



Volume I

Detroit Annual Conference
2018 Historical Reports



Michigan Area

The United Methodist Church

2018 Detroit Annual Conference

HISTORICAL REPORTS

PRE-CONFERENCE REPORT

**NOT FOR PUBLICATION UNTIL ACTED UPON AT
ANNUAL CONFERENCE**

2018 Detroit Annual Conference

June 1-4, 2018

Grand Traverse Conference Center • Traverse City, Michigan

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ANN ARBOR DISTRICT REPORT

The Ann Arbor District continues to be a spotlight for Jesus Christ in the world. We have continued to see growth in membership and attendance numbers, but more importantly we are experiencing an increase in the presence of the Holy Spirit. Our congregations continue to minister to those in need with both financial and spiritual support.

Several of our churches are in a covenant relationship with their sister church in Liberia. Support for clean water initiatives, health education and care and tuition support for elementary students are among the areas of help for our brothers and sisters in Liberia.

Our annual meeting was hosted by the Novi United Methodist Church. Several of our churches were awarded grants to assist their ministries in the coming years.

The United Methodist Women continue to be very active and their support in the mission field provides a beacon of love of our Lord and Master.

Our committees have been preparing for our new District and Conference structure. We are eagerly preparing to be in connection with the brothers and sisters of the eastern part of the Albion District. Although we will have a new name and different make up, our mission will not change. We will continue to make disciples for Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Our District Superintendent for the past eight years is moving on to new challenges. Rev. Mark Spaw has been an integral part of our growth and strength in his tenure as our DS. We will long remember his High Five initiatives that grew and strengthened our district.

We welcome the Rev. Elizabeth Hill as our new DS and look forward to working with her in our journey to be disciples of Jesus Christ.

Ken Kneisel, Lay Leader

BLUE WATER DISTRICT

“Where visions are cast, objectives are defined and Christ is honored!”

During 2017, laity and clergy in the Blue Water District continued to cast visions and live out our call to serve the Lord. We gathered for our last District Conference on November 4th at Lapeer Trinity UMC. On February 11th, the Blue Water District gathered together one last time to celebrate our time in the Detroit Annual Conference. We now have four Regional churches in the District, creating new ways for how laity and clergy can share in servant leadership. The churches currently in the Regional model are:

The Blue Water Free Store, in Port Huron served 10,837 families. the maximum for a day was 200. The Ministry Center held it's first fundraiser at Port Huron 1st, raising \$1,000.00. Selling off the scrap metal on the property yielded the Center \$200. Remodeling plans for the Ministry Center are progressing.

The Blue Water District Lay Servant program had another fruitful year offering eight basic and twelve advanced classes at various locations throughout the district. The Blue Water Lay Servants role in the District has become more important with the implementation of regional churches. The willingness and flexibility of the instructors has helped this program thrive.

On July 30th, 14 youth and five adults, led by District Superintendent Rev. Elizabeth Hill, departed for a week of service alongside the project partners at the Motown Mission Experience. Deeply rooted in Wesleyan Theology, Motown Mission began as a United Methodist organization and continues to maintain the connection to the contemporary UMC's commitment to grace, mission, and service as a means for individual and communal transformation. During the week, the team was housed and ate meals at historic Metropolitan United Methodist Church in Detroit. Our two work teams, representing four churches in the district, worked side by side with N.O.A.H Project, Rippling Hope, Global Mission Fellows, Arts and Scraps, North End Neighbors Block Club, and Resource Community Development Corporation. We prepared lunch and served the homeless, painted, installed security doors, assembled craft kits, cleared debris and yard waste, built porch steps, helped US-2 Missionaries move, mowed, raked and trimmed yards, along with a variety of other jobs. We served in different neighborhoods and areas of the city including, Highland Park, Grand Mont, The North End and Southwest Detroit and Downtown.

We also took time to explore part of the city that were new to the youth, even enjoying a visit to Hamtramck, the Astoria Bakery in Greektown, a cookout on Belle Isle and lunch from the roof of Metropolitan UMC. Evenings consisted of community time and worship. Each night we came together to talk about our experiences from the day, to sing songs of praise and to share in scripture, with guest speaker, Sherman Lewis who serves as a Lay Minister at Metropolitan. We learned about the '67 riots and the hope that is now spreading across the city.

Our trip could not have been possible without the generous support of our district mission and finance teams as well as the following churches that prepared meals or provided food for our meals during the week; Harbor Beach UMC, Port Hope UMC, Newburgh First: UMC and Macomb Faith UMC. Thank you all for the love you showed us during the week. As we prepared to depart on Saturday morning, new friendships had been made, biases had begun to be dispelled and all of us had a much better understanding of what can happen when a community comes together to do the work of Jesus. Plans are in the works for next year's mission trip, wherever that may be, but a piece of Detroit will be with us forever. Thanks again for all your support.

United Methodist Women of the Blue Water District stood together in faith, hope and love during 2017. We had a wonderful Spiritual Growth Retreat with Rev. Beth Librande, showing us how to "Trust God with Everything". Our own District Superintendent, Rev. Elizabeth Hill, was our Prayer Breakfast speaker at Kingston, speaking on "Listening to that Still, Small Voice". Special music was presented by Rev. Carol Abbott and Rhonda Powers, followed by our team meeting at Kingston. We spent our team Day Away at the United Methodist Children's Home in Redford Township where we also visited the "Wall of Racism" in Detroit. Sandusky First UMC hosted our Annual Meeting, with the Rev. Caroline Spragg who portrayed one of the women from the Bible in "Jesus Sets Entrapped Women Free", a phrase we still can use today for all those held in bondage by any number of sources.

2017 was also a busy year for District Lay Leadership. In addition to Annual Conference, the District Lay Leader District attended Listening Sessions as well as Conference and District meetings as new district boundaries and reorganization were presented. The Lay Leader was an active participant in the District Youth Retreat hosted by Trinity Church in Lapeer. I thoroughly enjoyed the District Picnic held at Faith-Macomb. I have been active with the District Leadership team and the Superintendent's Advisory Committee. I have had an opportunity to speak in several churches. It is always a pleasure to meet with other District Lay Leaders and we met at the Ministry Center for meetings throughout the year. I am looking forward to serving on the new Design Team. It has been a joy to represent the Blue Water District as Lay Leader.

The District Board of Missions Church Extension/ Finance Team has continued to assist with the financial needs of our local churches. We have approved the following grants in the Technology Grants \$10,500.00, District Youth Grants \$ 1,150.00, 3:1 Challenge Grant \$34,022.00, Extraordinary Special needs Grant \$4500.00, and Barrier Free Grants \$500.00, totaling \$51,172. The Team also approved 4 VCI –Vital Church Initiative Grants for the following churches: Romeo UMC, St Clair First UMC, Richmond First UMC and Lexington UMC.

Our District has committed to being a part of the Conference Emergency Preparedness / Disaster Response team. Opportunities for training and service have happened throughout the year. 60 ERT volunteers were trained at 5 sessions throughout the year, with more training sessions planned at Brown City and West Berlin UMCs. In response to the needs of hurricane victims along the Gulf Coast, we were able to deliver flood bucket and supplies to the Midwest Mission Distribution Center.

Respectfully by Rev. Dr. Margie R. Crawford,
Chair, Blue Water District Leadership Team

CROSSROADS DISTRICT

The Crossroads District envisions a transformed network of connected leaders and churches fully reflecting the Kingdom of God. During the Conference Year 2017-2018 the district continued to reach for the realization of this vision by the following:

- One of its significant means of connecting leaders and churches was the development of 13 Mission Zones throughout the district, in which all congregations became a part. Mission Zones exist to organize churches and communities of the Crossroads District in areas for the purpose of assessing congregational and connectional vitality; strategically plan and implement shared ministries and church configurations; and engage in shared mission within communities of the zone.
- Congregation vibrancy assessments have begun throughout the district, leading to the consideration of various approaches to merger and other configurations of church life.

- “Lord, Teach Us to Pray”, a one-day seminar for personal spiritual formation, and a separate event were provided for training persons to minister in and with a team in local congregations.
- Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection training was provided on December 18.
- Clergy and district leaders were gathered for a Christmas fellowship party as the Advent Season began.
- Two forums were held, training pastors and other clergy in the use of demographic tools for strategic planning. Dr. Thomas Bandy provided the training, using MissionInsite.
- “Tools for Ministry”, the annual district laity training event was held in February and included workshops for members of Staff/Pastor-Parish Relations Committees, Care and Nurture, Christian Education, MissionInsite, Lay Leaders, Lay Members to Annual Conference, Treasurers, Trustees, and those interested in Reaching the Unchurched and Spiritual Self-Care.
- Rev. Christina Miller-Black, District Coordinator for Discipleship Formation, led a “Launching Laity Leadership” workshop on Adult Christian Education in September.
- Rev. Miller-Black also led a number of connectional youth events: U-Nite, Skate-a-thon, and planning for a summer mission trip.
- Lay Servant Ministry training weekends were held in March and September.
- An annual district-wide signature ministry event was developed and held as “Taking It to Your Streets”, with projects conducted in several locations across the district.
- Earle Knapp joined the Leadership Team as Crossroads District Coordinator of Emergency Preparedness/Disaster Response. He attended the Michigan State Police workshop for faith community security in November.
- Rev. Terry Euper and the Liberia Task Force organized a mission trip to Liberia, scheduled for Fall, 2018.
- Crossroads District continued to lead the Detroit Annual Conference in the percentage of churches awarded “Spotlight Church” status for honoring their apportionment covenant and balanced support of missions.
- Cheryl Rentschler, District Administrative Assistant, continued to inform, support, and organize leaders throughout district churches and leadership with finesse, strength, and grace.
- The “Finale” Crossroads District Conference was held in October with Bishop David Bard preaching. A video magazine filled with photos of churches and ministries framed the video-recorded reports of Bonnie Potter (District Lay Leader), Paul Tiedeman (District Board of Missions Chair), Rev. Faith Green-Timmons (District Leadership Team Chair), and Rev. John Hice (District Superintendent). The history of the Flint/Crossroads District, dating back to its organization in 1850, was celebrated in grand style.

Grace and Peace,
Bonnie Potter, District Lay Leader
Michele Weston, District Leadership Team Vice-Chair
Rev. John Hice, District Superintendent

CROSSROADS DISTRICT BOARD OF MISSIONS AND CHURCH EXTENSION

The Crossroads District Board of Missions supports numerous mission/evangelism projects throughout the Crossroads District and the world and assists local churches in serving their communities and providing worldwide outreach. The Board also provides low cost loans to District Churches. Some of the many initiatives supported in 2017 include:

- Ongoing support to the Flint community as a result of the water crisis
- Urban ministry initiatives in the Flint and Pontiac areas including home repair ministry, support for the South Flint Soup Kitchen, tutoring, water crisis support, Asbury CDC Farm Hoop House and Flint Garden City Cooperative, youth and family ministries, “Leap into Learning”, College Prep Program support, etc.
- Support for rural churches with fewer than 100 members with things like Vacation Bible School, Building and Stained Glass repairs, Family outreach, Pass-by-Pantry, etc.
- Connectional grants to local churches to support numerous mission and outreach projects including: Community Youth Ministries, a Health & Wellness Fair, Nursing Home & Assisted Living Ministries, “Camp New Day” for children with at least one parent in prison, a local “Tavern” Church, a Diaper Bank Ministry, Ministry Technology upgrades and Mission trips to Cuba, Guatemala and the Dominican Republic
- Support for children and families through “Family Promise of Genesee County”
- Campus ministry through the InterVarsity Christian Fellowship
- 2017 Family Clergy Camp

- District wide community ministry projects as part of the District's "Taking It To Your Streets" initiative
- Haiti Hot Lunch Program
- Bishop Craig Children's Village
- Liberia Pastor Salary Support

Through these and other efforts in 2017, the Crossroads District Board of Missions has strived to fulfill God's call to ministry, meeting needs, changing lives and making disciples for Jesus Christ.

Paul Tiedeman, President

DETROIT RENAISSANCE DISTRICT

The Detroit Renaissance District was formed in 2011 with the merger of the former Detroit East and Detroit West Districts. Detroit Renaissance District currently consists of 67 congregations spread across the Detroit metropolitan area, consisting of persons from most parts of the world, a growing economy, inspiring arts and higher education, and congregations reflecting Korean, Vietnamese, Latino/Hispanic, African American, Caucasian and multicultural backgrounds. Located in Michigan's population center, our year starts with celebration of the legacy of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. in January, followed by UM Tiger Night in the summer, District Conference in September, Hands4Detroit (a hands-on outdoor mission work day) in October, and District Christmas Party in December.

Our annual Martin Luther King, Jr. celebration on January 8, 2017 featured awards and recognition for outstanding contributions for peace and justice. We celebrate the work of Ms. Audrey Mangum as our Director of Justice and Mission Engagement and Director of Children and Youth Ministries. This year our District Conference under the theme, "Faces of Discipleship," brought together about 500 delegates at Troy Korean UMC with celebrations of ministry, workshops (on many aspects of United Methodism from leadership development to sharing vision and mission of our new Michigan Conference), and a great inter-ethnic, multi-cultural fellowship time. Our Korean hosts put on a lavish display of hospitality, including lunch dishes from many of our ethnic congregations. On September 15th, Bishop Bard joined hundreds of us at Comerica Park for UM Tiger Night with the Detroit Tigers. On October 7th, Hands4Detroit worked with our Latino/Hispanic brothers and sisters at Centro Familiar Cristiano UMC in Southwest Detroit on community service projects. Finally on December 2nd, our District Christmas Brunch was hosted at Ferndale First UMC. Rev. Diana Goudie led a lively presentation.

This year, several local church assessments (based on The Book of Discipline paragraph 213) and the Vital Church Initiatives helped several congregations make critical choices among intentional redevelopment, merger and closing. These efforts, coupled with decisions to start a new Church of the African Diaspora in 2018 are helping us prepare for a vibrant future for United Methodist mission and ministry in southeastern Michigan.

We cannot neglect to mention the dedicated services of our United Methodist Women, Men, Youth Fellowship, Lay Servant Ministry, Ordained Ministry, Latino/Hispanic Ministry, Urban Youth Camp, and other District organizations. We especially appreciate the ministry of our district staff: Dwanda Ashford, Audrey Mangum, and Sheila Cook, our Leadership Team and district superintendent as we prepare to become a new District in the Michigan Annual Conference in 2018.

Bill Arendall,
Chair, District Leadership Team

MARQUETTE DISTRICT

The Marquette District continues to celebrate mission and ministry as we seek new ways of being the church in our area! The highlights of 2017 include:

A New District Superintendent: Our district is blessed to have Rev. Scott Harmon as our leader. Rev. Harmon has served several churches in the Marquette District and understands the blessings and challenges of ministry and mission in this district. We welcomed Rev. Harmon with an Installation Service at Wesley United Methodist Church in Ishpeming. Bishop David Bard led the service, many from our district participated in the acts of worship, and Rev. Harmon gave an inspiring message!

In April we sent our former District Superintendent, Rev. Elbert Dulworth, off to his new appointment with gratitude and thanksgiving for his leadership and pastoral care.

Day of Inspiration: This year's Day of Inspiration featured Ray Buckley, author and storyteller. Ray is the interim Director of the Center for Native American Spirituality and Christian Study and is the Director of Connectional Ministries for the Alaska Missionary Conference. We were inspired by Ray to tell the stories of our faith with enthusiasm and imagination and to take God's message of

hope to our congregations in our preaching.

Camp Michigamme: Well over 200 young persons enjoyed some time at Camp Michigamme this year. Director Erica Thomas, together with the Board of Trustees, have worked to continue the upgrades and improvements that have been ongoing over the past couple of years. There is now heat in the chapel making it user-friendly for more months of the year. Almost every surface of the camp received a fresh coat of paint this year. And plans are underway to build a new structure to be used for crafting and retreats.

God's Country Cooperative Parish: GCCP was able to purchase a building this year giving them greater flexibility year round as well as much needed work space. The former school had to have asbestos removed before any work could be done inside. Many people lent a hand and contributed financially to ensure this work could be done. In the future, this building will allow GCCP to serve more people and do more ministry around the 2500 square mile parish. We are thankful for Church & Community Worker Randy Hildebrandt and the vision he has for GCCP.

As we look forward to the future, a new conference, and becoming a new district, the people of the Marquette District are inspired for mission and ministry as we seek to create disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world!

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Susanne Hierholzer, Chair, District Executive Coordinating Council

SAGINAW BAY DISTRICT

2017 was a busy year for the Saginaw Bay District. We hosted a Loon's Baseball Family Fun Day in which 2,500 church folks and friends came out to celebrate the day! We had inflatables, games, grilled chicken wing competitions, hot dogs and so much fun! 55 of our people gathered to sing the National Anthem. We had prayer stations set up and offered Communion to go to everyone. Thank you to the dedicated church members that went out of their comfort zones and invited neighbors, unchurched and even strangers to attend the day. God blessed each one of us.

Amazing gRace Challenge was presented with the expectation that each church would go out into their community and get to know their neighbor. We had no idea of the impact it would make. Neighbors have been waiting for us, the church, to reach out to them. To pray for them, to ask them how we can be a better neighbor. It was a spiritual experience as we went out, just as Jesus asked us to do.

76 people traveled to Loveland, CO on the youth mission trip. It was exciting to witness so many young people return from the trip and receiving Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. Their lives will never be the same.

We respected the Retired Pastors this in as we celebrated Christmas with a luncheon especially for them. The DS asked each to pray without ceasing for the district and the people in it. It has been a powerful testimony to witness the faithful prayers and God moving through them.

All these blessings are happening in our newly created Disciple Zones. Dzones, small groups of churches, are where we are serious about making disciples in the Saginaw Bay District.

Lay Servant Ministry Team Report

Our team has been working hard to eventually reach a goal of having at least ten percent of every congregation take at least the Basic Course for Lay Servant Ministry. To reach this goal, we have begun to offer more classes throughout the year and have begun to offer classes at times which have not been customary before. We have also endeavored to have a member of the Lay Servant Ministry team attend each of our district's charge conferences to promote Lay Servant Ministry classes. These efforts have resulted in an increase in attendance in classes.

We are currently developing a continuous three-year cycle of courses where every course available to us in the Lay Servant ministry catalog will be offered at least once over a three-year period. By having this three-year schedule available we hope to help Lay Servants schedule the classes they need or desire to take to fulfill the call to ministry which they are seeking to respond to.

Our goal is to continue to expand the number of people we have working in Lay Servant Ministry which will result in better equipping our congregations to meet the needs of congregational ministry for the future as we seek to offer Christ.

Children's Ministry

In 2017, the children's ministry committee has been under evaluation and much change. The committee in itself had not been effective in previous years for several years. When trying to find members to be on the committee, it was discovered that:

- 1 – Volunteers are hard to find at the District level because they are having a hard time finding any at the local level.
- 2 – Without a clear vision or direction on what the committee was supposed to do, recruiting members was very difficult.

We learned that most churches would prefer district help within their own churches to build up children's ministry vs. planning & participating in district wide children's events.

The new vision for children's ministry is to assist local churches in planning, implementing and growing their children's ministry. In 2018, the focus will be on building individual ministries within the church, DZone projects including VBS and giving scholarships to churches to get children to camp.

In 2017, the children's ministry sponsored a movie night for "The Star", shown at the Midland NCG theatre and was sold out. 150 Saginaw Bay children and their families came together celebrating the birth of Jesus & enjoyed free popcorn. Children's Ministry sponsored two summer camp contests with scholarships as the award. Wisner and Aldersgate UMCs were each awarded one full scholarship for a child within their congregations. Six entrants to the essay contest were all awarded scholarships, with the winner receiving \$500 and each remaining entry \$100 towards camp.

Young Disciples Committee

The year began with Rogue Jesus, a spin-off on the sledding event that we have had for about eight years. We gathered to sled at Snow Snake and then moved to Harrison at the Gathering for an opportunity to worship, eat and fellowship together. We had 75 students and adults in attendance, our largest year! We partnered with Grand Traverse District for Spring Splash, a retreat at Great Wolf Lodge in Traverse City. About 30 students and adults were present from the district.

We had our first ever district youth mission trip. We took 59 students and 17 leaders from 14 different district churches to Loveland, Colorado with Group Mission Trips. The teens participated in various service opportunities from working on a farm to sorting food and clothes at a resource center for the homeless. Lots of memories and friendships were made. When we returned we had. We had mission trip reunion with 45 of the mission trip participants in Oscoda for a day of fun and fellowship along with the 2018 Mission Trip announcement, plans to take 100 students and adults to Pittsburgh, PA.

Training and Supporting Congregations (T.A.S.C.) provides training (methods) and opportunities, which are timely, relevant, innovative, out of the box, and immediately applicable. TASC is also TASC To Go. We produce, schedule and publicize training events for all persons in, or exploring leadership roles in their congregations. Churches select the date, and the training topic. They select from our menu of 17 topics. Each event day is a 3 hour fellowship, learning and interactive time. We added a standalone training session for Nominations and Lay Leadership.

Churches from Alpena to Poseyville took advantage of this new twist for our training sessions. Poseyville UMC had a need for a specific session and we were able to assist them. West Branch First and Caro churches had to move their training sessions into 2018 dates. We are working with D-zones to better schedule training sessions by geography in 2018.

Respectfully submitted,

Merry Henderson, Saginaw Bay DCOM Chair

CONFERENCE LEADERSHIP TEAMS

2017 was a year of unification for the Detroit and West Michigan Conference Leadership Teams. We met jointly throughout the year working with and for the Design team and the conferences. It was exciting to come together, listen to one another and learn from each other. We saw glimpses of how each conference has traditionally worked, came to understand what each conference valued most, and began a new path together. It has been exciting to envision new ideas together.

As the Conference Leadership Team is dissolved following the 2018 session of the annual conference, we are so appreciative of the all that our conference boards and agencies have done this past year. They have worked together as unified entities to implement the next steps to forge the Michigan Conference. The leadership and collaboration have brought us to this point in which we are ready to become one.

We offer words of appreciation to Ned Weller, for his leadership as the West Michigan Conference Leadership Team and for all he gave in his service and commitment to the Church. We also offer thanks to Jerry DeVine for his leadership as the Detroit Conference Director of Connectional Ministries.

We are excited for all God has in store for the Michigan Conference as we equip and connect through Christ Centered Mission and Ministry, Bold Effective Leaders and Vibrant Congregations.

Faithfully,
Rev. Benton Heisler, Director of Connectional Ministries
Rev. Amy Mayo-Moyle, Chair

DETROIT AND WEST MICHIGAN CONFERENCE HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE (Michigan Conference Human Resources Committee)

The Detroit Annual Conference and West Michigan Conference Personnel Committees continued working together as one during 2017. We jointly made every effort to evaluate the impact of staff changes on the Michigan Area. Due to the nature of our work that involves a wide variety of personnel/human resources issues our committee name has been changed. The new name is The Michigan Conference Human Resources (HR) Committee.

At the 2017 combined Detroit and West Michigan Annual Conference held in Traverse City, the proposed Michigan Conference Human Resources Policy that is published in the 2017 Conference Journal was adopted. Work on this policy began two years ago and will always be a work in progress as we strive to be in step with the current United Methodist Discipline, state of Michigan and federal laws.

During 2017, the committee developed job descriptions and interviewed candidates for positions in keeping with the plan of organization of the Michigan Conference. In addition, job performance appraisal guidelines were initiated and will be formalized in 2018 as well as an employee handbook. The committee reviewed budget projections for 2019, housing and parsonage policies, the transition plan and timeline, recommended compensation levels, and in partnership with Conference Communications are developing a social media use procedure.

As we approach becoming one conference, our staff members and district personnel have dealt with questions regarding their future employment and job descriptions. Everyone has demonstrated professional attitudes despite uncertain and changing scenarios. We are deeply grateful for the dedication and many gifts and graces that each person brings to strengthen the ministries of our conference and districts.

The HR Committee remains focused on continuing to staff the Michigan Conference in such a way as to help us all effectively Equip and Connect through Christ-Centered Mission and Ministry with Bold and Effective Leaders.

Respectfully submitted by Rev. Ellen Zienert and Rev. Jean Snyder Co-Chair

NEW CHURCH DEVELOPMENT

Following the direction and lead of the Michigan Area, the New Church Development Committees of Detroit Conference and West Michigan Conference became one. While funding remains separate according to the conferences, all work and decisions are unified. The combined Committee affirms the purpose statement:

The MI Area NCDC is launched to create and multiply new faith communities and disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

The NCD Committee is organized around sub-teams that care for the various responsibilities of the new church development work. Sub-teams include: Grant, Reach, Promotions, Diversity and Tracking Teams.

NCDC distributes grants for the various new faith community proposals, utilizing a variety of models. We continue to support the work of churches and new faith communities started in previous years, including Vietnamese and Hispanic congregations in the Detroit area; church adoptions in Bay City and Lansing/Pottersville; multi-site congregations from Friendship Church: Shelby Campus, Birmingham First Campus at Berkley, and Marquette Hope. New Worship Services were launched at Rochester St Paul's, Utica UM Churches, and Muskegon Central. Bishop Bard also appointed a pastor to start a new church in Traverse City. Smaller venue faith communities were started in pubs, cafés and restaurants to reach more people. DownRiver UMC, a 5-year-old Vital Merger new church start celebrated moving into a new permanent building.

A significant part of creating a multiplication DNA in our churches is accomplished by starting new ministries. New small groups are a good launch pad for creating this idea of multiplication. The NCDC offers micro grants of \$300 for each new small group started that intentionally reaches unchurched people.

The Reach Summit, held in Grand Rapids experienced the powerful preaching of Rev. Olu Brown, a new church start pastor from Atlanta. The overall purpose of the Reach Summit is “Equipping churches to reach more people.” Five Network Groups (Reach Leadership, Reach Systems, Reach Multiply, Reach Multi-ethnic Church, Reach Connecting Youth) were formed to encourage participants to spend monthly training sessions growing in their ability in reaching more people. Reach Summit- 2018, scheduled for Nov 2-3, will feature Dr. Elaine Heath, dean of Duke Divinity School, as the keynote speaker.

The 2016 General Conference has challenged us to make one million new disciples by the end of 2020. To reach that goal, the Connectional Table set a number of strategic goals. As these relate to the Michigan Conference in the area of Congregational Vibrancy, our challenge is to start 13 new churches using a variety of models, 130 new faith communities (new worship services or new venues for worship with attendance 50-100), and 1,300 new small groups. The New Church Development Committee will focus on reaching these goals through starting new places for new faces, developing lay leadership, and helping existing churches grow in effective ministry. The result will be new disciples.

Rev. Dirk Elliott, Director of Congregational Vibrancy
 Rev. Dr. Anthony R. Hood, Co-chair
 Rev. Matt Stoll, Co-chair

VITAL CHURCH INITIATIVE

Revitalization

For the past two years I have been the Director of Congregational Excellence overseeing the revitalization efforts in the Michigan Conference. I have worked closely with Naomi García and Dirk Elliott calling ourselves the Executive team of three. We have met monthly for the past four years in a collaborative effort to bring about the change needed to move congregations to health and vitality.

Five years ago we started this effort with a limited budget and an abundance of prayer and hope, knowing that God would do the rest. The main thrust of our work in revitalization continues to be the Vital Church Initiative now as (VCI), a “process” of renewal for growing healthy and fruitful congregations. A detailed report of these efforts can be found below.

Another area that has been fruitful in our area of ministry is resourcing the ¶213 A Discovery Process of Potential and Vitality. These congregational assessments have opened up options for churches that were literally out of options. Rather than closing their doors, this process has led to church adoptions, restarts, ministry plans, and yes sometimes closure with a legacy. We continue to expand this assessment process in many different and creative ways.

Last year we realized that we needed to expand our reach beyond VCI to fully live into our vision.

Vision: growing, fruitful, vibrant congregations, changing lives through Jesus Christ.

Mission: assisting congregations in directing people to actively follow Jesus Christ.

Throughout the last year I piloted regional visioning processes in the conference to lay the foundation on which to expand our groundwork. We are now assessing the results and hope to launch these new processes this fall. We are working to integrate key VCI characteristics into these new training opportunities.

Coaching	CHRIST-CENTERED	Accountability
Multiple Learning Sessions	Spiritual Formation	Cohort learning community

Some opportunities for extended learning could include Visioning and Goal Setting, Worship, Hospitality, Outreach, Family Systems, Transitions, Streamlining your Administrative Structure, Community Connections, Creating Social Media Strategy and VCI with multiple opportunities to implement a ministry plan. Each will include the important elements of coaching and accountability.

As you can see we are working hard to expand our reach in order for congregations to expand their reach for Christ. Our revitalization team has a faculty of over forty lay and clergy already trained and working in these vital areas. As we move to this next step we will not have to *recreate the wheel* or come up with the *next best thing*, these new processes will continue the integrated, holistic approach we have been building for the last six years. These processes will be an exciting addition as new districts are formed and our new conference becomes a reality.

Thank you for your support and prayers,

Rev. Gary Step
 Director of Congregational Excellence

Vital Church Initiative Michigan Conference

Foundations...Training...Statistics...

Assumptions and Accompanying Strategies

Healthy congregations grow.	Train & Deploy Facilitators of Continuous Learning Communities for laity & pastors together.
Leadership is everything.	Train & deploy coaches.
Adaptive change requires outside help.	Train & deploy consultation team.
Focus creates urgency.	Cascading accountability.
No quick fix.	Cultural shift of collaborative involvement for laity and pastor together over time.

Expectations of Participating Congregations and Pastors

Christ-centered. Fruitful. Excellent.
Accountable. Collaborative.

Criteria for Fruitfulness: Five Practices (see *FIVE PRACTICES OF FRUITFUL CONGREGATIONS*)

Radical Hospitality Passionate Worship Intentional Faith Development
Risk-Taking Mission & Service Extravagant Generosity.

Developing Core Competencies

- **Self-Reflection** – of individuals and ministry teams, leadership and entire congregations, the foundation of the trust dividend inherent to healthy change and growth.
- **Spiritual Foundation** – leadership rooted in, manifested as and tested by a personal relationship with God through Jesus Christ.
- **Change Leadership** – flexibility, adaptability, patience in and with ambiguous situations, responding positively (rather than reactively) to new demands and challenges, addressing resistance through clear communication, leading change through careful attention to the impact on people, understanding the difference between technical and adaptive change.
- **Communication** – encourages an active and open exchange of ideas, openly shares information, creates an inclusive and a safe environment.
- **Outreach** – focusing attention and resources beyond the church, understands the needs of the community, is active locally.
- **Evangelism** – reaching out to non-Christians, de-Christians, and others in a positive way, praying for those outside the church.

VCI FACULTY - VCI has a faculty of over forty lay and clergy serving as coaches, facilitators, consultants and mediators. Naomi García oversees the training and support in this area. She has developed a support system meeting virtually with support coaches monthly, and directive coaching quarterly. We also connect with consultants semi-annually. During these times together we offer continuing education, training, and natural feedback loops to evaluate our processes. Thank you Naomi!

Vital Church Statistical Update

Churches Completing: Phase 1 Learning 2gether: 147
 Phase 2 Self-study: 113
 Phase 3 Implementation: 93

77% of church moved on to Phase II

OUTPUT/OUTCOME (Measure) The difference or change to be accomplished

68%- there was significant identifiable movement towards Vitality

Critical factors: Strong pastoral and lay leadership, openness to adaptive change

11%- there was some identifiable movements towards Vitality

Mitigating factors: Average Pastoral and/or lay leadership, resistant to change

Most common cultural shifts: developed a shared vision, moving from an internal focus to an external focus

21%- There was no identifiable movements towards Vitality

Mitigating Factors: Poor pastoral and/or lay leadership, extremely high resistance to change, appointment change, poor coaching

Most common impedance: Entrenched cultures very resistant to change

INPUT	THOUGHTPUT	OUTPUT/OUTCOME (Measure)
Resources	Activities	The difference to be accomplished
Cabinet Commitment	-recruit, support, congregational vote	Creating a collaborative culture with a common language, aligned to a common vision, 2 directors on appointive cabinet, Strategic appointments
Executive Staff of five meeting quarterly (2DCM, 2 Directors, 1 Assoc.)	-meet, plan, vision, resource, accountability	Creating a team culture, common vision, aligned resources, investing in vitality of the local church
Staff- 1 Director, Assoc., Admin & budget	-Recruit churches and faculty, train, deploy, oversee, supply resources, hold accountable	Team work – high trust, collaboration
Faculty 72- lay and clergy (facilitators, coaches, consultants)	-coaching, Peer Mentoring, consultations, on-site workshops, hold pastors and leaders accountable	Faculty are trained in the best practices of growing churches and lived out in their local church context
Local Church (resources, time, leaders Three-year commitment)	-Nine sessions of learning together, completion of self-study, pastor engaging in peer mentoring, completing the prescriptions, workshops, planning, implementation, creation of teams, timelines, laity recruitment	Changing the culture through; inviting and inspiring worship, disciples engaged in mission and outreach, effective lay and clergy leadership, Small groups and strong children and youth ministry, radical hospitality, intentional faith development implemented, a new (common) language, aligned ministries and resources around mission and vision, implementing adaptive change (tool box)
		Measurable increases in key areas of health

CONFERENCE COUNCIL ON YOUTH MINISTRY (CCYM)

In 2016, CCYM members participated in a Spring Retreat, Annual Conference and THRIVE Youth Leadership Academy. Members also help conference calls and oversaw the distribution of Youth Service Fund money. In 2016, \$7,800 was given to 7 churches offering young people mission and service opportunities. In 2017 we will be repeating all of these activities and seeking to grow participation in THRIVE Youth Leadership Academy.

CONFERENCE COUNCIL OF YOUNG ADULT COMMUNITIES (CCYAC)

In 2016, CCYAC has been fairly inactive. Members of this group come together for Annual Conference but have not gathered otherwise. In 2017, we will be changing leadership and generating some activity around college aged young adults who have recently been active with CCYM.

2017 HISTORICAL UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

We started the year with eight (8) District and Conference officers of United Methodist Women attending the Leadership Development Days in Charlotte, NC (January 2017).

The 3rd Annual UNITED METHODIST WOMEN DAY OF GIVING to the Legacy Fund was on March 23, 2017. The Legacy Fund, is an initiative created to celebrate the 150 years of mission work of the United Methodist Women and to provide a financial foundation to future generations of women who work for the betterment of women, children and youth.

May 7, 2017, was the first Steering Committee Meeting of Detroit and West Michigan Conference United Methodist Women. The Steering Committee was organized to meet and work on the merger of the two Conferences in preparation of us becoming the United Methodist Women Michigan Conference, January 2019. Also, various Steering Committee Meeting dates were also scheduled from June 9, 2017 - November 3, 2017.

June 2, 2017, the Detroit and West Michigan Conference United Methodist Women celebrated with a garden party luncheon at the Michigan Area Annual Conference at Traverse City, MI. We had a total of over 130 people in attendance at the luncheon.

Mission u events for 2017 were: a One-day session, July 22nd at Erie United Methodist Church; a Mission u Sampler, August 17th at the Lake Huron Retreat Center (LHRC); Hands On Mission Experience (H.O.M.E.), August 17th in the Port Huron area; a two-day Mission u by the Lake at LHRC, August 18th-19th, (with a concurrent children's study at no charge); and, Mission u of the North October 16th-17th, at Gaylord UMC. Mission u topics were; **Spiritual Growth:** Living

As A Covenant Community; a second year of the **Issue Study**: Climate Justice; the **Geographic Study**: Missionary Conferences of the United Methodist Church in the United States; **Children's Study**: Joined and Held Together, A Children's Study on the Missionary Conferences; **Youth Study**: In Mission Together – A Youth Study on Missionary Conferences. Our study leaders were Nichea VerVeer Guy, Charissa Shawcross, and Rev. Mary McInnes. The missionaries were Stephen and Gail Quigg, from the United Methodist Global Ministries; Isaac Dunn, Global Mission Fellow of the United Methodist General Board of the Global Ministries and caseworker at the NOAH project; and Revs. Ut To and Karen Vo To, United Methodist Global Ministries in Vietnam. Rev. Faith Fowler also spent time talking to participants about the "Tiny Homes" in the Detroit area.

September and October were the months that the six (6) Districts of the United Methodist Women Detroit Conference hold their Annual Celebrations and Business Meetings. The meetings began on September 30th and ended on October 14th. We had conference officers attending the West Michigan Conference Leadership Training and Annual Celebration and Business Meeting at Mt. Pleasant UMC in Mt. Pleasant, October 20 - 21, 2017. We ended the month with the United Methodist Women Detroit Conference's Leadership Training and Annual Celebration and Business Meeting at the Brighton: First UMC in Brighton. The Leadership Training sessions were, October 27, 2017. Prior to the Training sessions, Gregory Timmons gave an update on the Flint Water Crisis.

The Annual Celebration and Business Meeting was the next day, October 28, 2017. The Keynote Speaker was Rev. Marva Pope, senior pastor at People's UMC in Detroit. The Annual Celebration topic was "Harvest Your Spiritual Gifts – Prayer". Our ingathering project was toilet paper and was given to Love, INC (Love in the Name of Christ) in Brighton, MI. The year ended with a second session of the United Methodist Women Leadership Development Days in St. Louis, MO (November 10-12, 2017). There were eleven (11) UMW District and Conference officers in attendance at the training. The training sessions are presented and partially funded by the National Office of United Methodist Women. The Detroit and West Michigan UMW Conferences continued their ongoing campaign to repair the "United Methodist Community House (UMCH)" called the "Special Maintenance Fund Program". As of the end of 2016, the program completed repairs and maintenance projects that totaled \$46,765.32. Of that amount, the Detroit Conference donated a total of \$12,052.62.

The Detroit Conference UMW 2017 total remittance to United Methodist Women, Inc. was 83% (\$186,988.34) to pledge and is for mission work nationally and globally.

The UMW Detroit Conference continues to promote the 2018 Assembly, May 18-20, 2018, Columbus, Ohio. The theme for the Assembly is, "**The Power of Bold**".

Marchelle "Micki" Phelps, President

STANDING RULES COMMITTEE

The Committee on Standing Rules believes it assists conference agencies to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world by ordering the life of the annual conference for effective ministry through its continued work of perfecting the conference rules and structure.

The committee met in Joint Session with WMC Rules of Order committee twice during the past year, on October 18th, 2017 and on March 21st, 2018. The following actions were taken as a result:

1. Reviewed the new Rules of Order and approved several changes to bring forth to the 2018 Annual Conference Session.
2. Reviewed the new Plan of Organization and made suggestions for change to the New Conference Design Team, who will present at Annual Conference.
3. Discussed the role and responsibilities of the new Rules of Order Committee at the 2018 Annual Conference in concert with Bishop Bard.
4. Addressed various questions raised by other agencies on interpretations of the Rules and Structure.

We also confirmed for Nominations our recommendations for the new Michigan Conference Rules of Order committee.

We thank those that have served on the committee and are moving on to other ministry opportunities in 2018-19, including Dick Kopple (9 years), Douglas McMunn (4 years), Andy Wayne (4 years), and Shannon Reynolds (2 years). Sue Buxton, Diane Brown, Keith Radak, Brenda Foltz, and myself will be continuing our service on the new Michigan Conference Rules of Order committee.

We look forward to being of service to you, the members of the Annual Conference, in our session this Spring in Traverse City.

Grace and Peace!

Todd L. Price, Chair

BOARD OF ORDAINED MINISTRY

It has been a year of firsts and lasts, as we conducted our clergy session together with West Michigan for the first time in June of 2017 and will meet for the last interview week ever for the Detroit Annual Conference in March of 2018. This past year has also been a time of hammering out new policies and procedures for the upcoming Michigan Board of Ordained Ministry that will begin functioning July 1, 2018. It has been an honor to work with our West Michigan counterparts in the Michigan Board of Ordained Ministry Task Force that has been meeting for a year and a half. Part of that work involved doing cross-over visits to each other's interview weeks to experience how things are done on the other side of the state. Yes, we do have different ways of processing candidates, but we accomplish the same thing—credentialing clergy leaders for ordained and licensed ministry in the Michigan Area. Instead of arguing about which way was better, we set out to find best practices across our denomination and choose a new way to operate.

One of the changes that is coming is to split candidate interviews into two weeks: full member interviews in November and provisional member interviews in March, to manage our numbers in a meaningful way. Candidates will now meet with one medium sized group of interviewers instead of multiple small groups and a half board. In addition, two teams will double-up for a portion of the interview so that more board members experience each candidate. We will also be adding a new Continuing Formation Committee on the Board that will be responsible for the new 8 Year Assessments, in conjunction with the Cabinet. We look forward to supporting and assisting clergy throughout their ministry careers to be stronger, healthier, and more effective in the years to come. We are excited about all of the possibilities ahead with a new office of Clergy Excellence to help make that happen!

I would like to thank all members of the Detroit Conference Board of Ordained Ministry, past and present, for their faithful and sincere work on behalf of our Church. Each of you has been an integral part of the commitment to integrity and the wonderful comradery that has been shared through the years. I also would like to express my appreciation for the Task Force that has spent so many hours planning for the future. I am very grateful to Sherri Swanson, Chair of the West Michigan Board of Ordained Ministry, for her tireless work as we have endeavored to make a new Board. It has been a gift to be able to partner with you in this process. Deep appreciation goes to Nancy Arnold, who has been our extraordinary administrative assistant for over ten years, and who has guided and kept me on track as chair.

Questions abound for our denomination as we look ahead into 2019. We continue to grapple with the question of how best to serve as the Board of Ordained Ministry in this place at this time. We ask for your prayers for all our candidates, for the laity and clergy who serve as board volunteers, for the new Board processes as they begin, and for our Church as we seek to participate in the *missio Dei* where we are.

In Christ,
Laura Speiran, Chair

CONFERENCE BOARD OF PENSION AND HEALTH BENEFITS, (CBOPHB)

Pension Apportionments & Health Care

This will be the final historical report for Detroit Annual Conference benefits as we prepare to begin a new history in 2019 as the Michigan Conference. To assist our focus toward what will be instead of what has been, this year's report will not be the usual 14 pages long. It will only be 11 pages.

Regarding 2017 Pension Apportionments: Total pension apportionments were received at an overall rate of 98.2%. On behalf of the CBOPHB, thank you to all for your continued faithfulness in this ministry.

Some things do not change: As required, permanent records of outstanding balances for both pension apportionments and health insurance balances are kept on file by the CBOPHB with the intention to recover the balances. The following is the list of balances on record as of February 28, 2018, which will migrate to the new conference. If left unaddressed, these balances must become part of a local church's financial plan when a local church considers building expansion, merger, or closure. Please contact the Director of Conference Benefits & HR Services, Rev. Donald Emmert, for further details or to discuss payment options for prior year pension and health insurance balances.

Outstanding Pension Balances				
	Church Name	2017	2016-2000	Total
Ann Arbor				
1015	AA Korean	0	94,806	94,806
1018	London	0	1,294	1,294
1024	Wellsville	0	1,640	1,640
1032	Deerfield	550	2,129	2,729
1041	Hartland	0	2,450	2,450
1059	Morenci	0	10,052	10,052
1071	Samaria Grace	1,953	2,000	3,953
1075	Springville	1,155	0	1,155
1080	Whitmore Lk Wesley	830	5,637	6,467
1082	Ypsilanti Lincoln Cmnty	0	1,330	1,330
1083	Ypsilanti St Matthews	267	0	267
	District Total	4,840	122,543	127,383
Detroit Renaissance				
9018	Det Cass Community	0	45,862	45,862
9019	Detroit Central	0	2,208	2,208
9021	Detroit Conant Ave	0	18,423	18,423
9024	Detroit Mt Hope	176	32,519	32,695
9029	Detroit St Pauls	1,490	29,200	30,690
9042	Harper Woods Redeemer	0	565	565
9046	Madison Heights	0	3,742	3,742
9515	Dearborn Hts Stephens	922	1,244	2,166
9517	Redford Aldersgate	1,650	691	2,341
9518	Detroit Calvary	1,595	26,982	28,577
9519	Det Centro Familiar Cristiano	802	2,173	2,975
9522	Det Ford Memorial	450	3,644	4,094
9525	New Beginnings	1,596	906	2,502
9526	Detroit Peoples	0	36,853	36,853
9530	Det St Timothy	0	11,678	11,678
9532	Det Second Grace	0	5,698	5,698
9533	Det Trinity Faith	0	1,788	1,788

9543	Garden City First	0	3,876	3,876
9550	Melvindale New Hope	1,070	1,487	2,557
9554	Southfield Hope	4,875	0	4,875
9561	Westland St James	1,150	24,118	25,268
9564	Det Resurrection	2,430	10,063	12,493
	District Total	18,206	263,720	281,926
Crossroads				
4001	Birch Run	0	346	346
4005	Burton Christ	0	12,297	12,297
4010	Corunna	0	20,899	20,899
4024	Durand	427	0	427
4028	Vernon	570	4,435	5,005
4039	Flint Eastwood	1,970	16,027	17,997
4040	Flint Faith	840	35,025	35,865
4042	Flint Charity	0	33,003	33,003
4055	Argentine	0	3,915	3,915
4064	Pittsburg	0	8,120	8,120
4065	Bennington	0	535	535
4067	Mt Morris First	0	7,046	7,046
4072	Carland	0	2,838	2,838
4452	Waterford Four Towns	0	15,207	15,207
4455	Pontiac St John	0	1,400	1,400
	District Total	4,769	161,093	165,862
Marquette				
5004	Crystal Falls Christ	1,456	2,297	3,753
5018	Ironwood Wesley	326	0	326
5021	Painesdale Albert Paine	0	770	770
5032	Negaunee Mitchell	572	0	572
5039	Hulbert	100	0	100
5047	Republic	0	462	462
5048	Michigamme Woodland	0	2,155	2,155
5051	Algonquin	0	532	532
	District Total	1,882	6,788	8,670
Blue Water				

6004	Ruby	0	1,365	1,365
6029	Harbor Beach	0	1,756	1,756
6033	Imlay City	2,200	10,491	12,691
6042	Lakeville	0	1,382	1,382
6066	Buel	0	1,842	1,842
6067	Melvin	0	635	635
6072	Pinnebog	0	2,658	2,658
6075	Washington Ave	0	3,893	3,893
6079	Richmond First	0	6,342	6,342
6084	St Clair First	0	3,090	3,090
6096	Shelby Twp New Hope	0	2,949	2,949
6097	Mt Vernon	234	0	234
6101	Yale	0	1,480	1,480
	District Total	2,434	37,883	40,317
Saginaw Bay				
7081	Saginaw New Heart	0	490	490
7083	Standish Community	0	10,360	10,360
	District Total	0	10,850	10,850
Total Pension Outstanding		32,131	602,877	635,008

OUTSTANDING HEALTH INSURANCE PREMIUMS					
	Church	Pastor	Current Appoint-ments	Previous Appoint-ments	Total
1059	Morenci	Galloway	6,508	0	6,508
6036	Jeddo	Wojewski	11,972	0	11,972
4453	Pontiac: Grace & Peace	Mobley	7,264	0	7,264
9519	Centro Familiar	Gandarilla	7,264	0	7,264
9526	Detroit Peoples	Pope	5,520	0	5,520
9530	Detroit St Timothy	Grimes	10,557	0	10,557
9550	Melvindale New Hope	Dunn	9,579	0	9,579
7044	Harrisville	Vollmer	10,830	0	10,830

1023	Britton Grace	Burstall	0	8,769	8,769
1059	Morenci	Burstall	0	8,066	8,066
4067	Mt Morris	Vincent	0	45,821	45,821
6070	Port Austin	Freeland	0	4,110	4,110
7083	Standish Community	Wojewski	0	6,285	6,285
9029	Detroit St Paul	Williams, H	0	20,380	20,380
9515	Dearborn Hts Stephen	Won	0	1,517	1,517
9526	Detroit Peoples	Williams, G	0	38,196	38,196
Total Premiums Outstanding			59,915	133,144	193,059

View to the future: Beginning in 2019, churches will recognize the pension apportionment under the new name of Benefits Ministry Shares. Benefits Ministry Shares will be billed monthly to every local church to fund current conference pension liabilities as well as all ministries of the conference benefits office. Instead of a formula and grade figure, the Benefit Ministry Shares amount for each church will be based on a fixed percentage (determined on an annual basis) of the church's clergy compensation.

Regarding health care: The CBOPHB reaffirms its commitment to providing a comprehensive, sustainable group health care plan while constantly assessing the financial realities for all involved parties. 2018 marked the fifth year in a row without an increase in health insurance premiums.

The active and retiree group health care plan designs for the Michigan Conference are currently being finalized and will become effective January 1, 2019. Details will be presented in the Summer and Fall of 2018 as they become available. The current active group health care plan printed below will remain in effect through 2018.

Per 2017 Annual Conference action, the eligibility, funding, and termination provisions of the retiree group health care plan will remain in effect for all members of the former Detroit Conference who are retired or who are eligible to retire by January 1, 2024. Members who are not eligible to retire by January 1, 2024 will follow the provisions of the new retiree group health care plan of the Michigan Conference once it is established.

Active Group Health Care Plan

Enrollment/Effective Date of Coverage: Health Care eligibility begins the first day of a new appointment/hire, change in appointment/employment status, or a life-qualifying event (i.e. loss of other health coverage), provided all required submissions, underwriting, and payments have been timely made. All available benefits are at all times subject to and may be limited, denied, or terminated based on applicable underwriting provisions, contract terms, eligibility rules, and premium payment requirements. It is the responsibility of the subscriber to submit enrollment forms in a timely manner. If the enrollment process is not completed within 30 days of eligibility, the subscriber must wait until the next open enrollment period.

Eligible Subscribers: Active Plan eligible classes include the following:

(Full-time for health coverage eligibility is defined as working at least 30 hours per week)

1. Full-time Clergy (Ordained Ministers and Local Pastors) under Episcopal appointment with the Detroit Annual Conference as the responsible agency for providing benefits.
2. Full-time Lay Employees of the Detroit Annual Conference and its approved, related agencies.
3. Full-time Lay Employees of a local church (including District Superintendent Assignments) until the employee turns age 65 provided the local church lay employee policy offers health care to all eligible full-time lay employees. All conference eligibility requirements must be observed. The local church is the responsible agency for all lay employee health insurance premiums. Premium-sharing schedules may be determined by local church employee policies.
4. Clergy and Conference/Related Agency Lay Employees on Disability Leave, provided the subscriber was enrolled in the Detroit Conference Group Active Health Care Plan at the time they were granted disability leave.
 - a. The subscriber must enroll in Medicare Part A and Part B at the date of first eligibility.
 - b. The subscriber is responsible for submitting a copy of the subscriber's Medicare card to the Conference Benefits Officer at the time of Medicare enrollment to assure the proper coordination of benefits.
5. Dependents of deceased Clergy and Conference/Related Agency Lay Employee subscribers provided the dependents were enrolled in the group active health care plan at the time of the subscriber's death.
 - a. Dependents of a retired subscriber will continue health coverage under the same eligibility and funding provisions as the subscriber.
 - b. A surviving spouse that remarries will continue to receive the health care benefit. However, the new spouse is not eligible for coverage.

6. Enrolled dependents of deceased Local Church employee subscribers as allowable by the health care plan if continued coverage is a provision of the local church employee policy, and if the local church maintains responsibility for the health insurance premiums.

Eligible Dependents:

1. Spouse.
2. Children and Legal Dependents under age 26.
3. Qualifying Adult Children with disabilities. (Per insurance regulations, Adult Children with disabilities may not continue on the conference plan after the subscriber is deceased.)

Changes in Eligibility: All changes in appointment, employee, or family status that affect eligibility in health coverage must be submitted within 30 days of the date the change occurs, otherwise loss, lapses, or gaps in coverage may occur. Subscribers are responsible for providing family status changes (including marriages, births, adoptions, legal guardianships) in writing to the Conference Benefits Officer. A delay in notification could mean a delay or denial of coverage until the next open enrollment period.

Working Aged 65: Active Clergy under eligible Detroit Conference Appointment and Conference Lay Employees in Conference/Related Agency employment retain eligibility status in the conference active group health care plan.

1. The conference active group plan continues to be the subscriber's primary coverage.
2. Subscribers and dependents must enroll in Medicare Part A at the time they turn age 65, but are not required to enroll in Medicare Part B until the time of the subscriber's retirement.
3. The subscriber is responsible for submitting a copy of the subscriber/dependent Medicare card to the Conference Benefits Officer at the time of Medicare enrollment to assure the proper coordination of benefits.

Funding of Active Health Care Policies:

1. Active Clergy and Conference/Related Agency Employees: Health insurance premiums are shared by the salary-paying unit (Detroit Conference, Conference Related Agency, or Local Church) and the subscriber according to the contribution schedule established by Detroit Annual Conference action.
2. Disabled Clergy and Conference/Related Agency Employees: Health insurance premiums are paid by the Detroit Annual Conference to the extent established by Detroit Annual Conference action.
3. Dependents of deceased Clergy and Conference/Related Agency Lay Employee subscribers: Health insurance premiums are paid by the Detroit Annual Conference to the extent established by Detroit Annual Conference action.

Termination:

1. A subscriber may voluntarily terminate a subscriber's health insurance policy at any time by submitting a request in writing to the Conference Benefits Officer.
2. Health insurance policies are terminated the date of a subscriber's termination from an eligible Clergy Appointment or Conference/Related Agency employment.
 - a. Coverage for terminated employees may be extended up to three months as a severance package provision.
 - b. Under special provisions of the Conference Board of Pension & Health Benefits, a policy will be extended for up to one year for a clergyperson subsequently appointed to an eligible leave of absence status.
3. Health Insurance policies for a local church employee are terminated effective:
 - a. The termination date of local church employment. Coverage may be extended up to three months as a severance package provision.
 - b. The first of the month in which the subscriber turns age 65. Existing policies for working aged 65 local church employees as of December 31, 2013 are exempt from this provision.
4. Health Insurance policies will be terminated for non-payment of premiums according to the following schedule:
 - a. Health insurance premium payments are due the fifteenth of every month for the current month's coverage.
 - b. A delinquency notice is issued when an account is two months in arrears.
 - c. A second delinquency notice is issued at three months in arrears.
 - d. A third delinquency and pending termination notice is issued at four months in arrears.
 - e. Policy will be terminated at six months in arrears.
 - i. Policy may be reinstated within 30 days of termination if the outstanding balance has been remitted in full.
 - ii. In a delinquency situation involving a clergyperson appointed to a local church, a repayment plan must be submitted to and approved by the Executive Committee of The Board of Pension & Health Benefits to extend coverage past the six month period.
5. COBRA coverage is not offered through the Detroit Annual Conference.

Waiver of Coverage:

1. Eligible Clergy and Conference/Related Agency Lay Employees that waive conference health care coverage must have a Waiver of Coverage form on file in the Detroit Conference Benefits Office.
2. Persons waiving coverage have opportunity to enroll themselves and eligible dependents in the conference health care plan annually during open enrollment or at the time of a life-qualifying event.

Retiree Group Health Care Plan

Introduction:

This section describes the provisions and requirements of the Detroit Annual Conference group retiree health care plan. All available benefits are at all times subject to and may be limited, denied, or terminated based on applicable underwriting provisions, contract terms, eligibility rules, and premium payment requirements. All required submissions, underwriting, and payments must be timely made. It is the subscriber's responsibility to understand the specific rules relating to eligibility for coverage in retirement prior to the subscriber's retirement date. Questions may be directed to the Conference Benefits Officer or conveyed in writing to the Board of Pension & Health Benefits. Do not rely on verbal responses to general questions raised in informational meetings or provided by representatives other than the Board of Pension & Health Benefits.

It is crucial that clergy who have served appointments during their career in Extension Ministries or another Annual Conference are knowledgeable regarding years of service credit, coverage, and cost sharing in order to effectively plan for retirement.

Definition of Terms:

1. **Years of Service Credit for Health Benefits in Retirement:** Years of Service in Eligible Detroit Conference Episcopal Appointments used to calculate eligibility and funding levels for health benefits in retirement.
2. **Eligible Detroit Conference Episcopal Appointment:** An Episcopal appointment is defined when the Detroit Annual Conference is the responsible agency for the clergyperson's benefits.
 - a. Some Extension Ministry Appointments will be eligible for credit toward health benefits in retirement. Others will not, depending on the agency responsible for the clergyperson's benefits.
 - b. Appointments to other conferences/agencies while maintaining membership in the Detroit Annual Conference are not eligible for credit toward health benefits in retirement.
 - c. **Reciprocal Agreement with West Michigan Conference**
 - i. A Detroit Conference clergy member will receive credit toward health benefits in retirement for Eligible Episcopal appointments in the West Michigan Conference.
 - ii. A West Michigan Conference Eligible Episcopal Appointment is defined when the West Michigan Conference is the responsible agency for the clergyperson's benefits.
 - iii. A Detroit Conference clergy member serving a West Michigan Conference appointment must serve a Detroit Conference Eligible Episcopal Appointment and be enrolled in the Detroit Conference Active Group Health Care Plan immediately preceding retirement in order to be eligible for retiree health benefits. (reference: *Eligible Subscribers* 1.b. below)
3. **Mandatory Retirement:** Defined as retirement on July 1 after having attained age 72.
4. **Full Retirement:** Defined as retirement at age 65 or with 40 years of service under appointment as an ordained minister or local pastor. The years of service for retirement may or may not be the same years of service used to calculate health benefit credit depending on the type of appointments served.
5. **Early Retirement:** Defined as retirement at age 62 or with 30 years of service under appointment as an ordained minister or local pastor. The years of service for retirement may or may not be the same years of service used to calculate health benefit credit depending on the type of appointments served.
6. **20 Year Rule:** Defined as retirement under age 62 with 20 years of service under appointment as an ordained minister or local pastor. The years of service for retirement may or may not be the same years of service used to calculate health benefit credit depending on the type of appointments served.

Medicare Enrollment/Coordination of Benefits:

The retiree medical health care plan is a supplemental plan to Medicare for all eligible subscribers age 65 and over.

1. In retirement, the subscriber and dependents must enroll in Medicare Part A and Part B effective the date of first eligibility.
2. The subscriber is responsible for submitting a copy of the subscriber/dependent Medicare cards to the Conference Benefits Officer at the time of Medicare enrollment to assure the proper coordination of benefits.

Eligible Subscribers:

1. **Retired Clergy (Ordained Ministers and Local Pastors):**
 - a. Subscriber must be a Clergy Member of the Detroit Annual Conference at the date of retirement.
 - b. Subscriber must be enrolled in the Detroit Conference Active Group Health Care Plan at the time of their retirement. For clergy not participating in the conference active group health care plan, in most situations the final opportunity for a clergy and/or dependents to enroll will be during the Open Enrollment Period prior to the subscriber's retirement date. Annual Open Enrollment is in December for a January effective enrollment date.
 - c. Subscriber must have served under Eligible Detroit Conference Episcopal appointments for the ten years immediately preceding retirement.
2. **Retired Conference/Related Agency Lay Employees:**
 - a. Subscriber must be enrolled in the Detroit Conference Group Active Health Care Plan at the time of their retirement. For employees not participating in the conference active group health care plan, in most situations the final opportunity for an employee and/or dependents to enroll will be during the Open Enrollment Period prior to the subscriber's retirement date. Annual Open Enrollment is in December for a January effective enrollment date.
 - b. Subscriber must have been employed by the Detroit Conference/Related Agency for the ten years immediately preceding retirement.
3. **Dependents of deceased Retired Clergy and Conference/Related Agency Lay Employee Detroit Conference group retiree health care plan subscribers** provided the dependents were enrolled in the group retiree health care plan at the time of the subscriber's death.
 - a. Dependents of a retired subscriber will continue health coverage under the same eligibility and funding provisions as the subscriber.

- b. A surviving spouse that remarries will continue to receive the health care benefit. However, the new spouse is not eligible for coverage.
- 4. Retired Local Church Lay Employees are not eligible to enroll in the Detroit Conference Group Retiree Health Care Plan. Existing retiree policies in this category as of December 31, 2013 are exempt from this provision.

Eligible Dependents: Eligible dependents are determined as of the date of the subscriber's retirement. All dependents must be enrolled on the subscriber's group active health care policy at the time of subscriber's retirement date in order to be considered for coverage eligibility. These include:

- 1. Spouse.
- 2. Children and Legal Dependents under age 26.
- 3. Qualifying Adult Children with disabilities. (Per insurance regulations, Adult Children with disabilities may not continue on the conference plan after the subscriber is deceased.)

New dependents through marriage or other family additions subsequent to the subscriber's date of retirement are not eligible.

Funding of Retiree Health Insurance Policies:

- 1. Clergy that received their first Detroit Conference Appointment prior to 2007:
 - a. Retiring under Mandatory, Full, or Early Retirement
 - i. The Detroit Annual Conference will pay 4% per year of credited service in an Eligible Detroit Conference Episcopal Appointment toward the retiree's health insurance premium (including eligible dependents)
 - ii. If the subscriber has less than 25 years of credited service, the subscriber will be billed monthly for the balance of the health insurance premium.
 - b. Retiring under the 20 Year Rule
 - i. The subscriber may retain coverage through the Detroit Conference Health Care Plan if they meet eligibility requirements as applicable from time to time.
 - ii. The subscriber is responsible for the entire insurance premium until age 65. At age 65, the Detroit Conference will pay a portion of the health insurance premium according to the funding provisions for mandatory, full, or early retirement.
 - iii. If the subscriber terminates their policy prior to age 65, they cannot re-enroll at a future date.
- 2. Conference/Related Agency Lay Employees hired prior to 2007
 - c. The Detroit Annual Conference will pay 4% per year of employment toward the subscriber's health insurance premium (including eligible dependents).
 - d. If the subscriber has less than 25 years of employment, the subscriber will be billed monthly for the balance of the health insurance premium.
- 3. Clergy that received their first Detroit Conference Appointment in or subsequent to 2007:
 - a. Retiring under Mandatory, Full, or Early Retirement
 - i. The Detroit Annual Conference will pay 3% per year of credited service in an Eligible Detroit Conference Episcopal Appointment toward the subscriber's health insurance premium (including eligible dependents).
 - ii. The maximum payment by the Detroit Annual Conference is 90%.
 - iii. The subscriber will be billed monthly for the balance of the health insurance premium.
 - b. Retiring under the 20 Year Rule
 - i. The subscriber may retain coverage through the Detroit Conference Health Care Plan if they meet eligibility requirements as applicable from time to time.
 - ii. The subscriber is responsible for the entire insurance premium until age 65. At age 65, the Detroit Conference will pay a portion of the health insurance premium according to the funding provisions for mandatory, full, or early retirement.
 - iii. If the subscriber terminates their policy prior to age 65, they cannot re-enroll at a future date
- 4. Conference/Related Agency Lay Employees hired in or subsequent to 2007:
 - a. The Detroit Annual Conference will pay 3% per year of employment toward the subscriber's health insurance premium (including eligible dependents).
 - b. The maximum payment by the Detroit Annual Conference is 90%.
 - c. The subscriber will be billed monthly for the balance of the health insurance premium.

Termination:

- 1. A subscriber may terminate their health insurance policy during retirement at any time. However, the termination is non-revocable and a subscriber cannot re-enroll at a future date.
- 2. The health insurance policy of a retired ordained minister whose clergy membership is terminated with the Detroit Conference for any reason will be terminated the effective date of the termination of the subscriber's clergy membership. Existing retiree policies in this category as of December 31, 2013 are exempt from this provision. However, Detroit Conference funding for all such policies will cease December 31, 2013, and the subscriber will become responsible for all premiums.
- 3. Health insurance policies will be terminated for non-payment of premiums according to the following schedule:
 - a. Health insurance premium payments are due the fifteenth of every month for the current month's coverage.
 - b. A delinquency notice is issued at two months in arrears.
 - c. A second delinquency notice is issued at three months in arrears.
 - d. A third delinquency and pending termination notice is issued at four months in arrears.
 - e. Policy will be terminated at six months in arrears.
 - i. Policy may be reinstated within 30 days of termination if the outstanding balance has been remitted in full.
 - ii. Since termination of a retiree policy is permanent following the 30 day window for reinstatement, subscribers in a delinquency situation are strongly encouraged to initiate communication with the Executive Committee

of The Board of Pension & Health Benefits to negotiate a realistic repayment schedule prior to the date of termination.

In the event any of the above provisions need to be interpreted, the Committee on Health Benefits is authorized to make any needed interpretation which will be considered final unless appealed to the full Detroit Conference Board of Pension & Health Benefits, which will have the final authority to decide any issue. In the event of any dispute or disagreement by a participant, the Committee on Health Benefits is authorized to negotiate and settle the matter subject to the terms and conditions of the underwriter of the coverage and review by the Board of Pension & Health Benefits.

A Transitional Word: The Gospels record numerous accounts of Jesus calling his disciples unto himself and then sending them out in ministry to others. A multitude of disciples over many, many years have served faithfully as members of the Board of Pension & Health Benefits. Together under the vision of the annual conference, they have helped administer a valuable ministry of caring to those inside our annual conference and into the world. For every life in every generation, we are grateful. And with every step, God's Spirit has led with a Divine wisdom that now enables us to bring this area of ministry into our new conference in a position of great strength. Thanks be to God.

Presented by The Detroit Conference Board of Pension & Health Benefits
Mr. Fred Gray, President
Rev. Donald J. Emmert, Director

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The following is a review of the activity of the board of trustees since the 2017 Corporate Session.

In September the leadership of the Detroit Board met with the leadership of the West Michigan Board to review and respond to requests from the Design Team. This information concerned budgets for the coming years, meeting dates, and the purpose of the board of trustees.

In October we held a joint meeting with the West Michigan Board of Trustees. This was a risk management review with Church Mutual Insurance Company. Following the review the Detroit board reaffirmed its officers.

In January, following a weather delay, the two boards met together with each board sharing their business with the other board.

We presently have the following meetings scheduled between the two trustee boards: April 9, 2018 and July 16, 2018. We will have a meeting in the fall with Church Mutual Insurance Company for the annual risk management review with the date being set by the insurance company.

The following are church property issues that have come before the Board and how they stand at the current time.

Bluewater Lakeville UMC has been sold

Bluewater Bethel UMC has been sold

Bluewater Akron UMC has been sold

Bluewater Unionville UMC: We received clear title in January

Bluewater Ruby UMC: Currently unresolved

Crossroads Lincoln Park UMC is closed. We are awaiting decisions from the Crossroads District about this property.

Crossroads Eastwood UMC: Currently seeking to resolve property issues before moving forward.

Inspections of our district parsonages have been ongoing. We seek to work with the residents to resolve any issues.

Rev. Brent L. Webster, Chair

BOARD OF JUSTICE, ADVOCACY AND EQUITY HISTORICAL REPORT *Under Construction. Pardon our Dust. Work Zone...*

Members of the Board of Justice, Advocacy and Equity (BJAE) advocate the Gospel of Jesus Christ in the church and world. We focus on issues of peace and justice, race and inclusion in the Michigan area, as well as around the globe. Through our work we seek to reflect the compassion of Christ for all humanity and for God's gift of life and creation. We are a combination of the Detroit Conference Board of Justice, Advocacy, and Equity, and the West Michigan Board of

Church and Society. Our focus areas are: Church and Society; the Commission on Religion and Race; the Commission on the Status and Role of Women; and Disability Concerns.

This past year continued to be one of building a solid working relationship between us into one board. We were joined this year by the addition of our colleagues from the Commission on Religion and Race. Together, we are united in our desire to construct a working Michigan Area board as approved by the 2017 Annual Conference. This year has been one of discernment for all of us as we center in on defining our responsibilities, creating a viable organization, honoring our four areas of concern, and operating as a statewide entity.

Our officers are:

Co-Chairpersons: Rev. George Covintree, Rev. Ameer Paparella Staff Liaison: Rev. Paul Perez
 Church and Society: Rev. Eric Stone COSROW: Rev. Carol Bouse
 Disability Concerns Liaison: OPEN Peace w/Justice Coordinator: George Jonte-Crane
 Religion and Race: Tina Campbell UMW representative (West Michigan) Randi Clawson
 General Board of Church and Society (GBCS): Rev. Paul Perez

We serve as a source of funding for projects throughout the conference, being responsible for the local distribution of the Conference's Peace With Justice offering, the United Methodist Global AIDS Fund, and other designated funds.

In the past year we helped fund:

- We the People's Detroit Water Shut Off Research Project
- The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of the Michigan Area of the United Methodist Church
- Sponsorship of the documentary film, Warrior Lawyer
- Michigan United's Immigrant and Family Defense Fund
- The Michigan Area's *Keep Making Peace* conference (this year's theme was Climate Change)
- attendance at the COSROW event in Denver, Colorado
- Justice for Our Neighbors (JFON)
- Circles: Grand Rapids, a part of the Grand Rapids Metro Ministry
- Ferndale First UMC, necessary preparations to become a "sanctuary" church

We were pleased to hold a combined Social Justice dinner at Annual Conference with both the West Michigan Board of Church and Society and the Michigan Federation of Social Action (MFSA). Susan Burton, Director of Women's and Children's Advocacy at the General Board of Church and Society was our featured speaker. The Harold Stanton Peace with Justice Award for 2016 was presented to Peter Plum, for his outstanding leadership as the coordinator of the Flint Water Distribution Project. In 2017 the Harold Stanton Peace and Justice Award was presented to the Rev. Carl Gladstone for his leadership of the Motown Mission in Detroit. The Lifetime Peacemaker award (West Michigan) was presented to the Rev. Paul Perez for his example and leadership as Director of Mission and Justice Engagement.

It has been a busy year. Much work awaits us. We are united in our resolve, working for a world that reflects God's love and grace, as together we 'speak up for the people who have no voice, for the rights of all the down-and-outers.' (Prov. 31:9, The Message)

Respectfully submitted, The Rev. George Covintree and the Rev. Ameer Paparella Co-chair

**WEST MICHIGAN AND DETROIT ANNUAL CONFERENCE
 COUNCILS ON FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION JOINT PRESIDENTS' REPORT**

In anticipation of the formation of the MI Area UMC Council on Finance and Administration and in a spirit of unity, we have chosen to issue a combined report to be included in both conference journals this year. Our councils have met jointly at each of the last two annual conferences and, during the past year, we have met jointly for all of our regular meetings.

Together we have worked to staff the Treasurer's office as it transitioned to handling the financial needs of both conferences. The Treasurer's office moved to Clark Corners in Lansing in December of last year. The expanded staff now includes **David Dobbs**, Conference Treasurer/Director of Administrative Services; **Don Emmert**, Conference Benefits Officer; **Becky Emmert**, Executive Administrator; **Jennifer Gertz**, EZRA Specialist and Administrative Assistant to Executive Administrator; **Chad Lundy**, Accountant; **Nancy Wyllys**, Accounts Payable; **Rich Pittenger**, Accounts Receivable; **Michael Mayo-Moyle**, IT Specialist; and **John Kosten**, Benefits Administrator. Our sincere thanks go to each of these individuals for their dedication and invaluable skills during this critical time of transition.

Our CFAs truly appreciate how each congregation worked so faithfully in 2017 to pay their ministry shares or apportionments:

West Michigan Conference received 83.4% of the total Ministry Shares for 2017 and was able to pay our Episcopal Fund commitment to the general UM church in full in the amount of \$254,103.

In West Michigan Conference, 52 churches of every size paid 100% of their Ministry Shares (and it is notable that many other churches paid over 90% of their Ministry Shares.) This represents approximately 13% of the total 390 congregations in West Michigan Conference. Unfortunately, 36 congregations made no payment towards their Ministry Shares in 2017.

Detroit Annual Conference received 78.4% of the total Apportionments for 2017 and was able to pay our Episcopal Fund commitment to the general UM church in full in the amount of \$331,615.

In Detroit Annual Conference, 256 churches of every size paid 100% of their Apportionments. This represents approximately 63% of the total 408 congregations in Detroit Annual Conference. Unfortunately, 35 congregations made no payment towards their Common Budget Apportionments in 2017.

Special thanks go to each member of our CFAs who gives of their time and talents to help in our mission to assist in whatever way we can to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Susan Cobb, West Michigan United Methodist Conference President of the Council on Finance and Administration

Marj Goralski, Detroit Annual United Methodist Conference President of the Council on Finance and Administration

**REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
UNITED METHODIST UNION OF GREATER DETROIT
8000 WOODWARD AVENUE, DETROIT, MI 48202 • 313 638-2390**

I like kids, especially grandkids! Unfortunately, I don't have any, but my sister, Shirley, graciously shares all seven of her grandchildren with me. In our family, they come in all shapes and sizes. We have engaging teenagers, smart elementary students and energetic twins in Kindergarten. Six year-old, Blake Bodner and I have a special bond. He thinks I am fun and is always ready to go with Aunt Carol on another great adventure. Recently, Blake came home from church and told his mother that when he grew up, he was going to be a preacher. "Preachers only work on Sunday," he said. "And a lot of people need Jesus." Blake is right. A lot of people do need Jesus. And as for the preachers, they only wish they could be paid on an hourly basis. Previously, Blake had told his mother that he was going to be a "worker man" and when she asked him about his earlier intentions, he replied, "I can preach on Sunday and build things the rest of the week." Yes, you can, Blake. And, frankly, the United Methodist Church would be better off if you grow into someone who will! Fortunately, I have the privilege of working at the United Methodist Union with people who will. **We call them Trustees.** They are people who are willing to share their talents, time and faith in so many different ways that build up the church. I invite you to take a moment to look at their photos in this publication and take note of the churches they represent throughout the Detroit Renaissance District.

In September (2017), the Detroit Renaissance District held its District Conference at Troy Korean United Methodist Church. I had never been to the church before and was impressed by their wonderful facility, and very much appreciated the assistance of their welcoming membership. It was an amazing morning as we celebrated the many faceted ministries that our denomination is offering across the district. It was easy to see that "**we are alive**" and making a difference! One could almost feel an energized sense of hope for the future emanating from the hearts of those in the sanctuary as person after person spoke about their district ministry. Our District Superintendent, the Rev. Dr. Charles S.G. Boayue, Jr., invited me to say a word on behalf of the United Methodist Union. Frankly, that was easy because the Union is a good news story!

Good News about New Church Development

That story began a long time ago, when a group of Methodists came together to form a Union with one purpose: to create, strengthen and revitalize United Methodist congregations to serve their communities. In the early years (after all the Union is 98 years old), their focus was new church development. **In the 1920's, they started 25 new churches** to meet the needs of a growing population. In the ensuing years, the Union was very involved in the formation of many other congregations, like Orchard UMC in Farmington Hills. Today, we work closely with the New Church Development Committee, the Extension Fund and other groups to provide grants for new church starts. Presently, we are in the second year of a three-year \$100,000 dollar total grant to support the Canton Friendship/Shelby Township new church start. Eighty people are now worshipping every Sunday in their newly renovated church facility, and we have high hopes for the future growth of this community of faith.

Canton Friendship UMC is continuing to offer to the Detroit Annual Conference a model for a new church start that may be utilized in other settings. If a second or third site reaches the development stage with Canton Friendship, the Union would be willing to contribute \$75,000 for each site. We are committed to new church development!

Good News about Loans

Another facet of our good news story involves making loans to churches and United Methodist Ministries

- In 2012, four and a half United Methodist Churches; Allen Park: Trinity, Lincoln Park: Dix, Lincoln Park: First, West Mound, and a significant portion of the membership of Wyandotte: Glenwood came together in a vital merger to form DownRiver UMC. After years of renting different facilities, they purchased a partially renovated church building in the fall of 2016. The Union extended a \$500,000 loan to them at very competitive rates for a renovation of their facility. The congregation moved into their building in early September and is excited about their future together. So are we!
- In 2014, the Union loaned Motown Mission \$70,000 to renovate a four-unit apartment building on Webb Street in Detroit. They received this building from a non-profit group and wanted to use it to house interns and small groups. Like most building projects, \$70,000 became \$100,000. Today, three of the four apartments have been renovated, and electrical, plumbing and masonry issues have been addressed. At the request of Rev. Sarah Alexander, the Director of Young Leaders Initiative/Motown Mission, the Union loaned them an additional \$29,010 to complete the renovation. We believe in the Young Leaders Initiative and their ministry to our community!

The Union also extended loans to Birmingham: Embury for a new roof, New Baltimore: Grace for exterior repairs to the sanctuary, and Rochester Hills: St. Luke's for a new parking lot. In addition, we work very closely with congregations who are experiencing financial issues that make it difficult for them to make their loan payments. The Union is committed to providing support and assistance and being flexible when necessary. And that is always good news.

Good News about Grants

The good news of the Union continues in ministry and mission initiative grants we extend to churches and projects. The Rev. Dr. Bill Ritter, my predecessor, described the grant process something like this...**the Union doesn't give grants just to keep churches breathing** for a few more weeks, or even months. Rather, we try to direct dollars towards churches that are looking beyond just paying the bills. Our goal is to support churches that have a vision, a plan and are willing to implement it. The optimal word here is **WILLING!** Both the church and the Union need to continue to have some skin in the game as we move forward into new possibilities. Grants are an important part of the work of the Union and a real blessing to the churches of the Detroit Renaissance District. How wonderful that more than 50% of the Union budget is reinvested in ministry and mission initiative grants.

- The Union partnered with Rev. Jeff Nelson and Royal Oak: First UMC to support a Digital Church Ministry. They want to discover new ways to use different social media platforms (i.e., Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snap Chat, Pinterest, etc.) to both share vital spiritual content and invite people to connect with ROFUM's mission and ministry. I am very excited about the potential of this mission initiative, not only for ROFUM, but our district as well. I believe that ROFUM will develop a skill set that can be utilized by other congregations, and Jeff has already committed himself to teach what they develop to other churches. In our ever-changing world, the church will need to be able to use technology effectively.
- We partnered with Waterford: Central UMC for a one-time grant to help provide a worship leader for their new contemporary worship service. And we assisted Redford: New Beginnings UMC with a grant to support the revitalization of their music ministry. This clearly is a congregation in the midst of a positive transformation.
- The Union has a long history of investing in the ministry of JFON SEMI (Justice for Our Neighbors Southeastern Michigan). Our initial grants, beginning in 2009, were instrumental in the formation of a United Methodist ministry to the immigrant population and we continue to support several JFON clinics. Dearborn: First UMC received a grant for their JFON clinic. A second grant was given as start-up money for the creation of Justice for Our Neighbors, Michigan (JFON MI). This would combine the West Michigan and Southeastern Michigan JFON groups.

Again, this summer, we provided the following grants: Urban Methodist Youth Camp, Clergy Family Camperships, and financial support for several summer programs for children and youth. We were pleased to partner with Detroit Centro Familiar Cristiano, Detroit Conant Avenue, Detroit Peoples, Detroit Second Grace, Pontiac Grace & Peace, Utica and Westland St. James United Methodist Churches.

Moving Forward

The work of the Union continues all year long as we engage with congregations in numerous ways. Members of our Board of Trustees worked directly with DownRiver, Southfield: Hope, Ford Memorial and even a non-United Methodist congregation who had purchased the former Inkster: Christ UMC. The **Union invested a significant amount of money in the United Methodist Development Fund (UMDF) to assist Southfield: Hope** in refinancing their building loan. All in all, it's been quite a year, filled with willing people, like my grand-nephew, Blake Bodner, who are committed to sharing their faith and willing to do the work!

I wouldn't want to close without expressing my appreciation for those leaving our Board: Rev. Mary McInnes, Janet Newcomer and Becky Stewart. Nor can I forget the leadership of our office staff; the support and kindness of Connie Perrine, Audrey Mangum, and our professional consultants who make a significant difference in our ministry. It is a privilege to be part of such an effective team.

The work of the United Methodist Union continues to be Good News to the churches of the Detroit Renaissance District. I pray that it will always be so. May God continue to guide and uphold the ministry we share together.

Blessings and Joy,



Rev. Carol Johns, Executive Director

CONFERENCE BOARD OF GLOBAL Ministries (CBGM)

The following reports highlight the work of the CBGM over the year 2017. Disasters were responded to, children were fed, and hearts were inspired with the news of what God is doing in mission around the world, and in our own communities.

Along with these important efforts, the leadership of the CBGM has spent significant hours working with our WMC counterparts to present a plan to move the Michigan Area forward in mission. We have worked hard to craft a plan for mission which not only continues our solid funding of ministries, but also involves people in transformative mission experiences, as well as purposeful and impacting learning opportunities. It is our earnest prayer that the Michigan Area of the UMC not only continues to be known for their strong support of missions, but that new hearts are inspired daily for the mission of Jesus Christ.

It has been a privilege,

Rev. Don Gotham, Chair

Secretary of Global Ministries - Jacqueline K. Euper

The first Michigan Area BGM Dinner was held on Friday, June 2, 2017 at Traverse City Central UMC with Olive Garden catering. About 80 persons from across the state attended. We appreciated Mr. George Howard, from Global Ministries in its new location in Atlanta GA, coming to be our guest speaker.

Dr. Emmanuel & Florence Mefor, medical missionaries from Zimbabwe, shared their powerful stories at Clarkston and Ann Arbor Westside UMCs on June 30 and July 1.

Revs. Ut To & Karen Vo-To, our own missionaries in Vietnam, were in DAC August 5 – 18. The following churches/UMWs hosted them: Milford, Roseville Trinity, Lexington, Cass City, Crossroads District UMW, Utica, South Lyon First, Oxford, Davison plus Davison UMW, Clarkston, DAC UMW Mission u and Lapeer Trinity. Good comments have been heard regarding their mission stories, including their incredible goal of having 1000 house groups by 2020. We have received word of their retirement in 2018. We wish them well in their future endeavors.

Rev. Paul Webster and his friend, Sylvester, from Mujila Falls Agriculture Center in Zambia were able to give 4 presentations in DAC. We encouraged regional gatherings since so many churches support Paul, but of his limited time in our conference. Thanks to Midland First, Clarkston, Warren First and Owosso First UMCs for hosting Paul and Sylvester in September and for all who attended.

October 30 – November 1, 2017, I attended the North Central Jurisdiction's gathering of SGMs and other conference mission persons in Wisconsin. Five persons from Global Ministries gave presentations on various aspects of Global Ministries' work. Delbert and Sandy Groves, missionaries in Zambia were also there to share their incredible mission stories.

The missionary support records for 2017 have been tabulated. Detroit Conference gave 404 gifts, totaling \$134,859.53. Congratulations to our faithful churches!

DC and WMC have been working side by side for two years to bring together mission plans for the new Michigan Conference. We pray that God's work will be greater than we can even imagine in this new venture!

Volunteers in Mission – Rev. Tom Anderson

2017 was a busy year for VIM teams from the Detroit Annual Conference. Approximately 98 teams went out involving a total of 1,320 persons. We provided \$100 scholarships for 15 first-time VIM participants. Our VIM Team leader trainer John Walls has done 3 trainings in the past year.

In the aftermath of Hurricane Harvey, I participated in several conference calls with the Bishop and Michigan area staff in coordinating communication and response to the disaster. We were able to set up collection sites for relief supplies, engage our conference moving companies to transport the donations to the Midwest relief center and schedule multiple ERT trainings around the state. Teams are serving in Texas, Louisiana, Georgia, Florida and Puerto Rico. Local church responses have been overwhelming.

Tammy Kuntz of the North Central Jurisdiction has instituted a regular conference call with Annual Conference VIM coordinators. This has really facilitated a sense of community as well as better communication. The North Central Jurisdiction Website is our best resource for lists of service opportunities, trainings and volunteer coordination. I am very grateful for Tammy's energetic leadership. Tammy also came to Adrian College to lead a VIM team leader training for students.

Some rumors I need to address: It's been said that VIM teams are discouraged from going to Haiti—this is not true. It's been said that Team leader training is required to lead a VIM team—this is not true. Training is only recommended, not required.

I maintain an e-mail list of 218 persons in our annual conference which includes the District offices. I sent out 12 e-mail newsletters during the past year. I focus on service opportunities, disaster relief news, and conference resources. I was able to send out a special resource packet for Liberian VIM team leaders. This is my final year as VIM coordinator. I have been a great honor to serve with you all on the Board of Global Ministries team. I rejoice in the extraordinary commitment of many of our congregations and it fills me with hope to see the potential for so much more. God bless you all in your ministry!

Michigan-Haiti Covenant Partnership Annual Report – Rev. Karl L. Zeigler, Chair

Our Covenant Partnership with the Methodist Church in Haiti (Eglise Methodiste d'Haiti – EMH) is strong and growing stronger!

The investment we made in our Covenant Partnership with the Haiti District of the Methodist Church of the Caribbean and the Americas (MCCA) is beginning to show results. During 2014 – 2017 we helped equip over 360 Local Preachers with learning experiences, resources, and EMH and UMC educators through a curriculum for Local Preacher training. With 118 of these men and women now fully certified, several New Church Starts have begun in 3 circuits in Haiti. The 2018 Haiti international Partners Conference report showed that membership in the EMH has increased by 10% to over 13,000 members.

Since we completed the Local Preachers Academy Training, the videos of the Lectures are being reviewed by our Haitian Planning Team partners to select their choices for the 6 to 9 lectures in each of the subject areas to be placed on a Haitian website for further & future study by Haitian candidates to become fully licensed and accredited Local Preachers in the Church. In addition, the transcripts of the lectures are being translated into both French (the official national language) and Haitian Creole (Kreyol) the heart language of the people. The books will become the core of theological study for a future generation of Haitian pastors.

This year we highlight a huge need for the Haiti Hot Lunch Program! During 2017 we (the Detroit and West Michigan Annual Conferences) provided the largest amount of financial support for the Haiti Hot Lunch Program – with combined support totaling \$121,728.16. But the numbers nationally have been declining over the past two decades. The cost per meal remains the same – one dollar per day (\$1.00 US); however, there are 22,000 students in the Methodist Schools in Haiti. We are the leaders in this Advance program and need to step up because Hot Lunches make a HUGE difference in the diets and learning abilities of our Methodist students. Let's help achieve a Michigan Conference commitment to raise enough for students to have at least 3 meals per week throughout Haiti. The Advance Number is # 418790!!!

A driving force to promote and grow the Haiti Hot Lunch Program was Rev. Paul and Joan Doherty. This past January Mrs. Joan Doherty entered the church triumphant. We are thankful for wonderful leadership and vision that Paul and Joan provided at the start-up of the Michigan Area Haiti Task Force and especially the Haiti Hot Lunch Program. We pray God's continued blessings on the entire family.

Many Michigan United Methodists and congregations gave to help with Hurricane Matthew Relief efforts, and we are still helping to fund the reconstruction of church roofs destroyed in October, 2016. Thank you for your continued prayerful support.

In addition to powerful prayer warriors, teams are regularly needed in Haiti to work towards Clean Drinking Water in hundreds of villages throughout the country, delivering medical care through Mobile Medical Clinics, providing cloth sanitary napkins (Days 4 Girls Kits) through personal health training in schools and churches throughout the country, teacher training to equip teachers to educate effectively in our 110 Methodist Schools, and assisting in the paying of Methodist Teacher Salaries where many are more than six (6) months behind in receiving paychecks.

To contact, reach out to:
Karl L Zeigler, Chairperson
Michigan Area Haiti Task Force
zeigler.karl@yahoo.com
248.904.8816

Thank you for your prayerful and financial support for all the teams members who volunteer their time, talent, treasure, and witness during their Volunteer In Mission (VIM) trips in Haiti! God Bless you!

Detroit Conference Liberia Task Force - Kayte Aspray, Chair

The Detroit Conference Liberia Task Force meets quarterly with a goal of promoting and coordinating activities that support the Covenant relationship between the Liberia Annual Conference and the Detroit Annual Conference.

- Duane Miller and Kayte Aspray represented the Conference at a meeting in conjunction with the East Ohio Conference in May with the new Bishop of Liberia, Samuel Quire. Bishop Quire presented his strategic plan.
- An Annual Conference resolution in support of Pastor and District Superintendent Salaries sponsored, presented and passed. The Conference Liberia Task Force (CLTF) was empowered to work with the Board of Ordained Ministry and Local Pastors association to promote this support.
 - Unfortunately, GBGM has withdrawn this as an Advance, as the Liberia Annual Conference did not request its renewal. This was an oversight in the period of an interim Bishop between Bishop Innis' retirement and Bishop Quire's assuming the episcopacy, and the LAC is working to have the Advance renewed.
 - We will promote as appropriate once the Advance is back in place.
- Luncheon sponsored at Annual Conference with a presentation by the Rev. Mike Seymour, and Mary and Garry Watson about their trip to Liberia in February for the gifting of wells.
- Final disposition of remaining money from the truck purchase occurred with the sending of over \$9,000.00 to the Liberia Annual Conference, to be used for the maintenance and upkeep of the vehicle.
- Robert Sieh, and his wife Margretta, Director of the Bishop Judith Craig Children's Village visited Michigan for three weeks in July, spoke in 13 churches/meetings and met with two District Task Forces as well as the Conference Task Force.
- The Conference Liberia Task Force met with Bishop Quire in September to discuss our Covenant Relationship document and begin the process of updating it for the new Michigan Conference. We were blessed to have Bishop David Alan Bard with us for a good portion of the meeting. The goal is to have a new Covenant ready for approval and signing ceremony at the 2019 Michigan Annual Conference.
- Kayte Aspray and Duane Miller represented Michigan at a September meeting with Bishop Samuel Quire with the Liberia Partner Team in Indianapolis. Seven conferences were represented. Bishop Quire presented his strategic priorities for Liberia and we discussed how we can work together to best assist projects in Liberia. Bishop Quire has invited Conferences globally to a meeting in Liberia in April to develop plans for working together. Duane Miller will represent Michigan.
- We are working with the Haiti Area Task Force, the Rev. Benton Heisler and Paul Perez to consider name changes for the Task Forces. The name Task Force normally indicates a team put together for a specific purpose for a short-term period.
- A Resolution (below) has been approved by the combined Conference Board of Global Ministries and referred to the Annual Conference Program Committee.

Resolution as Amended 9/16/17

On behalf of the Conference Liberia Task Force, I move that the offering at the Opening Worship of Annual Conference shall be an in-gathering offering to benefit the Haiti Hot Lunch program and the Bishop Judith Craig Childrens Village in Liberia, and that this be done annually at Annual Conference as long as the Detroit/West Michigan/Michigan Conference is in a Covenant Relationship with the Eglise Methodiste d'Haiti District of the Methodist Church of the Caribbean and the Americas, and the Liberia Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church. Offering to be divided as follows: 45% each to the Haiti Hot Lunch program and the Bishop Judith Craig Childrens Village and 5% each to the Michigan Area Haiti Task Force and the Conference Liberia Task Force.

MI Area Emergency Preparedness / Disaster Response Report

Dan O'Malley – WMC Conference Disaster Response Coordinator (C-DRC)

Robert Miller – DAC Conference Disaster Response Coordinator (C-DRC)

Overview: During 2017 work continued toward implementing the Emergency Preparedness & Disaster Response (EP/DR) plan by deepening our Early Response Team (ERT) bench strength and training our new District Disaster Coordinators. In addition, we became deeply involved with the Great Lakes Bay Area Long Term Recovery Group by supporting relief and recovery efforts in the Midland, MI area.

ERT Support: Bob Freysinger (ERT Trainer) held two ERT training sessions, one in February at Newton UMC training 4 people, and one in May at Cornerstone Church training 12 people, before having to take a break due to extensive knee surgery and recovery. Bob McCormick became certified as our second ERT Trainer in August and subsequently held 5 training sessions from October through November training 77 people. As an aside, 7 more sessions planned from 20 January through March which may include a venture to the UP. We finished the 2017 totaling 97 newly Trained ERTs members. In addition to trained ERT members, 2018 training will also emphasize the development of team leaders to head the teams. We are expecting our first Team Leader training to take place sometime in February.

District Disaster Response Coordinators (D-DRCs): A Disaster Response Coordinator team orientation and training workshop was conducted in October in partnership with UMCOR. Currently we are in the process of re-assignments based on the new 9 District Model for the MI Area Conference. It is notable that EP/DR has already effectively functioning as a MI Area Conference, and the formal committee structure post-transition has been determined.

Midland, MI – Bay Area Long Term Recovery Group: Torrential rain in June caused the Tittabawassee River in central MI to rise 17 feet in 48 hours causing historic flooding in hundreds of homes in the Midland and Saginaw area. The area was declared a disaster area and the federal government provided FEMA disaster assistance coordinators. EP/DR was immediately engaged by facilitating the shipping in of hundreds of flood cleanup buckets and health kits from the UMCOR Midwest Distribution Center. Support has continued thru participation in the Bay Area Long Term Recovery Group and our leadership in orchestrating of Disaster Case Management support partnering with UMCOR. As well, we are highly engaged in the related recovery construction effort.

National Activities: Hurricanes Harvey, Irma and Maria are providing out-of-state serving opportunities and ERT related support is still needed. However, our ability to provide ERTs is a function of the number of trained ERT members and team leaders which we are working to deepen the bench (reference above). Active efforts are underway to coordinate and vet teams from MI wanting to go to Puerto Rico which include special training, health conditions, and understanding the unique requirements for doing recovery work in Puerto Rico. Related, work with UMCOR and Michigan State Police/Home Land Security has begun in (January 2018) toward Disaster Case Management around evacuees from Puerto Rico currently residing in Michigan.

2018 Conference Objectives for EP/DR

Our focus:

- Work through the Conference Re-districting for 12 to 9 districts
 - Nominate and get appointments for new District DRCs for districts 3 & 8
 - Develop new relationships with relocated and new District Superintendents
- Re-build Early Response Team (ERT) bench strength
- Re-build ERT Team Leader bench strength
- Add ERT Trainer capacity to 4 people
- Engage current base of ERTs in recovery/rebuild work in the MI Area
- District DRCs to roll out connecting neighbors to their district churches
- District DRCs canvass local churches to develop DRCs in local churches
- District DRCs to connect and develop relationships with local EMAs in their districts

Conference Mission Personnel - Brenda Dupree, Chair

The Detroit Annual Conference currently has five missionaries serving within its conference in various capacities. We encourage you to welcome them! Peruse their biographies on the GBGM website and learn about their work in the name of Christ. They would love an invitation to come to your church and tell their stories. We thank God for each one of them and for their devotion and commitment to His call - the impact for His Kingdom is immeasurable!

In addition, there are plans for two fellows to be placed within the bounds of the Michigan Area in August 2018 at The Wesley Foundation and Sunnyside UMC, both of Kalamazoo.

1. Randy Hildebrandt is a Church and Community Worker assigned to God's Country Cooperative Parish in the DAC. He is based in Newberry.
rhildebrandt@umcmmission.org
Advance #982961
2. Sonya Luna is a GBGM missionary serving through the National Plan for Hispanic and Latino Ministries in the DAC and is the Michigan Area Conference Director of Hispanic/Latino Ministries.
sluna@detroitconference.org
Advance #3019618
3. Isaac Dunn, serving two years at NOAH, Central UMC in Detroit, will leave his post August 1, 2018. There will be a replacement at that time.
idunn@umcmmission.org
Advance #3022220
4. Grace Okerson, began her service of two years at NOAH, Central UMC in Detroit last July. She serves as the bag lunch coordinator.
gokerson@umcmmission.org
Advance #3022329
5. Lynda Sylvain is serving two years at Motown Mission as the Hospitality and Volunteer Coordinator Global Mission Fellow. She will be there until June 15, 2019.
LSylvain@umcmmission.org
Advance #3022358

The Advance – Rev. Karen Williams

The ADVANCE provides mission and ministry opportunities to engage the people of the United Methodist Church for the transformation of the world. You can find projects and ministries specific to the vision and goal of your church on the ADVANCE website and in the DAC Spotlight Church Book.

In 2017 \$1,069,984.19 was given to The ADVANCE by the churches in the Detroit Annual Conference, an increase of over 44%. Given in support of Disaster Response USA \$449,653; UM Missionaries, US2, and Mission Interns combined totaled \$120,465; Water for Life \$22,904; Anti-Human Trafficking \$12,356; Fill the Ark: Heifer International \$19,499; Undesignated UMCOR \$46,536. All of these contributions are in addition to those given by local churches to apportionments, Advance projects, District projects, and local projects and ministries in our communities.

The DAC Spotlight Church program is designed to bring awareness to the many projects, ministries, and Missionaries in the DAC and to encourage congregations in faithful giving and support. Many of our churches strive to go the extra mile and are designated a Spotlight Church by fulfilling the eight required steps.

This year 127 churches in the Detroit Annual Conference have been designated as a Spotlight Church.

Thank you for your support to the Mission and Ministries of The ADVANCE, and congratulations to each of the 2017 Spotlight Churches.

SPOTLIGHT CHURCHES**ANN ARBOR**

Belleville First
 Carleton*
 Chelsea First
 Dexter
 Dixboro
 Dundee*
 Fowlerville Trinity
 Highland
 Howell First*
 Lulu
 Marble Memorial
 Milford
 Monroe First*
 Monroe St. Paul's
 North Lake
 Northville First
 Petersburg
 Plymouth First
 Salem Grove
 Saline First
 South Lyon First
 West Side
 Weston
 Ypsilanti First

BLUE WATER

Armada
 Capac
 Forester
 Gratiot Park
 Hayes*
 Howarth
 Jeddo
 Kilmanagh
 Kingston
 Lapeer Trinity
 Lexington
 Mayville
 North Branch First
 Owendale
 Paint Creek
 Pigeon First
 Port Huron First
 Richmond First*
 Sandusky First

CROSSROADS

Bethany
 Birch Run
 Burt*
 Chesaning Trinity
 Clarkston
 Davison
 Duffield
 Fenton
 Flint Bethel
 Flint Court Street
 Flushing
 Fostoria
 Gaines
 Genesee
 Grand Blanc
 Halsey
 Laingsburg
 Lennon
 Middlebury
 Millington
 Montrose*
 Morrice
 Mt Bethel
 Mt Morris First
 New Lothrop First
 Otisville
 Phoenix
 Pittsburg
 Richfield
 Seymour Lake
 South Mundy
 Swartz Creek
 Waterford Central
 Waterford Trinity
 West Deerfield
 West Forest
 West Vienna

DETROIT**RENAISSANCE**

Birmingham First
 Grosse Pointe
 Livonia St Matthew's*
 Riverview
 Rochester St Paul's
 Trenton Faith
 Troy Big Beaver
 Troy First

Utica
 West Bloomfield
 Wyandotte First

MARQUETTE

Engadine
 Faithorn*
 Gladstone Memorial*
 Greenland
 Hancock First
 Manistique First*
 Marquette Hope
 Munising
 Norway Grace
 Ontonagon
 Rockland St Paul's
 St Ignace*
 Stephenson
 White Pine Community

SAGINAW BAY

Arenac Christ
 Beaverton*
 Caro
 Churchill
 Coleman Faith
 Fairgrove
 Gladwin First
 Houghton Lake
 LaPorte
 Mapleton
 Mio
 Oscoda
 Pinconning
 Roscommon Good
 Shepherd
 Saginaw First
 Sanford*
 Spratt
 Tawas
 Wagarville Community
 West Branch First
 Whittemore
 Wisner

TOTAL SL Churches **127**

*Indicates new Spotlight Church

UNITED METHODIST FOUNDATION

The United Methodist Foundation of Michigan is privileged to serve so many congregations and United Methodist organizations throughout the Michigan Area. The Foundation continues to partner with an ever-growing number of churches. Together with these local churches, we seek to assist and to inspire congregations in fulfilling their ministry. The Foundation offers a variety of programs and services to help your church get the most from available financial resources. From professional, socially responsible fund management, to stewardship education, development of effective capital campaigns, planned giving seminars and more, we are experts with years of experience helping churches just like yours. In fact, the Foundation is the preferred provider of value-aligned investment and financial stewardship services to United Methodist congregations across Michigan. All our ministry with local churches, except investment service, is provided without charge to the local church.

Like several other entities within the Michigan Area, the Foundation has worked diligently to be well positioned within the new conference structure. To this end, we have aligned our governance model to fulfill the prior annual conference motion to consolidate the Michigan Area Loan Fund and the Detroit Extension Fund as separate organizations linked more closely with the Foundation. We are delighted with the ways in which this alignment will enhance our client services.

In addition to investment and stewardship services, we share a major focus on providing scholarships to high-potential seminarians. The United Methodist Foundation of Michigan Leadership Scholars Program for Seminary Students is the largest single scholarship program for Michigan Area seminary students. We also provide grants to active pastors, including younger clergy attending revitup! for a Lifetime in Ministry and pastors attending the Clergy Benefits Academy.

Finally, we awarded the 2017 Wayne C. Barrett Steward Leader Awards to the following churches:

Battle Creek: Chapel Hill United Methodist Church
 Fraser: Christ United Methodist Church
 Grand Rapids: Aldersgate United Methodist Church
 Ypsilanti: Lincoln United Methodist Church

Our board and staff continue to be very excited about the Foundation's ministry as we partner with congregations, boards, and agencies across the Church. One of our prominent, denominational leaders described our ministry recently by writing, "The vision carried and implemented through the Foundation's financial and active engagement . . . demonstrates proactive systems strategic thinking and action that are much needed across our connection." Thank you to the various conference leaders, pastors, and laity for the ways in which you have helped to create this collaborative effort and most especially for your prayers and support during this period of consolidating boards and agencies. Transitions are rarely easy, but they provide a multitude of new opportunities and possibilities through the grace of God.

Respectfully Submitted,
 David S. Bell, President & Executive Director

UNITED METHODIST RETIREMENT COMMUNITIES (UMRC) AND UMRC FOUNDATION

United Methodist Retirement Communities (UMRC) provides a continuum of care and services to older adults from eight locations serving twelve Michigan counties, caring for more than 2,000 seniors and their families each year. These include market rate and affordable independent and assisted living options, skilled nursing care and rehabilitation, specialized dementia and Alzheimer's care, cognitive behavioral therapy, physical and occupational therapy, and Programs of All-inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE) at locations in Ypsilanti, Jackson, and Lansing. We are thankful for the prayers and support of so many United Methodist churches and affiliates who are helping us provide loving communities and care for older adults.

UMRC has been a leader in caring for older adults since its faithful founding in 1906. Building on a foundation of 112 years of service, UMRC promotes the wellness, dignity, and independence of older adults by providing high-quality and innovative residential and supportive services. The UMRC Foundation was created in 1998 as the fundraising arm supporting benevolent care for residents who have outlived their savings, as well as growth opportunities for the organization. Celebrating its 20th anniversary in 2018, UMRC Foundation's mission is to promote the wellness, dignity, and independence of seniors by supporting the residents, staff, and communities UMRC serves.

In embracing our Christian mission and guiding beliefs, UMRC is welcoming of ALL, and we reaffirm our commitment to caring for the needs of a growing population of older adults. Over the last several years, the UMRC Board and leadership team have taken great strides to strategically position UMRC to meet the needs of a senior population that is expected to double for older adults, and triple for adults 85 and over, by 2030.

In order to meet the needs and wishes of this growing population of older adults, UMRC's vision is to continue the growth of the organization, creating and enhancing options to increase the number of seniors it serves, all while focusing on UMRC's faith-based mission.

Campaign: UMRC Foundation's \$26 million **Growing to Serve** comprehensive campaign officially launched on November 28, 2017 with a VIP Groundbreaking celebration. This historic event marks UMRC's largest construction project in its 112-year history. The **Growing to Serve** campaign supports UMRC's three priority initiatives:

- Capital projects
 - Expansion and renovation of Kresge Healthcare and Rehabilitation Center, creating private rooms and bathrooms for all residents, regardless of income level.
 - McMullen Wellness Center, featuring an indoor pool, walking track, and other fitness initiatives for residents.
- Resident Services and Life Enrichment Activities for residents at Chelsea Retirement Community and Thome Rivertown Assisted Living in Detroit.
- Benevolent Care Fund, the cornerstone of the UMRC Foundation which ensures that older adults have a safe, loving home at UMRC, even if they outlive their savings.

To date, UMRC Foundation has raised approximately 85% of its total campaign goal.

Program of All-inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE): UMRC's PACE programs include Huron Valley PACE in Ypsilanti, Thome PACE in Jackson, and Senior Community Care of Michigan in Lansing. PACE is a proven, community-based, cost-effective alternative to nursing home care, serving low-income older adults who are nursing home eligible, but are able to live safely and independently in their community with the help of PACE services. Each PACE Day Health Center provides its participants with a "one-stop shop" for all medical, social, and supportive needs. Door-to-door transportation is provided up to five days per week for each participant to the Day Health Center and back home. PACE also provides respite for family and in-home caregivers of PACE participants. Together, UMRC's PACE locations are currently serving 400 older adults. In March 2018, UMRC will break ground to expand its Huron Valley PACE Day Health Center to double the number of older adults it can serve, thanks to support from a \$1 million grant from The Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation.

Dementia Training: Thanks to grants from the Michigan Health Endowment Fund and other funders, UMRC has implemented an intensive training program for staff and local caregivers who provide services to older adults with dementia, utilizing Teepa Snow's **Positive Approach™ to Care (PAC)**. PAC is an innovative program, medically proven to improve quality of life and reduce stress for those with dementia and their caregivers. Over 600 UMRC staff, local healthcare providers, families, and community members have attended PAC training to date. In just the first year of PAC training with UMRC caregivers, hospitalizations due to behavioral incidents of our residents with dementia dropped from 1-2 per month to just one for the entire year.

In 2018, UMRC and UMRC Foundation will host Teepa Snow to provide additional dementia awareness workshops, all open to the public and free of charge. To reach a broader regional audience of community caregivers, this year's workshops will take place at Jackson College in Jackson (May 15-17), Cleary College in Howell (August 6-7) and Washtenaw Community College in Ann Arbor (November 5-6). UMRC is also providing awareness workshops for family caregivers in the community and with local emergency room staff and EMT's to provide them with the tools they need to be effective in caring for an adult with dementia. As a PAC resource in the region, UMRC plans to eventually pursue certification as a PAC Endorsed community. UMRC would be the only one in the U.S.

Support for UMRC Staff: The UMRC Foundation supports UMRC staff through programs such as **Emergency Relief Aid** for employees experiencing a financial crisis and **Staff Scholarships** for employees who wish to pursue a degree or certification program. In addition, UMRC implemented its **CNA Pathway Program** in 2017, to attract those seeking a new career as a Certified Nursing Assistant by paying associated fees upfront for qualifying candidates. This unique opportunity allows for individuals, who may have been out of the workforce for several years, to start a new career without the burden of upfront costs of continuing education, training, and certification.

Residents Helping Others: Our UMRC residents do much to make a difference in their local communities. For example, last summer, 50 residents of UMRC's Chelsea Retirement Community, worked together to crochet sleeping mats made from plastic shopping bags. Each mat requires 500 to 700 bags, meaning fewer shopping bags in the landfill, and the mats are donated for use by Detroit's homeless to provide a protective layer between the cold, damp ground and their sleeping bag.

2018 Plans: With the hubbub of new construction taking place on our Chelsea campus, 2018 is shaping up to be an exciting year in the life of UMRC and the UMRC Foundation as we look to complete the **Growing to Serve** campaign and

see our goals come to fruition. Our United Methodist roots continue to guide our efforts to serve older adults and their families. We look forward to meeting with churches and affiliate groups over the coming year to share in our excitement.

Thank you very much for your commitment to our mission of service to older adults. Visit us in person at one of our eight locations, or on our website at www.umrc.com.

Respectfully submitted,

John Thorhauer Wendy Brightman, CFRE, CFRM
UMRC President and CEOUMRC Foundation President
Ph: 734-475-1020734-475-7209
E-mail: jthorhauer@umrc.comwbrightman@umrc.com

BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND CAMPUS MINISTRY

Purpose: The purpose of the Detroit Annual Conference Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministry will be to raise up the next generation of Christian disciples and leaders who will enliven the United Methodist movement and transform the world.

Our Task: The Board of Higher Education and Campus ministry will:

- 1) Strengthen the historic United Methodist connection of the annual conference with United Methodist colleges, campus ministries, and the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry.
- 2) Partner with West Michigan Conference in interpreting and promoting United Methodist colleges and campus ministries with youth and local churches across the state.
- 3) Initiate new campus ventures in campus ministry and care for the oversight of campus ministries as outlined in the 2012 Book of Discipline, ¶634.4.d.
- 4) Participate with other conference agencies in fulfilling the Pathway 2 goal of developing effective Christian leaders for the Church and the world, and creating a “culture of call” for ordained ministry within the churches of the annual conference.
- 5) Encourage support of ministries in higher education through the apportionments and special Sunday offerings of the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry.
- 6) Fulfill duties as outlined in the 2012 Book of Discipline ¶ 634.4.

Membership: The Board will be comprised of 12 members nominated by the annual conference Committee on Nominations and elected by the annual conference for terms of four years with a maximum of two terms, and members of the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry for the Detroit Conference. The following will be ex officio with voice but no vote:

- 1) College students representing Adrian College, Albion College, and the campus ministries of the annual conference.
- 2) Director of Wesley Foundations and campus ministries.
- 3) Chaplains of Adrian College and Albion College.
- 4) District Superintendent assigned by the cabinet.
- 5) Persons elected by the annual conference as trustees at Adrian College and Albion College.

The Chairperson shall be nominated by the annual conference Committee on Nominations and elected by the annual conference. Other officers will be elected by the Board.

Meeting: The Board will meet at least twice per year. Committees and task forces will meet as necessary to complete the work of the Board.

Accountability: The Board will be accountable to the Conference Leadership Team in matters of program and budget and will annual provide a written report to the annual conference.

The Board will continue to review our current commitments to determine the best way to fulfill its purpose and the tasks with the resources available.

In past year The Board has provided funding to support the following:

- 1) Wesley Foundation at University of Michigan
- 2) Adrian College pre-seminary program.
- 3) Northern Michigan University Connection Center.
- 4) Motor City Wesley

The Board is continuing to seek new campus ministries. Eastern Michigan University, Oakland University, Northwood University, and several Community College through Motor City Wesley have been our target campuses.

The Wesley Foundation at Saginaw Valley State University has been disbanded due to leadership changes and availability of future leaders. This foundation was active for almost two years and we are grateful for the enthusiasm for the leaders that were present during this time. The Board does not receive this closing as a failure. If we do not try we have no chance of success. The insights that we learned from this experience will be invaluable to the next group of leaders that want to pursue a ministry on this campus.

The Board continues our relationship with the West Michigan BHECM. Chairs from these committees communicate weekly about issues, concerns, and visions for a combined board beginning July 2018. We have been meeting almost exclusively as a combined board for the past year, although we do allow for each board to have their own time.

As we stand now, we have our nominations for the combined board to be voted on at Annual Conference 2018. The board is very diverse in age, ethnicity, and experience.

We thank you for your prayers and support in the past year and we look forward every day to serving the students on our college campuses

Respectfully submitted:

Rev. Richard E. Burstall, Chair

ADRIAN COLLEGE

The mission statement for Adrian College reads: “Adrian College, a liberal arts college in the United Methodist tradition, is committed to the pursuit of truth and dignity of all people. Through active and creative learning in a supportive community, undergraduate and graduate students are challenged to achieve excellence in their academic, personal, and professional lives, and to contribute to a more socially just society.”

While it is significant that the College name its United Methodist identity, the core values of this relationship are captured by an emphasis on “the pursuit of truth and the dignity of all people.” Truth is a contested term these days, and we do not settle for simple answers. However we do not presume that all things are relative. Truth matters. Human dignity confronts us with the intrinsic worth of each and all people.

Adrian College hosts several different student spiritual life groups on campus and weekly chapel services. Our staff includes one chaplain and six student ministers. Chaplain Chris Momany teaches as a member of the philosophy/religion department and publishes in both academic and popular church journals.

Dr. Momany’s current research explores the relationship between antebellum philosophical ethics and the antislavery movement. What “moral” theories were invoked to defend slavery? What theories of moral obligation were linked to abolitionist conviction? How does today’s culture display similar kinds of thinking? Dr. Momany’s forthcoming book is under contract with Foundry Books of Nashville, Tennessee.

Chris is active in the national organization of scholars known as “Historians Against Slavery” and contributes to conferences, workshops, and blogs on a regular basis. He serves in leadership among the National Council of Churches, where he helps guide a “convening table” devoted to “Joint Action and Advocacy on Issues of Justice and Peace.” Additionally, he has participated in a review of the Social Principles of The United Methodist Church and is currently a member of the “writing team” that is crafting an updated version of the Social Principles for this body of 13 million Christians.

Highlights of Recent Work in Chaplaincy Included

- A Wednesday Noon Chapel Series
- A Nationally-Respected Pre-Seminary Program that Unites Student Discernment with Formal Academic Study

- Continued Leadership across the Nation Regarding the Issue of Human Trafficking
You, too, can join our movement. Contact Dr. Chris Momany at 517-265-5161, Ext. 4211.

AFRICA UNIVERSITY REPORT

Africa University enjoyed a banner year in 2017, thanks to the local congregations, leadership, and individual members of The United Methodist Church. United Methodists in the Detroit Conference and throughout the connection spearheaded special celebration events marking Africa University's 25th anniversary. These efforts brought Africa University's progress and ministry contributions to the fore, allowing congregations to reaffirm their commitment to the institution's mission of nurturing global leaders who transform communities.

The university community—students, faculty, administrators and support staff, trustees, alumni, partners and friends—is particularly grateful and delighted to applaud the Detroit Conference for achieving its very first 100 percent investment in the Africa University Fund (AUF) apportionment in 2017. Thank you for your generosity and for demonstrating such confidence in all that Africa University is today, and will be in the future.

Institutional Update:

- Currently, Africa University hosts a stable, focused and vibrant campus community of 1,400 students as well as faculty, and staff from 29 nations. Amidst a transition in the governance of Zimbabwe, Africa University students have not missed a meal nor has the staff missed a paycheck. Lectures, research, and outreach activities continue uninterrupted despite national events.
- A new academic structure and the realignment of programs is encouraging innovation and enhancing Africa University's relevance to The United Methodist Church and to sub-Saharan Africa. This includes the launch of the Institute of Theology and Religious Studies which brings together multidisciplinary training and leadership formation opportunities for both clergy and laity.
- Africa University's insectary and researchers are providing critical data on mosquitos and regional malaria control programs to aid Africa's efforts to eradicate malaria and other insect-borne diseases.
- The university is also making trailblazing, regional contributions in migrant and refugee protection, child rights, and harnessing intellectual property for development.
- The first 25 years of AU's ministry have produced more than 8,000 graduates who lead at every level and in all efforts to make disciples, minister to the poor, improve global health, and better the quality of life in communities. A growing number of graduates are answering the call to missionary service, serving across Africa and in Asia, Europe and Latin America.

Africa University ended 2017—its 25th anniversary year—affirmed in prayer, celebrated, and with its highest level of support from The United Methodist Church to date. A record number of annual conferences—35 out of 56—achieved or exceeded their 100 percent investment in the AUF. Giving to the AUF increased in all five jurisdictions—with the Western Jurisdiction at 100 percent for the first time and the Northeastern Jurisdiction at 100 percent for the third consecutive year. The Detroit Conference contributed to an outstanding result of 99.83 percent for the AUF in the North Central Jurisdiction.

United Methodist congregations in the United States established a new record for the AUF in 2017. The overall giving of 96.77 percent to the AUF was the highest percentage ever invested by United Methodists in one of the seven general church funds.

As Africa University embraces emerging opportunities for service and impact within and beyond the church in Africa, your support remains crucial. As you gather for the 2018 Detroit Annual Conference, we invite you keep Africa University in your prayers. Please urge your congregation to continue its strong investment in the mission of our global church so that 100 percent giving becomes a tradition you celebrate! Your gifts matter and every gift is life-changing.

The four-year, \$50 million Campaign for Africa University is ongoing, with 76.5 percent of the goal or \$38.3 million in cash and pledges already committed. The campaign prioritizes scholarships, expert faculty, research, infrastructure, and technology. Do consider making a second-mile gift in support of the campaign.

Thank you, Detroit Conference, for your foundational role. Thank you for an incredible year of blessings. We stand on the promise of Luke 6:38: "Give, and it will be given to you. A good portion—packed down, firmly shaken, and overflowing—will fall into your lap. The portion you give will determine the portion you receive in return."

Thank you for affirming the power of faithfully sowing, standing and working together as you journey in partnership with Africa University. May God bless and keep you always in an abundance of grace and mercy.

Submitted by:

James H. Salley, Associate Vice Chancellor for Institutional Advancement
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Nashville, TN 37203-0007
Tel: (615) 340-7438, Fax: (615) 340-7290
jsalley@gbhem.org
www.support-africauniversity.org

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 Kathe Darr as the first Beck Professor.
- **Congregations:** The Lilly Endowment awarded the Center for Practical Theology \$1.5 million to create an innovation hub, which will foster creative vocational reflection in congregations, and a sharing of the congregations' wisdom.
- **Doctor of Ministry:** The DMin in Transformational Leadership is soaring with lively student cohorts that are broadly ecumenical, culturally diverse, and global. The model includes intensives, online courses, and faculty mentoring.
- **Scholarships:** We continue our offer of free tuition to UMC registered candidates for ordained ministry, and we continue to build student scholarships and housing as a central campaign priority. New scholarships include the Dale Andrews Scholarship in Practical Theology and Race, Korean Student scholarship, and the Bishop John H. Adams and Dr. Dolly D. Adams Scholarship for candidates for ordained ministry in the AME, AMEZ, and CME churches.
- **Arts Initiatives:** Recent exhibits and events include "Symbols and Art of China, Korea, and Japan" and "Bridging Divided Communities through the Arts"

PARTNERING FOR MINISTRY AND TRANSFORMATION: Preparing students for ministry means meaningful partnerships with the local spiritual community.

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

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.

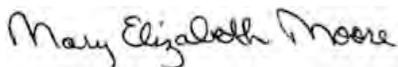
- Faculty and students have led and participated in service for victims of hurricanes and fires, protests on behalf of Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, protests of white supremacist movements, protests and services on behalf of immigrants and DACA young people, and ecumenical and interreligious witnesses 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

**DUKE DIVINITY SCHOOL
2018 ANNUAL CONFERENCE REPORT**

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

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. Concentration 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:

- Brooks, Gennifer Benjamin. *Bible Sisters: A Year of Devotions with the Women of the Bible*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2017.
- Papandrea, James L. *From Star Wars to Superman: Christ Figures in Science Fiction and Superhero Films*. Manchester, New Hampshire: Sophia Institute Press, 2017.
- Teasdale, Mark R. *Go!: How to Become a Great Commission Church*. Nashville, TN: Wesley's Foundry Books, 2017.
- Tran, Mai-Anh Le. *Reset the Heart: Unlearning Violence, Relearning Hope*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2017.

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 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

SAINT PAUL SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

www.spst.edu

Saint Paul School of Theology is a seminary of the United Methodist Church committed to the formation of people for innovative, creative ministry. We are one institution with two campuses, in Kansas and Oklahoma.

This past 2017-2018 academic year, Saint Paul enrolled 117 students in the master and doctoral degree programs. The Saint Paul Course of Study School educated 261 students in Kansas City, KS; Hays, KS; Oklahoma City, OK; and Springfield, MO.

Saint Paul School of Theology announced a new **FLEX** schedule for theological education starting Fall 2018. Seminarians will receive a more **Flexible Learning Experience** that combines convenience and community opportunities with intentional academic scheduling. Students can take a mixture of online, on-campus, and hybrid (blended online and on-campus) courses to complete the required curriculum.

One FOCUS week will be scheduled each semester for hybrid and on-campus students. They will come together with faculty and skilled practitioners to participate in spiritual formation retreats, practicums that teach ministry skills (i.e. funeral planning, technology in worship, financial reporting), and community activities.

The Board of Trustees and president set into motion a new scholarship initiative. Every entering, full-time, master's degree student at Saint Paul will receive a \$5,000 scholarship for the 2018 seminary year. This broad opportunity is the most recent effort to reduce student indebtedness.

Seminary partner, United Methodist Church of the Resurrection, will offer a three-year, full-ride scholarship beginning 2018-2019 academic year. The Resurrection Fellow will have a hands-on, paid internship with a ministry mentor to learn ministry skills in evangelism, worship, pastoral care, and discipleship.

Dr. Amy Oden, Professor of Early Church History and Spirituality, at Saint Paul at Oklahoma City University received the 2017 GBHEM Exemplary Teacher Award. Her book entitled, *Right Here, Right Now: The Practice of Christian Mindfulness* examines how Christian mindfulness practices begin with the teachings of Jesus and continue throughout Christian history. Oden includes step-by-step instructions for practicing Christian mindfulness today.

Dr. Mike Graves, William K. McElvaney Professor of Preaching and Worship, published a book in October entitled *Table Talk: Rethinking Communion and Community*. *Table Talk* explores communion practices and a new way of doing church that is catching on around the world. Dr. Graves writes about the dinner church movement and ways that it is carried out.

Seminary partner, Oklahoma City University, dedicated a classroom in the W. Angie Smith Chapel building to honor retired Oklahoma UM Bishop Robert Hayes, Jr. A plaque on the classroom door recognizes Hayes for his many years of service to both the seminary and university. He returned to Saint Paul at Oklahoma City University this year to teach, preach, and serve as Bishop-in-Residence.

The Saint Paul trustees, faculty, staff, and students thank you for your interest, prayers and support.

UNITED THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY in Dayton, Ohio

"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 and, with the support of a peer group, mentor and United faculty, they develop a model of ministry that will resolve the challenge in their congregations or communities.

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

MICHIGAN AREA UNITED METHODIST CAMPING 2017

"The mission of the Michigan Area United Methodist Camping Board of Directors is to extend, enhance and enable our congregations in the task of making disciples of Jesus Christ. Our focus is providing quality year-round programs with relevant camp and retreat facilities that offer and promote Christian faith for people of diverse backgrounds and ages."

Celebration

We begin this report with a celebration of the 1,564 campers who attended summer church camp last summer and over 24,000 persons we served throughout the year. In addition, we granted 265 scholarships amounting to \$35,562. "Praise God, from whom all blessings flow." Thanks to the generosity of many, we were able to share the Gospel of Christ with those who would not have otherwise been able to attend camp.

History and Progress

Our respective annual conferences voted in 2015 to combine camp and retreat ministries into a separate, non-profit organization to create and implement a new camp and retreat ministry. Thus began a bold new mission to not just keep our camp and retreat ministries but to expand, empower and embolden a new camp and retreat ministry in partnership with United Methodist churches in making dynamic disciples of Jesus Christ throughout Michigan.

The continued process of melding together two camp ministries, and bonding nine camps into a unified non-profit entity is unique in United Methodist Camping. Substantial change has been required to accomplish this task, and change is hard.

This past year has been filled with work building a strong financial footing upon which we can build a ministry that will enable us to nurture existing programs and create new opportunities for making disciples of Christ. Our business administrator has been working hard to develop new accounting programs and systems, which will serve 9 sites and the ministry office. Our steps to improve and control cash flow, as well as make budget adjustments to bring balance to our fiscal condition has been very effective, as we managed to finish 2017 in the black over all.

Non-profit camps cannot support a fully funded budget on "user fees" alone. (*User fees: income generated by the charges to campers and groups who utilize the campground.*) In a fully funded budget "user fees" are expected to generate 70% to 80% of the annual income. The remaining 20-30% of income comes from additional or "supplemental funding." The University of Indiana School of Philanthropy recognizes three sustainable types of "supplemental funding."

- An Annual Fund
- Capital Campaigns
- Endowments

As annual conference budgets become increasingly constrained, it is vital to MAUMC and the annual conference that camping ministry develop "supplemental funding." Your gifts to camping ministries are cherished and needed.

Our Board has chosen to hold prices for 2018 at the same base rate as 2017. This is a step of faith for all of us. The Board has combined this with a challenge for each facility to increase the number of guests and campers it serves by 25%. This is a bold challenge, but we are up to the challenge and ask for your help in meeting it!

1. Sending children to summer camp... even neighborhood children who are not from your church, 2. taking a group on a church retreat to one of our retreat centers, and

3. making use of our campgrounds for your family vacations will help us with this goal.

This year we look forward to:

- Continued improvement in our marketing through the efforts of our Marketing consultant Suzanne Everett to upgrade our website and provide new printed and digital materials. All these to better tell the life changing stories of our ministry. (If you have a story to share, please contact us at www.umcamping.org, we would love to hear from you.)
- Providing additional levels of support to our program leaders through training and networking.
- We have identified, prioritized, and are now addressing the significant deferred maintenance that has accrued through years of inadequate income. Keep your eyes open for the exciting updates we have coming in 2018.
- Effectively partnering with local congregations in reaching more people with the "Good News" in a time of so much negativity.

These initiatives are contingent upon our ability to generate "*supplemental income*" through the *Changing Lives* Annual Fund.

Staff Updates

All staff have worked hard to bring their particular camp or area of ministry to a new place of vital work for Christ. We continue to look for qualified persons who wish to share in ministry through camping. Our new phrase:

"If you want to work in Camping ministries in the state of Michigan, we have a place for you!"

The board of directors wishes to recognize the vital contributions of our site directors, Dan Stuglik (Crystal Springs), Sarah Ratz, (Recently moved from Judson Collins), Ann Emerson (Lake Huron), Sherry Stone (Camp Kinawind), Eric Hoffman (Wesley Woods), Ryan Culby (Lake MI/Albright Park), Ron Bell (Myers Lake) and Pamela Stewart (Administrative Assistant and Registrar), who have endured with grace the challenges of change. The board expresses special appreciation for the work of Tom McComb (Business Administrator), who has worked consistently to provide a working financial reporting system and Executive Director, Rev. George Ayoub, who has worked tirelessly, patiently and most importantly faithfully with the board of directors to fulfill our mission, programmatic and fiduciary responsibilities to you, the members of our corporation.

How You Can Help

We need your help to:

1. Send campers and/or visit as a family.
2. Promote and participate with financial gifts to camping ministries. Go to: umcamping.org and click DONATE.

Most importantly, we thank you, and we ask for your continued individual and corporate prayers for the ministry as we seek to grow for Christ!

COMMISSION ON EQUITABLE COMPENSATION

The laity and clergy persons who make up the DAC Commission on Equitable Compensation takes seriously the charge put before them and are grateful for the opportunity to serve our Church as we serve on this Commission. Salary grant requests for 2018 came in under and did not exceed our budget again for this last calendar year. Mostly this was due to re-assignment of pastors in the July time frame and the Bishops Cabinet being pro-active in recognizing, matching and shifting personnel and finances to better meet the needs of both clergy and congregations.

We have met with our counterparts from the West Michigan Commission 3 times to merge policies and processes for the new Michigan Conference and have been very productive in that task.

The CEC is blessed and prepared to continue to support the ministry of local congregations and ensure that a Pastor in our Conference receives the minimum salary set forth in our guidelines. The Commission met in November 2017 for grant requests for this upcoming year and January 2018 to recommend the new Conference Minimum Salary Guidelines for 2019 and equalize salary disparities that exist between our 2 Michigan Conferences.

Submitted by:

Rev. Mark E. Zender, Chair

COMMISSION ON CHRISTIAN UNITY & INTERRELIGIOUS RELATIONSHIPS

The Commission on Christian Unity & Interreligious Relationships of the Detroit Conference has been very busy this year. Each of its three members sit on other active Boards or Committees for other interfaith organizations including the Common Word Alliance, the Detroit Interfaith Outreach Network and the Humanitarian Action Group. In total the CCUIR has hosted, sponsored or participated in over 25 high profile events in 2017.

Though there are some UMC congregations doing outstanding work in the ecumenical or interreligious areas of ministry we are way behind the curve of other Christian denominations. As a major mainline denomination, we have been too inwardly focused for too long. The current members of the CCUIR are working very hard to make the work of the United Methodist Church more visible. 2017 was easily the most successful year in ecumenical and interreligious work in a long time and we are looking forward to the opportunities that 2018 – 2019 will bring.

MICHIGAN AREA UNITED METHODIST CHURCH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Michigan Area United Methodist Church Historical Society has been incorporated since 1958. The name was changed from Michigan Methodist Historical Society in 1975.

The Society has as their purpose the following:

To compile, edit, publish, and distribute histories of Michigan United Methodism, its predecessor denominations, and any other historical works that may later demand attention; to solicit, acquire, and administer funds to accomplish such purposes and any other acts as may be deemed necessary to carry out such purposes; and promote, support, and nurture the conference archives.

"Other purposes may include organizing area-wide celebrations of historical events and convocations which may involve participation beyond the board of directors; digitization and distribution of historical materials; awarding certificates of recognition to local churches that are celebrating important milestones, awarding distinguished service awards to individuals and groups within Michigan; recognizing and promoting United Methodist historic sites in the state; helping conference, district, and local church historians and archivists through workshops and information sharing; and such other activities as are consistent with the by-laws of the Historical Society of the United Methodist Church."

Officers are elected for the quadrennium. The officers are Diana Spitnale Miller - President, Lois Omundsen - Vice President, Sharon Scott - Secretary, and M. Kay Mowery - Treasurer.

Board Meetings were held in 2017 on March 2, May 4 (by conference call), and November 2. We usually meet at the Michigan Conference Center in Lansing.

The Historical Convocation was held Saturday, April 22, at Central Michigan University in Mt. Pleasant. The keynote speaker was Dr. Chris Momany from Adrian College. Other presentations were given on History of the United Methodist Church and our connections by Diana Miller and Tips for Historians by Dan Yakes. A workshop on Resources in the Archives was presented by the archivists - Rebecca McNitt (Adrian College) and Justin Seidler (Albion College).

Forty-one certificates were presented to those churches that had been in existence for 175 years and older and had made application to receive one. Representatives from 17 churches were able to attend the Convocation. Others received their certificate by mail after the event.

At the November meeting the Detroit Conference Friends of the Archives officially joined us due to the two conferences coming together. A few of their members have already been on the board. Their membership became part of a list of members as our group welcomes historians of churches, those interested in history and preserving it, clergy and lay, to come and join the Society.

Membership includes receiving news about the Society activities and free registration to our sponsored events.

Our next Roots and Branches Convocation will be April 7 at the Leighton United Methodist Church from 10 am – 3 pm. Dr. Sarah Blair who is the Director of the Library at United Theological Seminary will be the keynote speaker as we commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the United Methodist Church.

The Michigan Area United Methodist Church Historical Society is alive and well!

Diana Spitnale Miller, President

BOARD OF LAITY

The purpose of the Board of Laity is to provide an awareness of the role of the laity both with the local congregation and through their ministries; to promote the partnership of laity and clergy; to communicate lay concerns within the conference; and to empower laypersons within the conference.

We welcomed three new District Lay Leaders in 2017: Ken Kneisel (Ann Arbor), Vicky Prewitt (Marquette) and Dee Ann Hellus (Saginaw Bay.) As we become one Michigan Conference on July 1, 2018, we look forward to meeting new District Lay Leaders and an active Board of Laity.

In preparation for becoming that one Michigan conference, we currently meet jointly with the West Michigan Board of Laity. We have established goals to guide our work including:

1. Provide resources to local churches to make Disciples for Jesus Christ (web site, contact information, Facebook pages)
2. Develop training for local church and district lay leaders (district workshops for leadership training, “tools for ministry”)
3. Advocate for lay people needs (emphasize the importance of lay leaders with District Superintendents and Bishop.)
4. Develop better communications with church lay leaders (emphasize the importance of partnership between clergy and laity.)

To improve communications, we are working to establish better web resources and to write articles of MIConnect. We continue to develop an improved laity orientation session for annual conference to enhance communication with the laity.

Our Methodist heritage emphasized active lay leadership in working together with the clergy to spread the Good News of Jesus Christ. We will continue to use our spiritual gifts to love and serve God and neighbor and transform lives of people in Michigan and beyond.

John Wharton
Conference Lay Leader

COMMISSION ON RELIGION AND RACE

The focus of the Commission in 2017 centered on support the 2016 General Conference approved legislation in Paragraph 643 on vital conversations, programs and policies of racial/institutional equity and intercultural competency at all levels of the church with particular emphasis placed on pastors and congregations involved in cross-racial/cross-cultural ministry. Tenants of the legislation related to

Annual Conference were incorporated into the Michigan Area UMC structure as part of the duties of the Board of Justice, division of Religion and Race.

DAC-CORR sent three members to the North Central Jurisdiction Commission on Religion and Race (NCJ-CORR) train-the-trainer event in cross-racial/cross-cultural settings during May 2017. Those trained

used the skills obtained to develop and present a workshop on the many layers of diversity for the Detroit Renaissance District Annual meeting; similar workshops are anticipated around Michigan in 2018.

Ken Dowell, Co-Chair

HISPANIC/LATINO MINISTRIES

The goal for 2017 was to create one strategic three-year plan with the West Michigan Conference Committee as we come together to form the Michigan Area Conference Committee on Hispanic/Latino Ministries. We achieved that goal and by the end of the year, we had identified three main strategic areas that we will be focusing on in the next three years. The areas are Youth Engagement, Multicultural Leadership Engagement, and Community Engagement.

Descriptions of the Three Areas:

Initiative 1 - Youth Engagement: The purpose of the Youth Engagement Initiative is to empower Hispanic/Latino youth to become Bold and Effective Leaders so that they can lead and guide the development of Vibrant Congregations.

This initiative will address the concern of disempowerment among the Hispanic/Latino youth and educational attainment. It will also help address the burdens that Hispanic/Latino youth have to bear and help develop not only their social holiness, but also personal holiness.

Initiative 2: Multicultural Leadership Engagement: The purpose of this initiative is move people and congregations toward intentional, multicultural, contextual faith development to celebrate a strong multiethnic presence in our church and communities.

This initiative will work with the Hispanic/Latino members to become leaders in their churches. It will address the concern of disempowerment and educational attainment within the Hispanic/Latino community.

Initiative 3: Community Engagement: The purpose of the Community Engagement is to intentionally identify opportunities that break down barriers preventing the Hispanic/Latino community from full engagement in the Life of Church and society.

This initiative will work with the Hispanic/Latino community and organizations where local church can collaborate and support. It will look for not only the needs of the Hispanic/Latino community, but also the assets. This initiative will also overlap with the previous initiative. It will give an opportunity for the Hispanic/Latino leaders and the non-Hispanic/Latino leaders to use what they learn and put it into action in their communities.

As part of the strategic plan, we have identified projects that we will be doing within these three areas of ministry and are excited to carry out those projects in the next few years. We will also receive from the National Plan for Hispanic/Latino Ministries a \$50,000 matching grant over the next three years to help us complete the projects.

COMMITTEE ON NATIVE AMERICAN MINISTRY 2017 REPORT

The Committee on Native American Ministry in the Detroit Conference has the following responsibilities – to promote Native American Awareness Sunday; oversee the distribution of the Native American Awareness Sunday Offering; monitor existing Native American ministries within the annual conference; have the responsibility of developing new Native American ministries within the annual conference; and to fulfill all other functions in the United Methodist Book of Discipline.

To this end, CONAM has been involved in the following ministries – Saganing Center development; feeding veterans; aiding the Native American Churches in funding projects; working to make United Methodist aware of and involved in Native American ministry; distribution of backpacks and school supplies. CONAM continues to minister with these goals in mind – work to develop Native American leadership among United Methodist Native Americans; encourage and aid the spiritual and numerical growth of Native American churches within the conference; provide dynamic culturally based ministries.

2018 provides its own unique challenges and excitement as Michigan United Methodist become one conference. CONAM welcomes the opportunity to join with West Michigan as we seek to serve our Native American churches and make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rev. Carmen Cook, Chair

MI AREA EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS / DISASTER RESPONSE

Dan O'Malley – WMC Conference Disaster Response Coordinator (C-DRC)

Robert Miller – DAC Conference Disaster Response Coordinator (C-DRC)

Overview: During 2017 work continued toward implementing the Emergency Preparedness & Disaster Response (EP/DR) plan by deepening our Early Response Team (ERT) bench strength and training our new District Disaster Coordinators. In addition, we became deeply involved with the Great Lakes Bay Area Long Term Recovery Group by supporting relief and recovery efforts in the Midland, MI area.

ERT Support: Bob Freysinger (ERT Trainer) held two ERT training sessions, one in February at Newton UMC training 4 people, and one in May at Cornerstone Church training 12 people, before having to take a break due to extensive knee surgery and recovery. Bob McCormick became certified as our second ERT Trainer in August and subsequently held 5 training sessions from October through November training 77 people. As an aside, 7 more sessions planned from 20 January through March which may include a venture to the UP. We finished the 2017 totaling 97 newly Trained ERTs members. In addition to trained ERT members, 2018 training will also emphasize the development of team leaders to head the teams. We are expecting our first Team Leader training to take place sometime in February.

District Disaster Response Coordinators (D-DRCs): A Disaster Response Coordinator team orientation and training workshop was conducted in October in partnership with UMCOR. Currently we are in the process of re-assignments based on the new 9 District Model for the MI Area Conference. It is notable that EP/DR has already effectively functioning as a MI Area Conference, and the formal committee structure post-transition has been determined.

Midland, MI – Bay Area Long Term Recovery Group: Torrential rain in June caused the Tittabawassee River in central MI to rise 17 feet in 48 hours causing historic flooding in hundreds of homes in the Midland and Saginaw area. The area was declared a disaster area and the federal government provided FEMA disaster assistance coordinators. EP/DR was immediately engaged by facilitating the shipping in of hundreds of flood cleanup buckets and health kits from the UMCOR Midwest Distribution Center. Support has continued thru participation in the Bay Area Long Term Recovery Group and our leadership in orchestrating of Disaster Case Management support partnering with UMCOR. As well, we are highly engaged in the related recovery construction effort.

National Activities: Hurricanes Harvey, Irma and Maria are providing out-of-state serving opportunities and ERT related support is still needed. However, our ability to provide ERTs is a function of the number of trained ERT members and team leaders which we are working to deepen the bench (reference above). Active efforts are underway to coordinate and vet teams from MI wanting to go to Puerto Rico which include special training, health conditions, and understanding the unique requirements for doing recovery work in Puerto Rico. Related, work with UMCOR and Michigan State Police/Home Land Security has begun in (January 2018) toward Disaster Case Management around evacuees from Puerto Rico currently residing in Michigan.

2018 Conference Objectives for EP/DR

Our focus:

- Work through the Conference Re-districting for 12 to 9 districts
 - Nominate and get appointments for new District DRCs for districts 3 & 8
 - Develop new relationships with relocated and new District Superintendents
- Re-build Early Response Team (ERT) bench strength
- Re-build ERT Team Leader bench strength
- Add ERT Trainer capacity to 4 people
- Engage current base of ERTs in recovery/rebuild work in the MI Area
- District DRCs to roll out connecting neighbors to their district churches
- District DRCs canvass local churches to develop DRCs in local churches
- District DRCs to connect and develop relationships with local EMAs in their districts

MICHIGAN CONFERENCE PROTECTION POLICY TRANSITION TASK FORCE

The MiC PPTTF completed their task to write a new policy which reflects the work and experience of the West MI Abuse Prevention Team and Detroit Conference Protection Team. The new Michigan Conference Policy for the Protection of Children, Youth, and Vulnerable Adults, was accepted as part of the Transition Team's report at the 2017 Annual Conference. This accomplished, we had the urgent task of developing a teaching plan and training persons interested in becoming trainers under the new policy. All previous authorizations were deactivated December 31, 2017. Trainings were held in five sites around the State, September through November 2017.

The Task Force continues to meet monthly to discuss implementation of the training and other needs expressed by United Methodists committed to having protection for Children, Youth, and Vulnerable Adults at conference and district events. We spend half a day reviewing all applicants' files, a necessary step before they can become authorized to be care givers at district and conference events.

In response to an interest in developing local church policies, a sub-committee has been formed to address this need. Our goal is to have a Michigan Conference local church care and protection policy, available for adoption by all churches.

All this work is possible because of a group of dedicated individuals on the Task Force and the individuals who support our work on staff at the Conference office. We appreciate the individuals who have become trainers and those who have participated in a training to become authorized. You are ones who will help keep children, youth and vulnerable adults safe at the Michigan Conference and District Events.

Judy Herriff, Facilitator of MiC PPTTF. Members of the Task Force: Mike Darby, David Elmore, Murphy Ehlers, Toni Grimmet, Marguerite Zowislak, and Phyllis Hart.

Notes