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

Archives and History

The Commission on Archives and History hosted the annual meeting of the Northeastern Jurisdiction Commission on Archives and History, May 9-11, 2017, in Charleston. There were 69 people in attendance from conferences within the jurisdiction. Bishop Sandra Steiner Ball led the opening worship service, and Jane Donovan gave a presentation on salt in the Kanawha Valley. One day was devoted to touring the West Virginia State Museum, Tamarack, the J. Q. Dickinson Salt-Works, and the African Zion Baptist Church attended by Booker T. Washington. At Tamarack, Southern District Superintendent Joe Kenaston, in the character of Francis Asbury, made a great impression on attendees. Dinner at Simpson Memorial UMC was followed by a presentation on Methodism and West Virginia statehood by Joe Geiger Jr., director of West Virginia Archives and History.

One of the primary responsibilities of the commission is the Methodist Archives. At the end of 2017, the Archives consisted of 4,047 bound volumes, 453.50 linear feet of archival collections, 82 framed images, 157 reels of microfilm, and 34 linear feet of museum collections plus 3 pulpits. Of the bound volumes, 643 items have been identified as falling outside the scope of collection or as duplicate copies beyond Copy 3, and these eventually will be re-homed elsewhere. Major accessions during the year were the Glenwood Park Foundation records and West Virginia United Methodist Women scrapbooks and photo collection. Also in 2017, closed church records were received from the Greenbrier and Northern districts, and charge conference reports were received from the Little Kanawha District. Two other receipts of note are missing years of Western Pennsylvania Annual Conference journals and a 1969 Junior Queen Esther quilt that may have come from Highland Park UMC in Elkins.

Brett Miller, head of the library at West Virginia Wesleyan, manages the Methodist Archives. During the year, 753 bound volumes in the Archives were catalogued and can be located via Wesleyan’s online catalog system. Brett handled several research requests from conference staff, local churches, and individuals. Questions about the Methodist Archives and proposed donations should be addressed to Brett Miller, Director of Library Services and Archivist, Annie Merner Pfeiffer Library, 59 College Avenue, Buckhannon, WV 26201.

A second important area of responsibility for the commission is providing support to the conference’s heritage landmark Rehoboth. Caretaker Anita Tracy and a board of directors, on which the commission has three seats, manage the site. In 2017, Rehoboth had 1,617 visitors, a number that reflects a steady increase over the last four years. The site hosted two Road Scholars tour groups; several family reunions, church services, picnics, and ordinations; and a wedding, the first in three years. Rehoboth also was a side feature on an episode of the television program Barnwood Builders. Work continues on the amphitheater, which at present consists of a concrete stage and the beginnings of an additional parking lot. Three fundraisers are planned for 2018.
In September, the chairperson attended the meeting of the General Commission on Archives and History at Drew University, which included a training session for annual conference chairs. Attendees learned about a process for delisting historic sites, which will allow us to deal with a situation in West Virginia of a site now owned by a party not welcoming to visitors. It was also learned that the General Commission expects conference commissions to maintain contact with the historic sites/landmarks within its jurisdiction and to play a role in supporting its heritage landmarks. Ironically, shortly before attending the General Commission meeting, the commission chairperson had asked members to report on historic sites within the West Virginia Conference.

The commission provided a display at the 2017 annual conference of Methodist historic sites in the West Virginia Conference. Both the commission and Rehoboth had displays at History Day at the Capitol on February 22, 2018. The commission recognized one church anniversary in 2017 with the presentation of a certificate to Fall Run UMC in Ireland for 125 years of ministry.

An important goal of the commission during this quadrennium is outreach to local churches regarding records. Initial contacts have been made to schedule training for current records keepers in each district. Planning for more detailed workshops for church historians is also progressing, with the goal of holding five workshops at various points around the conference.

Mary Edith Johnson, Chairperson
Commission on Archives and History

United Methodist Women’s display at the Ministry Expo at Annual Conference 2018
Cabinet Report

Rev. Dr. Joseph S. Kenaston, Dean

This year has been eventful, challenging, and one of celebration for the Cabinet. It is a joyous privilege and an awesome responsibility to serve on the Cabinet with Bishop Sandra Steiner Ball.

In July of 2017, the Cabinet and Bishop Steiner Ball spent a week working in Greenbrier and Nicholas counties assisting three families restore their homes from the previous year’s flood. Like many of you who have participated in Volunteers in Mission, we experienced the joy of serving God and building relationships with the families in whose homes we were privileged to work. In the fall we joined many of you in participating in the Bishop’s Summit on Inclusion and the Gathering in Grace. In the winter every District had large turnouts and participated in the Membership to Discipleship event that was simulcast from Forrest Burdette to locations around the conference. This is not a one-time event. Each District is hosting follow-up conversations on transitioning churches from focusing on membership to creating an atmosphere of discipleship. Our goal is to resource and empower churches to develop discipleship systems that lead churches to create disciples who invite and make disciples. We are reinforcing the emphasis on professions of faith and people taking steps on the path of discipleship by expecting our pastors to report monthly on the professions and significant growth in discipleship.

This conference year has contained several challenges, the most striking of which was the shortage of clergy. We have seen this trend develop over a number of years. Having over twenty retirements year after year and only ordaining or licensing a few every year has now reached a crisis proportion. We have twenty-four full-time pastors moving towards retirement, going on leave, or transitioning to extension ministry. These openings are balanced by one seminary graduate and one attending licensing school who is not already serving as an assigned supply. Consequently, we have deployed several strategies that are helping us through the challenge. First, we are recruiting from seminaries. Several of our appointments this year, as well as last, are being filled by energetic graduates who, although not native West Virginians, are feeling called to serve in our conference. Our second approach is to realign charges for more efficient ministry and mission. Many churches that have been station appointments will be linked with neighboring churches and some two-point charges are becoming three-point charges or circuits. Another under-utilized resource is our laity. We are committed to identifying, equipping, and empowering laity to exercise leadership in shared ministry with licensed and ordained clergy. Some of the laity will go through Certified Lay Ministry training in 2018-2019. Our goal is to more than double the persons in candidacy or certified lay ministry to 100. Some of the Lay Ministers will serve as pulpits supply, but most serve in leadership in their local churches and charges. Finally, some of our charges will go from full-time to part-time.
All United Methodists know, or should know, that we are an itinerant church with an appointment system. This has been true since before our formal beginning in 1784. Our clergy are deployed to places and community settings where their gifts and passions match the mission and ministry needs of the church and community. As a Cabinet, we have the unique opportunity to see not only the needs of each charge and community but also the dynamic witness of United Methodism in over 1,000 places in our conference. We hold to the following core values as we seek to discern God’s will for an appointment. Our first core value is prayer. We begin and end with prayer and cover the entire appointment process with prayer. Our second value is that the congregation’s mission, ministry, and potential to bear fruit will be our priority. Consequently, we will seek to match passionate spiritual leaders in congregations that together will discover, develop, and deploy laity and clergy in ministries of transformation. We also believe that clergy status (i.e. elders, deacons, or licensed) is not necessarily an indicator of one’s effectiveness. In discerning appointments, we are honest and transparent about the strengths, weaknesses, gifts, abilities, and potential fruitfulness for the clergy and ministerial contexts. We expect that elders honor their vow to be a part of the itinerant system for the purpose of extending the mission and ministry of the United Methodist witness. We hope that licensed local pastors will itinerate for the health of the church and the mission of Christ. Another one of our goals is for longer tenure, but the clergy shortage sometimes means that pastors may be moved a little sooner than anticipated. Another core value is that consultation is year round and every point of contact with a pastor or congregation is part of the consultation process. Finally, we are committed to an open itineracy. Consequently, charges and churches need to be open to appointments that are not limited by age, gender, race, and differently-abled pastors.

There are two challenges, among many, that are opportunities for ministry in our Annual Conference. The first has a direct impact upon our churches and the second affects all our communities and churches. The Bishop’s Commission on a Way Forward and the upcoming special session of the General Conference is an opportunity for us to be in dialogue with each other about our understanding of scripture, the nature of the church, and how to live in our communities.

Each district has hosted formal conversations about the progress of the commission. In addition, we lift up our bishop in prayer as she has been tasked with the responsibility of being one of the three moderators of the commission. The opioid epidemic is a significant challenge to our communities and churches. It is rare to find a family who has not been touched by the disease. Rev. Dr. Barry Ball has been in every district, many cooperative parishes, churches, and schools across the state to offer information and inspiration to be engaged in ministry with those who are affected by the addiction. The entire Lenten emphasis, “What If” has been a thought-provoking call to put prayer into action.

Our Cabinet meetings are marked by prayer and joyful fellowship. Our sessions have the rhythm of worship, study, spiritual formation, Christian conversation, prayer, and laughter. We hold each other in prayer and seek God’s guidance in all that we do. This year we have two transitions. Rev. Mike Estep is being appointed to Suncrest UMC in Morgantown and Rev. Rick Sale is retiring and moving to Arizona. We celebrate their ministry on the Cabinet and in the Annual Conference. We invite you to hold them in your prayers as they make
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. The board of 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.

This past year we have supported the West Virginia Council of Churches in this mission and ministry to the state and its conference neighbors. By working with the WVCC we have taken on the challenging problems of substance abuse, helped former inmates re-enter into society, provided care for places struck by natural disaster, and opposed racism along with many other forms of ministry.

We also participated in LARCUM (Lutheran, Anglican, Roman Catholic, United Methodist) gatherings, sharing our faith and witness and learning how each of our denominations is tackling problems for God’s children. At this past year’s LARCUM event held at John XXIII Pastoral Center, we focused on the topic of reform for the 500th anniversary of the Reformation. In doing so we heard the story of reform in all of our various denominations and brought to life the phrase popularized by Karl Barth, “Ecclesia semper reformanda” (The Church must always be reformed). This year LARCUM will be looking at sacred vows of the clergy and laity and I would extend an open invitation to everyone. It will be held on September 10-12, 2018, at the John XXIII Pastoral Center in Charleston.

Each year we strive to do Christ’s work shoulder to shoulder with our loving brothers and sisters of numerous faiths and denominations and try our best to communicate and share resources, ideas, and needs. In this coming year, 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 Chair of Christian Unity & Interreligious Concerns
Members: Clifford Curry, Cindy Eakle, Laura Allen, D.D. Meighen, Roy Knight, Martha Wilkinson, Chris Scott, Rose Thornburg
Clergy Support

1) We are seeking to find new and creative ways to better serve the clergy of our Annual Conference and their families. So to that end, this year we are offering the following to clergy:

   Clergy Grants Available! Your Clergy Support team is once again offering a limited number of $200 grants for groups of four or more pastors who would like to organize an event, outing or gathering of clergy that focuses on spiritual, physical and/or collegial wellness. Our hope is that these groups of clergy use these funds to find creative ways to focus on wellness and subsequently share this with other clergy in our Annual Conference. We have paid for overnight retreats, supplies for a fitness gathering and a road trip to a United Methodist archive. What would you and some fellow clergy like to do? Let us know by September 1, so that we can meet to review your request and send you a check. It is that simple! Send requests or questions to: jmccune301@aol.com

2) Please look at the “Guidelines for Counseling Funds” which follow this report. We want to remind clergy that they are entitled to funding up to $700 annually per family for expenses related to counseling services. We want to do anything we can to be of assistance, so please do not hesitate to let us know if you have questions.

3) We want to remind clergy to take a Sabbath day every week and local churches to make sure they do! We also want to remind clergy and families to take their entitled vacations. These are such simple suggestions, but unless we make them a part of our calendar, they often do not happen. We also encourage retired clergy, as they are able and willing, to offer your support and assistance toward this endeavor. Finally, we hope that clergy watch over one another in love so that in our caregiving and community we will all be able to live fuller and healthier lives complimented with rest and renewal!

Jim McCune, Chairperson
GUIDELINES FOR COUNSELING FUNDS DISPERSSED
BY COMMITTEE ON CLERGY SUPPORT AND
PASTORAL CARE

1. Who is eligible?
   a. Clergy of the West Virginia Annual Conference
      (For these guidelines, clergy is defined as (1) Elders, (2) Deacons,
      and (3) Licensed Local Pastors serving an appointment within the
      conference)
   b. Immediate family members of clergy (spouse and dependent
      children)
   c. Divorced or widowed spouses of clergy for a period
      of two years after the death or divorce

2. What are the qualifications of the provider?
   People licensed by the state to provide professional counseling.
   Must be a State Licensed Psychologist, State Licensed Psychiatrist,
   State Licensed Professional Counselor or State Licensed Social
   Worker. Temporary licenses are not recognized.

3. How much is available per family?
   $700 per calendar year

4. What is the procedure for obtaining the funds?
   The provider bills the clergyperson's insurance and sends a copy to
   Ravi Isaiah. He then vouchers the amount not paid by insurance to
   be paid by the Committee on Clergy Support and Pastoral Care.
   This amount is limited to $700 for the entire family per calendar
   year. Ravi Isaiah may be reached at Ravi.Isaiah@canc.org or 304-
   388-4290.
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, including those which a bishop and cabinet member are not seen as impartial, or in situations where a bishop and cabinet member are parties to the conflict, or where the bishop and cabinet want to use the expertise of a trained Team.

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 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. Two phone consultations were held during this 2017-2018 church year.

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

Rev. Janet Harman, Coordinator

Congregational Development

The Congregational Development Team is leading with transitional ideas and transformative processes for individual leaders, congregations, districts and our conference. We are continually looking for ways that will help leaders and churches reach the rapidly changing culture we are dealing with today.

We need to go back to our “Wesleyan Roots” of disciples making disciples. Making disciples is our primary calling. Moving from Membership to Discipleship is one of the latest tools we have added to the CD Team Toolbox that supports most of the other processes that are being used in the conference.

The Congregational Development Team is following the lead of several transformation leaders (Doug Anderson, Bob Farr, Gil Rendle, Reggie McNeal, Robert Schnase) and others who are communicating what growing churches and conferences look like in our rapidly changing society. We highly recommend any of the following books written by these leaders for your leadership teams:
- Back to Zero – Gil Rendle
- Connect – Phil Maynard
- Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations - Robert Schnase
- Get Their Name – Bob Farr & Kay Kotan
- Membership to Discipleship - Phil Maynard
- Renovate or Die – Bob Farr
- The Externally Focused Quest – E. Swanson & R. Rusaw
- The Present Future – Reggie McNeal

Some of the current activities that the CD Team is involved with are listed below:

- **“Reaching New People”** is a process that involves the pastor and a team that learns new techniques to build relationships in their community with the help of a coach.

- **LMI—“Lay Mobilization Institute”** is a team process of laity and the pastor learning to be better disciples who get involved in their community while learning to make other disciples. This process includes a coaching segment.

- **“Membership to Discipleship”** is our newest venture to move congregations away from the historic membership model to a Wesleyan discipleship model of learning to make disciples that make disciples this process also has a coaching segment.

- **“Choosing the Faithful Path”** is a church lifecycle assessment to guide churches in making an honest choice to develop a faithful plan of action.

- **MissionInsight** – a demographic study tool available to every congregation

- **Partnering Ministries** such as helping to fund Ignite Morgantown which is building a new faith community of young adults within Suncrest UMC, and helping to fund a new faith community project in the Huntington Fairfield neighborhood with the Ebenezer Outreach Center and Johnson Memorial UMC.

The Congregational Development Team is available to work with any church that wants to develop disciples and connect with their community. We want to help churches learn basic methods of building relationships and have the tools they need to meet today’s unique challenges. If you have any interest in any of these areas, you may contact me or any member of the Congregational Development Team.

Les Fish
304-574-1651
fishcoal@cwv.net
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

   a. Select your city and your church.
   b. Complete boxes creating your unique User Name and Password
   c. 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.
   d. Complete Registration as instructed in e-mail. For more help, click Support on the Contact Us tab or use LIVE CHAT.
   e. 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.
   f. Do not make multiple attempts at registration. If a problem occurs, please contact us for support.
   g. Only one user name and password per church. 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

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 in 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.
Rev. Dr. Ken Krimmel
Assistant to the Bishop and Director of Connectional Ministries

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you. I pray that you and your congregation are fully engaged in ministry wherever you are. It is a blessing to be God’s church in the world today, even as we continue to struggle with challenges that test our faith. But we know that God is good and that God’s church will prevail.

You have probably heard the saying that the only thing that is certain is change. This year has certainly been a year of change for Connectional Ministries. On July 1, 2017 the Assistant to the Bishop position was added to my portfolio, along with serving as the Director of Connectional Ministries. On July 1, 2018 my portfolio will again change from Assistant to the Bishop and Director of Connectional ministries to Senior Pastor of Oak Hill United Methodist Church and Assistant to the Bishop. But this is not the only change in the Office of Connectional Ministries. Also, on July 1, 2018, Amy Shanholtzer, who currently serves as Director of Evangelism and Congregational Development, will become the Superintendent of the MonValley District.

Additionally, on December 1, 2017, our Communications Assistant left the Connectional Ministries staff to become Director of Communications for the West Virginia Society of CPAs. And, on December 1, 2017, Angela Jones moved from a part-time Administrative Assistant position to full-time status as Administrative Assistant and Ethnic Local Church Concerns Coordinator. So, lots of changes have occurred in the Office of Connectional Ministries since last year’s Annual Conference. Please keep this vital ministry of the Conference in your prayers as we move forward.

Our office is celebrating our award-winning Communications Team. This year the West Virginia Conference Communications Team won five awards at the national gathering of United Methodist Association of Communicators, held in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania in March. These awards include the Communicator of the Year award for our very own Director of Communications, Deborah Coble. We have an outstanding Communications Team in the Conference, and we know that you celebrate their success along with us.

Team-building has remained a high priority for our work as a Connectional Ministries Team, and this year we took steps to work even harder than last year to achieve improvement of the team concept in ministry. In November we spent a day away from the Conference Center and gathered at Spring Heights for a staff retreat. We were led by Tom Carter, who is a team-building facilitator residing in Florida. We also enlisted Melissa Shortridge to facilitate the work of the staff as we formed a covenant to work together on a Ministry Action Plan for the Connectional Ministries Team. We completed our MAP in February and will allow it to guide our work into the year.

All of our staff members serve as liaisons to the Agencies, Boards, and Teams of the Annual Conference. As the Assistant to the Bishop and Director of Connectional Ministries I have continued my liaison work with the Conference Board of Global Ministries; Ethnic Ministries; Conference Trustees; Committee on Finance and Administration; Spiritual Formation Task Force; West Virginia Council of Churches; and LARCUM (Lutheran, West Virginia Annual Conference Journal 2018
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Anglican, Roman Catholic, and United Methodists). Each staff member also has assignments to lead in a variety of ministries within the Annual Conference. In my position, these include the Extended Cabinet; Bishop’s Lead Team; Annual Conference Program Committee; Annual Conference Worship Committee; Covenant Council Leadership Team; Nominations Operational Team; and the Sexual Ethics Team.

Assistants to Bishops and Directors of Connectional Ministries also have responsibilities beyond the boundaries of the Annual Conference with the Northeastern Jurisdiction and the General Church. In August, I served on the faculty for the Training Orientation for new Directors of Connectional Ministries at Lake Junaluska, NC; attended the national meeting of Assistants to Bishops in Denver, Colorado in October; attended the Northeastern Jurisdiction Directors of Connectional Ministries meeting in White Plains, NY, in November; represented West Virginia at the Northeastern Jurisdiction Vision Table in Baltimore, MD, in January; and attended the national Association of Directors of Connectional Ministries meeting in Atlanta, GA, in January. It is an honor to represent the West Virginia Conference and provide leadership within the larger church.

Here at home, I continue to rejoice over the progress being made at our Conference Camp and Education Center at Spring Heights. Our Camp Manager, Amy Mullins, and our Director of Young Disciples and Outdoor Ministries, Shea James, continue to work very hard to improve the ministry to children, youth, and adults at Spring Heights and to bring the facilities into better condition, while also exercising faithful stewardship with the financial resources that are available.

Please encourage the children and youth of your congregations around the conference to attend camp this summer, so that they can have an opportunity to grow in their walk with Christ.

One of the roles I play is to be the steward of the conference vision and guide the mission and ministry of the conference. Our vision as a conference is to become a Christ-led, spiritual breath of fresh air that changes the world. Every time we touch a life with the love of God, through the many ministries throughout the conference, I believe we change the world. Our conference mission is to discover, develop, and deploy passionate spiritual leaders who will make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. We celebrated over 2400 professions of faith at Annual Conference 2017. This year we hope to celebrate 2400 new disciples who are actively growing in their faith through an intentional disciple-making system in their local church.

Another way we change the world is through our witness and outreach in society. In July 2016, the Northeastern Jurisdiction embraced a Call to Action to confront and end racism in our church and society. Our conference Covenant Council Leadership Team, with input from a variety of groups within the conference, formulated a response to the Call to Action that was shared at the gathering of the Vision Table in January 2018. Our commitment to confront and end racism in both church and society is an ongoing work that requires resolve and action on the part of everyone. Our Conference Commission on Religion and Race; Ethnic Local Church Concerns Committee; Committee on Native American Ministries; Bishop’s Summit on Diversity and Inclusion; and our Conference Chapter of Black Methodists for Church Renewal continue to hold before us our everyday commitment,
and work to change the world to become the beloved community that Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., challenged us to become.

As we prepare ourselves for holy conferencing when we gather on the campus of West Virginia Wesleyan College June 7–10, 2018, I invite you to begin to hold the Annual Conference session in prayer. It all begins with prayer. Bonnie MacDonald, Director of Leadership Formation, along with her develop team, have issued the challenge for us to be **INNOVATIVE** in our attitudes, in how we approach change, and in considering how we do ministry in the West Virginia Annual Conference. Let’s all begin to pray about how we will do our best to become and to live as growing disciples of Jesus, and change our world.

Finally, I wish to thank Bishop Sandra Steiner Ball for appointing me to serve in the position of your Conference Director of Connectional Ministries for the past two years. The West Virginia Conference Connectional Ministries staff is a highly effective team of professionals who love their work and give it their very best. All of our Directors and administrative support staff have given me the opportunity to lead and to learn new things about myself as a minister and as a person. So, I wish to thank the entire Connectional Ministries staff for the support and dedication they have given me and with which they faithfully serve the Annual Conference. I especially want to thank my Assistant, Chris Ridgway, for providing the administrative support necessary to accomplish the work of the Office of Connectional Ministries; to Karen Thaxton for keeping our Central Services running smoothly; Judi Kenaston, for her leadership, and most especially, for providing our Conference Journal, which serves as a wealth of information for the conference; Lisa Shafer, who keeps the Bishop’s Office going; and of course, I express gratitude for J.F. Lacaria, and our flood recovery team for all the ways they are changing lives, one home at a time.

As always, may God wonderfully bless you, the wonderful people of the West Virginia Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church.

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**Evangeline Eden,**

WV CONAM intern, Rev. Dr. Ken Krimmel, Director of Connectional Ministries, and Angela Jones, Ethnic Local Church Concerns Coordinator, were part of the many from the conference who attended the Unite to End Racism event in Washington, D.C., in April 2018.
Acts 2:1-17: When Pentecost Day arrived, they were all together in one place. 2 Suddenly a sound from heaven like the howling of a fierce wind filled the entire house where they were sitting. 3 They saw what seemed to be individual flames of fire alighting on each one of them. 4 They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages as the Spirit enabled them to speak.

5 There were pious Jews from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem. 6 When they heard this sound, a crowd gathered. They were mystified because everyone heard them speaking in their native languages. 7 They were surprised and amazed, saying, “Look, aren’t all the people who are speaking Galileans, every one of them? 8 How then can each of us hear them speaking in our native language?.. Some asked each other, “What does this mean?” 9 Others jeered at them, saying, “They’re full of new wine!”

10 Peter stood with the other eleven apostles. He raised his voice and declared, “Judeans and everyone living in Jerusalem! Know this! Listen carefully to my words! 11 These people aren’t drunk, as you suspect; after all, it’s only nine o’clock in the morning! 12 Rather, this is what was spoken through the prophet Joel:

In the last days, God says
I will pour out my Spirit on all people.
Your sons and daughters will prophesy.
Your young will see visions.
Your elders will dream dreams.

How exciting it must have been on that first day of Pentecost! To not only hear the proclamation of the gospel, the Good News, but to hear it in ones’ native language?! In a culture that speaks the same language, we may think that this is old news, but because our world is ever-changing due to the rapid advances of technology it can sometimes feel like we are speaking different languages. Rather than see this as a reason to lament, your Conference Communications Team embraces the many different ways we have to share the Good News with one another, young and old alike.

Utilizing the tools of modern technology, along with an intentionality to build relationships with one another in Christian Community, the Communications Team continues to lean into our call to engage people, empower disciples and to share the story of Jesus Christ working in and through the West Virginia Conference by the power of the Holy Spirit. **We are a Christ-led, spiritual breath of fresh air that changes the world!**

We are able to share stories, photos, videos, anecdotes of God’s love and faithfulness, and the local church’s response across a variety of platforms, including face-to-face conversations, as well as using technology such as wvumc.org, our website; social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram; YouTube; print and email.

But the most important thing we do is provide opportunities for God’s people to share their gifts, whatever they may be, to the Glory of God. To this end our Communications
Team has grown to 17 people! Each person has unique gifts and graces, representing a cross section of our conference with a good mix of laity and clergy, including a Certified Lay Minister, Licensed Local Pastors, Deacons, and Elders.

The anchor of our team is our District Communications Coordinators (DCCs). The DCC sits on her/his respective District Lead Team to assist in the communications flow between the districts and the rest of the Communications Team. They work closely with one another to recruit, develop and deploy communications resource persons, provide training, support, and help to expand the understanding of the Conference Communications Team. Our DCCs are:

Northern: Sheri Kernik
MonValley: Dusty Merrill
Potomac Highlands: Melissa Paugh
Little Kanawha: Ken Peters
Wesleyan: Jim Minutelli
Western: Kerry Bart
Midland South: George Hohmann
Southern: Wayne Richmond
Greenbrier: Judy Pysell

We also have at-large members, each with gifts that are essential to communicating well in the 21st century. They include:

Cheryl George – Communications Team Chair; Brad Bennett – SLI Facilitator; Jonathan Nettles; Joe Webb; Maria Wiblin; Jake Steele; Chris Ferguson; Scott Mayberry

In November 2017, Whitney Cherry left our team to become the Director of Communications for the West Virginia Society of CPAs. We have not yet filled her position, and so the entire Communications Team has stepped in the gap so that we can maintain our commitment to sharing the stories of the West Virginia Conference. (We have hired Joe Webb since December, on a 10 hour/week basis, to do design work for the conference staff.)

As a Communications Team we set our goals for 2017-2018 with a commitment to focus on developing content for our website, to share our stories and important information for the good of the conference via the Short Circuit emails, to continue to cultivate stories via social media and to provide high-quality print publications.

Our website continues to grow as a source of news and information for the conference. In fact, at the recent United Methodist Association of Communicators Awards, wvumc.org received 1st prize for website content! We expanded our Short Circuit emails to a weekly offering, going out to nearly 4,000 subscribers each Thursday afternoon. Our social media platforms continue to be a gathering place for glory sightings and stories of our local churches in action as they discover, develop and deploy passionate spiritual leaders for the transformation of the world. And our print publications have shifted a
bit, to more targeted quarterly offerings, such as the recent Lenten publication: *Fast, Pray, Listen, Respond*. We printed 20,000 copies of this publication and all have been distributed with each church receiving copies to share with their members.

As we look back on the past year there is much to celebrate, and we lean into 2018-2019 with enthusiasm.

In February 2018 our Communications Team provided technical support to the Discover Team to broadcast LIVE the Membership to Discipleship event. We were on hand at nine different sites sharing the broadcast that was based out of Forrest Burdette UMC. This was possible thanks to lots of hard work by the entire team!

Eight members of WVUMC’s Communications Team accompanied Conference Director of Communications, Rev. Deborah Coble, to Philadelphia, PA March 7-9 to attend the annual gathering of the United Methodist Association of Communicators. The team led two innovation sessions during the conference, telling the story of how the West Virginia Conference Communications Team operates.

Many annual conference communicators asked our team – what makes you so successful? Each time we were asked we pointed to our team, the foundation of which was laid over 10 years ago using the L3 principles of SLI and the vision has been carried by our Communications Chair, Cheryl George, and long-term team members, Brad Bennett, Jonathan Nettles and Judy Pysell.

To top it all off, your West Virginia Conference Communications Team brought home five UMAC awards:

1st place **website content**: wvumc.org. Deborah Coble, Whitney Cherry, Amy Shanholtzer, Bonnie MacDonald, Shea James, Ken Krimmel, Bishop Sandra Steiner Ball, Brad Bennett, Cheryl George, Jonathan Nettles, Joe Webb contributors

1st place **Photography/Portrait** Deborah Coble: Dr. Lawrence Sherwood/Old Rehoboth

3rd place **Single Publicity piece** – Spring Heights Promotional Video. Brad Bennett, Cheryl George, Jonathan Nettles, Deborah Coble, David Johnston, Erin Sears

3rd place **Livestream production** – 2017 Annual Conference. Brad Bennett, Dusty Merrill, Deborah Coble, Cheryl George

3rd place **Electronic Special Publication** – 2017 West Virginia Conference Circuit. George Hohmann - editor, Joe Webb - designer, Cheryl George, Deborah Coble, Jonathan Nettles, Judy Pysell, Jake Steele, Jim Minutelli, Whitney Cherry, Erin Sears, Carl Tribbet, Ken Peters

We give thanks for the opportunity to participate in the UMAC and look forward to continued relationships with our sister annual conferences. It was an honor and a blessing to be able to tell our stories of how God is at work in the West Virginia Conference.

As we look ahead, we seek ways to live into our 2018 theme, *Innovation*. We already have another multi-site live stream event scheduled and some new-to-us equipment was donated to the Communications Team by Princeton UMC that will allow us to facilitate future events.

We continue to share stories using video, social media and our website and are excited about how many churches across the conference are now using Facebook Live to
broadcast their worship services to their communities!

We seek to partner with local churches and districts in innovative ways to facilitate learning experiences so that every member and every church has a way to share the Gospel and cultivate disciple-making systems that are contextual and faithful to our shared vision: We are a Christ-led, spiritual breath of fresh air that changes the world!

We also remember with gratitude those who have paved the way for us. In the next year we are looking forward to visiting historical sites across the conference, to share their stories and to share video and stories of faithfulness that reach beyond the years.

We look forward to collaborating with you as we move through the year! If you have any story ideas, questions or photos to share, please send them to us via email: wvumc@wvumc.org.

Together let us share our stories of transformation boldly, fully confident in the love of God the Father, the grace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and in union and communion with one another through the power of the Holy Spirit!

Bishop Sandra Steiner Ball and J. F. Lacaria pause for a picture with the WVUMC Communications Team present at the 2018 UMAC Awards (l-r) George Hohmann, J. F. Lacaria, Bishop Sandra Steiner Ball, Dusty Merrill, Deborah Coble, Jonathan Nettles, Judy Pysell, Chris Ferguson, Kerry Bart, Joe Webb and Brad Bennett. Members of the team not pictured/unable to attend: Cheryl George, Jim Minutelli, Sheri Kernik, Ken Peters, Jake Steele, Maria Wiblin, Melissa Paugh, Scott Mayberry, Wayne Richmond.

At the end of the United Methodist Association of Communicators Awards, Bishop Sandra Steiner Ball presented Deborah Coble with the United Methodist Communicator of the Year Award for her service to the West Virginia Conference. (you can read more about Coble’s award and the West Virginia Conference team at UMAC by following this link: https://umcommunicators.org/2018/03/12/deborah-coble-communicator-of-year/)
Rev. Shea James  
Director of Young Disciples and Outdoor Ministries

As the Director of Young Disciples and Outdoor Ministries, I enjoy meeting with the Conference Council on Youth Ministry and hearing about their hopes and dreams for youth ministry in the conference. Our summer event, Rally on the Mountain, will be held at Winterplace July 12-15 and the theme is Challenge. This year we are excited to include all meals Friday morning-Sunday morning with the cost of registration. We hope you’ll join us at Winterplace!

Fall workshop will be November 16-18, 2018. The theme for this year will be announced July 1. For more information, please visit the “Young Disciples” tab on the conference website and scroll to “Youth-Events.”

Young disciples are on the move here in the West Virginia Conference! We supported two students, Gabe Papadopolous and Gavin Brandenburg who went to Cuba with Mission of Peace. The Youth Service Fund was also able to give money to five youth from Avery UMC who went to Kenya to serve in December of 2017 to help build a bridge and work with Living Hope High School.

We are excited about the launch of DiscoverU this summer, which is an opportunity for youth and young adults ages 15-23 to discern God’s calling in their lives, while they shadow adults who serve the church and beyond in a variety of ways. DiscoverU will be July 22-27 at St. John XXIII in Charleston, WV.

Another source of joy is serving with our outdoor ministries. Spring Heights is geared up for another wonderful summer of camp. Amy Mullins continues to serve as the Camp Manager. She is passionate about Spring Heights, and her love for camp and campers makes Spring Heights a unique and special place. Spring Heights launched its day camp program called DaySpring in the summer of 2017 and reached over 55 campers in Clendenin and Rainelle. There are beautiful videos about these two programs on the conference’s Youtube channel - please go and watch them. God is connecting with children and youth through Spring Heights, and it is beautiful!

Asbury Woods (Western District) continues to grow and reach out to more campers each year and does a fantastic job with winter retreats to keep campers engaged. Crossroads Camp (Little Kanawha District) is raising funds for a building campaign called “Greater Things.” They are doing several improvement projects, including building a new bathhouse and a lodge that will comfortably house adult retreat guests, as well as summer campers. Our camping team has been meeting regularly and is excited about creating camping standards across the connection.

If you take a moment to look around this week, you’ll see the faces of young people. These fine folks are our Youth Members of Conference and pages. They are here to learn and to serve. These faithful disciples choose to be here because they care about the church, and it is my honor to work with them! Give them a high-five or a “well done!” with a smile.
Rev. Dr. Bonnie Glass MacDonald
Director of Leadership Formation and Ministry Support

I am grateful to serve in a ministry position that offers the opportunity to focus on calling and development. Specifically, my challenge is to assist others in discerning how God is calling them and to facilitate the lifelong development of that calling in such a way that disciples continue to multiply and transform the world.

God intends all of us to be growing followers of Jesus, and each one needs to discover their best fit for serving. Some will be drawn to leadership and will experience that our gifts are validated by others around us as we lead, whether in the community, in the congregation, or at work. We all need to be about the practice of identifying, encouraging, and supporting the exploration of our giftedness, as members of the ministry of all believers.

How are you serving? How are you watching for others’ gifts and encouraging them to serve?

There are many stories I could tell to illustrate the ministry I get to facilitate on behalf of the West Virginia Conference every day. I am particularly excited about these innovative aspects of ministry encouragement this past year, which have targeted our conference’s ministry leaders:

- **The Leadership Standards Self-Check Tool**— In order to provide a picture of what a growing Christian leader looks like, the Conference Develop Team created this tool to supplement the Leadership Standards so that you can reflect on how you or your team are doing in spiritual leadership. You might use this tool to choose an area of reflection or study for the coming year. You can find it on our wvumc.org website.

- **The creation of a new Certified Lay Ministry training model**, which will launch in the fall of 2018, so that we can consistently support those interested in CLM training throughout the WV Conference and increase our lay leadership potential. If you are interested, talk with your district superintendent.

- **Financial support and encouragement of clergy who are pursuing required education** for their credentialing:
  - Grants increased for licensed local pastors completing the Course of Study (grants increased to $350 per course for full-time; $200 per course for part-time)
  - Paid $93,250 in Ministerial Education Fund grants to 20 students, pursuing seminary education in order to be ordained
  - Partnered in the “Excellence in Clergy Leadership Scholarship,” facilitating substantial scholarships and the prevention of debt for three of our West Virginia Conference seminary students

- **Our Discovery process** for high school students and young adults allows them to explore many options for ministry within the WV Conference by shadowing ministry leaders. DiscoverU is funded through the Young Clergy Initiative Grant from the General Board of Higher Education & Ministry. The partner summer-long Discovery internship opportunity is funded by the Board of Ordained Ministry.
All of these initiatives happen through collaboration between teams and individuals working to create a culture of leadership that is hopeful, innovative, invitational, and generative. I am especially grateful to work closely with the members of the Board of Ordained Ministry, the Develop Team, the CLM planning team, the UM Foundation of WV, and the staff of the West Virginia Conference.

The opportunities for ministry abound in the West Virginia Conference! I am one of many people who would love to help you find a good fit for the gifts God has given you. To explore your options, contact your pastor, your district superintendent, or me (bmacdonald@wvumc.org)!

**Rev. Amy Shanholtzer**

**Director of Evangelism and Congregational Development**

It is a rare and wonderful thing to have an opportunity to look back over a decade of work and see the relationships and opportunities that have blossomed. I’m grateful to the West Virginia Annual Conference for the chance to see the Church from this perspective and to learn and experiment in new ways to reach people for Christ and help them grow in Christlikeness.

In the last year, we’ve continued our Reaching New People workshops with Jim Griffith and Associates and enrolled new churches in the follow-up coaching with Paul Nickerson. These churches are doing magnificent and creative work as they test everything from neighborhood block parties to regularly visiting restaurants, getting to know and develop relationships with new folks.

We’ve been grateful for the work of Rev. Ella Dorsey at Fairfield Community Ministries in Huntington. She’s created partnerships with Ebenezer Outreach Center and the AD Lewis Center. We’re grateful for the Johnson Memorial United Methodist Church serving as an anchor church for this ministry. The Spirit is touching lives in this neighborhood through faithful United Methodists and others who care about their neighbors.

We’ve launched “Choosing the Faithful Path” – a resource that enables a local church to examine its life through Bible study. This study is kicked off by a trained facilitator who guides the local church as they look at all aspects of their life. At the end of the study, the church makes a decision and creates a plan for moving forward. To find out more, check https://www.wvumc.org/innovative-congregations/choosing-the-faithful-path/ or contact Les Fish, chair of the Congregational Development Team, at fishcoal@cwv.net.

The Evangelism Team has been busy working on resources for local churches to use as they develop disciples and discipleship systems. We are thrilled that 750 people were able to participate in the Membership to Discipleship event in February. Thanks to the Congregational Development and Communications Teams, as well as the Cabinet, for helping us pull all of that together. Each District is hosting follow up workshops to this
event. Churches are also encouraged to use the free Real Discipleship Survey, provided to every church at no cost through part of the Evangelism Team’s conference apportioned budget. The survey and many other resources for developing disciples can be accessed on the conference website here: https://www.wvumc.org/innovative-congregations/disciple-making-pathways/

Be sure to see the resources that are being developed for this conference session by the Older Adult Ministry Team. They’ve chosen to highlight a portable ramp building ministry piloted in our conference by House of the Carpenter. Watch outside the gym and check the Ministry Fair Table for more information.

I was blessed this year to participate in a New Church Planting Immersion experience with Path 1, journeying to the Philippines in January. This trip was more of a pilgrimage as I experienced the radical hospitality and welcome of the United Methodist in the Philippines. Pastors and laity, bishops and district superintendents all took extensive time out of their schedules to tell their stories in powerful ways. I saw the strength of alignment of conference, district, and local church vision and effort. I saw an unending commitment to create new places for new people to grow and flourish in their faith. I saw a willingness to do much with few material resources. I am grateful for the relationships that have allowed me to be a part of this experience and hope that they will continue to grow.

My work in the facilitation of leadership teams in the conference continues with the Discover Team and the MonValley District Lead Team. I believe in the power of teams working in covenant with Christ at the center to create a new future in keeping with God’s vision. I am hopeful that we will continue to multiply these teams across the conference as we seek to be a spiritual breath of fresh air that brings transformation and new life.

During my time as a conference staff member, I have been blessed with many close relationships and a view of the conference that not many folks get to see. I’m grateful for each colleague who has helped me to learn and grow and for the churches and pastors that have welcomed new learning experiences and allowed us to test new things and refine them. I have been blessed by the laity and clergy alike who have worked tirelessly in teams to bring new thoughts and ideas into reality. Thank you all for this opportunity to grow and learn. I look forward to using all of the lessons and experiences as I focus my future congregational development work in the MonValley District.
Covenant Council

With leadership and guidance from Rev. Dr. Ken Krimmel, Director of Connectional Ministries, the Covenant Council conducted two meetings in 2017-2018, in addition to attending the Bishop's Summit on Diversity and Inclusion.

Due to inclement weather, Covenant Council met via WebEx video conferencing on January 13, 2018, rather than in person. At this meeting, Bonnie MacDonald discussed leadership standards. Les Fish from Congregational Development shared their ministry action plan (MAP), and Micah Blanks from Young Adult Ministry highlighted opportunities and challenges through their MAP.

On March 3, 2018, Covenant Council met at the New Vision Depot in Beaver, WV, hosted by Dan and Sue Lowther. This meeting included budget approval for Category II. Martha Hill from Justice and Advocacy shared their MAP. The gathering concluded with a tour of the New Vision Depot and assisting with the setup for an upcoming youth service project.

The Leadership Team for Covenant Council also met in Fall 2017 and Winter 2018 to prepare the West Virginia Conference response to the NEJ Call to Action regarding racism. A document including short-term and long-term plans with strategies and goals was created.

In addition to Rev. Krimmel, the Leadership Team for Covenant Council includes Georgia Hughes-Webb, Jeff Matheny, Krysta Rexrode Wolfe, David Stilgenbauer, and Kristi Wilkerson.

Kristi Wilkerson, Associate Conference Lay Leader and Convener of Covenant Council

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coordinators</th>
<th>Coordinator</th>
<th>Naming Party/Organization</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disaster Response</td>
<td>Revs. Dan and Sue Lowther</td>
<td>Global Ministries</td>
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<tr>
<td>Global AIDS</td>
<td>Rev. Margo Friend</td>
<td>Global Ministries</td>
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<tr>
<td>Health Ministries</td>
<td>Rev. Clare Sulgit</td>
<td>Global Ministries</td>
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<td>Disabilities Ministries</td>
<td>Rev Michael D. Ludle</td>
<td>Global Ministries</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hunger Ministries</td>
<td>Mrs. Joy Hicks</td>
<td>Global Ministries</td>
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<td>Refugee and Immigration Ministries</td>
<td>Rev. Tim Edin</td>
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<td>Rev. David Stilgenbauer</td>
<td>Global Ministries</td>
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<td>Celebration of Missions Event</td>
<td>Rev. Cliff Schell and Belinda Toms</td>
<td>Global Ministries</td>
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<td>Conference Youth Coordinator</td>
<td>Rev. Joseph Hill</td>
<td>Conference Council on Youth Ministries</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conference Scouting</td>
<td>Mr. Ralph Herron</td>
<td>United Methodist Men</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conference Stewardship Coordinator</td>
<td>Rev. George Webb</td>
<td>Conference Nominations Committee (Quadrennium)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conference Prayer Coordinator</td>
<td>Rev. Bill Dawson</td>
<td>Conference Nominations Committee (Quadrennium)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conference Child Protection Standards Coordinator</td>
<td>Rev. April Forkey</td>
<td>Conference Sexual Ethics Team</td>
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COVENANT COUNCIL RECOMMENDATIONS
APPROVED BY ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Global Ministries</th>
<th>Church &amp; Community Workers</th>
<th>Special Emphasis</th>
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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 28, 2019. [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 14, 2018.
   i. Observe World AIDS Day December 1
   j. Receive an offering for Global AIDS.
   k. Receive an offering for Black Methodists for Church Renewal, February 3, 2019
   l. Receive an offering for Disabilities Sunday, March 10, 2019

2. The following guidelines to be printed in the 2018 Official Journal and Yearbook and on the conference website
   a. Disaster Response Guidelines
   b. Humphreys Memorial Scholarship Guidelines
   c. Hunger Grant Guidelines
   d. Revolving Loan and Grant Fund Guidelines
   e. Mission Ministries Grant Guidelines
   f. 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.
Episcopacy

The Conference Committee on Episcopacy gathers four times a year to provide support to and evaluation of our Episcopal leader. The membership of the committee comes from all across the conference. They provide eyes and ears for the bishop to know some of the needs which surface in the conference.

Bishop Steiner Ball serves as Resident Bishop of the West Virginia Area. However, she is also a bishop of the entire United Methodist Church. Because of this, she is required to serve in a variety of capacities outside of the West Virginia Conference. Probably the most visible role she has is as one of three episcopal moderators for the Bishops’ Commission on a Way Forward. She has provided amazing leadership to this significant group. The Commission on a Way Forward has asked for all bishops to share with their conferences the possible plans that are being presented. Bishop Steiner Ball has plans to meet with all interested lay and clergy in each district prior to Annual Conference. She began in March and will complete these visits by May.

In addition to these meetings, she is also meeting numerous times with the delegation to the 2019 Special Session of General Conference in St. Louis. The Council of Bishops has requested that each bishop meet with the delegations to help prepare the delegates to be open to a less contentious and more productive meeting. We are fortunate to have a bishop who takes her leadership role seriously.

Other areas in which she serves the General Church are as president of the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry and chair of the Finance Committee of the Council of Bishops, which puts her 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.

Bishop Steiner Ball continues to provide leadership in the area of flood relief. She and the conference have been active in providing relief, even now nearly two years after the first flood event. The bishop and her cabinet participated in a week-long mission trip doing flood recovery work in Greenbrier and Nicholas counties in July of 2017.

The Episcopacy Committee will continue to update a profile of the West Virginia Conference, identifying the unique aspects of the conference as it relates to the jurisdiction. This profile will be used as the Jurisdictional Episcopacy Committee assigns bishops in 2020.

In connection with the Episcopacy Committee, the Conference Trustees have completed a remodel of the kitchen in the Episcopal residence, which is located in Teays Valley. This upgrade has added value to the home, in addition to making it a more pleasant place to live.

In her personal life, the bishop’s husband, Barry, retired from his job with the federal government in October. This has meant that they no longer have a commuter marriage. We are so glad that Barry is around the conference. He has served as a short-term interim while a pastor was on paternity leave. He has also given excellent leadership with his expertise on the opioid crisis. We are grateful for his work among us. Bishop Steiner Ball’s elder daughter, Sarah, will be married in the fall, and we celebrate that as well.
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 recommend to the WV Annual Conference the 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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Budget</td>
<td>157,300</td>
<td>157,300</td>
<td>157,300</td>
<td>150,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fair Share Income</td>
<td>137,103</td>
<td>138,400</td>
<td>137,737</td>
<td>131,831</td>
<td>129,359</td>
<td>128,827</td>
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<tr>
<td>Expenses</td>
<td>138,429</td>
<td>178,066</td>
<td>205,802</td>
<td>154,310</td>
<td>107,514</td>
<td>77,615</td>
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<tr>
<td>Year-End Balance</td>
<td>441,662</td>
<td>401,996</td>
<td>333,931</td>
<td>311,452</td>
<td>333,296</td>
<td>384,489</td>
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<tr>
<td>Claims</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>22</td>
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</table>
As indicated by the chart above, we celebrate with you that for the second year now our claims totaled less than our Fair Share Income for 2017! Through your faithfulness in apportioned giving and fewer claim expenses, we have been able to replenish an additional $51,192 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 work with charges to eliminate the need to rely on Equitable Compensation as a subsidy so that Equitable Compensation is more readily available for renewal/medical leave or emergency situations. We are extremely fortunate to have a reserve account well managed by our conference treasurer’s office, but we cannot fully depend upon the availability of these funds in the future.

To fulfill our responsibility to the WV Annual Conference, the Equitable Compensation Team recommends and presents for adoption the following:

1. The Equitable Compensation budget for 2019 be set at $142,500.
2. The 2019 minimum salaries of full-time appointed clergy be approved as follows:
   a. Category I -- $37,000.00 (Members in Full Connection, Provisional Members)
   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)

RATIONALE: You will note that the minimum salary recommendations for each category is the same as last year. In other words, the team is not recommending salary increases for any category in 2019. The decision to hold the minimum salary at the present amount was based upon the equitable compensation team’s loving response to the concerns that have been raised by individuals, charges and the Cabinet over the last several years. More specifically, we elected to recommend no change in the minimum salary based upon the following rationale. First, the team recognizes that any salary increase also results in the increase of pension and apportionment amounts. While we encourage charges to engage in stewardship programs that enable charges to provide equitable compensation for clergy and viable ministry programs, we acknowledge that any increase in salary has the potential to force individual charges to apply for salary supplements or to cut ministry opportunities. Secondly, we recognize that over the last six years we have raised the minimum salary for Category I by $5,100, Category II by $5,100, Category III by $4,800, and Category IV by $3,800. It is the opinion of the Equitable Compensation Team that our current salary structure is sufficient enough to maintain our current salary ranking among other annual conferences and to recruit clergy to the WV Annual Conference.

1. 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” (2016 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 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 any one 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 from the Lay Ministry Team responsible for stewardship shall be available to visit each church/charge upon request.
EQUITABLE COMPENSATION TASK FORCE: At our last Annual Conference, I announced the creation of a task force to explore the impact of Equitable Compensation recommendations on charges receiving Equitable Compensation, the Cabinet’s ability to appoint pastors, and the overall fiscal health of the WV Annual Conference. At this time, I have nothing to report from the task force. However, a full report will be presented to the body at Annual Conference this coming June.

Again, it is our desire to 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

ETHNIC MINISTRIES
Native American Ministries (CONAM)

In both Christianity and Native tradition, reconciliation is right relationship. The classic vision quest for Native people is the effort to receive the right spiritual prescription to heal relationships that may have gotten out of alignment.

Steve Charleston, The Four Vision Quests of Jesus

This year the West Virginia Committee for Native American Ministries (CONAM) continued down the path of “Remembrance, Repentance and Reconciliation” that was begun several years ago by The United Methodist Church. Committee members Ellesa High (chairperson), Ed Grant, Ellen Krimmel, Ken Krimmel, J. F. Lacaria, Carol Markstrom, Jay Parkins, and Rich Shaffer again worked to serve Native Americans within our conference and region, as well as to share their traditions and history with our churches.

It was an honor for our CONAM to participate in Annual Conference by “saging” or “smudging” the Chapel at WV Wesleyan College in preparation for the meeting, and for a CONAM member to welcome representatives to a place which has been part of “Indian Country” for thousands of years. This traditional greeting also connected those present with all of Creation, including ancestors and those yet unborn (a “Cloud of Witnesses”) in a spirit of peace and “Creational” Inclusion.

The CONAM similarly opened the Bishop’s Summit on Diversity and Inclusion (“Building Holy Relationships Across Culture and Abilities”) with a Native welcome. Earlier in the day, the CONAM led a “Women’s Water Ceremony” at Cedar Lakes as part
of a CORR meeting. As in the past, we traveled to the Northeastern Jurisdiction Native American Ministries Annual Meeting, this year held in Eliot, Maine. It’s always inspiring and insightful to gather with church leaders from across the region and share new experiences and strategies concerning how to strengthen our conference’s interactions with Native peoples.

**New this year:** Elle (Ellesa) led an effort to create a Native American Ministries Sunday service that could be shared with congregations across the conference. Director of Connectional Ministries, Ken Krimmel, directed and produced an interview with her that aired on the conference’s website to encourage churches to observe this important recognition of American Indians within West Virginia and across the country. Deborah Coble, Director of Communications, videotaped the service which was held at the Bruceton United Methodist Church (co-sponsored by the Sugar Valley UMC) and featured live Native American drumming and singing by Mother Earth Beat Drum, Bible and Native American spiritual readings, power-point presentations, and display tables. A traditional “feast” of Native American foods and dishes followed the service, kindly researched and cooked by ladies of the congregation. Truly, it took many hands with many skills to make this occasion a success. It is the CONAM’s hope that interested churches may access this videotape online to use as part of their own Native American Ministries Sunday celebrations.

Another new project was developing an internship with Fairmont State University. Evangeline Eden, a senior Communications major, has been analyzing the CONAM’s online presence to explore how it might be improved and made more visible. In addition, she is working with Elle to help create a website that would connect the CONAM with Native Americans across the state.

**Other news:** Carol Markstrom and Elle High attended a Sunrise Ceremony (a four-day woman’s coming-of-age ceremony) with the San Carlos Apache people in Arizona. Elle also participated in the 25th Anniversary Peace Tree Ceremony (J. F. Lacaria and Jay Parkins also attended) at West Virginia University.

In addition, Elle traveled to Pittsburgh, meeting with Bob Wilson (chairperson of the Western Pennsylvania CONAM) and local Native people to strategize about shared needs and possible collaborations. In January, she consulted with staff at the West Virginia Folklife Center (also lending artifacts) as they created the exhibit, “Always Here: Native Americans in West Virginia.” Most recently, she accompanied students and faculty on a Native American Studies Program (WVU) trip to Carlisle, Pennsylvania, to tour what remains of the Carlisle Indian School (the “Granddaddy” and perhaps most infamous of the residential schools that affected generations of Indian children) and to meet with Native leaders as they plan a future national interpretive center there.

These are exciting times for our CONAM. Please join us!

Ellesa (Elle) High, Chairperson
Jesus said in John 14:27, “Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid.” Today, we live in a world fraught with fear, desperately needing the peace of Christ. For peaceful people striving to build God’s beloved community, this past year presented times to celebrate and times to mourn. God’s people encountered racism and the threat of white supremacy in a plethora of forms. Reports of racial oppression and violence filled the news as hurt-filled language trickled from halls of power to workplaces and playgrounds. The world witnessed blatant, implicit, complicit, and explicit racism. Consider that during the summer of 2017, a Commission on Religion and Race (CORR) member witnessed first-hand the hundreds of white supremacists marching through Charlottesville, Virginia, carrying automatic weapons and chanting racial slurs while provoking (perhaps invoking) the spirit of fear in the atmosphere. This situation served as a poignant reminder that minorities experience ongoing challenges that others rarely encounter.

Indeed, people of color face the drama and trauma of racism and racial bias without provocation. Various forms of racism may appear less dramatic to some but are equally as oppressive as the Charlottesville debacle for the minority populations who experience racism, racial bias, and discrimination daily. Consider, if you will, the peril of driving while black or simply living while black and being demonized or vilified because of skin color. Our congregations and communities need to prepare to address racial disparities on all fronts including, but certainly not limited to, employment, education, socioeconomics, healthcare, addiction, mass incarceration, wealth inequality, biased school suspension rates, racial profiling, white privilege, and yes, the quest for viable participation in the life of the Church.

In response, CORR seeks to make a difference by working to foster peace and greatly needed positive change while trusting in Jesus and depending on God’s Word. In this reporting period, CORR worked toward positive change through strategic visioning, training, and education with emphasis on intercultural competency and cross-racial/cross-cultural understanding.

To initiate strategic visioning, CORR met twice with Rev. Giovanni Arroyo of the General Commission on Religion and Race (GCORR). Rev. Arroyo facilitated strategic planning on November 20 and 21, 2017. Out of these sessions emerged the goals of preparing congregations for leadership transitions and for engaging the racially and culturally diverse populations surrounding the congregations. CORR will create training resources and programs to fulfill these goals. For example, a plan is in the works for the Southern District to host a pilot program designed to help congregations with becoming more racially inclusive and to prepare and test congregational readiness for cross-racial/cross-cultural (CR/CC) appointments. Similarly, work is going forward to ensure that Discover U participants have an intentional CR/CC experience with access to related resources. While this work centers on youth and young adults, the general plan extends to people of all ages. The plan also includes a CR/CC ministry training for the Conference Council on Youth Ministries (CCYM) for the
fall of 2018 and for Spring Heights camp counselors for the summer of 2019.

In terms of **training**, CORR’s meeting with Rev. Arroyo on October 5, 2017, at Cedar Lakes gave attention to *Book of Discipline* ¶643 and the annual review of CORR responsibilities. During this session, Committee on Native American Ministries (CONAM) chairperson Ellesa High led a Native American Women’s Water Ceremony. Surrounded by lakes, CORR women (supported by CORR men) drummed and performed a special water song in the Native American Tradition, asking for blessings and healing for the waters and for all people. This was a meaningful and powerful experience for all involved. Additionally, the Bishop’s Summit on Diversity and Inclusion on October 6 and 7, 2017, presented a training highlight. Held at Cedar Lakes, the 2017 Summit focused on intercultural competency and training for ministry with people who are differently abled. Bishop Peggy Johnson of the Philadelphia Episcopal Area and Rev. Arroyo of GCORR provided helpful leadership for the Summit. Special music was rendered by the Martin Luther King Jr. Male Chorus and St. Marks UMC Steel Drum Band.

CORR supported **education** in several ways. For example, CORR offered support for WV Black Methodists for Church Renewal (BMCR) members to attend jurisdictional and national BMCR meetings. CORR partially sponsored a WV BMCR retreat at the Saint John XXIII Pastoral Center in December of 2017 as well. Additionally, in a quarterly meeting via conference call on January 22, 2018, CORR voted to assist Rev. Dr. Earnest Watkins with the costs of attending a GCORR educational event in New Jersey. Finally, the flagship activity was the bus trip to the *Unite to End Racism* rally in Washington, DC on April 3 and 4, 2018. CORR joined several other conference committees and teams in subsidizing participation in this anti-racism rally. “Marking 50 years since the April 4, 1968, assassination of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., rally participants made personal commitments to eradicating the entrenched racism that grips the United States and paralyzes our ability to see every human being as equal (adapted from www.rally2endracism.org).”

The question is: will we all commit to eradicating racism in every way that it rears its ugly head in our congregations, our conference, our nation, and our world? The members of CORR believe that the West Virginia Conference of The United Methodist Church can and will help to bring equity, equality, justice, restoration, redemption, and peace to all people. Please join CORR in making a daily affirmation to “let there be peace on earth, and let it begin with me” (Jill Jackson-Miller and Sy Miller, 1955). Please empower CORR with continued support and increased participation so that this important work may abound in the name of Jesus the Christ. Amen.

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Felica Wooten Williams, PhD
And The WVUMC Commission on Religion and Race
Evangelism

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

The Conference Evangelism Team’s focus during the past year fell in three areas.

1. Conference Evangelist Guidelines
   The Team prepared a set of Conference Evangelist Guidelines:
   - The Conference’s Expectation of Evangelist
   - Anticipated Attributes of the Evangelist
   - The Work of the Evangelist
   - Required Qualifications for the position
   - Recommendations for Continuing Education
   - The Application Process
   - The Team’s Application Review and Approval Process
   - A Process for Annual Renewal of the Conference Evangelist

2. Selecting a Conference Evangelist

   Once the Conference Guidelines were complete, the committee accepted an application from Rev. Stephon Reed for the position of Conference Evangelist.
   Upon reviewing his applications, his qualifications, recommendations of his District Superintendent and other pastors, and interviewing Pastor Reed and his wife Shirley (also a pastor), the committee approved him as a Conference Evangelist. The Evangelism Team recognizes that Pastor Reed possesses the following attributes and church support:
   a. He is highly qualified, gifted and experienced in evangelizing, and revitalizing revivals.
   b. He has a love for the work.
   c. He comes recommended by the Potomac Highland District Superintendent.
   d. He will work with the Evangelism Team, the District Superintendent, and the Cabinet.
   e. He sees his role as such being the strengthening and revival in the Body of Christ.
   f. He considers this ministry to be an extension of his congregation’s ministry, and the congregation supports his efforts.
   g. He has a protocol to not meddle in any other congregation, doesn’t build a mailing list for his own purposes, and doesn’t solicit offerings (however, freewill offerings are welcome).

   The committee agrees that Pastor Reed is well equipped to serve as the Conference’s first Conference Evangelist. We hope that others with a similar heart for this ministry will step forward and apply to be named a Conference Evangelist. The Evangelism Team feels that a group of Conference Evangelists could serve the Conference in new and exciting ways.
   Pastor Reed’s primary focus will be revival for the congregation, encouraging going out to make disciples, and working with the pastor or a person appointed by the pastor for follow-up in any congregation with which he works.
   A beautiful addition to Pastor Reed’s effort is the commitment of Shirley Reed. She also possesses a heart for evangelism and works tirelessly with her husband to support and carry out their evangelism efforts.
   The Evangelism Team encourages all pastors to consider involving Pastor Reed in your congregational development.
3. Membership To Discipleship

The mission of The United Methodist Church is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. To improve our efforts in meeting this mission, on Saturday, February 10, 2018, the Evangelism Team, in conjunction with the Congregational Development Team and Conference Communications Team, presented a statewide simulcast called Membership to Discipleship.

Dr. Phil Maynard of EMC3 was invited to lead us through the process of transforming members into disciples. His disciple-building system reached over 700 conference members; providing them with insights that could motivate and perfect their discipleship process.

Dr. Maynard sought to answer two fundamental questions: “What behaviors mark the lives of growing disciples?” and “How does the church provide the support and tools disciples need if they are growing toward maturity?”

The simulcast was broadcast from the primary seminar location, Forrest Burdette Memorial UMC in Hurricane, to the following satellite locations:
- St. Luke’s UMC, Craigsville
- Gateway UMC, Fairmont
- Stout Memorial UMC, Parkersburg
- Lewisburg UMC, Lewisburg
- Christ UMC, Wheeling
- Canaan Valley Conference Center
- Main Street UMC, Petersburg
- United Methodist Temple, Beckley
- Duff Street UMC, Clarksburg

Going Beyond the Seminar

The conference leadership feels strongly that Dr. Maynard’s message and guidance are vitally important to sustaining and growing our Church. Therefore, the district superintendents agreed to offer district led training programs to supplement Dr. Maynard’s program. The first of these programs began just two weeks after the initial event.

Finally, the Evangelism Team wants to express our appreciation and gratitude to the Conference’s remarkable Communications Team. Their effort to put together a statewide simulcast in less than 120 days was inspiring. As a result of that work, the Conference is now in a position to offer more significant assistance and training to the entire conference, individual districts, and specific congregations. We really are a “connected” Church.

Respectfully Submitted by
Edward J. Corbitt, Chairperson
Global Ministries

Our Vision statement: A church visible to all the world (so that the world will be convinced of the gospel of Jesus Christ)
Our Mission statement: To equip and transform people and places for God's mission at home and around the world

The West Virginia Conference Board of Global Ministries was charged in 2017 with the task of creating a ministry action plan. To do that required creating a vision statement and a mission statement from which our work would evolve. Above are those two statements.

It is the overall goal of Global Ministries to help each local congregation engage in one or more outreach ministries in its community, in areas outside of its community yet within the bounds of the conference, and globally with globally meaning anywhere outside the boundaries of the West Virginia Annual Conference. Churches are encouraged to partner with one another in order to become more engaged and effective in their outreach ministries.

One of the action steps to assist congregations to achieve our overall goal was the Parish Development Event – Reshaping Parish Ministry, held May 5-6, 2017, at Suncrest United Methodist Church in Morgantown. We had three excellent keynote presenters --- Rev. John Edgar from Church for All People in Columbus, OH; Laura Beach Byrch from Rural Faith Development in Boone, NC; and Anne Bosarge from The Chapel Ministries in Brunswick, GA. They talked to 31 attendees from the West Virginia Conference and six from the Western Pennsylvania Conference about partnerships, visioning for ministry, and big change one step at a time.

A second action step taken to augment what was learned in the Parish Development Event was the revision of a 1991 document on Cooperative Parish guidelines. This document will be used in the year ahead to help guide parishes in their ministries as they continue with mission work already in progress, perhaps learn how to expand that work, and maybe even start a new ministry.

Last year we engaged Linda Williams as our Health and Disabilities Coordinator. Plans were begun to survey congregations about health issues in conjunction with West Virginia University with one district being used as a pilot project. Ms. Williams also was in the beginning stages of setting up a global health initiative in Haiti and Zimbabwe for our conference to be involved with. Unfortunately, Ms. Williams resigned due to a move out of state. The Board is currently in the process of seeking applicants and filling this position with the possibility it will be divided between two coordinators --- one for health and one for disabilities.

Global Ministries continues to award hunger grants, mini-mission grants, Revolving Loans and Grants, and Virginia Higgins grants. Guidelines for these are published in the Journal and on the conference website.

Elsewhere, you will find reports from our Mission Project Directors and Church and Community Workers. These agencies are doing an incredible work. Please continue to support them in any way that you can. Consider volunteering at these sites as well. They are a blessing to our conference and especially to those whom they serve.
GLOBAL MINISTRIES

Under the auspices of the Board, Volunteers in Mission and Disaster Response, which also includes New Vision Depot, do tremendous work. Volunteering to work at the Depot would be appreciated and going on mission trips is a true blessing. It is hoped that these suggestions would be considered. Our conference should be extremely proud of Rev. David Stilgenbauer, Rev. Dan Lowther, and Rev. Sue Lowther. Please take time to read their reports.

And do not forget to look at the reports from Rev. Margo Friend about what we are doing in relationship to Global AIDS and from Jeff Matheny, Conference Secretary of Global Ministries, who keeps us informed about missionaries connected with our conference.

The Board has an awesome responsibility. As it continues to live out its vision and mission statements, we find there is still much work to do. Please be in prayer for the Board as we move forward.

Pat Mick
Chair of Board of Global Ministries

Conference Secretary of Global Ministries

It has been another exciting year serving as the Conference Secretary of Global Ministries in the WV Annual Conference. I have been able to apply my passion for international missions with many other people around the conference, the jurisdiction and around the world. The primary role of the CGSM is to facilitate the connection between our United Methodist missionaries from around the world to the churches in our Annual Conference. This past year we had the opportunity to host Dr. Emmanuel and Florence Mefor in our conference during their itineration. Emmanuel is a physician and Florence is a nurse who serve in Mutambara, Zimbabwe. During their time in our conference, they were able to visit Morris Memorial UMC, Pea Ridge UMC, Princeton First UMC, Christ UMC in Wheeling, and Epworth UMC in Ripley. I would encourage each church to develop a covenant relationship with one of our United Methodist missionaries who is serving God both in the United States and around the world. I have a goal to improve communications between our missionaries and our local churches. I am also looking for a volunteer from each district to assist in this ministry. If you have an interest, please contact me at jeff@pbo.bz.

Last fall I had the opportunity to again travel to Zimbabwe and work at the Old Mutare Mission which includes a rural hospital, a children’s home, a primary school and a secondary school. While we were there we had the opportunity to visit with five missionaries and Rodgers Wabwile, who is the student from Living Hope High School attending Africa University. The missionaries we visited were Dr. Manyeza at Old Mutare, Larry and Jane Kies at Africa University, and the Mefors in Mutambara. It was certainly a pleasure to visit with all of them and see the difference they are making in the world by answering God’s call to ministry and service.
GLOBAL MINISTRIES

GBGM has also created 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 is the Global Justice Volunteer which lasts 2 months and is designed for people from 18 to 30 years old. The second opportunity is Global Mission Fellow and they are persons 20 to 30 years old and serve for two years. The third program is Mission Volunteers which is a flexible mission for people 18 and older. More details about each of these programs can be found 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

Celebration of Mission Event

The Celebration of Mission Event is an outreach ministry of the Conference Board of Global Ministries. 2018 is the 21st anniversary of the Events held across the West Virginia Annual Conference. Since the Events take place in late spring, it is not possible to provide 2018 financial reports for the Conference Workbook. However, we gratefully report that $128,001.32 was raised for our WV Conference Mission Ministries by the 2017 Celebration of Mission Events, a record amount exceeding the previous high mark by more than $15,000.00. Our District Coordinators, District Teams and District Churches all did a great job. Thanks to all who supported this vital project! The cash gifts provided $12,900.00 for each Conference Mission Project and Volunteers in Mission, and $6,450.00 for our two Church and Community Ministries. The cash figures do not include an estimated $40,000.00 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 $952,751.52 for our Conference Mission Ministries over the past nine years, plus an estimated $440,000 in tangible goods.

Ten percent of undesignated funds received are deposited in the UM Foundation Trust Fund for Mission Projects ($11,317.32 in 2017). In the past 12 quarters, 3.5% of the average market value of the funds is distributed to our Conference Mission Ministries each year ($894.21 for each project for 2017). At the close of 2017 the market value of the Trust Fund was $310,373.35.

The 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 Flensborg and Cynthia Eakle (Little Kanawha), TBS (Midland South), Ginny Davidson, Barbara Metcalfe and Janice Watts (MonValley), Barbara Cover
GLOBAL MINISTRIES

(Northern), Amanda & Nathan Epling (Potomac Highlands), Martha Wilkinson (Southern), Saundra & Brian Boley (Wesleyan), and Jane Morse (Western). The District Coordinators do us a tremendous service, forming district teams to 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 2018 support are:

- #875 -- Undesignated Gifts
- #880 -- Heart + Hands Outreach Ministries (was CDOM)
- #881 -- Ebenezer Community Outreach Center
- #883 -- Heart and Hand House, Inc. (Philippi)
- #884 -- The House of the Carpenter
- #886 -- Southern Dist. Church & Community Min
- #887 -- Scott's Run Settlement House
- #888 -- Tyrand Cooperative Ministries, Inc.
- #889 -- Upshur Parish House
- #892 -- Volunteers in Mission
- #896 -- Greater Clarksburg Coop. Parish

**The Challenge Goal for 2018 is to exceed the 2017 total for the support of our West Virginia Annual Conference Mission Ministries.** The Celebration of Mission Event Information and District Schedules are on the following page or can be downloaded from the Conference Website. For more information, call Belinda Toms at 304-335-2788 or Cliff Schell at 304-842-4492.

Respectfully submitted,
Belinda Toms and Cliff Schell, Co-chairs of the Celebration of Mission Event Conference Team
# GLOBAL MINISTRIES

## 2019 CELEBRATION OF MISSION EVENT

### DISTRICT ROTATIONS

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**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.
Disaster Response Ministries

The Conference year 2017-2018 continued to be a busy year for the WV Conference Disaster Response Ministries. The long-term recovery team formed to address the 2016 flooding across southeastern West Virginia is still actively engaged in assisting survivors to reach their goals in recovery, something we call their “new normal.” Our blessed connection resulted in our conference receiving $1.7 million in direct contributions for our recovery. In addition to these contributions, we received three distributions from UMCOR, a $10,000 emergency grant, and two long term recovery grants for $500,000 and $750,000 each. Together with our partners in recovery, we are able to make a significant impact on the overall recovery of the 12 declared counties and for many families living in undeclared counties but still profoundly impacted by the flood waters.

Our team has remained fully engaged and will continue into the summer of 2019. The team consists of Jack Lipphardt, director; Grace Msisha and Miranda Nabers, case managers; Chad Faris and Buck Edwards, worksite coordinators; David Stilgenbauer, VIM coordinator; Dan and Sue Lowther, Conference Disaster Response Co-Coordinators; and JF Lacaria, disaster management.

We are thrilled to report that all 13 churches that experienced damage have completed 90% or more of their recovery plans. The commitment we made to the Governor’s office, the National Guard and the WV Board of Education to underwrite the placement of 15 tiny homes, built by 11 of the state’s technical schools, is complete. Closely related to our work with the tiny homes, we just had a house blessing for a house that was constructed by high school students attending the Fred Eberle Technical School in Upshur County and placed by United Methodists in Clendenin for a family of four.

Here are some highlights of work we have completed:

- Our case managers have opened 105 cases and completed and closed 49 of them. Most of these cases are severe, indicating total property loss, or very challenging attendant problems such as poor health, disability, senior citizens.
- We have engaged over 900 volunteers who have performed 27,500 hours of recovery work valued at $600,000. Of special note is the fact that we had a VIM team exchange with Alaska.
- We have made major repairs to 60 residences, benefitting over 100 persons.
- We have spent $2 million in direct payments to vendors and recovery services, while partnered with other members of West Virginia Volunteer Organizations Assisting in Disasters (WV VOAD) like Red Cross, Catholic Charities, Lutheran Partners, Neighbors Loving Neighbors, United Way, and other foundations.
2017 also brought new flooding events in the MonValley and Northern Districts of our annual conference. In June of 2017, severe rains brought extreme flooding in Ohio, Marshall, Wetzel, Marion, Monongalia, Harrison, and Taylor counties in West Virginia. The West Virginia Conference Disaster Response Ministries had an immediate response to the relief of these counties, due in large part to the quantities of supplies at New Vision Depot. Hundreds of flood/clean up buckets, shovels, mops, brooms, rakes, and hygiene kits were sent to the affected areas. The WV Conference Disaster Response ministries continued to work with local communities, Community Lutheran Partners, and Appalachian Outreach Ministries to aid in the relief efforts and into the recovery. In February of 2018, some of these same areas were struck again by flooding. Again, relief supplies were sent and recovery is presently in progress. Following these events, the West Virginia Conference Disaster Response invested $7,000 to repair flooded parsonages and churches. These included 1st UMC Mannington, Hundred UMC Parsonage, Hundred UMC, and St. James UMC.

New Vision Depot and the WV Conference Disaster Response Ministries were also blessed with a new 2017 Ford F-450 flatbed truck. This new addition has already been of great value in moving large quantities of supplies into affected areas and moving equipment to further the recovery and relief in many areas. A special thank you to all who made this purchase possible.

New Vision Depot continues to grow and become a vital part of the ministry of disaster response. Through the gracious donations of many churches and congregants around the conference, we have a large quantity of supplies on hand to quickly get them to survivors in need. We cannot do this without you. 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 extend the hands 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.

JF Lacaria, Disaster Management
Disaster Response Co-Coordinators
GLOBAL MINISTRIES

West Virginia Volunteers in Mission

This year has been very much a learning year for me as the coordinator for VIM. The connection with disaster response has been a wonderful way to not only send teams out but to bring teams into the Conference. This year we had over 63 teams who have come to help with flood recovery. That accounts for over 1,400 volunteers this past year, with most coming for a week, making over 57,401 working hours on flood recovery. These numbers do not include many of our own volunteers who had connections with local churches.

We not only had teams who came, we also sent teams out. We had two teams who went to Alaska, one to Haiti and one to Mozambique. It is my desire to have more trips in the future. This past year we trained eighteen new team leaders and plan for them to lead teams very soon. I am also looking for churches and people to partner with me. United Methodist Volunteers in Mission (UMVIM) is a grassroots movement within The United Methodist Church that provides a way for lay and clergy Christians to use their skills and talents in service at home and around the world on short-term mission assignments at their own expense.

Their work includes construction of mission facilities, teaching, witnessing, conducting medical clinics, conducting Bible study or Bible School for children, and serving in disaster relief efforts around the world. As the Volunteers in Mission coordinator, I am looking for churches or people who are willing to be in covenant with UMVIM. Particularly, I am looking for partners who will commit to $500 a year. I want you to know UMVIM is not a funded ministry. There is a minimal amount of support to help cover the administrative cost. It is my dream to build the West Virginia UMVIM to a place where it can be a full-time position and allow us to extend the amount of trips offered. With your help, we can build UMVIM to a place that will allow more opportunities for West Virginia UMC to connect with the world in mission. Please put UMVIM, #804 in the memo line to be sure all contributions go to UMVIM. I hope you will join me in building up UMVIM.

Rev. David Stilgenbauer
Email: revdaves@yahoo.com
Phone: 304-210-6938
GLOBAL MINISTRIES

WV Global AIDS Fund Task Team

ZERO New HIV infections! ZERO Discrimination! ZERO AIDS-related deaths!

Friends, we are at a very difficult time in the AIDS Pandemic. There are many reasons why HIV cases are increasing world-wide, especially among young adults and children. In our beloved West Virginia Conference, we have been dealing with the disease of addiction, and more are infected every day. In the midst of this epidemic of drug overdoses lies the continued transmission of HIV and other viruses. Prevention must be done at every age level and all the time. From teaching little children not to touch needles and to get an adult if they see a needle, to working with Senior Citizens and teaching them how to protect themselves.

HIV: Incidence: People in urban areas and men who have sex with men (MSM) remain most affected. New infections have climbed among young MSM. About 16% of HIV-positive people are unaware of their status, and 75% of HIV-positive people are not virally suppressed. Sexually transmitted infections: About half occur in young people. Syphilis rates are rising, especially among young MSM. Antibiotic-resistant gonorrhea remains particularly concerning. https://dhhr.wv.gov/oeps/news/Pages/Infectious-Diseases-Still-Major-Public-Health-Issue,-CDC-Says.

HIV/AIDS remains one of the world’s most significant public health challenges, particularly in low- and middle-income countries. Due to the increase of people using needles to inject their drugs and sharing those needles, HIV is back on the rise in WV.

As a result of recent advances in access to antiretroviral therapy (ART), HIV-positive people now live longer and healthier lives. In addition, it has been confirmed that ART prevents onward transmission of HIV, when the person’s viral load is undetectable. An estimated 20.9 million people were receiving HIV treatment in mid-2017. However, globally, only 53% of the 36.7 million people living with HIV in 2016 were receiving ART. Progress has also been made in preventing and eliminating mother-to-child transmission and keeping mothers alive. In 2016, almost 8 out of 10 pregnant women living with HIV, or 1.1 million women, received antiretrovirals (ARVs).

We must offer HIV/AIDS prevention education in our churches and communities. There are many trained educators in our Conference who can work with your congregations to help you Get the facts, Know the facts and Use the facts for our sake and the sake of our loved ones. All of the educators are sensitive to local concerns. Contact Margo Friend for information about an HIV/AIDS educator in your region.

When you contribute to the UMGAC Advance you support grassroots community interventions. You can save a life by contributing as little as $10 which is the cost of therapies or community actions that can prevent transmission. THIS INITIATIVE SAVES LIVES, ONE MOTHER, BABY, AND FAMILY AT A TIME...
GLOBAL MINISTRIES

A special thank you to Thomasina Stewart for all her years of work with the Task Team. Thanks to Mary Baker and Idress Gooden, long time Task Team members. Most importantly a huge THANK YOU to The WV Annual Conference for your continued support of this Advanced Special: The Global AIDS Fund.

Margo Friend, Chair Global AIDS Task Team

“May Christ’s love surround you and be a constant reminder of your beloved-ness as we work together to create an AIDS-Free world.”
— The United Methodist Global AIDS Committee (UMGAC)

The NAMES Project AIDS Memorial Quilt: Twenty-five years ago The Board of Church and Society, along with other groups, hosted the first display of The NAMES Project AIDS Memorial Quilt in West Virginia. There is a small display of the Quilt on the second floor of the Rockefeller Gymnasium. In the summer of 1993, many people had not seen or did not know about the Quilt and HIV/AIDS. Sadly, the same is true today. Please take the time to see a portion of The NAMES Project AIDS Memorial Quilt.

Abundant Health Report

*I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.*

John 10:10b, NRSV

HOW IS YOUR HEALTH? As United Methodists, we are committed to creating abundant health for all – a global connection striving for mental, physical, emotional and spiritual well-being.

“It will be a double blessing if you give yourself up to the Great Physician, that He may heal soul and body together. And unquestionably this is His design. He wants to give you ... both inward and outward health.”

— John Wesley, from a letter written in 1778 to Alexander Knox, a theological writer.

The General Board of Global Ministries has been working towards Abundant Health for all of God’s Children and you are invited to join the movement. I know I often read about another initiative of the UMC and think “I’m up to my eyeballs in initiatives, how am I going to add one more?” But, fear not; virtually every church is already involved in Abundant Health. Are you feeding folks who are hungry? Abundant Health. Ever preached or heard a sermon on anxiety and fear? Abundant Health. Ever served a funeral meal? Abundant Health. Ever had a study on prayer? Abundant Health.
GLOBAL MINISTRIES

As you can see, we are already engaged in Abundant Health in our churches, communities, districts, conference and beyond. The Board of Global Ministries wants to support you in those efforts and get information from you about your successes so others can be inspired. Are you interested in sharing your story and hearing more? Stop by the Ministry Fair at Annual Conference, learn more and register your church; or go to www.umcabundanthealth.org, on Facebook: globalministries, Instagram: umcabundanthealth, Twitter: umcmission.

Looking forward to seeing you at Annual Conference!

Blessings,

Here is some additional information to share with your church:

Mind & Emotions

Vibrant mental health is a vital part of a person’s holistic well-being. Helping people identify, treat, cope with and overcome their mental health challenges is something that will increase their quality of life, not only because the church offers them encouragement, but also because congregations are a community of hope that will provide strength on their journey of healing.

*Fast facts:*

- 50% of all chronic mental illness begins by the age of 14 and 75% by the age of 24
- 800,000 people die from suicide globally each year (1 death every 40 seconds)
- 1 in 5 adults in America experience a mental illness

Body

Bountiful physical health comes in the form of a balanced diet, ample physical activity and access to health care. Our bodies are instruments through which God can work in our communities, the means by which we can share his message of grace and eternal love for all. By caring for the body, we fortify the mission to which God has called us: to live exuberantly as we make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

*Fast facts:*

- 19.5 million infants around the world are missing out on basic vaccines
- 44% of World Health Organization member states report to having less than 1 physician per 1,000 people
- 40% of U.S. adults eat fruit less than once each day
GLOBAL MINISTRIES

Resilient spiritual health gives us purpose in our daily lives. We find strength to face our own brokenness and the fractured world around us, allowing us to rise up as disciples who speak words of hope and plant seeds of peace. As we seek to follow Christ and live as he asks us to live, our communities will become places of grace and love.

Fast facts:
- 31% of the global population is Christian
- 16% of the global population is religiously unaffiliated
- 48% of Americans see themselves as religious and spiritual

Why we do this work
Jesus’ mission on earth was inaugurated by healing (Matthew 4:23-24), and his healing ministries were a central sign that Jesus was the promised Messiah (Luke 7:20-22). Therefore, we understand that continuing Jesus’ ministry of healing is an important part of what it means to be disciples of Jesus Christ.

Just as a good shepherd must have a connection with the sheep, so we are called to identify with and engage in mutual partnership with individuals and communities facing health challenges. Just as Jesus the Good Shepherd knows his sheep, so we too must get to know those with whom we are in partnership so that we may promote life-saving interventions appropriate for our communities, locally and globally. Just as Jesus lays down his life for his sheep, so we are called to sacrificially care for those who are vulnerable among us.

We believe that God, who is already at work healing, renewing, and redeeming creation, not only calls us to follow the path of Jesus in this way, but will also empower us with the Spirit as we step forth in mission to seek abundant health for all!

One way that Abundant Health supports worldwide healing is through the General Board of Global Ministries Global Health focus of extending health interventions to one million children by 2020.
GLOBAL MINISTRIES
Church and Community Workers Ministry

Church and Community Workers are commissioned missionaries appointed by the General Board of Global Ministries. They are devoted to breaking the chains of poverty and social needs in the areas where they serve. Their work began over 130 years ago and is still going strong today. If there is a need Church and Community Workers will be a necessary part of the church. They are working to “be the church” in the communities where they are assigned. In the West Virginia Conference, support for Church and Community Workers is shared by the General Board of Global Ministries, the Annual Conference, United Methodist Women and co-operative parishes where they are assigned.

At this time, there are 28 Church and Community Workers all across the United States. West Virginia is blessed to have two of those workers, Gayle Lesure with the Clarksburg Cooperative Parish and Joanne Davis with Hope in the Mountains in the Southern District. Look for their reports on the following pages. In 2017 we said goodbye to Amy Purdon who was working with The House of the Carpenter. Work is underway to find another Church and Community Worker for The House of the Carpenter.

Church and Community workers are women and men who have answered the call of God on their lives. They involve themselves in the community to help meet the needs there. Their job will always be to make a difference in the spiritual and economic life of those they serve.

The West Virginia advisory committee works to advocate for the Church and Community Workers and the wonderful work that they do. It is our desire to say, “thank you” and to get the word out to others about the mission they are doing. We want to be a part of helping them in their work for the Conference, for the Church and for Christ.

Judy Raines, Chair
CCW Advisory Committee

Church and Community Worker
Hope in the Mountains

Joanne Davis

A year of discovery! I wouldn’t claim to be either Lewis or Clark, but I get around!

During the past year, I have been out and about, all over the Southern District and beyond. I’ve traveled from Fayetteville in the north to Princeton in the south, all over Beckley in the east to Justice in the west. I’ve motored over Bolt Mountain, Herndon Mountain, Spruce Mountain, and seemingly countless small hills and mountains in-between. I’ve traveled Lester Highway and the Welch-Pineville Highway more times than I can count. I’ve
GLOBAL MINISTRIES

been to churches as different from each other as the Temple in Beckley and Court Street in McDowell County. I’ve gone up to Wheeling for the UMW Annual Meeting and down to Bluefield for the UMW Southern District Spring meeting; to Buckhannon for Mission u and to Charleston for a convocation on the opioid epidemic. All of this is in service of a larger goal: to build relationships with those in our churches and those in our communities, with an eye towards forming partnerships that can transform our communities in the name of Christ.

I have grown to know and love so many people as I build relationships with the members of our churches and with members of the community. The next steps are to solidify those relationships, to link our churches to our neighbors, and to imagine ministries that bring to life the hopes, dreams, and aspirations of our neighbors. As 2018 unfolds, I am working to discover the assets of our churches and of our communities and their residents, and to learn about their deepest hopes and dreams for themselves and the places in which they live. If we can match the assets and passions of our congregants with those of the people living in our communities, we will have a solid basis upon which to design ministries that can transform the lives of all of God’s children in those places! As they say in the advertising business, watch this space!

Church and Community Worker
Greater Clarksburg Cooperative Parish
Gayle Lesure, Deaconess/Church and Community Worker

“Whatever you do to the least of these my brothers and sisters, you have done unto me...”
Matthew 25

As I begin this report it is snowing outside and the winter just keeps on coming. But I am also aware that we are deep into the season of Lent, which culminates with the Easter Celebration, the sign of new life and the hope of resurrection. And that is what being in ministry to our neighbors in need is all about --- bringing hope, resurrection and new life to all. As I look back over the year of 2017, and reflect on the ministry and mission that we have been about, several things come to mind.

The Greater Clarksburg Cooperative Parish, to which I am appointed as CCW, and also serve as the Parish Coordinator, covers the Northern part of Harrison County, the towns of Clarksburg and Bridgeport and all the surrounding communities. The cooperative parish includes 18 local congregations serving others in the name of Christ. The parish is blessed with gifted, dedicated pastoral leaders, youth ministers, one Probationary Deacon and one Deaconess. The cooperative parish has many activities/celebrations throughout the year, such as Martin Luther King Jr. service of remembrance, a Parish-wide Ash Wednesday Service, Chili Cook-off (to benefit the Celebration of Mission Event), Annual Picnic, and Parish-wide Thanksgiving Service among others. We have also held Leadership Development workshops/events, as well as children/youth activities from time to time.
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The four Parish Food Pantries have had quite a time keeping their shelves stocked this past year. A lot of families have been coming to their doors needing food, especially for children. Many of the food pantries/local churches also have the backpack ministry and weekend feeding programs.

During the state-wide teacher’s strike that took place this year, many of our churches provided food every day at lunch for the children and then sent them home with a bag of food. One of the newest developments with access to food for all in our county is the latest action of a group of agencies, community leaders and churches to establish a centralized Food/Produce Warehouse in downtown Clarksburg, which will be accessible to all of the food pantries in the area. The final plans should be coming out soon.

One of the largest challenges we face in our area is the rapidly expanding opioid epidemic and drug overdose issue and the number of folks who are suffering from this addiction disorder. There is a concerted effort among various agencies, the court system, community groups, and the churches to work together to make a difference and get this problem under control. I have been attending monthly meetings of the County Group --- P.I.T.A.R, which stands for Prevention, Intervention, Treatment, and Recovery. Every month we learn about positive steps that are being made on all levels of communities, counties, and state available to remedy this grave concern. One of the more exciting developments in our parish area is the possibility of a Women’s Recovery house to be situated next to one of our local churches in Clarksburg. This is a work in progress. The need is so great, and the people of the local congregation have responded enthusiastically to the idea.

Open Heart Ministries of Harrison County, our ecumenical outreach ministry, continues to serve the economically disadvantaged individuals and families, bringing hope, help, and healing to many across the county. As the Church and Community Worker/Deaconess, I serve as the Executive Director. We are blessed with 12 ecumenical partners and the 18 churches of the parish which support us through their prayers, presence, and gifts. We also have received substantial gifts from outside companies, community groups, and covenant churches.

In the year 2017, we served over 1400 adults and children. We have begun keeping track of the number of people who come to our office who are employed in the area. We also keep records of family size and the number of children in the family, as well as those who own their homes. Out of the data that we collected, we found that 22.5% of those who come for assistance are single parents with children. In the 342 households with two or more adults, slightly more than 50% of the households have one or more adults who are unemployed. We have from time to time offered one-on-one budget counseling services, as well as tips for successful job interviews. In our office each week is a listing of all the jobs available in the area.

We continue to see individuals and families move to Harrison County from more rural counties and places out of state with the belief that jobs are available and housing is affordable. Most often, they exhaust any money they have struggling to find employment and housing. This has been particularly seen in those seeking employment in the oil and gas industry.
GLOBAL MINISTRIES

*Open Heart Ministries* assisted seven (7) women who were in acute domestic violence situations. We provided assistance to four (4) homeless families. This past year we also encountered three situations with single men over 65 who had difficulty managing their income and rent. Two (2) were homeless for a short period of time. With all these situations we attempted to connect them with an agency to manage their social security checks, ensuring their rent and utilities got paid monthly. Because of multiple health issues with one of the men, we contacted the Department of Veteran Affairs (VA) and were able to get him into an assisted living setting.

The year of 2017 was the 10th year anniversary of *Open Heart Ministries* and in October there was a huge celebration event held at one of the partnering churches. The evening was full of worship and song, food, celebrations, and recognitions. One of the highlights of the evening was the recognition of the 11 faithful volunteers that are the “face and heart” of the ministry. In addition to these 11, there are two persons right now who are being trained to be volunteers. I am so grateful to all of the volunteers who give of their time so faithfully each week. They are such an asset to the day to day operation of the ministry, and serve with grace and dignity.

In conclusion, let me share one last thought about the ministry of Church and Community Workers. Church and Community Workers are missionary personnel of the General Board of Global Ministries of The United Methodist Church. Presently there are 28 active CCW’S across the nation. We are called to be “a bridge” to the Community, connecting the community with the church and the church with the community. Church and Community Ministry has been described as a “kaleidoscopic ministry” because of the diversity and ever-changing scope of our work. Every Church and Community Workers assignment is different and unique; ever evolving, yet always reflects the vision of hope that brings communities out of despair and hopelessness.

Living out the call of Christ, the words for Luke 4:18-19 have become our clarion call...

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor; he has sent me to proclaim release to the captives, recovery of sight to the blind, to set free the oppressed and to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor...” Amen.
GLOBAL MINISTRIES
Health and Welfare Agency

Burlington United Methodist Family Services, Inc.
“Changing lives by preventing harm and providing hope and healing
to hurting children and families”

Obedience: What will happen to people who obey God’s word?
But HE said, “More than that, blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it.”
Luke 11:28

The staff at Burlington do hear the word of God, and we keep it. We have a strong
passion or devotion to help children and families. The needs of the hurting continue to grow.
We are one of your instruments to help the hurting in your community. We are reaching out.

Last year, I reported that Burlington was awarded the grant for the last phase of the
Safe at Home project which is designed to keep children in their homes and communities
and reduce the amount of out of home residential care. The project is working, but more
and more children require the service. Last year, we served 211 children in their homes.
Our residential numbers remain about the same as before. We served 210 children in our
out-of-home programs.

Our Foster Care numbers are rising due to the drug problems of our West Virginia
families. We are approaching the benchmark of 150 kids in care. About two years ago, we
were at 67, and last year at 110. I always pray for more Foster Care Families. If GOD leads
you to open your home to help a child in this way, please give us a call at 304-788-2342.
We need more families.

As always, you open your hearts at Christmas time. This past year was the most
successful of all. Thank you for your support in providing prayers, money, and gifts for our
children and families. Through your support, we were able to provide a good Christmas
for the children in Residential (91), Foster care (130), Right From the Start (82), Parent as
Teachers (83), Safe at Home (120) and Staggers Recovery Home (15). These are all numbers
that are up from previous years. I am so very proud of the people who look beyond their own
families to help others. GOD has a special place for you in heaven. I speak for the children,
families, and staff when I say “Thank You.” I extend an open invitation to all to visit one
of our residential homes for Christmas. You will be changed forever.

Christ is alive. We make sure that our children know this. The Chaplains do a
great job of getting the Word to our children. We want to thank you for the many donations
of Easter baskets or money to purchase Easter baskets and clothing for our children. The
joy it brings our children provides lasting memories.

We have been truly blessed with the local Churches that have stepped up to add extra
support to our programs. They are touching the lives of children and staff with the Word.
The following are some examples:
GLOBAL MINISTRIES

- Asbury UMC: Brenda’s House’s home church;
- Fairview UMC comes to campus once a month and is Rees Headlee’s home church;
- Antioch UMC: Craig House’s home church which allows us to use their space for special Christian Ed events;
- Rees Chapel: Kitzmiller Cottage’s home church;
- First UMC: Keyser-Pathway’s home church and Kirby UMC does mentoring with them once a month;
- Grace UMC: Keyser Group Home’s home church and Augusta UMC does mentoring with them once a month;
- A group of volunteers and some pastors from different churches do mentoring with Kitzmiller Cottage.
- Madison United Methodist Church, Burlington- Burlington School;
- Nethken Hill-Administration
- Temple Chapel, Southern District, and Auxiliary Members- Beckley Campus.

This past summer on each campus was busy. We managed to do summer school, work programs and mini-vacations for the children. Vacation Bible School for the younger kids worked out great. Instead of sending them the five hour bus trip to Spring Heights, we did events and classes here on campus and in our local area. After lessons, they went horseback riding, swimming, hiking, or to a park. We again managed to send 40 kids to Spring Heights. At both events, the children learned of God’s love. These experiences are made possible by your contributions. Thank you for continuing to make memories for God’s children that will last forever. I hope to be able to make this statement every year.

In October, we had our first graduation from the Staggers Recovery House. We had four young women that had completed the program and were one-year drug-free. Your gifts and prayers made this possible. If we can help one person, we are making a difference. God is making a difference.

Our Apple Harvest and Pumpkin Festival volunteers are getting older. We need your help. Please come and bring some younger help. The money raised is given back to the kids. For example: this past year, 85 children and staff were able to attend the play in Lancaster. The time shared with friends is even more rewarding. I challenge you to bring a friend who is ten years younger than you. This request is the same as last year’s, as our volunteers are getting older, and we need to give them a much-needed rest. This years’ events are scheduled for October 6 and 7.

The children are still active in the tone chimes at Beckley and the Rainbow Choir at Burlington. We manage to perform at many churches. Please invite us and we will come! This invitation is always open.

I was honored last year to attend the program to honor Gary Wilson, previous BUMFS President/CEO, at the State Capital. Gary was named as the Outstanding Person from Mineral County who had made a positive impact on our community and the state. His family was in attendance as he received a well-deserved award. For many who knew Gary, he cared and dedicated his life to God and changing lives.
GLOBAL MINISTRIES

I am proud to say that we were awarded our re-accreditation by the United Methodist Association EAGLE evaluation. 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. Through the United Methodist Associations EAGLE Accreditation process, we are a better Christian Agency. Our Right From the Start program was identified as “Outstanding.” This program is only made possible with your prayers and donations. Last year we served 208 clients.

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. Our Accounting Department, headed by Gary Croston, does a fantastic job.

Projects we are still trying to fund include:

- The Chapel on the Beckley Campus ($400,000) to pay off the loan
- Burlington Chapel Music Room - Landscaping. ($4,000)
- Purchase of the Keyser Community Based Services ($450,000)

As always, I ask for your continued prayers and support for our mission “Changing lives by preventing harm and providing hope & healing to hurting children and families.”

Thanks again for allowing me to serve God through you.

Michael L. Price Sr., MS
President/CEO

All things are possible to him that believeth:
Mark 9:23
GLOBAL MINISTRIES
Conference Mission Agencies

Ebenezer Community Outreach Center, Inc

Another year has come and gone here at the little red brick building. 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.

The Learning Center, including preschool and the after-school program, has an enrollment of 64 children ages 2-12.
Youth Energized for Success (after-school program) allows youth to participate in activities such as swimming, skating, and bowling.

We provided approximately 50 baby baskets to new mothers. These baskets include handmade blankets, outfits, diapers, wipes, bottles and any other baby item needed.

Our clothing closet provides clothing to parents, children and the community at no charge. Ebenezer also provides Branches Domestic Violence Shelter and the City Mission with all left-over clothing.

Our Christmas Angel program provided gifts to approximately 65 families this year. This program continues to thrive with the generous support of First UMC (Huntington), Central UMC, Beverly Hills UMC, First Baptist Church, Bella Consignment, and individuals from the community.

School Supplies, including backpacks and binders, were given to over 120 children. Max McGinnis, an eagle scout, decided to complete his project at Ebenezer. The entire building was painted. Colorful paint has been added to each classroom, office, bathroom, multi-purpose room and the hallway. We thank Max for this wonderful endeavor which brightened up the building.

Pastor Ella Dorsey and Ben McGinnis come and read to the children on a volunteer basis.

A special thank you to ECOC’s Board of Directors, The Board of Global Ministries, West Virginia Annual Conference, Western District Office, local UM Churches and individuals for their continued support.

Please remember the mission project’s work is not complete and would not survive without YOU! Your time and money help all mission projects. Just always remember us! May you be blessed in all that you do.

“Reaching Out to Others”
Celes L. Sheffield
Executive Director

Ebenezer Community Outreach Center, Inc.
1660 8th Avenue, Huntington, WV 25703
Heart + Hand Outreach Ministries (formerly known as Community Development Outreach Ministries) has experienced a period of restructuring and transition, which has better prepared us for the long-term continuation of the very mission that created our project over 50 years ago.

The move and consolidation of our primary operations to 212 D Street in South Charleston, has been a huge success. This building more than adequately satisfies our need for office space, food pantry, thrift store, and storage. The number of families we serve continues to grow and the popularity of our thrift store has made so many more things possible.

In May 2017, the name of our organization was changed to more accurately reflect the mission of our project and how we are known by the local community. The strength and talent of our board enabled us to have a new logo and more effectively promote our programs and gain community support.

In October 2017, Heart + Hand opened an Upper Kanawha Valley satellite office on Fridays to provide more convenient basic needs assistance to those living in the Riverside High School District. This office is housed in the Chesapeake City Hall where we are given free space to meet with clients.

Currently, our organization includes the following structure:

1. The Heart + Hand Outreach Ministries executive office, located in the Heart + Hand building in South Charleston, includes the Executive Director and Operations Manager with responsibility for all bookkeeping, accounts payable, human resources, grants, and other administrative and management duties for Heart + Hand programs. Seasonal programs include sponsorships to Camp CJ in Hinton; coordination of mission team visits for housing rehabilitation projects; partnerships with schools and churches; and the annual Undies Sunday collection and distribution.

2. Heart + Hand Community Service Center in South Charleston partners with other agencies, churches, and schools to seek long term solutions to issues plaguing our local community. We are the primary provider of a food pantry, baby items, clothing, utility assistance, and work boots/nonskid shoes for folks starting a new job. We serve residents of South Charleston, Alum Creek, St. Albans, Dunbar, Institute, and Tornado. We also serve as the intake site for the Dunbar/Institute Samaritan Center and process Dollar Energy applications. At Christmas, 768 individuals benefited from food and 557 children received gifts.

3. Heart + Hand Putnam County provides utility, rent, and emergency food assistance to Putnam County residents. From that location, we also process Dollar Energy applications, vouchers to our Heart + Hand Thrift Store in South Charleston, and educate applicants about their local food pantry and other resources. At Christmas, 345 children benefited from receiving toys and clothing. Winfield United Methodist Church has provided us free space for the past three years.

GLOBAL MINISTRIES
Heart + Hand Outreach Ministries

Heart + Hand Outreach Ministries (formerly known as Community Development Outreach Ministries) has experienced a period of restructuring and transition, which has better prepared us for the long-term continuation of the very mission that created our project over 50 years ago.

The move and consolidation of our primary operations to 212 D Street in South Charleston, has been a huge success. This building more than adequately satisfies our need for office space, food pantry, thrift store, and storage. The number of families we serve continues to grow and the popularity of our thrift store has made so many more things possible.

In May 2017, the name of our organization was changed to more accurately reflect the mission of our project and how we are known by the local community. The strength and talent of our board enabled us to have a new logo and more effectively promote our programs and gain community support.

In October 2017, Heart + Hand opened an Upper Kanawha Valley satellite office on Fridays to provide more convenient basic needs assistance to those living in the Riverside High School District. This office is housed in the Chesapeake City Hall where we are given free space to meet with clients.

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The Heart + Hand name in the local community brings back generations of memories. For most it makes them think about donating their “stuff.” Most people don’t think about what we do with their donations, so we love to tell the story: “Volunteers prepare the donations to go into our Thrift Store. We provide vouchers so that low-income individuals can get the clothing and household items they need. The rest is a year-round fundraiser for us. So please come and search for those special treasures you didn’t know you needed!” Many people are surprised to hear we want them to shop. But with that invitation, they will and they love it.

We are thankful for our affiliation with the WV Annual Conference and all that support our mission project financially, prayerfully, and through volunteer service. The number of churches partnering with us is too great to list. Together we are answering the call and making a difference in the lives of our neighbors.

God Bless you.
Vicki Ballengee, Executive Director

Heart and Hand House, Inc.

When I reflect on the ministry of Heart and Hand House, I often think about a passage of scripture from 2 Corinthians, Chapter 5, which includes these verses:

“Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation. Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ...”

In the book, When Helping Hurts: How to Alleviate Poverty Without Hurting the Poor...and Ourselves, authors Brian Fikkert and Steve Corbett suggest that poverty is the result of broken relationships – relationship with God, self, others, and the rest of creation – and, therefore, poverty alleviation is a ministry of reconciliation. That truly is what we do! Our mission statement declares that our purpose is “to minister to the physical, mental, spiritual and emotional needs of in-crisis, low-income people.” Meeting the physical need is important, but that is only the first step in helping those we serve find reconciliation. Treating folks with dignity, providing encouragement, listening to their stories, and praying with them are just a few simple ways we can help them find peace with themselves, with others, and with God. We are, indeed, ambassadors for Christ, and I like to think that our ministry is an “embassy” of sorts, where low-income, in-crisis families and individuals can come to be loved, cared for, and find grace.

For those who are interested in the numbers, following are our service statistics from the past year. As you read this report, please remember that these figures represent...
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more than just time, materials and money – they represent people whose lives we have touched. In 2017, Heart and Hand responded to more than 1,700 requests for emergency assistance from Barbour County families. More than 1,150 food boxes were distributed, providing over 40,900 meals and snacks. During the summer, Home Repair and Construction volunteers completed repair projects for 17 families and constructed one new home. Essential items, such as clothing, shoes and household goods, were given to those in need through our Belington and Philippi Thrift Stores, and income from sales helped support our other ministry programs. More than 140 different producers sold fresh, locally-produced foods and craft items at our Community Garden Market, collectively earning more than $68,000. In addition, low-income customers 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 have facilitated the sales of produce to local schools and other institutions, providing an increased income opportunity for local farmers and increased community access to healthy, local food. Families with newborns and older infants received diapers, wipes, formula and other essential baby-care items through our Baby Pantry and Layette Program. We also continued to provide backpack food items to about 84 elementary school children each week in partnership with Corley UMC. During the summer months, we provided lunches for 250 children participating in educational programs at the local library and sent them home with backpacks of food at the end of each week. At Christmas, food for a holiday meal, plus laundry baskets full of hygiene and cleaning items, underwear, books, stocking stuffers and devotional booklets were distributed to 199 families. In addition, gift bags containing hats, gloves, coloring books, crayons, and other small items were distributed to 151 preschoolers and students in the local Head Start Program. None of this would have been possible without our wonderful volunteers, who logged in nearly 10,000 hours of service, along with our dedicated staff and board and the gifts and prayers of our WV Annual Conference family.

Grace and peace to you all!

Brenda Hunt
Executive Director
GLOBAL MINISTRIES
The House of the Carpenter

“For the needy shall not always be forgotten, nor the hope of the poor perish forever”
Psalm 9:18

The Lord has not forgotten the neighbors who come to the HOC each week. The staff and volunteers are thankful every day when a family leaves the building with food for the coming week, when a winter coat has been provided, when a utility bill is paid, a student passes a math test, a new chord on the guitar is strummed, a picture is painted, a new dish is prepared, a meal is shared, a song is sung and a prayer is lifted. These are weekly events in our mission to fulfill our calling to ministries of mercy, transformation and spiritual formation. (View all the ministries of the HOC @ www.houseofthecarpenter.com)

This year four new ministries were developed, two in transformation and two in spiritual formation.

- Teen Cooking Class – teaching middle and high school students fundamental cooking and nutrition culminating in a shopping challenge and cooking dinner for their family
- Art Class – teaching basic art techniques and encouraging self-expression to 10 – 15 year olds
- Mission Camp – this camp allowed high school students who are generally the recipients of ministry to be the ones providing service to others and to have the opportunity to reflect on giving to others
- Vacation Bible School – led by one of our summer work teams from Evergreen UMC in VA, this provided the VBS experience to elementary age students on Wheeling Island
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The Building Hope for Tomorrow campaign to construct the Youth Center is going well. The cost of the project is $2 million and as of February 28th, the HOC has received pledges/donations of $1.26 million. Over $1,000,000 has been raised locally. If you have not viewed our video or looked at the preliminary drawings, we invite you to go to the webpage (www.houseofthecarpenter.com/youthcenter) where you can access all of the information. There will also be new printed information available during Annual Conference at our table in the Rockefeller Center during registration. In preparation for construction, the HOC has been able to:

1. Purchase the property at 208 South Front Street
2. Demolish the decaying house on the property (the roof was held in place with car jacks)
3. Level the property in preparation for construction
4. Complete the site survey including elevations to the current facility
5. Complete core sampling to determine types and sizes of foundations
6. Apply to the City of Wheeling and receive a variance for the construction of the facility
7. We are in the process of completing the construction documents
8. Apply for final approval of project through the Planning Commission of the City of Wheeling
9. Secure construction loans for the project.
10. Continue with the Capital Campaign
11. Hold a groundbreaking ceremony on April 25th.

There are many ways you can stay current with the ministry and programs of the HOC on Facebook @ Houseofthecarpenter01 or text HOCWHEELING to 22828 for monthly updates on the ministry and the construction of the Youth Center. We are thankful for the grace of God and your support that allow us to bring hope to our neighbors every day.

Mike Linger
Director, House of The Carpenter
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Scott’s Run Settlement House

Scott’s Run Settlement House is living out our mission to serve those in need in Monongalia County. Our service numbers for our food pantry and backpack program continue to grow. In 2017, a week’s worth of groceries was provided to 8,761 individuals while 829 children in 12 schools were provided over 30,000 bags of food during the school year. Our backpack program has increased 292% since its inception in 2011.

Our seasonal outreach programs also continue to make a huge impact in Monongalia County. In 2017, a total of 972 individuals enjoyed a Thanksgiving meal; 352 people in 99 families were sponsored at Christmas; 141 people in 45 families were able to prepare an Easter meal and have treat baskets because of the generosity of churches, businesses, and sponsors; and 126 children received a new backpack full of supplies for school. SRSH’s Senior Luncheon continues to be a success and there are 15 individuals who regularly attend the monthly covered dish luncheon.

The services provided by Scott’s Run Settlement House 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 are what makes all of this possible. Ronald Reagan said, “We can’t help everyone, but everyone can help someone.” This demonstrates how important and significant your support has been; each donation, no matter how big or small, makes a real impact on someone’s life. You have made it possible for Scott’s Run to provide greatly needed services to those most in need.

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

Shay Petitto
Executive Director

Tyrand Cooperative Ministries, Inc.

Tyrand Cooperative Ministries has been meeting the needs of the less fortunate in Randolph County since 1962 and still remains dedicated to working towards alleviating hunger and meeting other emergency needs of our brothers and sisters in Christ. We continue to see an increase in families and individuals needing assistance with food and utility bills.

I am humbled by all the volunteers who give so unselfishly of their time and talents to make our ministry a success. We have a compassionate core of volunteers who help us
GLOBAL MINISTRIES

with the ministries of Tyrand. It was an honor to present Irene Swecker with the “Doorway of Hope Award” at the 2017 Annual Conference. Irene has volunteered at Tyrand for over 40 years and at the age of 96 remains loyal to our ministry.

Our main two-story building, which houses the offices and the Thrift Store, is in desperate need of a new heating system. Estimates are in the range of $18,000.00 - $20,000.00. The current baseboard heaters are over 35 years old and work only when they want to. In preparing for the new heating system a Work Team from Christ Presbyterian Church in PA added two rooms onto the upstairs part of this building for storage since we will be losing our storage space in the attic. The group not only did the majority of the work but they paid for the materials needed to build the two rooms. This team also worked and paid for materials needed in three homes in our area. In 2017, our teams worked at 25 homes. We are blessed by all our work teams that come throughout the year to work on homes in our area.

The Highland Cooperative Parish sponsors a Ham and Bean Dinner fundraiser for us each March. Members of this group also help us with our annual Cakewalk/Auction that is held the first Saturday in April.

The drug epidemic has slowly crept into our surrounding communities. We often have a person on drugs come into the center asking for cash and get distressed when we do not give it to them. We want to keep our volunteers and staff safe so we installed panic buttons in each office and two in the Thrift Store. Our volunteers have been trained in how to stay safe and still offer the love of Christ to those with addictions. All staff attended Rev. Barry Ball’s Opioid Workshop in January. The staff and a couple of volunteers attended the “Active Shooter Training” on February 14. We work closely with the Randolph County Office of Emergency Management in being prepared for any situation that should arise. We also continue to work with the RCOEM in Disaster Preparedness.

We continue to sell items on E-bay to help fund our programs. Our seller name is: tyrand2009. If you shop on Amazon you can select a charity to donate to through Amazon Smile. Donations can also be made through PayPal at tcm@frontiernet.net We would be grateful for any donations.

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. We are appreciative of the Highland Cooperative Parish, the Wesleyan District, and churches of other denominations that participate, as well as all the churches in the WV Annual Conference for their continued support. I encourage each of you to visit and support Tyrand and all your Mission Projects. Keep all of us in prayer as we struggle to keep serving the less fortunate.

Blessings,
Belinda Toms, Executive Director
As I write this report, a snowy grayness has settled in. In many ways this year has reflected the gray day outside—more and more people need help, more and more volunteers are needed to provide the help, and it is taking more and more effort to raise the needed money to provide the help. However, even on this gray day, 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 Upshur Parish House and Crosslines continues through all the seasons. In 2017, utility and food assistance through Crosslines totaled over $106,000.00. There were over 11,000 assists that included over 3,155 food packages and nearly 1,800 clothing vouchers. We spent over $50,000.00 in utility assistance, over $8,000.00 in housing assistance, over $12,000.00 in transient and homeless assistance.

During the holiday season, we distributed around 1,400 Thanksgiving and Christmas meal baskets furnishing all the needed traditional foods for families to celebrate. In addition, on Christmas Day, around 80 volunteers helped to serve a beautiful Christmas Dinner to around 400 people.

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, with an additional monthly Saturday evening meal during the fall and spring semesters at WVWC when the Poverty Reduction team helps us out. We thank all churches, civic groups, and individuals who make it possible for these meals to be offered.

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. It is the day-to-day routine that I think about for the most part. Sometimes we all experience “compassion fatigue,” which is a feeling that no matter what we do, things are not going to get any better. This seems to be something that we are all feeling more and more.

“Compassion fatigue” strikes in different ways. 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 help 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
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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.

And yet, when the unexpected occurs, God provides in so many ways. During the recent teachers’ strike, we began to distribute bag lunches to children who might need extra food. Teachers and other community volunteers collected food and helped us pack and distribute over 2,000 bag meals to children at 13 sites around the county.

One of the joys of being the Director of the Parish House is working with the Center for Community Engagement at WVWC. Working with 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 and our food pantry. 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 ten 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. All in all, we have over a hundred people who volunteer with us throughout the year. I am grateful for their tireless efforts and for the amount of 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. In September, Connie Cutright and Marilyn Walton both left us for other pursuits. They have been a blessing to us and have worked well together to make certain we stay on top of things. We pray God’s blessings for both of them.

Stella Harvey, Angel Harvey, and Alanna George make up our Clothes Closet team. Renovations and updates have been made to the store making it more friendly and accessible for people to shop. We have also completed the installation of a new heating and air conditioning system. All proceeds from Clothes Closet go back into the work of the Parish House and Crosslines.

Kenneth Harvey is our food pantry manager and also works diligently as a maintenance coordinator. Recently, Randal George joined the team, working with Ken Harvey to maintain the properties and manage the food pantry. Last summer, John Lynch worked with our home repair program for this summer.

In September, we welcomed Cindy Winneberger and Kathy Black as our office staff. They have settled in well and we are grateful that they have joined our staff.

Angel Harvey returned to us for another year in the AmeriCorps program and is working in the area of Community Health. She is continuing to help develop programs such as cooking 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. Many times she works directly with our neighbors through the food pantry and help desk and is able to ask questions about the health of our neighbor families.
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We have faced many expenses during this year. Some of these are one-time expenses such as building improvements that will not need to be repeated. Some of these are costs that have gone up. In late summer we sent out a letter of request throughout the Annual Conference, mainly to help pay for the needed heating and air conditioning unit. We are grateful for the response and the support. We were able to replace a very old Clothes Closet heating system with a new efficient heating and air conditioning system.

Crosslines and food pantry are both in very good shape. Through the generosity of an anonymous donor and a gift from the Salvation Army, our meat for the holiday packages was paid for. This expense is usually around $14,000, so we are very grateful.

During the months of April, May, and June, I will be on renewal leave. We are grateful to the Rev. Gary McGrew who will be Acting Director during that time.

Each year when I write this report, I am always amazed at what we are able to do. And I am also certain that some important accomplishments are left out of this report. I am very grateful to all people who help us do what we do.

Thanks be to God,
Rev. Alicia Randolph Rapking
Executive Director

Tyrand Cooperative Ministries shares its message with the youth of the conference.
GLOBAL MINISTRIES

UMC GENERAL BOARD OF GLOBAL MISSIONS
ADVANCE SPECIAL #3021425

LIVING HOPE HIGH SCHOOL
PO Box 2376
Bungoma, 50200, Kenya
www.LivingHopeHighSchool.org

P.O.Box 23 Riverton, WV 26814

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 are the only supportive arm for Living Hope High School in Bungoma, Kenya. We receive no other funding except through sponsorships and donations.

This 93-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. Almost 95% of these undergraduate high school students are sponsored by members of churches in the West Virginia United Methodist Conference! 83 college and training school students are sponsored by UM members. One college student is sponsored by the WV Annual Conference. 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 into 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 sparkling kitchen with a new tile floor was upgraded by one of the 3 mission teams this year. 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 has improved our sanitation considerably. Our “AGAPE” brick science building is now finished and in use for lectures and labs daily. The new “Healing Hut” (small dispensary hospital) is complete and is staffed by a registered nurse two hours every morning. 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 coop, housing 60 laying hens is proving students with a boiled egg 2 days per week. Thanks go to the Potomac Highlands pastors! God is at Work!

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 obtain a B+ grade on their country’s achievement tests and report cards in order to remain enrolled. Five seniors received government scholarships this past year to universities. 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 own 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 14 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.

One mission team from Avery UMC built a much needed community bridge. One mission team from Winchester, VA remodeled the primitive kitchen, and another mission team members taught Red Cross First Aid to all the sophomore students, gave school wide medical tests, and administered vaccinations. Thank you and blessings Vim participants. You have made a huge difference at Living Hope!!!

The school is 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: advancedhope.org. Click on the “give now” tab and use the number #3021425. This information is also on our website.

We now have a new easy to use website: livinghopeshighschool.org. Additional information can be found there plus our monthly newsletters. We are being blessed and drawn closer to our Lord as God us 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 POT HIGHLANDS District office at (304) 323-1994 or Helen Markwell (704-567-2354) Join us in praying that the Spirit continues to lead us and provide for us at Living Hope High School. We keep Jesus FIRST!

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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
PO Box 478
Lavalette, WV 25535

If you have any questions, you may contact Rev. Stonestreet at rdstonestreet@gmail.com or 304-590-2847
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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Annual Budget/Expenditures</th>
<th>Hunger Grant Goal Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Up to $10,000, inclusive</td>
<td>$250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$10,001 and up</td>
<td>$500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Annual Budget/Expenditures</th>
<th>Hunger Grant Goal Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under $30,000</td>
<td>$500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$30,000 and up</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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.

Revised November 2013; Revised November 2015
GLOBAL MINISTRIES

West Virginia Annual Conference
Board of Global Ministries

Guidelines for 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 Grant
The Mission Ministries Grant is designed to provide churches and church ministries within the WV Annual Conference an opportunity to initiate new ministries in local communities or expand current ministries throughout the conference that will alleviate human suffering and/or seek justice especially to those who find themselves marginalized. This grant is intentionally established to support and encourage local creativity in response to local necessity.

Mission Ministries Grant
The geographic area that is included in the Mission Ministries Grant is any WV Annual Conference county, charge or church.

Criteria for the Grants
1. The Grant is to be used to help local United Methodist churches and church ministries undertake and establish a mission emphasis or expand a current ministry 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 or as long as monies are available.
9. A report on the most recently funded project including a financial statement needs to be on file with the Missions Coordinator 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 completed.
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 requested on the application have not been included, if appropriate
   • Inadequate number of partners
14. Complete and submit the evaluation report at completion of the project.

If you have any questions, you may contact
Joyce Board 304-372-4877
230 Second Avenue joyonboard@frontier.com
Ripley, WV 25271

Mission Ministries Grants ——WV Conference—Global Ministries; Updated February 2018
GLOBAL MINISTRIES

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES
Revolving Loan/Grant Fund
West Virginia Conference of The United Methodist Church
Maintained by the Board of Global Ministries

Loans
1. Capital Improvement* Loans, up to a maximum of $50,000, are available to local churches, WV Conference mission projects, cooperative parishes, district camps, and the WV Conference camp. 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 up to $25,000 are to be repaid over a five-year period with monthly payments on principal and interest. Loans over $25,000 and up to $50,000 are to be repaid over a seven-year period with monthly payments on principal and interest. Loan recipients may refinance for an additional three years in the event of extreme hardship.

3. The current rate of interest for the Revolving Loan/Grant Fund shall be set at 2% below the current prime rate, shall not exceed 8%, and 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* Matching Grants of no more than $12,500 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)
   • Evidence that the grant has already been matched
   • 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

Contact Person: Joyce Board
230 Second Avenue
Ripley, WV 25271
joyonboard@frontier.com
304-372-4877

Revised 2/2013
Revised 11/2014
Revised 11/2016

Policies and Procedures
Revolving Loan/Grant Fund
WV Conference Global Ministries
GLOBAL MINISTRIES

Humphreys Memorial Scholarship Guidelines

Edwin B. Humphreys had a desire to make a difference in someone’s ability to further her or his education. He had a heart for those who might not otherwise have an opportunity for a post high school education. Mr. Humphreys established a scholarship fund through the West Virginia United Methodist Foundation through which 90% of the annual net income “may be awarded as one or more post high school educational scholarship(s). The person(s) selected must be accepted and/or admitted (enrolled) as a student of a two- or four-year educational institution, such as but not limited to, a trade school, vocational school, community college, junior college, school of nursing, four-year college or university.”

The guidelines are being developed and will be published on the conference website as soon as they are available.

United Methodist presence was evident at the opening of new housing for families who lost their homes in the 2016 flood. Flood Recovery work continues in the Conference.
GLOBAL MINISTRIES

WV Annual Conference—UMC
Disaster Response Ministries

Relief—Recovery

Published in 1987 by the West Virginia Annual Conference
Reprinted 1993
Revised 2009
Revised 2013

The United Methodist Church
PO Box 2313
Charleston, WV 25328
304-344-8331 or 1-800-788-3746

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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.”

There are many logical and practical reasons why churches respond to disaster. Sociologically, 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 very early. The church gives help in four areas:

- **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 comers 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.

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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) is responsible for assessing which of the 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 (rebuidling 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 Adhoc Disaster Committee will be called.

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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.
- 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 a 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

The Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministry has had a productive year as it strives to better understand its role in providing direction and support for campus ministry. The Board devoted significant time to developing a Ministry Action Plan (MAP). Work on the MAP began in August and was completed at a retreat in January involving Board members and campus ministers. The Board expressed its support of the United Methodist mission when it developed the following statement:

Through the presence of campus ministries, we will discover, develop and deploy passionate spiritual leaders who make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

In fulfilling its mission, the Board has recognized the need for greater accountability. This will be accomplished through a number of activities including:

- Development of a regular and ongoing reporting process for campus ministries that will be accompanied by clear expectations
- Identification of areas for professional development for campus ministers and their local boards
- Campus ministry visits by the Board Chair, Conference staff and other interested board members

The Board supports and has oversight of campus ministries at eight institutions: Concord University, Fairmont State University, Glenville State College, Marshall University, Potomac State College, University of Charleston, West Liberty University and West Virginia University (WVU). Five of the campus ministries are classified as “full-time” with the campus ministry receiving salary support and regular operating support. At Marshall University and West Virginia University, the campus ministers have one hundred percent of their time dedicated to campus ministry. Campus ministers at Fairmont, Glenville and West Liberty serve churches in addition to serving the campus. Plans have been initiated for Concord to be served through this model beginning in 2019. Campus ministries at Potomac and the University of Charleston are served by a local church with the ministers dedicating a portion of their time to campus ministry. The Board has developed a simple grant process to provide monetary support for their efforts.

Campus ministries reach out to students to meet both their physical and spiritual needs. Meals are provided at Concord, Fairmont, and West Liberty. Regular Bible study is available at Concord, Glenville, and Marshall. Many campus ministry activities recognize the value of service. Students at Potomac State and Marshall have participated in alternative Spring breaks and worked in areas devastated by floods and hurricanes. West Liberty students have reached out to Community Youth Groups. Campus ministry at WVU has partnered with the University’s Collegiate Recovery, a campus organization that supports students in recovery at WVU. Concord and WVU have discovered creative ways to reach
students through professional-grade expresso machines. Concord brought their machine to Annual Conference in 2017 and provided drinks to members as they registered and visited the Ministry Fair. Campus ministry at the University of Charleston received a grant to support AGAPE LATTE, a monthly opportunity for faculty to share their personal spiritual journeys with students.

These activities are only examples of what is occurring on our college campuses. Campus Ministers are fully engaged with helping students discern their call to service. The Board is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure success.

Mark Stotler, Chair

**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 Committee of the West Virginia Annual Conference is comprised of representatives from each district, ex officio members from agencies and at-large members. The Committee has met three times this year: during Annual Conference, at the Bishop’s Summit, and at a brainstorming retreat at The Log House at Sweet Trees. Members of the Committee attended the State of Appalachia gathering at Pipestem, participated in the Race to End Racism and the Unite to End Racism Rally in D.C. Committee members have also been involved with the revision of the Social Principles anticipated to be presented for approval during the 2020 General Conference. In addition to other communication modes, members share information via a Facebook page. The Committee works 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.
In the upcoming year, the Committee is placing an emphasis on educating UM churches about the Social Principles and kicked off the 2018 church year with a video presentation at Conference. A retreat is planned for the fall of 2018 for a deeper dive into pressing justice matters.

I also serve in the capacity as Peace with Justice Coordinator for the Conference and have appreciated the guidance of the Justice and Advocacy Committee regarding disbursement of funds. Our committee is ably served by Deborah Coble, the conference staff person assigned to guide the Justice and Advocacy Committee work.

Blessings,
Martha Hill, Chair

Conference Lay Leader

It has been another busy year in the life of The United Methodist Church in West Virginia. The laity wrote devotionals for Advent and Lent, which were accessible through the West Virginia Conference website (wwumc.org). I continue to be impressed by the writing abilities of our laity as they share their insights and stories through these devotionals.

Last summer I shared the process of making stained glass in a hands-on workshop with the youth at Rally on the Mountain and Radical Discipleship Academy of Appalachia. We have a wonderful group of youth who are already leaders in our congregations.

West Virginia was host to the NEJ (Northeastern Jurisdiction) Conference Lay Leaders at the end of September. We had a fantastic time in Morgantown as we gathered at Suncrest UMC and also packed food for the 700 school children of the area at Scott’s Run Settlement House Mission. A big thank you to all who helped with this event from our conference. This meeting was a huge success and those in attendance enjoyed the instruction and fellowship.

In mid-October, four representatives from the West Virginia Conference attended the NEJ Native American Ministries annual meeting in York, Maine. We learned about the history of the Indigenous People in America and the tragic removal from their land. We were able to participate in an interactive demonstration of the methods used for the systematic removal of Native people. We also learned more about the numerous Thanksgiving feasts celebrated for centuries by the Native American tribes prior to the arrival of the pilgrims.

The Delegation for the Special Session of General Conference continues to meet and visited the districts to hold listening sessions with the laity and clergy. Please hold all the delegations and the bishops in your prayers as we prepare for our special session in St. Louis next February.

At the end of February 2018, the Association of Annual Conference Lay Leaders held their annual meeting at St. Simon’s Island, an area steeped with John and Charles Wesley’s history. We visited areas where John and Charles had lived and preached.
teacher for our time together was Rev. Junius Dotson, General Secretary for Discipleship Ministries. His teaching on disciple-making was excellent and very motivational. Rev. Junius Dotson will also be the teacher for our Annual Conference at Buckhannon this year and you will not want to miss any of his sharing with our conference.

As you prepare for Annual Conference, think about new ways we can reach people for Christ. The theme for conference this year is “innovate.” We can be innovative so that we can bring people to Christ. Seven hundred sixty laity and clergy participated in the first simulcast teaching session with Phil Maynard, teaching “From Membership to Discipleship.” Phil presented live to the people in attendance at Forest Burdette Memorial UMC. Eight other locations across the conference were able to participate through the live simulcast. This presentation was excellent and informative. Not only did it save travel time for the attendees, it also saved overnight lodging for those who would have traveled long distances if there had only been one location. Innovation, change, and finding new ways to deliver training to the Disciples Christ has called us, you and me, to be. Have we asked God what He wants us to do for Him?

I look forward to seeing you in Buckhannon!

Rich Shaffer, WV Conference Lay Leader

**Lay Servant Ministries**

Every year since the inception of the Lay Servant Ministries program in 2004, progress has been made in defining, refining and coordinating the various aspects of this vital ministry. Without doubt, change from the previous designation of “Lay Speaking” to “Lay Servant” has been difficult, due in part to the very connotation of the title. While lay speaking has always been a vital part of the lay programs, it has not been the only reason to take advantage of the various instructional classes offered. Indeed, most of the classes have been structured to encourage the laity to learn more about their Christian beliefs and to understand how the United Methodist heritage fulfills their individual needs. Changing the title from “Lay Speaking” to “Lay Servant” better identifies the overall program and broadens the scope. Every Christian is a servant of God, but not everyone is called to be a public speaker, which is exactly what preaching from the pulpit happens to be. Lay Servant Ministries is designed to be all inclusive no matter what the inclinations of the individuals might be. The hope is that more people will participate under the designation of “Lay Servant” than the title of “Lay Speaker.”

The Lay Servant Ministries program has been refined over the past several years in order to encourage those wishing to participate to become better equipped to serve. By
reducing the number of classifications to three (from as many as six at one time), there is a better understanding as to exactly what each category encompasses and how each fits into the overall church structure and the needs of the individual. The three classifications are:

- **Certified Lay Servant** – requires taking the basic course plus one advanced course.
- **Certified Lay Speaker** – requires taking a series of six specified courses, all of which can be taken online with the exception of one which happens to be on “preaching.”
- **Certified Lay Minister** – requires completion of four in-depth modules leading to a possible greater and deeper role of ministry within the church.

As is the case in many of the United Methodist Annual Conferences, our West Virginia Conference is aging on average, particularly in the ranks of pastors, and with this aging come retirements which shrink the number of pastors available to serve the local churches. To fill this gap, Certified Lay Ministers as well as Certified Lay Speakers are stepping up to serve where and when needed. The importance of the Lay Servant Ministry program has grown exponentially and we are blessed to have such a vital program in our midst. With much prayer and discernment, our great hope is that the Lay Servant Ministries program will continue to thrive, expand and grow... to God be the glory. Amen.

Fred Kellerman
Director of Lay Servant Ministries

**Older Adult Ministry**

According to *The United Methodist Discipline*, in each annual conference there may be a conference council on older adult ministries. Its purpose shall be to strengthen the older adult ministries in the local churches and districts of the annual conference.

The WV Conference Older Adult Ministry Team (OAM) has organized and had a productive year. Most of our meetings were held by conference call. Our most recent meeting at the Conference Center had all but one member in attendance. We celebrate their commitment.

This year we have identified a practical need for many older adults and disabled persons. We have partnered with The House of the Carpenter to meet that need. This year at Annual Conference the OAM Team will be sponsoring a Build-A-Ramp Workshop. Look for us on the lawn near registration at Rockefeller Center. Gary Bryant from HOC and other men will be demonstrating how to build reusable wheelchair ramps. Following this report are several descriptive pages of what this entails.

Additionally, the OAM Team will award two grants of $500 each for congregations that present a need for this type of construction for a community member. The award will cover about half of the expense. Contact Janet Flanagan  flanaganjanet8@gmail.com  if you
are interested in applying for these funds. The OAM Team will select the recipients.

We want to be sensitive to your needs. If there is a topic or situation which you believe the OAM Team should address, please don’t hesitate to let us know.

The OAM Team is supported by Discipleship Ministries of The United Methodist Church. There have been changes in the organization at the national level which may be of interest to you. The responsibilities will now be housed with The Upper Room and Rev. Hess “Doc” Hall is the staff person assigned to this task. Our OAM Team will be contacting Rev. Hall in the future to discuss ways to utilize him with our West Virginia Team.

Rev. Janet Flanagan, Chair
flanaganjanet8@gmail.com
304-539-1415
SEQUENCE OF ACTIVITIES
Developed by HoC Volunteers

Request for Handicap Ramp - Persons wanting a ramp complete the request form and send or deliver it to the House of the Carpenter (HoC). Coordinators at the HoC review the request and call to schedule a visit.

First Site Visit - This is an evaluation and planning visit using the Site Assessment Form. State that you are checking to see if a ramp is feasible in this home. Determine home ownership and relationship with client. Discuss the waiver of liability that is part of the Request Form and assure the home owner has signed it. Identify persons with disabilities. Visit the location where the client would like to have the ramp installed. The door should be at least 32 inches wide to allow the wheelchair to pass through easily. If there is a storm door, the storm door closer should be at the top of the door and the door handles should allow easy passage of the wheelchair. The possible route of the ramp should be accurately measured and sketched and photographed. Horizontal and vertical distances along the possible route of the ramp should be accurately recorded. This would include the porch, steps, sidewalks, obstacles and access points to getting in a vehicle. Look for locations of utilities like gas, water and electric meters that would obstruct the ramp location. Ask about the need for building permits and coordination with other agencies including a home owners association. Leave information on how the client can contact you and a possible time when you would return with a draft plan for the ramp for their comments and approval.

Design of Ramp Plan & Permits - A summary of guidelines for wheelchair ramp construction according to the American Disability Act (ADA) is attached. Use this information along with the data taken during the first site visit to draft a plan for the ramp. A page showing three ramp design options for one site is attached. Draw a sketch with dimensions of the proposed ramp. Use the sketch to make a list of materials needed and calculate the estimated cost of materials. Most ramps built to these criteria cost about $25/foot at this time in the Wheeling area. Get permits needed using a copy of the plan. Building permits often have the fee determined by the cost of the project. Home Owners Associations will probably need time for review and approval of the project.

Second Site Visit - Provide a copy of the plan to the client and get their comments and approval. Take a copy of a photo of a similar ramp to help them understand the plan. Discuss possible dates for scheduling construction.

Assembly of Ramp Segments - Compile a list of all materials needed for the ramp segments. Schedule dates and staff to get the materials and tools and assemble the ramp segments needed for the project. A list of tools needed for this phase is included with the segment plan attached. All the segments needed for most ramps can be completed in one day by 5 to 8 volunteers. It is nice to have a work site under roof for this work and for storing the ramp segments until needed.

Ramp Construction Day - Make a list of materials needed for handrails and support posts for the project. Make a list of tools needed for the project. Schedule workers to pick up ramp segments and tools and materials and take to the construction site. Include several copies of ramp plans for the workers and emphasize safety. Plan for breaks and lunch during the day. If possible include the client in prayer at the start and end of the workday. Celebrate the Christian fellowship making this ramp possible.
REQUEST FORM FOR HANDICAP RAMP  The House of the Carpenter, Inc.

Program Information The House of the Carpenter has a limited amount of funding and volunteer labor for the building of temporary structure handicap accessibility ramps. **We cannot work on rental property.** Those requesting a ramp must complete the application below and return it to the House of the Carpenter. The Handicap Accessibility Ramps are sturdy, solid and build with treated lumber according to American Disability Act Code. If the application is approved and resources are available, the ramps will be completed by volunteer workers under the supervision and coordination of the House of the Carpenter staff and volunteers. When the ramp is no longer needed, please contact the **House of the Carpenter at (304) 233-6460** and the House of the Carpenter will remove the ramp so that it can be moved to assist someone else.

Work Site Information

Name of homeowner ___________________________ When did you move here ________

Address __________________________________________

Phone number ___________ Date of birth of homeowner ___(month)___(year)

Total number of people living in this home _____________

Number of children (under 18) living in this home ________

Number of disabled persons living in this home ______

Annual household income ____________

I (homeowner) will contribute to the work needed by providing the following:

___ Funds ___ Material ___ Labor ___ Other __________________________

Waiver of Liability: In accepting assistance, I hereby release The House of the Carpenter, Inc. and the work team assigned to my case including but not limited to all volunteers from any liability relative to the repairs done on my home and further agree to hold The House of the Carpenter, Inc. and any representative or volunteer free and harmless against all liabilities, claims, suits at law or inequity attributed to any act or omission of personnel or volunteers of The House of the Carpenter, Inc.

Signature of Homeowner ___________________________ Date __________________

Received by (House of the Carpenter personnel) ___________ Date ___________

*Please note that this application does not guarantee the availability of services.*
**Site Assessment Form**  The House of the Carpenter, Inc.

Name of person(s) doing this assessment ___________________ Date of Visit ___________________.

Home Owner’s Name: __________________________

Address __________________________

View proof of ownership such as mortgage payment, deed, etc.  Y  N

Phone Number __________________________ Best time to call __________________________

Building permit needed:  Y  N  Permit issuing agency __________________________

Bathroom facilities available:  Y  N  Special concerns __________________________

Vehicle parking concerns __________________________

Evidence of health concerns including: mold, asbestos, poison ivy, other __________________________

Safety concerns __________________________

List any concerns about family members or neighbors having physical, mental or emotional conditions that should be made known to volunteers working in this home.

Name of church (if any) we might contact about helping with repairs to this home __________________________

**Information on persons in home: Note: this data is used in applying for and tracking grants to The House of the Carpenter, Inc. and no names will be used, only numbers.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Person Number</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish</th>
<th>Race (Mark one or more boxes)</th>
<th>Disability</th>
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<td></td>
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<td>Black or African American</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<td>Asian or Pacific Island</td>
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<td>American Indian or Alaska Native</td>
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Sketch site on reverse of this form & include dimensions. Take photos also.
RAMP DESIGN GUIDELINES

BASED ON THE AMERICAN DISABILITY ACT STANDARDS AND EXPERIENCE OF HOUSE OF THE CARPENTER

These guidelines and plans describe a standardized modular approach to constructing wooden handicap ramps at private homes. All the segments needed for most ramps can be completed in one day by 5 to 8 volunteers. Most ramps can generally be installed in one day with a work team of five to ten people. The ramps may be easily removed later and used at another home when the need for the ramp at this home is over.

SLOPE  The maximum design slope of the ramp floor is one inch drop over each horizontal foot (1:12 slope). Slightly steeper slopes can be used only for short distances where space is limited. A drop of 4.5 inches can be used for a 36 inch long horizontal section (1:8 slope). The ramp floor should be level across the width of the ramp.

RAMP DIMENSIONS  The top end of each ramp needs a level area at least 5'x5', usually a porch, to allow maneuvering while exiting and entering the door. The width of these ramps is four feet (48"). They are prefabricated in different lengths. The segments are usually screwed together end to end to form the ramp floor. Segments six feet long are usually used in the sloping parts of ramps. Segments eight feet long are used at U-turns in ramps. Segments five feet long are used at landings and rest stops. Very long ramps have a five foot long level area installed every 30 feet so the wheelchair operator can rest.

POSTS  Treated wood 4x4s are cut and assembled on site. A base piece four foot long is screwed to two uprights forming a large U. One of these is placed at each joint of ramp segments. The frame of each ramp segment fits between the uprights. Starting from the top down, the frame of the segment is raised to the proper height and screwed to the posts and to the building. A 2x6 board is fastened to the posts under the segment frame to help support ramp segment at the post. After the ramp floor is secured, the post uprights are cut off at the height of the handrails and the railings screwed to the posts.

HANDRAILS  Railings are used at each section of the ramp over six inches above the ground. The railings are treated 2x6 boards mounted parallel to the ramp floor. The top edge of the top railing is located 35 inches above the ramp floor. The bottom of the bottom railing is about 4 inches above the ramp floor. Parts of the ramp higher than 30 inches above the ground should have a third railing midway between the top and bottom railing.

BOTTOM LANDING  There should be a level landing at the bottom of the ramp where it meets the sidewalk or ground and the slope of the ramp should be uniform to the bottom. Sometimes it will be necessary to use a section of ¾ inch thick treated plywood for the ramp surface at this last segment. It can be cut to the proper length at the site and strips of non-slip tape applied across the surface.
**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 includes 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), the 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), the Chair of Enrollment and Recruitment (the Rev. Larry Buckland), the Registrar of Local Pastors (the Rev. Richard Justice), the Chair of Conference Relations (the Rev. Timothy Allen), 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 great help and resource for the Board.

In addition to the full Board meetings, the committees meet to better serve their constituents. This year to better serve as a Board and to do the difficult work we are called to do, we created a covenant. The covenant is used to help us better serve in our roles and assists us in being accountable to one another in this work. Three members of the Board attended the Eight-Year-Assessment training in Orlando, Florida, this past February. We are excited about the way we can assist pastors to be the best they can be with training, spiritual renewal, and working with their congregations. We look forward to walking this journey with our conference to wellness and wholeness.

**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 who is with the candidates throughout the day to offer spiritual support. The Rev. Tom Nolan is our chaplain for this quadrennium. We are thankful for his leadership in worship and the presence he is for the candidates, as well as the members of the Board, during our time together. During the January and March 2018 interview cycle, the Board interviewed and approved the following for recommendation to the Clergy Executive Session at Annual Conference:
4-Full Membership/Elders’ Orders  
0-Full Membership/Deacons’ Orders  
3-Provisional Membership/Elders’ Orders  
0-Provisional Membership/Deacons’ Orders  

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 129 candidates participate in this program of a two-day retreat and four group mentoring sessions. Mentors assist inquiring candidates to discern where God is calling them (licensing, ordination or remaining in some area of lay ministry). Peer group relationships, as well as support from peers and mentors, have proven to be beneficial to all involved in this program. 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 led by a team of three clergy this quadrennium: the Rev. Bart Thompson, the Rev. Alan Williams, and the Rev. Alicia Rapking. Dedication and hard work were placed into building the depth of experience for our candidates in this restructured Residency program. The Residency group met for an immersion experience in August at Saint John XXIII Center in Charleston. The residents were exposed to a curriculum that included cultural competencies, diversity, order formation for the elders and deacons, worship and liturgy, the craft of preaching, church history, and WV annual conference leadership expectations. The Covenant groups are meeting between Residency sessions with their mentors to foster formation, support, and leadership development. In March 2018, the Residency group went to Baltimore and Washington, D.C. The Methodist and Evangelical and United Brethren traditions were explored. The Holocaust Museum and the Methodist Building were visited as a means to discuss the role the Church has and the impact it can have on social issues in our world. We congratulate those who have completed Residency.  

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. The 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. All these teams help provide assistance with funding for education, receiving the necessary paperwork and
required materials for evaluation, and providing the tools for continuing in excellence after finishing licensing or ordination.

Course of Study

The Rev. Richard Justice works to keep the participants in the Course of Study moving forward with their education. We celebrate the hard work of all our Full-Time and Part-Time Local Pastors, as they continue to complete their Course of Studies work through our regional and extension schools. These men and women make up the majority of pastors in the West Virginia Conference. This year we approved an increase in the grant money for our Local Pastors from $150.00 to $200.00 per course for extension schools; from $250.00 to $350.00 per course for regional schools.

The leadership of the Board changes each quadrennium. We continue to learn and grow 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 serve in our churches in the West Virginia Annual Conference so our clergy, laity, churches, and communities will be healthy leaders in this world Mind, Body, and Spirit.

Grace and Peace,
Rev. Sharletta M. Green, Chair

Order of Elders

Shortly before I was ordained in 1995, I received a Bible from a men’s breakfast Bible study, where each of them had marked their favorite verses by which to remember them. My mentor pastor inscribed the front with the words “Blessings as you begin your new journey—the most challenging, but rewarding vocation there is.” He wasn’t kidding!

That’s the joy of belonging to the Order of Elders, where we can celebrate what God is doing through us and with us, and remind each other that God and all of us are here to shore each other up when the challenges inevitably arise.

This past year we explored a means of moving our folks from membership to discipleship by inviting the author of “Charting a Course of Discipleship” to our spring meeting. In October we joined our colleagues in the Order of Deacons and Fellowship of Local Pastors, by invitation of our Bishop, to spend time determining strategies for inevitable conflict. This spring we will have gathered to explore “Creative Spiritual Disciplines,” led by Rev. Carolyn Nettles.

Self-care and care for others. Such important touchstones for us! I’m thankful for a terrific Coordinating Committee, an encouraging Bishop, and the faithful Elders who make the Order of Elders gatherings a priority.

Grace and joy,
Rev. Julie Halstead
Chair, West Virginia Conference Order of Elders
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 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, and witnessing to the love of Christ through transformational ministries in our communities, our conference and in the world.

Annual Conference 2017 was a time of transition for our Order, as J. F. Lacaria retired, Adam Ployd was ordained and received into full membership in the WVAC, and Heather Moore was commissioned for the work of a Deacon and became a provisional member. We also wish to note that on January 21, 2018, our brother, Dallas B. Bailey, Jr., went on to Glory. Dallas was ordained a full member Deacon in 1997 and retired in 2002. And so, presently our WVAC Order of Deacons is 23 members strong. Thirteen of us are in active appointive ministry and the rest are serving in retired relationship. Three of our members are serving in other conference areas, and two appointed here are actually members of other conferences. 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.

WVAC Deacons presently serve in a variety of specialized and complementary ministries which include Christian Education, music, hospitality, chaplaincy, higher education, senior adult ministry, financial stewardship, worship arts, youth ministry, UM agency leadership, flood recovery, and special education teaching. Some of us are Deacon Associates, giving servant leadership alongside our Elder brothers/sisters in the local church, while others serve in pastoral or chaplain 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. While Deacons are not itinerant clergy by definition, our unique ministries often require us to travel near and far to serve God.

Saturday, October 21, following the WVC clergy event Gathering in Grace, we met at St. Marks UMC, Charleston, for our Fall Convocation. The purpose/focus of the gathering was to worship, fellowship, and reflect on our ministries in light of God’s call for us to connect the Church and the world. We began with lunch and sharing to catch up with one another, and we closed with considerations around planning for our spring retreat. In mid-May, we will have come together at The Log House at Sweet Trees Spiritual Retreat Center at Harrisville over the course of three days/two nights. Our sister Deacon Barbara Bartz Rogerson’s ministry is based there, and she will host our annual retreat.
Please join us as we pray without ceasing for the Church and the world . . . for our leaders and for all those seeking to be faithful disciples of Jesus the Christ. May our loving and merciful God find us faithful.

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

Fellowship of Local Pastors and Associate Members

The Fellowship of Local Pastors and Associate Members is organized in each Annual Conference in order to provide mutual support of all licensed clergy for the sake of the life and mission of the church (¶323). Every Local Pastor and Associate Member holds membership in the Fellowship due to their clergy status. Currently, over 50% of the clergy in the West Virginia Annual Conference are Associate Members and Local Pastors. Many Local Pastors are bi-vocational, serving the church in part-time status. The phrase most often heard in regards to part-time status is: “There is no such thing as a part-time pastor.” Most will understand this, but if not locate someone who has served in this capacity and they will be able to enlighten you. Local Pastors are examined each year by their District Committee on Ordained Ministry and must be deemed effective and fit to continue in pastoral duties.

The WVFLPAM meets each year at Annual Conference for a luncheon, fellowship, encouragement, and business. In recent years the Fellowship has made it their practice to gather at least 30 minutes before the luncheon to connect and reconnect with colleagues and friends. Around the tables during the luncheon, the testimonies of God’s faithfulness are heard and individual needs expressed. The meal is followed by a short message of encouragement from the Fellowship Chair, lifting of announcements pertinent to Local Pastors and Associate Members and prayer for one another and The United Methodist Church.

As has become the tradition of the WVFLPAM, the Fellowship will meet on Thursday, June 7, for luncheon and fellowship. Gathering time will begin at 11:30 a.m., with lunch served at 12 noon. All Local Pastors and Associate Members and their guests are welcome to participate. The cost will be $5.00, with the conference budgeted funds picking up the difference. The bishop and cabinet members are always welcomed as guests of the Fellowship when their schedule permits.

If there are any questions regarding the Fellowship of Local Pastors and Associate Members at any time, feel free to contact me at dgwolford.gw@gmail.com or 304-813-0176.

On the Way,
Gwen Wolford, Chair of WVFLPAM
BOARD OF PENSIONS-PENSION FUNDS, INC.
FUNDS HELD BY THE GENERAL BOARD OF PENSIONS
AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2017

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: 12/31/2017:** $4,998.91

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: 12/31/2017:** $9,923,377 overfunded (129%)

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: 12/31/2017:** $569,404.92

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: 12/31/2017:** $272,802.53

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: 12/31/2017:** $1,016,582.98

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: 12/31/2017:** $2,282,422.66
7. **MPP Annuities Reserve Fund** – Reserve set up to absorb any market downturns in funding MPP account balances in pay status to retirees.
   
   **Balance: 12/31/2017:** $1,786,234.57

8. **Undesignated Pension Funds, Inc. Reserve** – a reserve fund set up to allow flexibility between Pension requirements and Health Care issues as the Board of Pensions see necessary
   
   **Balance: 12/31/2017:** $1,195,449.97.

**Recommendations approved by the 2018 Annual Conference:**

**I. Pensions**

A. That the Past Service Rate (pension rate for service rendered prior to 1982) increase from $576.00 to $588.00, effective January 1, 2019.

B. That the fair share figure for past service pensions (Pre-82 Service) be reduced to $100,000.

C. That clergy who are appointed three-quarter time and half-time and 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 increase 20% for 2019.

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.

E. Raise deductible to $2,000 per individual and $4,000 for families for all participants.

F. Establish a policy that does not allow working spouses who have health care provided to them at their place of employment to be enrolled in the Conference Health Insurance Plan

G. Change prescription drug co-payment to 30% of the cost of the drug (with a maximum cost of $100) or $35 whichever is greater

H. Change hours worked from 20 hours per week to 30 hours per week to be eligible for participation in the Conference Health Care Plan.

**Medicare Eligible Participants**

I. 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.

J. 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.

K. 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 2019 be observed as the Day of Remembrance Sunday, and that offering be designated for the support and development of our Disaster Response Depot.

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 $2500 per calendar year, with a lifetime benefit of $7,500.

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 RESOLUTIONS Section 6)
Retired Minister’s 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 (80) percent 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 and survey

Clergy Emergency Fund Policy

The purpose of this fund is to provide emergency funds for clergy and their families when faced with medically related expenses that would create financial hardship to them or their family.

Active clergy families under appointment in the West Virginia Annual Conference or retired clergy families may request up to $2,500 annually with a $7,500 lifetime cap for this fund. Clergy who have previously exhausted their lifetime limit will be eligible to access emergency funds under the new guidelines up to the new limits.

ACTIVE CLERGY FAMILIES

All requests from active clergy must be referred by their District Superintendent. The request must be in writing (email or letter) and be accompanied by a receipt, letter or estimate, either of which describing what the medical necessity of the money is to be used for. In the case of an estimate, once the money is used, a receipt is to be forwarded to the Treasurer’s Office to complete the documentation. Funds may be sent directly to the recipient or the District Superintendent for distribution. Records of disbursements will be kept in the Conference Treasurer’s Office.
RETIREDB CLERGY FAMILIES

All requests from retired clergy must be referred directly to the Conference Pension Officer (Conference Treasurer). The request must be in writing (email or letter) and be accompanied by a receipt, letter or estimate, either of which describing what the medical necessity of the money is to be used for. In the case of an estimate, once the money is used, a receipt is to be forwarded to the Treasurer’s Office to complete the documentation for that transaction. Funds will be sent directly to the recipient. Records of disbursements will be kept in the Conference Treasurer’s Office.

**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.

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**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:
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2. Number of Applications received.
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Loans will be limited to eighty (80) percent 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

Rev. J.F. Lacaria and Rebecca Parkins participate in the Unite to End Racism Rally in Washington, DC., April 2018
Rules

The Rules Committee met on February 28\textsuperscript{th} in Charleston, WV. There were four members present – two joining via conference call – along with the Secretary of the Annual Conference. Following discussion and affirmative vote, the Rules Committee makes the following motions to the WV Annual Conference Rules. Please note that deletions are marked with words that have been struck and additions are marked with double underlines. Numbers used in the Motions from the Committee (which are in bold) below should correspond with the Conference Workbook.

Amend by addition Rule B.II.6.a as follows:

(a) Purpose: To provide support services for the ordained minister’s career development appointed and retired clergy, including personal and career counseling, continuing education, assistance in preparation for retirement, and all matters pertaining to ministerial morale.

Rationale:
This rule change request was submitted by the Committee on Clergy Support and Pastoral Care. The requested change would allow this committee to serve all clergy in the Conference and not just those who are ordained.

Amend by Addition Rule B.II.16.b.5

5. United Methodist Women’s Coordinator for Education and Interpretation or in the event the position is not filled, the United Methodist Women’s Conference President or her designee.

Rationale:
This rule change request was submitted by the Board of Global Ministries of the WVAC. It was further reported that this item was approved by them at their meeting on February 3, 2018. By Discipline, the UMW Coordinator for Education and Interpretation is a member of the Conference Board of Global Ministries by virtue of office. At this time, the Conference UMW has eliminated this position. Therefore, this change would permit the Conference United Methodist Women to be represented on the Conference Board of Global Ministries.

Amend by Addition Rule B.IV.9.b(2)

(2) This committee shall develop a pertinent Personal Data Sheet and forward it to all nominees no later than November 1\textsuperscript{st}, of the year prior to the year of election, with the request that it be filled out and returned to the Chairperson no later than January 1\textsuperscript{st}, of the year prior to General and Jurisdictional Conferences. The personal data sheet may include a statement of 50 words or fewer describing what the nominee would contribute as a delegate.
Rationale:
This proposed addition submitted by the Rev. Mark Flynn would more closely align the data being presented about Lay Nominees to General and Jurisdictional Conferences with the data being presented about Clergy Nominees. Even with this addition, the Rules Committee feels that the committee creating the Personal Data Sheet will continue to have the ability to exercise its discretion in the creation of that document.

Amend by Deletion Rule B.IV.10.b.3
(3) Personal data information shall be assembled by the Data Collection Committee with the nominees listed in alphabetical order. The information collected shall be available through the Annual Conference website to all clergy members prior to Annual Conference.

Rationale:
The Rules Committee discussed and approved this amendment while reviewing the differences between processes used by Lay and Clergy in the election of delegates to Jurisdictional and General Conferences. It is the feeling of the Rules Committee that removing the above words would allow the “Personal Data Sheet” for Clergy to be distributed in other ways, rather than just limiting it to the Annual Conference web-site.

Scott Sears, Chairperson

Trustees

Greetings! As required, the trustees elected the following officers for the 2016-2020 quadrennium. (Book of Discipline ¶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.

The Conference Trustees continue to affirm 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 continue to affirm 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; and 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 the coordination of maintenance and upkeep coordination. Suggestions are made by and in consultation with the Conference Episcopacy Committee about the residence and episcopal family needs. During the summer and fall of 2017, the kitchen of the residence was completely renovated with a new design, appliances, and remodeled décor. The cost of this remodeling came from the Conference Episcopal Residence Fund.

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 2019 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 during calendar year 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. The trustees are working with proposals to replace a roof on the Camp Office building and do some maintenance on the pool. Costs of this work are estimated at $34,000 and to be taken from the Conference Property fund.

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 2017 was $212,857 (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 continue to work with the Cabinet in carrying out ¶2549 (2016 Book of Discipline). With guidance from the office of the Conference Treasurer, and specifically our Controller, Myra Bess, a system of receiving and deposit of closed churches funds are deposited in the Property Funds. We thank our Trustee Agent, Rev. Cliff Schell, for his work on sales and conveyance of closed church properties. A report is submitted from the agent regarding the work (see following page).
Trustee Resolutions
We recommend adoption of the following resolutions presented by the trustees –

2018 Resolution #1 - Closed Properties, and the Sale and Other Disposition of the Same
2018 Resolution #2 - Closed Church – Real & Personal Property Funds

I appreciate each of the trustees and our ex officio persons for the work, consultation, and leadership that they provide. We especially appreciate the years of service given by Rev. Clifford Schell as Trustee Agent. Cliff will be retiring from this role between Annual Conference and December 2018. Persons are being considered for his replacement.

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 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)

“In all things may God alone be glorified!” (Saint Benedict)
“The best of all, God is with us!” (Rev. John Wesley)

Grace and peace,
William H. Wilson (Bill), Chairperson
CLOSED CHURCH PROPERTIES CONVEYED  
MARCH 1, 2017 – FEBRUARY 28, 2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROPERTY/COUNTY</th>
<th>YEAR CLOSED</th>
<th>DATE CONVEYED</th>
<th>CONSIDERATION</th>
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<tr>
<td>Bellburn/Greenbrier</td>
<td>2016</td>
<td>11/2017</td>
<td>$ 4,000.00</td>
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<tr>
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UNDER CONTRACT AWAITING FINAL PAYMENT

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United Methodist Men

When Jesus approached Peter, Mark, Matthew, and Luke plus the others, he told them to follow him for he would make them fishers of men. In the end, when Jesus saw their faith, he told the disciples to go forth and teach others what he had said and make disciples of others to spread the good news that the Lord is alive and will be with them through their life. We as good disciples have a great responsibility to be like the disciples and to go forth and preach and teach his word to all others, not just the men but to the women and children of the world.

The West Virginia Conference United Methodist Men begin and end their year in September of each year at the Annual gathering of United Methodist Men at Jackson’s Mill. This is held in conjunction with the Boy Scout Circuit Rider event. The Boy Scouts are able to attend this event at no cost to the troop because of a gift from the MonValley District UMW. Funds are raised by a golf outing held at Tygart Valley Golf Course in Grafton, WV.

This past year it was our honor to have the Rev. Dr. Rick Vance, president of the National Association of UMM and Director of Men’s Ministry in Nashville, Tennessee, as our guest speaker. It was enlightening to listen to his knowledge of the Lord because he presents his views in a unique way. This gave Rev. Vance a chance to see how we hold our gathering in conjunction with the Boy Scouts Circuit Rider event and the way we were able to feed all of the Boy Scouts on Saturday evening. We were also honored to be the host conference for Wayne Custer, president of the Northeastern Jurisdiction UMM, to have his annual meeting as conference president. We were able to keep all of our conference officers, except for the secretary. Due to health problems, Ed Ranejik was replaced by Ed Altizer.

Sunday morning worship and communion started with the Boy Scout Award presentation. Donald Davis was presented with the Torch Award from the Boy Scouts for outstanding service to children and youth. We were also honored to have Rev. Dr. Joe Kenaston portraying Francis Asbury, and giving his version of an old time sermon. This year the collection on Sunday morning was to be donated to the Upper Room Prayer Line. This collection, combined with earlier donations, allowed the West Virginia Conference UMM to contribute $1,448.00 to the Prayer Line during the National Association of Conference Presidents (NACP) meeting this February in Nashville, Tennessee.

On a personal note, this will be my last year as WVCUMM Men president. It has been a rewarding four years and something that is beyond saying is how much I have enjoyed the wonderful times of fellowship with all the men in the conference. I just would like to say thank you to each and every person for the help and friendship we have had together. I would personally like to thank Bishop Sandra Steiner Ball for her support of the United Methodist Men in West Virginia. Thank you and God bless.

Don Davis, President
United Methodist Women

United Methodist Women shall be a community of women whose purpose is to know God, to experience freedom as whole persons through Jesus Christ; to develop a creative, supportive fellowship; and to expand concepts of mission through participation in the global ministries of the church.

My name is Sue Dostal. I attend Cross Roads United Methodist Church in the Western District. As I venture into this new position as President, I reflect on what the organization of United Methodist Women does and what our conference United Methodist Women has done in the past.

United Methodist Women focuses on women, children, and youth. We advocate for the marginalized and disadvantaged. We take a stand where it is necessary to support one of our priority issues, such as Maternal and Child Health, Climate Justice, Economic Inequality and Human Trafficking. Mission needs to be carried out with education, preparation, action, advocacy, mutual learning and partnerships. Our conference had many local units participate in “Standing in The Red Zone,” which was an initiative to increase awareness to stop human trafficking. Many local units participate in recycling also.

United Methodist Women provides educational experiences that lead to personal change in order to transform the world. One way to accomplish this is through the Reading Program. It offers five categories from which to read: spiritual growth, education for mission, nurturing for community, leadership development, and social action.

United Methodist Women prepares women and girls to be leaders in their community, church, school, district, and conference. Leadership Development Days are offered annually to equip women with opportunities to learn particular responsibilities for the office that is held within United Methodist Women, to participate in worship, workshops and network with other participants. It also connects the leadership of United Methodist Women to that of the church.

Each spring we offer a Spiritual Growth Retreat where participants build on their faith journeys. They experience worship, music, great speakers and spiritual growth, which is open to anyone who would like to participate. We offer two sessions; Thursday – Friday and Saturday – Sunday. This allows participants to choose what best fits their schedule. Last year’s theme was Legacy of Faith with Julie Taylor as the guest speaker. This event is held at Cedar Lakes Conference Center.

Mission u is another opportunity for the women to study current issues that impact society with particular attention to the responsibilities of women fulfilling the mission work of the church. Last year, Mission u was held at West Virginia Wesleyan College in July and the theme was Legacy of Hope. The studies presented included Living as a Covenant Community, Missionary Conferences of The United Methodist Church in the United States, and Climate Justice: A Call to Hope and Action. Study leaders were Rev. Joe Hill, Rev. Janet Harman, Rev. Judy Vetter, and Ramona Lockwood. The youth and children participated in their age appropriate study of Missionary Conferences of The United Methodist Church in the United States. Study leaders included Gail Boykin of the New York Conference for the youth, Kasey Akens and Katelyn Lewis for Middle School and Justus Robinson, with Hannah Willey assisting, for the elementary age.
Every year our study leaders, Dean and Assistant Dean for Mission u attend training. This training is a means for teaching the prospective study to the members of the conference. It also teaches the connectedness between the current study and the happenings of society and how all of this is connected to the PURPOSE of United Methodist Women.

Our 2017 Annual Meeting was held at Christ United Methodist Church in Wheeling. The theme was Legacy of Love with Bishop Tom Bickerton as the guest speaker. Offerings were accepted Friday and Saturday in the amount of over $2,000. The offerings support Church and Community Workers and a National Office initiative.

Beginning in 2018, each district team is responsible for sponsoring a district-wide Mission Encounter to take place at one of the conference mission project sites, a Church and Community Worker’s site or any other type of mission site within their community. The hope is for greater participation with the ladies of the district as they will not have to travel far or be away from home more than a day.

This year we are celebrating 149 years of United Methodist Women putting Faith, Hope and Love into Action. As we “Move Forward” into the coming years, our hope is for continued work in supporting the marginalized and continued education and connectional efforts for the growth of United Methodist Women. We are looking forward to celebrating 150 years in 2019.

Sue Dostal, President
WV Conference United Methodist Women

Young Adult Ministries

Greetings, in the name of our Lord!

The Young Adult Ministries Team has been in a period of discernment with the foci being organizational structure and purpose. Our discernment has led us to:

• Seek clarification about the team’s membership status and strive to be in line with the West Virginia Annual Conference’s expectations of diversity

• Create a Ministry Action Plan that focuses on reaching and retaining Young Adult disciples;

• Create tangible goals within our MAP that include:
  o Resourcing local churches to reach Young Adults;
  o Grant opportunities for local churches who seek to become engaged in ministry with Young Adults;
  o Creating a curriculum that can be shared at the local church level to help Young Adult disciples express and learn about their faith.

We currently request your prayers as an Annual Conference, as we continue our conversations on how to stay relevant to this exciting age group.

Micah Blanks, Chair
micahblanks@hotmail.com
Conference Council on Youth Ministries

The 2017-2018 year for the Conference Council on Youth Ministries (CCYM) and the youth of the West Virginia Annual Conference has been full of growth, laughter, and memories that so many will be able to carry with them into the rest of their lives. We’ve taken a focus on strengthening one another as leaders and disciples, establishing a deeper connection with God, and creating lifelong bonds and friendships. I am confident in the future of the youth of this conference as they continue to grow and take that growth out into the world and be the disciples that Christ has called us to be.

Radical Discipleship Academy of Appalachia (RDAA), has continued, for its fourth year, to be a time for youth to come together with one another and to grow deeper with themselves, with their peers, and with Christ. The week at Spring Heights is spent in fellowship, learning, worshiping, admiring God’s beautiful nature, and making unforgettable memories that will still be able to make the students chuckle for years to come.

Rally on the Mountain had its second successful year at Canaan Valley Resort. The camp was filled with music and worship led by Visible Worship, workshops, and games, and baptisms that, thanks to the rainstorm that was happening at the same time, let others remember their own baptism, and to make sure that the ones that got baptized got fully covered, just in case the kiddie pool wasn’t quite deep enough. “Create” was our theme, and if you have ever had the privilege of seeing the beauty of Canaan Valley, you can agree that it is a perfect setting to discuss that theme.

Fall Workshop has continued to be an amazing place to be as we answered the question of “What Now?” meaning, we have come across this big event, and what do we do after that? That could be anything from accepting Christ, getting baptized, leaving a mission trip or a camp, or anything else where you are not sure of the follow through. Our weekend camp in Cedar Lakes was filled of the Spirit, good discussion, and lots of laughter.

Our conference youth increasing involvement with our jurisdiction. The North-eastern Jurisdiction goes on an annual mission trip, Mission of Peace, and we were able to send two youth, Gavin Brandenburg and Gabe Papadopolos, to Cuba. MOP never fails to be an inspiring and spiritual journey. This coming July, the jurisdiction is sending five youth voting delegates to South Africa to participate in the Global Convocation for Young People, and I have the privilege of being one of those five. There are youth from around the world who will gather together to worship, have discussion, and write up legislation to be presented at General Conference in 2020.

My one and only year of being the chairperson of CCYM has been filled to the brim with so many amazing memories that will last a lifetime. I have been able to have an inside look on how much work goes into the events that the Conference puts on every year, and I have unending gratitude to all of those who have helped make all of this possible. To the youth and members of CCYM, you are all so eager and willing to do whatever needs to be done, and to do it with eagerness. To the adult volunteers, thank you for your guidance, and your patience because we know that youth can be difficult to work with, though you are always there to help whenever and wherever it is needed. To Shea James and Joe Hill,
we can never say thank you enough as you have always been with us through all of this, with wisdom and guidance, and being able to tell when we need a break on those extra-long CCYM meetings. You have taught us so much and only have the best intentions for the youth of this conference, so once again, thank you. And to those who support us by praying for all of this, let us never forget how much power is in a prayer, thank you for all that you do.

This Conference is full of bright and inspiring youth who, without a doubt, will make a huge impact in the world. Thank you to the West Virginia Annual Conference for letting our youth be the light that they are.

Brookann Simmons
CCYM Chairperson
Conference Youth Coordinator

As Youth Coordinator, I continue to find a great deal of joy and hope for the future of the church as I work with the Conference Council on Youth Ministry. This year we functioned with Co-Chairpersons, Brookann Simmons and Jenna Soltesz. They have been an effective team working together and with our other executive team members, Gavin Bradenburg, Max McGinnis, and Bree Moll.

Last summer’s Rally on the Mountain, which took place at Canaan Valley, saw many new youth attending. We were happy to see new adults involved as well, leading workshops and chaperoning. Worship music at the event was lead by Visible Music College, which brought a new feel to the services that engaged the youth well. Again CCYM members did the bulk of the preaching and other youth helped with the liturgy. As always it was inspiring; to the point that youth not on the council began to express an interest in preaching at future events. I think I can speak for our Director of Youth and Outdoor Ministries, Rev. Shea James, as well as myself when I say that one of the highlights of the Rally was the baptisms of Bree Moll and her siblings.

While the Rally continues to be a time for new locations and new formats, Fall Workshop offers familiar tradition. I am always touched by the number of adults who come out to support the youth as cabin counselors and workshop leaders. Though familiar, CCYM planned workshops that were more seriously directed toward equipping them and their peers toward integrating their faith with the practical matters of living as disciples in the world.

I have to tip my hat to Shea James. As I have been adjusting to the rhythms and demands of serving as a conference superintendent, Shea has shoulered the majority of the burden this year in guiding our conference youth ministries. In her service to the West Virginia Annual Conference Shea carries a number of responsibilities and does so well.

I thank Bishop Sandra Steiner Ball, Rev. Barry Steiner Ball, and conference staff who come out to the youth events to show their support. Youth continue to be surprised and delighted when they see that the Bishop has come out to spend time with them. It helps them to see the Bishop as THEIR Bishop.

Last but not least, I thank Bob Cover and Wes McKinney, both of whom are mainstays in our work with youth in the conference.

To the rest of the West Virginia Annual Conference: thank you for your investment in our youth. Whether you are supporting them by your presence, prayers, talents, or through your faithfulness to your apportionment, thank you for investing in the future of Christ’s church.

Yours in Christ,
Rev. Joe Hill
Conference Youth Coordinator
The 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:

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* The benchmarks are customized to match the asset allocation in each Fund, adjusted for fees.

Receipts and Assets Under Management

For all purposes – new permanent endowment trusts, gift annuities, custodial accounts and additions to existing trusts and custodial accounts – total receipts through March 15, 2018 is over $650,000.00.

The United Methodist Foundation ended 2017 having reached a significant milestone: over $100 Million in assets under management. We celebrate having achieved this milestone and give thanks to all who made it possible—to all former and current staff, Board members, church leaders, and especially to the
generous donors who have trusted this ministry enough that they made legacy gifts to provide lasting impacts. We recognize, however, that our goal is not to build up the Foundation, but to create a culture of generosity that enhances and expands ministry in the name of Jesus Christ in the West Virginia Conference and beyond.

FOUNDATION GRANTS

Budgeted Grants

Each year, we tithe our anticipated revenues for grants to churches and other ministries around the Conference. In 2017, our Grants Committee awarded over $93,000.00 in ministry grants to the churches and agencies of the West Virginia Annual Conference. These grants funded addiction recovery programs, ministry with children and youth, handicapped accessibility projects, and ministry with the poor. 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

The Foundation is also committed to granting funds accumulated in excess of our established reserve levels. In 2016 and 2017, we granted $300,000 to churches affected by the June and July 2016 floods. In 2018, we partnered with the Annual Conference and West Virginia Wesleyan College to help fund the new position of Director of Spiritual and Religious Life.

SAVE A TREE, PLANT A TREE

Save a tree, and we’ll plant a tree! In an effort to encourage good stewardship of the earth, for each account holder who changes from mailed paper statements to using the online Account Portal, The Foundation will make a donation to a non-profit organization that will plant a tree in a United States National Forest. Not only can you save trees by reducing the paper used for printing statements, but also you can plant a tree!

Account Portal credentials are available for donors who created Foundation accounts, to pastors, and to officers responsible for monitoring the accounts. Multiple officers can have access. To receive credentials to access the Account Portal, email The Foundation at info@umfwv.org, or go to our website (www.umfwv.org) and click the green box that says “Plant a Tree.” We hope you will consider the possibilities of our Account Portal and help us to save a tree and Plant a Tree!

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 9 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.
To be added to our mailing list, contact us at info@umfwv.org
Contact Jeff Taylor at jefftaylor@umfwv.org
Contact Kim Matthews at kimmathews@umfwv.org
For accounting questions, contact Susannah Carpenter, CPA, our Director of Finance and Administration, at scarpenter@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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Greetings from West Virginia Wesleyan College. We wish you a warm welcome as you come to our campus for the 2018 West Virginia Annual Conference.

Since my arrival, Bishop Sandra Steiner Ball and I have been working to strengthen the relationship between the College and the Church. Recently, we announced the new position of United Methodist Church Liaison and Spiritual Life Coordinator at West Virginia Wesleyan College. Lauren Weaver will assume the new position effective July 1. Along with coordinating spiritual and religious life on campus, Lauren will act as the liaison between the College and The United Methodist Church of West Virginia. Lauren will have responsibility for connecting United Methodist congregations with the College on a variety of levels.

The College also expanded its relationship with local United Methodist churches this past year. This expanded relationship was highlighted by a joint worship service on Ash Wednesday at Wesley Chapel with the First United Methodist Church of Buckhannon and Chapel Hill United Methodist Church congregations. Bishop Sandra Steiner Ball delivered the stirring message and the Chapel Choir performed several inspirational selections. Along with the students, faculty, and staff from the WVWC community, many members of the WVWC Board of Trustees were in attendance.

The campus community continues to enhance its community engagement. Our student body participates in community service through their Greek affiliations, their athletic teams, their churches, and their personal affiliations. Over 100 students are directly involved with the Center for Community Engagement. Our service scholars alone, 78 students, did over 12,000 hours of community service. Campus community participation ranges from working with the local schools -- pre-K through 12th grade students -- on academic subjects like math and reading, to dealing with social justice and human rights around issues like poverty, to regional issues like childhood obesity.

It has been an exciting year, and West Virginia Wesleyan College continues to move in positive directions. In November, we signed an agreement with the West Virginia School of Osteopathic Medicine to establish a Pre-Osteopathic Program for undergraduate students who have an interest in the field and plan to enter osteopathic medical school. In December, the Board of Trustees approved the proposal that allows WVWC to offer the Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) beginning Fall 2018. Wesleyan is now a doctoral granting institution!
AFRICA UNIVERSITY

Africa University is deeply thankful to the West Virginia Conference for investing in the Africa University Fund (AUF) apportionment at 100 percent in 2017. Africa University ended 2017 with its highest level of support from The United Methodist Church to date. A percent of the goal or $38.7 million of support from the annual conference was a record 35 annual conferences that achieved or exceeded their 100 percent investment to the AUF. Thank you, West Virginia United Methodists, for leading by example, and for your outstanding record of faithfulness to this ministry.

Institutional Update:

- Currently, Africa University hosts a vibrant campus community of 1,417 full-time students and faculty and staff from 31 African nations. In addition, 392 students are pursuing degree programs on a part-time basis.
- Amidst the ongoing transition in the governance of Zimbabwe, lectures, research, and outreach activities at Africa University have continued uninterrupted.
- Africa University’s annual operating budget of just-under $10.5 million prioritizes student access and retention. More than $2.2 million in scholarships and financial aid awards were disbursed in 2017.
- The recently-launched Institute of Theology and Religious Studies offers multidisciplinary training and leadership formation opportunities for both clergy and laity.
- Through teaching and research, Africa University is making trailblazing, regional contributions in key areas such as migrant and refugee protection, child rights, and the eradication of malaria and other insect-borne diseases.
- More than 8,000 Africa University graduates are engaged in efforts to make disciples, alleviate poverty, improve global health, and better the quality of life in communities across sub-Saharan Africa.

Education is in a time of transformation. In the education space, we are moving from the analog era to the digital era. We are moving from seat time based education to competency based education; we are moving from calendar based learning to learn on demand; we are integrating project based learning with textbook learning; we are blurring the lines between formal and informal learning; we are moving from mass education to personalized education; and as we create these individual learning pathways, we are mindful that the journey to intellectual and spiritual enlightenment is dynamic.

As we walk this journey together, we are interminably grateful for your continued support.

Joel Thierstein, J.D., Ph.D.
President
• By 2020, Africa University expects its business incubation hub, launched on campus in 2017, to deliver commercially-viable products and services that have been developed in partnership with African innovators and investors.

As Africa University embraces emerging opportunities for service and impact within and beyond the church in Africa, the unwavering support of the West Virginia Conference is of vital importance. On June 9th, David Ntahombaye, a young man from Burundi, will be awarded a degree in Health Services Management because West Virginia United Methodists invested in scholarships at Africa University as part of their global legacy. This new graduate now has the skills to make important contributions to the health sector in his country. Never tire in doing good, because your steadfast love is a bridge to dreams fulfilled. Please remember the students, faculty, administrators, trustees, and alumni of Africa University in your prayers.

Thank you, West Virginia Conference, for your foundational role in the Africa University story. Thank you for being a part of this incredible year of blessings. Thank you for affirming the power of faithfully sowing and working together in ministry with Africa University. May God bless and keep you always in an abundance of grace and mercy.

James H. Salley
Associate Vice Chancellor for Institutional Advancement
Africa University Development Office
1001-19th Avenue South
P O Box 340007
Nashville, TN 37203-0007
Tel: (615) 340-7438
Fax: (615) 340-7290
jsalley@gbhem.org
www.support-africauniversity.org
GBHEM GENERAL AGENCY REPORT – 2018 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

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

Mission: Build capacity for United Methodist lay and clergy leaders to discover, claim and flourish in Christ’s calling in their lives, by creating connections and providing resources to aid in recruitment, education, professional development and spiritual formation. 

Vision: Generations of thriving, diverse and compassionate Christian leaders for The United Methodist Church and the world.

OUR WORK THROUGHOUT 2017 AND 2018

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

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

GBHEM works with the Commission on Central Conference Theological Education (CCTE) to distribute grants for the theological education of pastoral leaders in the Central Conferences. In 2017, the CCTE awarded 67 grants totaling more than $1 million to the seven Central Conferences of The United Methodist Church.

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

In 2017, GBHEM’s Office of Loans and Scholarships awarded 23,000+ students with $4.1 million in scholarships and 350 students with $1.6 million in low-interest loans. More than $1.6 million was awarded to 200 recipients of the Excellence in Clergy Leadership Scholarship, which helps United Methodist clergy avoid excessive educational loan debt, minimize financial stress and build financial acumen.

To aid pastors in their ministry journey, GBHEM’s Candidacy Office introduced EM360: A formation guide to help pastors and congregations meet mission and ministry goals, EM360 is a tool to help clergy leaders identify and gauge pastoral effectiveness. In 2017, 1,438 candidates enrolled in UM CARES to seek certified candidacy for licensed or ordained ministry. A total of 589 candidates were certified.

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

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

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

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

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

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BOSTON UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

Dear Colleagues in Ministry:
Greetings from Boston University School of Theology (BUSTH) as we travel together in this journey of discipleship!

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

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

TAKING ACTION GLOBALLY AND LOCALLY:
- Campus action: Work to improve accessibility and sustainability. BUSTH is the first certified Green School in BU, and is active in the Green Seminary Initiative. It has also been named as one of the “Seminaries that Change the World.”
- Internships in global service and peacemaking: Student-initiated internships for service with communities across the world, and for just peacemaking projects with international organizations.

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

OTHER NOTABLE NEWS:
- Celebration of the 40th anniversary of the Anna Howard Shaw Center

As BUSTH looks back on 2017, it celebrates transformational leaders who keep the word of Jesus Christ alive. Their living legacy and perceptive witness gives us hope and courage for the future.

Blessings and gratitude,

Mary Elizabeth Moore, Dean

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Candler School of Theology

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Jan Love
Mary Lee Hardin Willard Dean and Professor of Christianity and World Politics
Duke Divinity School

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

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

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

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

Three new certificates were approved this year. The Certificate in Missional Innovation, which can be earned as part of a master of divinity degree, is intended for students interested or involved in innovative forms of ministry. They will receive training in contextual evangelism and church planting with the goal of converting, gathering, and discipling people who are often neglected or unreached by existing church structures. The Certificate in Theology and the Arts, which can be earned alongside the M.Div., M.T.S., or Th.M., aims to help students appreciate and articulate the mutual enrichment of theology and the arts and to create opportunities to involve local churches and communities in the arts. The Certificate in Theology and Health Care is a new fully accredited residential graduate program that provides robust theological and practical engagement with contemporary practices in medicine and health care. The certificate aims to equip Christian health care practitioners with foundational courses in Christian theology, Scripture, and the practical issues they encounter.
In 2017, the Duke Forward comprehensive campaign concluded, having raised critical endowment and expendable funds to support the people, programs, and activities of the university. Duke Divinity School raised $114.1 million, 143 percent more than the goal of $80 million. This support enables the Divinity School to provide scholarships and fellowships to students, build faculty excellence, and launch new programs and research efforts. We are grateful to God for the generous partnership of many alumni, other individuals, churches, and foundations. These gifts are helping to move Duke Divinity School forward into preparing men and women who will serve their neighbors and lead the church of the future.

Our faculty continue to provide exemplary service in the classroom, for the church, and to the wider culture. Just one example is Edgardo Colón-Emeric, assistant professor of Christian theology, continues the Duke Divinity tradition of Methodist engagement in ecumenical initiatives. As part of the Joint International Commission for Dialogue between the World Methodist Council and the Roman Catholic Church, Colón-Emeric presented to Pope Francis the Spanish translation of the latest bilateral statement. Colón-Emeric has also been actively involved in Methodist churches and seminaries in Latin America, including an effort to train lay pastors in Guatemala that has involved Duke Divinity staff and doctoral students.

A number of efforts and programs at Duke Divinity School this year have sought to further our commitment to supporting and learning from students and communities that have been too-often marginalized. Our Convocation & Pastors’ School featured professors, pastors, and activists who addressed ways that the church can dismantle bias and hate. The Center for Reconciliation had a full slate of programs, including a conversation series on navigating conflict that was open to the public; a pilgrimage to significant sites in Durham; and participation in reconciliation events in East Africa and Northeast Asia. Thanks to a grant from the General Board of Higher Education & Ministry’s Young Clergy Initiative, Duke Divinity School received a grant to help develop leadership for the Black church within the UMC through mentorships, funded field education placements with experienced Black pastors, and attendance at the Convocation for Pastors of Black Churches. Within our school, Dean Elaine Heath has met regularly with the leaders of the Black Seminarians Union and a team of faculty and staff to address concerns around implicit bias in grading, training in cross-cultural competency, additional scholarship support for students, and staffing needs to support an increasingly diverse student population.

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
Gammon Theological Seminary
653 Beckwith Street SW, Atlanta, GA 30314
404.581.0300 www.gammon-itc.org

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

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

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

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

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

Grace and Peace,
Ken J. Walden, Ph.D.
President-Dean
Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary

In 2017-2018, Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary focused on the following priorities:

- **Responsive and Relevant Theological Education**: Respond to the educational and professional development needs of prospective students, alums, clergy, and laity by providing relevant theological education in a variety of formats and investing in our competent and diverse faculty.

- **Inclusivity in Our Relationships**: Ensure we are equitable, just, and inclusive in our relationships with the variety of diversity we encounter (e.g., racial, cultural, sexual orientation) within both our seminary and local communities.

- **Ensuring a Vibrant Future**: Establish a vibrant future by investing in employees, instituting new policies and procedures, caring for the earth, and generating gifts to sustain the seminary for generations to come.

**RESPONSIVE AND RELEVANT THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION**

**Scholarships Available for Fall 2018**

Continuing the seminary’s commitment to reducing student debt and addressing the financial needs of students seeking a theological education, Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary has an additional 25 full-tuition scholarships available for individuals applying for admission as a full-time student in Fall 2018. For more information, please visit www.garrett.edu/news.

**Two New Master of Arts Degrees**

**Master of Arts in Public Ministry**

In Fall 2018, Garrett-Evangelical will accept students into the newly formed Master of Arts in Public Ministry program. Students in this program aspire to fulfill their Christian vocations to love God and serve neighbor through public ministries of advocacy, organizing, and justice-making in collaboration with other communities of faith and conscience. In particular, this program equips laity serving in community, social, or justice-oriented organizations who seek to enhance their public work by engaging with theological education and formation. Concentrations tracks are available in Ecological Regeneration, Racial Justice, or Child Advocacy.

**Master of Arts in Spiritual Formation and Direction**

Through rigorous academics paired with profound spiritual formation, the Master of Arts in Spiritual Formation and Direction is designed to provide you with advanced training in the spiritual and devotional practices that lead to both personal and communal growth. Graduates of this program aspire to fulfill their Christian vocation to love and serve God and neighbor through the task of spiritual direction and companionship. Most of the courses in the Spiritual Direction concentration include a spiritual direction module, which – when successfully completed – leads to a certificate in spiritual direction. Those skills may be used in a direction setting, but they may also inform and enhance your approach to leadership, preaching, teaching, and pastoral counseling.
**Connectional Learning**

Connectional Learning is the name for Garrett-Evangelical’s new take on continuing education. We seek to create education and training suited to your unique professional, vocational, and spiritual needs. Our new suite of offerings enables you to choose the programming that fits best for your physical location, ability to travel, learning preferences, time, and budget. We saw tremendous growth in this area with an increase in the number and type of programs we offered online, on campus, and regionally. We are actively preparing our Fall 2018 offerings to announce them at our Annual Conference visits.

Upcoming programs that may be of interest to you are a community organizing workshop held in Chicago on June 18-22, 2018. In Fall 2018, we will launch our online “Financial Management for Churches and Nonprofits” course for clergy to attend with a lay leader. Registration opens in late spring/early summer. This course was designed as part of our Lilly Endowment grant, “Leading Vibrant Congregations: A Collaboration of Faith and Finance.” To learn more about our offerings and stay up to date on future programs, please visit: www.garrett.edu/connectional-learning.

**Faculty Scholarship**

Our faculty has been busy. In 2017, faculty members wrote 12 books and numerous chapters in book, articles, and blog posts. Here are four faculty publications that may be of interest to you:


**INCLUSIVITY IN OUR RELATIONSHIPS**

Since the launch of our strategic plan in 2015, we have been working to pay greater attention to race, diversity, and inclusivity in our community. This work began with a Racial Equity and Diversity Inclusion Audit. We have been working through the results of the audit to inform changes we need to make in our community. One of our major initiatives this year is to create a community statement that names, celebrates, and affirms the variety of persons we encounter as well as challenges the seminary with specific goals to fulfill its commitment to grow and serve all persons equally and justly. We plan to have this statement vetted by our faculty, staff, students, and trustees this spring and will publish it on our website following the Board of Trustees approval in May. As we develop this statement, we are continuing to offer training opportunities and encourage lectures and discussions on race, diversity, and inclusion.
ENSURING A VIBRANT FUTURE

Hope for Creation and Green Seminary Certification Program

Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary is committed to addressing the urgent environmental crises facing the world’s peoples today and to promoting the just and wise care of God’s creation for the flourishing of all. This commitment is rooted in an affirmation of God’s love for the world, an embrace of our human vocation to be faithful stewards of the good earth, and an active hope in God’s promise to establish justice and righteousness throughout the land.

We are in the midst of integrating sustainable practices and ecological awareness as a participant in the Green Seminary Initiative (GSI) for the Seminary Environmental Certification Program. A three-year program, this certification will assist Garrett-Evangelical as it integrates care for creation into areas of education and spiritual formation; liturgy, ritual, and worship; building and grounds management; community life; and public leadership.

Thank you for your continued interest in our work. We are grateful to serve The United Methodist Church and the church at large. For more information about Garrett-Evangelical, I encourage you to visit our website, www.garrett.edu, or visit us on campus.

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 news from MTSO. Here are a few highlights from a productive year.

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

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

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

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

Respectfully submitted,
Danny Russell, Director of Communications
United Theological Seminary

“NOW TO HIM WHO BY THE POWER OF GOD AT WORK WITHIN US IS ABLE TO ACCOMPLISH ABUNDANTLY FAR MORE THAN ALL WE CAN ASK OR IMAGINE…”

--- Ephesians 3:20

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

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

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

Rev. Rudy Rasmus, pastor of the 9,000-member St. John’s United Methodist Church in downtown Houston is a current doctoral student, who says he has been both challenged and supported in the DMin program. “The program is rigorous,” Rev. Rasmus says. “It is contextual, it is intentional and the professors and staff are at the top of the form.”

United also has 212 students enrolled in the Master of Divinity degree program who usually seek to serve as pastors in local congregations. 88% of entering students are ordained or seeking ordination to serve a local congregation compared to 56% in other ATS member schools.

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

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

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

Grace and Peace,
Dr. Kent Millard, President
Wesley Theological Seminary

Wesley Theological Seminary, located in Washington, D.C., continues to equip the next generation of Christian leadership for the church and the world. As a United Methodist seminary, we form students to lead innovative ministries while remaining grounded in our biblical and theological traditions. Whether you are clergy or laity, an alumnus or a prospective student, looking for master’s or doctoral work or continuing education or simply deeper biblical knowledge, Wesley wants to support you in your current and future call to ministry. Here are a few ways Wesley can help you grow in faith, wisdom, and ability.

Expand your leadership skills

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

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

Wesley also offers opportunities for individual study without pursuing a degree. The Certificate in Faith and Public Life explores the foundations of public theology, religious freedom, and civil discourse through graduate courses. For more information, visit www.wesleyseminary.edu/fpli.

A Certificate in Wesleyan Studies is available online via the Wesley Theological Seminary Lay Academy. Topics include United Methodist identity, early church history, Christian ethics, interfaith relations, and the intersection of faith and science. The courses can also be taken for personal education and enrichment. More information can be found at www.beadisciple.com/wesley/.

Take your ministry to the next level

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

Find out more or apply at www.wesleyseminary.edu/doctorofministry/.
Discover exciting pathways to seminary studies

Wesley understands the struggle of responsibly accepting your call while being concerned about balancing life, family, ministry and student debt. We are here to help make responding to that call possible. Through our partnership with Shenandoah University and our **new 3+3 Fast Track B.A./M. Div. program**, students enter ministry with less debt after earning their degree in 6 years. Learn more at [www.wesleyseminary.edu/3+3degrees](http://www.wesleyseminary.edu/3+3degrees).

**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. Check out upcoming flexible course offerings for summer and fall 2018 at [http://www.wesleyseminary.edu/admissions/try-a-class-3/](http://www.wesleyseminary.edu/admissions/try-a-class-3/)

**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.

Contact us at (202) 885-8659 or admissions@wesleyseminary.edu about how Wesley’s degree programs can equip you for your next step in ministry.

Enrich your congregational outreach and explore new dimensions of ministry

Through the Wesley Innovation Hub, Wesley is working with **20 local congregations** to design innovative ministries to enrich the religious lives of young adults. Follow the work and connect with resources at [www.wesleyseminary.edu/wesley-innovation-hub/](http://www.wesleyseminary.edu/wesley-innovation-hub/). The Wesley Innovation Hub is made possible by a generous grant from the Lilly Endowment.

In a time of polarization, the Center for Public Theology, under the leadership of Distinguished Professor of Public Theology Mike McCurry, continues to equip pastors, seminarians, people of faith, and the media to create spaces for civil dialogue at the intersection of religion and politics. The Center also provides events, such as the Wesleyan Political Theology Project, to help faith leaders lead prophetic, open dialogue in their communities. For more information, visit [http://www.wesleyseminary.edu/ice/programs/public-theology/](http://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 offers regular classes and workshops with visiting artists. For information on past and upcoming opportunities visit [www.luceartsandreligion.org](http://www.luceartsandreligion.org).

Stay connected

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 [www.wesleyseminary.edu/support/](http://www.wesleyseminary.edu/support/).

We invite you to stay in touch through the year and learn more of the latest developments at Wesley by [signing up for our monthly electronic newsletter, eCalling, at www.wesleyseminary.edu/ecalling](http://www.wesleyseminary.edu/ecalling).

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

The Rev. Dr. David McAllister-Wilson, President

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Young people lead the conference in a Flash Mob during the Friday night barbecue at Annual Conference