# 2018 Reports to the 2019 Annual Conference Session

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Reports from Conference Ministry Units

Board of Ordained Ministry

The Board of Ordained Ministry (BOM) helps the Minnesota Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church live out its mission through the enlistment, recruitment, credentialing, training, and support of the clergy of the conference. The following are the highlights of our work for the year 2018-2019:

Aligning the work of the BOM with the Bishop/Cabinet: The Board Executive Committee continues to meet twice annually with the Cabinet, once in October and once in the summer. In these meetings, we revisit our expectations for clergy leadership and how to best encourage faithful, effective qualities. The BOM Chairs continue to serve on the Bishop’s Human Sexuality Task Force.

Board Development: At our fall meeting some significant changes were made in regard to licensing local pastors and interviewing candidates for licensing, and provisional and full membership. The interviews for licensing local pastors has been delegated to the District Committees on Ordination, where these pastors are cared for throughout their ministry career. We moved to more competency-based interview questions that cover these nine characteristics for ministry excellence: Personal Passionate Faith, Evangelistic Heart, Apostolic Leadership, Emotional and Social Intelligence, Wesleyan Way of Discipleship, Leading Adaptively, Holy, Healthy Habits, Life-Long Learner, Loves God’s World.

Licensed Local Pastors: The number of people licensed for ministry continues to grow across the conference. Due to the number of licensed local pastors we continue to have a conference staff person serving as registrar for LLPs. We celebrate the vibrant, faithful leadership being provided through so many Licensed Local Pastors.

Recruiting: Recruiting continues to be an area of focus for the BOM. We continue to engage the Chairs of the Ethnic Caucuses and support the ongoing Eli Project for interns. We are also working with Conference Leadership Development in the area of recruiting.

Cultural Competency: The BOM remains committed to growing in this area. To that end, we utilize pre- and post interview questions of ourselves in regard to each candidate that we interview. We are actively searching for more diversity within the makeup of the BOM.

Clergy Support and Training: We continue to support the well-being of clergy at all stages of ministry. We support the New Clergy Leadership Academy, Soul Leaders, Shmita training – an enhanced Boundaries training, and MEF funds – conference funds for continuing education.

It is a joy to work with talented, Spirit-filled members of the board. Their commitment of time, energy, and passion to the work of the board is humbling and inspiring. The opportunity to get to know the hearts, stories, and dreams of those we interview is always a gift.

Brenda North, Co-chair and Laurie Kantonen, Former Co-chair

Board of Pension and Health Benefits

The Conference Board of Pensions and Health Benefits (CBOPHB) is composed of eleven lay and clergy persons, assisted by one consultant, Wespath Benefits and Investments liaison and three staff. The CBOPHB Board is responsible for certain benefits for eligible ministerial members who are currently serving or who have served the annual conference and other church workers and lay employees of the annual conference. Those responsibilities include: 1) pensions; 2) protection in case of death or disability; 3) health insurance; 4) medical and dependent care reimbursement; 5) incapacitation funding (pulpit supply); 6) maternity/paternity leave funding and 7) adoptive aid grants.
2018-19 CONFERENCE YEAR HIGHLIGHTS/DEVELOPMENTS/ISSUES:

1. Members of the CBOPHB participated in the Financial Advisory Consulting Team (FACT) study of the Minnesota Annual Conference in 2016. The two recommendations from the FACT report relating to the CBOPHB are:

- Commit to engage in the Economic Projection Process in conjunction with Wespath after the 2016 Annual Conference Session.

- Review health benefits programs for active and retiree members of the Minnesota Conference. Effective January 1, 2018, the self-funded MAC plan contract with Blue Cross Blue Shield of Minnesota terminated. In its place appointed clergy and lay employees eligible for the conference group health plan enrolled in Wespath’s HealthFlex Exchange plan effective January 1, 2018. The CBOPHB adopted the HealthFlex Exchange program to expand health insurance offerings. HealthFlex offers six medical/pharmacy plan options, three dental plans and two enhanced vision plans along with medical and dependent care flexible spending accounts and health savings account with the High Deductible health plan. The change to HealthFlex allows the participant to choose the plan design and add-on options that best fit their needs for their family situation.

The CBOPHB began working on the Economic Projection Process with Wespath in 2017 and continued the work in 2018 requesting specific funding parameters for the Wespath projections. The projection work is ongoing to refine the data and to update with actual performance of funds and liabilities. The process will assist the conference in establishing a long-term funding strategy based on the conference’s risk tolerance in order to respond to financial needs and competing interests for reserve funds.

2. In calendar year 2018, the benefit reserves funded $1.24 million of conference expenditures thus providing relief to apportionment and local church expenses. The items funded from benefit reserves included retiree and LTD medical subsidy, active health subsidy, CRSP-match, 2% of CPP premiums (which lower the cost to local churches), medical grants, medical/maternity/paternity leave, conference lay staff pension and Death & Disability premium, and benefit office staffing. In calendar year 2019, benefit reserves will fund approximately $1.4 million in conference expenditures.

3. Beginning January 1, 2017, the CBOPHB reduced the billing rate to the local church for the Comprehensive Protection Plan (CPP), the death and disability coverage for clergy appointed ¾ time or more. The prior billing rate was 3% of compensation (salary + housing). Following the economic downturn of 2008 Wespath provided a premium holiday to all conferences for two years. The Minnesota Conference provided a 6 month premium rebate to all churches that provided CPP coverage at that time. Wespath announced a CPP premium holiday for the years 2018 and 2019 due to the mortality table change to the RP 2014 indicating longer life expectancy, which increases the time in which death benefits are assumed to be paid. The CBOPHB determined using the remaining reserves from the prior premium holiday and reducing the CPP rate to 1% to the local church, the conference can then fund the CPP cost (3% billed from Wespath) and continue the 1% CPP rate through 2021 and possibly beyond. It is understood, completely removing a cost to the local church for a year or two then reinstating the cost is more difficult than a continued lower rate over many years.

4. The Pre-82 pension liability of the Minnesota Conference is currently fully funded (104%) as of January 1, 2017, based on the most recent Final Valuation from Wespath. The Pre-82 funds are committed to the payment of obligations in the denominational pension plans. They may be used for Pre-1982, MPP annuity contributions, and CRSP-DB contributions for Minnesota Conference clergy pension liabilities or for other conference’s unpaid liabilities to these same plans. In an effort to preserve a fully-funded status, the CBOPHB has recommended the Past Service Rate (“PSR”) be increased at the annual rate of 2% for the foreseeable future. The Wespath Valuation Report for 2019, as of 1/1/2017, indicates the Pre-82 plan for all conferences, on a minimum contribution basis, with a funded ratio of 107%. While Minnesota’s funded ratio is reported at 104% there are 13 conferences with funded ratios of less than 95 percent, and of those, 3 conferences are reported to have a funded ratio of less than 80 percent. The Pre-82 plan encompasses all participating conferences; if a conference defaults on its liability, all plan assets are available and all conferences are responsible for the liability. The CBOPHB reviews the Valuation reports, the financial climate and the funded status each year to determine when it is prudent to redirect funds from the Pre-82 assets. The Pre-82 preliminary valuation report as of 1/1/2018 for 2020 reports a funded ratio of 108% for the Minnesota Conference. The Minnesota Conference has reserves if there is an unfunded liability for the Pre-82 service.
5. The Annual Conference 2018 payment to Wespath for the Clergy Retirement Security Program defined benefit component ("CRSP-DB") was paid on December 31, 2018 from funds collected through direct bill to the local churches and reserve funds. The 2018 contribution to CRSP-DB plan on December 31, 2018 was $1,242,785. Due to the mortality schedule change instituted 1/1/2016 for 2018, the CBOPHB determined using Pre-82 plan surplus to pay the CRSP-DB annual contribution for 2018 was not prudent, which was the procedure from 2007 through 2015. In the future, payments of the CRSP-DB may be made by using Pre-82 plan surplus as determined each year based on the funded status of the Pre-82 plan and the financial climate. In years when Pre-82 surplus is not available, payments received from local churches will fund the CRSP-DB contribution.

6. For 2014 through 2020 the CBOPHB approved funding the CRSP one-to-one matching component of up to 1% of compensation for clergy contributing to the UMPIP from the conference’s reserves in the Deposit account invested at Wespath. The total 2018 CRSP-DC Match contribution was $124,682. Over 90% of clergy appointed in Minnesota participated and received CRSP-DC Match contributions. See “Miscellaneous Additional Information” at the end of this report for specific billing information for 2020.

7. *The Book of Discipline ¶1506.6, states, “Each Annual Conference shall develop, adopt, and implement a formal comprehensive funding plan or plans for funding all of its benefit obligations.”* The Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits completed and submitted the Comprehensive Benefit Funding Plan for 2020 to Wespath in March 2019 for review and written opinion. The Comprehensive Benefit Funding Plan is submitted to Annual Conference Session for approval annually.

8. From August, 1995 thru 2017 the Minnesota Annual Conference provided medical insurance with a self-funded program administered by Blue Cross Blue Shield of Minnesota (BCBSMN) called the MAC Plan. The CBOPHB celebrates the history of the self-funded plan and the success in providing quality coverage for the participants for over 20 years.

   Effective January 1, 2018, Wespath’s HealthFlex Exchange was the health plan offered to eligible clergy, lay employees, and non-Medicare eligible retirees in the Minnesota Conference. The CBOPHB approved the use of MAC Plan reserves to retain the same church portion of the health insurance premium in 2017 for the 2018 health plan year. The use of reserves assisted the local church by keeping the church share the same since 2011. When the 2019 HealthFlex Exchange Plan premiums were provided to the CBOPHB, MAC Plan reserves were considered in the calculation process for the premium credit available for participants to choose the plan that best fits their health and financial needs. The 2019 HealthFlex premium increases ranged from 1.1% to 6.4% across the different plan options. The 2019 premium increase for the C2000 plan (Minnesota’s default plan option) was 4.1%. The 2019 premium credit was increased based on the 4.1% increase for the C2000 plan. There was an adjustment to the premium credit for the ‘Participant +1 dependent’ tier for 2019, in 2018 this tier realized a participant cost share advantage.

   The Cabinet requested of the CBOPHB to move to a blended church share for clergy health insurance over the next few years. By moving to a blended rate the church cost for health insurance would be standardized regardless of the clergy’s family size and coverage needs. Rather than do this all at once, the CBOPHB voted to phase-in the blended rate over several years to help local congregations. The 2019 cost for churches for ‘Single’ coverage was increased to $700 per month, the ‘Clergy +1’ and ‘Family’ coverage levels were decreased to $1,100 per month. The CBOPHB also voted to use conference MAC Plan reserves to moderate church and participant costs for 2019, which is estimated to be $378,000.

   Effective January 1, 2019, the Retired over age 65 participants were moved to the BCBS Group Plan N medical supplement plan because the BCBS Cost Plan was no longer available for the majority of conference participants. MedicareBlue Rx provides prescription drug coverage for all Medicare primary retirees. The premium for Retired over age 65 and LTD with Medicare remained the same for both 2018 and 2019.

   At this time, the CBOPHB does not have a preliminary proposed rate for 2020 for Retired over age 65 with Medicare supplement plans. The CBOPHB, also, has not determined the 2020 cost share for participants in the HealthFlex Exchange plan. To keep the MAC Health Plan financially sustainable, reserve levels will be monitored regularly and careful consideration given for use of reserves to moderate increases to churches and participants.
MAC Plan update:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Income**</td>
<td>4,187,419</td>
<td>4,215,859</td>
<td>4,263,874</td>
<td>4,454,255</td>
<td>5,133,768</td>
<td>5,135,013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017 Runout</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Claims</td>
<td>212,087</td>
<td>3,244,577</td>
<td>3,806,492</td>
<td>3,917,905</td>
<td>4,406,160</td>
<td>4,401,454</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HealthFlex</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Premiums</td>
<td>3,019,908</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retiree BCBS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Premiums</td>
<td>1,044,850</td>
<td>1,072,693</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Initiative Programs</td>
<td>8,949</td>
<td>39,474</td>
<td>68,933</td>
<td>64,192</td>
<td>69,228</td>
<td>70,745</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fees</td>
<td>94,826</td>
<td>203,728</td>
<td>276,053</td>
<td>308,020</td>
<td>355,676</td>
<td>339,766</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gain/ (Loss)</td>
<td>(193,201)</td>
<td>(344,612)</td>
<td>112,396</td>
<td>164,138</td>
<td>302,704</td>
<td>23,048</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** Income includes Medicare Part D Subsidy, Stop/Loss recovery for claims incurred above the attachment point, and Early Retiree Reimbursement Program 2013 thru 2017.

9. The Conference has an unfunded liability for the retiree health care premium subsidy. PRM Consulting Group, the actuarial firm hired by the Conference, prepared an Actuarial Valuation of Postretirement Medical Benefits with a valuation date of January 1, 2019 for plan year ending December 31, 2018, which reported the Expected Postretirement Benefit Obligation (or present value of benefits) to be $12,034,489 using the RP 2014 mortality table and discount rate of 4.0%. While there are no dedicated funds specifically set aside for the postretirement medical liability there are reserve funds available for funding pension and benefit needs.

INFORMATION RELATING TO THE PENSION PLAN AND COMPREHENSIVE PROTECTION PLAN ACTIVITY:

1. **Pre-82 Pension Information**: The Conference has been successful in satisfying the past service pension liability for pre-1982 years of service. This is due to the philosophy adopted in 1985 of “funding in advance” rather than “paying as you go.” As a result of gifts, apportionments, pension campaigns, continuing support of Pension Partners, and investment earnings, the Pre-82 Plan is projected to be in a fully funded position as of January 1, 2017 for 2019, according to the most recent final valuation report issued September 2018 from Wespath. Future changes in actuarial assumptions, earnings or payments could alter this annual projection either up or down. The following chart illustrates the progress made since 1982.

**TOTAL PAST SERVICE (PRE-1982) PROJECTED PENSION LIABILITY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Pension Rate</th>
<th>Total Liability</th>
<th>Funded Liability (Projected Value of Assets)</th>
<th>Unfunded Liability</th>
<th>Percent Funded</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1982</td>
<td>$178</td>
<td>$24,869,910</td>
<td>$9,947,960</td>
<td>$14,921,947</td>
<td>40.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>253</td>
<td>30,195,441</td>
<td>24,196,041</td>
<td>5,999,400</td>
<td>80.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>357</td>
<td>38,914,290</td>
<td>38,914,290</td>
<td>-0-</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>422</td>
<td>46,113,717</td>
<td>54,136,563</td>
<td>(8,022,846)</td>
<td>117.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>542</td>
<td>45,316,293</td>
<td>56,439,371</td>
<td>(11,123,078)</td>
<td>124.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>626</td>
<td>47,446,365</td>
<td>72,574,041</td>
<td>(25,127,676)</td>
<td>153.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>692</td>
<td>40,626,922</td>
<td>47,372,636</td>
<td>(6,745,714)</td>
<td>116.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### SUMMARY OF PAYMENTS FROM BENEFIT FUNDS ON DEPOSIT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CRSP-DC Match</td>
<td>$124,682</td>
<td>$128,329</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Grants &amp; Pulpit Supply</td>
<td>19,752</td>
<td>48,783</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retiree Medical Subsidy</td>
<td>593,134</td>
<td>583,181</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$737,568</strong></td>
<td><strong>$760,192</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### SUMMARY OF DEFINED BENEFIT PENSIONS PAID FOR PRE-1982 SERVICE, MPP ANNUITY AND CRSP (Clergy Retirement Security Program)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2018 Recipients</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>412 Retired Clergy Participants</td>
<td>$7,101,030</td>
<td>$6,963,851</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>144 Surviving Spouses and Others</td>
<td>1,516,518</td>
<td>1,435,399</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Persons Receiving Pension Benefits</strong></td>
<td><strong>$8,617,547</strong></td>
<td><strong>$8,399,250</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 2. Comprehensive Protection Plan (CPP)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FUNDS PAID OUT</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disability Benefits to Pastors</td>
<td>$289,162</td>
<td>$214,086</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPP Benefits to Children &amp; Spouses</td>
<td>18,147</td>
<td>19,936</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$307,309</strong></td>
<td><strong>$234,022</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### INFORMATION RELATING TO MEDICAL INSURANCE

1. **General Information:** Effective January 1, 2018, the self-funded MAC Plan was terminated and all remaining eligible participants were enrolled in Wespath’s HealthFlex Exchange program. HealthFlex Exchange offers 6 medical/pharmacy plans, 3 dental plans and 2 enhanced vision plans for participants to choose from based on their coverage needs. HealthFlex provides coverage to 33 conferences in the connection.

2. Retirees over age 65 (Medicare eligible) and long-term disability members with Medicare are enrolled in fully insured Medicare supplement plans (see “Conference Year Highlights #8 above.)

3. **MAC Health Plan Rates:** The following charts show church share rates as of January 1, 2019
COSTS AS OF JANUARY 1, 2019 (Church shares after subsidy from reserves)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HealthFlex Exchange</th>
<th>Local Church share</th>
<th>Pastor’s share</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACTIVE PASTORS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>$8,400.00</td>
<td>$8,520.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family or Participant +1</td>
<td>$13,200.00</td>
<td>$13,440.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*ACH=Automatic Clearing House funds transfer/withdrawal from bank account

RETIREE & DISABLED RATES BEFORE SUBSIDY AS OF JANUARY 1, 2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RETIRED PASTORS</th>
<th>ANNUAL PREMIUM</th>
<th>Individual Pays</th>
<th>Conference Pays</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Retiree or Spouse 65+ &amp;</td>
<td>$3,624.00—Single</td>
<td>**</td>
<td>**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEDICARE</td>
<td>$7,248.00—Couple</td>
<td>**</td>
<td>**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retiree under age 65</td>
<td>Depends on choice</td>
<td>**</td>
<td>**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retired (clergy and spouse)</td>
<td>See above by type</td>
<td>**</td>
<td>**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One over 65/one under 65</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DISABLED PASTORS

Conference will subsidize 70% of default premium for 5 years followed by 50% subsidy. (CBOPHB change July 1, 2005, amended 2009)

** Subsidy Rules apply (See #4 below Retiree Premium Subsidy for specifics)

4. **Retiree Premium Subsidy**: Approved at the 2003 Annual Conference and effective January 1, 2005. Five years of continuous participation in the MAC Health Plan immediately prior to retirement is required for continuation on the MAC Health Plan in retirement. Participation in Medicare Part A and B is required for continuation on the MAC Retiree Medicare Supplement Plans when retired and over age 65. The basis for subsidy is the year of retirement, the retirement type (full, early or 20-year rule), and years of service as follows.

**Rules for Retiree Subsidy** (subsidy is per clergy and per spouse on MAC Plan)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Retirement</th>
<th>Retired before 12/31/1981 &amp; 1/1/1990</th>
<th>Retired between 12/31/1990 &amp; 1/1/2019</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Full or Mandatory</td>
<td>Lesser of 100% of premium or $320 per month</td>
<td>Lesser of 100% of premium or $4 per month per year of service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early (62 years of age or 30 years of service)</td>
<td>Lesser of 100% of premium or $320 per month</td>
<td>Lesser of 100% of premium or $4 per month per year of service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 year rule</td>
<td>No Subsidy</td>
<td>No Subsidy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note**: Withdrawal under BOD paragraph 360 will terminate conference retiree subsidy.


Approved action item 205 in the 2018 Journal on page 84 adjusted the years of service used for clergy retiring after 1990 to include the year 2019. The Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits will regularly review the years of service used for subsidy.
5. **HealthFlex Exchange eligibility:** All clergy appointed ½ time or more are mandatory enrollment with the option to waive HealthFlex coverage if they have coverage by one of four options permitted by HealthFlex. Lay employees are eligible if the local church has completed the *HealthFlex Sub-Adoption Agreement* and works 30 or more average hours per week. The local church is required to fund at least $618 per month for lay church employees enrolled, the reported church share by the CBOP for 2019.

*Note:* Eligible clergy that do not complete the enrollment form or the waiver form within 30 days of eligibility will be automatically enrolled in the default C2000 HealthFlex plan and the church will be billed. Billing is issued monthly by the conference benefits office. Complete details regarding the coverage and operation of the program are on file with the Benefits Officer of the Minnesota Conference and with HealthFlex. As of January 2019, 231 pastors, lay employees and retirees under age 65 are enrolled in HealthFlex Exchange plus their dependents. As of January 2019, 314 Medicare eligible retirees, spouses, surviving spouses, and LTD participants with Medicare are enrolled in the fully insured Medicare supplement plans offered by the Minnesota Annual Conference.

**OTHER BENEFIT PROGRAMS**

**FLEXIBLE SPENDING PLAN:** HealthFlex Exchange offers a Flexible Spending Plan for participants on the HealthFlex medical coverage. The benefit plan is established by HealthFlex under Section 125 of the Internal Revenue Code. Participants elect an amount to withhold before tax, which may be used to pay medical, dental, or dependent care (daycare) expenses. Carryover of unused medical funds up to $500 in a plan year are permitted into the next year.

**MEDICAL/INCAPACITATION LEAVE COMPENSATION:** See 2011 *Journal*, page 93 thru 95, for policies and funding of and by Conference Board of Pension & Health Benefits relating to medical/incapacitation leave. The CBPHB currently provides pulpit supply for up to 8 weeks when a clergy person, due to impaired health (illness, surgery or accident) is deemed temporarily unable to perform the essential duties of the appointment by the Cabinet.

**MATERNITY AND PATERNITY LEAVE—PULPIT SUPPLY FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE:** See 2005 *Journal*, page 125-126, for policies of funding by Conference Board of Pension & Health Benefits relating to Maternity and Paternity Leave. The Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits will provide pulpit supply financial assistance to the church when arranged with the church, the District Superintendent and the Benefits Officer. Compensation to the pastor, pension and medical coverage will be maintained by the church for no less than the first eight weeks of leave.

**ADOPTIVE AID GRANTS:** The Conference Board of Pension & Health Benefits provides an adoptive aid payment to active clergy participating in conference medical coverage for the adoption of a child other than a blood relative of either spouse or a legal lawful child from a previous marriage. Blood relatives are defined as nephews, nieces, grandchildren, or cousins. The CBOPHB approved at the September 9, 2014 meeting an increase to the Adoptive Aid Grant from $500 to $1,000 effective immediately. A request for payment must be made to the Conference Board of Pension & Health Benefits within 12 months from the date of adoption. This payment is in lieu of a maternity benefit, which would have been provided under the medical plan. The Board of Ordained Ministry & Cabinet should be reminded annually that this benefit is available to clergy.

**MISCELLANEOUS ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

The 2020 Minnesota Conference Average Compensation (CAC) is $66,559. The 2020 Denominational Average Compensation (DAC) is $72,648. Compensation is defined as total cash salary plus housing plus any tax-deferred contributions made on the pastor’s behalf.

The 2020 Clergy Retirement Security Program (CRSP) and Comprehensive Protection Plan (CPP) billing to churches is calculated as follows:

\[
\text{CRSP – DB (defined benefit) } = \\ \begin{cases} \\ 5,581.56 & \text{fulltime appointment} \\ 4,186.08 & \text{¾ time appointment} \\ 2,790.72 & \text{½ time appointment} \end{cases} \\
\text{CRSP – DC (defined contribution) } = 2\% \text{ of Compensation (Salary + Housing)} \\
\text{CPP - ¾ and fulltime appointment } = 1\% \text{ of Compensation (Salary +Housing)}
\]
*Wespath legislation adopted by General Conference 2016 changed the Comprehensive Protection Plan eligibility to all ¾ time clergy appointed, effective January 1, 2017, with a billing rate of 3% of clergy compensation (salary + housing). (see "Conference Year Highlights #3 above)

Clergy pension benefits effective January 1, 2014, with Modified CRSP based on:

- A defined benefit calculated at retirement: 1.0% x DAC x Years of Service beginning 1/1/2014 = Annual Defined Benefit at retirement
- A defined contribution: 2% of clergy compensation (salary plus housing allowance or parsonage value of 25% of salary) to Clergy’s CRSP Defined Contribution account.
- A defined matching contribution of up to 1% of clergy compensation for clergy contributing to the voluntary United Methodist Personal Investment Plan (UMPIP) greater than 0. The matching contribution was a new feature to the CRSP.

Jean Edin, Pension/Benefits Officer
Katherine Schill, Conference Board of Pension/Health Benefits Chair
Barbara Brower, Director of Finance and Administration

The Board of Trustees is established by The Book of Discipline in each annual conference (Paragraph 2512). In Minnesota, the annual conference is incorporated as a nonprofit corporation; the members of the corporation are the same as the members of the Annual Conference. The Board of Trustees serves, for purposes under corporate actions under Minnesota law, as the board of director of the corporation. The Book of Discipline entrusts the Board of Trustees with responsibility for receiving, collecting, and holding in trust all donations, bequests and gifts to the Annual Conference; administering such donations in accordance with the grantor and in the interest of the intended beneficiary of such gifts; receiving, holding in trust for and on behalf of the annual conference for use in ministries; investing, reinvesting, buying and selling all funds and property held in trust; and taking all necessary legal steps to safeguard and protect the interest and rights of the Annual Conference in any place and in any matter relating to property and rights to property owned by or on behalf of the Annual Conference.

In its legal capacity as the board of directors of the corporation, the trustees are responsible for authorizing official acts of the Minnesota Annual Conference when it acts as a corporation. Thus, the Board of Trustees acts as the legal representatives of the Annual Conference in its conduct of business buying and selling property, protecting the interests of the Annual Conference by procuring and maintaining insurance, participating in legal proceedings to protect the property rights of the annual conference, and authorizing instruments that bind the annual conference, such as deeds, mortgages, guarantees, and investments.

United Methodist polity includes a trust clause whereby all property is held in trust for the denomination. While each local church owns its building and property, the trust clause means that assets are held in trust for the future of United Methodism as part of the covenant relationship that every United Methodist has with one another. This ensures that church property is used and retained by the denomination for the common goal of inviting, forming, and sending Christians to do God’s work in the world. Discontinued church property comes to the annual conference through this trust clause. Legacy resources from discontinued church properties are re-invested for the work of congregational development. As part of our work, the Board of Trustees, along with Congregational Development, assist transitioning congregations at the beginning or end of their life cycle.

Among the actions undertaken by the Board of Trustees in 2018-2019 are the following:

- The task force assigned to maintain Star Lake camp property finalized an agreement with the Minnesota Land Trust to establish conservation easements on much of this pristine property. The proceeds of the easement will be used to further our camping program. We continue to lease the land to a non-profit group who utilize it as a camp.
- The task force assigned to maintain the former Joyce property and parsonage for Uptown Church, a new church start, agreed to sell both the parsonage and the church. The sale of the parsonage closed in
December 2018 and the sale of the church is expected to close in June 2019. The net proceeds of the sale will be used for Uptown Church and other new church starts.

- Maintained the district superintendent parsonage in Alexandria and the Episcopal residence in Eden Prairie.
- Continue to market the land in Sartell, MN for sale.
- Continued to hold the previous St. Croix Valley church and parsonage for Embrace church campus and parsonage. The conference will continue to own these buildings until Embrace church has met certain benchmarks determined by Congregational Development.

I continue to appreciate the opportunity to serve as Chair of the Board of Trustees and thank all of the members of the Board for their service this year. Special thanks to Jeffrey B. Larson who helped guide us through the significant and extended property transactions.

Rachel McIver Morey, Chair

Commission on Archives and History

- The Commission on Archives and History (CAH) met quarterly in 2018.
- The Conference Archivist (Kathy Spence Johnson) the Conference Historian (Thelma Boeder), and the Conference Secretary of Memoirs (David Laechel) are all-active on the Commission.
- Two new members joined the Commission this year: Rev. Judith Clark and Rev. Dan Foster.
- We continue to promote the 15 official Conference Historic sites. A complete listing is available on the conference website.
- Provided 15 clergy grave markers to families for clergy who passed away in 2017-2018.
- We sent letters of recognition and encouragement to congregations that are celebrating significant milestones in the history of their congregations or buildings.
- The Conference Archive has Minnesota Conference Archive/Past Perfect Catalogue online. Look here for highlighted Conference Archival records: http://minnesotaumc.pastperfectonline.com
- We continue to make available guidelines for how local churches and cemeteries can set up a Cemetery Association for perpetual care for the cemeteries.
- We sent an email to local churches asking who their historians (official or unofficial) or a contact person might be. We then sent a letter of greeting to them to thank them for their work and to encourage them. We received a handful of responses.
- Our archivist worked with the historians of the Red Rock Camp Meeting Association to provide a display at their 150th Anniversary celebration in June.
- We registered Olivet UM Church of Robbinsdale as a “Historic Site” to the General Commission on Archives and History. We will present their plaque early in 2019.
- We provided reminders and support to the Annual Conference Sessions Team to mark the 50th anniversary of the UM merger in 1968. The merger was voted on at General Conference 1968, but it didn’t happen in MN until 1969.
- We began compiling a list of historic sites with active fellowships (some of which are designated MN Historic Sites) that have occasional events at their sites. We have a list of 7 fellowships so far.
- We sent two delegates to the North Central Jurisdictional Commission on Archives and History Convocation at Dayton, OH (Theme: UMC 50th merger) in July.
- We submitted quarterly articles in MN Connect, including Spring: NCJ CAH at Dayton, OH, Summer; July 29 Portland Prairie event with the Bishop, Fall: Email blast to church historians, and Winter: “Save the date” for Convocation of JCAH in MN.
- Across the course of a number of meetings by the Commission and a special task force, we designed the North Central Jurisdiction Convocation that we will host in July 2019 in Mankato. The theme will be, “The Way Forward: Looking Backward to Discern a Path Forward.”
- The UM Historical Society of MN continues in inactive status.

David Werner, Chair
The COSROW co-chairs, Rev. Debra Jene Collum and Faye Christensen attended the UMW Assembly in Columbus, Ohio, in May. The Assembly was spirit-filled. We were able to meet with other COSROW members there. We also sat down with folks who were gathering suggestions for a revision of the UMC Social Principles. We emphasized the importance of using expansive language throughout the Social Principles. The question was asked about why polygamy isn’t addressed in the Social Principles. We were told that since polygamy is not against the law in some parts of the world and that some African UMC leaders have more than one wife, it’s best not to address that issue at this time---so as not to offend.

“#MeToo#ChurchToo” was the theme of COSROW’s pre-conference seminar. It focused on women in the workplace and used skits of real-life sexual harassment occurrences experienced by UMC women. Ideas regarding how to deal with inappropriate actions were discussed. The seminar also reviewed the UMC’s policy about sexual harassment, abuse as well as the procedures regarding reporting and investigations of such. Bishop Ough’s statement about sexual assault & abuse (Oct. 1, 2018) was read at the fall COSROW meeting. The statement was in response to the much-publicized testimony of Dr. Christine Blassey Ford about Judge (now Justice) Brett Kavanaugh. Bishop Ough’s words were powerful and compassionate. The COSROW co-chairs emailed Bishop Ough and thanked him for shining a spotlight on this critical issue which is all too often draped in silence.

COSROW will bring a resolution to the 2019 MN Annual Conference encouraging the use of expansive language during annual conference worship services. This action was prompted by a complaint on social media following the 2018 annual conference which criticized the use of expansive language regarding Creeds.

MN COSROW’s co-chair, Rev. Debra Collum attended a train-the-trainer workshop in San Antonio, Texas, in Oct. 2018 through a Golden Cross Grant. Four other clergywomen from MN attended. They included Rev. Cynthia Williams, D.S.; Rev. Martha Postlewaite; Rev. Mariah Tollgaard and Rev. Leah Challberg. The “Do No Harm” event focused on 4 topics:

1. Boundaries Training;
2. Response Teams;
3. Supporting Alleged Perpetrators and Victims and
4. The Administrative Process---i.e. what to do with complaints?

In September, Rev. Debra Collum, presented at the Prophetic Imagination Conference in Minneapolis on Expansive Language for God. She did this in her role of Co-Chair of COSROW continuing COSROW’s commitment to education concerning use of language for God and humans.

COSROW is partnering with CORR, UMW, and Church and Society for the 2019 pre-conference seminar entitled “Called to be Neighbors” which will focus on our Muslim neighbors.

Faye Christensen and Debra Collum, Co-chairs

Director of Camping and Retreat Ministries

Dakotas-Minnesota Area United Methodist Camp and Retreat Ministries

2018 Highlights

- **Staffing Transitions and Celebrations**
  - Thank you to Sean Binder for his leadership as Director of Storm Mountain Center. Sean moved on in the fall of 2018.
  - Welcome Levi and Lara Ziegler as new co-directors of Storm Mountain Center, Winter 2019
  - Welcome Beata Ferris as Area Marketing and Outreach Project Coordinator, Spring 2019
  - Welcome Eric Reshley as Maintenance and Facilities Director at Koronis, Spring 2018
  - Welcome Kevin Albers as Maintenance and Facilities Director at Storm Mountain, Spring 2018
  - Welcome Diane Hepburn as Food Service Director at Storm Mountain, Spring 2018
• Operations Ending in Black
  o For the fourth year in a row in Minnesota, and for the third year in a row in the Dakotas, your camp and retreat ministries ended financially in the black. Success is attributed to unified financial system, adhering to established financial controls and review process, staff management and oversight, annual review of costs/rates, and real-time access to accurate data and information.

• Central Office Staffing
  o Dakotas-Minnesota Camp and Retreat Ministries continues to serve our churches, clergy, and staff through a centralized administration office. This alignment is working well.

• Camp Ambassador Outreach
  o In March of 2019, the area camping ministry hired Beata Ferris as Area Marketing and Outreach Coordinator. Beata works in collaboration with camping central office staff, campsite directors, and the Area Camp and Retreat Ministry Director, to lead and implement an updated and enhanced outreach that helps identify and strengthen relationships with local church representatives (Camp Ambassadors) who encourage their churches and communities to attend an Area United Methodist Camp. With the timing of Beata’s hire, our outreach to Camp Ambassadors was later than anticipated. However, Beata is quickly making up for lost time and has been connecting with our local church leaders.

• Camping Statistics and Additional Highlights - see 2018 missional report

Strategic Ministry Plan Updates and Improvements:

• Dakotas
  o Lake Poinsett
    ▪ Construction of new maintenance shop – anticipated spring/summer 2019
    ▪ Addition of park, play area, and welcome pavilion – anticipated fall 2019
    ▪ James Larson Estate Gift and Endowment
      ▪ Lake Poinsett was named as the primary beneficiary of the James “Jim” Larson Estate. Jim was a longtime volunteer and supporter of camping ministry and Lake Poinsett Camp.
      ▪ Established “James Larson Endowment” in 2019 to help fund site maintenance and improvements into the future.
    ▪ Purchased new mower

  o Wesley Acres
    ▪ Purchased new pontoon boat
    ▪ Updated zipline
    ▪ Purchased new truck and snow plow

  o Storm Mountain Center
    ▪ Installed new roof on director’s residence
    ▪ Updated local internet/wifi

• Minnesota
  o Koronis
    ▪ New Tabernacle
      ▪ $1.75M committed to project including funds raised though Koronis capital campaign, “Give S’more for Camp, and camp sale proceeds
      ▪ anticipated ground breaking – Spring 2019
      ▪ Detailed case statement – www.koronisministries.org/continuingthevision
    ▪ Waste Water system overhaul, after much pumping during first quarter of 2018
    ▪ Chapel lighting project completed
    ▪ Chef’s apartment added in Lakeview Lodge
    ▪ Added kitchen to lower level of Director's residence
Northern Pines
  - Red Pine Dining Hall flooring replaced
  - Roofs for New Wesley cabin, two tree houses, and the block house
  - Dining Hall alarm system upgrade
  - Fan and lighting upgrades to Lodge
  - Purchased new truck

Kowakan Adventures
  - New Kevlar canoes

Star Lake
  - Members of the Minnesota Conference’s Board of Trustees voted in 2016 to pursue conservation easements over individual parcels of Star Lake Wilderness Camp land.

Updates and Reminders:

- **Shared Dakotas-Minnesota Area Mission, Core Values, Outcomes**
  - **Mission:** Helping campers and guests to experience Christ, Creation, and Community through camp and retreat ministries.
  - **Core values:** Providing sacred places apart, nurturing Christian faith and discipleship, teaching creation care and appreciation, partnering with United Methodist churches and agencies, extending Christian hospitality and community, developing principled spiritual leaders, and inspiring and equipping lives for love and justice.
  - **Outcomes:** Disciples and leaders who hear and respond to God’s call to share their faith, love and accept everyone, serve others, and trust God.

- **Campwise**
  - Dakotas and Minnesota Camps utilize Campwise, a widely-used camp and retreat software program, for camper and guest registration, data management, and reporting.
  - 2018 included refined of improved reporting for volunteer leaders, staff, user day reports for hosted/conference ministries, and automation.

- **Site Advisory Teams**
  - Campsites continue to develop and strengthen their site advisory teams/councils. These teams allow volunteers an opportunity to participate in the camping ministry in the areas they love most, provide direct feedback to our site directors and staff, and extend the reach of each site. People interested in serving on a site team should contact the director of the site.

- **Dakotas-Minnesota Area Alignment**
  - All Dakotas-Minnesota Area staff, including site directors and central office staff, continue to meet and plan together consistently.
  - Governance - Since 2016, the Dakotas and Minnesota conferences’ camp and retreat ministries have combined their strengths and leadership and have come together to form a joint governance council. This arrangement expands the camping-related offerings for United Methodists in each conference as well as sharing of best practices to create the strongest possible area camp and retreat ministry. The Camp and Retreat Council is made up of equal representation from each conference and meets quarterly.

- **Dakotas - Living into a Sustainable Operating Model**
  - **Apportionment neutral in camp operations** - Dakotas Camps continue on the pathway to become apportionment neutral, in the funding of the camping operations only, by 2021. Camps will continue to receive apportionment support in the areas of capital development and maintenance, central office staff support, property taxes, and insurance.
  - **Fee/Rate Review** – A comprehensive review of all fees and rates for camps and retreats was completed in 2016. A phased multi-year plan to adjust rates was implemented in 2017.
- **Financial Policies/Controls** - Each site develops a monthly spending plan based on prior year’s actuals. Monthly conversation and review of any variances on established spending plans helps ensure real-time management and course correction as needed with a goal of no new deficits.

- **American Camp Association (ACA) Accreditation**
  - Dakota-Minnesota staff regularly review every facet of camp programs and operations to ensure a safe and quality camp experience for all participants. In 2017, Lake Poinsett Camp and Wesley Acres Camp joined Koronis, Northern Pines, and Kowakan as fully accredited operations through the American Camp Association, the national accrediting body for camping programs. Storm Mountain Center will seek accreditation in 2019. To earn accreditation, camps must comply with hundreds of health, safety, and program quality standards. Only one in five camps nationwide achieves this distinction.

- **Volunteer Dean and Leader Training**
  - Developed and launched updated volunteer application for any/all camp volunteer positions. Application includes camping safe sanctuaries requirements, leader agreements, required safety information, and training resources.

- **Curriculum**
  - All Dakota-Minnesota campsites use “Inside-Out” summer camp curriculum, a popular, ecumenical series, used in many camp and retreat settings throughout the country.

- **Continuing Education and Professional Development**
  - Staff attend trainings, webinars, and workshops, both individually and as a group, in areas of management and spiritual growth.

- **Area Camp and Retreat Staff**
  - Dakota
    - Christy Heflin - Director, Lake Poinsett Camp
    - Levi and Lara Ziegler - Co-Directors, Storm Mountain Center
    - Paul and Brenda Lint - Co-Directors, Wesley Acres Camp
  - Minnesota
    - Leslie Hobson - Director, Northern Pines Camp
    - Dan Ziegler - Director, Koronis Ministries and Kowakan Adventures
  - Area Central Camping Office
    - Stacey Edwards - Camping Coordinator
    - Linda Bowers - Camping Assistant
    - Beata Ferris - Marketing and Outreach Project Coordinator
    - Susan Shellberg - Camping Accountant
    - Keith Shew – Executive Director of Camp and Retreat Ministries

Thank you for continuing to support your camp and retreat ministries in the Dakota and Minnesota Annual Conferences. Thank you for making sure that the children, youth, families, and adults in your church and community know about camping opportunities! Your support and encouragement helps ensure that Lake Poinsett, Koronis, Storm Mountain, Wesley Acres, Northern Pines, Kowakan, and many off-site programs and events can continue to be places where God meets with people. An experience at one of your Dakota and Minnesota United Methodist Camps has changed the lives of generations of our Annual Conferences’ leadership and many others as well. Thank you - you are appreciated!

“Camp Gives Kids a World of Good!” **American Camp Association**

*Keith Shew*
The Minnesota communications team—consisting of Karla Hovde, our capable and excellent communications specialist and me—has stayed busy in 2018 and 2019. Here’s a look at some key projects and initiatives from the past year:

- **General Conference 2019**: Both of us were on the ground in St. Louis to provide daily comprehensive coverage of this special called session, which took place Feb. 23-26. The 864 voting delegates—including four from Minnesota—met to discern a way forward related to the issue of homosexuality, ultimately approving a “Traditional Plan” that affirms the church’s current bans on ordaining LGBTQ clergy and officiating at or hosting same-sex marriages. In partnership with Dakotas Conference communicators, we provided conference-specific coverage including articles, photos, videos, and Facebook Live sessions—all featuring reflections from our delegates and alternates. Since General Conference, we have worked with conference leaders and church leaders to coordinate and prepare them for media interviews—and we’ve disseminated key messages and resources to help clergy lead effectively.

- **Love Boldly Micro Grants**: Following General Conference, many Minnesota churches across the theological spectrum indicated that their reputation had been hurt by the actions of The United Methodist Church’s top legislative body. The communications team came up with the idea of partnering on a media push to repair and rebuild their reputations. We invited churches to apply for a grant of up to $1,000 that could be used to communicate their values and commitments, and extend a genuine welcome to their communities. Messages could take the form of a newspaper ad, a social media ad, a banner to place outside the church, yard signs, door hangers for the neighborhood, postcards, a billboard, or any avenue appropriate for each church’s setting. We provided design assistance for those who needed it. The reaction to this offering was extremely positive, and as of April 15, more than 80 churches had applied for and received a grant. (Applications are still being accepted!)

- **REACH**: On Oct. 5-6, the Dakotas-Minnesota Area hosted a first-of-its-kind event for nearly 500 leaders at Embrace Church in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. The two-day event, featuring five keynote speakers and 10 topical workshops, provided inspiration and tactics to reach new people for Christ. In partnership with the Dakotas communications team, we created promotional and event materials, built an event website, provided daily coverage at the gathering, and created videos of each keynote address, along with corresponding study guides, that churches could use after the event.

- **E-newsletters**: We continue to use two primary e-newsletters to help people throughout the conference stay connected and informed: **MN Bulletin Board** (which comes out every Tuesday and includes upcoming events and opportunities) and **MN Connect** (which comes out every Thursday and includes news, feature stories, ideas, and inspiration). At the beginning of each month, we also share a wrap-up e-newsletter that contains links to the top articles from the past month and a bulletin insert containing news and tidbits specifically geared toward people in church pews. These e-newsletters have consistently high open rates.

- **Social media**: Social media continues to be a significant vehicle to disseminate information throughout our conference and stay connected to the churches and United Methodists we serve. We share articles and blog posts, events, opportunities, inspirational messages, scripture, and more. As of April 15, 2019:

  - >2,488 people “like” the Facebook page (up 309 from a year ago)
  - >2,386 follow the conference on Twitter (up 129 from a year ago)
  - >348 follow the conference on Instagram (up 95 from a year ago)

  These channels allow us to reach a somewhat different audience than those who receive information through our other avenues. For the past three years, we’ve also used Snapchat at Annual Conference. Conference attendees could put a customized “geofilter” (with that year’s conference theme and logo) over the top of any “snaps” (photos or videos) they posted during the event.

- **Print and video projects**: We work with many conference ministry areas to create high-quality print pieces that help churches and individuals stay informed about key opportunities and initiatives. Some examples: annual
conference session materials, a quarterly “Breakthroughs” newsletter highlighting Reach • Renew • Rejoice progress, a missional report celebrating key conference initiatives, and new over the past year, quarterly “Vine and Branches: Digging Deeper” booklets (a follow-up tool from the 2018 Annual Conference) containing spiritual practices that can be used with small groups and/or entire congregations. Through a valuable ongoing partnership with the Dakotas Conference communicators, we are able to produce several high-quality and inspiring videos each year. These videos typically debut at Annual Conference and are shown by local churches after returning home.

- **Online video conferencing:** The Dakotas-Minnesota Area continues to use a video conferencing service that allows conference leadership and ministry teams to have remote meetings from anywhere, thus providing huge cost savings and time savings in the form of reduced travel. Usage has been significant from the start and continues to grow each year. From April 1, 2018 to April 1, 2019, there were 1,188 meetings across the Area that together spanned more than 3,100 hours. More than 3,300 participants used the system during that period. We are committed to continuing to provide this valuable tool and currently exploring whether to remain with our current vendor or switch to a different one based on which company can best meet our needs at the lowest cost.

- **Outreach/crisis communications:** We continue to work with individual churches to assist them with their communications strategies (recommending communication tools, relaying best practices, providing website suggestions, etc.) and we pitch stories to the media about newsworthy happenings that help tell the story of the United Methodist movement in Minnesota. This year, we also worked with several churches and leaders on crisis communications and helped them provide quick and thoughtful responses to some particularly difficult media requests.

- **Accolades:** In February, we earned six awards from the United Methodist Association of Communicators (UMAC), comprised of communicators from across the denomination. Members of the secular media serve as judges. Our awards were:
  - 1st place print and electronic design: Reach event brochure
  - 1st place single piece publicity and advertising: 2017-2018 Missional Report
  - 1st place print newsletter: “Breakthroughs” (quarterly Reach • Renew • Rejoice update)
  - 2nd place single piece publicity and advertising: Camp Minnesota 2018 Catalog
  - 3rd place feature article: “When we don’t limit God: Church’s 150th anniversary focuses on community”
  - 3rd place video: “Creating a culture of call”

We are here for you, and we always welcome your questions, feedback, and suggestions for ways we can better serve you. Please let us know if you have story ideas, or if there are particular resources or tools you’re looking for. Thank you for your partnership in ministry!

Christa Meland

Director of Leadership Development

Leadership Development continues to be a key aspect of our mission to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world by equipping its local churches for ministry and by providing a connection for ministry beyond the local church.

Our vision is one of flourishing clergy and congregational leadership energized for mission, and excelling in our gospel imperatives; Growing in Love of God and Neighbor (the Great Commandment, Matthew 22:37-40), Reaching New People (the Great Commission, Matthew 28:19-20), and Healing a Broken World (the Great Proclamation, Luke 4:16-21).

Some highlights include:

- In 2018, we had 42 Clergy, and 8 Clergy mentors participating in Clergy Leadership Academy (CLA). The focus of this year’s rotating curriculum has been Self-Awareness & Authenticity as a Leader.
• 4 Eli Project Interns completed internships within local congregations during the summer of 2018 with one of our interns declaring candidacy directly following her internship. The Eli Project saw its first former Eli Intern appointed within the Minnesota Annual Conference and established a new program for 2019, Eli 2.0 Internships, to continue to build a culture of call.
• The Board of Ordained Ministry and DCOM’s integrated the new Minnesota Annual Conference Leadership Competency Model into their candidate interview process with a new focus on behavioral, competency based interviews. Additional training was completed on the practice of interviewing and reducing bias in decision making.
• A new performance and development process, integrating the Minnesota Annual Conference competency model, was established for all Clergy to use in their annual one-on-one with their District Superintendents. This process has allowed us to better serve the training & development goals within each district and throughout the Minnesota Annual Conference.
• Leadership Development introduced Peer Coaching Circles and coach training for clergy along with building more resources in Methodist theology and history.
• Lay Leadership in the Minnesota Annual Conference continued offering its new discernment retreat, ConneXion, and its Lay Speaker retreat with ongoing support for Lay Servants, Lay Speakers and Certified Lay Ministers.
• New Conference Co-Youth Leaders, Sami Tierney and Catie Levenick started strong with organizing two high-impact youth events, The Event and Confirmation Retreat. They also began to create a network that allows youth leaders to more easily share ideas and best practices.

**Jody Thone**

**Director of Ministries**

Can I just acknowledge that this has been a hard year?

I went in this year believing and hoping that the United Methodist Church would find a way forward together and that the One Church Plan would pass. I knew there would be bumps in the road as we sorted ourselves out after the Special Called Session of the General Conference held in February 2019, but I was not prepared for the seismic shifts happening in our organizational life together. It has added a layer of complexity and anxiety about our life and ministry. How will be together? Can we be together as we have been in Minnesota? How do we truly become a church that dares to love boldly all people?

And so, it has re-shaped my work in the past few months. Every day I move between the daily work before me of the on-going ministries of the annual conference such as leading an HCI pastor cohort or planning for our summer orientation of new clergy and the demands of responding to this uncertain time we are in, and engaging in many conversations about how do we move forward. Some days I feel like everything is as it always has been, and it will continue on, and other days feel like everything is shifted and nothing is going to be the same.

And if that had been the only hard thing this year, that would have been enough. But no, I have had my own personal health challenges with a cancer diagnosis. I was on medical leave for two months recovering from surgery. I am grateful for our sick leave policy that gave me the time I needed, as well as all the prayers and support while I was on leave. A special thank you to Jody Thone (Leadership Development) and Justin Halbersma (HCI) who answered my calls for help to cover for me in key ways while I was recuperating. Interestingly enough, in my own personal life, post-surgery, some days it feels like life is back to normal, as it was before, and other days, I am reminded that everything is different! So personally and professionally, I am navigating uncharted waters.

*Discover Joy! Live Deeply* has been our theme for the past year. Staying connected to the vine that is Jesus who gives us our life has been a good word for me this year. A new piece out of annual conference session this year was to create resources for congregations to help them continue to grow in their love of God and neighbor. The Vines and Branches resources was distributed in the fall, winter, spring. Thanks to a design team of Mariah Furness Tollgaard, Rachael Warner, and Jody Thone who helped birth it, and the work of our communication staff, Christa Meland and Karla Hovde to design, create content and deliver it.
In the midst of a hard year, there is indeed joy. Out of the chaos, comes creation, and the Spirit is certainly at work as we engage in conversations about who we will be as a church. There is emerging collaborative among teams and leaders we seek to faithfully prepare for a new future. Our staff continues to show up, bring their best gifts and work hard for our common mission every day. We had an amazing first ever REACH conference in Sioux Falls last October that packed out the house. Those are just a few that come to mind. There are more. And as always, I am thankful for and blessed by the opportunity to help steward and witness our shared mission and ministry in the Minnesota Annual Conference.

Cindy Gregorson

Director of New Church Development

Together in mission, the Minnesota Conference is starting new services, sites and churches to reach new people for Jesus Christ. Our shared goal is to see a reproductive rate of 3% as an annual conference. This year we acknowledge the progress of 10 congregations as they move toward sustainability and we celebrate the addition of 12 new congregations to our multiplication efforts!

GERMINATING (congregations in pre-launch phase):

- Cannon Falls: Asa Tessness starting a new Embrace network congregation.
- Fairmount UMC New Service: Shawna Horne and Jin Hur starting a new service for new people.
- Jordan Hispanic: Milton Jones gathering a new congregation nested at Lydia Zion UMC.
- Le Sueur UMC: Terry Horne starting a new service to reach new people.
- Minneapolis Hispanic: Nehil Bejarano starting a new church north Minneapolis.
- Mission Newport: Steve Pannkuk starting a new congregation nested in Newport UMC.
- Recovery Minneapolis: Brad Herman leads the pre-launch work to start a new church.
- St. Michael Community: Brent and Laura Cottington starting an Embrace network church.
- St. Paul Haitian: Mickson Deronvil starting an English speaking service for Haitian immigrants.
- Stewartville UMC: Catie Levenick starting a new service to reach new people.
- Vineyard Hutchinson: Jim and Sara Hein working for a re-launch of an established church.
- Washington County/Cottage Grove: Jeremy Peters leading pre-launch for a new church

SPROUTING (congregations on the path to sustainability):

- Centennial, St. Anthony Park: Whitney Sheridan
- Cross Roads, Elko New Market: Gordon Duel
- Fridley UMC: Bob Brice
- Hmong Faith Fellowship, Oakdale: Vicheye Young
- Iglesia Peidra Viva, Minneapolis: Jesus Purisaca
- New City, Minneapolis: Tyler Sit
- North Summit, Blaine: Josh Meyers
- Northern Light, Anoka: Cullen Tanner
- The Beloved, St. Paul: Shawn Moore
- Twin Cities Hmong, Robbinsdale: CherLu Vang
- Uptown, Minneapolis: Jeremiah Lideen; Jim Lee

Ben Ingebretson

Episcopacy Committee

The functions of the MAC Committee on Episcopacy are to support the bishop of the area in the oversight of the spiritual and temporal affairs of the Church, with special reference to the area where the bishop has presidential responsibility, to be available to the bishop for counsel, to assist in the determination of the episcopal needs of the area, and to make recommendations to appropriate bodies and to keep the bishop advised concerning conditions
within the area as they affect relationships between the bishop and the people of the conference agencies. (see Book of Discipline, paragraph 637 for a full description of the committee’s responsibilities). We pray that God will work through us as we engage in these tasks together.

In 2018/19 we continued our pattern of meeting in the Fall with the Dakotas Committee on Episcopacy, and in the Spring on our own. Fall 2018 we met in Mitchell, SD with the Dakotas Committee on Episcopacy.

Providing support and encouragement for Bishop Ough and for Char is an important focus of our work. We trust that Bishop Ough will continue to lead us with a strong missional focus, with courage and an attentiveness to the Holy Spirit’s movement as he seeks to lead our Conference in making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. We are grateful for his leadership and for his passion for churches to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ by growing in their love of God and neighbor, reaching new people and healing a broken world. We thank Char for her steadfast support of Bishop Ough and of our Conference. In addition to his responsibilities in this Episcopal Area, Bishop Ough continues to serve on the Executive Committee of the Council of Bishops. We are proud that our bishop will continue to lead the Church in these difficult times. We encourage the Bishop to continue to model good work life balance for the clergy and laity of our conference by setting aside time for sabbath rest and family vacations. We urge all members of the Minnesota Annual Conference to pray for Bishop Ough and Char as they lead us into a future with hope.

Our committee also celebrates the ministry and work of Sheilah Kyburz, Administrative Assistant for the Dakotas-Minnesota Area of The United Methodist Church. She is an inspiring role model for all of us as she serves with humility, efficiency and excellence. We thank her for deep commitment to the whole area as she serves in this important role.

Judy Zabel, Chair

Equitable Compensation Executive Secretary

At the 2017 and 2018 Annual Conference sessions, only the Executive Secretary of Equitable Compensation position was nominated and elected. Grants for equitable compensation are paid from the Strategic Leadership Fund according to the 2018 Policy and Procedure Manual section 300.03.c. The Covenant Committee of the Board of Ordained Ministry is to fulfill the other functions of the former Equitable Compensation Action Team (not elected since the 2015 Annual Conference session).

As the Executive Secretary I have been paying attention to issues that I think are important to raise before the Annual Conference for information and possible action.

At the end of this report is the listing of the levels for the 2019 and 2020 Denominational Average Compensation (DAC) and the Conference Average Compensation (CAC) of the United States annual conferences. Note that the Minnesota Conference Average in 2019 and 2020 is ranked 40th of the 55 annual conferences. Minnesota is lower than our neighbors in the Dakotas, Iowa, and Wisconsin Conferences in 2019 and in 2020.

The action of the 2018 Annual Conference to set the minimum compensation level at 62% of the Conference Average Compensation could mean a change in this situation in 2021 and beyond. We will need to wait and see.

Pastoral responsibilities for costs of health insurance and pensions as well as items either paid direct by the church (such as parsonage utilities) or by reimbursable plans (such as continuing education, travel, professional expenses, annual conference attendance expenses) may have as much impact on actual pastoral compensation as cash salary paid. I am still seeking to gather the information from neighboring conferences about how these are handled. This information is not easily attainable from a conference Journal or website. I continue to gather this information.

As a result of the tax bill passed in December 2017, significant changes have taken place that affect the potential tax liability for pastors.
Beginning with the 2018 tax year, there is no federal moving expense schedule to allow for deductions for moving expenses for anyone (except active military personnel). Since Minnesota did not completely federalize, at least for 2018 taxes there is a Minnesota schedule to permit some moving expense deduction for active clergy. Furthermore, the moving expenses are understood to be regular income that means the expenses paid on behalf of a pastor for moves will be fully taxable for federal and state income taxes. These expenses are also subject to SECA. This means that for many pastors the tax consequences of a move of any distance could be about 40% of the costs of the move. Legislation was approved in 2018 to make grants to help offset this tax liability for all pastors if a grant is requested (up to $500 maximum). Information is to come from the Finance Office about this. See the 2018 Policy and Procedure Manual section 200.6c.

Moves for retiring pastors have been taxable for a number of years since there is no new job location to make a deduction possible.

There is also now federally no place on Schedule A for a deduction for unreimbursed business expenses. (Again, since Minnesota did not federalize, at least for 2018 taxes there is a place on the Minnesota itemized deductions schedule for unreimbursed business expenses.) It is even more important now for congregations to use an accountable reimbursement plan. Many pastors have not requested reimbursement for all business expenses because there has been a way to reduce taxable income for a portion of these expenses. That will no longer be the case. Note the special notes below about the tax consequences of not using an accountable reimbursement plan.

The 2012 General Conference added to The Book of Discipline as a responsibility of the Equitable Compensation Action Team the requirement to propose to the Annual Conference an arrearage policy. The arrearage policy is to address the issue of times when a pastor has not received “a full scheduled payment of the approved compensation” and the congregation, pastor, and district superintendent have been informed of the fact and that “all avenues explored to meet the salary” (see ¶625.2(d) and ¶624 of The 2016 Book of Discipline). I have submitted to the 2019 Annual Conference a revision of the sample policy suggested by the National Association of Commissions on Equitable Compensation (NACEC) dealing with this issue.

There has been a legal battle regarding the constitutionality of the housing allowance for clergy since the District Court from the Western District of Wisconsin judge ruled it unconstitutional. As of a ruling dated March 15, 2019, based on arguments on October 24, 2018, the housing allowance was ruled constitutional by the 3 judges of the 7th District. Unless this case gets appealed to, and is accepted by, the Supreme Court, the case is now settled.

Work that still needs to be done:

An area that deserves further study is the tax consequences of moving expenses. The General Board of Pension and Health Benefits is considering with others encouraging legislation as part of the assumed to be presented legislation to address “unintended consequences” of the tax bill passed in December 2017.

SPECIAL NOTES TO CONGREGATIONS AND PASTORS:
The Internal Revenue Service Mileage Rate for 2019 is 58 cents per mile. Mileage reimbursed at the IRS rate has no tax impact as income. Congregations may pay a rate above this, but any reimbursement above the IRS rate must be declared as income (although actual expenses may offset this income). Congregations do not have the option of reimbursing mileage at a lower rate.

Some congregations continue to provide reimbursements for continuing education and mileage as an allowance (a budget figure divided by twelve) rather than on a voucher basis for actual expenses. To do so is contrary to conference policies AND IRS requirements. Continuing to pay an allowance rather than to reimburse according to vouchered receipts and an adopted congregational policy for reimbursements can result in significant tax liability to the pastor since the IRS considers allowances to be regular income that are subject to tax liabilities for federal, state, and SECA.

Rod Stemme, Equitable Compensation Executive Secretary
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conference</th>
<th>2020</th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>% Increase</th>
<th>Conference</th>
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</table>
The finance and administration area of the Annual Conference provides accounting, budgeting and reporting, investment management, personnel and benefits administration, oversight for historical records of churches and the conference, stewardship of resources for the conference, property and risk management, and the means by which funds are transmitted from churches in Minnesota to mission and ministry sites around the world.

Shared Ministry:
As a connectional church, apportionments are the foundation of our shared ministry. In 2018, congregations within the state collectively remitted 88.36% of the requested apportionments. This was slightly down from 2017 of 89.91%. We received $6.1 million in apportioned revenue on a total apportioned amount of $6.9 million. Approximately 80% of our churches paid their full apportionment this year. We are especially grateful to those churches who consistently and faithfully pay their full apportioned amounts and to those who have increased their giving of apportioned funds.

We utilized $103 thousand of investment reserve funds to pay the 2018 General Conference apportionments of $1.7 million in full. Since we generally receive 25% of remittances at year-end, reserves are necessary to cash flow operations of the Annual Conference throughout the year and to maintain discontinued church property until sold.

Non-apportioned giving and Love Offering
Minnesota United Methodists have a strong history of generosity and last year gave $1.5 million above and beyond apportionments to various ministries and causes. This mission giving included the conference's Reach • Renew • Rejoice congregational development initiative, General Conference Advance Specials, Minnesota Conference Advance Specials, the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR), Imagine No Malaria, Special Sundays, and the Minnesota Conference Love Offering.

Donations to the 2018 Love Offering, an offering that Minnesota churches take annually to support missions, totaled $106,000. The 2018 offering went to Puerto Rico Hurricane Recovery Trips (65 percent), Park Avenue UMC Children’s Defense Fund Freedom Schools Program (20 percent), and NUMAS Haus (15 percent). Contributions to disaster relief exceeded $238,000.

Capital Facilities Development & Finance Commission
The primary purpose of Capital Facilities is to support financing and refinancing of church buildings, church building construction or expansion projects. The commission provides this outreach ministry in the form of loan guarantees that add the credit of the annual conference to that of local churches. The cost to the local church is .25% of the amount guaranteed.

The collateral to support the loan guarantee program comes from four sources in this order: cash and marketable investment assets of Capital Facilities; the Permanent Church Extension Fund; conference-owned property; and the pledges of 234 local churches.

At December 31, 2018, Capital Facilities had two loan guarantees in place with a total value of approximately $552,000. Capital Facilities provided support to North Branch UMC during the year. Finally, Capital Facilities members acted as resources to other churches that were evaluating refinancing alternatives.

The commission members have a broad background in finance and related disciplines and should be viewed as a resource for churches contemplating capital projects. If you have questions, please contact Rev. Gail Alexander at (651) 457-5686 or citymaple1953@gmail.com, or Barbara Brower at (612) 230-6135 or barbara.brower@minnesotumc.org.

As noted above, the commission’s ability to provide loan guarantees is dependent upon pledges from local churches as collateral. By supporting this program with pledged collateral, local churches can leverage scarce financial resources with very little likelihood of incurring any expense. Churches should consider this as an outreach/mission project without the need of spending cash.
Council on Finance and Administration

The Book of Discipline says, “The purpose of the council shall be to develop, maintain, and administer a comprehensive and coordinated plan of fiscal and administrative policies, procedures, and management services for the Annual Conference (Paragraph 612.1). The council worked on many activities this year including:

- Paid 100% of our general conference apportionments for 2018 using approximately $103 thousand from conference reserves
- Approved conference-wide appeals and Special Asking's
- Reviewed the annual audited financial statements
- Developed the 2020 budget and uncollectible amount
- Released prior year's unpaid apportionments
- Approved clergy housing allowances

Our thanks to those churches that shared in the connection this year through apportionment payment. Our collection rate for apportionments was 88.36% for 2018, a slight decrease from 2017. The uncollectible amount for 2020 is budgeted at $725,000 or 10% of the budget. The majority of apportionment funds received from local congregations stay within Minnesota to plant new churches, revitalize others, provide training, workshops and internships and support other outreach efforts.

Conference Reserves and Investments:
Invested funds as of end of 2018 totaled $67 million, this is down $4.5 million from the end of 2017 primarily due to market returns.

The benefit reserves ($55.6 million) are held at Wespath in the Multiple Asset Fund. The return on this fund for the year end 2018 was negative 6.14% compared to the benchmark of negative 6.47%. This fund has recovered and for the first quarter ended 3/31/2019 had a 10.2% return. The Multiple Asset Fund had the following investment allocations: U.S. Equity Fund 35.6%, International Equity Fund 29.0%, Fixed Income Fund 25.1%, and Inflation Protection Fund 10% with the remainder in cash.

The Permanent Church Extension Fund, Capital Facilities Fund, and the Trustee Property Fund are invested with the Minnesota United Methodist Foundation in 40% equity and 60% fixed and had a negative 2.08% return for the year ended 12/31/2018. These funds have also recovered.

There are three generations of clergy pension and retirement plans being administered by the Conference; each is funded at 100%. Retirement and health reserves are at a level that allows them to be used to cover approximately $1.3 million of expenses that used to be apportioned to the local churches. The operating reserve is funded at a level that meets current requirements.

Episcopal Residence Committee

The current Episcopal residence received minor routine maintenance in 2018. Upkeep needs of the property continue to be monitored and regularly addressed as needed.

Barbara Brower, Director of Finance and Administration
Gail Alexander, Chair of Capital Facilities Development & Finance Commission
John Mitchem, Chair of Council on Finance and Administration

Higher Education Team

The Higher Education Action Team works to support ministry in our Conference that helps college students encounter a God large enough to move from the Sunday School room to the college classroom, the college dorm, and the workplace. It means helping young people find out what it means to be a disciple of Jesus Christ as a young adult, making important life-decisions.

The work of this team is described in great detail in paragraph 634 of The Book of Discipline, but the short version of our work is that we exist to support and coordinate work in campus ministry within our conference, and to help connect campus ministries to local United Methodist congregations. We met four times in 2018-19.
Among our accomplishments for the year:

- Supported campus ministries including the Wesley Foundation at the University of Minnesota, United Campus Ministry at the University of Minnesota, Duluth, and the Wesley Foundation at MSU, Mankato
- Facilitated scholarships related to the United Methodist Student Day offerings which are now administered directly by the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry
- Welcomed and supported the beginning of the new Wesley Foundation at the Minnesota State University, Mankato
- Brought together the campus ministry leaders across our state for mutual support, resourcing and encouragement four times.
- Connected Campus Ministry leaders with Conference communications staff, environmental justice ministry opportunities, and leadership development including the ELI program.
- Expanded our collective presence at Annual Conference to raise awareness about campus ministry in MN.
- Supported the planning and development of the Bishop Ough Celebration & Endowed Scholarship at Hamline University.

We are in the third year of our grant application process to provide financial assistance to campus ministry units and congregations in ministry with college students. Funded ministries will address critical issues related to college students in their local context, with an eye toward spiritual development as a necessary component of academic, emotional, relational and personal development.

The intention is that grants will be awarded to new ministries or existing ministries engaged in new initiatives that demonstrate the potential, capacity and commitment to reach new people, grow in love of God and neighbor and heal a broken world.

*Mariah Tollgaard*, Chair

**Investing in Congregations Granting Team**

The Investing in Congregations Granting Team began in the fall of 2007 for grants that were issued for ministry in 2008. The intent of these grants is to assist congregations who have the desire and capacity to begin new and innovative ministry. Rather than providing a long term subsidy for ministry, the grants are intended to provide seed money for a new venture, encouraging churches to take risks in making strategic and timely investments in our conference imperatives to:

- Reach New People
- Cultivate Spiritual Vitality
- Heal a Broken World

Team members include: Amy Jo Bur (chairperson), Mike Faust, Dottie Mau, Linda McCullough, Rachael Warner, Lyndy Zabel (conference staff), and staff support from Gail Johnson. Thank you to each of the team members. Many grant applications were received and budgeted funding dollars are limited, so careful and faithful discernment was necessary in the decision-making process for funding. Each of the team members brought their best and most faithful efforts to this task.

Grant applications were received for both grants and microgrants, from each of the districts of the annual conference and for a wide variety of projects. It was inspiring to read the exciting, innovative, and high quality applications that we received throughout the year.

Grant and micro grant proposals were received for $209,040 during the main grant cycle in the fall, and grants and microgrants were approved for a total of $121,634 for calendar year 2019. Additionally, there were two other cycles of microgrant funding, to encourage new ideas throughout the year: one timed after annual conference, and one timed in January 2019. In the post-annual conference microgrants, twenty-five microgrants were awarded for a total of $25,000 for immediate ministry during the last quarter of 2018, and in the January cycle of microgrant applications, eleven microgrants were awarded for ministry within the mid-year of 2019 for $26,500.

The following congregations were approved for new investing in congregations grants during 2019: **Morris:** Federated UMC and **Lydia:** Zion.
The following congregations were approved for grant renewals during 2019: Corcoran UMC, Eden Prairie UMC, Mankato: Centenary UMC, North Branch: Main Street UMC, Red Wing: First UMC, St. Paul: Hamline UMC, Virginia: Peace.


Amy Jo Bur, Chair

Lay Ministries Team

The laity of the church form the bricks that make a church community strong. With Jesus as their foundation, laity reach out into their various communities and bring the teachings of Jesus to life. The Lay Ministries Team coordinates the Certified Lay Servant, Certified Lay Speaker and Certified Lay Minister programs for Minnesota United Methodists seeking to determine their ministry path, enhance their skills and extend their reach within the community.

The ConneXion program provides opportunities for laity to explore their service path. Now in its second year, ConneXion is training additional people for leadership roles within this program to make it more available throughout the state of Minnesota. Participation in ConneXion is the first requirement for entry into the Certified Lay Speaker and Certified Lay Minister programs. 21 lay persons attended ConneXion in September 2018 at Christ United Methodist Church in Rochester. We have 186 Certified Lay Servants.

Certified Lay Speaker programming has changed a lot over the last ten years. The Lay Ministries Team provides the primary Core Requirements via an annual retreat environment that, with the ConneXion program, fulfills the basic learning goals of the Certified Lay Speaker. Each lay person then completes follow-up assignments before certification. The Lay Ministry Registrar maintains the Certified Lay Speaker registry of those who are certified for pulpit supply. This list is accessible on the Minnesota Conference UMC website. To date we have 54 Certified Lay Speakers with 11 being interviewed and certified this spring.

The Certified Lay Minister program provides a specialized ministry that reflects the lay person’s gifts and experiences and allows them to serve in roles such as communications director, music leader, children/youth ministries director, district parish nurse, care coordinator and spiritual leader of a congregation with oversight of an elder and support through a Mutual Ministry Team. At present Minnesota Annual Conference has seven Certified Lay Ministers. This year the Lay Ministries Team approved on-line study through BeADisciple. Four candidates are enrolled in this study and are working toward certification soon.

Not only do each of these programs continue to grow and develop as the church continues to grow and develop, but they encourage the laity to explore other avenues to share God’s love and grace. One Certified Lay Speaker does not provide pulpit supply but is a nursing home chaplain. We have had several Certified Lay Speakers become Licensed Local Pastors (five in 2017-2018). One Certified Lay Speaker is currently serving as a missionary in Thailand with her husband for four years.

The members of the Lay Ministries Team feel blessed to be able to serve in whatever ways we can to encourage, inspire and support the laity of the Minnesota Annual Conference.

Terry Sullivan, Chair
The Mission Promotion Team oversees Annual Conference individuals and churches who collectively participate in ministries of compassion, mercy, peace and justice – locally, regionally, nationally and internationally – in an effort to be faithful to Christ’s call to heal a broken world.

- We work hands-on through Volunteers in Mission, participate in disaster relief through the United Methodist Committee On Relief (UMCOR), engage with local schools, partner with various conferences and organizations, and support missionaries and mission projects world-wide. This year, 1,371 gifts were given to the Advance, totaling $596,000.
- We have long-standing relationships with Compatible Technology, Emma Norton, Mid-West Mission Distribution Center, OC Ministries, Project Ag Grad, Simpson Shelter and Wesley Meals.
- We advocate for peace and justice through the Palestine-Israel Justice Project, the Commission of the Status and Role of Women, the Commission of Race and Religion, and the Committee on Native American Ministries.
- We promote health awareness, Creation Care, inter-cultural competency, and United Methodist Church Social Principles.
- We help people get back on their feet through the Dignity Center in Minneapolis.
- We daily provide emergency shelter and housing support throughout the state.
- We provide hunger relief far and wide through community meals, grocery give-a ways, food pantries, and in direct partnership with Feed My Starving Children.
- We support seventeen missionaries in twelve countries.
- We have formed official coalitions with United Methodists in Haiti, Jamaica, Laos, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Vietnam.

This past year, conference teams sent sixty-five volunteers to work on homes in Puerto Rico devastated by Hurricane María, doubled our vision clinic efforts in Jamaica - distributing 5,000 pair of glasses, and sent an intergenerational team to Henderson Settlement in Kentucky. Hundreds of volunteers have traveled to Africa, Asia, Central America, the Caribbean, and the Dakotas, as well as in MN through STORM CAMPS and Urban Cross.

We had a successful Mission Summit in New Ulm, providing a variety of learning opportunities.

We raised over $100,000 through the 2018 Love Offering to help with Hurricane Recovery in Puerto Rico, ensure a healthy and safe start for children through the Freedom Schools Program in Minneapolis, and provide transitional rent assistance for homeless single women and their children in Brown County through the NUMMAS Haus in New Ulm.

It’s been a fruitful year, thanks to all of you who live out the love of Christ in so many ways!

Karen Thompson, Chair
Lyndy Zabel, Director of Community Engagement

Palestine/Israel Justice Project

Last year at Annual Conference a resolution was passed asking that a study be done to see how to best educate the Minnesota United Methodist congregations about the abuse and detention of Palestinian children by the Israeli Defense Force. Israel continues to detain Palestinian children, trying them in military courts without parents or a lawyer present against Israeli law. We found several sources of excellent information, B’Tselem and Military Court Watch.

B’Tselem is a Jewish Jerusalem-based non-profit organization whose stated goals are to document human rights violations in the Israeli-occupied territories, combat denial of the existence of such violations, and help to create a human rights culture in Israel. They have a number of downloadable booklets available on line. Two of these publications deal with the topic of Israeli detention of Palestinian children: Minors in Jeopardy Violation of the Rights of Palestinian Minors by Israel’s Military Courts and Unprotected Detention of Palestinian Teenagers in East Jerusalem. They are downloadable at the B’tselem website and contain 36 and 33 pages respectively.
Military Court Watch is guided by a basic principle that children detained by the Israeli military authorities are entitled to all the rights and protections guaranteed under international law. Further, and in accordance with the principle that no State is permitted to discriminate between those over whom it exercises penal jurisdiction, there is no legal justification for treating Palestinian and Israeli children differently under Israel’s military and civilian legal systems. In accordance with these principles, MCW advocates, and where appropriate, litigates, to ensure that all children that come in contact with the military legal system are treated with equality and in accordance with the law."

The adoption of these principles would include the following safeguards:
- Children should not be arrested at night;
- Children should be properly informed of their right to silence;
- Children should never be blindfolded, hooded or painfully restrained;
- Children should never be subjected to violent, threatening or coercive conduct;
- Children must be able to consult with a lawyer prior to interrogation;
- Children should have a parent or guardian present prior to and during their interrogation;
- All interrogations should be audio-Visually recorded;
- No child should be transferred out of the West Bank in violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention.

In order to assess to what extent children are being denied their legitimate legal rights, MCW monitors their treatment from the moment of arrest until final release. This process involves the collection of testimonies from affected children and their families, as well as assessing developments within the military legal system.

The recommendation on how best to educate the Minnesota United Methodist Churches about the abuses of the IDF are as follows.
1. Engage Military Court Watch to present at the joint 2020 Annual Conference to speak to the delegates. Delegates from all the churches in the conferences will be present and able to take the information along with videos of the presentations to their local churches.
2. Ask the United Methodist Women to include sessions about this issue in the district and conference gatherings.

**Youth Ministry Team**

It has been a great last few months of learning and growing to understand the needs of Youth Ministry in the Minnesota Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church. We, Sami and Catie, took over as co-chairs in early August, and have since hit the ground running. It is a joy to submit this report!

Our first task was The Event was held at Craguns Resort in Brainerd, November 2nd-4th. The Event was geared toward youth in grades 5-9. The theme for the weekend was “You are Not a Rubber Chicken” which lead to conversations around value, worth and calling.
- Well over 300 in attendance (more than 250 students).
- Boiling Point headlined The Event again this year, also hosting a concert Saturday night.
- Youth and their leaders participated in large group sessions, worship, and small group activities, where they were invited to get to know youth from other churches.
- The Event also provided a leadership track for older youth (ten interns were present) to grow in their leadership skills as they assisted with worship, small group sessions, and behind the scenes work.
- We added a few new elements to The Event this year.
  - The first was an adult/leader break-out session, hosted and lead by Jacob Eckeberger from Youth Works. This had many positive reviews by those in attendance, which has given us many ideas for the future.
  - We also asked different groups to sponsor the snacks and take home items for the weekend as a way of sharing youth ministry resources with churches. The sponsors included; STORM Camp, Northern Pines, Camp Minnesota, and YouthWorks.
- We learned a lot from this event, and are very much looking forward to some new ideas for the Event 2019.

We have already kicked of 2019 with great Youth Happenings in the MN Annual Conference, and we are looking forward to giving that report next year.

*Sami Tierney and Catie Levenick, Co-Chairs*
Reports from Affiliated Organizations

General Board of Higher Education and Ministry (GBHEM)

As the leadership development agency of The United Methodist Church, the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry (GBHEM) builds capacity for United Methodist lay and clergy leaders to discover, claim and flourish in Christ’s calling in their lives. The agency creates connections and provides resources to aid in recruitment, education, professional development and spiritual formation. Every elder, deacon and licensed local pastor benefits from our training and candidacy programs. Many young adults find help in clarifying God’s call in their lives through our discernment opportunities.

Through its Office of Strategic Leadership, GBHEM refined plans for a center for leadership development and spiritual formation. It is drawing on research to plan the expansion of leadership training offerings to churches and communities through a range of means such as face-to-face training, online conferencing, consulting, and recommending resources and experts.

The Division of Ordained Ministry (DOM), using extensive research on the components of effective ministry, introduced a new formation process, Effective Ministry 360 (EM360), which guides pastors and congregations to plan and execute mission and ministry objectives. EM360 also offers assessment modules for candidacy, district superintendents, eight-year clergy assessment and Course of Study. DOM provides introduction and orientation sessions about the process.

The Division of Higher Education (DHE) has initiated research to inform a “leadership pipeline” process for university leaders on United Methodist campuses. Among the books GBHEM published this year, “Missio Dei and the United States: Toward a Faithful United Methodist Witness” (book and study guide) exhibits the best of church and academy collaboration. Contributors explore how the church can reengage its Wesleyan heritage as it participates in God’s mission.

The Office of Loans and Scholarships announced an increase in the maximum amount of money United Methodist students can borrow to pursue their education. The annual maximum is $10,000, with a lifetime maximum of $40,000. On average, the agency distributes $5.5 million in scholarships annually.

Partnering with churches and institutions, GBHEM has promoted projects, programs, initiatives, education and leadership development in various cultural contexts within United Methodism and in pan-Methodist relationships. The agency expanded the Methodist Global Education Fund for Leadership Development, supported the work of regional networks with the International Association of Methodist Schools, Colleges, and Universities, and established Regional Hubs for Leadership, Education and Development. In 2018, hubs were active in nations in Africa, Asia, Europe and England, North America and South America.

Minnesota Council of Churches

A Tradition of Innovation

- Community Engagement, which includes respectful conversations, Taking Heart Ramadan dinners, #BlessedRamadan, Black Clergy Speakers Bureau, interfaith relationships.
- Refugee Services, which includes case management, education, employment and immigration.
- Advocating Justice, which includes Joint Religious Legislative Coalition, Healing Minnesota stories, Enbridge Line 3 advocacy.
- Supporting the Faith Community, which includes operating the Minnesota Church Center, congregational partnerships, volunteer opportunities, News for the Common Good.
2018 Report

Manifesting the Unity of Christ for the Common Good

25 denominations are members of Minnesota Council of Churches. In 2018 we:

- Gathered the leaders of Mainline Protestant, Historic Black Churches, Traditional Peace Churches and the Greek Orthodox Church, representing almost 1,000,000 Minnesota Christians in regular meetings to build the common good in the world.

- Witnessed to a radical welcome for our Muslim neighbors with Blessed Ramadan signs and news reports in four states and two countries.

- Reached a cumulative 6,000 Minnesotans participating in Respectful Conversations and Respectful Conversations in Schools.

- Welcomed 202 refugees to Minnesota.

- Brought 1,400 Christians and Muslims together in relationship at 28 cross-cultural Ramadan Iftars promoted or mentioned in six news outlets.

- Assisted 1,025 people with immigration services and 125 people with citizenship applications.

- 84% of freshmen at the University of St. Thomas will use skills they learned in Respectful Conversations.

- Trained social studies teachers in an entire school district to use Respectful Conversations to embrace difficult discussions about controversial topics in public school classrooms.


- Took a fearless stand in support of our neighbors, sending #BlessedRamadan lawn signs to seven states and people throughout Minnesota.

- Supported truth-telling, racial justice and personal transformation by taking over 1,200 people on Dakota Sacred Site Tours.

- News for the Common Good reached over 3,500 congregational decision-makers every other week.

Rev. Dr. Curtiss DeYoung, CEO

Minnesota United Methodist Foundation

My report is a bit different than in the past. I am not describing Foundation activities work from the past year, nor am I talking about plans for the coming year. Given the uncertainty our denomination faces, I think it is imperative that people in the Minnesota Annual Conference know that the MN UM Foundation will continue its ministries and services to churches, boards and agencies going forward. Thus, I am including a letter that was sent to pastors earlier this spring.

On a personal note, I will retire on June 30, 2019, after 15 years of working with the Foundation. I want to thank every MN United Methodist for your grace and generous acceptance of the work of the Foundation. It has been an honor to work with all of you. Thanks & Blessings,

Val Walker, Executive Director
“Inspiring Spiritual Growth Through Generosity”

March 20, 2019

Dear Friends in Christ,

I am sure each of you is aware of the most recent actions taken by the General Conference 2019. Realizing that many of you may have worries about financial security in the aftermath of these decisions, I send this letter to assure you that the mission of the Minnesota United Methodist Foundation, “Inspiring Spiritual Growth Through Generosity”, remains unwavering. Our commitment to value-aligned investment services, planned giving information, stewardship seminars and materials and consultation services will continue to be available to you. Our ultimate goal is to assist the Church to achieve its purpose to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Our mission remains the same, to serve churches, people and ministries related to The United Methodist Church. In the coming weeks the Foundation Board of Directors will meet to further assess our By-Laws and Articles of Incorporation for further definition or expansion if necessary, so that our Foundation’s missional footprint can be more broadly inclusive of all God’s people.

Your investments are secure. We will continue to administer your investments as you have instructed under our Management Trust document with you. Only those specified as authorized signers may make withdrawals or fund transfers.

As an independent faith-based 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, the Minnesota United Methodist Foundation is in an exceptional position to serve local churches, the Minnesota Annual Conference and conference boards and agencies. We stand ready to assist you, our clients, to grow your ministries into the future.

Please contact us if you have any questions or need more information. Feel free to reach out to us in the coming weeks and months if you have questions about your church’s relationship with the Minnesota United Methodist Foundation.

Faithfully,

Val Walker
Executive Director

Steve Pinney
Chair, Board of Directors

Professional Administrators of the United Methodist Connectional Structure, MN Chapter

Since its inception in 1990, the Minnesota Chapter of Professional Association of United Methodist Church Secretaries (PAUMCS) has endeavored to be a vital link of help and encouragement between the members of the administrative staff of the greater United Methodist Church. As a GCFA-sanctioned organization, PAUMCS continues to provide a supportive base of professional development, continuing education, individual growth and spiritual enrichment for persons (paid or volunteer) in church support.

In May of 2017 at the National Conference held in Chicago, IL the national membership voted to change the organization’s name to the Professional Administrators of the United Methodist Connectional Structure. Therefore, the MN Chapter’s name also changed. Different name, same acronym.

In 2018, our local chapter held a spring retreat April 27-28, at the Koinonia Retreat Center. The theme was “Divine Innovation: How Is God Making All Things New?” Our Retreat Committee led us in activities that helped us recognize that God gives us resources that we can creatively use that can begin change in and for us.

Our Annual Meeting and workshops were held at Advent UMC located in Eagan on October 15. The theme was “Making the Most of What You’ve Got” and was led by Jody Thone, Director of Leadership Development for the MN Conference of the UMC. She spoke about the Enneagram Personality types (registrants were encouraged to take a free profile before the meeting) and also spoke to us about leadership development. We also had presentations from MissionInsight and how it can be used; the Resource Center for Churches; Discipleship Resources; and a
discussion on pertinent church topics. We held our annual business and elected new officers. We concluded the
day with devotions and communion.

PAUMCS is open to all who are in a UM-related setting. In the 2017-2018 year we had 50 members from across the
conference. This included a few new members and 8 national members. Our hope is that every church would
encourage their support staff to be members by sponsoring them to be connected in this “vital link” ministry.
Connect with us online at www.minnesotaumc.org/paumcs.

Denise C. Poetter, President

Resource Center for Churches

In many ways, 2018 unfolded as other years have at the Resource Center for Churches. Providing access to
curated ministry resources and point-of-need consulting, we equipped our member churches, including all the
churches of the Minnesota Annual Conference, to grow in love of God and neighbor, reach new people, and heal a
broken world. With our searchable weekly post, Six New Things, we spread the word about both traditional
material like curriculum and DVD studies, and outstanding digital resources: downloadable guides for reflection and
conversation, podcasts, video, blogs and sites, reviews and interviews, events and ideas. We recommended
resources and learned at CEF (Christians Engaged in Faith Formation) gatherings. We joined with the planning
team for The ConNext Summit 2019 to craft an exciting event for faith formation leaders. We shared the wisdom
and enriched the ministries of the leaders of the Minnesota Annual Conference and beyond.

2018 was also a year of transition for us, as we began exploring new possibilities for the Resource Center. How can
we best support our churches in this new time? We know that, while providing access to physical resources
remains important, curating and making digital resources accessible is an increasingly vital part of our mission. We
know that point-of-need consultation with trusted folks who offer familiarity with the landscape of ministry resources,
an understanding of particular church contexts, and a deeply formed faith remains key. We want to create needed
learning opportunities beyond ConNext, and we want to lift up the innovative work of the members of this
multidenominational community of practice so that we can learn from and inspire one another.

These conversations laid the groundwork for what will be a collaborative ministry at the new campus of United
Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities. We hope and expect that this fresh context and renewed mission will invite
more church leaders into our community of practice and inspire a lively conversation on forming faith and being
church. We are excited about the future of this ministry.

We are deeply grateful to you for the experience and wisdom you share, your continuing financial support of the
Resource Center, and all the creativity and hard work of our board members: Christa Meland, Cindy Yanchury, and
Sarah Lawton. We are excited to meet you in this new place and engage in our transformative work: sparking
imaginations, sharing wisdom, and enriching ministries.

Lizabeth Bougie, Director

United Methodist Women

The United Methodist Women (UMW) of Minnesota are among approximately 800,000 members nationally whose
mission is fostering spiritual growth, developing leaders, and advocating for justice. In the Minnesota Conference
there are approximately 6000 individual members in 303 units (of the 348 faith communities including churches,
ethnic fellowships and new church start-ups) in Minnesota. NOTE: These numbers are not completely accurate
because the census turned in to National UMW for 2017 showed 3679 members in 103 units. The census process
was changed in 2017 and many of the active units did not go online to the National organization and complete their
census.

Minnesota Conference UMW consists of the Conference Executive Team and committees that meet four times a
year, plus district executive teams that meet four times a year to conduct UMW business. Each District UMW has
officers responsible to be District Liaison to all the local UMW units in Minnesota.
Cindy Saufferer from Morristown, Minnesota, continues to make Minnesota proud as one of 25 Directors of the National Organization of UMWW. We are proud that she served the following committees and boards for 2018: Planning and Assessment, Acts of Repentance working group, General Board of Global Ministries, and Emma Norton Services. She serves as Board Secretary of National UMWW.

The 2018 Minnesota Conference Mission u was held at Best Western Plus Kelly Inn in St. Cloud on July 13-15 for the weekday event, and two Mission u Too events at Detroit Lakes UMC in North Star District on July 28 and August 4 at The Well in Rosemount, which included a child and youth program. The three mission studies for 2018 were Spiritual Growth: What About Our Money? A Faith Response; Social Justice: Embracing Wholeness: An Earth’s Perspective for Covenantal Living (part 2); Geographic: The Missionary Conferences of the United Methodist Church in the U.S.; Children’s Study: What About Our Money?

The Minnesota Conference UMWW 45th Annual Gathering was held Saturday, October 6, 2018, hosted by St. Peter’s Lutheran Church and River Valley Executive team in Hastings, MN. Approximately 105 United Methodist Women were on hand to learn about maternal mortality. Minutes from 2017 Annual meeting were approved as written. The 2016 audit is complete and filed and 2017 is in progress. The budget for 2019 was approved. The Minnesota Conference Pledge to Mission for 2019 is $150,000.00 and Emma Norton Goal for 2019 is $49,100.00.

The Minnesota Conference UMWW led a Leadership Development Retreat (LDR) for District UMWW officer training October 27-28, 2017, at Best Western Plus Kelly Inn in St. Cloud. A program on Fundraising and Legacy 150 was presented by Emily Marshall the Director of Development at National UMWW in addition to training provided by conference officers for their district counterparts.

We continue to support the only National United Methodist Institution in Minnesota - Emma Norton which houses 50 women at the Emma Norton Residence in St. Paul and Emma’s Place in Maplewood that houses 13 single parent families with 3 or more children, each.

Minnesota Conference President, Sandy Meyer, represented UMWW:
- on the Emma Norton Services Board, Executive Committee, and chaired the UMWW/UMC Committee
- at Red Zone Event on Trafficking for Super Bowl 2018 on Jan 27 at Hennepin UMC
- on the Church Women United Celebrations Committee which met in Dallas, Texas February 16-19
- at First UMC for UMWW Sunday on March 18 in Windom, MN
- at Church Women United Regional Meeting on April 20-21 in Wahpeton, ND
- at the Emma Norton Services Opening Doors Dinner on May 7
- at Assembly May 18-20 in Columbus, OH
- at Annual Conference in St. Cloud May 30-June 1. She also attended the pre-session sponsored by Commission on Status and Role of Women (COSROW) on May 29. She attended the COSROW meeting and took part in workshops. Several people stopped by her display table and inquired about UMWW.
- at Mission u in St. Cloud on July 13
- at Mission u Too at the Well in Rosemount on August 4
- at Church Women United of Minnesota Annual Meeting a on September 8 at Lutheran Church of Christ in Minneapolis
- at Caledonia UMC Salad Luncheon on September 15
- at Commission on Status and Role of Women (COSROW) meeting on October 20 at Peace UMC in North Oaks

Sandra Meyer, President (2016-2019)
Africa University thrives in ministry because of the steadfast support of local congregations of The United Methodist Church. The university community is grateful to the leaders and members of the Minnesota Conference for prioritizing Africa University with the contribution of 100 percent of the asking to the Africa University Fund (AUF) apportionment in 2018.

The students, faculty, and staff value every gift and they are especially humbled by the sacrifices that are being made to maintain a tradition of 100 percent support for the AUF in the Minnesota Conference.

Through its investment in the Africa University Fund, the Minnesota Conference continues to affirm the university’s core mission of nurturing leaders who help communities to know and grow in relationship with Jesus Christ, and to experience peace, sustainable livelihoods, food security and abundant health. Thank you, Minnesota United Methodists, for your steadfast commitment and gracious support.

**Institutional Update:**

- Africa University remains a top choice for African young people who are seeking a relevant and life-changing educational experience. In 2018, Africa University enrolled more than 700 new students and maintained an overall enrollment of around 2,000 students. There were 25 African countries represented in the student body. Women made up 53 percent of the student population, which is almost twice the average for African higher education institutions. Africa University’s women graduates are emerging as the change leaders of their generation, whether empowering victims of gender-based violence in the Democratic Republic of Congo or working alongside rural women to establish and operate community-based telecommunications infrastructure and provide internet connectivity to underserved communities in across Africa.

- Throughout 2018, Africa University weathered the challenges of Zimbabwe’s depressed and uncertain socio-economic environment with creativity and prudence. The university delivered teaching, learning and community service activities of high-quality without interruption, while also renewing and expanding its infrastructure. Key enhancements in 2018 included the refurbishment of three residence halls for women students and the full implementation of an ERP software system to integrate and manage all facets of the university’s operations.

- For the first time in five years, there is new construction on the Africa University campus thanks to a 25th anniversary gift from Highland Park United Methodist Church in Dallas, TX. In December 2018, work began on the foundation for a new residence hall. The university subsequently broke ground for the construction of phase two of its Student Union and Cafeteria building. Both projects are progressing well and are expected to be fully in use by August 2020.

- With conflict, poverty, and the impact of climate change persisting as the key drivers of food insecurity and the rise in internal displacement, migration, and refugeehood in Africa, the university consolidated its position as a trailblazer by offering new graduate training and research opportunities. Africa University has also continued to provide scholarships for refugee women so that their experiences, talents, and ideas are integrated into the search for sustainable solutions.

- Africa University delivered critical data for reducing malaria deaths in southern Africa and controlling the spread of insect-borne diseases world-wide. AU’s insectary—a laboratory for rearing and studying live insects, such as mosquitoes—shares its findings through the Southern Africa Centers of Excellence for Malaria Research. This data informs regional policies, practices, and malaria control efforts.

The students, faculty, administrators, and trustees of Africa University thank the members of the Minnesota Conference for their prayers and support, which continue to grow and sustain this ministry. Thank you for all that you have sown into Africa University over the past 27 years and for being part of a shared story of faithfulness, hope, and transformation. As Africa University and the Minnesota Conference move forward together in missional engagement, we trust in God’s unending grace for the increase.

*James H. Salley*, Associate Vice Chancellor for Institutional Advancement
Greetings from Boston University School of Theology (BUSTH) as we live together as disciples in uncertain times!

**BREAKING NEWS:**
- **Students:** We continue to increase and celebrate diversity in our student body, creating remarkable opportunities for in-depth exchanges and fruitful collaboration.
- **Faculty:** We welcomed two amazing faculty this year: Shively Smith as Assistant Professor of New Testament, and Nicolette Manglos-Weber as Assistant Professor of Religion and Society.
- **Online Lifelong Learning:** We are launching a new Online Lifelong Learning Program at the School, offering webinars, workshops, and reading groups for professional enrichment.
- **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 Korean Student and African Student Scholarships, and leadership fellowships for promising leaders: Raíces Latinas for Latinx leaders, Sacred Worth for leaders in the LGBTQIA+ community, Howard Thurman for African-American leadership, and Indigenous Studies Fellowships.
- **Faith and Ecological Justice Program:** This new student program undertakes initiatives to increase ecological awareness, education, and activism in ecological justice.
- **Theology and the Arts Initiatives:** Recent exhibits and events include “Moments in Time” and “Transcending Conflict.”
- **Grants:** Henry Luce Foundation has awarded a 3-year grant to support the Educating Effective Chaplains Project. The grant supports work with other seminaries to develop models that can better prepare chaplains for effective ministry.
- **Website:** After several years of planning, a new School website will launch in Fall semester 2019.

**PARTNERING FOR MINISTRY AND TRANSFORMATION:** Preparing students for ministry means meaningful partnerships with the local spiritual community.
- **Creative Callings:** Our vocational project is an exciting partnership with local churches, seeking to create “a culture of call.” It is sponsored through a grant from the Lilly Endowment.
- **Engagement with the UMC:** Many of our students are delegates, project leaders and assistants, and class participants in General Conference 2019.
- **Congregational courses:** The Continuing Scholar program offers current BUSTH courses to alums and local clergy as continuing education credit for a small fee per course.
- **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.
- **Religion and Conflict Transformation Clinic:** The Clinic provides internships and workshops that foster justice and peace-building.
- **Travel seminars:** These courses engage students with immersion journeys to the Arizona-Mexican border, Israel and Palestine, Argentina, and other sites of learning and ministry. Attendees from the recent Serbia and Croatia Seminar presented to the 2018 Parliament of the World’s Religions in Toronto, Canada.
- **Ecumenical partnerships:** We continue to build robust Communities of Learning with the Episcopal Church and United Church of Christ, and to develop new communities with the Unitarian Universalist and Baptist Churches.
- **Partnership with Hebrew College:** Together we are able to enrich interreligious learning through joint courses and public events, and also co-sponsor The Journal of Interreligious Studies and State of Formation cohort of emerging leaders.

**TAKING ACTION GLOBALLY AND LOCALLY:**
- **Campus action:** Work to improve accessibility and sustainability. BUSTH is the first certified Green School in BU, and participates actively in the Green Seminary Initiative. It has also been named as one of the “Seminaries that Change the World” for the second consecutive year.
- **Internships in global service and peacemaking:** We provide internships that support students who engage in ministry with churches and service organizations across the world.

**COMMITMENT TO JUSTICE:** Celebrating differences while joining in action.
- Faculty and students have led and participated in UMCOR; support efforts with victims of hurricanes and fires; protests on behalf of Puerto Rico, Texas, and Florida; protests of white supremacist movements; services with immigrants and DACA young people; and ecumenical and interreligious witnesses for justice in the city of Boston.

- Through student-led Town Hall meetings, the community has had deep conversations on issues that divide (including theological differences). We seek to foster respectful listening that builds community life and communal action.

OTHER NOTABLE NEWS:

- 2019 marks the 180th year of the School of Theology, originally founded as the Newbury Bible Institute in 1839.

- Our major development campaign for BUSTH will end in September 2019, and we continue working toward grand success for the future of our School and the vitality of your ministries.

As BUSTH looks to the future, we celebrate transformational leaders of the United Methodist Church, who keep the word of Jesus Christ alive. Your living legacy and faithful witness give us hope and courage for the future.

Mary Elizabeth Moore, Dean

Candler School of Theology

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

This is especially important to note amid the current uncertainty in our denomination. It is an honor and a privilege for Candler to be one of 13 official seminaries of The United Methodist Church. Yet true to the Methodist tradition of ecumenical openness, Candler has enthusiastically welcomed the entire Wesleyan family to our community for generations. Faculty, staff, and students from the AME Church, the AMEZ Church, the CME Church, Free Methodists, Nazarenes, and others have worked, worshiped, learned, and prayed alongside United Methodists, and have been a vital part of shaping Candler and our mission. This diversity has been a wonderful gift and a rich blessing. As we move forward from the Special Session of General Conference, we will continue to invite and welcome wholeheartedly those from all expressions of the Wesleyan tradition. Indeed, we will continue to welcome all those who follow Jesus Christ.

Candler is also privileged to be one of seven graduate professional schools of Emory University in Atlanta. With the resources of a top-tier research institution and the reach of a global city, our students benefit from a rich academic and hands-on learning environment: The General Board of Global Ministries is in Atlanta, as are numerous public health, international development, and social service organizations. Candler’s intentional involvement with our surrounding community has contributed to our inclusion on a list of “Seminaries that Change the World” for six years running. In short, there is no better place to prepare for ministry that engages our major denominational priorities: developing leaders, starting and growing churches, ministry with the poor, and improving global health.

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

Candler’s student body continues to reflect the diversity and breadth of the Christian faithful, with an enrollment of 453, reflecting 51 percent women, 39 percent people of color (U.S.), and a median age of 27 among MDivs. Students represent 44 denominations, with half coming from the Methodist family.
Candler has a deep commitment to alleviating student debt and promoting financial literacy. In 2018-2019, we awarded $5.8 million in Candler scholarships, with 100 percent of MDiv students receiving aid. Plus, our comprehensive “Faith & Finance” program teaches money management skills that serve our students now and will continue to serve them—and the churches they lead—well into the future.

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

Jan Love, Mary Lee Hardin Willard Dean and Professor of Christianity and World Politics

Drew University

Drew University Theological School continued its multi-year self-transformation by launching its new curriculum for the Master of Divinity in the fall of 2018. This entirely reconceived degree seeks to form graduates that are rooted in the Christian story and traditions, capable of effective and creative leadership, and spiritually and socially resourceful for cultivating the transformative gospel of Jesus Christ in, with and for the church and the world. A new two-year degree, the Master of Arts in Theology and Ministry also launched, and offers students the opportunity to prepare for public leadership or a specialized vocation through deep theological and ethical reflection informed by biblical, historical, theological and practical sources. New pathways in the Master of Arts, the Master of Sacred Theology, and the Doctor of Ministry were also created as part of the curriculum transformation process which seeks to more intentionally focus the school’s service to the church, as well as to the academy and civil society. Drew welcomed 145 entering students this academic year, its largest entering class in over a decade, with an overall enrollment of 350 for the current academic year. In the coming year a new 5-year strategic plan will be developed, new degree delivery options that increase accessibility and affordability for prospective students, as well as new partnerships with annual conferences, other church bodies, and values-based organizations that share and strengthen Drew’s mission to advance peace, justice, love of God, neighbor, and the earth.

Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary

In 2018-2019, 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**

**New Partnership with North Central College**

We are partnering with North Central College to offer students the unique opportunity to take graduate-level courses in religious studies while completing their undergraduate degrees. Beginning in Fall 2019, students will be able to take classes at the seminary’s campus, and transfer graduate courses towards undergraduate work. For more information, please visit www.garrett.edu/news.

**Creative Course Opportunities**
**Faith in Place Environmental Justice Course**

This past spring, Garrett-Evangelical partnered with Faith in Place to offer a dynamic new course titled “Organizing for Environmental Justice”. Faith in Place is a state-wide organization working with over 1,000 houses of worship to protect our common land, air, and water. The class met at various locations around the city. Students increased their awareness as leaders, organizers, managers, and advocates for the care of the earth and environmental justice by reading and discussing literature on these topics and witnessing the work of leaders and organizations committed to these ends during the site visits. They also faced the complex challenges facing individuals and communities suffering from environmental injustices. The seminary continues to develop creative partnerships like this one to better equip our students serve the needs of the church and world.

**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. Whether you are clergy, laity, or spiritually curious, we welcome you to explore our programs that are designed to be relevant, responsive, and reachable. We are actively preparing our Fall 2019 offerings to announce them at our Annual Conference visits. There are several highly anticipated online course and webinar offerings, including “Thriving Ministry with Young Adults: Holy Yearning, Holy Listening, Holy Partnerships” and “Financial Management for Churches and Nonprofits”.

There is a wealth of information and resources on our website, including past webinar recordings and on-campus lecture opportunities. To learn more about our offerings and stay up to date on future programs, please visit: www.garrett.edu/connectional-learning.

**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. Last year we created 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 have secured a staff member to act as Manager of Inclusion and Community Engagement, and we continue to offer training opportunities, lectures, and discussions opportunities 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. We initiated a thriving composting program, enacted a waste audit, and hosted an Interfaith Climate Action Summit in April to engage our local community around responses to climate change.

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.

Hamline University

In my fourth year as president of Hamline University, our focus on ‘taking the lead’ continues. Large number of undergraduate and postgraduate students continue to choose Hamline because they see what we see – a diverse community focused on providing excellent preparation for career and postgraduate success.

Last year we spoke of the Association of American Colleges and Universities’ selection of Hamline as one of only ten Truth, Racial Healing and Transformation (TRHT) campuses nationwide. I am happy to report that our first TRHT event was held in April, on a very important subject – that of racial narratives in media. The conference was very well attended and helped raise awareness about a very important issue in our national discourse.

An entirely student-driven effort led to an April presentation of TedX Talks on campus. This event, which will be the only one of its kind to be held in Minnesota during 2019, showcased ten discussions on critical issues of the day.

One of the highest-profile talks was given by Professor Jillian Peterson, who has helped compile one of the most detailed databases on mass shootings to be found anywhere in the world. A national expert on de-escalation, Professor Peterson hopes to use data and information to help prevent mass shootings in the future. Her local, regional, national and global impact will only grow in the future as these talks reach the Internet.

Another student-led initiative, the Feed Your Brain campaign, has helped raise awareness about student food insecurity issues. Hamline student An Garagiola-Bernier has worked tirelessly to lobby leaders at local and state level, and has actively supported a bill currently before the Legislature that would mandate cooperation between universities and students on food security issues – something Hamline already does, as you will see later.

Hamline athletics also enjoyed another excellent year. Our women’s hockey team, coached by new United States Hockey Hall of Famer Natalie Darwitz, finished as national runners-up, the best finish in the program’s history. Junior Bre Simon won the Patty Hurd Award as the national Division III player of the year, an honor she also received from US College Hockey Online.com. Sophomore Madison Kolbow earned the NCAA’s “Elite 90” academic achievement award for having the highest GPA of any player at the NCAA “Frozen Four” championships, and also won the MIAC’s Elite 22 academic award. She carries a 3.95 GPA in biochemistry. Freshman Molly Garin was named national rookie of the year by uscho.com.

The women’s basketball team won more games this season than in the last three seasons combined, and Hamline’s lacrosse team won its league championship and reached the NCAA tournament. All this was done without cost to a fine cumulative academic performance. In fall 2019, men’s sports compiled a 3.11 GPA, while the women posted a 3.37 GPA, for a combined average of 3.23.

This year, the Wesley Center for Spirituality, Service and Social Justice, directed by Chaplain Nancy Victorin-Vangerud, in her 11th year, is celebrating multiple milestones and new initiatives.

First, the McVay Youth Partnership is in its 15th year of afterschool youth mentoring. Each year, McVay connects 40-50 Hamline students as interns, associates and fellows with up to 200 middle and high school students through four sites: Path of Grace UMC, Mounds Park UMC, Liberty Plaza Resource Center, and Washington Tech Magnet School. With church partners Faith UMC in St. Anthony and Hamline Church United Methodist, youth build confidence and supportive peer relations through homework help, cooking, sports, and arts and crafts.
The Feed Your Brain student organization has moved into the new Hamline Food Resource Room in renovated space in the Walker Field House. Hamline has recognized that college students can be vulnerable to food insecurity which impacts their student success and wellbeing. Through funding from the Power of One Day, the Wesley Center and Hamline Church United Methodist, Feed Your Brain has hosted monthly food pop-ups in the new space for 150-170 students. Each month, we partner with The Food Group to select and purchase food for the pantry. We also continue to have monthly visits from the Keystone Foodmobile to provide additional resources.

Last fall we hosted the first Interfaith Retreat with 20 students at Koronis Ministries Retreat Center, led by the student leaders of our Religious and Spiritual Life groups. New programs this year include a “Women in Religion” panel, “Judaism and LGBTQ” panel, and listening circles organized following mass shootings in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and Christchurch, New Zealand. We also hosted a response circle after the Special Session of General Conference in order to provide information and hear students’ concerns.

Hamline Church United Methodist continues to engage with Wesley Center collaborations such as ministry internships with church staff, internships in the SPROUT Garden, “Speaking Like Light” sacred poetry readings, Multi-Faith Baccalaureate, Alumni Weekend’s Piper Pizza Palooza, and end of semester barbecue on the lawn. Chaplain Nancy started a Sunday morning Chaplain’s Coffee in the new Sorin Commons Gathering Place, with the group then attending worship across the street at Hamline Church.

From November 1-3, The Mahle Endowment in Progress in Progressive Christian Thought supported a special culminating conference of the “Year of Re-Imagining” with the “25th Anniversary of Re-Imagining.”

Finally, the first J-term ‘study away’ trip to Laos took place. Building on the partnership established last spring by the Minnesota-Laos mission team, this year’s J-term students studied “Religion and Culture” and served as English language mentors with programs of the Sunbeam English Language Center in Vientiane, traveled to Luang Prabang and built cross-cultural peer to peer relations with young adults of the Lao Samphan.

Respectfully submitted,

Faynese Miller, Ph.D., President

Rust College of Holly Springs, Mississippi

Established in 1866 by the Freedmen’s Aid Society of the Methodist Church on a former slave auction site. Rust is the oldest one of 11 Historically Black Colleges and Universities established after the Civil War by the Methodist Church still in existence today serving more than 1,000 students annually from Mississippi, 22 states and 4 foreign countries. Rust’s Mission continues to be in tune with the church’s overall philosophy – doing no harm, doing good and staying in love with Jesus Christ as we serve the young people who look to Rust as their bridge to a better tomorrow through education.

Rust College Religious Life is a diverse community providing the administration, faculty, staff and students sacred space to be fellow travelers on a journey of faith that leads to transformation of the individual and the world. The Office of the Chaplain oversees religious life activities, coordinates training for student ministers, and provides counseling for administration, faculty, staff, and students.

Informed by Christian tradition, Rust College religious life strives to be an ambassador for Jesus Christ to a diverse higher education community. Grounded in the Wesleyan tradition, religious life is the place where “Tomorrow’s Leaders are Students Today.” Students who will be and do “all the good they can, by all the means they can, in all the ways they can, in all the places they can, at all the times they can to all the people they can, for as long as they can.”

Highlights for 2017-2018 year include:

- The College ended the 2017-2018 fiscal year with a balanced budget for the 52nd consecutive year.
- Ms. Irah Gates, a junior Sociology major, Memphis, Tennessee was selected Student Ambassador for the White House Initiative on Historically Black Colleges and Universities.
- Rust College received a grant for $80,000 from the Hearin Foundation to support needy students seeking financial aid.
• Dr. Alisea McLeod, Assistant Professor in Humanities, received the Humanities Teacher of the Year award.
• Rust College Mass Communication Instructor, Mrs. Sharon Goodman-Hill, and senior student, Mr. William Robinson were Higher Education Appreciation Day - Working for Academic Excellence (HEADWAE) recipients.
• Rust College hosted Mr. Thomas W. Dortch, Jr., Chairman of the National Black College Alumni (NBCA) Hall of Fame Foundation in Atlanta, Georgia, Jamila Mustafa, MTV and BET Networks, IHeart Media and ESPN Host, Hank Stewart, Author/Poet, Anta Sallah Njie and Stevie Baggs, Jr., Speaker/Author, former NFL Player in the National Black College Alumni Hall of Fame Foundation Legacy Lecture Series.
• Our frugal fiscal practices continue to keep us financially sound. For the last 50 years, Rust College has had a policy of only building “debt-free” non-income producing buildings. As a result of this policy, Rust has long term debts less than $1.5 million related to residential hall construction and renovated in 1990. We actively recruit foundations, corporations, alumni and friends for scholarship grants to help underwrite the tuition cost of our students who must have financial support to get and stay in school. Our text book-use-system assists us in keeping our tuition and fees to a minimum. For example, in 2012 tuition, room, board, books and fees totaled $12,150 annually. In 2017 the total cost is $14,200 which amounts to an increase of only $2,050 over a five-year period.

As you, our friends of the United Methodist Church, continue to uphold your promise of educational opportunity established many years ago, we, the members of the Rust College family, will uphold the promise made by our founder, Rev. A. C. McDonald in 1866, “to do not hothouse work” but will work to build men and women morally, spiritually and academically sound. We are thankful to you for your prayers and financial support. Your continued support is essential as we endeavor to build a stronger legacy for this generation and those in years to come who will look to Rust and our great church for higher educational opportunities. The College expresses thanks for the dedication and leadership of the following Trustee from the Minnesota Annual Conference: Mr. George Holden.

Dr. David L. Beckley, President

Saint Paul School of Theology

Saint Paul School of Theology, a seminary of the United Methodist Church, is committed to the formation of people for innovative, creative ministry. We are one institution with campuses in Kansas and Oklahoma. During the 2018-2019 academic year, the seminary enrolled 99 students in master and doctoral degree programs.

Saint Paul School of Theology began the 2018-2019 academic year moving its Kansas staff and faculty offices to the Kansas Campus where classes are held. This move was the final step in the process of renovating classrooms with larger spaces as well as bringing Kansas faculty, staff, and students together. A new Common Room equipped with refrigerator, microwave, and snacks was added to give students a place to gather for community meals, student forums, and study. Enhanced technology upgrades were made on both campuses with the launch of the new FLEX schedule and FOCUS week. We received a $5,000 grant from the Missouri United Methodist Foundation to support our technology program for students. In an ever-increasing digital world, Saint Paul is constantly working to reach beyond its walls.

A new Doctor of Ministry (DMin) focus, Spiritual Leadership in Unsettled Times, was announced with courses beginning Fall 2019. The new DMin focus is offered in partnership with Church of the Resurrection, Gamaliel Network, and the Metro Organization for Racial and Economic Equity. Students can take a mixture of online and hybrid (blended online and on-campus) courses to complete the required curriculum.

This year marks the celebration of over 10 years in Oklahoma. Since 2008, Saint Paul has prepared Oklahoma-area leaders for ministries that meet the needs of today’s churches and society. In collaboration with Oklahoma City University, students enjoy access to all the resources of a vibrant university, as well as the hospitality and support of a close-knit seminary community.

For Fall 2019, The Oklahoma Foundation, in partnership with Saint Paul School of Theology, is offering a three-year scholarship to educate future church leaders. An Oklahoma Foundation Fellow will receive 3 years of full-tuition and fees (covering 79 credit hours toward the Master of Divinity degree). Foundation Fellows will learn multiple ministry skills in areas such as worship, pastoral care, evangelism, and discipleship.
Saint Paul's faculty continue to contribute to the academy, church, and society. Dr. Elaine Robinson, Professor of Methodist Studies and Christian Theology, worked along with co-editor Amos Nascimiento to solicit chapters from United Methodist scholars around the globe who could present an indigenous account of the history of Methodism in their own context. These authors include: Fulgence Nyengele (Congo), Julio Vilanculos (Mozambique), Ulrike Schuler (Western Europe), Sergei Nikolaev (Russia), and Luther Oconer (Philippines). The manuscript is now finished and in the process of being published by GBHEM’s Foundry Books under the title, *Global United Methodism: Telling the Stories, Living the Realities*.

Dr. Jim Brandt, Professor of Historical Theology and Director of Contextual Education, wrote the lead article in the recently published book, *Schleiermacher and Sustainability: A Theology for Ecological Living*. As part of the Columbia Series in Reformed Theology, each chapter deals with a particular locus in Schleiermacher’s systematic theology, focusing on its implications for sustainable living.

Saint Paul's 2018-2019 Lecture Series boasted several exciting keynote speakers from across the United States to speak on a myriad of topics such as "10 Steps on the Path of Moral Leadership" and "Speaking of Jesus: Early Methodist Principles for Bearing Witness to the Christian Story in a Multi-Religious World". In October, Dr. Luke Bretherton of Duke University was the speaker for the Wayne E. Drake Peace Lecture. In February, the Foundation for Evangelism sponsored Rev. Dr. Jack Jackson of Claremont School of Theology to present this year’s Wallace Chappell Lecture. In March, Rev. Dr. David Gushee of Mercer University was the keynote speaker for the Slater-Wilson Lectureship on Spiritual and Intellectual Life.

For 2018, Saint Paul received a grant from Kansas Leadership Center (KLC) in Wichita, KS that allowed 20 people to experience KLC programs. Several faculty, staff, and alumni were able to practice KLC’s approach to leadership. Those participants have reported being enriched and inspired by the program. For 2019, Saint Paul received 40 slots for community leaders to attend KLC programs.

Saint Paul Course of Study (COS) School educated 299 students in Leawood, KS; Hays, KS; Oklahoma City, OK; Columbia, MO; and Springfield, MO. Saint Paul launched a part-time, accelerated COS satellite program in Columbia, MO this year. Comprised of 9 courses in practical theology, this COS option is designed specifically for part-time local pastors or certified lay ministers entering ministry following completion of the Missouri Conference Licensing School. Like any other COS Satellite, the Columbia satellite is a pilot and collaborative program of Saint Paul Course of Study Regional School in collaboration with the Missouri Conference. Since September 2018, COS has offered two courses and enrolled and registered 23 students in the satellite program.

Saint Paul School of Theology is pleased to report that the Higher Learning Commission has changed the seminary’s status from "Accredited - Probation" to "Accredited". For 60 years, Saint Paul has supplied excellence in theological education and our previous challenges have inspired us to strive beyond excellence. We are excited about our future and furthering the mission of Saint Paul.

President Neil Blair, Saint Paul trustees, faculty, staff, alumni, and students thank you for your interest, prayers and support.

[www.spst.edu](http://www.spst.edu)

Kansas Campus
13720 Roe Avenue, Building C
Leawood, KS 66224

Oklahoma Campus:
2501 North Blackwelder
Bishop W. Angie Smith Chapel
Oklahoma City, OK 73106
459 men and women are being equipped as faithful, fruitful pastors and Christian leaders for the Church: (i)
292 Masters Students
167 Doctoral Students
Third largest United Methodist seminary in the United States (ii)

Founded nearly 150 years ago by Bishop Milton Wright, father of famed aviators Wilbur and Orville Wright, United has continued that spirit of innovation through:

- **Online degrees:**
  - 98% of master’s students have taken one or more course online while studying at United.
  - United students live in 39 different states.
  - Week-long intensives fulfill UMC residency requirements.

- **Live Interactive Virtual Education (LIVE):**
  - New grant brings the latest technology in virtual education.
  - Participate in on-campus courses via webcam and enjoy live lectures and real-time discussion with faculty and peers.

- **Doctor of Ministry Degree:**
  - Become a doctor for the Church, addressing a real problem or challenge in your church or community.
  - Study under a mentor who is an expert in their field and learn alongside a small group of dedicated peers.
  - 3-year program that allows you to complete project as you go, leading to a 78% program graduation rate in 2017 (vs. 54% average among other seminaries) (iii)

- **Practical education designed to resource the Church:**
  - The majority of United faculty have pastored churches.
  - 91% of entering United students are already serving in ministry, bringing that context to the classroom.

- **A focus on Church Renewal:**
  - 165 Course of Study students (iv)
  - 42 students in the Hispanic Christian Academy (3-year Spanish online course of ministry program for Hispanic lay pastors and leaders) (iv)
  - Certificates in Church Planting, Disability Ministry, and Supervision

- **Academic AND Spiritual Growth:**
  - 95% of students say the United community supports both their academic and spiritual growth. (v)

- **Diverse Christian Views:**
  - Over 30 different denominations
  - 19 international students from 15 different countries
  - 96% of students feel their views are respected in the classroom/seminary community and say they have been taught to respect the views of others.
  - 47% of students who reported are African-American, 43% Caucasian and 10% represent other ethnicities

We thank God for the men and women coming to United because God has called them to serve the least and the lost. We pray as the Lord Jesus instructed his disciples saying, “The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest” (Luke 10:2).

**Dr. Kent Millard,** President

(i) Data represents Fall 2018 headcount enrollment, unless otherwise specified.
(ii) ATS 2017-2018 Annual Data Tables. Data represents Fall 2017 headcount enrollment.
(iii) ATS 2017-2018 Strategic Information Report for United Theological Seminary. Graduation rates represent the percentage of students who were able to complete their chosen degree within a specified period of time which approximates two times the normal length of the degree.
(iv) Data represents unduplicated headcount enrollment in the 2017-2018 academic year.
(v) United Theological Seminary 2017-2018 Student Satisfaction Survey, in which 30% of students responded.
Fostering wisdom and courage

Wesley Theological Seminary, celebrating our 60th year in Washington, DC, has equipped Christian leadership for nearly 150 years. We prepare students to lead innovative ministries while remaining grounded in our biblical and theological traditions. President David McAllister-Wilson writes in his new book, *A New Church and a New Seminary*, "Leadership requires a seminary to foster both wisdom and courage."

Our faculty is chosen to prepare these kinds of leaders. In the past year, we welcomed Academic Dean Phil Wingeier-Rayo, Ph.D. plus two new faculty, the Rev. Lorena Parrish, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Urban Ministries and Director of the Community Engagement Institute, and the Rev. Anna Petrin, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Worship and Chapel Elder. Learn more about all the remarkable scholars on Wesley’s faculty at [https://www.wesleyseminary.edu/faculty-2/](https://www.wesleyseminary.edu/faculty-2/)

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

Discover exciting pathways to seminary studies

Wesley offers a 81-hour Master of Divinity, a 36-hour Master of Arts and a 60-hour Master of Theological Studies. Wesley equips all those called to serve for ordained Elder and Deacon ministries or to other ministries beyond the pulpit.

Some are able to take advantage of our modern and affordable on-campus housing and food service to be full-time residential students, living in an exciting international capital. But we understand the struggle to balance life, family, ministry, and finances. So, Wesley’s Master of Divinity degree can now be completed via online, weekend, short-term intensive, and weeknight courses in 5 years, designed for those with busy ministry, work, and family lives. Check out upcoming flexible course offerings for Summer and Fall 2019 at [http://www.wesleyseminary.edu/admissions/try-a-class-3/](http://www.wesleyseminary.edu/admissions/try-a-class-3/)

In our 3+3 Fast Track B.A./M. Div. program, in partnership with Shenandoah University, students enter ministry with less debt after earning their degrees in six years. Learn more at [www.wesleyseminary.edu/3+3degrees](http://www.wesleyseminary.edu/3+3degrees).

Wesley provides more than $2 million dollars annually in scholarships thanks to the consistent support of graduates, congregations and friends. Our new Generacion Latinx Scholarship joins our many merit-based scholarships that enable students to afford seminary education. The Community Engagement Institute at Wesley embraces a vibrant vision to be the premier center for churches and faith-based organization engage their communities. Our Community Engagement Fellows program prepares students to engage in entrepreneurial ministry. Generous stipends are available for each Fellow while they complete their M.Div. degree. Students can focus their fellowship on Public Theology, Urban Ministry or Missional Church. Meet our current Fellows at [https://www.wesleyseminary.edu/admissions/community-engagement-fellows/](https://www.wesleyseminary.edu/admissions/community-engagement-fellows/)

Take your ministry to the next level

Wesley is a leader in Doctor of Ministry programs in specialized tracks that can include international study. Our 2020 tracks will include Church Leadership Excellence, offered in conjunction with Wesley’s internationally respected Lewis Center for Church Leadership and Life Together: Spirituality for Transforming Community, and a track designed for military chaplains. Find out more or apply at [www.wesleyseminary.edu/doctorofministry/](http://www.wesleyseminary.edu/doctorofministry/).

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

**Enrich your congregational outreach and explore new dimensions of ministry**

The Lewis Center continues to be on the leading edge of research for the local church. The Lewis Center’s Leading Ideas e-newsletter is now the go-to source for over 20,000 people in ministry each week. From this we’ve launched a new podcast – Leading Ideas Talk. Sign up or listen at www.churchleadership.com/. And look for new practical online courses at lewisonlinelearning.org.

From their new location at The Methodist Building on Capitol Hill, the Center for Public Theology, under the leadership of Distinguished Professor of Public Theology Mike McCurry, equips pastors, seminarians, people of faith, and the media to create spaces for civil dialogue at the intersection of religion and politics. In its second year, the Center's Faith and Public Life Immersion for undergraduates offers a week-long experience of study and encounters with public theologians and those advocating for justice in Washington. For more information, visit http://www.wesleyseminary.edu/ice/programs/public-theology/.

The Luce Center for Arts and Religion is the only seminary-based program uniting arts and theology. The Luce Center offers regular classes and workshops with visiting artists. For information on past and upcoming opportunities visit www.luceartsandreligion.org.

The innovative online Health Minister Certificate Program prepares congregations for public health work in their parishes. Contact Tom Pruski at tpruski@wesleyseminary.edu for more information or to register for future certificate classes.

The African American Church Studies Master of Divinity specialization gives contextual preparation for the opportunities and challenges our future leaders may encounter in African American churches, while the Public Theology specialization allows master’s degree students to gain community leadership and advocacy skills. Learn more at https://www.wesleyseminary.edu/admissions/african-american-church-studies/ or https://www.wesleyseminary.edu/ice/programs/public-theology/.

Through the Wesley Innovation Hub, a research project funded by the Lilly Endowment, we are working with 20 local congregations to design innovative ministries as models for ministry by and for young adults. Follow the work and connect with resources at www.wesleyseminary.edu/wesley-innovation-hub/.

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