of accountability that have made my work more exact, more transparent, and thus more responsible.

I am blessed to work alongside Judi Kenaston, who, with a servant's heart, creates ministry out of the nitty gritty work of reporting accurately as the servant of the greater denomination. Ken Krimmel has been a bridge for me, from the Cabinet as Dean to his current work, which was once my work. Ken is ready to take the reins from me and continue to direct the program ministries of the conference. We have spent the last year in a year of transition and learning, and I look forward to seeing the great things that lie ahead under his guiding hand.

As I prepare a report of my work this year, I find that I am reporting on a ministry I never anticipated, and certainly never longed for because it came at great cost to so many. Following the devastating floods of June of 2016, Bishop Sandra increasingly freed me from the expected duties of an Assistant to the Bishop, in order that I might give attention to our conference's role in long-term recovery. The immediate recovery of our parsonages and churches was a primary focus while we developed a team to oversee the long-term recovery of families and communities. This conference has been greatly blessed that Jack Lipphardt came out of retirement almost before retirement began in order to direct our efforts. Together, Jack and I hired two excellent case managers, Miranda Nabers, and Tapiwa "Grace" Msisha, and two highly skilled on-site construction coordinators, Chad Faris and Buck Edwards. They, alongside Dan and Sue Lowther, our Disaster Response Coordinators, and David Stilgenbauer, our work team manager and conference VIM coordinator, devote their time, their energy, their very lives to helping others find their place of security, their new normal after watching their homes and dreams and, tragically, their friends and families swept away by the waters.

Through the grace of God, the generous gifts of God's people, and the UM Foundation of West Virginia, thirteen churches that were damaged by floodwaters have moved

toward recovery. Some have completed their recovery, others are along the way. One of our church structures, Brawley Chapel, had to be demolished, but its ministry continues among the faithful of Clendenin UMC. The floods across the southeastern part of our conference did not prevent us from assisting in the recovery of two churches in the Northern District who also were damaged by flooding water, Follensbee UMC and Tridelphia UMC.

UMCOR has approved \$500,000 toward long-term recovery and is considering another request we have submitted for \$450,000 to leverage large gifts to be used for major repair or full replacement of homes. Our conference has partnered with our sister and brother denominations within and beyond the West Virginia Council of Churches. Ecclesiological differences fade when Christians exert effort in a life together.

We are currently managing 55 cases, and we are major partners in six more. We are responsible for the placement of 15 tiny homes manufactured in our public vocation schools. We have spent over \$450,000 in church and parsonage repairs, \$150,000 in direct aid to families, and \$100,000 in supportive services and work team preparation. Six of our churches in the area of flooding have made significant modifications to their buildings to house work teams, making an eight-year commitment to the conference to make disaster response a core ministry of the church. Beside my desk is a fat file folder full of letters, notes, and prayers that came attached to gifts given to flood recovery. UMCOR and United Methodist Communications walk alongside us with support, from billboards to buckets. In our life together, we are blessed with the mercy of Christ. We are poised for a great summer of welcoming teams and rebuilding homes and lives together.

Life Together is the title of the book Dietrich Bonhoeffer wrote about our Christian life in fellowship with Christ. He wrote, “the second service that one should perform for one another in a Christian community is that of active helpfulness. This means, initially, simple assistance in trifling, external matters. There is a multitude of these things wherever people live together. Nobody is too good for the meanest service. One who worries about the loss of time that such petty, outward acts of helpfulness entail is usually taking the importance of his (her) career too solemnly... it is part of the discipline of humility that we must not spare our hand where it can perform a service and that we do not assume that our schedule is our own to manage, but allow it to be arranged by God. Only where hands are not too good for deeds of love and mercy in everyday helpfulness can the mouth joyfully and convincingly proclaim the message of God’s love and mercy.”

Standing by that bed at Camp Caesar so many decades after I signed the card was like the mountaintop, but I needed to come back out into the light of a longing world, join so many servants who share in this life together, and work to heal a drowning world. Working alongside you who read this report has been and remains the joy of my ministry.

Cabinet Report **Rev. Dr. Joseph S. Kenaston, Dean**

It is humbling to be given the opportunity and responsibility to serve on Bishop Sandra Steiner Ball's Cabinet. She is a deeply spiritual person with a passion for reaching people for Christ, discipling believers, and making a difference in a hurting world. Bishop Steiner Ball also has a vision for the conference, districts, and churches that is based on healthy and fruitful ministry.

Our role on the Cabinet and as District Superintendents is to be spiritual leaders. We are called to pray, reflect on the Scriptures, follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit, and seek to discern God's will for our individual lives as well as our corporate life together. Our Cabinet meetings reflect the desire to experience God's presence and seek God's direction. We not only pray consistently and frequently throughout our time together, we also have worship with preaching and Holy Communion, share in a spiritual formation study, engage in a leadership/church dynamics/ministry study, and regular devotional time at every meeting. As you can see, prayer, worship, study, reflection, and holy conferencing guide our time together.

We are Conference Superintendents first. We work as a team and seek to be concerned about vital ministry in all areas of the conference, not just in our assigned District. This affects our discussions as well as discernment around appointments.

Superintendents are the extension of the Bishop's office. In addition to serving at the invitation of the bishop, assigned to our respective districts, and being appointed a year at a time, we work closely with the bishop in all Disciplinary matters, supervision of clergy, making of appointments, and keeping the focus on the conference's vision of "*being a Christ-led, spiritual breath of fresh air that changes the world.*" We are also committed to our conference's mission "*to discover, develop, and deploy passionate spiritual leaders who make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.*"

In the 2012 *Book of Discipline*, the District Superintendent's role changed and we were given the additional responsibility of being the chief missional strategist for our districts. One way that we have sought to become more effective missional strategists is by using a District Lead Team. The team utilizes the SLI principles of loving, learning, and leading. Each district's lead team is responsible for asking the adaptive questions that will lead towards more fruitful ministry in the churches and charges in the district. The vision and ministry action plans that the district lead teams develop will be radically different in each district because the context, challenges, and opportunities are unique. For example, some districts emphasize children's ministry while others put a high priority on community engagement and missions. The districts are utilizing Lay Mobilization Institute, Reaching New People, Fresh Expressions, Choosing the Faithful Path, and a variety of workshops, seminars, and mentoring.

The Extended Cabinet includes Ken Krimmel, Director of Connectional Ministries, JF Lacaria, Assistant to the Bishop, Jim Berner, Conference Treasurer, and, when he can participate, the Lay Leader, Rich Shaffer. The Extended Cabinet has prayer, worship, and

conversation around vision, programming, leadership development, mission, conference initiatives, stewardship and finance, and issues in the conference and larger church. This spring the Cabinet participated in a Western District Saturation Event. Greg Hayes hosted the initiative and the Cabinet, Conference Staff, and UMF preached in 21 churches on Sunday, March 19, and led 21 workshops in three locations. It was a great opportunity for engaging clergy and laity in becoming more fruitful in ministry.

We are excited to be serving with Bishop Steiner Ball, the churches and people of the West Virginia Annual Conference. We are committed to making a difference in the health and vitality of the people called United Methodists.

Christian Unity and Inter-religious Concerns

Greetings and peace to everyone at this Annual Conference and our brothers and sisters in Christ elsewhere in the world. Christian Unity and Inter-religious Concerns is happy to report that we have continued to reach out to, dialogue with, and provide ministry alongside the great diversity of believers found within the body of Christ. We formed a new board for this quadrennium and together we have taken our first steps as a team to promote Christian unity in this beautiful place we call home.

This past year, we have:

- supported the West Virginia Council of Churches in this mission and ministry in West Virginia and neighboring states;
- participated in LARCUM (Lutheran, Anglican, Roman Catholic, United Methodist) gatherings by sharing our faith and witness to how our denominations are tackling problems for God's children in our midst;
- celebrated joint worship services in communities across West Virginia;
- opened the doors of our churches to welcome shared sanctuaries in difficult times;
- conducted mission work shoulder to shoulder with our loving brothers and sisters of numerous faiths and denominations;
- made best efforts to communicate and share resources and ideas for the purpose of making disciples for the transformation of the world.

Please continue to support us, pray for us, and assist us as we strive to make known the truth of Ephesians 4:4-6: *“There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all.”*

God bless you in each of your ministries this coming year,
Jonathan Moon, Chairperson

Committee members: Clifford Curry, Cindy Eakle, Laura Allen, D.D. Meighen, Roy Knight, Martha Wilkinson, Chris Scott, Rose Thornburg

Clergy Support and Pastoral Care

As we organize for this new quadrennium it is our desire to have information in place for clergy and families relative to such issues as financial support for counseling, guidelines concerning Renewal Time, vacation, Sabbath, continuing education and the role of Staff-Parish Relations Committees (SPRC) in supporting these various areas.

We also hope to develop a series of questions for those retiring, relative to their needs and interests post-retirement. We want to ensure that those who wish to continue to be “connected” to the Annual Conference will find resources from our committee as well as the Cabinet.

Another endeavor is to set up a series of questions connected to morale and wellness so that we might more clearly understand what the needs are of clergy and families and how we can best design programs in response to those needs.

Finally, it is our hope to establish informal times to “play” and relax around one another, beyond the business of Annual Conference and at least one time during the year when we can underwrite a one-day event for the purpose of simply relaxing and catching up with one another.

Look for more information on these areas beginning fall 2017.

James McCune, Chairperson

Conflict Transformation

The Conflict Transformation Team, which began in 2001, works under the supervision of the episcopal leadership for the WV Annual Conference. Currently, Bishop Sandra Steiner Ball is very aware of the need for a group of trained individuals who can work in conflicted church situations. These situations can include those which a bishop and cabinet member are not perceived as impartial, where a bishop or cabinet members are parties to the conflict, or where the bishop and cabinet want to use the expertise of a trained team.

Since its beginning, Team Consultants have been trained by staff of *JustPeace Center for Mediation and Conflict Transformation* and *The Lombard Mennonite Peace Center*.

Consultants are available to visit your congregation to prevent destructive conflict; help people engage conflict constructively; teach strategies to engage the present crisis (i.e., Circles of Grace) and, in doing so, prepare for any future conflicts.

Currently the Team offers: Mediation, Facilitation of Large Groups in Dialogue, Facilitation of Circles of Healing and Accountability, and Consultation. The model uses clergy and laity, who not only are trained in conflict management/transformation but may also have experience in labor arbitration, mediation and ethics.

Coordination of assignments is handled through the Coordinator, who is contacted by a district superintendent or pastor to assist in addressing the organizational

development needs of congregations and/or agencies within the WV Annual Conference. The Conference has established a fee standard for these services, which are paid by the church or other parties.

As of this date, 35 West Virginia Conference churches and/or church-related agencies have been served by Team Consultants to help reconcile conflicts, transform congregations and provide education. No consultations were held during the 2016-2017 church year.

You are encouraged to contact the Team Coordinator, Rev. Janet Harman at 304-543-1669 for further information.

Rev. Janet Harman, Coordinator

Congregational Development

We are trying to follow Transitional Thinking, finding ways to move from the way we traditionally operate in church to new ways of thinking in the areas of:

- Radical hospitality
- Passionate worship
- Visionary leadership
- Intentional faith development – discipleship
- Risk-taking mission and service outreach
- Accountability
- Extravagant generosity

We are learning from some transitional leaders of today and would highly recommend any books written from these leaders for leadership teams at any local church:

- Doug Anderson
- Bob Farr
- Reggie McNeal
- Gil Rendle
- Robert Schnase

We are supporting and helping churches to reach the rapidly changing culture we are dealing with today through some of the following ministries:

- Celebrate Recovery Ministry in the Potomac Highlands and other forms of recovery ministry in the Western districts
- Ignite in Morgantown
- Reaching New People with Griffith Coaching

- Lay Mobilization Institute (LMI) – discipleship training for local churches
- Choosing the Faithful Path – a church lifecycle assessment process
- MissionInsite – demographic study tool available to every congregation (see more information on following page)
- Individual coaching

Other areas of interest for the team as we have time to engage in the work:

- Studying our fruitful, growing churches
- Developing hospitality tools and assessments
- Kingdom Builders fundraising to expand our reach and impact

We must go back to our “Wesleyan Roots” of disciples making disciples if we are going to be agents of change for making disciples for transforming the world. The Congregational Development Team is available to help your church learn the necessary methods and tools to help you meet today’s unique challenges. If your church has any interest in any of these areas, you may contact me or any member of the Congregational Development Team.

Leslie (Les) Fish, Chairperson
304-574-1651
fishcoal@cwv.net



Bishop Steiner Ball checks in with J.F. Lalaria, the Assistant to the Bishop, who retired at Annual Conference 2017

How to Register



1. Open Your Browser

Navigate to: MissionInsite.com. Mouse over the Client Center button on the home page. Select Registration. On the new Registration Information page click REGISTER.

Enter Your Unique AGENCY ACCOUNT ID #:

2. Begin the Registration Process

- Select your city and your church.
- Complete boxes creating your unique User Name and Password
- Review terms, check the Accept Terms box and click Register. You will receive an e-mail to verify your registration which contains your Activation Code from MissionInsite. Check your Spam/Junk box if the e-mail does not appear in your Inbox.
- Complete Registration as instructed in e-mail. For more help, click Support on the Contact Us tab or use LIVE CHAT.
- When you verify your e-mail you will be logged into your study. For future logins click the Login Tab on the MissionInsite Home Page.
- Do not make multiple attempts at registration. If a problem occurs, please contact us for support.
- Only one user name and password per user. For users with multiple agency relationships, please contact your agency administrator or MissionInsite to add additional agencies to your login.

3. Welcome Screen



The Welcome Screen provides a basic introduction to essential tools to gain full value of PeopleView™ System functions and resources for your congregation. Resources are organized in CoreView, CommunityView and FusionView. Click each button to view these key resources.

4. Introducing CoreView, CommunityView and FusionView.

CoreView

Who are We?

CoreView begins with People Plot. People Plot provides insight, **organizational identity** and reach of your congregation — **these are your core assets.**

CommunityView

Who is our Neighbor?

CommunityView informs you about your **mission field diversity.**

FusionView

How do we Engage Our Community?

FusionView employs discoveries and learnings from CoreView and CommunityView to assist in development of **strategic solutions** for mission and ministry.

5. Essential Support Resources

(Mouse Over the Help Tab on the Upper Left of the Map Screen)

Contains Videos, Documents and How To Information Including Live Chat. Review each tab to discover the wealth of material available to assist you in your use of the PeopleView System. Resources Include: **The Mosaic Household Portraits**

- o **Mosaic USA Group Segment Descriptions by Experian** (71 Individual Segments & 19 Groups)
- o **Mission Impact Mosaic Application Guide by Bandy** (Practical ministry application suggestions for each Mosaic segment: Leadership, Hospitality, Worship, Education, Small Groups, Outreach, Property and Technology, Stewardship/Financial Management and Communication)

6. Quick CommunityView Reports - Select Report Wizard

Mouse Over the Tools Tab (Top Left of Web Page)

The Report Wizard will assist users in rapid and easy creation & customization, for all geographies, of QuickInsite™, ExecutiveInsite™, FullInsite™, Impressions™ or Quad™ Reports.

7. Explore the Map Tools

All PeopleView™ System functions are selected from Map Tools. All reports are based upon geographic shapes. Shapes are created by selecting options in the Shapes tab. Create your first shape and access information with one of the Predefined Reports or Build Report. Build A Report is ideal for accessing data to answer specific questions such as "How many people live within a 20 minute walk of our location?"

Note: All Map Tools functions are described in the Basic Site Orientation on the Welcome Screen.

Connectional Ministries

Rev. Dr. Ken Krimmel **Director of Connectional Ministries**

Grace and peace to you in the name of our Risen Savior and Lord Jesus Christ. This is my first year serving as your conference Director of Connectional Ministries. The learning continues for me as I grow into this challenging and invigorating ministry. I am deeply grateful for the mentorship of JF Lacaria, who has been a listening ear, and a coaching voice for me in this new role. Additionally, he has led our conference in extraordinary, faithful, and effective flood recovery work since the flooding occurred on June 23, 2016. Our whole flood recovery team has done outstanding work, and our New Vision Depot, under the direction of Dan and Sue Lowther, has been a God-sent blessing.

Soon after I began my work as DCM, it was time to head to Lancaster, PA, for Northeastern Jurisdictional Conference. There I had my first official meeting with the other nine DCMs of the jurisdiction. At the conclusion of NEJ, I experienced my first meeting as a member of the NEJ Vision Table. This is a talented and energetic group of lay and clergy from across the jurisdiction and is led by our own Bishop Sandra Steiner Ball. The Vision Table met again in January. We worked on inter-cultural competency training and had lengthy discussions around the NEJ Call to Action to confront racism in our church and society. As a result of studying the document, our Covenant Council Leadership Team has recommended the formation of the Committee on Ethnic Local Church Concerns in order to better support and resource our ethnic local churches in the conference.

Training for my new role took me again to Lake Junaluska, NC, for a week of stimulating education for those serving as Directors of Connectional Ministries all across The United Methodist Church. It is always a blessing to make new friends from other conferences and jurisdictions who are engaged in the same ministry as oneself, and to form new relationships through our common work in ministry. It was impressed upon all DCMs to work diligently in the role of conference strategist.

The first priority of conference strategist given to DCMs is to be the steward of the conference vision. The West Virginia Conference Vision is, *“To be a Christ-led spiritual breath of fresh air that changes the world.”* I have been casting this vision throughout the conference with the help of our Communications Director, Deborah Coble, and Communications Assistant, Whitney Cherry. We have banners and signs around the Conference Center, and on our website so that this vision becomes more familiar to everyone around the conference.

Our communications staff and team have been working hard on a brand new website for the conference that will be much more user-friendly, only having to be two clicks away from the information sought. This will help us share the stories, news, and information about what God is doing all across this conference in a new and more effective way. I hope you will find it helpful as a United Methodist in the West Virginia Conference.

Along these lines, the office of Connectional Ministries, through the Director of Communications, has launched a brand new medium for telling our stories and sharing news

Connectional Ministries

and information. It is called “Connexions,” and features an interview between the DCM and leaders of the conference. You may have seen the interview about refugee ministries or those introducing our new District Superintendents. This will be a regular way of getting our word out across the conference as we move forward.

July 1, 2017, brought to our staff our new Director of Communications, The Rev. Deborah Coble. Deborah comes to us from Iowa, and brings a rich background in marketing, television, and ministry as an Elder in The United Methodist Church. Her creative spirit is already helping us become the spiritual breath of fresh air that our vision calls us into becoming. We also added a new Administrative Assistant to our staff on October 1, 2017. Angela Jones provides much-needed support for the important work of our Director of Leadership Formation and Ministry Support, The Rev. Dr. Bonnie MacDonald. Angela also has brought fresh air to the conference staff. We also experienced a vacancy on our staff this year in the position of Director of Diversity and Inclusion. The Rev. Dr. Felica Wooten-Williams left the conference staff to concentrate on other areas of her ministry. Her leadership brought the first two Bishop’s Summits on Diversity and Inclusion to our conference, and we are committed to continuing these important events. The next Summit is scheduled for October 6 – 7, 2017 at Cedar Lakes Conference Center in Ripley, WV.

Since this year has marked the beginning of a new quadrennium in The United Methodist Church, the Covenant Council Leadership Team planned and conducted an excellent leadership-training event in September for our new leaders of Conference Agencies who make up the Covenant Council. Serving with me on the leadership team are: Kristi Wilkerson, Assistant Lay Leader; Krysta Rexroad-Wolfe; Jeff Matheney; Thomasina Stewart; and David Stilgenbauer. It is a joy to work with this great team.

As DCM, I have been working closely with our Conference Board of Global Ministries; Parish Development Team; Church and Community Workers, and Volunteers-In-Missions. We celebrate a new Church and Community Worker who joined us December 1, 2016. Joanne Davis comes to us from Missouri as a Global Ministries Missionary, and is working in the Southern District. Additionally, we have a new VIM Coordinator who began his work in that position January 1, 2017. David Stilgenbauer brings to VIM a wealth of leadership experience with VIM, having led a dozen work teams, and having worked closely with Disaster Response training. Our former VIM Coordinator, Sandy Binotto, gave a lot of love and devotion to the VIM work of our conference and continues to work with the team going to Living Hope High School in Kenya.

The DCM also meets with the conference Trustees; Council on Finance and Administration; Course of Study Board of Managers; Spring Heights Camp and Education Center; the Annual Conference Program and Worship committees, the Conference Nominations Team, and the Covenant Council. I have participated ecumenically with the Lutheran, Anglican, Roman Catholic, and United Methodist gatherings in Charleston, and in the NEJ Committee on Native American Ministries gathering in Wheeling.

Our Lead Teams continue to provide a method for our conference teams and agencies to organize and function to their fullest ability. The Bishop’s Lead Team, Discover Team,

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Develop Team, Deploy Teams, Nominations Operational Team, Team of Effective Laity, and nine District Lead Teams continue to meet regularly in order to Love, Learn, and Lead, and to continue to live into our conference mission, *“To discover, develop, and deploy passionate spiritual leaders who make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.”* To this end, our conference priority has been to reach 2400 new people for Christ, and to nurture them in disciple-making systems. Amy Shanholtzer, our Director of Evangelism and Congregational Development can help your church discover the right disciple-making system. Shea James, our Director of Youth and Outdoor Ministries, can assist your church as you reach out to youth, and Amy Mullins, our Camp Manager, will be happy to help your children and youth have the right Christian educational experience at Spring Heights, our beautiful conference camp and education center. The team approach to ministry and mission in the West Virginia Conference is becoming part of the conference DNA and continues to provide a focus for aligning our conference, districts, local churches, and agencies so that we all keep moving in the same direction for our work in kingdom-building for our Lord Jesus Christ.

As a member of the Extended Cabinet, I continue to meet with the cabinet around strategic planning and programmatic concerns and enjoy the times of worship, spiritual formation, study, and communal meals. I meet monthly with the other NEJ DCMs by Webex, and have met with them in person in Baltimore/ Washington, D.C., and in Phoenix, Arizona, which was also our national gathering.

A crucial aspect of my work as DCM is to provide oversight and supervision of the Conference Connectional Ministries staff. We are continuing to build a great ministry team, and are working together to accomplish the services of the office of Connectional Ministries for the conference. We have a tremendous staff of talented and dedicated servants, and it is my privilege to work with all of them. I wish to express much appreciation for my Assistant, Chris Ridgway, whose extensive knowledge of the workings of the conference structure provides me with invaluable support, and to Karen Thaxton, who oversees our busy mailroom and work of central services. Chris' and Karen's work is greatly appreciated not only by the Office of Connectional Ministries, but also by Administrative Services, and our Conference Secretary.

It is a pleasure to serve the Lord through the West Virginia Conference of The United Methodist Church as your Director of Connectional Ministries. It is challenging, fulfilling, and satisfying to serve you in this position. I ask for your prayers and support as I continue to learn and grow into this position, and to be a faithful servant of Christ in this ministry of our conference. May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you today, and remain with you always.

Connectional Ministries

Rev. Deborah Coble Director of Communications

Jesus came near and spoke to them, "I've received all authority in heaven and on earth. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to obey everything that I've commanded you. Look, I myself will be with you every day until the end of this present age."
Matthew 28:18-20

Scholars say that it was Gutenberg's printing press, and the subsequent printing revolution, that allowed for the mass production of the Bible in the language of the people. The Good News in the hands of regular people ultimately inspired German priest Martin Luther to post the Ninety-Five Theses about the state of the Church on Wittenberg Gate. This simple communique ushered in the Reformation, 500 years ago this year!

Today, we are in awe of the rapid advances in technology. Cell phones, computers, and tablets allow us to share stories and photos to friends and family around the globe! When Bishop Sandra visited Africa, we were able to see images from the 25th Anniversary celebration of Africa University almost instantly, which we, in turn, were able to share across the connection. We are blessed by these new tools that allow us to share the Good News of Jesus Christ to disciples of all nations.

It is a goal of the Communications team of the West Virginia Annual Conference to utilize the tools of modern technology to engage people, empower disciples, and to spread the shared story of the gospel of Jesus Christ across the conference and around the world.

We do this best by sharing stories, photos, and anecdotes, crafting points of connection that reveal Christ-centered communities and the shared vision of the West Virginia Annual Conference.

Our communications team begins with you, the people of the West Virginia Conference. Stories of God's love and faithfulness originate in the local faith community – wherever two or more are gathered in Christ's name.

We are blessed to have dedicated volunteers from every district who make up the Conference Communications Team. They are gifted in the arts, writers, photographers, videographers and story tellers and they gather and curate stories of God's love, mercy and grace to be used in home churches, districts and the annual conference as a whole. As your conference communications team, Whitney Cherry, Communications Assistant, and I receive these as a gift and we are grateful to have the opportunity to be a part of the telling of your stories.

We have selected four strategies for communicating the stories of the Annual Conference; the conference website, www.WVUMC.org; our bi-weekly **Short Circuit** emails, which are distributed to those who subscribe; **social media**, including Facebook, Twitter, Flickr and Instagram; and our print publications, specifically the **Monthly Circuit**.

Connectional Ministries

Over the past year, your Conference Communications Team has revamped our monthly print publication to be vision forward. Each publication of the Monthly Circuit has a theme that is expanded on with stories and pictures. In the past year, we have explored; what it means to be Called to Ministry, our seven Mission partners, the 2016 Flood, our traditionally African American churches, and our WVUMC Youth Camps. Looking forward we will have issues focusing on Campus ministries and working with Youth, Innovative Congregations and the Ministry of Laity.

Our bi-weekly enews, the Short Circuit, continues to share upcoming events and connects the conference with communications from Bishop Sandra, our districts, and agencies. Each issue is chock full of information, so we encourage you to visit our website and sign up to receive the Short Circuit.

In spring 2017, we launched a new website, one that builds upon the stories of the people and ministries across the conference. The website, www.WVUMC.org, features a newly revamped events calendar that allows for better sharing of events and activities conference-wide as well. The feature bar with drop down menus allows for faster navigation. We hope you will explore our website and send us feedback!

In February 2017, we hosted a website workshop in partnership with United Methodist Communications. Over 24 churches and agencies have now launched websites thanks to this initiative, which was a pilot for UM Communications. WVUMC is modeling the cutting edge of technology!

Our growth in social media is attributable to the widespread use of smart phone technology. More and more people are getting their news and information via their phones, so we have an actively curated social media platform that includes video interviews and stories. In the past year, we helped New Vision Depot, WVUMC Disaster Response and WVUMC Global Ministries launch Facebook pages that allow these ministry teams to engage in meaningful conversations and share stories of transformation.

It is the goal of Conference Communications to continue to explore and share connection points between our local churches, districts, annual conference, jurisdiction and the general church. To this end, we will seek out stories that reflect our conference vision statement: *We are a Christ-led spiritual breath of fresh air that changes the world!*

We look forward to collaborating with the people called United Methodist in the West Virginia Conference in the year to come! If you know anyone with gifts of storytelling, photography, and art please invite them to be in contact with us. You may email any questions or suggestions you have to wvumc@wvumc.org

Together let us boldly share our stories of transformation made possible by the love and grace of God! To God be the glory for the great things He has done, is doing and will do in and through us all.

Connectional Ministries

Rev. Shea James

Director of Youth and Outdoor Ministries

I have completed my first full year as your Director of Youth and Outdoor Ministries, and it has been quite a ride! I am pleased by the faithful work that has been done by our young people, camp and retreat ministries, and the young adult team. New ministries are emerging and new people are being reached for Christ. These ministries are indeed a spiritual breath of fresh air that will change the world.

Part of what I enjoy about my position are the opportunities to meet the wonderful people of the West Virginia Annual Conference. Youth Ministry 101 trainings have taken me to the Potomac Highlands, Little Kanawha, Southern, Northern, and Western Districts as well as to several local churches. If you are interested in learning about best practices for youth ministry or would like to discuss youth ministry in your local setting, please contact me. I would be happy to help you create vibrant and vital ministries in your community.

The Conference Council on Youth Ministries has been growing and we now have representation in each of our districts. The youth are excited about our second year of Rally on the Mountain, to be held at Snowshoe June 22-25th. Rally on the Mountain is a unique event where youth can develop meaningful relationships with their church group, get to know other youth from throughout the conference, and experience all of the wonderful activities that Snowshoe has to offer such as paddleboats, zip-lines, rock walls, and three swimming pools! I hope to see you there!

CCYM is actively involved in the Northeastern Jurisdictional Council on Youth Ministry and is proud to report that Brookann Simmons, a high school junior from Cross Lanes, has been elected to serve as Vice-Chair of NEJCYM for the 2017-2018 school year. We have several applicants for the Mission of Peace trip to Cuba December 28, 2017-January 12, 2018. Please be in prayer for these young people as they live into these varying roles and responsibilities. We are blessed to have young people who are passionate spiritual leaders.

Outdoor Ministries are buzzing along thanks to the excellent leadership of Christy Knicely Nichols, chairperson of the Camping Team. Christy and I, along with the fantastic design work of Whitney Cherry, Communications Assistant, created a March Magazine which featured the various outdoor ministries in the conference. Our camps are striving to be collaborative and not view each other as competition. Our goal is that all of the children and youth in the West Virginia Conference might have a camping experience that is full of fun and spiritual formation. We know that camp changes young people, because at camp young people encounter Jesus like nowhere else, and when you encounter Jesus you are always changed. Always.

Camp is a critical component of the 2,400+ initiative, looking for 2,400 professions of faith and 2,400+ disciples. Outdoor ministries allow young people to encounter Christ and make a profession of faith. Likewise, young people are able to grow deep roots in their faith while at camp. Bible Study, worship services, cabin devotions, and conversations with

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their counselors encourage our young people to not only profess Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior but to open their hearts and minds to the Spirit throughout their day.

While I am pleased with the work of our Camping Team, and the many camps throughout the connection, I do have reservations about Spring Heights. Spring Heights finished 2016 with a deficit. This and the physical renovation needs of the camp are reason for concern. While I am not so naive to think that these issues will magically remedy themselves, I am confident in the cost saving measures that have been taken such as not hiring summer staff from overseas who cost us twice as much as state-side staff, not using the tower portion of our challenge course this summer which costs several thousand dollars to train our staff, and cutting back spending in areas of resale merchandise and supplies for programing. Spring Heights is a gem and I hope everyone is able to experience it in some way; whether you send a child or grandchild to camp, sponsor a camper, or schedule a retreat or family reunion on the property. There is no place on earth like Spring Heights!

I am excited and hopeful about the future of youth and outdoor ministries in the West Virginia Conference. May fun and spiritual formation guide all of our efforts so we are able to be a spiritual breath of fresh air that changes the world!

Rev. Dr. Bonnie Glass MacDonald

Director of Leadership Formation and Ministry Support

I am grateful to continue to serve as the Director of Leadership Formation and Ministry Support for the West Virginia Conference for another year. Every day I have the opportunity to encounter and assist people who are discovering their gifts for service and are discerning how those gifts fit into God's calling in their lives. Some are beginning that discovery, others are well along on their journey of faith and ministry. My particular area of calling focuses on facilitating the development of passionate spiritual leaders.

I have the joy of working with teams across the Conference in developing leaders, including the Board of Ordained Ministry and each district's Committee on Ministry, as well as the many sub-teams that support the work of these groups. I also have the privilege of resourcing our campus ministers and the Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministry. Though I could mention many "glory sightings" from the year, here are a few:

- Our Conference Develop Team continues to wrestle with the challenge of creating a culture of leadership within the West Virginia Conference that is *hopeful, innovative, invitational, and generative*, and how best to equip leaders that sustain such a culture. This is valuable work for the healthy future of leadership in our Conference. The *Leadership Standards* are the

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result of the work of this team as well, and remind us all of the importance of continued spiritual formation and growth as leaders.

- I have appreciated the opportunity for contact with inquisitive and hospitable clergy and lay leaders throughout the Conference as I have led training on pastoral assessments, pastoral transition and District Committees on Ministry.
- Our retreats for candidates exploring ministry options have continued successfully to guide people toward next steps in fulfilling their calling, with two retreats yearly. One hundred and two people have participated and been personally guided since July 2013. Next steps have included lay ministry, professional certification, certified lay ministry, licensing and seminary attendance with the hope of ordination as elder or deacon. New conversations and plans are underway for how to make discernment options even more accessible to younger people.
- Our Board of Ordained Ministry partnered with the UM Foundation of WV and others this year to make a new substantial seminary scholarship available to our WV Conference students enrolled full-time in a United Methodist seminary. We are reviewing all of our support for students, including Course of Study, to determine how we might best support our students and pastors obtaining a ministerial education.

One of my great joys is being given the opportunity not only to celebrate another's talent or giftedness when I see it but also to then be allowed to listen to that person share his or her sense of calling from God. These are holy moments! I hope you are watching for such moments in the lives of those around you as well. If I can help you or someone around you in discerning or searching out next steps in serving, please let me know.



Communion is shared at worship at Annual Conference

Connectional Ministries

Rev. Amy Shanholtzer

Director of Evangelism and Congregational Development

It is a joy and a blessing to work with the United Methodist congregations of the West Virginia Conference. Every day is a new surprise and joy as I hear the stories of the innovative and creative ways that churches are finding to reach new people with Christ's love. Since the last Annual Conference meeting, we have been blessed with many churches trying new things and reflecting and adjusting their processes based on what they learned.

In 2016, we hosted three "Reaching New People" workshops across the conference, more than ever before. We currently have 26 teams from churches/charges in the ongoing coaching process with Paul Nickerson. This is an accountable process bringing teams of churches together to share their experiences and progress with learning new ways to reach new people. Pension holiday funds were a major reason that so many churches were able to participate this year. We celebrate their use of those funds in this way.

We also have four churches, three from the Southern District and one from the Western District, that have completed Phase 4 of the Lay Mobilization Institute. This is an L3 process facilitated by faculty and students from Asbury Theological School that leads teams from local churches through a process to develop a discipleship system for their church that trains and empowers laity. One additional church from the Little Kanawha District is beginning their Lay Mobilization Journey as well.

We are thrilled about new ministries developing in various places in the conference. We celebrate churches that are creating new services at new times and places to reach new people. We are thankful for partnership with existing churches and parishes to help develop new ministries to reach new people. We are grateful for the ongoing ministry of Ignite in Morgantown, and two new efforts to reach communities struggling with addiction in the Potomac Highlands and Western Districts. We are also exploring opportunities for new ministry development in Huntington. Studies show that the best ways to reach new people are through new ministries. We are grateful for folks who are willing to explore new ways and opportunities.

Members of the Evangelism and Older Adult Ministry Teams are working together with new chairpersons and team members to develop a map for ministry as we go forward. Look for new and innovative offerings for these teams as we seek to offer resources for faith sharing and discipleship formation in every place around the conference.

I have had the opportunity to lead district and local church visioning and planning workshops quite frequently in the last year. I am also thankful to members of each of the teams with which I work for their willingness to offer trainings as well, to multiply the reach of our teams across the conference. It is exciting both to lead and to learn from those who are in the training events. The efforts of our churches show in both glory sightings and in the numbers that we celebrate together – every profession of faith represents a life transformed by the love of Christ. Every step in discipleship represents a more mature faith able to reach out to transform lives and communities around us.

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I also facilitate several L3 teams in the conference – the Discover team, the MonValley Lead Team and I check in on some local church L3 teams by request after they have launched. It is a joy to see these teams working together to solve adaptive questions in their own congregations. As the Discover Team moves forward in its work this year, we are hopeful that we will discover, test and refine additional tools for use in the local church in building and developing disciples. We highly recommend the Three-Day Academy of Spiritual formation being held at John XXIII in Charleston, September 24-27, 2017, as an important tool for building disciples in the local church. Please contact Janet Harman for more information in the coming weeks.

I continue to be part of the Midland South District Committee on Ministry. I just completed a turn on the Route 122 Transformation Network planning team, serve as the Northeastern Jurisdictional (NEJ) representative to the Path 1 Strategy Team and am completing a term as NEJ representative to the planning team for the Network of Congregational Developers meeting to be held in Boston in May.

I am grateful to those who participate in the work of the kingdom through their giving to the Kingdom Builders. In order to expand our work, we hope to one day have an endowed fund from which we can expand new ministries. We trust that those who are investing with us can see the vision for the future and are making an investment in that with us. We are thankful for the partnership of the UM Foundation, Inc., in helping to make that dream come true.

Most days there is far more work than I can complete, and for that I am grateful. It is a pleasure to hear and to tell the stories of transformation, knowing that the Spirit of God is at work among us.

2017 Annual Conference Offerings

Thursday Opening with Communion: Theme: Flood Recovery	WV Conference Flood Recovery
Thursday Evening: Theme: Historic Questions and Retirement	UM Youth Event Scholarships
Friday Evening: Theme: African American Tradition Service	Ethnic Local Church Concerns
Saturday Evening: Theme: Celebration of Ministry	Living Hope High School Scholarships
Sunday Morning: Ordination	Justice and Advocacy

Covenant Council

With leadership and guidance from Rev. Dr. Ken Krimmel, Director of Connectional Ministries, the Covenant Council conducted four meetings in 2016-2017. To begin the new quadrennium, a Leadership Training and Orientation was held in conjunction with the Bishop's Summit on Diversity and Inclusion in September 2016. The pre-summit training was well attended by Covenant Council membership and focused on leadership standards. Banners were created and displayed regarding the West Virginia Conference Vision: "We are a Christ-led spiritual breath of fresh air that changes the world," and mission to: "discover, develop and deploy passionate spiritual leaders who make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world." The principles of loving, learning and leading were also highlighted. At each meeting, the Council was provided an update on Flood Recovery occurring through the West Virginia Conference since the June 2016 flood.

Regular meetings of the Council were held on October 15, 2016, January 21, 2017, and March 11, 2017. These meetings included an emphasis on educating the group in utilizing WebEx for video conference calls and creating Ministry Action Plans (MAP). Discussion continued on the Conference goal to add 2,400 members by profession of faith. The initiative has been extended to include 2,400+ whereby the plus encourages these new members to continue their spiritual journeys through participation in disciple-making groups. Covenant Council specifically learned more about small group disciple making through "3DM Huddles," "After the Altar Call" and "Charting a Course" resources. The March meeting included budget approval for Category II.

After previous approval, Covenant Council added CONAM (Committee on Native American Ministries) to our structure. Ethnic Local Church Concerns was approved to be re-created within our structure, as well. Both of these requests were sent to the Rules Committee for consideration and are part of that committee's recommendation. The Council also discussed the Northeastern Jurisdictional Conference's Resolution regarding racism and the West Virginia Conference response.

In addition to Rev. Krimmel, the leadership team for Covenant Council includes Jeff Matheny, Krysta Rexrode Wolfe, Thomasina Stewart, David Stilgenbauer, and Kristi Wilkerson.

Kristi Wilkerson
Associate Conference Lay Leader
Convener of Covenant Council

COVENANT COUNCIL RECOMMENDATIONS APPROVED BY ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2017

Global Ministries

1. All congregations are encouraged to:
 - a. Receive an offering for Golden Cross to benefit Burlington United Methodist Family Services and observe it Sunday, April 29, 2018. [Churches may also celebrate Golden Cross on any "5th Sunday" and/or any Sunday of Advent]
 - b. Receive offerings for the Conference Advance Specials.
 - c. Visit at least one of the mission projects and/or Church & Community Workers site and/or invite one of the directors to your church during the year.
 - d. Have at least one person attend the Conference United Methodist Women's Mission u held annually at West Virginia Wesleyan College.
 - e. Conduct a United Methodist Women mission study at least once during the year.
 - f. Participate in Celebration of Mission Event (C.O.M.E.) which is to be held on the fourth Saturday of April.
 - g. Observe Undie Sunday October 8, 2017.
 - h. Observe United Methodist Volunteers in Mission (UMVIM) Awareness Sunday February 11, 2018.
 - i. Observe World AIDS Day December 1
 - j. Visit Global Ministries – The United Methodist Church website: www.umcmission.org.
2. The following guidelines to be printed in the 2017 Official Journal and Yearbook and on the conference website
 - a. Disaster Response Guidelines
 - b. Hunger Grant Guidelines
 - c. Revolving Loan and Grant Fund Guidelines
 - d. Southern Mission Initiative Grant and Mission Ministries Grant Guidelines
 - e. Virginia Higgins Grant Guidelines
3. Jeff Matheny to serve as Conference Secretary of Global Ministries

Conference Advance Specials

A conference advance special is an entity where a special relationship exists between that entity and the conference, encouraging the conference to be in prayer as well as support those that are listed.

Global Ministries	Church & Community Workers	Special Emphasis
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Development Outreach Ministries (CDOM) • Ebenezer Community Outreach • Heart & Hand House, Inc. • House of the Carpenter • Scott's Run Settlement House • Tyrand Cooperative Ministries • The Upshur Parish House • Volunteers in Mission • Disaster Response • Hunger Ministries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater Clarksburg Cooperative Parish – Gayle Lesure • House of the Carpenter – Amy Purdom • Hope in the Mountains (Southern District) – Joanne Davis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Global Health • Africa University Endowment • Congregational Development

Coordinators

	Coordinator	Naming Party/Organization
Disaster Recovery	Revs. Dan and Sue Lowther	Global Ministries
Global AIDS	Rev. Margo Friend	Global Ministries
Health and Disabilities Ministries	Linda Williams	Global Ministries
Hunger Ministries	Mrs. Joy Hicks	Global Ministries
Refugee and Immigration Ministries	Rev. Tim Edin	Global Ministries
Volunteers in Mission	Rev. David Stilgenbauer	Global Ministries
Celebration of Missions Event	Rev. Cliff Schell and Belinda Toms	Global Ministries
Conference Youth Coordinator	Rev. Joseph Hill	Conference Council on Youth Ministries
Conference Scouting	Mr. Ralph Herron	United Methodist Men
Conference Stewardship Coordinator	Rev. George Webb	Conference Nominations Committee (Quadrennium)
Conference Prayer Coordinator	Rev. Bill Dawson	Conference Nominations Committee (Quadrennium)
Conference Child Protection Standards Coordinator	Rev. April Forkey	Conference Sexual Ethics Team

Child Protection Coordinator

Greetings in Christ!

First, I would like to provide everyone with some information concerning the position of Child Protection Coordinator in the local church/charge. Our Annual Conference approved conference Child Protection Standards in 2003 and then revised these policies in 2012 (*2012 Journal* pages 405-426). These policies make it clear that every local church or charge will elect a Child Protection Coordinator and officially adopt its own Child Protection Standards.

The local church or charge Child Protection Coordinator must be trained through the Conference CP Coordinator. The role of the Local CPC is

- to collect, process and maintain information on those who apply to work with children and youth at their church/charge, (voluntary or paid);
- educate the staff, volunteers and event leaders with the Child Protection Standards of the local church/charge and those of the Annual Conference where applicable; and
- monitor church programs and events to assure compliance with the Child Protection Standards.

While smaller churches may not have as big a job for the CPC as a larger church with a school, after school program, or multiple children's programs would have, the role of the CPC is still very important regardless of the size of the church. All churches should want to provide the opportunity for children to meet Christ.

The West Virginia Conference Sexual Ethics Team has the responsibility of training the local CPC's and helping churches create their own Child Protection Standards policy. As the Conference Child Protection Coordinator for the past 7-8 years, I have been coordinating/teaching the Child Protection Standards Training Course, assisting churches and their CPC's in whatever capacity is needed to complete their policies. I have also been recording and monitoring the process of completing the training throughout each district within the Annual Conference.

Here are the total results of the training classes while I have been as coordinator:

District	Pastors	CPC	Lay	Total
Northern	38	39	120	197
Little Kanawha	30	36	165	231
Potomac Highlands	46	42	76	164
Southern	25	12	45	82
Greenbrier	18	15	20	53
Midland South	25	11	38	74
Wesleyan	55	26	79	160
Western	21	5	46	72
Total Conf.	258	186	589	1033

Every Year beginning July 1, I send each of the nine districts a list of dates that I have available to teach the three-hour training course for all pastors in the districts, Child Protection Coordinators, and any lay people who wish to attend. I aim to be in each district each year so that any new pastors or newly elected CPCs can receive the required training. It is helpful for the districts to coordinate a district event since my pastoral duties prevent me from getting to every church that needs the training individually.

I hope that this report answers your questions and challenges our people to attend the training when I am in their district.

April Forkey

E-mail: mcmhope@gmail.com

Episcopacy

The Conference Committee on Episcopacy gathers four times a year to provide support to and evaluation of our Episcopal leader. We are delighted to welcome Bishop Sandra Steiner Ball back for her second quadrennium in the West Virginia Conference.

Bishop Steiner Ball continues to participate in a covenant group that allows her to stay grounded in faith as she offers leadership to a variety of areas in the Jurisdiction and the General Church. Her roles in the General Church have increased significantly as she is in her 5th year serving as a bishop. She is one of three episcopal moderators for the Bishops' Commission on the Way Forward and by all accounts, she is providing amazing leadership to this significant group. In addition, she is assigned to the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry and serves as the chair of the Finance Committee of the Council of Bishops and on the Council of Bishops' Executive Committee. She coordinates and leads the training for new District Superintendents and Directors of Connectional Ministries, held annually in the late summer. In the Jurisdiction, she is in her second and final year as president of the College of Bishops (all the bishops in the Northeastern Jurisdiction) and also serves on the Vision Table for the Jurisdiction.

Her travels this spring have taken her to Africa where she participated in the celebration of the 25th Anniversary of Africa University in Mutare, Zimbabwe.

The Jurisdictional Committee on Episcopacy has created an evaluation tool that we have tested in the conference this year. A number of groups, including the Episcopacy Committee, the Cabinet, and conference staff, had the opportunity to complete the evaluation and give feedback. The hope is that this evaluation tool will, when used consistently over time, allow for discussion and identification of needs for the conference and its Episcopal leadership. The NEJ Episcopacy Committee is using the input from the Conference Committees on Episcopacy to refine the tool.

The Episcopacy Committee has put together a profile of the West Virginia Conference, identifying the unique aspects of the conference as it relates to the jurisdiction. The Jurisdictional Episcopacy Committee uses this profile as it assigns bishops. The profile will be updated as we progress through the quadrennium.

The Episcopacy Committee is also encouraging the Conference Trustees to complete some needed work at the Episcopal Residence. This includes both routine maintenance as well as some more substantial upgrades, such as remodeling the kitchen. The vice-chair of the COE, Rich Shaffer, has been particularly helpful in this area.

The West Virginia Conference is blessed to have Bishop Steiner Ball providing leadership for us, the Jurisdiction and the General Church. The Episcopacy Committee works with her to provide support and encourage balance as she faithfully follows her calling.

Judi Kenaston, Chairperson

Equitable Compensation

Members of the West Virginia Annual Conference:

I bring you greetings on behalf of the Equitable Compensation Team and I thank God for your faithfulness and determination in paying your apportioned gifts to the West Virginia Annual Conference. It is through this connectional giving that we can assist in the appointment of full-time clergy throughout our annual conference who are well educated and equitably compensated. Whether it is long-term support, renewal leave or short-term emergency situations, our team is ready to help and support the local church. The 2016 *Book of Discipline* charges the Commission on Equitable Compensation to support full-time clergy serving as pastors in the charges of the annual conference by: a) recommending conference standards for pastoral support; b) administering funds to be used in base compensation supplementation; and c) providing counsel and advisory material on pastoral support to district superintendents and committees on pastor-parish relations. To fulfill these responsibilities, our team meets to review applications from churches needing assistance in meeting the minimum base compensation for their pastors, review the conference application process, establish budgetary needs for the coming year, and to establish a recommended minimum salary schedule for full-time appointed clergy. We monitor and distribute information, as needed, to the Bishop and Cabinet for help in the appointment process and long-term strategy development of the WV Annual Conference. The table below shows income and expenses, as well as the year-end balance of the Equitable Compensation Fund for the previous six years. Since Equitable Compensation operates on a claim basis, control of expenses is not an exact science and will differ from year to year.

	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>2014</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2016</u>
Budget	157,300	157,300	157,300	157,300	150,000	150,000
Fair Share Income	137,942	137,103	138,400	137,737	131,831	129,359
Expenses	158,248	138,429	178,066	205,802	154,310	107,514
Year-End Balance	442,988	441,662	401,996	333,931	311,452	333,296
Claims	40	35	45	45	35	34

As indicated by the chart above, we celebrate with you that for the first time in many years our claims totaled less than our Fair Share Income for 2016! Through your faithfulness in apportioned giving and fewer claim expenses, we have been able to replenish \$21,844 in our reserve fund. Although this is good news, this windfall is not necessarily a trend. We continue to urge our bishop and cabinet to continue to work with charges to eliminate the need to rely on Equitable Compensation as a subsidy so that Equitable Compensation is more readily available for emergency situations. We are extremely fortunate to have a reserve account well managed by our conference treasurer’s office but we cannot fully depend on the availability of these funds in the future. To this end, the Equitable Compensation Team recommends and presents for adoption the following:

1. The Equitable Compensation budget for 2018 be set at \$150,000.00.
2. The 2018 minimum salaries of full-time appointed clergy be approved as follows:
 - a. Category I -- \$37,000.00 (Members in Full Connection, Provisional Members who are seminary graduates serving a full-time appointment, and Commissioned Provisional Members who are seminary graduates serving a full-time appointment)
 - b. Category II -- \$35,000.00 (Associate Members)
 - c. Category III -- \$34,000.00 (Full-Time Local Pastors)
 - d. Category IV -- \$30,000.00 (Student Local Pastors)
3. Accountable Reimbursement Plan – The minimum amount for Accountable Reimbursement Plan will be \$2,000.00 per charge.

STANDARDS FOR CLERGY SUPPORT FOR FULL-TIME PASTORS OF THE WV ANNUAL CONFERENCE:

The WVAC Standard of Clergy Support for Pastors appointed to full-time ministry shall include the following:

- 1) A parsonage provided as recommended by the Conference Parsonage Standards;
- 2) Parsonage utilities as defined by Conference Fiscal Policy #7;
- 3) The means to participate in the Clergy Retirement Security Plan (CRSP);
- 4) The means to participate in the Ministerial Pension Plan;
- 5) The means to participate in the Comprehensive Protection Plan;

6) An accountable reimbursement plan (sometimes called an expense allowance) to cover the costs of a pastor's performance of pastoral duties including educational requirements;

7) Base compensation for the work required and in consideration of ministerial competence, skill development, and years of experience, and

8) The means to participate in the conference sponsored hospital and medical insurance programs. NOTE: Where a charge elects to pay part or all of a pastor's self-employment tax, the amount of that tax paid for the pastor by the charge shall be considered part of the base compensation. (This is in keeping with IRS regulations and provides for parity of compensation levels among charges.) If a charge elects to pay this optional amount for one pastor, it shall be required to pay the same for any pastor appointed to the charge.

ELIGIBILITY/APPLICATION FOR EQUITABLE COMPENSATION:

(Guidelines are established by the Annual Conference)

To be eligible for Equitable Compensation, churches/charges shall:

- have a minimum of 125 members;
- pay 70% of the total compensation;
- be encouraged to pay their Fair Share giving; and
- submit to the Equitable Compensation team:
 - 1) Charge Request Form;
 - 2) The budget adopted by the church/charge for the year, containing an accountable reimbursement plan for the pastor's expenditures;
 - 3) A progress report that outlines plans for underwriting the budget if it is the first time a church/charge is requesting funds to provide assistance for a full-time appointed pastor/ministerial student, providing that "no member in good standing, who is appointed to a pastoral charge, is denied the minimum base compensation" (BOD paragraph 625.9). Any church wishing to make such an application should be in consultation with their District Superintendent.

GUIDELINES FOR PROCESSING FORMS: Every charge requesting compensation support for a pastor shall submit all forms listed in the Eligibility/Application for Equitable Compensation paragraph above to their District Superintendent. These forms are to be submitted six (6) weeks prior to the beginning of the appointive year or when a new appointment is made and assistance for financial support is needed to maintain the minimum compensation support set by the Annual Conference. Changes in classification must be cleared through the Board of Ordained Ministry upon recommendation of the District Committee and approved by ministerial members in Full Connection. The time table for processing charge request forms is as follows:

May 15: The District Superintendent will forward ALL forms to the Conference Treasurer's office to the attention of the Chairperson of the Equitable Compensation Commission.

June 15: The Chair of the Equitable Compensation Commission will review and submit forms to the Conference Treasurer's office for processing.

Fall: To expedite the processing of forms in a timely manner, District Superintendents shall place church/charge conferences that are requesting support from the Commission on Equitable Compensation at the beginning of their Charge Conference Schedules.

November 1: The District Superintendent shall forward all new charge request forms or continuation forms requesting financial assistance for the Commission on Equitable Compensation to the Conference Treasurer's office to the attention of the chairperson of the commission for processing. The pastor of each church/charge receiving compensation assistance shall also submit a progress report to the District Superintendent on or before November 1 of each year. Failure to process the request forms on time will cause a delay in payment of assistance to the charge.

LIMITATIONS OF FINANCIAL SUPPORT: The maximum amount the Commission will pay to anyone charge is 30% of the total compensation (base compensation, medical insurance over 75%, personal pension contribution). No churches/charges receiving funds from General or Conference Board of Global Ministries, Black Ministries Fund, or any other Conference Agency for compensation support are eligible to receive funds from Equitable Compensation. The only exceptions to this rule will be churches receiving non-recurring grants from the General Board of Global Ministries for Church Extension.

EXPECTATIONS: Churches making application for supplement for the Equitable Compensation Fund shall: Assume an increasing share of the total compensation in each of four years as follows: 75% the first year, 80% the second year, 85% the third year, and 90% the fourth year. This effectively limits compensation support to four years for any charge. To meet these expectations, churches/charges are encouraged to initiate evangelism programs that will promote membership growth, implement programs that are designed to meet the social, physical, and spiritual needs of church members as well as persons in the surrounding community, and develop an effective program of Christian stewardship. As always, a support team consisting of a District Superintendent, one member of the Commission on Equitable Compensation team, and a member of the Lay Ministry Team responsible for stewardship shall be available to visit each church/charge upon request.

Again, it is our desire to assist and serve this annual conference in every way possible. If we can assist in any way, please don't hesitate to contact me or one of our team members.

Grace and Peace,
Michael Q. Atkinson, Chairperson

Evangelism

*“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations,
baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,”*
Matthew 28:19

Jesus’ instruction is clear and leaves little doubt about our mission in this world. But what does it mean to make disciples; surely, more is involved than mere conversion? That question is guiding your conference evangelism team as we lay the foundation for our work. Our intention is to find and develop tools that will inspire and support local congregational evangelism. As John Wesley discovered, grassroots evangelism is the most meaningful and productive process for winning souls for Christ.

The team is excited and encouraged with the direction we have chosen. However, we encourage congregations not to wait on us. Profound evangelism is within everyone’s reach. Just follow some simple rules:

1. Pray unceasingly.
2. Live out the Gospel in your daily lives. As the old saying goes, “Preach Christ, and if you must, use words.”
3. Live in a covenant relationship with other Christians, supporting and encouraging each other.
4. And, above all else, use Matthew 28:18-20 as the litmus test for effort.

Mr. Edward J. Corbitt, Chairperson



Participants in Children’s Conference take advantage of the fountain at WWC during the hot weather

GLOBAL MINISTRIES

Global Ministries

I had a WOW moment as I was planning this report. It occurred to me that I have somewhat come full circle. In my late teens, I was asked to be secretary of the then Commission on Missions at Princeton First United Methodist Church. Here I am over 50 years later still serving in the area of the work of missions as I chair the West Virginia Conference Board of Global Ministries. What a privilege this has been.

We welcomed some new leaders last year and are fortunate to have some continuing on the board. New to the board are Joyce Board, Missions Coordinator; Judy Raines, Church and Community Worker Advisory Committee Coordinator; and Rev. Ray Stonestreet, Health and Welfare Coordinator. Not new to the board but new to the position is Thomasina Stewart, Parish Development Coordinator. Continuing are Rose Sterling, Secretary; Jeff Matheny, Conference Secretary of Global Ministries; and Joy Hicks, Hunger Grant Coordinator. We are grateful for the leadership provided us by Rev. Dr. Ken Krimmel, our staff liaison.

I am so proud of the work in which our conference board has engaged this past year. We have entered into a new structure from the previous years. We no longer have the divisions of mission, health and welfare, and parish and community development. The Leadership Team truly became a functioning executive committee. However, we clearly are doing the work of these former divisions.

We celebrate the ministries of our seven (7) mission projects, three (3) Church and Community Workers, Burlington United Methodist Family Services, New Vision Depot and Disaster Response, and Volunteers in Mission. (See individual reports of these entities in the Global Ministries section.) Also, look for the report from our Conference Secretary of Global Ministries, Jeff Matheny. Other connections to Global Ministries with reports are Celebration of Mission Event, HIV/AIDS, and Refugee and Immigration Ministries.

We welcomed a new Church and Community Worker this past year, assigned to *Hope in the Mountains* in the Southern District: Joanne Davis. It is hoped to have another church and community worker in the Southern District by the end of 2017.

Additionally, we welcomed a new Volunteer-in-Mission Coordinator: Rev. David Stilgenbauer. He has been hard at work making the transition beginning January 1, 2017, and working closely with New Vision Depot and Disaster Response and the conference disaster relief efforts.

In the new structure, the Church and Community Workers Advisory Committee was separated from Parish Development. Even though these two bodies have common interests and concerns, it became important to have the advisory committee operate separately and be directly connected to the Leadership Team.

“Better Together – Hope and CommUnity” is a major event of Parish Development scheduled for May 5-6, 2017, at Suncrest UMC in Morgantown and has been in the planning stages for over a year. Many of our local churches need help in how to engage in outreach

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ministry to offset so many needs in our communities and conference. Through this event, parishes, charges, local churches, and individuals will have the opportunity to hear how to build partnerships, how to network, how to develop leadership, and how to assess needs. In addition, breakout sessions will be available to assist in reshaping parish ministry and to provide skills development.

In this last year, we started revamping our approach in the areas of health and disabilities to be aligned with the General Board of Global Ministries. We are beginning to develop plans to be a part of the Abundant Health Initiative – Our Promise to Children by entering into a global initiative in Haiti and a conference initiative with children’s health issues as the main focus. We thank our new Health and Disabilities Coordinator, Linda Williams, for her work in getting us started.

We are pleased to be able to offer a variety of grants. Available are the Southern WV Mission Initiative Grant, the Mission Ministries Grant, Revolving Loan and Grant, Virginia Higgins Grant, and Hunger Grants. You can find the guidelines and applications on the conference website.

Last year we awarded one Southern WV Mission Initiative Grant, four Mission Ministries Grants, four Revolving Loan and Grants, 13 Virginia Higgins Grants, and 59 Hunger Grants. We do indeed have a lot to celebrate as we help churches, boards, and agencies be Christ in their communities.

The newest endeavor is the creation of a Ministry Action Plan. A draft has been crafted with much work yet to be done. It is exciting to visualize all the opportunities in ministries and programs that our board has the potential to execute locally and around the world. Stay tuned!

Pat Mick, Chairperson

Conference Secretary of Global Ministries

It has been another exciting year as your CSGM. I have been able to apply my passion for international missions with many other people around the conference, the jurisdiction and around the world. As you know the primary role of the CSGM is to facilitate the connection between our United Methodist missionaries from around the world to the churches in our Annual Conference. Our missionaries visit us every three years to share their work and build those relationships. It is certainly easier for our congregations to connect with the work of our missionaries and they are more willing to support them with prayers and resources when they have a personal and ongoing relationship with them. I would encourage each church to develop a covenant relationship with one of our United Methodist missionaries who is serving God around the US and around the world. If you have an interest in helping with this work or would like to get connected with one of our missionaries please email me at jeff@pbo.bz.

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As I am writing this report we are anticipating a visit to our conference by Dr. Emmanuel and Florence Mefor who are missionaries at the Mutambara Mission Hospital in Nhedziwa, Zimbabwe. The hospital is one of three mission hospitals of The United Methodist Church in Zimbabwe. A native of Kano, Nigeria, Emmanuel earned his medical degree at the University of Maiduguri College of Medicine in Maiduguri, Borno State, Nigeria. In 1997, Dr. Mefor began his service with GBGM as a Person in Mission (PIM) through the Global Mission Partners program. He served as a general practitioner at Chicuque Hospital in Mozambique from 1995 to 2003, and from 2003 until late 2006, he was with the UMC Rural Health Program in his home country. A native of Abatete, Nigeria, Florence became a registered midwife following studies at the School of Midwifery in Awgu, Nigeria. She earned her nursing degree from the School of Nursing in Jos and spent 14 years nursing at the Evangel Hospital in Jos, which is in Nigeria's Plateau State. Florence served at the Chicuque Hospital in Mozambique from 1999 to 2003, and in her home country with the UMC Rural Health Program from 2003 until late 2006. Before her commissioning as a GBGM missionary, she served at Chicuque as a Person In Mission (PIM) through the GBGM's Global Mission Partners program.

I also want to remind you that GBGM continues to have some new opportunities for missionary service through a program called Generation Transformation. This program has three potential opportunities for people to get involved in God's work. The shortest program, which lasts just 2 months and is designed for people from 18 to 30 years old, is the Global Justice Volunteer. The second opportunity for those 20 to 30 years old is to become a Global Mission Fellow. Global Mission Fellows serve both here in the U.S. and also overseas for a period of two years. The third program is Mission Volunteers which is a flexible mission for people 18 and older. Find more details about each of these programs at www.umcmission.org/Get-Involved/Generation-Transformation. These short-term programs are a great way to get involved with work in the United States and around the world.

Thank you for your continued support and prayers for our missionaries,
Jeff Matheny

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Celebration of Mission Event

The Celebration of Mission Event is an outreach ministry of the Conference Board of Global Ministries. In 2017 we marked the 20th anniversary of the Celebration of Mission Events being held across the West Virginia Annual Conference. Since the events take place in late spring, it is not possible to provide 2017 financial reports for the Conference Workbook. However, we gratefully report that **\$109,846.39** was raised for our WV Conference Mission Ministries by the 2016 Celebration of Mission Events. Thanks, WV Conference Churches! The cash gifts provided \$11,835.00 for each Conference Mission Project and Volunteers in Mission and \$5,918.00 for our one Church and Community Ministry. The cash figures do not include an estimated \$50,000.00 in donated material goods provided by the Celebration of Mission Events, which were held in each of our nine districts. The Celebration of Mission Event has raised **\$824,750.20** for our Conference Mission Ministries over the past 8 years, plus an estimated \$400,000.00 in tangible goods.

The UM Foundation Trust Fund for Mission Projects holds 10% of undesignated funds (\$9,123.39 in 2016). They have distributed 3.5% of the past 12 quarters average market value to our Conference Mission Ministries each year. At the close of 2016, the market value of the Trust Fund was **\$269,625.22**.

A Conference Celebration of Mission Event Team works with District Coordinators to provide mission events in all nine districts. **District Coordinators** are Karen and Tom Grafton (Greenbrier), Patsy Flensburg and Cynthia Eakle (Little Kanawha), Peggy Vaught (Midland South), Ginny Davidson, Barbara Metcalfe and Janice Watts (MonValley), Barbara Cover (Northern), Amanda and Nathan Epling (Potomac Highlands), Martha Wilkinson (Southern), Saundra and Brian Boley (Wesleyan), and Jane Morse (Western). The District Coordinators do us a tremendous service, with the goal of forming district teams that will enlist the support of all local churches to commit to at least one fund-raising event each year for the Celebration of Mission Event.

Proceeds and donated goods from the Celebration of Mission Events support the Conference Mission Projects, the Conference Church and Community Ministries, and the Volunteers in Mission. All Celebration of Mission Event cash gifts are remitted to the Conference Treasurer. Local churches or individuals may send cash gifts for the support of the projects before and/or following the event, accompanied by the proper remittance number. The numbers for 2017 support are:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>#875--Undesignated Gifts</p> <p>#880--Community Development Outreach Ministries</p> <p>#881--Ebenezer Community Outreach Center</p> <p>#883--Heart and Hand House, Inc. (Philippi)</p> <p>#884--The House of the Carpenter</p> <p>#885--The House of Car. Church & Community Min.</p> | <p>#886 – Southern Dist. Church & Community Min</p> <p>#887 – Scott's Run Settlement House</p> <p>#888 – Tyrand Cooperative Ministries, Inc.</p> <p>#889 – Upshur Parish House</p> <p>#892 – Volunteers in Mission</p> <p>#896 -- Greater Clarksburg Coop. Parish</p> |
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Cash gifts from local churches may be sent at any time during the year to the Conference Treasurer and designated for one or more projects or remitted as undesignated.

THE CHALLENGE GOAL FOR 2017 IS TO RAISE a minimum of \$100,000 FOR OUR WEST VIRGINIA ANNUAL CONFERENCE MISSION MINISTRIES. The Celebration of Mission Event Information and District Schedules can be downloaded from the Conference Website. For more information call Belinda Toms at 304-335-2788 or Clifford Schell at 304-842-4492.

Belinda Toms and Clifford Schell
 Co-chairs of the Celebration of Mission Event Conference Team

2018 CELEBRATION OF MISSION EVENT DISTRICT ROTATIONS

DISTRICT	EMPHASIZED MISSIONS
Greenbrier	Ebenezer Community Outreach Center Southern District Church and Community Ministry <i>("Hope in the Mountains")</i>
Little Kanawha	Heart and Hand House – Philippi Upshur Parish House
Midland South	The House of the Carpenter Mission Project/Church and Community Ministry Upshur Parish House Volunteers in Mission
Mon Valley	Community Development Outreach Ministries Tyrand Cooperative Ministries
Northern	Community Development Outreach Ministries Tyrand Cooperative Ministries
Potomac Highlands	The House of the Carpenter Mission Project/Church and Community Ministry Greater Clarksburg Cooperative Parish
Southern	Scott's Run Settlement House Greater Clarksburg Cooperative Parish
Wesleyan	Ebenezer Community Outreach Center Southern District Church & Community Ministry <i>("Hope in the Mountains")</i>
Western	Heart and Hand House - Philippi Scott's Run Settlement House Volunteers in Mission

PLEASE NOTE: The Rotation List is for the designation of tangible goods only. Cash gifts may be designated, but undesignated giving is encouraged. Undesignated cash gifts will be divided to provide an equal amount for all Conference Mission Projects and VIM and a 1/2 share for Church and Community Ministries when cash funds are distributed.

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Disaster Response Ministries

The Conference year 2016 was an extremely busy year for the WV Conference Disaster Response Ministries. Early spring flooding struck in the Triadelphia area of the Northern District. The WV Conference Disaster Response Ministries assisted the Northern District Disaster Response Coordinator, Rev. Mike Linger, by providing supplies and monetary assistance to bring relief and recovery to survivors of this event. Later in the summer, another flooding event occurred in the Northern District, this time affecting the community of Follansbee. Again, during and following this event, the WV Conference Disaster Response Ministries assisted the Northern District Disaster Response Team with clean up buckets, health kits, bleach, lime, and assorted relief supplies, as well as providing monetary support for the recovery.

Among the greatest of our work for this conference year, though, is the catastrophic flood of June 23, 2016. The June 2016 flood affected numerous counties throughout West Virginia, with 12 of these counties being declared a National Disaster by FEMA. This tragic event destroyed numerous homes, businesses, churches, and lives. Twenty-two lives were also lost due to this “1000-year” flood. Within hours of this event, the WV Conference Disaster Response Ministries was at work providing relief to survivors. Many churches, church leaders, pastors, and District Disaster Response Coordinators responded immediately following the flooding to provide what relief they could. Several of our United Methodist Churches functioned as relief centers or shelters during the days following this event.

During the first few hours of this epic flood the newest part of the WV Disaster Response Ministries, New Vision Depot in Beaver, WV, went to work. Many volunteers from the Southern District came and volunteered time and effort to ready supplies, receive incoming trucks, and load out-going trucks and trailers to get needed supplies to affected areas. A brief list of some of the supplies sent out from New Vision Depot include; 284 pallets of water, 2300 UMCOR Flood Buckets, 28 pallets of lime, 417 emergency blankets, 65 pallets of bleach, 2530 brooms/mops, 2700 UMCOR Health Kits, 840 shovels, 17 wheelbarrows, two trailer loads of toilet paper, two trailer loads of bed kits and six truckloads of cleaning supplies. New Vision Depot continues to work with our new Disaster Recovery Team to help supply the recovery of survivors.

The efforts of the WV Conference Disaster Response have also been greatly supported in multiple ways throughout our Conference and beyond. Goods and supplies continue to come in to help survivors, as well as monetary gifts. During this event, we have also been greatly supported by other Annual Conferences. Donations have come from all over the nation. At New Vision Depot we received trucks from UMCOR’s Sager Brown in Louisiana, from Alabama, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Kentucky, Tennessee, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Mississippi, and New York - just to name a few. UMCOR has given great support to the relief and recovery efforts. Just days after the flooding, UMCOR issued a \$10,000 relief grant to the conference, which was followed by a visit from Cathy Earl, who

GLOBAL MINISTRIES

is now Director of Disaster Response and U.S. Partner Relations for UMCOR, helping the Conference Disaster Response plan for recovery from this event. Since this time, UMCOR has issued a \$500,000 recovery grant to the West Virginia Conference and is considering another request we have submitted for \$450,000 to support major repairs or full replacement of homes. A special thank you to the WV United Methodist Foundation for their support through this event. The WV UMF has provided funding so that 13 of our United Methodist churches that were damaged by flooding could move toward recovery.

Due to the breadth and destruction of this historic flooding, our disaster response team grew by adding additional staff to manage recovery. Jack Lipphardt was hired as the Director of Disaster Recovery, Miranda Nabers and Tapiwa “Grace” Msisha were hired as Disaster Case Managers, and Chad Faris and Buck Edwards were hired as Disaster Construction Coordinators. A special thank you is also extended to JF Lacaria for managing this work of recovery and to David Stilgenbauer, the Conference VIM Coordinator, for providing volunteer management. We are currently managing 55 cases for survivors and are major partners on 6 more, with 9 cases being closed.

The West Virginia Conference Disaster Response Ministries has also partnered with other groups including Vocational and Technical Schools around the state to place 15 tiny houses in the affected counties. These homes have been a blessing to those who still await major repairs or replacement of their homes from this event. Another partner we must mention is United Methodist Communications. UM Communications has provided our conference with a grant that has provided billboards and publications to let people know that The United Methodist Church will be here to help until the end.

Much more could be stated and I am sure I have left something out, but I know space here is limited. Know, though, it is through the blessing of our United Methodist Connection that much work has been accomplished and continues to be done that could not happen without us working together. Thank you to all. We need your prayers for God’s guidance, strength, and protection; we need your gifts so that this vital ministry can continue to reach the hand of Christ to many in some of the hardest times in their lives; and we need your presence to keep the hands and feet of Christ moving for the glory of God.

Revs Dan and Sue Lowther,
WV Conference Disaster Response Co-Coordinators

GLOBAL MINISTRIES

Refugee and Immigration Coordinator

This has been a building year for our specialized ministry. We have worked in the areas of organizing for refugee resettlement and in promoting advocacy legislation for persons currently at risk.

Deborah Coble, our Conference Communications Director, and I have networked with the Charleston-based West Virginia Inter-faith group on Refugee Resettlement. The Kanawha County and Charleston area have been approved by the U.S. State Department for receiving several refugee individuals and families from a variety of home nations. Each of these vulnerable persons will come to Charleston in particular and would need the hospitality support of our member congregations within the West Virginia Annual Conference. I, as coordinator, would like to be in contact with “flagship” congregations that would be available to learn more about this issue and ultimately show a tangible friendship toward particular refugee families as they arrive in Charleston by September 2017. The Episcopal Church here in West Virginia and the Jewish faith community have taken the lead in West Virginia in this area. Funds are being raised to establish the new office for refugee resettlement, initially within the St. John’s Episcopal Church in Charleston.

As a legislative priority matter, Ken Krimmel contacted me to participate in a conversation on immigration early on in 2017. A short video was recorded and has been viewed many times by those within and outside of our current conference constituency. My central thrust was a theological understanding of our United Methodist Social Principles. We certainly are called to practice our religion with the orphan, the widow, and the stranger. I will continue to network with our own General Board of Church and Society, United Methodist Women, UMCOR, General Board of Global Ministries and Church World Service for future opportunities to network, apply for relevant grants and viewing precedent for what ministries are being encouraged in our sister conferences and denominations.

I am personally encouraged by the amount of response that has come to me over this issue and in particular the video Ken and I made. Many young adults of our number have told me that they are encouraged that our church is doing something and they want to help. We are strategizing for more creative ways to inform people of our two-pronged approach to this ministry. I am still welcoming and inviting new team members to participate with me at the conference and district levels on this vital transformation-based ministry. I look forward to talking with you.

Rev. Tim Edin

Email: pastortimedin@yahoo.com or Cell: 304-777-7035

GLOBAL MINISTRIES

Volunteers in Mission



It is an honor to have been asked to serve as the conference Volunteers In Mission coordinator. My passion for VIM began when I was in Seminary. I was required to take a trans-cultural trip. I had previously served in the United States Army and had lived many places, such as Korea, Germany, Haiti, and Jamaica. Therefore, I believed this was unnecessary.

After speaking with the instructor and my advisor, I realized this was something I was going to have to do. Shortly after I had these conversations, I received the VIM packet with the trips for the following

year. Looking through the packet there were many wonderful opportunities, one of which jumped out at me: a trip to Fairbanks, Alaska.

After discussing the trip with the VIM coordinator and the course professor, the trip was approved for my trans-cultural experience. I truly had no idea what to expect. I thought I was merely fulfilling a requirement. Within 24 hours, my mind set was completely transformed. It was no longer meeting a requirement; it had become a spiritual journey, as well as a physical journey. That first trip was in 2005, but I have returned many times since then. It is my hope that many others can find the passion and joy that being part of a VIM experience can bring.

In 2017, we have trips going to Mozambique and Haiti, and two trips going to Alaska - one to Anchorage and one to Fairbanks.

We also have teams coming to West Virginia. At the beginning of March, we have 25 teams scheduled to come to help with flood recovery. This does not include the teams that come every year to help in the areas of greatest need.

As we move forward together, it is my hope and desire that we can increase not only the number of trips but also the number of persons involved in the work of VIM. I value your input; if you have a trip you would like to take part in or a place you would like to have a team go, please feel free to contact me at RevDaves@yahoo.com

Thank you,
David Stilgenbauer
VIM Coordinator

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Global AIDS Fund Task Team

The Task Team has spent most of the Conference year not on active duty concerning HIV/AIDS. Once the devastating floods hit WV in late June, we centered our time as individuals responding to the needs caused by the floods.

The Task Team met once in Charleston and with free conference calls (via freeconferencecalls.com). I appreciate the work they have done and continue to do!

The Task Team's objectives for 2017 -2018 are:

- to continue fundraising;
- to hold at least one HIV/AIDS Prevention Summit to update and educate health teachers, school nurses, counselors, United Methodist leaders and others concerning HIV.

The HIV/AIDS Prevention Summit expenses will be paid from the 25% of dollars given to the Global AIDS Fund in WV and a small fee for lunch from participants. There will also be a fee for those wanting continuing education credits. Details on the Summit will be in conference communications material soon.

In 2018, we will mark the 25th Anniversary of the very first display of the NAMES Project AIDS Memorial Quilt in West Virginia. It was held at Annual Conference. (Do you remember? Are you feeling older?) Sadly, people are still being infected. HIV is on the rise in the United States, thanks to the heroin epidemic. WE MUST PUT AN END to HIV. We want to stop the growth of the Quilt by finding a cure.

Margo Friend, Chair

Task Force Members: Idress Gooden, Mary Baker, Nils Haynes, and Thomasina Stewart.

GLOBAL MINISTRIES
Church and Community Worker
Hope in the Mountains, Southern District

Joanne Davis

“Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel....seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the LORD on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare. For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the LORD, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope. Then when you call upon me and come and pray to me, I will hear you. When you search for me, you will find me; if you seek me with all your heart, I will let you find me, says the LORD...” Jeremiah 29: 7, 11-14A (NRSV)

After all the heartbreak the southern Appalachian region has experienced in recent decades, is there hope in the mountains? Yes, there is—because God is with us!

We all can look forward to the day when God’s purposes will be fulfilled, and all things will be made new. But God is not waiting until that time to renew creation. Jesus has called us to be His partners in making real God’s shalom right here and now, in the mountains and the valleys of southern West Virginia. And there is no greater adventure, and no greater way to be faithful, than to partner with Christ in bringing God’s healing and wholeness to communities desperate for just that healing and wholeness.

“Hope in the Mountains” is about working with our churches to turn our vision outward. It’s about working with our people to seek the welfare of the communities in which we live. It’s about opening wide the doors of our churches so that all persons may find a welcome there, to be sure. But even more than that, it’s about opening our doors so that we can go out, to meet God’s beloved people where they are, and so that we can work with those beloved people to make real the shalom of God in our communities. As we do, we will discover God’s blessings for us—we will discover a new sense of vitality and purpose. We will find our own joy as we walk with our neighbors towards their joy!

I have visited churches in all five of the counties encompassed by the Hope in the Mountains ministry: Fayette, McDowell, Mercer, Raleigh, and Wyoming. I’ve attended workshops, prayed prayers and sung hymns with our good people, heard wonderful stories—and eaten many delicious meals! My first few months have been a time of listening and learning, a time of joy and discovery. With God’s guidance, I will continue to listen and learn and, with you, to look for ways we can join with the neighbors outside the church to bring God’s peace to our communities. Please share your thoughts, your ideas, and your prayers with me! God is in the midst of this; who knows what we can do with the help of our God?

GLOBAL MINISTRIES
Church and Community Worker
Clarksburg Cooperative Parish Coordinator

Gayle E. Lesure, Deaconess

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor...”

Luke 4:16-19

United Methodist Church and Community Workers are mission personnel of the General Board of Global Ministries of The United Methodist Church. Presently there are 33 active Church and Community Workers serving all across the nation. Church and Community Workers form a covenant community devoted to lifting up the poor and disenfranchised in rural, small town, village and urban areas. We focus our energies on the societal inequities of poverty, hunger, food scarcity, undocumented workers, immigration, racial inequality and domestic violence to name just a few.

Church and Community Ministry has been described as “a kaleidoscopic ministry” because of the diversity and the ever-changing scope of our work. Every Church and Community Worker’s assignment is unique and ever evolving, yet always reflects the vision of hope that brings communities out of despair.

Presently, within the bounds of the West Virginia Annual Conference, there are three Church and Community Workers. Joanne Davis is the newest one assigned to West Virginia; she is serving in the Southern District in the project, Hope in the Mountains. Amy Purdom, assigned to the House of the Carpenter, as been serving in West Virginia about one and a half years. She is assigned to The House of the Carpenter in Wheeling. And, I am presently located in Harrison County with The Greater Clarksburg Cooperative Parish. I also have been serving as the coordinator for our parish since 2016. The West Virginia Annual Conference has had a long history of Church and Community Workers serving the conference, dating all the way back to the early 1900’s.

The cooperative parish to which I am assigned as CCW covers the towns of Clarksburg and Bridgeport and the surrounding areas. The cooperative includes 18 local congregations, 11 charges, numerous pastoral leaders and one deacon. The cooperative parish has many activities throughout the year, such as Parish-wide Ash Wednesday service, Chili Cook off, Annual Picnic, Martin Luther King remembrance service, and others. We also have activities for children and youth from time to time.

Also, there are four very active Food Pantries in the Parish; Duff Street UMC, Temple UMC, North View UMC and Quiet Dell UMC. Our parish food pantries are a part of the countywide food pantry chain. All together, there are 16 food pantries that serve the low-income population in Harrison County.

As Church and Community Worker assigned to the Greater Clarksburg Cooperative Parish, I am also the Executive Director of our parish-wide shared outreach ministry, Open

GLOBAL MINISTRIES

Heart Ministries. Open Heart Ministries is an ecumenical outreach ministry serving all of Harrison County. The year 2017 marks the 10th anniversary that the ministry has been serving the people of Harrison County, helping to eliminate gaps in services and meeting some needs of low-income individuals and families that social service agencies in the area are not able to meet.

Over this past year, the ministry saw new people every day. These individuals were often confused about how they could access assistance in Harrison County. At times, they seemed frustrated by the routing between agencies. The volunteers at OHM diligently worked to help individuals develop a plan of action to raise the funds that they need; at times the volunteers serve as advocates to help the family or individual get the help they need. Volunteers continue to field calls from people new to the area, or people who have never had to ask for assistance, advising them how to begin to get assistance, and what services are available in the county. Open Heart Ministries also offers “job interview coaching,” though no one has taken us up on it yet. We will continue to offer through 2017. We also do some one-on-one financial counseling, without duplicating services routinely provided by our partner agencies.

We continue to see high rent, unemployment, under-employment, and the lack of transportation or the availability of transportation as issues impacting the abilities of our clients to meet their basic needs. For example, I had a long conversation with a young woman that came into our office, worked at a local fast food restaurant with a take home pay of approximately \$500.00. Her rent was \$450.00 and the remainder had to cover food, utilities, and other necessities. A young couple came in to request help with a gas bill. She works full time and her husband is between jobs, and they have two children. The challenge for them is that they do not have a car of their own and they rely on public transportation. Unfortunately, the bus route does not go all the way out to the health facility where she works and isn't running when she gets off work, so many times she has to take a taxi home which takes away from the monthly finances. When day care needs are factored in, the situation is overwhelming. These are just a few of the many situations we hear every day and we work diligently to bring hope and help to these families.

It is amazing to me that in 2016 Open Heart Ministries ministered to 1500 adults and children, assisting with rent, gas bills, heat, emergency food, cleaning supplies and other needs and we have spent over \$58,000.00. We have encountered people who have slept in their cars because they had no other place to go, increasing numbers of grandparents who are now raising their grandchildren in the absence of their parents due to incarceration, people who live just one day at a time, hoping and praying that tomorrow will be better.

Open Heart Ministries is the embodiment of Christ in the world, living out the call, “*If you have done it to the least of these my brothers and sisters, you have done it unto me...*” We continually give thanks to God for the parish churches, our ecumenical partners, and other individuals and friends, who through their love, prayers, support, and financial giving have blessed this ministry over the years.

Thanks be to God from whom **all** blessings flow!

GLOBAL MINISTRIES
Church and Community Worker
The House of the Carpenter, Wheeling

Amy Purdom

This year found me busy in ministry with the *Building Bridges Tutoring Program*, an after school homework help program for at risk middle school students. This program seeks to help students improve their academic performance while also providing a loving, nurturing environment. We had eight students attending the program this year and as one student said, “This feels just like a family!” The target audience is middle school students living on or near Wheeling Island. The *House of the Carpenter* provides a snack, faith development discussions and activities, homework help time, and extracurricular activities. The vision is for the students to develop relationships with a caring adult so that their chances of being successful in school increase greatly.

In January 2017, I opened a *Job Coach Resource Center*. This program provides employment mentoring through staff and volunteers, including but not limited to: resume writing, interview skills, internet job searches, career interest inventories, organizing skills, time management, and completing job applications. People are always very grateful for the help and encouragement they receive through this ministry.

I continue to spend much time working on spiritual formation with the neighbors who come to the Food Pantry and Thrift Store. I take the time to actively listen to the neighbors and to follow up on prayer requests. I lead a morning prayer group once a week. Sometimes people come back and thank me for praying, saying their prayer was answered. I thank God for those moments, knowing that God is always at work, blessing each breath we take.

During the spring, summer and fall, I was in charge of the Food Pantry Garden, aka “Holy Spirit Garden” due to the large volume of vegetables, which God provided through our efforts, in our garden. Last fall, volunteers were still picking zucchini as late as Oct. 1!

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Health and Welfare Agency

Burlington United Methodist Family Services, Inc.

“Changing lives by preventing harm and providing hope & healing to hurting children and families”

All things are possible for one who believes.

Mark 9:23

What does GOD require of us? HE has shown you, O man, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you but to do justly. To love mercy, and to walk humbly with your GOD.

Micah 6:8

Burlington United Methodist Family Services continues to grow our mission of helping hurting children and families. God is in our hearts and minds. We share this love with the clients and families we meet every day.

Last February, I went to Charleston to sign for the second phase of the Safe at Home grant, which allows us to work with families to keep children in the home. We recently applied for Phase III of that grant and I am pleased to say we were just awarded Phase III. The total grant has allowed us to hire thirty-three staff located throughout West Virginia. After training, these staff will serve about fifteen clients each. We are making a positive difference. We are reaching out to the communities our kids live in.

In March, we put the gym to good use, as we hosted the “Stop Hunger Now” project. Our Campus children along with other district kids prepared over 20,000 meals to be shipped to countries where there is great need. GOD was here with us, the kids were working hard and smiling because they were doing HIS will.

At Easter, the kids are taught about the resurrection and the events that occurred around that time. HE is alive. We want to thank the churches that provided Easter baskets for each of our kids. We could use more assistance, so if you can help, please see it in your hearts to do so. The joy it brings our children provides lasting memories.

We spent a busy summer on both campuses managing to do summer school, work programs and mini-vacations for the children. We tried something new this year with Vacation Bible School for our younger kids. Instead of sending them on the five-hour bus trip to Spring Heights, we did events and classes here on campus and around the local area. After lessons, they went horseback riding, swimming, hiking, or to a park. Forty of our older youth returned to Spring Heights again for camp. At both events, the children learned of GOD’s love. These experiences are made possible by your donations. Thank you for continuing to make memories for God’s children that will last forever.

In September, the Stagers Recovery House was opened. This is a facility for fifteen women, ages eighteen and older, who want to stay off drugs, and need some added

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support. Drugs are destroying our families daily. If we are serious about helping hurting families, then we must start addressing the drug problems that are negatively affecting our family values. We are! Any financial help you can provide is appreciated. We can stop the hurt; this is one more thing I believe that God wants us to do.

The Apple Harvest and Pumpkin Festival for 2016 were both big successes; the weather was great. What a difference a year makes. We were blessed on the Burlington Campus with the Bishop and the Cabinet coming up to help peel apples and prepare for the Apple Harvest Festival. Staff and children's spirits were positive and uplifting. I challenge you to attend these events and bring a friend. I challenge you to bring a friend who is ten years younger than you. This request is the same as last year, as our volunteers are getting older and we need to give them a much needed rest. Both events are in need of volunteers. The Apple Harvest this year will be September 30th and October 1st. The Pumpkin Festival will be October 7th and 8th.

The music room addition to our Burlington Chapel is complete except for some landscaping. During Apple Harvest, we had a dedication ceremony and named it in honor of the Rev. Andy Agnew who had previously served as CEO/President of BUMFS. This room provides added space for the Rainbow Choir and to teach music lessons. Residents are playing instruments including drums, guitars, bowed psaltery, piano and the dulcimer.

Between the tone chimes at Beckley and the Rainbow Choir at Burlington, we manage to perform at many churches. **Ask And We Will Come!**

In November, we had the dedication of the Community Based Services building in Keyser, which is now named the Wilson/Bane Building. This is in memory of Gary Wilson (past CEO and long-time BUMFS employee) and in honor of Bill Bane a long-time supporter who has rented the building to us for over twenty years; never raising the rent. Both men lived their lives helping children and families.

In November, we had our site visit for the EAGLE accreditation. I am proud to say, that we were awarded our accreditation with high honors. The staff and the Board of Directors do a great job in completing their work assignments. It was pointed out that they do it in a Christian fashion, with GOD as the driving force. I want to especially thank Sandra Stump, Barry Lancaster, Kathy Poole and Sheila Walker who put all the documents together and made it easy for the inspection team to review. It was completed with pride and professionalism. Through the United Methodist Associations EAGLE Accreditation process, we are a better Christian Agency. We do our jobs with our main core value of "Christ Centered".

Thank you for your support in providing prayers, money, and gifts for our children at Christmas. Through your support, we were able to provide a good Christmas for the children in residential (91), Foster care (110), Right From the Start (58), Parents as Teachers (64), Safe at Home (67) and Staggers Recovery Home (15). These numbers have all increased since last year. This is one time during the year that the children forget about their hurt and are seen smiling and enjoying life. I invite any and all to visit Christmas on Campus to see the excitement and joy in all the children. It truly is a special time.

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The need is always there for more Foster Care Families. Our numbers are up to 110 kids in Foster Care. We need more Christian families.

We continue to be good stewards of God’s gifts as we have had a clean audit. John Burdette, auditor for JB&A, was quick to point out that there were no discrepancies.

Projects we are still trying to fund include:

- The Chapel on the Beckley Campus (\$500,000) to pay off the loan
- Burlington Chapel Music Room - Landscaping (\$6,000)
- Purchase of the Keyser Community Based Services (\$550,000)

As always, I ask for your continued prayers and support for our mission “Changing lives by preventing harm and providing hope and healing to hurting children and families.” Thanks again for allowing me to serve God through you.



Michael L. Price Sr., MS
President/CEO



Pat Mick, Chair of Global Ministries, at the Mission Fair at 2017 Annual Conference

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Community Development Outreach Ministries/Heart & Hand

CDOM is the mission project of the Midland South District and was formed in 1974 by combining three separate projects into one: Heart and Hand House, Avesta Drive Community Center (closed in 2013), and Coal Branch Heights Community Center (closed 2016). Evaluation of the cost effectiveness and needs of our programs led to the recent tough decisions to discontinue two free after-school programs in remote areas of St. Albans and Charleston.

Heart & Hand has successfully served South Charleston and surrounding communities for over 50 years. In 2016, the closing of St. John United Methodist Church and their day care center, created an opportunity that has further strengthened the future of Heart & Hand. The trustees of St. John United Methodist Church made it possible for our organization to become owners of their 8,000-square foot daycare building at 212 D Street in South Charleston.

So, in September of 2016, we experienced major change that set the stage for the future success of our mission project. We closed the Coal Branch Heights Community Center. CDOM moved out of St. Marks United Methodist Church. Heart & Hand Community Service Center/Thrift Store left the Spring Hill area. We relocated the CDOM office and Heart & Hand to the new location on D Street in South Charleston. This building adequately satisfies our need for office space, food pantry, thrift store, storage space, and growth.

Heart & Hand Putnam County has been open for two years now. We are thankful for our partnership with Winfield United Methodist Church as they continue to provide free office space, utilities, and the internet to our program.

We are proud to report that Heart & Hand South Charleston filled toy applications for 357 children and Christmas food for 331 families living in South Charleston, St. Albans, Dunbar, Institute, and Alum Creek in 2016. Throughout the year, 3,393 individuals benefited from food, utility assistance, clothing, household items, and work boots or nonskid work shoes. Heart & Hand Putnam County brought the community together to provide toys and clothing for 304 children. Throughout the year, we assisted 1,180 Putnam County residents with utilities, rent, or emergency food. We provided sponsorships to children in eastern Kanawha County to attend Camp CJ. In partnership with East Bank United Methodist Church, we hosted two Roncalli High School (Indianapolis) work team visits. Thanks to the Undie Sunday collections, we continue to distribute undies and socks to low income families and individuals participating in work release programs.

The Heart & Hand Thrift Store is strongly supported by good quality and quantity community donations. Volunteers sort and keep the store stocked. Families that qualify for our voucher program, shop free for clothing and household items. The rest of the merchandise is sold at thrift store prices with profits helping our operational costs and

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providing additional basic needs assistance. We need more volunteers and we need more shoppers. It is a year-round fundraiser for us.

We are thankful for the support of the WV Annual Conference and all that support our mission project financially, prayerfully, and through volunteer service. Together we are making a difference in the lives of our neighbors. God bless you.

Vicki Ballengee, Executive Director

Ebenezer Community Outreach Center, Inc.

Another year has come and gone! With the help of the WV United Methodist Annual Conference, community organizations and individuals, Ebenezer has been able to continue to provide programs and services to the Huntington community. These programs continue to provide a relief for many families on a daily basis.

Fifty-eight children are enrolled in the Learning Center, including preschool and the after-school program.

Youth Energized for Success (after-school program) enjoyed many exciting activities during the summer due to a grant from the Virginia Higgins Foundation. Youth participated in activities such as swimming, skating, fishing, hiking, and bowling. They also visited the Highlands Museum in Ashland to learn how people lived in the past and to see what a one-room schoolhouse looked like. The children had fun and learned a few new things as well.

On a monthly basis, approximately 420 people are served through the various programs and services we offer to parents, children and the community. Approximately 115 mothers were provided baby items through ECOC's baby bassinette. Our clothing closet has provided clothing to parents, children and the community at no charge. Ebenezer also continues to give any left-over clothing to Branches Domestic Violence Shelter and the City Mission.

Through the generous support of First UMC (Huntington), Beverly Hills UMC, Steele Memorial UMC, First Baptist Church, HIMG, Bella Consignment, and individuals from the community, Ebenezer was able to continue to provide Christmas gifts to 72 families of the community.

School Supplies, including backpacks and binders, were given to over 100 children.

With the help of Valley Health and transformational grant, ECOC provided health checks for approximately 100 seniors.

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We offer a special thank you to ECOC's Board of Directors, The Board of Global Ministries, West Virginia Annual Conference, the Western District, local UM Churches and individuals for their continued support of Ebenezer's mission to our parents, children and the community. Thank you to the members of the Virginia Higgins Foundation for allowing Ebenezer to be a recipient of funding to give our youth some wonderful opportunities and learning experiences during the summer.

Please remember the mission project's work is not complete and would not survive without YOU! The Lord's work still needs to be done whether it is through your skills, time or money; please continue to reach out and help those in need. May you be blessed in all that you do!

"Reaching Out To Others"

Celes L. Sheffield, Executive Director

Heart and Hand House, Inc.

In 2016, Heart and Hand responded to more than 1,550 requests for emergency assistance from Barbour County families, and provided additional assistance through our Home Repair and Construction Program, Thrift Stores, Christmas Basket distribution, Backpack Feeding Program and Community Garden Market. More than 1,060 food boxes were distributed last year, providing over 39,350 meals and snacks to local individuals.

During the summer, Home Repair and Construction volunteers completed repair projects for 17 families and constructed one new home in the county. Essential items, such as clothing, shoes and household goods, were distributed to those in need through our Belington and Philippi Thrift Stores. The stores also generated income to support our other ministry programs through the sale of excess and non-essential goods.

At our Community Garden Market, 161 different producers brought in fresh, locally-produced foods and craft items last year, collectively earning close to \$60,000. Low-income community members were able to use their SNAP EBT, WV Farmers Market Nutrition Program coupons, and food pantry vouchers at the market to increase their access to fresh, healthy foods. We also continued efforts to aggregate sales of produce to local schools and other institutions, providing increased income opportunity for local farmers and increased access to healthy, local food for school children and other members of the community.

Through our layette program and expanded baby pantry, families with newborns and older infants received diapers, wipes, formula and other essential baby-care items. Partnering

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locally with Corley UMC, we continued to provide food to an average of 63 elementary school children each week through our Backpack Feeding Program.

During the summer months, we also provided a hot lunch for children participating in educational programs at the local library and made backpack-type foods available for them to take home at the end of the week. At Christmastime, we distributed food for a holiday meal, plus laundry baskets full of hygiene and cleaning items, and devotional material to 187 families. In addition, gift bags containing hats, gloves, coloring books, crayons, and other small items were distributed to 136 students in the local Head Start Program. It was another very busy year, and we are ever grateful to all who supported our work with their gifts and prayers.

Brenda Hunt, Executive Director



But Moses said, “Who am I to go to the King and lead your people out of Egypt?” God replied, “I will be with you. And you will know that I am the one who sent you, when you worship me on this mountain after you have led my people out of Egypt.”

I’m not certain how assuring those words were to Moses. “You will be confident of my presence at the end of the journey when you are back at this place worshipping me” doesn’t sound too promising. Sometimes, however, we are most aware of the presence of God as we look back over our journey and remember crucial moments. From a distance, we can witness all that God has done.

Recently, The House of the Carpenter took the time to examine our journey. In 1964 we began as a mission to those in the Wheeling area with a simple food pantry and some basketball on the open air courts to build relationships with an impoverished community. Gradually, the Ministries of Mercy grew. God equipped us to offer clothes and household items, to begin holding summer camps with the intent of giving hope to an upcoming generation and then to develop the resources to repair homes for those in need. God was showing us the need, and at the same time providing the volunteers, the funds and the space.

Eventually, we ran out of space and a new facility was constructed without any debt. With the added space, the ministry grew. More Ministries of Mercy (food, clothing and shelter) emerged to address the growing need.

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Yet, God also called us to explore a new form of caring, the Ministries of Transformation. These are ministries which help enhance the quality of life for our neighbors. They can be teaching moments, times of providing resources or simply opening the doors to opportunities. There have been cooking programs and financial management classes.

We've learned that the most fertile ground for these types of ministries rests with children and youth. Programs such as the Literacy Camp to keep children reading during the summer, Kids in the Kitchen and the Girl on Fire event began. These ministries flourished and now programs focusing specifically on children and youth account for half of all the ministries of the HOC. God has called and God is equipping and is providing for us along this journey.

Currently, over 1,300 people a week are served through all of the ministries of the HOC. We look back in awe at all that God has done. We didn't think it possible, but we have learned when God calls, God equips, God provides and God leads. We simply have to be willing to listen, trust and follow.

As with all journeys, there have been moments when we have been confronted with a tumultuous sea. The failures of the past and the fears of the future have pressed in on us, making the way forward seem impossible. The deep waters in front of us cover the path God is asking us to travel. In those moments, the journey can appear overwhelming.

The journey becomes harder when, at the same time, we hear a myriad of other voices saying "it can't be done," or "the timing isn't right." We sometimes find ourselves asking the question "Are we sure this is what God is asking of us?" Still, amid all the voices, there are the few who are confident of the call, and who choose to walk in faith down the beach and begin to wade in the water and invite us to join together as we answer God's call.

These faithful visionaries have helped us hire a youth coordinator who has expanded our ministry with youth. They have led us to the Pre-work Program and the Leadership Academy. They have helped birth our weekly community dinner and NOVA worship service. They have led us to work on establishing a new housing project in cooperation with Habitat for Humanity and together explore the possibility of a larger housing expansion in partnership with the City of Wheeling. The vision has led us to host a Girl Scout troop, an Alcoholics Anonymous Group, to begin an employment resource center and to have our first Bible Study.

God is constantly calling us forward. At times, the water can look too treacherous, causing fears and doubts to arise. In those moments, we are forever thankful there are always those whose faith is greater than their fear, and who are willing to walk down the beach to lead us forward in response to God's call.

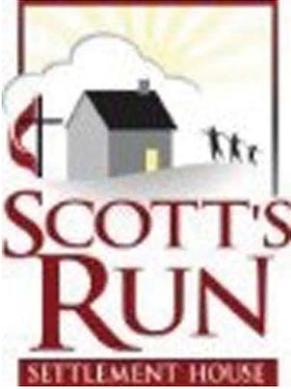
Grace and Peace,

Mike Linger

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Scott's Run Settlement House



Scott's Run Settlement House is continuing to grow our mission to serve our brothers and sisters in need in Monongalia County. Our service numbers for our food pantry and backpack program continue to grow. In 2016, nearly 6,000 individuals were provided with a weeks' worth of groceries and 750 children in nine schools were provided over 30,000 bags of food during the school year. Our backpack program has seen a 285% increase since its inception in 2011.

Our seasonal outreach programs also continue to make a huge impact in Monongalia County. 1,187 people in 362 families enjoyed a Thanksgiving meal; 383 people in 98 families were sponsored at Christmas; 119 people in 39 families were able to prepare an Easter meal and have treat baskets because of the generosity of churches, businesses, and sponsors; 284 children received a new backpack full of supplies for school. SRSRH's Senior program continues to be a success and there are 20 regular individuals who attend the monthly covered dish lunch.

The services provided by Scott's Run Settlement House continue to make a difference in the lives of those who struggle to meet their most basic needs in Monongalia County. Your continued generosity and unwavering support of our work is what makes all of this possible.

Mother Teresa said, "We ourselves feel that what we are doing is just a drop in the ocean. But the ocean would be less because of that missing drop." This demonstrates how important and significant your support has been. You have made it possible for Scott's Run to provide greatly needed services to our community.

Thank you for illustrating God's grace and abundance through your continued support of our ministries.

Shay Petitto
Executive Director

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Tyrand Cooperative Ministries, Inc.

For 55 years, the ministries of Tyrand have served the less fortunate of southern Randolph County. We continue to see an increase in families and individuals needing assistance with food and utility bills. Our goal is to help keep the utilities on because once they get behind it is so difficult to get caught up due to extra reconnect fees and deposits. I cannot stress enough my appreciation of Tyrand's staff and volunteers who show love and respect to our families in need.

We were pleased to present at the 2016 Annual Conference the Doorway of Hope Awards to Rev. Clifford Schell and Avis Forinash for helping Tyrand make a difference and give hope to the less fortunate Tyrand serves.

On June 18, 2016, we celebrated the completion of our new Maintenance Building with an Open House. This building replaced our old barn that was falling down. We presented the work team from Christ Presbyterian Church in Pennsylvania with a plaque for their time for being here in 2015 when the new pole barn arrived and getting it under roof before leaving that week. Many groups had a hand over the next few months in completing it and Christ Presbyterian Church put the final touches on it the day before the Celebration. We are blessed by so many wonderful people who come to Tyrand to serve others.

In June, we were saddened by all the devastation our brothers and sisters were going through in other districts due to the flood. Our board members, volunteers, and community members were gracious in collecting Clorox, paper towels, toilet tissue, mops, brooms, squeezes, cases of water and other items that filled our trailer three times. I hauled items to Rev. Brandon Moll's church in Webster Springs and to Rev. Karen Tate's church at Camden-On-Gauley and they made sure the items got to where they were needed. Our work team from Sinclairville, NY, sent five members of their work team to Camden-On-Gauley to assist an elderly woman removing the wet insulation from underneath her mobile home. The group made the two-hour round trip to this home each day. It is humbling to see faith and love in action when our brothers and sisters in Christ are hurting.

Again this year we provided Thanksgiving Baskets and Christmas Food Baskets to the less fortunate in our area. The Churches of the Highland Cooperative Parish and other Non-Methodist churches in our service area collected canned food for the Baskets.

The Christmas Store served over 200 children with new toys, gloves, toboggans, socks and underwear for Christmas. We are grateful to the Greenbrier District for all the underwear they collected for us through Undie Sunday.

We are very appreciative of all the support we receive from members in all the churches of the Highland Cooperative Parish and West Virginia Annual Conference. We are blessed with a compassionate staff and core of volunteers that help us with the ministries of Tyrand. The Highland Cooperative Parish sponsors two fundraising dinners a year for Tyrand and they help us with our Annual Cakewalk/Auction. We have several volunteers on a regular basis in the Noah's Ark Thrift Store and some come on Wednesdays to quilt and make crafts to sell to raise money to help purchase the toys at Christmas.

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Our slogan “Faith and Action Joined in Love” is a constant reminder for us to be disciples of Christ and to help our brothers and sisters in need. I encourage you to continue to support the ministry of Tyrand Cooperative Ministries and especially keep all the missions in your prayers as we struggle to keep serving the less fortunate.

Respectfully submitted,
Belinda Toms, Director

Upshur Parish House



As I write this report, it is a grey day at the beginning of Lent. The sunny days of a June Annual Conference are still months away. However, I am reminded of the steadfast presence of our God, in all seasons of the year and in all seasons of our lives. This year, in particular, I am reminded of how God’s steadfastness envelops us and encourages us through all the challenges that we face. Thanks be to God!

The work of the Upshur Parish House continues through all the seasons. In 2016, our ecumenical utility and food

assistance program exceeded the amount of help offered in the previous year. There were close to 10,000 assists that included over 3000 food packages and over 1700 clothing vouchers. We spent over \$65,000.00 in utility assistance, over \$7,000.00 in housing assistance, over \$13,000.00 in transient and homeless assistance and we gave out nearly 1400 holiday meal packages. We spend over \$26,000.00 on food for the food pantry and the meat for the holiday packages and our total cash payout was around \$135,000.00.

In addition to these services, we continue to offer hot, well-cooked meals from volunteers and church and civic groups who believe that it is important for everyone to have food for sustenance and fellowship around the tables. These meals have increased from twice a week to three times a week and four times a week during the spring semester at WVWC when the Social Justices classes help us out by offering a weekend meal.

On Christmas day, 65 volunteers help to prepare, serve, and deliver over 400 meals.

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The above figures are always astounding to me. On any given day, I am not thinking about the total costs and assistance that we do in the course of the year. On any given day I am amazed at the dedication and stamina of our staff and volunteers. I am grateful for the mercy and grace that are offered to our neighbor families by our staff and volunteers. I am grateful for the contributions that come to us from the WV Annual Conference, area churches, civic groups, and individuals and continually, I am amazed at how God provides for us to do this crucial work in our community.

Sometimes we get so busy that we forget that we are helping others feel the love of Christ. Sometimes we get so busy that we forget that we have enabled families to make their dollars stretch a little further. Sometimes we get so busy that we forget that we help dry tears and bring about sighs of relief. Sometimes we get so busy and so discouraged that we forget that we do make a difference and we are able to make a difference because Christ has made a difference in our lives and in the lives of so many people in our community. And I am grateful for all the ways that God helps us to make a difference.

The Upshur Parish House has kept busy in many other ways this year. During the past year, our Clothes Closet has gone through evaluation and restructuring. As of January 2017, our Clothes Closet manager is Stella Harvey. Renovations and updates have been made to the store making it more friendly and accessible for people to shop. All proceeds from Clothes Closet go back into the work of the Parish House.

In August, we welcomed an AmeriCorp Service member to our staff. Angel Harvey is working in the area of Community Health and is helping to develop programs such as cooking classes, budgeting classes, chronic disease management classes and other programs that will enhance the health of our neighbor families and community. She has been a great asset to our program. A major emphasis of her work is with the Community Garden, which we sponsor in conjunction with Create Buckhannon. Our Community Garden offers plots for residents to raise garden produce and also provides space for residents to raise produce for our food pantry.

One of the joys as Director of the Parish House is working with the Center for Community Engagement at WVWC. Working with LeeAnn Brown, Katie Loudin, and Jessica Vincent, we offer placements for service scholars and opportunities for students to gain experience working with non-profits. This year students are placed at the Clothes Closet, our food pantry, and an internship. These students become invested in who we are and what we do and get to know our neighbors. They bring us hope and joy.

Our volunteers are amazing and dedicated. Between Crosslines Help Desk, food pantry, and Clothes Closet we have over 25 regular volunteers. We also have six WVWC Service Scholars and a group of volunteers who help out with monthly commodity pick-up or painting and clean up. During the holiday food distribution, our volunteer base expands to accommodate the extra work that is required. Overall, we have over a hundred people who volunteer with us throughout the year. I am grateful for their tireless efforts and for

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the compassion that each volunteer brings to their work. Our volunteers are a blessing to so many of our neighbors.

Our paid, part-time staff works tirelessly in so many ways. Connie Cutright is our office manager and, along with Marilyn Walton, keeps our operation and finances up-to-date. Stella Harvey, Angel Harvey, and Alaina George make up our Clothes Closet team. Kenneth Harvey is our food pantry manager and also works diligently as a maintenance coordinator. John Lynch will work with our home repair program for this summer.

The highlight of our year came after a summer of hard work and preparation as we welcomed the WV Annual Conference review team for our Quadrennial Review. Pat Mick, Judy Raines, and Joyce Board spent the better part of three days with us checking out everything and everybody! It was a good experience and we were very pleased with the report that they gave us.

It has been a great year to report. I look forward to seeing what God will do next through the work of Crosslines and the Upshur Parish House.

Alicia Rapping, Director
68 College Ave., Buckhannon, WV 26201
304.472.0743



Beverly and Les Milton pose with Bishop Steiner Ball and HOC Director, Rev. Michael Linger, after receiving the «Doorway of Hope» award for their work with the House of the Carpenter.

GLOBAL MINISTRIES

UMC GENERAL BOARD OF GLOBAL MISSIONS

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Miracles In The West Virginia Annual Conference and in Bungoma, Kenya

In less than eight years, Living Hope High School has increased our support from 13 local United Methodist Churches to 68 UM churches in West Virginia, 75 individual United Methodists, and 22 United Methodist Ministers in the West Virginia Annual Conference. These United Methodists are aglow through the work of the Holy Spirit in our midst. They have become the only supportive arm for Living Hope High School in Bungoma, Kenya. We receive no other funding except through sponsorships and donations.

This 90-student Kenya Accredited residential Christian school serves impoverished teens. Some have lost one or both parents due to AIDS or desertion, and others through disease. Some have both parents but live in abject poverty. Eighty-seven of these undergraduate high school students are sponsored by members of churches in the West Virginia United Methodist Conference! Thirty-four college and training school students are sponsored by UM members. To what else can we, UMC members, attribute this miraculous outpouring, other than the Holy Spirit? GOD IS AT WORK!

The Lord has drawn us as a conference into this wonderful project. He has put a personal concern on our hearts for the physical and spiritual nurturing of these Christ believing young people. One of our own members, Marilyn Uhl, retired from teaching here in West Virginia and went to Kenya (unsponsored by any church) in 2009 to follow the Holy Spirit's lead and to begin this mission project. Seven brick buildings being used as classrooms, a brick assembly hall, a newly wired computer lab, and a kitchen with a new cement wood stove and chimney. Eight donated cottage dormitories are completed and occupied. A new deep well, 10,000 liter holding tank, faucets throughout the campus, and a beautiful tiled hand washing station have improved our sanitation considerably. Our new "AGAPE" brick science building is now finished due to recent donations from individuals and through ADVANCE. The new "Healing Hut" (small dispensary hospital) is nearing completion and should be finished by April 2017. We will be in the process of furnishing it with beds and bedding, examination tables this summer and we will need funds to do this. Your generous donations are welcome. Electricity has been installed in the office, in the computer lab, and in the dining hall. The school has expanded to almost nine acres including a soccer field, a volleyball court, and a permanent cow pasture and barn. A new chicken coup, housing 60 chickens, is the next much needed construction project. We have just outgrown our old coup and we need more space to house the chickens that have been graciously donated by United Methodist Ministers in the Potomac Highlands District. Thank you, pastors.

The students tend their own garden, milk cows, chickens, and banana grove while competing inter-scholastically in girls and boys volleyball, soccer, and track. A new track team has been formed because the Lord has sent us some outstanding runners. 100% of the students obtained a B- grade on their country's achievement tests and report cards in order to remain enrolled. This past year our school placed first out of the district's 31 high schools in Form 4. Our 2015 graduates scored so well on their high school cumulative tests that 8 out of the 20 were given government scholarships. The students and faculty members feel God's benevolent hand on each of them. The students pray and worship with an intensity and dedication that inspires each of the sponsors to increase their prayer life and their dedication to follow Jesus Christ's example to feed the hungry and clothe the naked!

The faculty at the high school has expanded from its original 2 to 12 college educated teachers. Nine local people are employed as full-time service staff, cutting wood, cooking, etc. The wages of these permanent employees has definitely affected the economy in the local area. The number of construction workers who have been hired, and the supplies that have been purchased and used, have helped hundreds of families live at a higher standard. The school always uses local markets and suppliers for food, maintenance, construction, and supplies. We praise God for this opportunity.

Living Hope High School is now an official UMC Advance designation for mission giving. You may send your donations by check payable to your local United Methodist church with the project name "LIVING HOPE HIGH SCHOOL" and project number #3021425 on the check. Online gifts can be sent to: advancinghope.org. Click on the "give now" tab and use the number #3021425.

We now have a new easy to use website: livinghopehighschool.org. Additional information can be found there plus our monthly newsletters. We are being blessed and drawn closer to our Lord as God uses us to bless others. If your church would like to join in this journey of sponsoring a student, or have a Living Hope speaker come to your church and give you further updates on new happenings, call District Superintendent Mike Este at (304) 822-4191 or Helen Markwell (304-567-2254) Join us in praying that the Spirit continues to lead us and provide for us at Living Hope High School. We keep Jesus FIRST!



GLOBAL MINISTRIES



West Virginia Annual Conference Board of Global Ministries



Guidelines for Virginia Higgins Grants

Mission Statement

The purpose of Health and Welfare Ministries shall be to assist United Methodists to become involved in Health and Welfare ministries and programs, especially in the areas of child care, aging, health care, and persons with handicapping conditions; and to assist organizations, institutions, and programs related to the West Virginia Annual Conference and other units of The United Methodist Church in their involvement in direct service to persons in need through both residential and non-residential ministries.

Application

Complete the application. Additional pages may be included—use the same numbering system for the items/questions as listed on the application. Completed applications must be postmarked by **April 15 of the current funding year.**

Priorities in Funding

Sixty percent (60%) of the available distributable income will be granted each year to the on-going mission and ministry of the Health and Welfare Institutions of the West Virginia Annual Conference.

Criteria for Funding General Projects

1. The remaining forty percent (40%) of the available distributable income will be granted to local United Methodist Churches, Outreach Agencies, and other conference structures engaged in Health and Welfare Ministries.
2. Funds will not be granted to for replacement of existing funds.
3. Funds will not be granted for salary support.
4. The group or agency making the application may submit only one proposal per funding cycle. If the proposal is not approved when first submitted, the group or agency must resubmit for the next funding cycle. However, no proposal will be considered for funding by the Health and Welfare Coordinator more than twice.
5. Projects will be funded for no more than a three-year period.
6. The maximum grant to any project will be \$5,000 annually.
7. Demonstration that the project proposal relates specifically to the Mission Statement of Health and Welfare Ministries.

GLOBAL MINISTRIES

What Happens If Your Project Is Funded

1. You will receive a letter (or email notice) from the Health and Welfare Coordinator informing you of the approval and funds will be mailed to you by June 1.
2. Upon completion of the funding project and no later than December 31 of the current funding year, a written evaluation summary will be submitted to the Health and Welfare Coordinator.

The evaluation shall include:

- a detailed listing of expenditures for the project,
- a brief summary of accomplishments.

If all funds have not been spent by December 31, submit an explanation:

- that explains why funds have not been spent,
- that explains how and when the funds will be utilized or that the funds will be returned to Health and Welfare Ministries.

Designation of Payee

Checks will be made to the United Methodist sponsoring organization which has responsibility for seeing that the funds are distributed for the purpose intended. If, after a period of 180 days, the funds have not been utilized as specified in the grant, they shall be returned to Health and Welfare Ministries plus any interest earned while held by the payee organization.

Applications must be postmarked no later than April 15 of the current year.

Return completed application to:

Rev. Ray Stonestreet
Health and Welfare Coordinator
203 N. Caperton Avenue
Princeton, WV 24740

If you have any questions, you may contact Rev. Stonestreet at rdstonestreet@gmail.com or 304.425.2441.

GLOBAL MINISTRIES

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Revolving Loan/Grant Fund

West Virginia Conference of The United Methodist Church

Loans

1. Capital Improvement* Loans, up to a maximum of \$30,000, are available to local churches, WV Conference mission projects, cooperative parishes, district camps, and the WV Conference camp. Extra consideration will be given to those churches/mission projects/parishes/camps that cannot obtain the necessary funding from local lending agencies.
The loan may be a single payment loan (amount to be dispersed in one payment) or a divided payment loan (amount to be dispersed in more than one payment—as the group needs the money). An additional loan cannot be requested from the WV-UMC Revolving Loan/Grant Fund until a prior loan, from this Fund, has been paid in full.
2. Loans are to be repaid over a five-year period with monthly payments on principal and interest. Churches with less than 150 members may qualify for a five-year extension on repayment, under the same conditions.
3. The current rate of interest for the Revolving Loan/Grant Fund shall be set at 2% below the current prime rate and shall not exceed 8%. Interest rates for ethnic churches, for churches affected by natural disasters, for all WV Conference mission projects, for incorporated cooperative parishes, for district camps and for the WV Conference camp shall be set at 5% or at 2% below the current prime rate if that rate drops below 7%, but the rate of interest shall be no lower than 1%.
4. Loans cannot be used to pay off other loans/indebtedness or to replace funds from endowments, persons, organizations, etc. Loans cannot be used to replace funds for completed projects. Loans cannot be used for (church/mission project/parish/camp/etc.) salaries.

Grants

5. Capital Improvement* Grants of no more than \$25,000 may be made to local churches, WV Conference mission projects, cooperative parishes, district camps, and the WV –Conference camp when all other avenues have been exhausted, and an emergency or extreme need is shown to exist.
6. Grants cannot be used to pay off an existing loan from the WV-UMC Revolving Loan/Grant Fund, to pay off other loans/indebtedness, to replace funds from (endowments, persons, savings accounts, organizations, etc.), to pay for indebtedness for past projects, or to replace funds for past projects. Grants cannot be used for (church/mission project/parish/camp/etc.) salaries.
7. Local churches, WV Conference mission projects, cooperative parishes, district camps, and the WV Conference camp will not be considered for an additional grant for at least seven (7) years from the date of their last grant, unless extreme need or emergency can be substantiated (such as: fire, flood, tornado, etc.).

GLOBAL MINISTRIES

Grants and Loans---WV Conference Responsibility

8. It shall be the responsibility of the West Virginia Conference Board of Global Ministries--Leadership Team to determine eligibility for a loan or grant and the amount to be granted within the guidelines.
9. The WV-UMC Revolving Loan/Grant Fund must maintain a minimum balance of \$200,000 for any loan or grant to be considered, except in extreme emergency situations (such as: fire, flood, tornado, etc.).
10. The WV Conference Board of Global Ministries--Leadership Team may decrease or deny the amount of the loan or grant under any of the following conditions:
 - Inadequate amount of labor being provided by the group
 - Inadequate amount of fund raising and/or pledging
 - Amount of debt the group may have
 - Inadequate amount of current funds available
 - The church is paying less than 100% of conference apportionments
 - Application does not show adequate need for the project
 - One or more of the five required attachments are missing
 - Yearly income is much greater than yearly expenses
 - Inadequate insurance
 - Errors on the application
11. The WV Conference Treasurer's Office will be responsible for administering the funds.

Grants and Loans---Applicant Responsibility

12. Complete the application. An incomplete application will not be considered. The application must also include the 5 attachments listed in #13 (below).
13. The applicant must provide:
 - A description of the project, the need for the project, who will benefit from the project, and the approximate number of persons who will be served (Attachment A)
 - An itemized list of expenses/costs for this project (Attachment B)
 - The current budget of the applying group (church/mission project/camp/ parish) (Attachment C)
 - A copy of the deed for the property (Attachment D)
 - An original document, from an insurance agent, stating that the property has adequate insurance coverage. The document must also list the amount of coverage for the property. (Attachment E)
14. Evaluation---When the project is completed, complete the enclosed evaluation form within 3 months.
15. A group may not apply for a grant during the time that they have a loan.
 A grant may be applied for 5 years after a loan has been paid in full.
 A loan may be applied for 5 years after a grant has been issued.
 An additional loan may be applied for after the prior loan has been paid in full.
 Grants may be applied for every 5 years.

**Capital improvement---any expenditure for physical improvements, including costs for:
 any change, alteration, rearrangement or addition to existing facilities
 new construction
 acquisition or improvements to sites, buildings, or service systems
 acquisition of fixed equipment and similar expenditures*

Revised 2/2013
 Revised 11/2014

Policies and Procedures
 Revolving Loan/Grant Fund
 WV Conference---Division of Missions

2/2

GLOBAL MINISTRIES

West Virginia Annual Conference Board of Global Ministries

Guidelines for Southern WV Mission Initiative Grant and New Mission Ministries Grant

Mission Statement

God's Holy Spirit calls the Church into being for mission. The Church experiences and engages in God's mission as it pours itself out for others, ready to cross every boundary to call for true human dignity among all peoples, especially among those regarded as the least of God's children, all the while making disciples of Christ for the transformation of the world.

Purpose of Grants

The Southern WV Mission Initiative Grant and Mission Ministries Grant are both designed to provide churches and church ministries within the WV Annual Conference an opportunity to initiate new ministries in local communities throughout the conference that will alleviate human suffering and/or seek justice especially to those who find themselves marginalized. These grants are intentionally established to support and encourage local creativity in response to local necessity.

Southern WV Mission Initiative Grant

The geographic areas that are included in the Southern WV Mission Initiative Grant and therefore eligible for consideration are the following twelve counties: Boone, Fayette, Greenbrier, Lincoln, Logan, McDowell, Mercer, Mingo, Raleigh, Summers, Wayne and Wyoming. These southern WV Annual Conference counties have a US Census Bureau poverty rate at or above 15% as of March 2013.

Mission Ministries Grant

The geographic areas that are included in the Mission Ministries Grant are any WV Annual Conference county, charge or church not included in the Southern WV Mission designated area.

Criteria for the Grants

1. The Grants are to be used to help local United Methodist churches and church ministries undertake and establish a mission emphasis in their community which will alleviate human suffering and/or seek justice especially to those who find themselves marginalized.
2. Projects should be sponsored or partially sponsored by local United Methodist Churches, or other WV Conference bodies.
3. Any WV Conference Mission Project that is receiving Work Funds from the Conference budget is not eligible to participate in the grant program.
4. Requests by Church and Community Workers are only eligible if the grant application is originated by and in partnership with a local United Methodist church, charge or parish.
5. Funds will not be granted for replacement of existing funding.
6. Funds will not be granted for salary support.
7. Maximum grant is \$3000.
8. Granted projects will be funded no more than three times.
9. A report on the most recently funded project including a financial statement needs to be on file with the Division of Missions before any additional requests are considered.
10. Applications are accepted any time during the year.
11. Signatures of the pastor, administrative board/Church council chairperson, and district superintendent are required for the application to be considered complete.
12. It shall be the responsibility of the WV Conference Board of Global Ministries—Leadership Team to determine eligibility for a grant and the amount to be granted.
13. The grant amount may be decreased or denied under any of the following conditions:
 - Only completed applications (all parts responded to) will be considered
 - The church is paying less than 100% of conference apportionments
 - Application does not show adequate need for the grant
 - Sponsorship by a local UMC, or other WV Conference bodies is not adequate
 - Application does not meet the intent of the grant (undertake and establish a mission emphasis)
 - The 2 attachments have not been included
 - Inadequate number of partners
14. Complete the progress report 3 months after receiving the money and again at completion of the project.

GLOBAL MINISTRIES

Guidelines for Hunger Ministries

1. Undesignated funds will be divided and sent out quarterly. Ninety percent (90%) of the total will go to projects within the West Virginia Annual Conference and ten percent (10%) will be distributed to Living Hope High School in Kenya. The money will be distributed proportionally with regard to the amount of each grant.
2. Once a project reaches one hundred percent payout of funds, through designated funds, undesignated funds, or a combination of both categories, that project's grant goal will be considered attained.
3. The application must include a budget and documented expenditures of the previous year for grant consideration.
4. The application must be postmarked by **March 20** of each year. Project applications must be postmarked by the indicated deadline or they will not be considered. (Applications should be made in the first quarter of each year.)
5. Photocopies of previously submitted applications will not be considered.
6. Non-United Methodist projects may apply but must show co-sponsorship of the project with a United Methodist organization. There must be a direct relationship with the UM organization.
7. Hunger grants are to provide assistance for food pantries and other agencies dealing with hunger in our society. Hunger grant money is intended for use in purchasing food, food-related items, and storage (refrigerators, freezers, shelving). Funds are not to be used for administrative costs, salaries, clothing closets, or utility payments for clients.
8. The following will be the grant scale for Food Pantries:

<u>Annual Budget/Expenditures</u>	<u>Hunger Grant Goal Amount</u>
Up to \$10,000, inclusive	\$250
\$10,001 and up	\$500

9. The following will be the grant scale for Community Services Agencies with food programs:

<u>Annual Budget/Expenditures</u>	<u>Hunger Grant Goal Amount</u>
Under \$30,000	\$500
\$30,000 and up	\$1000

Maximum Service Agency grant will be \$1000.

10. All Mission Projects of the West Virginia Annual Conference will automatically receive hunger grants of \$1000.
11. Maximum grants to any project within the Annual Conference will be \$1000.
12. If each grant receives the goal amount, the surplus funds will be distributed proportionally.

GLOBAL MINISTRIES

**WV Annual Conference—UMC
Disaster Response Ministries**



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GLOBAL MINISTRIES

Theological Implications for the Disaster Response

"We are not lords, but instruments in the hand of the Lord of history; and we can share in other people's sufferings only to a very limited degree. We are not Christ, but we must have some share in Christ's large heartedness by acting with responsibility and in freedom when the hour of danger comes, and by showing a real sympathy that springs, not, from fear, but from the liberating and redeeming love of Christ for all who suffer.

Mere waiting and looking on is not Christian behavior. The Christian is called to sympathy and action, not in the first place by his own sufferings, but by the sufferings of his brethren, for whose sake Christ suffered."¹

There are many logical and practical reasons why churches respond to disaster. Sociologically² churches are grass roots institutions which...are being looked to for help, comfort and leadership in the times of stress and crisis. "They are among the basic institutions within any social unit...they have 'territories' within which they have social, physical, and economic, as well as 'spiritual concerns'. They have visibility and strength which their individual members do not have."

In practice, churches are involved in response to disaster from the very first hour. The church gives unique help in four areas.³

Spiritual (dealing with questions of life, death, eternal hope, why me?, why not me?, values, etc.)

Emotional ('caring presence', support, re-establishing a sense of community, resolving the emotional conflicts of such trauma.)

Physical (people involvement, clean-up, transportation, etc.)

Material (those areas which are crucial for living, but to which no other source can give.)

"These are all essential. They have to do with the quality of life for persons suffering great trauma from disaster. No one except the Church can really function well in these areas – especially the first two."

Theologically, there are reasons central to the Church's existence which calls for compassionate response to the needs occasioned by disaster. Churches "have a mandate: they must be concerned with the welfare of individuals. They must address the concerns of the poor, the needy, and the victimized." The Church's mission is found within the Biblical and theological background of our faith. The Church is about the reconciliation of people with themselves, with each other, and with God, in the face of disruptive forces within and without.

It is the Church which comes proclaiming, in a profound way, a significant message of continuity between what has been, what is now, and what will be in the future. It is the church that comes representing the essence of eternal values that transcend the immediate.

The task of the church, in the break-up of community occasioned by disaster, through its involvement in community organization, pastoral care, and involvement in local leadership, is to re-establish the presence of a supportive, caring community.

Through the work of local ministers, lay persons, pastoral counselors, and Church and Community Workers, the message is strong and clear. "You are a disaster victim, but you still have eternal strengths and potentials for coping. You have abilities to regroup. Most importantly, you have the unique qualities that God has given you to discover hope in the midst of disaster."

The church is involved in disaster response to project a prophetic message related to the future. The prophetic voices of the church....seeks to prevent conditions which make the possibility of future disaster less prevalent than necessary.

¹ Bonhoeffer, Dietrick, *Letters and Papers from Prison*, p. 13.

² Molenaar, Neil, *The Role of Churches in Preparation for Longterm Recovery*, p. 8ff.

³ Miller, Virginia, *The Church's Role in Disaster*.

GLOBAL MINISTRIES

PREFACE

Our United Methodist disaster response effort has been for years called a ministry of pastoral care. We now realize the term pastoral care is insufficient to define what we do in our disaster response ministry. To many, the term means mental and spiritual health counseling. Yes, there is a counseling component, but our disaster response ministry is much broader.

To others, pastoral care is even more narrowly defined as services provided to or by ordained religious leaders. However, disaster response ministry is not the exclusive territory of clergy. Perhaps what we do is best described as a *Ministry of Care*.

Our multifaceted ministry of Christ's Church has theological, material, mental health, advocacy, and social service components designed to provide for the spiritual, emotional and physical recovery of disaster survivors and for the well-being of their caregivers.

Remember a disaster erodes some relationships and cuts others. The aim of our caring ministry is to strengthen and reconnect these relationships—between persons and God, persons and families, persons and communities. Whatever you plan, do it so relationships are built and /or restored, not further damaged.

The parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:30-37) tells of two religious officials and a man from Samaria. The Samaritan holds no religious office, and is, in fact, of a race despised and considered "unclean" by those arrogant officials. When the three are confronted with a call to care, it is the Samaritan who answers and gets the approving nod from Jesus. He performs his caring ministry at some cost and personal risk. Those hearing Jesus tell of it were no doubt surprised to hear that an "unfit" Samaritan is portrayed as capable of compassion.

The story is a reminder to any who call themselves followers of Christ that when strangers lie wounded, each of us is called to respond. We have no choice but to set aside our personal agenda and embrace inconvenience in order to offer care, always at some cost and risk. All of us, laity and clergy alike, are God's designated caregivers, urged by Jesus "to do likewise."

Mission Statement

Compelled by Christ to be a voice of conscience on behalf of the people called Methodist, West Virginia Disaster Response Ministries works throughout the West Virginia Annual Conference to alleviate human suffering and advance hope and healing.

Values

The work of the West Virginia Annual Conference Disaster Response Ministries is grounded in faith in God and in the communities we serve. This gives us the courage to serve boldly as the presence of Christ to alleviate human suffering and advance hope and healing.

- WV Annual Conference Disaster Response Ministries provides practical, proactive support to the most vulnerable survivors of chronic or momentary emergencies stemming from natural or civil causes.
- The WV Annual Conference Disaster Response Ministries honors cultural differences. We deliver aid to people without regard to race, religion, politics, gender or sexual orientation. We seek input from local communities in identifying needs and developing innovative solutions.
- All people have God-given dignity and worth. The most essential partner in the West Virginia Annual Conference Disaster Response Ministries work is the beneficiary.
- WV Annual Conference Disaster Response Ministries works with partners—especially those who are indigenous to the affected locale. Civic organizations, faith communities, school leaders, and other local resources are great assets to sustainable recovery and development, particularly after massive traumatic events.
- WV Annual Conference Disaster Response Ministries is a good steward of its gifts and grants.
- WV Annual Conference Disaster Response Ministries does not tie the promise of its relief and development activity to any religious or political viewpoint.
- The WV Annual Conference Disaster Response Ministries professional staff incorporates best practices and standards to provide innovative, effective, and integrated ministry.
- The WV Annual Conference Disaster Response Ministries welcomes the good efforts of countless individuals and churches who support us through gifts, prayers, and service.

GLOBAL MINISTRIES

West Virginia Annual Conference The United Methodist Church

Disaster Response Coordinator/s (DRC)

Job Description

Summary: With the assistance of the Conference Disaster Response Committee, the DRC coordinates the development and implementation of a Conference-wide disaster response plan, which includes the effective utilization of the human and material resources of congregations and the Conference to meet the immediate and long-term needs (physical, emotional, and spiritual) of persons caught up in disaster.

Duties: Reports directly to the Conference Director of Connectional Ministries/Assistant to the Bishop. Maintains and trains on a regular basis a network of district disaster response coordinators, who, with input from parish coordinators, provide initial and updated assessments of needs throughout the course of a disaster. Gathers and provides information regarding a disaster to the Conference Disaster Response Committee and, together with the Committee, determines a proper course of action to meet the needs arising out of a disaster. The WV Annual Conference Disaster Coordinators maintains appropriate connections with the WV Council of Churches, other faith communities, and government and private social service agencies, which are active in times of disaster. The WV Annual Conference Disaster Coordinators provides for the accountability of funds collected and distributed over the course of a disaster.

Qualifications: Is a United Methodist clergy or lay member of a United Methodist congregation. Understands the importance of and is committed to the timely response of the Church during disaster. The person must be able to devote the time necessary to lead the Church during disasters. The person must have the ability to inspire volunteers and the teaching skills to help train them.

GLOBAL MINISTRIES

WV Conference Policies and Procedures for Disaster Response Ministries

(Adopted: 2013, Global Ministries Team)

Administrative Policies

There are levels of disaster: local, parish, district, annual conference, and national. As the scope of disaster extends beyond a particular level, the next level's resources are accessed. For example, if a local church can handle the needs of a localized disaster, then there is no need to seek further assistance. If not, resources should be found at the parish or district levels. If a Parish Coordinator, District Superintendent or District Disaster Coordinator senses the disaster is beyond the scope of the parish or district, then the Annual Conference Disaster Response Coordinator should be notified and annual conference resources made available.

District Disaster Response Coordinators

Each district shall have a district response coordinator to coordinate district disaster response and cooperate with the annual conference response coordinator. The district coordinator and the parish coordinator (s) should work together to provide response to disasters beyond what a local church can handle. The district coordinator along with the District Superintendent will decide if the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator needs to be contacted. The district coordinator will become a member of the Annual Conference Adhoc Disaster Committee when the affected area is within the district's boundaries.

Annual Conference Disaster Response Coordinator (s)

The coordinator(s) is responsible for coordinating conference response to disasters as they occur. The Episcopal Office and Conference Coordinator (s) will assess whether UMCOR should become involved. The conference coordinator (s) is responsible for the disbursements of conference funds and the signing of vouchers.

- In some level II and all level III and IV disasters, any active clergy serving as the West Virginia Conference Disaster Response Coordinator must be relieved of pastoral duties in the local church for at least one month. A supply pastor should be appointed and paid with disaster funds. The District Superintendent should interpret this necessity to the congregation.
- The West Virginia Conference Disaster Response Coordinator should serve at least four years, and should be recruited with the understanding that she/he will enroll in training classes offered by UMCOR in the form of UMCOR's Training Academy or Jurisdictional Academies. The West Virginia Annual Conference will be responsible for the cost associated with this training.

Annual Conference Adhoc Disaster Committee

This committee is comprised of the Bishop, the Director of Connectional Ministries, the Director of Leadership Formation, Division of Health and Welfare Chairperson, the VIM Coordinator, the Director of Communications, the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator(s), the Treasurer, the Global Ministries Team chairperson, and the District Superintendent(s) and district disaster coordinator(s) of the affected area(s). The Director of Connectional Ministries serves as the chair of the adhoc committee. The adhoc committee will act upon requests that exceed the pre-approved voucher limits and/or require dealing with special circumstances. The adhoc committee will meet when a disaster requires further action and/or long term support.

Response to Damage to Church Property

1. There are immediate grants to churches, affected by a disaster, of \$1000 per church (rebuilding church property or serving the citizens of the disaster area) upon request of the district superintendent of the district where the church is located. The grants will be disbursed by the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator(s).
2. Additional grant requests (to help churches restore church property) will be acted upon by the Conference Adhoc Disaster Committee.
3. Local churches may make application to the Revolving Loan Fund for emergency grants through the Division on Missions.

Limited Access to Disaster Area

Disaster response training is mandatory for anyone wishing to help in a disaster area. Admission to a disaster area or contact with victims/families will be prohibited unless the person can provide disaster training certification. A person trained by the WV Annual Conference can be identified by proper badging credentials.

Financial Policies

The primary purpose of Disaster Response is to meet the needs of the people through agencies and programs. A disaster response fund exists for disbursement of funds. This fund is comprised of donations given by individuals and organizations for disaster response.

1. The conference disaster response coordinator(s) is responsible for the disbursements of funds and reports the status of the disaster fund annually to the Conference Global Ministries Team and the Annual Conference. Vouchers will be signed by the disaster response coordinator(s) and sent to the Conference Treasurer for checks to be written from the disaster response fund. The voucher limit is \$5000 per voucher. Reimbursements for expenses incurred by the Disaster Response Coordinator(s) are approved by the Director of Connectional Ministries.
2. The Adhoc Disaster Committee will meet and act upon requests that exceed the approved limits and/or require dealing with special circumstances.
3. When a disaster requires further action and/or long-term support, a meeting of the Annual Conference Disaster Adhoc Committee will be called.

GLOBAL MINISTRIES

Planned Reserves

When possible and prudent, a balance of \$100,000 should be reserved for the next possible disaster. Twenty percent of the balance should be reserved for administration.

Description of Responsibility in Disaster Response

Bishop:

Preparation

- Appoints a Conference Disaster Response Coordinator who will serve at least four years.
- Appoints a Conference Disaster Adhoc Preparedness and Response Committee. Assures that the committee formulates a conference disaster preparedness and response plan.
- Appoints the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator as Chair of the Conference Disaster Committee.
- Appoints a Cabinet or staff person representative to represent the Bishop on the Conference Disaster Response Committee in her/his absence.
- Empowers the Cabinet or staff representative, in the absence of the Bishop, to implement the response plan when disaster strikes and to contact UMCOR for assistance.
- Is aware of the assistance UMCOR can and cannot provide.
- Assures that the Cabinet is trained by UMCOR at least every four years.
- Encourages District Superintendents to have disaster response programs annually at district pastors' meetings and district conferences.
- Establishes contingency plans for a conference wide financial appeal.
- Supports and encourages that the One Great Hour of Sharing offering be observed in all Districts and Local churches.
- Assures that conference property is prepared/protected and insured in case of disaster.

Response

- Implements Conference Disaster Response Plan as needed.
- Establishes communications with disaster response leaders within the Episcopal Area.
- Offers support, spiritual guidance, resources and assistance.
- Notifies UMCOR of Disaster needs as soon as possible
- Considers a conference wide financial appeal.
- Tours damaged areas as soon as possible to offer hope and encouragement.
- Appoints temporary assisting pastors to any disaster affected congregations when the pastor-in-charge may be overwhelmed by duties of both church and community
- Meets with Cabinet, Disaster Response Committee and UMCOR, if invited, to determine course of action for response.
- Encourage conference to participate in response and recovery efforts both physically and financially.

Conference Disaster Response Coordinator

Preparation

- Chairs the Conference Committee, serving at least four years.
- Coordinates the work of the Conference Committee.

GLOBAL MINISTRIES

- Works with District Superintendents to identify appropriate persons to serve as District Coordinators.
- Assures that positions related to response are filled on the district and conference levels by individuals who have skills related to the tasks.
- Assures that persons in positions related to disaster management and response are aware of and trained in their duties.
- Assures that training curriculum is updated and maintained for all response teams.
- Maintains a list of Conference Committee members and their contact information.
- Creates and maintains a database of volunteers to perform all Disaster Response Team ICS functions.
- Maintains a list of ERT and other trained individuals and teams in the conference including their contact information.
- Develops and maintains a list of all conference equipment and supplies to be needed for response teams.
- Maintains records on trailers and equipment available within the conference for disaster response.
- Maintains a copy of all disaster forms and plans.
- Collects/Stores emergency response materials and encourages districts and local churches to do the same.
- Is aware of warehouse space that could be available for use in response.
- Is aware of resources including transportation for donated goods.
- Meets with conference committee at least twice annually.
- Provides guidance and support for the conference committee's training.
- Attends trainings/conferences on disaster preparedness and response and encourages committee to do the same.
- Becomes trained and knowledgeable in UMCOR's Connecting Neighbors program.
- Maintains relations with other disaster response agencies, such as WV VOAD.
- Represents the Conference as a member of WV VOAD, maintains relations with county and local EMA's, State and FEMA VALS.
- Encourages local churches take the One Great Hour of Sharing special disaster offerings annually.

Response

- As soon as feasible after the onset of a disaster, provides for an initial assessment of damage.
- Alerts the Bishop and other applicable cabinet members and staff to the estimated extent of the disaster.
- Makes contact with the DS and District Coordinator of the affected areas to help determine the need for a conference response.
- Makes contact with Partners and attends VOAD briefings. Sees that the work of the UMC is in cooperation with other response agencies active in the disaster.
- Makes contact with EMA and FEMA to exchange contact information.
- Visits the disaster area as soon as possible for situation assessment.
- Works with the Conference Communicator to establish a single point of contact for media referrals and inquiries.
- If UMCOR is invited to respond, works with the Volunteer Coordinator to secure housing for any UMCOR Team members who will be arriving at the disaster site.
- Work with VIM Coordinator to determine needs.
- Provides ongoing updates to all who need to know.
- Sends available emergency response supplies as requested by District Coordinators/ DSs
- Communicates needs to those who need to know.
- Meets with the District Coordinators as often as needed and at least monthly during times of response.
- Coordinates transition to Recovery Phase with Conference Committee and VIM Coordinator.
- Assists in the establishment of long-term recovery committees.
- Work with the local churches and communities for best recovery efforts.

GLOBAL MINISTRIES

District Disaster Response Coordinators

Preparation

- May serve on and attend meetings of the Conference Disaster Response Committee. Helps to interpret the work of the committee to local laity and pastors. Is a liaison between the district and the Conference.
- Is familiar with, and supports the Conference Plan and is an ambassador to the district educating and providing accurate information on the work of the conference committee.
- Coordinates with the District Superintendent and establishes a means of communications for emergencies.
- Establishes relationships with emergency managers in each county or city in the district and offers appropriate support during disaster events.
- Identifies individuals for a District Disaster Response Committee.
- Serves as chair of the District Disaster Committee
- Leads the committee in developing a district response plan that includes:
 - A) Organizing a District Early Response Team
 - B) Caring for people of the district
 - C) Caring for district facilities
 - D) Caring for others in the conference and beyond
 - E) Developing a call chain
- Recruits volunteers to fill district positions necessary for response.
- Assures that everyone involved in District response is aware of and trained on their duties.
- Arranges ERT training and has at least one ERT in the district.
- Work toward securing equipment for disaster response in the district.
- Arranges “Connecting Neighbor” training for the local churches in the district.
- Arranges for other disaster training as appropriate.
- Maintains records of established disaster response teams and trained individuals in the district.
- Offers presentations on disaster preparedness and response for district pastors’ meetings, district conference and local churches.
- Makes contact with each church in the district to make introductions and exchange contact information for use during a disaster.
- Encourages collection of emergency supplies and assist local congregations to prepare for the One Great Hour of Sharing programs annually.
- With District Superintendent and pastors in the District, identify churches that agree to serve as:
 - A) Disaster operations centers
 - B) Temporary Shelters
 - C) Places to house volunteers
 - D) Places to collect, warehouse and distribute donated goods.

Response

- Gathers damage information from pastors in the area if affected by the disaster.
- Confers with District Superintendent on damage reports.
- Visits the affected area as soon as possible for situation assessment noting the extent to which the disaster has affected local communities, churches, and church property. Report findings to DS and Conference Coordinator and notes the potential need for ERTs
- Tours the affected area, if available, with the Conference Disaster Assessment team and the Bishop.
- Coordinates response efforts if the district is affected.
- If the district is not affected, coordinator may help with response efforts in other districts.
- Informs Conference Disaster Response Coordinator of needs and locations for supply delivery, distribution points, volunteer check-in, etc.

GLOBAL MINISTRIES

- Meets with Conference Committee and VOAD to be briefed on the disaster and to determine response program and options.
- Encourages the acquisition of volunteers and financial and material support from the district.
- Assist in Long Term Recovery as long as needed.
- Support transition from relief to recovery.
- Stays informed of recovery efforts and communicate with Conference Coordinators.

District Superintendent:

Preparation

- Shall be familiar with the Conference Disaster Response Plan and keep a copy of the plan available.
- Appoints a District Response Coordinator.
- Familiarizes self with UMCOR principles and response procedures.
- Establishes a communication system with the District Coordinator for use during disaster.
- Makes disaster response training a part of district pastors meetings and district conferences annually.
- Encourages churches to be prepared with training and plans.
- Actively engages and encourages district pastors and lay leadership to participate in annual One Great Hour of Sharing program.

Response

- Establishes communications with the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator and the District coordinator.
- Coordinates with District Leadership Council to assure that office and parsonage are adequately insured and otherwise secured for potential disaster probabilities.
- Contacts the district coordinator and pastors in the affected communities and gathers information on damage to church owned property as well as the extent of damage in the affected community.
- Gets caregivers into the community immediately if there has been loss of life or destruction of church property to assist the local pastor and augment what the local congregation can do.
- Contacts the Conference Coordinator with any requests for assistance.
- If a pastor is likely to be overwhelmed with church and community duties, appoints a temporary assisting pastor.
- District Superintendents need to be involved and visible; business cannot be conducted as usual for some time; damage to church property, if it occurs, can consume much of the District Superintendent's time.
- Visit affected area as soon as possible after the event to offer hope and encouragement and a caring Christian presence.
- Accompanies the Disaster assessment team to the affected areas.
- Tours the affected area with the Bishop.
- Connects and confers with District Lay Leader.
- Meets with Bishop and Conference Committee to determine the extent of response.
- Encourages district churches that are unaffected, but near the disaster area to share their resources.
- Encourages pastors and laity to take plenty of time in decision making following a disaster. Works with affected clergy to develop their own recovery plan.
- Serves as fiscal agent for district grants.
- Assists in the transition from relief to recovery.

Higher Education and Campus Ministry

I am happy to report that college ministry continues to function despite the steep learning curve being experienced by the new chair. After serving on the Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministry for only one year, I humbly accepted the role of chair. I was whisked away for some training in Nashville where I learned firsthand the needs and challenges facing campus ministries. Many members of the team were also either new or recent appointees. As a relatively new team, we were faced with the challenge of understanding our role. Our meetings revealed individuals who were dedicated to supporting the West Virginia Conference vision and mission:

We are a Christ-led spiritual breath of fresh air that changes the world. We will discover, develop and deploy passionate spiritual leaders who make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the World.

As we move forward, the Team is committed to being advocates for the work of our campus ministers. The Team will explore ways to provide professional development for our campus ministers as well as local advisory boards. Finally, the Team will look at ways of enhancing the relationship between campus ministries and local churches.

Campus ministry has a full-time presence on five campuses – Fairmont State University, Glenville State College, Marshall University, West Liberty University and West Virginia University. Part-time ministries continued at Potomac State College and the University of Charleston. Finally, a part-time ministry at Concord University was restored. These campus ministries are engaged in a variety of activities including, but not limited to the following:

- Bible studies
- Food ministries
- Community nights
- Community service
- Mission projects
- Developing student leaders for discipleship

Campus ministers are accomplishing goals and making disciples without the luxury of unlimited resources. They are dedicated servants who strive to go where Christ leads. May every member of this annual conference continue to hold them in prayer.

Mark Stotler, Chairperson

Justice and Advocacy

“Taking an active stance in society is nothing new for followers of John Wesley. He set the example for us to combine personal and social piety. Ever since predecessor churches to United Methodism flourished in the United States, we have been known as a denomination involved with people’s lives, with political and social struggles, having local to international mission implications. Such involvement is an expression of the personal change we experience in our baptism and conversion.”

The United Methodist Church believes God’s love for the world is an active and engaged love, a love seeking justice and liberty. We cannot just be observers. So we care enough about people’s lives to risk interpreting God’s love, to take a stand, to call each of us into a response, no matter how controversial or complex. The church helps us think and act out a faith perspective, not just responding to all the other ‘mind-makers-up’ that exist in our society.”

Excerpt from *The Book of Resolutions of The United Methodist Church 2016*.
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The Justice and Advocacy Team of the West Virginia Annual Conference is comprised of representatives from each District, ex officio members from agencies and at-large members. The Team has met three times this year, including attending the CORA, State of Appalachia, meeting at Pipestem, with a fourth meeting scheduled during 2017 Annual Conference. A retreat is planned for the winter of 2017. Additionally, members of the group have attended conferences and participated in outside advocacy opportunities consistent with the Social Principles of The United Methodist Church including G-COSROW, the West Virginia Women’s March, West Virginia Hijab Day and the Peace with Justice Coordinators Gathering in Washington, DC.

The first year of the new quadrennium was dedicated to getting our bearings and ascertaining the passion of our members for various ministries. Meeting with the staff at the offices of the General Church and Society in DC proved to be most fruitful. The J&A Team also met with Jeff Allen, executive director of the West Virginia Council of Churches, to explore our shared interests and review the WVCC’s Public Policies handbook.

The Team will be working with the West Virginia CCORR and assume the responsibilities of COSROW as well as taking an active role in the upcoming Bishop’s Summit on Diversity and Inclusion. I will be serving in the capacity as Peace with Justice Coordinator for the Conference

Justice & Advocacy is ably served by Deborah Coble, the Conference staff person assigned to guide our work.

Martha Hill, Chairperson

Laity Conference Lay Leader

Greetings to all as we journey to work out our salvation with fear and trembling. As I write this report, we are in the Lenten season. I feel so blessed by the four devotionals I am reading in preparation for Easter. I also anticipate the glorious Easter celebration we will experience with Christ as we praise and worship our Messiah. Last year was an extremely busy year as I attended several conferences, some as an elected representative of the Annual Conference and others as I felt called. As I plan meetings with laity for Saturdays, I notice it is getting more and more difficult to find days when members of the committees can come together. This is due to the increased involvement of the laity in the conference, district and local lead teams that have been generated by the Spirit moving among God's people. Many of the laity are involved in the District lead teams. They are visiting the local churches in their districts and listening to the local congregations. They are sharing the glory sightings and successful projects that reach people for Christ. This is a wonderful source of encouragement and support for the churches throughout our conference.

The Advent and Lenten Devotionals written by the Laity of the West Virginia Conference were exceptional this past year. I want to thank all of you who wrote for these publications and encourage you to write again. I also hope others who have not written will sign up at the Laity table in the gymnasium for the 2017 Advent and 2018 Lenten devotionals during Annual Conference. There are almost 500 folks who subscribe to these daily devotionals through email and we print 150 paper copies. The Conference Communications Staff have also made these available through Twitter and Facebook (a big thank you to Deborah Coble and Whitney Cherry).

The Bishop's Lead Team decided a goal of 2400 professions of faith prior to the 2017 Annual Conference would be an achievable stretch. Several months ago I was involved in a discussion to create a visual that would be a reminder of this goal of 2400 plus. The decision was made to have a circular stained glass panel made. The panel would be comprised of 24 pieces of glass around a scene with the United Methodist Cross and Flame (each of the 24 pieces represents 100 people). I knew this was a visual I could create. Other stained glass artists were considered to build the visual because no one on the Lead Team knew I had the ability. I hesitated, but finally offered to create the stained glass visual. After five months, the visual, a reminder of our goal to make disciples for Christ, is complete. Are you hesitating to answer a call? Are we hiding our talents from the church? Let me urge you to say, "Here I am Lord, send me."

Rich Shaffer, Conference Lay Leader

Lay Servant Ministries

Jesus said, *“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commended you.”* What better mantra to be lived into by the Lay Servant Ministries (LSM) program than these strong words by Jesus to His disciples. We are called, as disciples, as servants, to obey Jesus and spread His word.

No one can argue that we are living in a fast-paced, ever-changing world, and our Lay Servant Ministries program is no exception. Each General Conference since its inception, changes have been made to improve the types of classes offered, increase the opportunities to serve and to become more inclusive; and now, it seems, we’re getting close to a finished product at least until God directs us otherwise.

The recent changes to which I allude, are:

1. Discontinuance of the designation “Local Church Lay Servant.” No longer can merely taking the Basic course qualify for inclusion into the LSM.
2. Setting the number of designated classifications at three: Certified Lay Servant, Certified Lay Speaker and Certified Lay Minister.
3. Certified Lay Servants must take the Basic course and one advanced course. This is the minimum requirement to be a part of LSM.
4. Oversight of the Certified Lay Minister category is moved from the Board of Ordained Ministry to the Board of Laity (our Lay Ministry Team). This move is made in order to place all lay programs under one administrative body.

Each of these changes is viewed as positive by our Conference LSM and reflects an effort to simplify the system. One of the main objectives of the LSM is to involve more people and offer varieties of ways to serve. Not everyone is comfortable speaking from the pulpit, but instead, may prefer to serve the church and God in more supportive roles. The LSM classes provide excellent spiritual training, regardless of where or how one chooses to serve God.

Progress has been made within our conference, as well as in most other conferences, in bringing standardization to LSM, particularly the content of classes and adherence to required hours of instruction. This becomes important as members of our increasingly mobile society move not only across district lines, but between annual conferences as well, and standardization of LSM conceivably will allow for the transfer of credentials without penalty, with certain approvals.

I wish to thank all of the District Superintendents and the District Committee on Ministry Chairs for their cooperation and understanding as we have undergone significant changes over the past number of years with relatively few major upheavals. Change is always difficult, but in the words of Robert F. Kennedy, “progress is a nice word, but change is its motivator.”

May we all continue to be motivated for God’s glory.

Shalom,

Fred M. Kellerman, Conference Director

Native American Ministries (CONAM)

West Virginia Committee on Native American Ministries (CONAM) currently has the following membership: Ellesa High (chairperson), Edith Brabender, Ken Krimmel, JF Lacaria, Carol Markstrom, Jay Parkins, Rich Shaffer, and Starr Weaver. This year's activities focused on two major endeavors that, with God's help, came to fruition. The first was the "Service of Repentance and Reconciliation" held during the 2016 Annual Conference on Friday, June 10, 2016. Planning began during the previous quadrennium, with CONAM members seeking guidance at a regional level from other CONAMs. Then, through the initiative of Bishop Steiner-Ball, boe harris-nakakakena and Ragghi Rain Calentine (both long-time members and contributors to the New Jersey CONAM and to the NEJNAMC as well) were main speakers at our 2015 annual conference, and their many and varied activities helped pave the way for the 2016 service.

Jay Parkins was appointed as chairperson to develop, in consultation with the committee, this significant milestone event. Opened with Native flute playing, a gathering song, special words of welcome to Native American guests, and traditional gift giving, the service included a "Call to Remembrance, Repentance and Reconciliation," hymns and gospel readings, a meditation delivered by Rev. Jay Parkins, prayers of reflection and confession, words of assurance, songs sung in Native languages and drumming by Mother Earth Beat, a West Virginia Native American women's drum.

As a symbolic act of repentance, the congregation was invited to tie a gray ribbon around each person's wrist as a sign of repentance and in remembrance that we all are called to be reconcilers in Christ. As a final symbol and gift, church representatives came forward and were given small white pines (trees are often used to stand for peace) to plant at their churches across the conference and marking their commitment to repentance, reconciliation, love and peace--their commitment to acknowledging past wrongs perpetuated by the Methodist Church upon Native peoples, and their desire to build stronger, more positive relationships.

Our second major project was hosting the Northeastern Jurisdictional Native American Ministries Committee (NEJNAMC) annual meeting held on October 6-8 in Wheeling, WV. Planning began in 2015 and required a real team effort. Drawing on multiple consultations with the executive committee of the NEJNAMC, the WV CONAM centered the meeting at Christ United Methodist Church in Wheeling (a special thanks here to Rev. Jacob Steele, his staff, and congregation!), where board meetings, agency reports, business and plenary sessions, devotions, committee/task force reports, and a silent auction for fundraising were held.

At the Wheeling Hampton Inn, the meeting's 50 participants were greeted by CONAM members and given individual welcome baskets filled with conference information, brochures about West Virginia, bottles of spring water, and snacks. A cookout and social evening were enjoyed at the Inn's outdoor facilities, activities again graced by the music, singing, and friendship of Mother Earth Beat Drum. Another highlight of the conference was a bus trip to the Grave Creek Archeological Complex in Moundsville, WV. Participants were treated to a presentation by Andrea Keller, Cultural Program Coordinator of the site, which included displays concerning ancient Native American history and cultures in our

state. Although hosting this event indeed took a group effort, a special note of thanks goes to J.F. Lacaria, who worked over several months to make the meeting a successful reality.

Finally, the WV CONAM continued developing a Native American spiritual outreach to inmates at the Huttonsville Correctional Center in Huttonsville, WV. Ellesa High created “traveling” items to build a sacred space for inmate ceremonies and prayers, ones that could be used both outside on the grounds or inside the facility during inclement weather while also meeting institutional regulations. In addition, the CONAM donated ten abalone shells needed by inmates for smudging with sage as part of their spiritual practices.

With Christ as our Beacon and Savior, the members of the WV CONAM remain dedicated to discovering new possibilities for better serving Native Americans within our annual conference and to enhancing Native materials that can be used in our churches.

We would love to hear from you!

Ellesa High, Chairperson

Ellesa.High@mail.wvu.edu or phone 303-435-2338

Older Adult Ministries

The Older Adult Ministry Team (OAM) is in the process of forming for the quadrennium.

Are you interested in reaching out to people who identify themselves as senior citizens, older adults, or Baby Boomers (born between 1946 – 1963)? The Older Adult Ministry Team may be for you. Already some of the team has attended BOOMERSTOCK in Nashville and have been trained to identify and reach out to these people with ministries that will meet them where they are.

Older adult ministries already happen in many churches, but we want to make connections so that we can learn from each other. We will share resources and encourage churches to make ministry to this age group a priority.

Janet Flanagan, Chairperson

Ordained Ministry

The West Virginia Annual Conference Board of Ordained Ministry consists of 40 members representing all nine Districts, including Elders currently serving and some who have retired, Associate Members, Deacons, Local Pastors and Laity to represent the whole of our Annual Conference. The Cabinet representative to the Board, Rev. Melissa Shortridge, assists in clear communication between the Board and the Cabinet. The Discipline articulates at least 35 tasks for the Board of Ordained Ministry, which include enlistment and recruitment of new clergy in cooperation with the Cabinet to caring for clergy throughout their ministry as well as recognition of clergy retirements. To attend to and ensure that the guidelines and tasks outlined in the Discipline, the Board is organized into committees to represent the various areas.

The Executive Committee includes the Board Chair (The Rev. Sharletta M. Green), Vice-Chair (The Rev. Dr. Jay Parkins); Registrar (The Rev. Jacob Steele); Secretary (The Rev. Sara Facemyer Lamb); Chair of the Order of Elders (The Rev. Julie Halstead); Chair of the Order of Deacons (The Rev. Claudia Fizer); Chair of the Fellowship of Associate Members and Local Pastors (The Rev. Gwen Wolford); Cabinet Representative (The Rev. Melissa Shortridge); chair of Enlistment and Recruitment (The Rev. Larry Buckland); Registrar of Local Pastors (The Rev. Richard Justice); Chair of Conference Relations (The Rev. Robert Fulton); Vocational Discernment Coordinator (The Rev. Suzanne Ellis) and Residency Co-Director (The Rev. Bart Thompson).

The Rev. Dr. Bonnie MacDonald, Annual Conference Director of Leadership Formation and Ministry Support, is the Conference Staff liaison and is an amazing resource for the Board.

In addition to the full Board meetings, the committees meet to better serve their constituents.

Interview and Evaluation Team

The Board's most visible work is the interviewing of candidates for Associate, Provisional and Full membership. Each candidate spends a day with the Board interviewing in a small group and then with the full Board. We have time for worship and fellowship, and we have a chaplain that is with the candidates throughout the day to offer spiritual support. The Rev. Tom Nolan has agreed to be our chaplain for this quadrennium. We are thankful for his leadership in worship and the presence he offers the candidates, as well as the members of the Board during our time together. During February and March 2017 interview cycle, the Board interviewed and approved the following for recommendation to the Clergy Executive Session at Annual Conference:

- 4-Full Membership/Elders' Orders
- 1-Full Membership/Deacons' Orders
- 3-Provisional Membership/Elders' Orders
- 1-Provisional Membership/Deacons' Orders
- 1-Recognition of Orders and Full Membership
- 3-Members by Transfer

Candidacy

The West Virginia Annual Conference began the “Inquiring Candidacy Program” in 2013, which is led by the Rev. Suzanne Ellis. Since its inception, we have had 102 candidates participate in this program of a two-day retreat and group mentoring sessions. Mentors assist inquiring candidates to discern where God is calling them (licensing, ordination or remaining in some area of lay ministry). We are thankful for the work of all who assist with this program and the leadership they offer our inquiring candidates.

Residency Team

The Residency program is under new leadership and is offering exciting new ways of learning, growing, connecting and building lasting relationships that will support clergy throughout their ministry. We have a team of three clergy leading Residency this quadrennium, The Rev. Bart Thompson, The Rev. Alan Williams and The Rev. Alicia Rapking. They are excited to move from five two-day gatherings to a five-day spiritual academy with class time, spiritual guidance work, worship and covenant group meetings at least four times a year. There will be times of travel to see historic places in our United Methodist history here in the United States while also connecting with the General Church. We are seeking to offer a more deep, focused and centered experience for our candidates in this restructuring of our Residency program.

Board of Ordained Ministry Policies and Procedures: The Board’s policies and procedures are all outlined on the conference website: www.wvumc.org .

Ministry Orders

The Rev. Julie Halstead, Chair of Order of Elders; the Rev. Claudia Fizer, Chair of the Order of Deacons; and the Rev. Gwen Wolford, Chair of the Fellowship of Associate Members and Local Pastors, all work to provide information from the constituents they represent to help us be more effective in the ministry of the Board.

There are a few more committees that share in the responsibility of caring for our clergy in various ways. Course of Study, Continuing Formation, Registrars, and Scholarship Teams all work to assist our candidates in each part of our process with understanding educational requirements depending on the route one is taking. We offer assistance with funding for education, receive necessary paperwork and required materials for evaluation, and provide the tools for continuing in excellence after finishing licensing or ordination.

The Leadership of the Board is new this Quadrennium. We are learning and growing in our roles as we seek to care for clergy from the beginning of the inquiry process to finishing strong in retirement. It is our desire and our prayer to better equip, serve and care for those who minister in our churches in the West Virginia Annual Conference so our clergy, laity, churches, and communities will be healthy leaders in this world in Mind, Body and Spirit.

Rev. Sharletta M. Green, Chair

Ordained Ministry - Order of Elders

We have begun a new chapter in the life of the West Virginia Conference Order of Elders with a new chair and many new members of the Executive Committee. We have inherited a rich tradition and it has been our desire to build on those important foundations as we stress the need for covenant groups and camaraderie with those carrying a most challenging, and most rewarding, authority in the church as ordained elders.

Our vision is to be in covenant for and with one another, in mutual care and accountability; to offer meaningful and relevant learning opportunities as we serve the church by making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world; and to work together with the Order of Deacons and the Fellowship of Local Pastors as we all serve Christ's church in the West Virginia Conference.

Last fall at our gathering, we recognized our new ordinands with gifts of patens and chalices designed for the 2016 General Conference. We were motivated and encouraged by Bishop Sandra Steiner Ball's message to us.

This spring we procured author and motivator Teresa Gilbert, who has written a guidebook entitled Charting a Course for Discipleship. The book attempts to give us an opportunity to intentionally plan steps for making disciples in a clear and distinct manner, given our individual local church settings. Gilbert and her husband, a former District Superintendent from the Illinois Conference, presented a number of models to help us in this endeavor. As an added treat, musical artist Eliza Lynn, formerly from Nashville, assisted us in worship.

In an effort to be invitational and to stress the importance of covenant among our members, we have made it a point to invite our provisional members to participate in our sessions as well, meeting around the conference for the convenience of our membership. Spiritual discipline should start early in one's ministry, and to make our gatherings rich in covenant, fellowship, encouragement, and care is important to us all.

It is an honor to serve as the first female Chair of the Order. I look forward to a continuing creative and inspiring time together for the remainder of the quadrennium.

Rev. Julie Halstead

Ordained Ministry - Order of Deacons

Members of the Order of Deacons are ordained clergypersons called to lifetime ministry of Word, Service, Compassion, and Justice. As servant leaders, Deacons help form and nurture disciples of Jesus Christ. By teaching and proclaiming God's Word, leading in worship, and assisting with the administration of the sacraments, we strive to connect the gathered community of faith with its ministry and mission to the poor, the sick and the oppressed in the world. Our obedience to God's call and faithfulness to covenant undergird our mission of equipping and empowering the laity, of witnessing to the love of Christ through transformational ministries in our communities, our conference and in the world.

WVAC Deacons presently serve in a variety of specialized and complementary ministries that include Christian education, music, hospitality, chaplaincy, higher education, senior adult ministry, financial stewardship, worship arts, youth ministry, UM agency leadership and special education teaching. Some of us are Deacon Associates, giving servant leadership alongside our Elder brothers/sisters, while others presently serve in pastoral capacity with sacramental privilege. By design, Deacons must discern and secure their own place of ministry/employment and seek approval and appointment by the Bishop. In this way, we are authorized by the church in our ministries as ordained clergy to the community-at-large, local congregations, and in district and conference level capacities that connect the church and the world.

In mid-November, we spent a day apart with our Resident Bishop, Sandra Steiner Ball. Our host for the day was our deacon brother, Rev. David Donathan, Minister of Music and Organist at Christ Church UM, Charleston. We appreciate having had access to the worship and gathering spaces at CCUM, and especially enjoyed David's guided tour of the recently remodeled facility. Our guest speaker, who is an atheist, shared his personal perspectives on organized religion and faith and dialogued openly in Q & A with the Order for our morning session. The afternoon business session was followed by Bishop Sandra's address to the Order and reflections on 2016 General Conference legislation related to deacons. And as one of the moderators, she also shared perspective and details about the Commission on a Way Forward. We closed with a Prayer and Praise Service in the Centrum. It was a gathering designed to help us reconnect with ourselves and our Order, to clarify our relationship with God, the church, community, and the world. The weather was supportive of travel, and participation was stellar!

As I compose this report, our annual retreat is less than ten days away. Anticipated agenda highlights include Love Feast worship, a field trip to the post-flood area of Clendenin, Ukrainian Easter egg decorating, and a pipe organ mini-concert. Blessed John XXIII Pastoral Center is a popular site for all manner of our conference gatherings. We are looking forward to worship, fellowship and hospitality there. Unfortunately, Bishop Sandra will not be with us, as she will be at a distance, doing her part to find a Way Forward. We will be in prayer for the church and the world there and in our places of ministry.

Presently our WVAC Order of Deacons is twenty-two members strong. Thirteen of us are in active appointive ministry, one is in CPE process, and the balance are serving in retired relationship. Two of our members are serving in other conferences, and two appointed here are actually members of other conferences. We anticipate the ordination of an additional commissioned deacon at this 2017 Annual Conference. Thanks be to God, we also have prospects among exploring candidates and commissioned members yet to come for ordination. "Active" or "Retired," we are by no means static as to ministry and mission and/or number and connection within the Order.

And yes, we are yet alive! Thanks and praise to God for that!

Reverend Claudia A Krebs Fizer, FD-R
Chairperson, Order of Deacons

Fellowship of Associate Members and Local Pastors

“Each annual conference shall organize a Fellowship of Local Pastors and Associate Members. **All** licensed local pastors and associate members **shall** be members of and participate in the Fellowship. The Fellowship will provide mutual support for its members for the sake of the life and mission of the church.

The specific and limited function is to:

- (a) providing for regular gatherings of local pastors and associate members for continuing formation in relationship to Jesus Christ;
- (b) encouraging local pastors in continued study beyond Course of Study;
- (c) developing a bond of unity and common commitment to the mission and ministry of The UMC and the annual conference; and
- (d) enabling the creation of relationships that allow mutual support and trust. (see ¶323)

Local Pastors are approved annually by their District Committee on Ministry. Upon recommendation of this committee, they **may** be licensed by the bishop to perform all the duties of a pastor including the sacraments within and while appointed to a particular charge (¶316).

The Associate Member is in the itinerant ministry of the Church and is available on a continuing basis for appointment by the bishop. They shall be amenable to the annual conference in the performance of their ministry and shall be granted the same security of appointment as elders (¶321). There are 26 Associate members serving churches with six of those serving while in retired status. For the conference year 2016-2017, there were 243 Local Pastors serving in the WV Annual Conference including 77 full-time and 166 part-time.

On Thursday, June 8, the Fellowship will gather for its Annual Meeting on the campus of WV Wesleyan College. Our gathering will begin at 11:30 a.m. with a time of fellowship before the meal is served. The cost to AM's and LP's and their guests will be \$5.00, with the remainder of the cost covered by the Fellowship. Lunch is at noon and the gathering will conclude in time to be in the chapel at the start of opening worship for Annual Conference. Email me at dgwolford.gw@gmail.com or call 304-813-0176 to reserve your seat.

In addition to my role as WVAC Fellowship Chair, I am serving as the National Fellowship Chair, as well. I encourage every Associate Member and Local Pastor to become a member of the NFAMLP by going to www.nfamlp.org and printing the membership form, writing a check for \$35 and mailing to the treasurer, Don Olm, N1982 Julius Drive, Greenville, WI 54942.

Feel free to contact me at any time for any reason. To God be the glory!

Gwen Wolford, WV Annual Conference Fellowship Chairperson and NFAMLP Chair

Outdoor Ministries

The following are brief reports from our district camps, Asbury Woods and Crossroads, a memory of camping at Camp CJ, and a more thorough report from our conference camp, Spring Heights.

Asbury Woods Camp - Western District

Asbury Woods is a year-round United Methodist Retreat Center located in Salt Rock, WV (Western District). It is available for all groups and all sizes. The camp offers four different buildings for lodging and meeting areas, a chapel, dining hall/lodge with a full kitchen and fireplace, a small lake, pool, picnic shelter, a campfire area, and hiking trails and natural beauty throughout.

Summer is our busiest season with four different district camps including Day Camp for Kindergarten - 2nd grade, Older Elementary Camp for 3rd-5th grades, Middle School Camp from 6th-8th grades, and High School Camp for 9th-12th grades. Anyone throughout the conference is welcome to attend our camps.

Summer also sees several mission teams from various places along the east coast use our camp as their headquarters and lodging area to do mission work throughout the Tri-State Area. Asbury Woods is a very busy place all summer.

During the fall, winter, and spring many church groups and outside organizations use the camp for retreats, meetings, hikes, picnics, reunions and many other activities. The camp has also hosted many weddings and receptions.

Asbury Woods is a special and beautiful place that is a source of pride for our district and conference. Everyone is invited to come visit or book the camp for your church's picnics, retreats, meetings, or just a group outing.

Rev. Steve Hensley

For further information about reserving Asbury Woods, please contact Bobby or Wanda Hall at 304-948-1020 or asburywoods@zoominternet.net

Crossroads Camp - Little Kanawha District

A lot has happened at Crossroads camp in 2016. We kicked off the year in January with the little Kanawha District Winter Retreat. Who would have thought the theme "Live Like You're Leaving" would prepare our camp for the days ahead? Our hearts were saddened on February 3, 2016, when our beloved camp manager Dave Tucker earned his wings and crossed over to heaven. He was definitely light and salt to the camp at Crossroads. He had a vision for the camp and it began when he came as a camper in 1975. We miss him, but God saw fit to bless our camp twice with his twin brother Daryll Tucker took over in March 2019 as camp manager.

By April of 2016, the board began to focus on camp updates and improvements. Improvements include updated LED outdoor dusk-to-dawn lighting, a new metal roof on Trinity Cabin, and a camp washer and dryer were added to the medical building.

The board of directors established the GREATER THINGS CAMPAIGN in an effort to fund-raise to update the present cabins and the long-term planning of a new lodge with meeting rooms, kitchen/cafeteria, showers, and sleeping areas. As a board, we are so thankful for the churches that started our camp in 1945 and have continued to assist in growing our camp. Now is the time for thinking of the future youth and the legacy of “preparing youth for their Christ-like journey” as our mission statement says. Volunteers that generously donate their time and talents are doing the work at the camp.

During this improvement/under construction time we will continue working on our newest cabin for completion in 2017. We purchased new bunk beds and installed a mini-split heating and cooling system for this cabin in July 2016.

Crossroads is an important part of the Little Kanawha District and to the community around Parkersburg. In 2016, we held eleven weekend camps, four week-long camps, three weddings, and various graduation/birthday gatherings, family reunions, and church picnics. Two families held their family Christmas celebrations at Crossroads Camp. We are looking forward to all that God has in store for Crossroads Camp in 2017!

Lisa D. Withee, Board Chairman and Camping and Retreats Coordinator
Lisa.withee1970@gmail.com

Camp CJ (Greenbrier, Midland South, and Southern Districts) **Church Camp Memories**

I started attending church camp when I was 5 years old with my mom and dad who were both counselors. I then would attend many more years as a camper before becoming a junior counselor when I was 16 and eventually a counselor in college. Camp CJ has been a major influence in my life and still is to this day. I use many of the lessons I learned while at camp in my daily walk in life with God. Treating people with compassion and dignity is the way I try to live each day. I am grounded by the bible verse my dad taught me “Gracious words are a honeycomb, sweet to the soul and healing to the bones.” –Proverbs 16:24 NIV

I could probably write a book of my most memorable experiences of camp but a few highlights are leading songs at the campfire, talent shows, running each morning before breakfast, and our communion service on Thursday night. I loved singing songs with the whole camp by the fire and shouting as loud as we could. The talent shows were always a hit at camp because we would practice a song or skit during the year to make sure it was perfect. As an avid college runner and current marathoner, I would always awake before sunlight to get my morning run in. I would use this hour or so each morning as personal devotional time with God. It seemed to start the day off the right way. Communion was the most spiritually rewarding part of camp for me because it culminated the week with a beautiful service as we took part in the Lord’s supper and prayed together.

I really credit a lot of my success today to attending church camp for 15+ years. I will always keep a special place in my heart for my church camp family. Many times, I believe Camp CJ was more of my church family than the actual church I attended growing up. The bonds we created can never be broken and are something I will cherish for the rest

of my life. I am the Head Men's Cross Country/Track & Field Coach at the University of Charleston and always try to implement lessons I learned from camp to the guys I coach each day.

Nick Bias

Spring Heights-West Virginia Conference Camp

Hello, 2017! We are excited to start another year here at Spring Heights. We continue to look for ways to introduce young people to the Lord. At Spring Heights, we like to use our nearly 1000 acres to partake in God's wonders with a beautiful lake, hiking trails, wildlife, sitting by the campfire, and praying around the cross in the meadow.

Last year we had around 300 campers, and are working on increasing our camper registration. We introduced a few new programs last summer that were a hit and will be back this year, like Night Owls and Super Splashes. We strive for excellence at Spring Heights and are always improving our camps and programs. This year we are excited to introduce a Family Weekend at the end of the summer, July 28- July 30. So, come and join the good clean fun in a godly environment.

One thing that I am really excited about is the possibility of offering day camp this summer to our communities affected by flooding. That is right - we are going to take our day camp on the road! Four Spring Heights staff will take the fun of camp to Clendenin UMC and Rainelle UMC so the young people who live in those communities might enjoy some fun and spiritual formation. We have applied for a grant to make this ministry happen and, with the good Lord willing, we will know by Conference if we have received the funding!

Our retreat business is steadily growing, with church groups, weddings, and parties. We plan to have a few fundraisers, such as a women's retreat and a mud run. Everyone is welcome to reserve cottages, lodges, or space at Spring Heights! If you would like to book a weekend or week, please contact the office.

Spring Heights is a vital ministry of the Annual Conference. We are proud to be hosting the Radical Discipleship Academy of Appalachia for the fourth year this summer. Burlington Family Services continues to send children in their care to camp at Spring Heights each summer. The House of the Carpenter will be sending some of their children to camp. We host Course of Study for local pastors six weekends out of the year. In March 2017, we hosted one of the largest Course of Study weekends ever with 109 students!

This year has had its fair share of difficulties. One of our challenges at Spring Heights is providing clean and safe water for those who visit the property. Clean water is needed for drinking, cooking, cleaning, and showering. Because of the camp's remote location, we contract water treatment on the property by two state-certified water treatment operators. Between the contractors' fees, chemicals, and maintenance we spend nearly \$50,000 a year to provide clean water to the camp. While this is a large expense, it is an essential one, and Spring Heights is dedicated to providing a safe environment for its guests, which includes clean drinking water.

I do believe that God provided Spring Heights as an oasis from the hustle and bustle of the world, a refuge where we can partake in the wonders of creation. God provided a place of worship for the young and old and anyone in between to enjoy. Spring Heights is calling, and you really should come and see!

While we work on trying to improve, Spring Heights is always in need of volunteer help and donations. If you would like to bring a volunteer crew out for a day, please contact the office. We are happy to host volunteer groups who can help us maintain the property so that Spring Heights can continue to be a place where people grow in their understanding of God for generations to come. If you have a donation, please contact the camp office to arrange pick-up/drop-off. Make checks to "Conference Treasurer" with "Spring Heights Donation" in the memo line. Donations can be mailed to:

Conference Treasurer
Attn: Cheryl Sutton
P.O. Box 2469
Charleston, WV 25329

I want to thank the Conference Trustees and members of the Covenant Council for having faith in us and supporting us as we continue to make improvements to the property and program. In the past year, we have laid fresh gravel on the maintenance road, fixed some old water pipes, and replaced the pool pump. We are excited about dreams for the future that include sustainable land use, growing local produce, and teaching creation stewardship in a way that reflects God's hope for creation.

We are hoping for a great year and invite you to join us in some way! Please follow the progress of our ministry:

at www.springheights.org;
on Twitter [@springheights](https://twitter.com/springheights);
on Facebook at www.facebook.com/springheightsfb
on Instagram [@springheights](https://www.instagram.com/springheights)
or on Pinterest, SpringHeights.

See you soon!

Amy Mullins
amy@springheights.org
2067 Barrcut Road
Spencer, WV 25276
Phone: 304-927-5865

Pensions

The main responsibilities of the members of the Board of Pensions are to manage our pension and health care plans. Everyone is well aware of the volatile nature of these endeavors. We, however, are pleased to report that our conference has experienced success over the last few years in preserving our current health care plan. We also continue to provide increases to our Past Service Rate, which provides income for our retirees, while protecting our reserve for unexpected downturns in the economy. Thank you for your part in attempting to maintain active and healthy lifestyles. We would also like to extend special thanks to Jim Berner and Kathy Damron for all of their hard work, prudence, and dedication in working with our clergy and laity who utilize our health care plan and denominational pension plans.

Jamie O'Brien, Chairperson

BOARD OF PENSIONS-PENSION FUNDS, INC. FUNDS HELD BY THE GENERAL BOARD OF PENSIONS AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2016

1. Deposit Account - The "Checking Account" maintained by the General Board of Pensions through which the West Virginia Annual Conference Pension Plan makes deposits and payments.

Balance: 12/31/2016: \$3,489.84

2. Past Service Funding Account (Pre 1982 Service) - The past service liability account for clergy who have retired and to which is credited the conference's level annual payment toward its past service liability and to which are debited the amounts required to pay benefits to retired clergy, widows and other claimants.

Balance: 12/31/2016: \$9,759,307 overfunded (126%)

3. Superannuate Endowment Fund - An account not belonging to the West Virginia Annual Conference Pension Plan, but created by the General Board of Pensions from assets of earlier pension plans of the United Methodist Church and from which the West Virginia Annual Conference receives interest earnings which are credited to the Deposit Account to reduce the Conference's annual payments in its Pension Plans.

Balance: 12/31/2016: \$ 482,616.13

4. Defined Contribution (DC) and Comprehensive Protection Plan (CPP) Clearing Account - An account established at the General Board of Pensions and Health Benefits to clear DC and CPP payments in accordance with the Modified Direct Bill Program used to receive and credit participants' retirement contributions.

Balance: 12/31/2016: \$ 254,728.11

5. Clergy Retirement Security Program (CRSP) Defined Benefit (DB) Clearing Account

- An account established at the General Board of Pensions and Health Benefits to clear DB payments in accordance with the Modified Direct Bill Program used to receive and credit participants' retirement contributions.

Balance: 12/31/2016: \$ 733,758.40

6. Deposit Account Excess – United Methodist Foundation of WV – An account established to invest balances with our local United Methodist Foundation for earnings and liquidity purposes.

Balance: 12/31/2016: \$ 2,003,072.79

7. MPP Annuities Reserve Fund – Reserve set up to absorb any market downturns in funding MPP account balances in pay status to retirees.

Balance: 12/31/2016: \$1,786,234.57

8. Undesignated Pension Funds, Inc. Reserve – a reserve fund setup to allow flexibility between Pension requirements and Health Care issues as the Board of Pensions see necessary

Balance: 12/31/2016: \$ 1,112,257.99.

RECOMMENDATIONS APPROVED BY THE 2017 ANNUAL CONFERENCE**I. Pensions**

- A. That the Past Service Rate (pension rate for service rendered prior to 1982) increase from \$565.00 to \$576.00, effective January 1, 2018.
- B. That the fair share figure for past service pensions (Pre-82 Service) be reduced to \$150,000.
- C. That clergy who are appointed at three-quarter time and half-time and who are eligible to participate in the Clergy Retirement Security Program (CRSP) be eligible to earn benefits under the CRSP plan.

II. Hospital Medical Insurance

- A. That the apportionment for the health insurance program remain at \$3,900,000.
- B. That \$100,000 be apportioned for the Medical Insurance Reserve account.
- C. That all health care premiums remain at 2017 levels for 2018.
- D. The Board of Pensions shall administer the Health Insurance Plan and be authorized to make such changes as will be of benefit to the local church and all persons covered by the plan.

Medicare Eligible Participants

- E. To be eligible for the West Virginia Annual Conference health insurance supplement to Medicare coverage at retirement, you must have been under full

time appointment status for seven consecutive years immediately prior to your retirement date. Persons who have had an interruption in the last seven years of their appointive service, but have remained in relationship with the West Virginia Annual Conference, may have their eligibility reviewed by the Board of Pensions on a case-by-case basis.

- F. If an Eligible Employee and/or his Dependent(s) are not enrolled in the Plan within the applicable sixty (60) day enrollment period, or within a period described under “Special Enrollment Procedure”, they must enroll during the Plan’s Open Enrollment Period, [March 1st – March 31st], a nonparticipating Eligible Employee may elect to enroll themselves singly or with his or her Dependents in the Plan and a Participating Employee may elect to add, modify or eliminate coverage under the Plan. Any changes elected during the Plan’s Open Enrollment Period shall be effective as of the first day of the Plan Year, [April 1st], immediately following the close of the Open Enrollment Period.
- G. The Plan will coordinate prescription drug claims as if the participant is a Medicare participant and will subsidize reimbursement at 50% of the first dollar of the Medicare Part D “Donut Hole” prescription drug expense of \$2,250 to \$5,850 up to a maximum reimbursement of \$1,800 per Calendar year.

III. Miscellaneous

- A. That the first Sunday in November 2018 be observed as the Day of Remembrance Sunday, and that offering be designated for the support and development of our Disaster Response Depot and Mission Central HUB. .
- B. That the moving expense allowance for retiring clergy and spouses of active clergy who have died within the year be set at a maximum of \$4,000. Moving expenses shall be limited to actual costs up to the maximum allowable amount.
- C. The maximum individual emergency benefit shall not exceed \$1,000 per calendar year, with a lifetime benefit of \$3,000.
- D. That the following special grants and pension adjustments be approved:

SPECIAL CASES:

Dependent Adult Children:

- Esther Louella Feather
- Wilma Wayne.
- Amy B. Conner

- E. Funding for the Clergy Retirement Security Plan (CRSP) will be billed directly to each church in the Annual Conference by using a formula that reflects each pastor’s compensation as a percentage of overall conference compensation.
- F. That the Executive Secretary of Pension Funds, Inc. be authorized to sign all documents on behalf of the Annual Conference that binds our pension agreements with the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits.
- G. That the resolution **Rental/Housing Allowances Retired or Disabled Clergy** of this Conference be adopted. *SEE RESOLUTION #6 in Section VI - Resolutions.*

Retired Ministers' Housing Loan Fund

History

At the 1981 session of the West Virginia Annual Conference, upon recommendation of the Board of Pensions, a Ministers' Retirement Housing Loan Fund was established to provide low-interest loans to ministers at or near retirement for the purpose of purchasing a retirement home. The Board of Pensions, at their August 19, 1999 meeting revised this fund to be loans of no more than \$100,000 per family.

Pension Funds, Inc. administers this housing loan fund through the Executive Secretary's office. The fund is supported by gifts, Day of Remembrance offerings, and interest earned on existing loans.

Eligibility

All United Methodist ministers retiring in the current calendar year and surviving spouses of deceased ministers (provided application is made within one year after the minister's death) are eligible to receive loans from this fund. Applications may be secured by writing the Office of Pension Funds, Inc., P.O. Box 2469, Charleston, WV 25329, attention Jim Berner. ALL APPLICATIONS MUST BE RECEIVED BY FEBRUARY 1. Applications will be reviewed at the Board's February meeting.

Donations

Donations of money, stock, bonds, real property, and other convertible assets are welcomed. The Executive Secretary of Pension Funds, Inc., and the United Methodist Foundation of West Virginia, Inc. will cooperate to provide channels of giving and investment for persons who would like to provide gifts to the Retirement Housing Loan Fund.

Loan Fund Guidelines

Loans are available to surviving spouses of deceased ministers and to ministers of the West Virginia Annual Conference who will qualify for pension after serving on a full-time basis as a Local Pastor or Conference Member at least ten (10) consecutive years immediately preceding the date of retirement.

The following criteria will determine the availability of loans:

1. Fund Balance.
2. Number of Applications received.
3. Applicant's financial need.
4. Nearness of applicant to retirement (must be within one year of retirement). This provision does NOT apply to surviving spouses.

The purpose of the loan is to assist in the purchase of primary retirement housing. Loans will NOT be made to assist in refinancing a house or to purchase a second home if the first home is sold.

Loans will be limited to eighty percent (80%) of the appraised value or purchase price of the property, whichever is least. If the home is later sold, the loan is NOT assumable.

Interest rates shall be two-thirds of the prime rate as reported in the Wall Street Journal with a minimum rate of 6% on the day the loan application is received in the office of the Executive Secretary of Pension Funds, Inc. Loans shall be amortized over a period of not more than twenty years. All costs relative to loan procurement shall be borne by the borrower.

The borrower shall provide the following documents:

1. Deed of Trust
2. Evidence of property and liability insurance
3. Termite inspection (existing home) or termite treatment (new homes)
4. Promissory note covering the full amount of the loan
5. Certificate of title or final title letter
6. Appraisal
7. Home Inspection
8. Survey



Erin Sears, Lay Equalization Young Adult from the Southern District, sings during a Worship Service at Annual Conference 2017

Religion and Race

The Commission on Religion and Race (CORR) is a vital unit of the West Virginia Conference of The United Methodist Church. CORR assumes responsibility for an array of matters as outlined in the 2016 Book of Discipline, ¶643. CORR interprets the intent of all responsibilities in a manner that reflects the context for ministry and realities within the West Virginia Episcopal Area. CORR meets quarterly and began its work in the current quadrennium with a strategic planning session on July 28 and 29, 2016.

CORR supports and provides programs of education in areas of intercultural competency, institutional equity, and vital conversations. Intercultural competency was the focus of the 2016 Bishop's Summit on Diversity and Inclusion. The 2016 Summit occurred on September 16th and 17th at Charleston Conference Center situated in South Charleston, WV. The Reverend Giovanni Arroyo and Michelle Ledder from the General Commission on Religion and Race (GCORR) led the intercultural competency training.

CORR provides resources and access to training to enable the work of the local church ministry with a particular emphasis on pastors and congregations involved in cross-racial/cross cultural ministry. Presentations on diversity and inclusion occurred in the Greenbrier District on May 17, 2016; the Southern District on May 26, 2016; and the Little Kanawha District on October 13, 2016. CORR members and a team of African-American clergy and laity represented the WVUMC at the School of Congregational Development held in Evanston, Illinois, on August 17 - 20, 2016. CORR also supported involvement in meetings of Rural Chaplains and of Black Methodists for Church Renewal (BMCR).

CORR consults with the Board of Ordained Ministry and the cabinet to ensure racial/ethnic inclusion and equity in the recruitment, credentialing, and itineracy processes of the Conference. The executive committee of the BOOM and the cabinet shall meet at least once per year in joint sessions with CORR to create and assess long-term plans for identifying and developing clergy leadership who will serve the racial and ethnic population in the Church. CORR's joint meeting with the Cabinet and the Board of Ordained Ministry was held on October 18, 2016.

CORR is available to consult with local churches that are experiencing changing demographics in the neighborhoods where they are located, which demographics may be different from the church's racial/ethnic constituency, and have a desire to be in ministry within their community. CORR will also partner with appropriate denominational bodies to assist with the resolution of complaints of racial/ethnic discrimination made by clergy or laity.

CORR met via conference call on January 23, 2017, and on April 22, 2017. CORR planned and organized the Ethnic Ministries Luncheon scheduled during Annual Conference on Friday, June 9, 2017.

Like the General Commission on Religion and Race (GCORR), CORR works to build the capacity of The United Methodist Church, specifically WVUMC, to be contextually relevant and to reach more people, younger people, and more diverse people as we make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. CORR looks forward to ongoing ministry within the West Virginia Conference.

Felica Wooten Williams, Ph.D., Chairperson

Rules

The Rules Committee met on February 23rd in Charleston, WV. There were five members present – one joining via conference call – along with the Secretary of the Annual Conference. Rev. Dr. Ken Krimmel, Director of Connectional Ministries, was invited to join the meeting for a period of time to present proposals from Covenant Council concerning additions to the Rules.

A review of the Rules was done to check for editorial changes that needed to be made in order to bring the Rules into alignment with the 2016 *Book of Discipline*. There were over fifty such changes this quadrennium. The Rules as printed in the Pre-Conference Workbook reflect those editorial changes.

Following discussion and affirmative vote, the Rules Committee presents the following actionable items to the WV Annual Conference Rules. Please note that deletions are marked with ~~words that have been stricken~~ and additions are marked with double underlines. Numbers used in the Actionable Items below for amended rules should correspond with the Conference Workbook.

Actionable Item A

Insert new rule, and change numbering as needed, in the Annual Conference Rules, Section II, Conference Agencies, as found on pages 396-405 of the 2016 Journal of the WVAC and as edited in the rules which appear in the Conference Workbook:

13. Ethnic Local Church Concerns

¶632 There shall be in every annual conference a conference committee on ethnic local church concerns or other structure.

- a. Purpose: Shall follow the basic functions of ¶632 in order to support and resource the ethnic local church.
- b. Membership:
 1. Five members
 2. Care shall be taken to ensure balance of clergy, laity, gender, youth and young adult.
 3. It is recommended that the majority of members be representative of racial and ethnic people, reflecting the racial and ethnic constituencies and local churches of the annual conference.
 4. Director of Connectional Ministries or their designee (without vote)

Rationale: *This rule change originated with the Covenant Council and is presented to bring our Agency Structure into alignment with the 2016 Book of Discipline.*

Actionable Item B

Insert new rule, and change numbering as needed, in the Annual Conference Rules, Section II, Conference Agencies, as found on pages 396-405 of the 2016 Journal of the WVAC and as edited in the Conference Workbook:

22. Native American Ministries, Committee on

¶654 There shall be an annual conference committee on Native American ministry or other structure.

a. Purpose: To determine the distribution of the Native American Ministries Sunday offering, coordinate the promotion of Native American Ministries Sunday, and monitor Native American ministries within the annual conference.

b. Membership:

1. No less than five, no more than twelve. Where possible, membership should include at least three Native Americans.

2. Care shall be taken to ensure balance of clergy, laity, gender, youth and young adults.

3. Director of Connectional Ministries or their designee (without vote)

Rationale: This rule change initiated with the Committee on Native American Ministries (CONAM) and was presented and approved by Covenant Council prior to being presented to the Rules Committee. Both CONAM and Covenant Council feel that the structure of this committee needs to reflect a workable way for this provision of the Discipline to be carried out in the WVAC and that this rule best reflects that structure.

Actionable Item C

Amend Section II, Rule 4 as follows:

4. Camping and Outdoor Ministries

a. Purpose: Shall be responsible for planning and directing the camps and conference education program including the operation of the Educational Center.

b. Membership:

1. chairperson

2. nine district representatives

3. two at-large members

~~4. Director of Leadership Formation and Ministry Support (without vote)~~

4. Director of Youth and Outdoor Ministries (without vote)

5. Spring Heights Camp Manager (without vote)

6. Two Conference Trustees, ex officio, to be named by the Conference Board of Trustees.

Rationale: This rule change originated with the Nominations Team and reflects changes in Conference staff structure that relate to this particular Agency.

Actionable Item D

Amend Section II, Rule 13 as follows:

13. Evangelism ¶630.3

- a. Purpose: To plan and promote an effective, comprehensive ministry of evangelism and to train and resource clergy and laity in ministries of evangelism.
- b. Membership:
 1. chairperson
 2. a representative from Congregational Development team
 3. a representative from Global Ministries team
 4. the Conference Lay Leader
 5. Director of Evangelism and Congregational Development (without vote)
 6. one lay person from each district
 - ~~7. one clergy person from each district~~
 8. up to eight five at-large members
- c. This agency shall relate to the General Board of Discipleship.

Rationale: This rule change originated with the Nominations Team at the request of the Evangelism Team. The Evangelism Team feels that this smaller structure allows for broad representation from across the Annual Conference while still allowing the team to be small enough to carry out its tasks.

Following further review of Section II of the WVAC Rules and reports in the 2016 *Journal*, the committee voted to have the Chairperson meet with the leadership of CCYM and see if a change was needed to Section II, Rule 32. On March 2, 2017, Scott Sears met via phone with Lauren Shanholtzer (President of CCYM), Rev. Joseph Hill (Conference Youth Coordinator) and Shea James (Conference Director of Youth and Outdoor Ministries). Following that meeting, the following was submitted and approved by the Rules Committee by electronic vote.

Actionable Item E

Amend Section II, Rule 32, as follows:

34. United Methodist Youth

¶ 649 There shall be a conference council on youth ministry.

- a. Purpose: To strengthen the youth ministry in the local churches and districts of the annual conference.
- b. Membership:
 1. ~~forty-two members~~ as outlined in ¶649.2 and in the Constitution of WVAC CCYM.
 - ~~2. at least 2/3 membership to be youth~~

3. ~~Membership will include two positions for balancing members to insure adequate representation of its various constituencies and to strive to reach a 50% balance of racial ethnic members. (§649.2)~~
 4. ~~twenty seven district representatives - two youth and one adult from each district.~~
 52. conference youth coordinator.
 6. ~~conference lay leader or designate~~
 73. Director of Youth and Outdoor Ministries (without vote)
- c. This agency shall relate to the Covenant Council.

Rationale: When this rule was established the CCYM sponsored an annual event that allowed for the election/discernment of certain officers as well as the election of District Representation and at that time this rule and the CCYM Constitution were aligned. The event no longer takes place in our Annual Conference and the CCYM moved to a different process of selecting its officers and its representatives. They are currently updating their Constitution to reflect these changes and will provide printed copies of that constitution at Annual Conference session when we consider this rule change. In future years, the CCYM Constitution will be included in the Conference Workbook as part of their report. The UMM and UMW (Rules 31 and 32 as well as §§647 and 648) also establish their membership via their constitution; however, those documents are part of the Book of Discipline. It is the CCYM's hope that by printing the Constitution along with the workbook that the process for membership will be seen as open, fair and well defined.

Scott Sears, Chairperson



West Virginia Annual Conference 2017 greets those attending Children's Conference

Trustees

Greetings! Since the early years of the Wesleyan movement – the beginnings of our former Methodist, Evangelical United Brethren and United Methodist tradition – meeting houses, churches, and church related properties have been governed by an understanding of being a “connection”. The Model Deed of 1763 established by John Wesley and the first Methodists and the Deed of Declaration (1784) served as the precedent for matters of property to be included in the Book of Discipline.

“All properties of United Methodist local churches and other United Methodist agencies and institutions are held, in trust, for the benefit of the entire denomination, and ownership and usage of church property is subject to the Discipline. This trust requirement is an essential element of the historic polity of The United Methodist Church or its predecessor denominations or communions and has been a part of the Discipline since 1797. It reflects the connectional structure of the Church by ensuring that the property will be used solely for purposes consonant with the mission of the entire denomination as set forth in the Discipline.” (§2501, 2016 Book of Discipline)

The Annual Conference trustees are charged with maintaining that trust through the legal responsibilities of holding of donations, bequests, real or personal property for the Annual Conference (§2512, 2016 Discipline); the trustees are directed by the Annual Conference in regard to investing, buying, selling, transferring, or conveying funds and properties that are held in trust. As directed by the Book of Discipline, *“the board (of trustees) shall make to each session of the annual conference a full, true, and faithful report of its doings, of all funds, monies, securities, and property held in trust by it, and of its receipts and disbursements during the conference year.”* (§2512.6)

I make this report from the Conference Trustees as the newly elected chairperson effective February 11, 2017. Serving as the chairperson of the trustees since June 2015 has been Rev. Dallas Forren. In anticipation of his taking retirement from active ministry in June 2017, he resigned as chairperson effective February 11, 2017. The Trustees elected the following officers as required by the Book of Discipline (Paragraph 2512.2): Rev. Dr. William Wilson, President; Mr. Larry Johnson, Vice President; and Rev. Ellen File, Secretary. The trustees affirmed per conference fiscal policies that Mr. James Berner, Conference Treasurer, serves as Treasurer of the Trustees.

At the June 2016 meeting of the trustees the following persons were affirmed in ex-officio roles with the trustees: employed as Trustee Agent, Rev. Clifford Schell; nominated by the bishop and elected by the Annual Conference, Conference Chancellor, Mr. Robert File, Esq. Consulting with the trustees regularly through the Office of Administrative Services is the conference Risk Manager, Mr. John Thompson. The trustees affirmed that Rev. Dr. Joe Kenaston is the Cabinet liaison effective January 2017.

The following areas are reported to the conference: 1) The Episcopal Residence; 2) Spring Heights; 3) Property Insurance; and 4) Closed Churches Property 5) Resolutions.

Episcopal Residence

The residence provided for our resident bishop in Putnam County is being regularly maintained and kept up in regular consultation with Bishop Sandra Steiner Ball and her husband, Rev. Barry Ball. Our thanks and appreciation to our Director of Administrative Services, James Berner, for his regular routine assistance with maintenance and upkeep coordination. Suggestions are made by and in consultation with the Conference Episcopacy Committee about the residence and Episcopal family needs. A kitchen remodeling project is currently underway and a “project manager” has been selected for securing bids, coordinating the project, and being on site to assist with decisions regarding the remodeling project.

Spring Heights

As a conference owned property, the trustees continue to address the year-to-year maintenance needs of the Spring Heights camp facilities outside of Spencer, WV. The trustees recommend the amount of \$30,000 in the Spring Heights Maintenance Fund in Category III of the 2018 Conference Budget. The trustees have been involved since 2014 in a selective timbering agreement at Spring Heights. This has been best for the stewardship of the land, and to provide capital funds for the camp. Funds were used in 2016 from the timbering account for maintenance and major equipment needs. No funds remain in the timbering account as of December 31, 2016. The trustees are working with the timbering plan, in consultation with Natco Forestry Services, for future phases.

Property Insurance

The trustees appreciate the guidance and consultation given by our Conference Risk Manager, Mr. John Thompson. Conference properties, vehicles, and mission projects (through our Affiliation Agreements) are covered by insurance. As reflected in the financial reports of the Conference Treasurer the cost of property insurance for 2016 was \$211,770 (see Property Insurance Account report from Conference Treasurer).

Closed Churches Property

Effective January 1, 2016, the disciplinary process regarding closed churches (formerly known as “abandoned and discontinued churches and properties”) changed in the Discipline. The trustees have been reviewing and training on the new process and language of ¶2549 (2016 Book of Discipline)

We thank our Trustee Agent, Rev. Cliff Schell, for his work on sales and conveyance of closed church properties. The report of the Trustee Agent appears below.

Trustee Resolutions

As the trustees have studied the new disciplinary paragraphs about closed churches and have consulted with both Bishop Sandra Steiner Ball and our Conference Chancellor, Robert File, we are revising the three “Trustee resolutions” that are presented to the Annual Conference each year.

Upon recommendation of both bishop and chancellor, the former trustee resolution titled “Unlawful Appropriation of Church Property” (see p.227, 2016 W.Va. Conference

Journal), which has been adopted by the annual session of W.Va. Annual Conference since 1970, is not being presented. The resolution is not needed based on the new ¶2549, 2016 Book of Discipline.

We recommend adoption of the newly revised resolutions presented by the Trustees –

2017 Resolution #1 - *Closed Properties, and the Sale and Other Disposition of the Same*

2017 Resolution #2 - *Closed Church – Real & Personal Property Funds*

Our thanks to Rev. Dr. Ken Krimmel, Mr. James Berner, Rev. Clifford Schell and Mr. Robert File, Esq., for their work and consultation on the new revised trustee resolutions.

My appreciation to each of the trustees and our ex-officio persons for the work and leadership that they provide. I am humbled to serve the Annual Conference in this important work in my retirement as a retired Elder in Full Connection.

“In all things may God alone be glorified!” (Saint Benedict)

“The best of all, God is with us!” (Rev. John Wesley)

William H. Wilson (Bill), Chairperson

ABANDONED/DISCONTINUED CHURCHES & CLOSED CHURCH PROPERTIES CONVEYED
MARCH 1, 2016 – FEBRUARY 28, 2017

<u>DATE</u>	<u>PROPERTY</u>	<u>COUNTY</u>	<u>CONSIDERATION</u>
<u>04/22/2016</u>	<u>Darlington UMC Parsonage</u>	<u>Kanawha</u>	<u>\$ 139.35 (Advertising)</u> <u>Conveyed</u>
<u>01/23/ 2017</u>	<u>Brawley UMC</u>	<u>Kanawha</u>	<u>NA-Conveyed</u>
<u>06/04/2016</u>	<u>North Buckhannon UMC</u>	<u>Upshur</u>	<u>\$1,000.00</u>
<u>07/08/2016</u>	<u>Zion UMC Cemetery</u>	<u>Tyler</u>	<u>\$ 400.00</u>
<u>08/03/2016</u>	<u>Mt. Liberty UMC Lot</u>	<u>Barbour</u>	<u>\$1,500.00</u>
<u>09/01/2016</u>	<u>Halo UMC</u>	<u>Webster</u>	<u>NA-Merged-Trinity</u>
<u>11/12/2016</u>	<u>Hardman Chapel UMC</u>	<u>Calhoun</u>	<u>\$ 500.00</u>
<u>11/16/2016</u>	<u>Johnson Avenue UMC</u>	<u>Harrison</u>	<u>\$1,000.00</u>
<u>12/20/2016</u>	<u>Jakes Run UMC</u>	<u>Monongalia</u>	<u>\$2,700.00</u>
<u>01/30/2017</u>	<u>Z. Warner UMC</u>	<u>Cabell</u>	<u>\$24,500.00</u>

United Methodist Men

Faith is only a five-letter word in our vocabulary, but to a Christian person it means so much; for without faith in our lives, we would be nowhere at all. As in Matthew 17-20 and Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you. If you have faith as a grain of mustard-seed, ye shall say unto this mountain. Remove hence to yonder place: and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you. The West Virginia United Methodist Men have that faith, a lot more than the size of a mustard seed, and there is nothing impossible for us as a group and we can accomplish much along with the Lord

The United Methodist Men had a good start for the year with a table, in conjunction with the Boy Scouts, at the ministerial fair of the 2016 Annual Conference. It was at the Saturday evening session that the United Methodist Men had the honor and delight to present our conference first ever Susanna Wesley Award of Excellence to Judith M. Kenaston. It was a big surprise to her, and much credit goes to her husband for keeping her away from other tasks so that she could be the recipient of the well-deserved award for the outstanding service she has given in her local church, the West Virginia Conference and the General Conference level.

The United Methodist Men again were able in different parts of the state to help in the community by getting truckloads of potatoes and other items to help feed the hungry and give drink to the thirsty. During the flooding in the state, different men groups were willing to help in the cleanup to allow people to feel somewhat normal.

We are very thankful to the men from the MonValley District for hosting the Arnold Eddy Golf Tournament, This made the 11 out of 12 years that they have been doing this project that enables the Boy Scouts in West Virginia and surrounding areas to attend the Circuit Rider Event without cost. This year's tournament was held Tygart Valley Golf Course in Grafton, WV, with the winner being Suncrest United Methodist Church.

This year the West Virginia Conference United Methodist Men's weekend was held on September 9-11, 2016 at Jackson's Mill Resort, home for this event since 1954. The theme for this was "What Christ is Doing with My Life" and our guest speaker was Joe Kelley, National Prayer Advocate. Mr. Kelley took the time to speak to the Boy Scouts at the campfire section held on Saturday evening after the UMM had the honor again to talk to each of the boys during the dinner. The UMM has set up a scholarship program to assist a Scout to attend the National Scout Jamboree in 2017 at the Summit Bechtelle Retreat. We were able to award three scholarships for the Jamboree: Scout Andrew Fisher of Vance Presbyterian Church in Wheeling, WV; Scout Joseph Shepard, Troop 20 of Wayside UMC; and Scout Charles Boston, Troop 60 of Vienna Baptist Church, both in Vienna, WV.

It was at the Saturday evening meeting that the following members were re-affirmed as officers:

President: Don Davis
Vice President: George Hohman
Secretary: Ed Rancjik
Treasury: Danny Murphy

Scout/Youth: Ralph Herron
Nomination: Paul Hanko
Prayer Advocate: Harold Langevin
Funding: Rev. George Webb

Mr. Wayne Custer of Pleasant Hill United Methodist Church, Wheeling WV, was selected as the West Virginia Conference United Methodist Men “Man of the Year” for 2016. Wayne has served as president of the Pleasant Hill UM Men, Northern District, the West Virginia Conference UM Men, the Northeastern Jurisdiction and Second-Vice-President of the National Association of Conference Presidents and many other things. Wayne is now serving for the second time as President of the Northeastern Jurisdiction. In accordance with his wishes, I was honored to present Wayne a plaque and certificate at his home church, Pleasant Hill United Methodist Church in Wheeling, WV.

Don Davis, Conference President

United Methodist Women

The United Methodist Women of the West Virginia Conference were working in 2016 hard as did our foremothers in 1869 to serve Women, Children, and Youth.

We started with the Spiritual Growth Retreat at Cedar Lakes. Our Theme “Fresh Winds of Faith” and our speaker was the Rev. Heather Murray Elkins. She lived up to our Theme. After being robbed of her belongings before she arrived at the Retreat, she went on to give us the best lesson we will ever have in Faith. She was given some clothing by some of our ladies and with just her telephone and her memory led us in an inspiring retreat.

Then on to Mission u at West Virginia Wesleyan College in Buckhannon where our Theme was “Fresh Winds of Knowledge.” We had several great studies. The first was “The Bible and Human Sexuality” with study leaders J.F. Lacaria and Thomasina Stewart. Both received high praise for the teaching on such a controversial subject. Our “Climate Justice” study was led by Ramona Lockwood and Gayle Lesure who both did an exceptional job. Judy Pauley taught our “Latin America” study and having made many mission trips to Guatamala had some great experience to draw from. She also received great reviews on Evaluation.

Our children studied “Latin America” and grades 1-4 were taught by Justus Robinson and Hannah Willey. Grades 5-8 were taught by Kasey Akinson and Katelyn Lewis and Grades 9-12 were taught by Kerri Smith. All had great reviews. Our musicians were Winnie Smith and Kendra Rinard, who served as song leader.

Then we were off for Bridgeport for our 45th Annual Meeting. Our Theme was “Fresh Winds of Mercy” and our speaker was Gail Loush. She told us the story of the many parts but one body. Our ingathering was for their Backpack ministry and we really outdid ourselves. They will be able to feed a lot of children.

Now we march on to 2017 and we keep working for women, children, and youth.

Dorothy Siemiaczko, Conference President

Young Adult Ministry

Eighteen to thirty-five is a large target age group! Therefore, Young Adult Ministries requests your prayers as in addition to taking on new leadership for the quadrennium, we are also in the midst of creating a Ministry Action Plan (MAP) in order to better service Young Adults in West Virginia Annual Conference.

The Young Adult Ministries team is currently discussing aspects of ministry to young adults. We are also seeking to research and discover effective forms of Young Adult Ministry to partner with and learn from. We have placed a survey on our Facebook page seeking to gain information that will help us to define our mission. Please go; “like,” “share,” and participate. We look forward to the coming year of ministry.

God Bless you West Virginia United Methodist Conference.

Micah Blanks, Chairperson
micahblanks@hotmail.com

Youth Ministries

This has been a very exciting and innovative year for the Conference Council on Youth Ministries (CCYM) as well as the youth of the West Virginia Annual Conference. Our mission is to strengthen the faith of youth, call youth into a relationship with God, and strengthen youth ministries on a conference and district level. With a pretty big transition year under our belts, the 2016-2017 year is shaping up to be full of opportunities, new leadership, and growth throughout the conference. There are fantastic things coming from the youth of West Virginia and they continue to show how bright the future of the church is.

For the third year, the Radical Discipleship Academy of Appalachia (RDAA) was able to reach out and connect with more youth. There were seven new participants this year: Carly Hartley, Brennan Counts, Luke Morgan, Logan Harris, Emma Williams, Zach Barrickman, and Krista Lowden. Alongside them were four second- or third-year RDAA members: Louisa Smith, Brookann Simmons, Jenna Soltesz, and Ward Ries. These 11 youth plus other adults and young adults spent one week together diving deeper into their faith and answering theological questions. They had communion together, worshiped, and made memories along the way. After their week at Spring Heights, they spent the next 11 months within their covenant groups learning and growing closer with their relationship with God.

“On This Rock” was the theme for Fall Workshop 2016. We were very fortunate to have over 200 youth join together at Cedar Lakes in Ripley, WV, to hear this wonderful message. Our speakers for the weekend were Brookann Simmons, Jenna Soltesz, Rev. Maria Wiblin, and Bob Cover. Youth learned to incorporate 80’s music into theology, how God fills our lives in ways we don’t see, and how to build their faith in different circumstances. Over \$1,000 was raised for the Youth Service Fund (YSF), which will be used to help youth groups and individuals all over the nation and the world with mission trips or service projects.

The Northeastern Jurisdiction (NEJ) takes a pilgrimage every year to a different country. This year, the NEJ Mission of Peace (MOP) traveled to the country of Nicaragua. Two youth from West Virginia, Cassie Stewart and Elissa Erb, traveled with other youth and adults from the NEJ on this spiritual journey. As they returned, they have gone and shared their stories and experiences with others. For the 2017-2018 year, MOP plans on voyaging to Cuba. This summer, the second Rally on the Mountain will take place June 22-25, 2017, at Snowshoe Mountain Resort. This year's theme will be "Create 2017" and we are so excited to welcome any and all youth to join us this summer. Marci Coleman will be there as the guest music artist and we are inviting different workshop leaders from both inside and outside the conference. Bishop Steiner Ball will be with us the entire weekend this year and will be sharing a message with us Saturday evening. With the theme of "Create," Snowshoe is the perfect location for us to experience God's creation and learn more about our role as inhabitants of the Earth. We will be able to explore Snowshoe as well as joining together in fellowship and worshipping with one another. We hope to see your youth group there!

This being my final year as the chairperson of CCYM, I wanted to thank some people who have had a huge impact on my journey as well as been a huge help to the youth. First and foremost, Shea James and Joe Hill have worked so hard to get the youth to where they are today. Without their continuous support and help, we would not have been able to figure out what we want for the youth of the conference. I also want to thank Bishop Steiner Ball and J.F. Lacaria for their continued support for youth and giving us a voice in times of need. Some other people I would like to thank are Amy Shanholtzer, Bonnie MacDonald, Deborah Coble, Nancy White, Bob Cover, Wesley McKinney, Tim Smith, Justus Robinson, Matt Hibbs, Diana Shepard, Mark Connor, and Mark Smith. I am tremendously grateful for the opportunities the conference has provided for the growth and development of young leaders in the church. The future of the church is in very capable hands and the youth and young people in the West Virginia Conference are willing and able to do the work of Jesus Christ in and throughout the annual conference. Thank you so much for all the thoughts and prayers over the years and all of the continued support. I am very excited to see what is next for the CCYM and how much they will grow personally and within their relationships throughout the church!

Grace, peace, and blessings,
Lauren Shanholtzer, Chairperson

Youth Coordinator

As Youth Coordinator, I meet and talk often with our Director of Youth and Outdoor Ministries, Rev. Shea James, and our Chair for the Conference Council on Youth Ministry, Lauren Shanholtzer. It is a running joke between us that my role is a “short-term, temporary, interim position,” meaning I might just up and vanish unexpectedly one day. I say joke because watching our young people thinking and creating together, seeing their passion for Christ and for reaching people with his love and watching them discover their gifts and the confidence to use them, it is laughable to imagine myself ever letting go of the chance to observe up close such wonderful growth. I say repeatedly that they are the hope of our tomorrow, and the hope they represent and offer is a promising hope indeed. At times, it has been challenging to balance the Youth Coordinator role with the role of being a senior pastor. I imagine the challenge will remain as I begin my work as a District Superintendent to the Annual Conference. For the chance to continue walking so closely with our youth as they discover and use their gifts, it is a challenge I will happily accept...even if it is a challenge that again finds me wearing ice cream and chocolate syrup at the end of a fundraiser.

Rev. James has been a wonderful addition to the Annual Conference. She has helped to foster a well-balanced atmosphere of freedom, support, and ownership that nurtures CCYM in their work. Lauren Shanholtzer continues to serve quite capably as council chair, devoting a great deal of her free time to conference ministry with and for youth. Shea and I both have enjoyed her maturity and passion in filling that office. It fills us with pride and a little sadness as Lauren transitions into college life. Her contributions and spirit will be sorely missed by all of us on the council but we are grateful to have many equally capable and gifted young people on the Council eager to take up the work. We are confident they will carry the torch with equal grace and dedication.

Last summer, after more planning meetings than I can remember, we held the first Rally on the Mountain at Snowshoe resort. We were so proud to offer this experience designed by our youth leaders. We were also proud to work with them as they carried out so much of the behind-the-scenes work it required. For its pilot year, Rally on the Mountain was well executed, well attended, and very well received. We are thankful to all of the chaperones, workshop leaders, and worship leaders that helped to make this such a meaningful experience. We are especially thankful to our Bishop, Rev. Sandra Steiner-Ball and Rev. Barry Ball for making time in what was an exceedingly busy summer to take part in the Rally.

Working our way through that first Rally we have learned a number of ways to enhance the experience for participants this summer. We look forward to offering this summer’s Rally on the Mountain at Snowshoe with the thematic idea, “Create.” It has been heartening to talk with and listen to our young leaders working through everything from an overarching theme, to workshop ideas, all the way down to the finer logistical issues. I promise you, you’ve never seen a more spirited conversation about nametags. The idea was offered for this year’s Rally to forego special guest preachers and to have the youth take on the responsibility of delivering all of the sermons, which they have embraced enthusiastically. We have set the event in June this year to avoid conflicts with the many local events throughout the state that take place in July.

Fall Workshop continues to be a beloved mainstay on our yearly calendar. It is always joyous and inspiring to see youth coming with a desire to grow in faith, in understanding, and in their experience of Christian community with their peers. For all of the studies and stories about the apathy of youth, Shea and I have been blessed to discover at this and every event new youth who are eager to offer new ideas, eager to take their turn at preaching, and eager to join or help CCYM in their work. It filled our hearts to watch our young leaders planning and working to raise money for the Youth Service Fund, even when it resulted in Shea and I serving communion with two hands and two legs duct taped together.

This year Rev. Maria Wilbin gave the opening message and, true to a much-loved tradition, Bob Cover gave our closing sermon. The sermons in between were offered by Jenna Soltesz and Brook Ann Simmons who are exceptional co-chairs for CCYM and exceptional preachers.

We have observed that the counselors that come out to help with Fall Workshop are as excited to be there as our youth. Many are long-time members of the conference who have fond memories of Fall Workshop from their own days as youth. We see that for them the weekend is a beloved time of service but also a time to stay connected with old friends while discovering new ones of all ages.

To the many adults, lay and clergy, who lend their prayers, gifts, and love to our youth year after year at the local, district, and conference levels, we thank you for the young leaders you are discovering, developing, and deploying. I know you watch them with just as much pride and hope as I do. I give thanks for the intergenerational web that sustains and supports our Conference Council on Youth Ministry and the work that we do.

Rev. Joe Hill
Conference Youth Coordinator



Lauren Shanholtzer, Louisa Smith and Dustin McCune lead the Conference in music

United Methodist Foundation of West Virginia, Inc.

Creating a culture of generosity in the West Virginia Annual Conference...

The United Methodist Foundation of West Virginia, Inc. helps create a culture of generosity that transforms the world by raising, managing, and distributing funds that serve the needs of all people and communities. Through Christian stewardship and partnerships with donors, churches and other ministries, the Foundation makes disciples of Christ for the transformation of the world by helping individuals and communities grow closer to God’s image. We welcome opportunities to lead discussions, classes, and workshops about stewardship and planned giving. Remember that as you plan for:

- ◆ Clergy gatherings and retreats or leadership academies and training;
- ◆ Gatherings of churches or church groups, parishes, or districts; and
- ◆ Meetings with individuals who are interested in learning about legacy giving.

Need to fill the pulpit on a particular day? Contact Rev. Jeff Taylor or Kim Matthews, CLM. We are willing to travel to churches to preach or teach. Let us know how we can help you with funding your ministry!

FINANCIAL & ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

Investment Returns: The Foundation’s investment returns, net of all fees, for the past year, as well as the 3-, 5-, and 10-year averages, along with comparative benchmarks, are as follows:

Investment Fund	2016	3-year Average 2014-2016	5-Year Average 2012-2016	10-Year Average 2007-2016
Fund A—Fixed Income Fund	2.34%	0.72%	1.11%	2.38%
<i>Benchmark</i>	1.25%	0.16%	-0.04%	2.63%
Fund B1—Conservative Balanced	6.64%	3.06%	6.05%	5.42%
<i>Benchmark</i>	6.40%	2.55%	3.81%	3.16%
Fund B2—Moderate Balanced	7.40%	3.67%	7.30%	5.82%
<i>Benchmark</i>	7.13%	3.23%	5.97%	3.54%
Fund B3—Aggressive Balanced	7.68%	2.51%	7.38%	5.48%
<i>Benchmark</i>	7.21%	2.70%	6.49%	3.63%

Receipts and Assets Under Management

Total gifts and deposits for all purposes received through December 31, 2016, were **\$4.3 Million**. The total amount of assets under the Foundation's management as of December 31, 2016, is nearly \$93.5 Million.

FOUNDATION GRANTS

Budgeted Grants

Each year, we tithe our anticipated revenues for grants to churches and other ministries around the Conference. In 2016, our Grants Committee of The Foundation awarded over \$82,350.00 in ministry grants to the churches and agencies of the West Virginia Annual Conference. The grant awards helped to provide food and literacy programming for children, health and wellness programming for a community, addiction recovery ministry support, clergy excellence grants, training for Boy Scout chaplains, and funding for the West Virginia Council of Churches Day of Hope. Grant applications are accepted throughout the year; guidelines for applications and submission deadlines can be found on our website (www.umfwv.org).

Grants from Foundation Reserves for Flood Relief

When the Foundation started our Grants Program, the Board set a goal of establishing a specific goal of budget reserves to meet future unexpected expenses. When the reserves goal was met, the Board began considering what we should do with our excess reserves. In the midst of our deliberations about the "problem" of excess reserves, the rains came and severe flooding occurred. One Board member sent an e-mail, borrowing from the Book of Esther, that perhaps our excess reserves were to be used "for such a time as this." Every Board member agreed, and we have worked with Bishop Steiner Ball and Rev. J. F. Lacaria to identify where the needs are the greatest among churches who suffered catastrophic losses. We have committed **\$300,000** dollars to churches damaged by the 2016 floods. We are grateful to be in a position to provide this kind of support.

OUR CONVERSION EXPERIENCE

On December 1, 2016, the Foundation finally converted...to a new accounting software system. In February 2016, we began the process of learning a new system and of migrating decades of data from three separate systems to our new, integrated donor management and accounting system called Stellar iPhi. The new system allows us to provide timely reports and up-to-date account information to donors and investment partners. Our quarterly accounting reports sent to donors and churches are in a better, more user-friendly format. Soon, we hope by the time you are reading this report, we will be offering on-line access to account holders to view. We are trying always to improve our operations, and we believe this conversion is a big step forward.

ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Please be sure to visit the Foundation's Ministry Fair Table during Annual Conference. You are invited to join us for lunch on Saturday, June 10 to learn more about our ministry. *All are invited, but space is limited, so please contact us to make your reservation.*

LET US TELL YOU MORE

Of course, we'll come to you, but you can also visit us on the second floor of the Conference Center: 900 Washington Street, E., Suite 203, Charleston, WV 25301.
Toll-free: 1-800-788-3746 ext. 45

To be added to our mailing list, contact us at info@umfwv.org

Contact Jeff Taylor at jefftaylor@umfwv.org

Contact Kim Matthews at kimmatthews@umfwv.org

Check us out on Facebook (www.facebook.com/umfwv) to receive the latest news from the Foundation.

Visit our website at www.umfwv.org

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Rev. Terry Bradfield, Wesley Theological Seminary Vice President for Administration speaks on behalf of seminary education

West Virginia Wesleyan College

The 2016-17 academic year has been a time of transition. President Pam Balch retired at the end of December of 2016, and incoming President Joel Thierstein takes the reins on July 1, 2017. President Balch's tenure was marked by growth in enrollment, the development of graduate programs, the construction of Dunn Hall and the Nordstrom Welcome Center, and the renovation of Fleming and Doney, among many other accomplishments. Dr. Thierstein comes to Wesleyan from Mount Saint Joseph's in Cincinnati, where he served as Provost and Interim President. It is an exciting time at West Virginia Wesleyan, as we celebrate the accomplishments of one President and welcome another to our campus.

Wesleyan continues to build upon its successes. The faculty voted unanimously to approve a Doctor of Nursing Practice degree, and the College is currently seeking approval from the Higher Learning Commission to launch this program in the Fall of 2018. We continue to improve the assessment of student learning, focusing this year on written expression, one of the four mission goals of the College. The Title III Grant continues to provide funding for classroom renovations, academic support, and professional development.

The College continues to offer an array of cultural events for its students and the local community. In February 2017, Lincoln scholar Ronald C. White, Jr., the author of the celebrated biography *A. Lincoln*, visited our campus. Mr. White evaluated Wesleyan's Lincoln collection and presented a lecture on our sixteenth president. The lecture was one of the most well attended cultural events of recent times, with over 300 in attendance. Wesleyan is currently exploring ways of utilizing its Lincoln collection to develop programs for its students.

Arguably, the greatest student success of the year, among many, was Mason Winkie becoming Wesleyan's fourteenth Fulbright Scholar. Winkie, a senior biochemistry and psychology major from Bridgeport, will represent the United States as an English Teaching Assistant in the Czech Republic. I cannot think of a better young person to represent Wesleyan and the United States than Mason Winkie.

Finally, I will close by expressing how much Wesleyan values its connection with The United Methodist Church. I know many of your ministers personally, especially those who serve on the College's Board of Trustees. The College and The United Methodist Church both are passionate about service and social justice, as we work together to provide our students with assistance as they take the next steps on their spiritual journeys. Thank you for your friendship and your support!

Sincerely,
Dr. Boyd Creasman
Interim President



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GENERAL AGENCY REPORT - 2017 ANNUAL CONFERENCE General Board of Higher Education and Ministry (GBHEM)

The agency launched a new mission and vision at the start of 2017. The updated mission and vision simplify our role as the primary leadership development agency for The United Methodist Church.

MISSION

Our mission is to lead and connect the educational and ministerial life of The United Methodist Church.

VISION

We will continue to transform the world through the power of education and ministry in the Methodist tradition. We will serve God and the worldwide Church in recruiting, nurturing, and educating lay and clergy leaders who seek wisdom and live ethically as God's peacemakers.

EDUCATION

The **Collegiate Ministry Office** at GBHEM hosted Imagine What's NEXT, a three-day event for young adults ages 18-26 to discern their call of lay or clergy leadership and learn ways to connect that God-given call through the work of the church. Nearly 700 students participated in NEXT, an increase of nearly 40 percent from prior years.

The **Young Clergy Initiative** funds innovative projects across the church to attract young people to ordained ministry. The \$7 million initiative has funded more than 75 projects. A biennial event, **Exploration** provides a platform for young adults ages 18-26 to hear, discern, and respond to God's call to ordained ministry. In 2015, 475 attended Exploration. The 2017 event will take place in Portland, Oregon, November 3 – 5.

The agency has a **Global Methodist Education Network** that includes more than 1,000 institutions of higher education around the world. GBHEM supports **Schools, Colleges and Universities** across the U.S. The Schools, Colleges, and Universities Office at GBHEM hosted 30 of the school's presidents at the CEO Meeting of the Council of Independent Colleges in Orlando, Florida in January 2017. In addition, the office hosted 35 presidents at the National Association of Schools & Colleges of The United Methodist Church (NASCUMC) winter meeting in Washington, D.C.

Global Education and New Initiatives at GBHEM provides technical assistance, financial support, scholarships and recruitment aids for five target regions across the globe: Africa, Asia Pacific, Latin America, Europe and the U.S. Global Education works with the United-Methodist related schools, particularly institutions of higher education and theology schools. In addition to schools, the office supports international and regional associations, as well as oversees the Methodist Global Education Fund for Leadership Development.

The **Black College Fund** invests in the hopes and dreams of those students attending United Methodist-related historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs). The Black College Fund distributes 95 percent (on average more than \$9 million) of all funds received equally to the 11 HBCUs. The fund provides for faculty development, infrastructure maintenance, and for students who need financial support and scholarship, helping the HBCUs to keep tuition and fees competitive. The Black College Fund was pleased to announce that five of its HBCU's enrolled 22 Hispanic students as part of the Latino student access program in 2016.

The agency works with the Commission on **Central Conference Theological Education** (CCTE) to distribute grants for the theological education of pastoral leaders in the Central Conferences. The 2012 General Conference established a \$5 million CCTE fund, and more than 250 grants have been awarded across 22 countries to date. Due to its impact, the fund was doubled at the 2016 General Conference. New grant recipients were announced in March 2017.

In 2016, GBHEM's Office of **Loans and Scholarships** awarded 2,025 students with more than \$3.1 million in scholarships and 406 students with more than \$1.9 million in loans. The loans and scholarships are open to United Methodist students and seminarians who are seeking to further their education.

GBHEM reestablished its **publishing ministry** in 2016 to engage, nurture, and advocate for the intellectual life of The United Methodist Church. Through this ministry, GBHEM produces academic resources for the constituencies of the agency, including single-author and multi-author works, as well as edited volumes. More than 10 new and revised books have been released under the publishing ministry.

MINISTRY

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** has distributed nearly 1,500 devices to 22 theological seminaries, loaded with publications in English, French, and Portuguese.

Individuals pursuing **licensed and ordained ministry** find the resources they need to overcome challenges and barriers sometimes encountered when responding to God's call in GBHEM's Candidacy Office. The office coordinated a successful Board of Ordained Ministry Quadrennial Leadership Development in fall 2016. In addition, the office revised the BOM Handbook following General Conference along with the conference relations resources for the 2016 Book of Discipline. The Candidacy Office is also developing an eight-year Clergy Assessment Process and GBHEM's Effective Ministry Assessment (EMA) leadership development tool.

Course of Study and **Specialized Theological Education** provides resources for local pastors to gain the education and training needed for service across the church, with courses available in Spanish. The office launched Portuguese Course Study programs in 2016 and will continue to expand. GBHEM launched three new education options for part-time pastors in December 2016: an Extension of the Course of Study School of Ohio (COSSO) located at United Theological Seminary, a satellite Course of Study program with Saint Paul School of Theology in Hays, Kansas, and a pilot Escuela de Cursos de Estudios (ECE), a Spanish Course of Study, in Denver, Colorado.

Chaplains and pastoral counselors are credentialed through the **United Methodist Endorsing Agency**, which provides resources for chaplains and counselors serving inside and outside the walls of the church. UMEA supports those working in 25 ministry settings such health care, military, prison, workplace, marriage and family, specialized and more. The office is completing the second pilot initiative to evaluate the effectiveness of a hybrid Clinical Pastoral Education program sponsored by GBHEM.

GBHEM leads clergy continuing education programs, providing resources for spiritual formation and professional development to help ensure an effective clergy for the church. **Clergy Lifelong Learning** provides an innovative platform for ministry through the multilingual UMC Cyber Campus. In addition, the office organized the 60th anniversary celebration of full clergy rights for women in August 2016 at the United Methodist Clergywomen gathering, which included 450 attendees from 27 countries, speaking six languages. This office continues to provide guidance in cross-cultural/cross-racial leadership development throughout the denomination.

The agency supports **deacons and diaconal ministers** as they lead the people of God into ministries of compassion and justice, and interpret the needs of the world to the church. The Office of Deacon Ministry Development and Provisional Membership led the celebrations for the 20th anniversary of the "recovery" of full-member clergy deacons for the church. In addition, a new certification in parish nursing was created, and the certification in camping and retreat ministries was updated (in collaboration with Discipleship Ministries).

Africa University

Africa University ended 2016 poised to celebrate its Silver Jubilee and eager to embrace new opportunities for transformative ministry over the next 25 years.

It is a great joy to recognize and thank the West Virginia Conference for a 100 percent investment in the Africa University Fund (AUF) apportionment in 2016. All ten conferences in the Northeastern Jurisdiction led by example, giving to the AUF at 100 percent or higher for the second consecutive year. The commitment of local churches across all five jurisdictions enabled 34 of the 56 United Methodist annual conferences in the United States to invest 100 percent or more of their asking to the AUF.

The university community acknowledges, with heartfelt appreciation, the many ways in which the churches of the West Virginia Conference has been active, faithful, and generous in helping Africa University to realize its mission. In addition to their investment in the AUF, West Virginia United Methodists have made ongoing contributions for scholarships. Thank you for all that you for enabling Africa University to thrive!

Through Africa University, the West Virginia Conference helps young people to discover and sharpen their gifts for leadership. Thanks to the selflessness of West Virginia United Methodists, the mission of the global United Methodist Church is taking shape in the contributions of the university's 7,000+ graduates. More than 90 percent of these graduates are still in Africa, serving communities in 32 countries. Currently, more than two dozen Africa University graduates are missionaries in Africa, Latin America, Asia and Europe, under the auspices of the General Board of Global Ministries (GBGM). Young people who would otherwise be on the margins of society are actively helping others to experience God's grace, peace, and abundance.

Without Africa University, "I am sure that I would not have the mental maturity and spiritual growth that I have now," said Albert Wakili, an AU graduate who is a Global Mission Fellow. Wakili is currently serving as a youth and children's worker at Blanchardstown Methodist Church in Dublin, Ireland, one of the newest and most ethnically diverse congregations in Irish Methodism. He plans to return to Nigeria later this year when his two-year term with the GBGM ends.

Great things are on the horizon for Africa University in the next quarter century. Your Africa University is continuing to evolve and serve by:

- Restructuring its academic units in order to remain relevant and provide a broader-based education to meet new demands in the African workforce.
- Providing leadership formation experiences and learning for more than 1,400 students from 26 African countries.
- Generating new knowledge and capacity to support peacebuilding and to improve food security, human rights, and leadership for the African continent.

Africa University draws its mandate, energy, and capacity to transform lives from The United Methodist Church. Therefore, as part of the observance of the 25th anniversary, we invite the individual members, congregations, and districts of the West Virginia Conference to take time this year to celebrate their journey with Africa University. Engage in a season of daily prayer for Africa University. Join Africa University's honorary alumni association. Consider hosting a special "AU@25" event or Africa University Sunday in your local church or area. Use your event to increase awareness of Africa University's ministry and invite attendees to each give at least \$25 each in honor of the 25th anniversary. Celebrate your role in making Africa University all that it is today and all that it will be in the future. Remember that regardless of the challenges that arise, United Methodists sustain this ministry together — praying, loving and sharing our blessings — and there is no other way that we could do it!

Thank you for your unwavering response to the call to active faith, hope, and renewal in the world. We pray that blessings continue to abound for all who serve in ministry in the West Virginia Conference.

James H. Salley
Associate Vice Chancellor for Institutional Advancement
Africa University Development Office
P O Box 340007; Nashville, TN 37203-0007; Tel: (615) 340-7438
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Boston University School of Theology



Boston University School of Theology

Dear Colleagues in the West Virginia Conference:

Greetings in the Spirit of Jesus Christ! The Boston University School of Theology (BUSTH) travels with you in the vital journey of seeking God, building knowledge, and equipping leaders for the church and society. We celebrate our students, alums, and church partners, who join hands in serving God and building toward transformed communities.

BREAKING NEWS:

- **Congregations:** We welcomed Jonathan Calvillo as a new faculty member in sociology of religion, leading us toward better understanding of congregations and faith identity. See also our website of congregational resources: <http://www.bu.edu/cpt/current-projects-2/congregational-research-and-development/>.
- **Doctor of Ministry:** The DMin program in Transformational Leadership is soaring with deeply committed student cohorts who are widely ecumenical, culturally diverse, and increasingly global. The blended model includes intensives, online courses, and close work with faculty mentors.
- **Scholarships:** We multiplied funding for student scholarships and housing, including the Vincent Machozi Scholarship for African students who seek to cultivate ministries of compassion, justice, and peace in their homelands.
- **Religion and Arts Initiative:** The Initiative sponsored a hymn-writing contest this year, complementing the photography contest last year and STH's rotating art exhibits. The current exhibit focuses on ecological healing: "Sense of Place" by women print-makers from Ecuador and Maine.

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, workshops, and projects that foster justice and reconciliation.

- **Travel seminars:** Courses engaging local communities on Arizona-Mexican border and in Cuba, Germany, and Indonesia.
- **Ecumenical partnerships:** Continuing close work with UMC, AME, and other Wesleyan denominations, while building strong programs 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 and developing religious leaders who are faithful and wise.

TAKING ACTION GLOBALLY AND LOCALLY:

- **Campus action:** Work with Boston University to improve accessibility and sustainability: to provide full access for all persons (a work in progress) and to live sustainably with the planet.
- **Internships in global service and peacemaking:** Student-initiated internships for service with communities across the world, and for just peacemaking projects with international organizations.

RENEWED COMMITMENT TO JUSTICE: Celebrating differences while joining together for action.

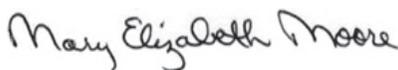
- **Standing with Standing Rock:** Several BUSTH students and alums joined indigenous peoples at the Oceti Sakowin Camp in North Dakota to protest the pipeline on sacred Sioux land.
- **Deep conversations:** Faculty, students, and administrators have led deep conversations on issues that divide, but with respectful listening that builds community life and communal action.

OTHER NOTABLE HEADLINES:

- Our own **Associate Dean Pamela Lightsey** was featured in Boston University's 2016 Annual Report for her pursuit of justice, empowerment, and change.
- Our graduating senior, **Rev. Mariama White-Hammond** (AME) led the Boston Women's March, and some 75 STH faculty and students marched, calling for social and ecological justice as we build new futures in the United States.
- Students of all theological and social orientations are asking and then acting: "What can I do to make this world better?" "How can I witness to my Christian faith?"

As BUSTH looks back on 2016, it celebrates transformational leaders who have loved God and cared mightily for God's world. Their living legacy gives us hope and courage for the future.

Blessings and gratitude,



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, over 10,000 students have graduated from Candler, where they have been shaped as thoughtful, principled, and courageous Christian leaders dedicated transforming the world in the name of Jesus Christ.

One of 13 official seminaries of The United Methodist Church, Candler is also one of seven graduate professional schools of Emory University, a top-tier research institution offering extensive resources and a rich context for study. Our location in Atlanta provides a learning environment that reflects the highly diverse communities of the 21st century. Simply put, there is no better place for ministry preparation that addresses 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 17 degrees: seven 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 apply what they learn in real time. We have also partnered with the University of Georgia's School of Social Work to create an MDiv/MSW where students learn to maximize their effectiveness by combining pastoral skills such as spiritual counseling with social work practices such as family therapy and community assessment.

Our student body continues to reflect the diversity and breadth of the Christian faithful. We have 475 students enrolled, with 51 percent women, 34 percent people of color (U.S.), and a median age of 30. Students represent 39 denominations, with half coming from the Methodist family. 83 percent of students are seeking a degree to prepare them as ministry professionals.

Candler has a scholarship covering 73 percent of tuition. Plus, our comprehensive "Faith & Finance" program teaches money deep commitment to alleviating student debt and employs a multi-pronged approach to tackle this issue. In 2016-2017, we awarded nearly \$5.75 million in Candler scholarships, with 95 percent of M.Div. students receiving aid and the average management skills that serve our students now and will continue to serve them—and the churches they lead—well into the future.

In fall of 2016, Candler welcomed to the faculty Larry Goodpaster as Bishop-in-Residence, and Kendall Soulen as Professor of Systematic Theology. Also this fall, three Candler alumni began their terms as newly elected bishops in the Southeastern Jurisdiction: David Graves (90T) in Alabama-West Florida, R. Lawson Bryan (75T 85T) in South Georgia, and Sue Hauptert-Johnson (95T) in North Georgia.

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 in 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 and Professor of Christianity and World Politics
Candler School of Theology

Drew Theological School

As we celebrate the 150th anniversary of our founding this year, we find ourselves in the unique position of reflecting deeply on our past and, at the same time, looking with confidence and enthusiasm toward the future. Drew Theological School has, throughout its long and distinguished history, fostered a vibrant spirit of learning and community that allows for a rich diversity of both expression and experience. These qualities of inclusion and a steadfast commitment to social justice are what make the Theo School what it is today – and have, in fact, defined it from the beginning of its existence.

In the spirit of our founders, we continue to educate students from all over the United States and throughout the world. We continue to pursue a mission of empowering students to “creative thought and courageous action to advance justice, peace, and love of God, neighbor and the earth.” In the classroom and beyond, we continue to focus on educating and forming rooted, innovative, and bold leaders for the church, the academy, and the world.

These are the principles that attract students to our programs, and they guide us in all we do to support them during their time with us.

We have seen the effects of this in our rising enrollment numbers. In the last three semesters, the Theological School has seen a steady growth in both applications and enrollments, and early indications strongly suggest we will continue that trend this year. Our students hail from across the country, represent 21 different denominations, as well as a sturdy non-denominational presence, making Drew a truly ecumenical community. Yet we could not have arrived here on our own: over 30 percent of our applicants come to us through recommendations from our alumni and friends.

We also have a history of great success when we open our doors to prospective students and invite them to explore our programs first-hand. Of the students who attended our *Open Doors at Drew* event last March, more than 50 percent enrolled.

These gatherings are so successful because they offer prospective students an opportunity to see Drew in person – to see Drew *in action*. We allow them to immerse themselves for the day in dynamic classroom conversations, worship services, and panel discussions with both current students and alumni. These events highlight our efforts to create a truly collaborative, comprehensive, and transformative experience that involves the entire Drew community.

A recent report by the Pew Research Center, “America’s Changing Religious Landscape,” made clear that seminaries and theological schools must reimagine their programs and how they reach students who are seeking out new expressions of Christian theology, ethics, liturgy, and gathered community.

In order to accommodate these prospective students and offer them the kind of dynamic and relevant theological training they seek, we embarked on an ambitious transformation of our curriculum, thanks in part to a generous grant from the Jessie Ball duPont Fund.

This project has been guided by our efforts to address the changing needs of our

students, those who may not choose to pursue a traditional ministerial path, and those who require a more flexible structure to their education. While our commitment to the Church and to the training of pastoral leaders is unwavering, we have also focused on ensuring that our current curriculum, teaching, and student assessment are aligned with more diverse demographics, changes in vocational choices, and the need to prepare religious leaders to serve effectively in multi-faith, secular, and even non-religious settings. We aim to serve the students whose vocational goals may include chaplaincy in healthcare settings, the military, or corporate venues, those who may seek to work as life coaches, or who may pursue careers in advocacy, social activism, and the non-profit world more generally. The focus is on preparing students for transformational leadership, wherever their vocation is lived out.

Our curriculum transformation project also includes a focus on various modes of delivery – online classes and a flexible course schedule for students who are unable to attend class during the day or those who live too far from campus to attend in person regularly. These changes will expand our sphere of influence and the contexts in which our students serve, inspiring us to think more broadly about what is required for leadership-in-context. It will also hopefully bring us an even more diverse student body, something that Drew values highly.

The curriculum that we hope to implement will more clearly and intentionally help students root themselves in the cumulative wisdom of their tradition (more Bible and theology) but also prepare them to be adaptive leaders who confidently innovate ancient wisdom and tradition in order to address contemporary needs and challenges. They will do more and sit less.

Their mentors in learning and experimenting will extend beyond our residential faculty and draw from the rich resources of partner organizations and networks which can provide the real-world settings for these “experiments in courage,” where the pursuit of wisdom and godly living can be more vigorously pursued.

The majority of our students come to us with experience in ministry, and many are currently exercising some form of public religious leadership. Additionally, an increasing number of students come to us with a wide range of experience in the foundational understanding of basic biblical texts and theological concepts. Furthermore, an emphasis on public theology and the role of the public theologian and leader is an essential aspect of the work of Christian ministry today, and more attention will be paid to helping our students develop this aspect of their ministry.

All of these efforts will make it possible to offer our bold vision to a wider audience of students. While these changes will be significant, they will in no way alter the spirit that has distinguished a Drew Theological School education for 150 years. Indeed, these changes have their source and their end in that very spirit, and they will, we are confident, contribute to its continued vitality.

We are thrilled by how our vision for the future of the Theo School is unfolding and taking shape. We look forward to our continued work with the entire Drew community – both past and present, on and off-campus – as we transform this center of learning, pastoral formation, and service to respond in relevant and powerful ways to the changing needs of our churches, our communities, and the world.

Duke Divinity School

In the academic year 2016–2017, we have been delighted to welcome our new dean of Duke Divinity School, Elaine A. Heath. Dean Heath also serves as professor of missional and pastoral theology, and her research interests focus on evangelism and spirituality, evangelism and gender, new monasticism, and emergence in church and theological education. Prior to coming to Duke, she was the McCreless Professor of Evangelism at Southern Methodist University's Perkins School of Theology in Dallas, Texas. Dean Heath is the co-founder of the Missional Wisdom Foundation, which provides opportunities for clergy and laity to learn how to live in intentional, missional communities in diverse social contexts, and she is an ordained elder in the United Methodist Church. She has published books for scholars, churches, and laypeople; her most recent book is *God Unbound: Wisdom from Galatians for the Anxious Church* (Upper Room). She is widely in demand as a speaker and teacher for Annual Conferences, retreats, and leadership training.

Since arriving at Duke in July, Dean Heath has begun work on a new strategic plan for the Divinity School. By the end of 2016, the initial listening and feedback phase had been completed and a task force convened to help guide the process of strategic goal-setting. With Dean Heath's leadership, Duke Divinity School remains mindful of our mission to train, prepare, and form men and women committed to God and enthusiastic about ministry. We endeavor to prepare leaders for a changing church and world who will have the spiritual formation, theological foundation, and institutional flexibility to serve God in established churches, intentional communities, or missional organizations, as the Holy Spirit guides them.

This year we welcomed students from a range of backgrounds who are called to serve God and the church. In 2016, our total enrollment was 641 students: 418 are enrolled in the M.Div. degree program; 52 in the M.T.S.; 8 in the Th.M.; 45 in the Th.D.; 71 in the D.Min.; 16 in the M.A.C.P.; 23 in the M.A.C.S.; and 8 who are special students. Thirty-seven percent of our students are United Methodist, with an additional 4 percent from other Wesleyan traditions, and 48 percent of our M.Div. students are United Methodist. Eleven percent of all students are Baptist, 8 percent are Anglican or Episcopalian, 3 percent are Roman Catholic, 11 percent are Presbyterian or Reformed, with the rest from 24 other denominations or non-denominational churches.

On April 9, the Divinity School hosted the first annual Hispanic Preaching Festival to celebrate and explore Hispanic homiletics. The event drew 54 participants from 14 different Hispanic congregations across the region. Attendees included pastors, laypeople, and students. The festival featured sermons from local pastors, including Alma Ruiz M.Div.'13 and associate pastor of Fiesta Cristiana, which is affiliated with Apex UMC in Apex, N.C., and Raúl Colón, pastor of Centro Cristiano de Vida in Wake Forest, N.C. The festival was part of the Hispanic-Latino/a Preaching Initiative, a Spanish-language program that provides opportunities for Hispanic and Latino/a (H/L) pastors to receive homiletical training in a peer group format. Each year, 10 applicants serving as pastors in the H/L community are chosen to participate as preaching fellows. The peer group begins with a

retreat and then meets monthly for 15 months to engage with homiletical, theological, and exegetical resources led by the program coordinator and other invited teachers.

The Clergy Health Initiative published a new report that illuminates how the demographics of elders and local pastors actively serving United Methodist congregations in North Carolina are shifting. In an effort to better understand and describe the multiple demands and rewards of clergy life, the Duke Clergy Health Initiative has conducted a longitudinal survey of North Carolina's United Methodist clergy every two years since 2008. For the report on appointments, the Clergy Health Initiative paired survey findings with publicly available data from the North Carolina and Western North Carolina Conferences. The findings illuminate shifts in the demographics of elders and local pastors actively serving congregations.

Our initiatives, centers, and programs are a vital resource for us in connecting the work of Duke Divinity School with other disciplines and constituents. The Center for Reconciliation celebrated its 10th anniversary this year, continuing its work of fostering reconciliation through the Summer Institute, the CFR Justice Fellows, and the Great Lakes Initiative in East Africa. The Office of Black Church Studies, in partnership with the Duke Initiatives in Theology and the Arts, Duke Performances, Duke Dance, and the Duke Department of African and African-American Studies, presented a symposium on African-American Theology and the Arts, featuring the renowned dance company Ailey II. The Theology, Medicine, and Culture initiative hosted the event "Practice & Presence: Gathering for Christians in Healthcare," for healthcare professionals who want to deepen or reimagine the relationship of faith in vocation in community with likeminded practitioners. *Faith & Leadership*, the online magazine published by LEADD, continues to reach over 300,000 readers and provide a resource for theological reflection and "traditioned innovation" for all in ministry. Their continued excellent work was recognized again this year with awards from the Associated Church Press "Best of the Christian Press" contest.

In partnership with the Western North Carolina and North Carolina Conferences, the Thriving Rural Communities initiative sponsored the 2016 Convocation on the Rural Church, "Apprenticeship with Jesus," to discuss issues important for transforming rural churches and communities. The Divinity School held a two-day conference titled "Tamar's Ashes: Pastoral Ministry Amidst Sexual Abuse and Domestic Violence" for the school's students as part of the Mentoring for Ministry program. Duke Divinity School remains committed to supporting local churches and local pastors, particularly in under-resourced communities, and providing pastoral training for our students to allow them to minister to people and in places that are often marginalized or forgotten.

We are delighted to announce the hiring of a new assistant professor of homiletics, Jerusha Neal. She is currently serving as a missionary and lecturer in practical theology at the Davuilevu Theological College of the Methodist Church of Fiji and Rotuma in the South Pacific. Her particular interests are formational theological education, teaching preaching in cross-cultural settings, and affirming women in their pastoral call. A native of the U.S. Midwest, Neal has served as co-pastor of the Santee United Methodist Church in Santee, Calif., and been the director of Christian education at the First Presbyterian Church of Fullerton, Calif.

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.

Respectfully submitted by the Office of Dean Elaine A. Heath

Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary

In 2016-2017, Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary is focusing on the following priorities:

- Supporting the local church in **addressing economic challenges** and **engaging young adults as active members of the church**.
- Furthering our commitment to public theology with the launch of the **Garrett-Evanston Children's Defense Fund Freedom Schools Program** and the Hispanic and Latino/a Center's **installation of the *Cátedra* Paulo Freire**.
- Re-imagining lifelong learning as a new "**Connectional Learning**" program that provides opportunities to meet learners where they are with the type of education they need when they need it.
- Engaging faculty scholarship in the design of new courses for a **new MDiv curriculum** beginning Fall 2017 and in celebrating **faculty publications**.

SUPPORTING THE LOCAL CHURCH IN ADDRESSING ECONOMIC CHALLENGES AND ENGAGING YOUNG ADULTS

Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary received two Lilly Endowment awards this fall. A \$750,000 grant will support clergy education in theologically informed financial and business practices. We believe that strong leadership in the financial health of a congregation is critical to its vitality. The grant is part of Lilly Endowment's National Initiative to Address Economic Challenges Facing Pastoral Leaders. To help clergy meet these economic challenges, Garrett-Evangelical has created a multi-dimensional program, "**Leading Vibrant Congregations: A Collaboration of Faith and Finance.**" To read more about the program, visit: www.garrett.edu/FaithAndFinance.

The \$1.5 million grant will assist congregations in launching or mentoring new ministries that will attract young adults – a population that congregations today are struggling to reach. The grant is part of Lilly Endowment's newly announced Young Adult Initiative 2016. With this grant, Garrett-Evangelical becomes one of 12 innovation hubs around the country helping churches create informed and meaningful ministries for millennials. Read more about "**Holy Yearnings, Holy Listening, Holy Partnerships: A Peer-to-Peer Young Adult Ministry Initiative**" at www.garrett.edu/YoungAdultInitiative.

PUBLIC THEOLOGY

This year, Garrett-Evangelical opened the **Children's Defense Fund (CDF) Freedom Schools®** program in partnership with the Evanston community. The CDF Freedom School's program is a six-week, high-quality, literacy-rich program free to underserved children proven to curb summer learning loss and help close achievement gaps. Last summer, we had thirty-five children in 4th, 5th, and 6th grade who participated. These scholars were from Evanston's Fifth Ward, a ward of primarily black and brown people and the only ward in Evanston without its own elementary school. The program was a resounding success. Parents saw their children fall in love with reading and excited to go to the school each day. And, *we* were excited to learn in January, the Garrett-Evanston CDF Freedom Schools Program was approved for summer 2017.

We are driven to increase enrollment of Hispanic and Latina/o students. Dr. Débora Junker, Assistant Dean of Students and Director of the Hispanic Center, has revived the work of the Center including new volunteer activities and "lunch and learn" discussions. In 2016, the Center installed the *Cátedra* Paulo Freire, which promotes educational events, research activities, and the enrichment of dialogue among students, faculty, religious leaders, and community members. The *Cátedra* is a resource for Latino/a communities encouraging their engagement and interaction with the realities and contexts of the Latino/a population in the U.S., and at the same time enhances relationships with the Garrett-Evangelical community.

CONNECTIONAL LIFELONG LEARNING

At Garrett-Evangelical, we understand every person has a unique learning path. Education and training needs vary based on the journeys of the career and vocation in which you may find yourself. Considerations for physical location, ability to travel, learning preferences, time, and budget are important when undertaking learning, whether for degree purposes or for lifelong learning purposes. That's why we designed "Connectional Learning" to meet you where you are and to connect you with the education you need when you need it.

Connectional Learning is our language for building an extended learning community that connects: personal learning interests with accessible non-degree educational resources; professional development needs for knowledge and skills with continuing education units; and diversity of learners to a variety of delivery formats (on and off-campus; online; hybrid). Check our Connectional Learning site often for the latest regional offerings, online courses, webinars, and faculty blogs: www.garrett.edu/ConnectionalLearning

FACULTY SCHOLARSHIP

In light of all that is happening in the world today and our commitment to put faith into action for the well-being of all persons and creation, we have redefined the focus, requirements, and targeted outcomes of our Master of Divinity degree. The **new MDiv curriculum** will begin fall 2017. The faculty has designed a number of new courses for this curriculum that prepare leaders for ministry in contemporary cultural and social realities, including attention to race, gender, class, and sexuality, as well as the personal and vocational development of the student.

We are also pleased to share the following **faculty publications** that may be of interest to you:

- **Nancy E. Bedford**, Georgia Harkness Professor of Applied Theology, *Galatians: A Theological Commentary on the Bible*
- **Wonhee Anne Joh**, Associate Professor of Systematic Theology, *Critical Theology against US Militarism in Asia*
- **James L. Papandrea**, Associate Professor of Church History: *Handed Down: The Catholic Faith of Early Christians; Seven Revolutions: How Christianity Changed the World and Can Change It Again; The Earliest Christologies: Five Images of Christ in Postapostolic Age*
- **Stephen G. Ray, Jr.**, Neal F. and Ila A. Fisher Professor of Systematic Theology, *Awake to the Moment: An Introduction to Theology*
- **Jack L. Seymour**, Professor Emeritus of Religious Education, *Teaching Biblical Faith*
- **Mark R. Teasdale**, E. Stanley Jones Associate Professor of Evangelism, *Evangelism for Non-Evangelists*
- **Brent P. Waters**, Jerre and Mary Joy Stead Professor of Christian Social Ethics: *Just Capitalism; Christian Moral Theology in the Emerging Technoculture*
- **K.K. Yeo**, Harry R. Kendall Professor of New Testament: *The Trinity Among the Nations: The Doctrine of God in the Majority World; The Spirit Over the Earth: Pneumatology in the Majority World*

Cordially,

Lallene J. Rector, President

ABOUT US

Garrett-Evangelical is the result of the interweaving of three institutions:

- Garrett Biblical Institute, the first Methodist seminary in the Midwest, was established in 1853 by some of the same church people who founded Northwestern University.
- Chicago Training School, established in 1885, was an important force for women in ministry and for developing service agencies throughout Chicago. Chicago Training School merged with Garrett Biblical Institute in 1934.
- Evangelical Theological Seminary, located in Naperville and founded as a seminary of the Evangelical Church (later the Evangelical United Brethren) in 1873, joined with Garrett Theological Seminary in 1974 to form Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary.

Methodist Theological School in Ohio

Thank you for this opportunity to bring you an update from MTSO. Here are a few highlights from a busy year.

Recognition as a “bright spot” in theological education

Auburn Seminary recognized MTSO among a small number of seminaries in its September report, “Bright Spots in Theological Education: Hopeful Stories in a Time of Crisis and Change.” Auburn is a leadership development institute seeking to equip leaders of faith and moral courage to inspire positive change in the world. The report details the “leap of faith” that began with MTSO’s founding of Seminary Hill Farm and extends to an array of commitments to ecology and social justice.

Major Luce Foundation grant

The Henry Luce Foundation awarded MTSO a three-year, \$425,000 grant in December to support the establishment of the Seminary Environmental Leadership Initiative. The grant is shared by MTSO, the Interfaith Center for Sustainable Development, and the Green Seminary Initiative, a project of Drew Theological School and GreenFaith. A growing number of seminary leaders recognize the moral imperative to play a role in the care of God’s creation, but they face significant challenges in addressing environmental issues on their own. The Seminary Environmental Leadership Initiative aims to establish best practices and offer resources for seminaries that wish to engage in environmental issues academically and institutionally.

Faculty appointments

MTSO welcomed two new faculty members in January. Elaine Nogueira-Godsey serves as assistant professor of theology, ecology, and race. She comes to MTSO from the University of Johannesburg in South Africa, where she was a post-doctoral research fellow. Francesca Nuzzolese is associate professor of pastoral care and counseling. Most recently she was associate professor of pastoral care and spiritual formation at Palmer Theological Seminary and Eastern University in Philadelphia.

New course at National Underground Railroad Freedom Center

MTSO offered a special graduate course, “Race, Religion and Nation: From Black Power to Black Lives Matter,” at the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center in January. The class offered a historical exploration of the Black Lives Matter movement and its precursors, including Black Power activism, hip hop music and culture, and the presidency of Barack Obama. It was offered through MTSO’s cooperative relationship with the Freedom Center.

Respectfully submitted,

Danny Russell, director of communications



Dayton, Ohio; www.united.edu
Where Dreams Take Flight

United Theological Seminary in Dayton, Ohio, was founded in 1871 by Milton Wright, a Bishop in The Church of the United Brethren in Christ and father of aviation pioneers Wilbur and Orville Wright. The Wright brothers had a passionate dream of developing the first successful “flying machine.” They experienced great difficulties, hardships, and setbacks in achieving their dream. Through their determination and commitment, however, their dream eventually was fulfilled, and they were the first human beings to achieve sustained flight.

God often plants a vision or dream in someone’s heart to become a full-time servant of Jesus Christ. In St. Peter’s sermon on Pentecost, Peter quotes the prophet Joel who said, “God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions and your old men shall dream dreams” (Acts 2:17). When God pours out the Spirit on someone and calls them into ministry, United seeks to partner with that person in helping them to grow spiritually and intellectually in achieving their God-given call and dream.

In the fall of 2016, 418 students enrolled at United to answer God’s call and vision for their lives.¹ Our prayer is that God will use United to prepare these students to become faithful, fruitful and effective pastors and church leaders who make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. According to a recent survey, 86% of our graduates are either currently serving in local congregations or are retired from serving in local congregations.² United alumni/ae are making an impact.

On January 1, 2017, United celebrated the beginning of a new partnership in ministry with Methodist Theological School in Ohio (MTSO). United has become an extension site for the Course of Study School of Ohio located at MTSO, providing a convenient hybrid program for part-time pastors pursuing a local pastor’s license. Through United’s Course of Study, pastors experience a Friday-Saturday weekend on campus and finish coursework online over the weeks that follow. Courses are offered four times per year.

If you feel God calling you to serve in any form of Christian ministry, we encourage you to go online to united.edu to discover the option that fits your ministry and calling. May God bless you as you respond to God’s dream for your life to serve in either the ordained, commissioned or lay ministry.

Grace and Peace,
Dr. Kent Millard, President

¹ Fall 2016 headcount of masters’ and doctoral students enrolled in courses.

² According to the 2014 United alumni/ae survey.

Wesley Theological Seminary

At Wesley Theological Seminary, we are building on 135 years of faithful preparation of church- and world-changing leaders by continuing to innovate and grow. We are excited to partner with you in the ministry to which God has called you now – and wherever you may be called in the future. Keep reading for good news that you can use...

So you can grow as a leader (and share with others)

Wesley's **Lewis Center for Church Leadership** continues to be the internationally respected go-to resource for actionable best practices for clergy and laity. The center's free *Leading Ideas* e-newsletter provides well-researched, discipleship-growing ideas to more than 17,000 people. **Sign up for Leading Ideas at** <https://www.churchleadership.com/category/leading-ideas/>.

The new **Wesley Theological Seminary Lay Academy** offers **11 online courses** covering a variety of topics including Methodist identity, early church history, Christian ethics, interfaith relations, and the intersection of faith and science. Laypeople can earn a certification in Wesleyan Studies by completing six of the courses online or can choose to take courses individually for personal education and enrichment. **More information about the Wesley Lay Academy and the certification in Wesleyan Studies can be found at** <http://www.beadisciple.com/wesley/>.

Two new certificate programs allow individuals to take specialized classes without pursuing an entire degree. **The Certificate in Faith and Public Life** explores the foundations of public theology, religious freedom, and civil discourse through graduate courses. **The African American Church Studies certificate** is a non-degree option for local church leaders who want to enrich their ministry in African American communities. For more information, contact admissions@wesleyseminary.edu or visit www.wesleyseminary.edu.

So your congregation can live more fully in God's mission

Wesley has received a grant of \$1.5 million from the Lilly Endowment to help congregations design innovative ministries that support and enrich the religious lives of young adults. Through this grant, **20 local congregations will be selected to work with Wesley as an innovation hub** that brings together church leaders, young adults, experts and practitioners for conversation, education, and exchange of ideas. The ultimate goal will be to help each congregation launch new partnerships with young adults, ages 23 to 29. **Congregational applications will be open July 1 - October 31, 2017. For more information, contact the Rev. Beth Ludlum at** bludlum@wesleyseminary.edu.

The **Institute for Community Engagement at Wesley Downtown** continues to help the church turn itself inside out. The Institute at Wesley now offers an **innovative online Health Minister Certificate Program** from Heal the Sick, an initiative to prepare

congregations for public health work in their parishes. **Some scholarships are available for this program. Please contact Tom Pruski at tpruski@wesleyseminary.edu for more information or to register for future certificate classes.**

The newest component of the Institute for Community Engagement is Wesley's **Center for Public Theology**. Under the leadership of Distinguished Professor of Public Theology Mike McCurry, this center is equipping pastors, seminarians, people of faith, and the media to create spaces for civil dialogue at the intersection of religion and politics. The Center is also providing events, workshops, and resources to help faith leaders lead faithful, prophetic, open dialogue in their communities. **To see upcoming opportunities, visit <https://www.wesleyseminary.edu/ice/programs/public-theology/>**

The **Luce Center for Arts and Religion** remains the only seminary-based program uniting arts and theology. The Luce Center invites the public to artist talks with each new exhibit and has regular classes and workshops with visiting artists. **For information on past and upcoming opportunities visit luceartsandreligion.org.**

If you're a current or future seminarian

Wesley's Master of Divinity degree can now be completed via online, weekend, short-term intensive, and weeknight courses in 5 years. This format is designed to be more accessible to those with busy ministry, work, and/or family commitments throughout the region.

The new African American Church Studies Master of Divinity specialization gives contextual preparation for the unique opportunities and challenges our future leaders may encounter in African American churches, while the **Public Theology specialization** allows master's degree students to gain skills for community leadership and advocacy.

Wesley continues to offer our 36-hour Master of Arts and a 60-hour Master of Theological Studies to **equip those called to ordained deacon ministries or to other ministries beyond the pulpit.**

Talk to someone at (202) 885-8659 or admissions@wesleyseminary.edu about how Wesley's degree programs equip people to lead others to loving God and neighbor.

If you're a pastor, alumnus, or just want to keep up on the news...

Wesley's Doctor of Ministry program continues to offer **the most practical and spiritually renewing tracks** in theological education. **We are excited to announce the launch of our third track based in Cambridge, England: *Holiness, Effective Ministry and Engagement with the World*, beginning in January 2018.** Other 2018 tracks include Art and Theology, Church Leadership Excellence and Soul Care for Pastors, Chaplains and Clinicians. **Find out more or apply now at <https://www.wesleyseminary.edu/doctorofministry/>**

The **Lewis Center for Church Leadership** moves to an exciting new phase in its 14-year history with the transition of leadership from founding director, the Rev. Dr.

Lovett Weems Jr., to new director, Wesley faculty member, the Rev. F. Douglas Powe, Jr., effective July 1, 2017. Dr. Weems will continue to be part of the Lewis Center as part-time Senior Consultant, continuing his ground-breaking work in denominational conference resourcing. Meet Dr. Powe and Dr. Weems in a video discussion at:

<https://www.churchleadership.com/news/lewis-center-announces-a-new-director/>

Please save the date – **September 28-29, 2017** – and join Wesley in celebrating the outstanding academic contribution of founding director the Rev. Dr. Lovett Weems, Jr. **More information to come about this celebration at www.churchleadership.com.**

Wesley faculty members continually develop resources to advance theological scholarship and help Christians grow. This year we have celebrated **new books** by Drs. F. Douglas Powe Jr., Eileen Guenther, Shively Smith, Ryan Danker, Denise Dombkowski Hopkins, and Joseph Bush. In the past year, we have welcomed a **new Professor of Preaching, the Rev. Dr. Veronice Miles, and a new Chapel Elder and Visiting Professor of Worship, the Rev. Gina Campbell, and we are excited to announce the appointment of Dr. Rick Elgendy as Assistant Professor of Christian Ethics and Public Theology.**

Stay in Touch

Ready to join in our mission? Wesley provides **more than \$2 million dollars annually in scholarships** to our students, thanks to the consistent support of graduates, congregations, and friends of the seminary. Find out more about how you can be part of the future of Wesley at **<https://www.wesleyseminary.edu/support/>**

We invite you to stay in touch through the year and learn more about the latest developments at Wesley by **signing up for our monthly electronic newsletter, *eCalling*, at www.wesleyseminary.edu/ecalling.**

Thank you for journeying with us through this update! We look forward to continuing to serve you and your community as we seek to live into God's dream together. Blessings to you on a fruitful and faithful annual conference. We thank you for your service and hold you in prayer as you continue in ministry, wherever that may be.

The Rev. Dr. David McAllister-Wilson, President.