MN UMC 2017 Annual Conference Schedule

Schedule is subject to change. Updated May 15, 2017

Items in bold are events for all conference participants.
The remaining items are optional and/or intended for specific interest groups or attendees.

Monday, June 19, 2017: Pre-conference workshops

Noon to 6:00 p.m.  Conference registration available

1:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.  **Re-forming our Neighborhoods—Becoming Pentecost People:** Change your corner of the world! Come talk about race in our neighborhoods, churches, and communities. Presented by a partnership of CORR, COSROW, NAMAT, and UMW.

6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.  **Start A New Service/Site—Reach New People:** Starting a new service is an efficient and potentially very effective way to re-energize a local church. Led by Ben Ingebretson and Cathy Townley.

6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.  **Candidacy process orientation:** Steps and options for those moving toward ordination.

Tuesday, June 20, 2017

7:30 a.m.-5 p.m.  Conference registration/information available (Convention Center Lobby)

10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.  Maximizing Your Conference Experience (Convention Center, Opportunity Suites)

10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.  Women clergy coffee reception (Kelly Inn Ballroom)

11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.  Banquet with worship, missional report and opening motions

2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.  Clergy and Laity Sessions

Clergy will gather in Haws C at the convention center.

Laity will gather in Haws A/B at the convention center.

5:00 p.m.  Dinner (on your own); food trucks and activities at Lake George Park

6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.  **Revival Celebration at the Park:** Gather in nearby Lake George Park to hear dynamic speaker Rev. Junius B. Dotson and to enjoy choirs, amusements, a service project, and more. (Shuttle service will be available between the Convention Center, the park, and the Holiday Inn.)

8:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.  Rehearsal for Celebration of Life in Ministry service
## Wednesday, June 21, 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Health screening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:30 a.m. to 7:45 a.m.</td>
<td>Breakfast available at the Kelly Inn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Conference registration/information available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.</td>
<td><strong>Worship and Bishop Ough’s Episcopal Address</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:00 a.m. to noon</td>
<td><strong>Morning Session:</strong> Includes teaching by Rev. Junius B. Dotson and legislation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noon to 1:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Lunch provided (many special interest groups invite participants to join them for information and social time)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.</td>
<td><strong>Afternoon Session:</strong> Includes an Acts 2 (TED-style) Talk and legislation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.</td>
<td><strong>Get Engaged workshops and resource fair:</strong> An array of workshops offer ways to get involved and make a difference. Ministries and vendors will offer informational tables throughout the Conference Center.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Dinner (on your own)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Buffet available (in Convention Center)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.</td>
<td><strong>Celebration of Life in Ministry Service:</strong> Includes ordination, commissioning, recognition of retirees, and memorials. Free child care is available.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Reception for honorees</td>
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## Thursday, June 22, 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Health screening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:30 a.m. to 7:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Breakfast available at the Kelly Inn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Conference registration/information available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:00 a.m. to Noon</td>
<td><strong>Morning Session:</strong> Includes worship with conference preacher Rev. Greg Strunk, an Acts 2 (TED-style) talk, and legislation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noon to 1:15 p.m.</td>
<td>Lunch provided (each district will gather for a meal and conversation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:15 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.</td>
<td><strong>Afternoon Session:</strong> Includes an Acts 2 (TED-style) talk, legislation, and closing worship</td>
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</table>
### 2017 Annual Conference Legislation

#### Action Items

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Title of Legislation</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td>2019 and 2020 General Conference Delegates</td>
<td>A AA D R</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>101</td>
<td>Updates to Minnesota Annual Conference Policy and Procedure Manual</td>
<td>A AA D R</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>102</td>
<td>Protecting the Right to Peacefully Address Injustice through Boycotts, Divestment and Sanctions</td>
<td>A AA D R</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>125</td>
<td>2018 Proposed Budget</td>
<td>A AA D R</td>
<td>13</td>
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#### Consent Calendar/Recommended for Adoption List

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Title of Legislation</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>200</td>
<td>Designation of 2018 Conference Advance Specials</td>
<td>A AA D R</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>201</td>
<td>2018 Special Askings</td>
<td>A AA D R</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>202</td>
<td>Loan Guarantee Ceiling</td>
<td>A AA D R</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>203</td>
<td>Approval of Years of Service for Pension Credit</td>
<td>A AA D R</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>204</td>
<td>Comprehensive Benefit Funding Plan for 2018</td>
<td>A AA D R</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>205</td>
<td>Retired Clergy Subsidy Years of Service</td>
<td>A AA D R</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>206</td>
<td>Rental/Housing Allowances for Retired/Disabled Clergy</td>
<td>A AA D R</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>207</td>
<td>Equitable Compensation Schedule for 2018</td>
<td>A AA D R</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Elected Leaders (Will be available before Annual Conference Session)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Title of Legislation</th>
<th>Action</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>300</td>
<td>Elected Leader Nomination Report</td>
<td>A AA D R</td>
<td>TBD</td>
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<tr>
<td>301</td>
<td>District Leader Nomination Report</td>
<td>A AA D R</td>
<td>TBD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>302</td>
<td>Affiliate Leader Nomination Report</td>
<td>A AA D R</td>
<td>TBD</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Item 100  2019 and 2020 General Conference Delegates  

Submitted by and Contact info:  Sessions Team; Carol Zaagsma, Co-Chair, carol.zaagsma@paumc.org and Marianne Ozanne, Co-Chair, marianne.ozanne@gmail.com.

Action:  The election for 2020 General Conference Delegates will occur at the MN Annual Conference Session in 2019, and therefore, delegates and alternates elected at the 2016 Annual Conference Session will continue to represent the Minnesota Annual Conference at the special called session of the General Conference occurring in February 2019.

Relationship to the Scriptural Imperatives and Rationale:  General Conference Special Sessions (GCSS) are usually composed of the delegates to the preceding General Conference (GC) or their lawful successors. (¶14, Article II; Book of Discipline)  Sending the previously elected 2016 GC Delegation to the 2019 GCSS will allow these delegates to continue the work begun at the 2016 General Conference.

The election of the Delegates to the 2020 GC Session at the MN Annual Conference Session in 2019 can then be in response to any actions taken by the General Conference Special Session, in preparation for General Conference 2020.

Implementation:  Normal voting procedures for the election of 2020 General Conference Delegates will occur at the 2019 MN Annual Conference Session.

Outcome:  2016 General Conference Delegates (or their lawful successors) will attend the 2019 General Conference Special Session.  2020 General Conference Delegates will be elected during the 2019 MN Annual Conference Session.

Resources Required and Potential Financial Impact:  No extra resources are required.

Item 101  Updates to Minnesota Annual Conference Policy and Procedure Manual  

Submitted by and Contact info:  Janet Beard, Conference Secretary, conf.sec@minnesotaumc.org; Cindy Gregorson, Director of Ministries, cindy.gregorson@minnesotaumc.org; approved by Common Table.


Relationship to the Scriptural Imperatives and Rationale:  The current Policy and Procedure Manual contains information that is out of date and procedures that are not in alignment and/or compliant with current practices.

Implementation:  The Conference Secretary will update the manual and have the updated version available on the website following the 2017 Annual Conference Session.

Outcome:  All members will benefit from a Policy and Procedure Manual that is revised to be accurate and useful in our work in ministry throughout the Annual Conference.

Resources Required and Potential Financial Impact:  No extra resources are required.

Item 102  Protecting the Right to Peacefully Address Injustice through Boycotts, Divestment and Sanctions  

Submitted by and Contact info:  Palestine-Israel Justice Project Team; Shirley Duncanson, Co-Chair, sduncanson@comcast.net and Gretchen Fogo, Co-Chair, jgfogo@comcast.net.  Church and Society Team:  Gail Chalbi, Chair, gchalbi1146@q.com.
Relationship to the Scriptural Imperatives and Rationale: Whereas the prophets of the Old Testament admonish us to seek justice and Jesus Christ through example teaches us to act justly;

Whereas boycotts, divestment and sanctions (BDS) are constitutionally protected forms of free speech and protest that have often been used by people of conscience to effect positive social and political change;

Whereas a wave of anti-BDS legislation that has been proposed in the U.S. Congress and in state legislatures and public institutions across the United States threatens to penalize the use of these time-honored nonviolent justice-seeking actions;

Whereas United Methodists and other religious communities have long used the nonviolent methods of boycotts, divestment and sanctions to stand in solidarity with oppressed people and to work for justice, and such advocacy measures by the United Methodist Church have proven to be useful tools in helping to bring about a wide range of constructive social change, including the strengthening of labor rights for farm workers in the United States and ending of apartheid in South Africa;

Whereas, in 2005, after studying the success of such efforts, a broad coalition of Palestinian civil society issued a call for a global movement of Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) to advance the Palestinians’ long-denied rights to self-determination, freedom, justice, and equality;

Whereas, in 2009, Palestinian Christians echoed the call for boycott and divestment in their landmark document, "Kairos Palestine: A Moment of Truth," ~ an ecumenical confession of faith and urgent call to action often compared to the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.’s "Letter from a Birmingham Jail" and other Christian manifestos written in times of crisis ~ that has been signed by thousands of Palestinian Christians and endorsed by the 13 Patriarchs and Heads of Churches in Jerusalem;

Whereas, in recent years, more than a dozen United Methodist Annual Conferences have called for their own conference and/or the denomination to divest from companies that support and profit from the Israeli occupation of Palestinian land, including our own conference which approved a resolution to divest from General Electric in 2014;

Whereas, in 2012, the United Methodist General Conference approved the resolution "Opposition to Israeli Settlements in Palestinian Land," (#6111) which calls on “all nations to prohibit...the import of products made by companies in Israeli settlements on Palestinian land,” i.e. calls for an international boycott of the Israeli settlements and the Minnesota Annual Conference approved a resolution to boycott Soda Stream Products in 2015;

Whereas, in 2016, the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits of the United Methodist Church announced that five Israeli banks would be excluded from their investment portfolios, explicitly because of those banks’ involvement in settlement construction in the occupied Palestinian territories;

Action: THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Minnesota Conference of the United Methodist Church goes on record stating their opposition to any state or federal legislation that seeks to restrict the right to address injustice through boycotts, divestment and sanctions and joins the Rabbinical Council of Jewish Voice for Peace in calling on our elected officials “to resist efforts to stifle the movement toward justice for Palestinians through the current wave of ‘anti-BDS’ legislation;”

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Minnesota Conference Secretary write a letter to the President of the United States and to the Governor, the congressional representatives and the members of the legislature of the state of Minnesota informing those elected officials of this resolution and attaching the full text of the resolution, said letter to include the approximate number of congregations and church members within the Minnesota Conference of the United Methodist Church.
Submitted by and contact information: Mission Promotion Team; Karen Thompson, karen@5oaksllc.com and Lyndy Zabel, lyndy.zabel@minnesotaumc.org.

Action: The Minnesota Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church approved the following groups or organizations to be designated as having Conference Advance Special Status. The Conference Advance Special program exists to enable persons and churches to support mission and ministry projects within the bounds of the Minnesota Annual Conference and world-wide where there is a Minnesota UMC missional connection. Advance Specials are ministries, institutions and agencies that are a specific mission project or a specific mission project of a broader mission agency, which requires support beyond the capabilities of its parent ministry. New projects in bold print.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Camping:</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Camp Minnesota</td>
<td>Minneapolis MN</td>
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<tr>
<td>Koronis Ministries</td>
<td>Paynesville MN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Pines</td>
<td>Park Rapids MN</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kowakan</td>
<td>Ely MN</td>
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<tr>
<td>Camperships (camp scholarships)</td>
<td>Minneapolis MN</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Fellowships:</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grace Korean United Methodist Fellowship</td>
<td>Duluth MN</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mankato Korean Fellowship</td>
<td>Mankato MN</td>
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<tr>
<td>Richfield Faith Vietnamese Fellowship</td>
<td>Richfield MN</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>New Church Starts:</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Northern Light</strong></td>
<td>Ramsey MN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Northwest Hmong Ministry</strong></td>
<td>Robbinsdale MN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>North Summit</strong></td>
<td>Blaine MN</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>New City Church</strong></td>
<td>Minneapolis MN</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Uptown Church</strong></td>
<td>Minneapolis MN</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>La Piedra Viva</strong></td>
<td>Minneapolis MN</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Unique Missional Settings:</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spirit River Church</td>
<td>Isanti MN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La Puerta Abierta</td>
<td>St. Paul MN</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Other ministries:</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All Feathers Ministry</td>
<td>Cass Lake MN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banyan Community</td>
<td>Minneapolis MN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Center for Victims of Torture</td>
<td>St. Paul MN</td>
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<tr>
<td>Compatable Technology Inc.</td>
<td>St. Paul MN</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dignity Center</td>
<td>Minneapolis MN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emma Norton Services</td>
<td>St. Paul MN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feed My Starving Children</td>
<td>Coon Rapids MN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>Location</td>
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<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gathering House Ministries</td>
<td>Owatonna MN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>God's Closet</td>
<td>St. Paul MN</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Haiti Coalition</strong></td>
<td>Minneapolis MN</td>
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<tr>
<td>Harbor House Crisis Center</td>
<td>Superior WI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Imara International</strong></td>
<td>Maple Grove MN</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interfaith Action of Greater St. Paul- Dept. Of Indian Work</td>
<td>St. Paul MN</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>International Children's Center, Dominican Republic/Haiti</strong></td>
<td>Kalamazoo MI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laos Coalition</td>
<td>Minneapolis MN</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mankato Holy Grounds</td>
<td>Mankato MN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midwest Missions Distribution Center</td>
<td>Chatham IL</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mobile Ministry</td>
<td>Lake Kabetogama MN</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Mobility Worldwide (formerly PET)</strong></td>
<td>Maple Grove MN</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mounds Park Community Ministries</td>
<td>St. Paul MN</td>
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<tr>
<td>Multicultural Ministry</td>
<td>Minneapolis MN</td>
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<tr>
<td>OC Ministries</td>
<td>Minneapolis MN</td>
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<tr>
<td>Project AgGrad</td>
<td>Golden Valley MN</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Se Luz Ministries</strong></td>
<td>Plymouth MN</td>
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<tr>
<td>Simpson Center for Servant Ministries</td>
<td>Minneapolis MN</td>
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<tr>
<td>Simpson Housing Services</td>
<td>Minneapolis MN</td>
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<tr>
<td>South Side United Methodist Coalition</td>
<td>Minneapolis MN</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vietnam Coalition (includes Grace Children Center)</td>
<td>Minneapolis MN</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Volunteer Lawyers Network</strong></td>
<td>Minneapolis MN</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wesley Foundation</td>
<td>Minneapolis MN</td>
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<tr>
<td>World Beat Connection</td>
<td>Minneapolis MN</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Relationship to the Scriptural Imperatives and Rationale:** Conference policies require the Annual Conference Advance Special status designations be approved at each annual conference session. Contact information for these ministries will be available on the conference website or by contacting the Mission Promotion Team.

**Implementation:** Mission Promotion Team, Council on Finance and Administration.

**Outcome:** Churches of the Minnesota Annual Conference will have the opportunity to support and become involved in mission with a variety of significant ministries that are reaching and helping new people.

**Resources required and potential financial impact:** Mailing labels or email list for churches will be provided (upon request to the designated group or organization).

**Item 201 2018 Special Askings**

Submitted by and Contact Information: Council on Finance and Administration; John Mitchem, president, john@albertleachurch.org.

Action: The Council on Finance and Administration recommends Special Asking status for the year 2018 for Hamline University at $1 per member and Camping at $2 per member. “Special Askings” are institutions,
agencies, or ministries that have been given the right to send, with apportionments to each church, a suggested amount for the ensuing year.

**Relationship to the Scriptural Imperatives and Rationale:** The Special Askings relate to both of the imperatives. The Special Askings provide funds for Hamline University and for the Camping Ministries of the conference that enable them to reach out to new people and to cultivate spiritual vitality in students and campers of all ages and backgrounds. The Hamline University Special Asking for 2018 is recommended at $1 per member.

Special Askings are those ministries that receive special recognition by having a suggested amount for churches to consider but are not apportioned funds. This designation as a Special Asking will allow them to be included in the annual mailing of the apportioned fund amounts to each church. The Camping Special Asking for 2018 is recommended at $2 per member.

**Implementation:** Council on Finance and Administration.

**Outcome:** The Special Askings will be included in the annual mailing to churches with the 2018 apportionment calculation.

**Resources required:** Minimal staff time to implement with costs covered under current budget for conference staff and printing and mailing costs covered under current budget for postage and printing.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item 202</th>
<th>Loan Guarantee Ceiling</th>
<th>Adopted/Adopted as Amended/Defeated</th>
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</thead>
</table>

**Submitted by and contact information:** Conference Board of Trustees; Robert Braudt, Chair, rbraudt@riverhillsumc.org.

**Action:** The ceiling on the total amount that may be obligated by the Capital Facilities Finance & Development Commission for loan guarantees for the period ending July 1, 2018, be maintained at the lesser of $5,000,000 or the total of the following: Capital Facilities Fund, Permanent Church Extension Fund balance, conference-owned properties, and assets pledged by churches of the Minnesota Conference at the time the guarantee is made.

**Relationship to two Scriptural Imperatives and Rationale:** The ability of local churches to borrow for building allows them to address their work of reaching out and cultivating spiritual vitality. The amount currently guaranteed is approximately $1,768,200.

**Implementation:** Capital Facilities Finance & Development Commission reviews applications for loan guarantees. Conference Board of Trustees authorizes use of conference assets for backing guarantees. Local churches pledge assets to the program.

**Outcome:** Churches needing additional security for building, expansion, or remodeling loans may apply for a guarantee from the conference.

**Resources required and potential financial impact:** Staff time, supplies, and meeting costs are covered under other budget areas and current amounts are adequate for supporting this work.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item 203</th>
<th>Approval of Years of Service for Pension Credit</th>
<th>Adopted/Adopted as Amended/Defeated</th>
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</thead>
</table>

**Submitted by and contact information:** Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits; Katherine Schill, Chair, 651-925-6872.

**Action:** That the years of service and pension credit in the Minnesota Annual Conference as reported by Wespath Benefits & Investments (aka. General Board of Pension and Health Benefits) be approved for the persons who are requesting retirement at the 2017 annual conference session, as shown in the table below.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Retirement Date</th>
<th>Ordained or Local Pastor w/ Pension Credit</th>
<th>Years Served Pre-82 w/ MN Conf.</th>
<th>Other Conf.</th>
<th>Years Served Post-81 w/o Pension Credit</th>
<th>Total Years</th>
<th>Years Served toward Retirement Eligibility ¶358.2</th>
<th>Including service not included in ¶358.2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alexander, Dennis</td>
<td>7/1/2017</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>35.5</td>
<td>38</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bengtson, Mark</td>
<td>7/1/2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bohlke, Gwendolyn</td>
<td>7/1/2017</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>15</td>
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<td>Ferch, Loren</td>
<td>7/1/2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>Goetzinger, Sharon</td>
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<td>9.75</td>
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<td>9.75</td>
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<td>9.75</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gottfried, Gary</td>
<td>7/1/2017</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>3.5</td>
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*Service not in ¶358.2 includes service as a Student Local Pastor, Part-time Local Pastor, Diaconal Minister, in a Central Conference or under the Collins Pension Plan for Missionaries, and Pre-82 years served without Pension Credit.

**Item 204 Comprehensive Benefit Funding Plan for 2018**

**Submitted by and contact information:** Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits; Katherine Schill, Chair, 651-925-6872.

**Action:** The 2016 Discipline ¶1506.6 requires each annual conference develop, adopt and implement a formal comprehensive funding plan or plans for funding all of its benefit obligations. *The funding plan or plans shall be submitted annually to the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits (Wespath) for review and be approved annually by the annual conference, following the receipt and inclusion of a favorable written opinion from the
General Board of Pension and Health Benefits. (Wespath) This summary document is only a portion of the information contained in the actual signed funding plan. As such, it might not contain all the information required for a comprehensive view of the benefit obligations of the conference. You may request the full contents of the 2018 comprehensive benefit funding plan from your conference benefit office.

The MN Conference submitted its 2018 Comprehensive Benefit Funding Plan (CBFP) and received a favorable written opinion from Wespath. Following is the summary of the CBFP for the 2018 conference benefit obligations:

**Relationship to the Scriptural Imperatives, Rationale and Resourcing:**

**Clergy Retirement Security Program (CRSP) Defined Benefit (DB) and Defined Contribution (DC)**

Effective January 1, 2014, the Minnesota Annual Conference election for Fulltime Equivalent (FTE) eligibility requirement for CRSP-DB participation is 50% and greater. Based on the election of 50% and greater the required contribution as of 12/31/2018 and 12/31/2017 for CRSP-DB is $1,242,785 and $1,287,938 respectively, which will be funded by funds collected through conference billing to the local church for CRSP-DB.

Effective January 1, 2014 the CRSP-DC was modified by action of General Conference to 2% of compensation non-matching contribution along with a matching contribution of up to 1% of compensation of the clergy’s contribution to the United Methodist Personal Investment Plan (UMPIP), a 403(b) pension fund. The CRSP-DC non-matching portion (2% of compensation) is billed to/collection from the local church/salary-paying-unit and remitted to Wespath monthly. The CRSP-DC matching component of up to 1% of compensation will be funded by conference benefit reserve funds in the Deposit account invested at Wespath beginning in 2014 and continuing through 2018 with an estimated annual cost of up to $150,000 each year.

**Ministerial Pension Plan (MPP)**

The MPP Annuities as reported by Wespath has a funded status as of 1/1/2016 of 105.2%, requiring no contribution in 2018.

**Pre-82 Benefit**

The 2018 Past Service Rate (PSR) will be $734.50, a 2% increase from 2017. The PSR increase is funded by the dedicated assets in the Pre-82 plan funds at Wespath. For the foreseeable future, the PSR will increase at a rate of 2% until the pension plan funding for all plans are funded and sustainable. The Minnesota Annual Conference funded ratio as of 1/1/2016 for 2018 as calculated by Wespath is 102% based on the conference funding plan of 2% PSR increases.

The Minnesota Annual Conference did not redirected Pre-82 surplus in 2016 due to the mortality schedule change to the RP 2014 schedule increasing life expectancy and reducing the funded ratio. The redirection arrangement allows a conference with sufficient surplus to redirect surplus funding for required contribution of defined benefit obligations of the conference or another conference, if with another conference, then receive the same amount of funds into a benefit reserve account under the control of the receiving conference. The Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits recognizes the use of surplus redirection increases the possibility of future Pre-82 contributions.

**Post-Retiree Medical Benefits**

The MAC Plan is the self-funded health plan of the Minnesota Annual Conference. The retiree premium subsidy is based on a fixed rate or a fixed rate times years of service depending on the retirement date era. The retiree subsidy, averaging $603,000 annually beginning in 2011, is funded through benefit reserve funds for retiree benefits, both pension and medical. The Retiree Medical Valuation as of January 1, 2017 reported an Expected Postretirement Benefit Obligation (EPO) net cost of $13,043,819 and an Accumulated Postretirement Benefit Obligation (APBO) net cost of $11,452,653 for plan year ending December 31, 2017. These amounts are an increase over the prior valuation report of $913,007 and $258,414, respectively, as of January 1, 2017. The valuation increase reflects a .45% reduction in the discount rate used by the actuary for the future cost projections and a 2.3% increase in APBO retiree medical costs from the previous valuation for the year 2017.
Comprehensive Protection Plan (CPP)
The Comprehensive Protection Plan is directly billed to the local church based on appointments and compensation of clergy. The billing rate to the local church effective as of 1/1/2017 was reduced from 3% of compensation to 1% of compensation for all ¾ and fulltime appointments. General Conference 2016 approved the CPP eligibility change allowing each conference to elect CPP coverage for clergy appointed ¾-time. Minnesota elected to include clergy appointed ¾-time to the CPP coverage effective 1/1/2017.

UNUMLife Options
The UNUMLife Options welfare plan provides death and disability benefits to conference lay employees working 30 hours per week or more. The UNUMLife Options welfare plan also covers UM elders and deacons appointed ½ time in the local church as they are not eligible for the Comprehensive Protection Plan. The premiums for local church clergy participants are billed to the local church. The UNUMLife premiums for conference lay employees are funded through benefit reserves beginning 2017 removing this cost from the apportioned budget. The 2017 conference lay staff UNUMLife Option premiums will be funded by benefit reserve funds in the Deposit Account, the estimated cost is $20,000.

United Methodist Personal Investment Plan (UMPIP)
The conference office lay employees working an average of 20 hours per week or greater are eligible, after six months of employment with at least 1040 hours, for a pension contribution of 6% of salary. Lay employees are encouraged to contribute personal funds toward their retirement through payroll reductions to the UMPIP. The conference contribution beginning 2017 will be funded from benefit reserves; the estimated cost is $57,000.

Active Medical Benefits
The Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits (CBOPHB) projects a 0% premium increase for purposes of the 2018 conference budget process for Annual Conference. The CBOPHB looks at actual claims versus projected claims with projected trend and reserve levels to set each year’s premium. If claims continue at the current level and reserve funds continue to grow or remain stable the premiums are expected to stay flat. If there are reserve losses and/or high claims the premiums would need to be adjusted in kind.

Current active participant premiums are paid by the local church and the clergy or lay employee participant. In 2018 the MAC plan reserves will fund an estimated $350,000 of the active plan cost when determining the 2018 premium. Lay employees are eligible if they work 30 or more hours per week the salary-paying-unit sponsoring the MAC Plan for their lay employees must fund at least the same cost of the single premium as they do for clergy.

Active Clergy Benefits
Churches pay direct cost of clergy benefits with few subsidies: MAC Plan subsidy for active participants is included in the calculation prior to determining the church and participant share and up to 1% CRSP-DC match subsidy effective January 1, 2014 for 2014 thru 2018 is funded by benefit reserve funds. The salary-paying-unit supports the remaining benefit costs of the appointed clergy.

Outcome: The Minnesota Annual Conference participates in many clergy and lay employee benefit plans through Wespath Benefits of the United Methodist Church as directed through the 2016 Book of Discipline and the plan documents. The Minnesota Annual Conference as an employer accepts the responsibility of providing adequate and sustainable benefits for the appointed and lay personnel of the district and conference offices. The Minnesota Annual Conference encourages all local churches to provide adequate and sustainable benefits for their lay employees.

Item 205 Retired Clergy Subsidy Years of Service
Submitted by and contact information: Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits, Katherine Schill, Chair, 651-925-6872.
**Action:** That the 2018 year of service as calculated by Wespath Benefits & Investments (a.k.a. General Board of Pension and Health Benefits) be counted towards retired clergy health insurance premium subsidy at the same subsidy rate as for years of service prior to 2018.

**Relationship to the Scriptural Imperatives and Rationale:** Additional time is needed for research and analysis for the Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits to determine what retiree health insurance alternative will work best for the clergy and the Minnesota Annual Conference for those with active service beyond 2017. This one year extension will allow additional time for review and analysis of an ever changing healthcare environment. The Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits will continue to study the best approach for the Minnesota Annual Conference to provide medical subsidy in retirement. All eligibility, rates and determination of subsidy rates will remain as stated in Item #509 from the 2003 Annual Conference except that the years of service with subsidy of $4 per month per credited year of service will be extended to 12/31/2018.

**Implementation:** Conference and Wespath Benefits & Investments

**Outcome:** Retired clergy will receive credit for the 2018 service year as calculated by Wespath Benefits & Investments towards MAC Plan premium subsidy as approved in Item #509 at the 2003 Annual Conference.

**Resources required and potential financial impact:** The addition of one year of service will not change the current requirement for retiree medical subsidy in the apportioned budget since it is funded by benefit reserves, and therefore no addition to the 2018 budget is required for this item. Adding the 2018 year of service should not increase the total unfunded retiree health insurance subsidy liability significantly above the 2003 actuarial projection of $12.1 million. Population, demographics, mortality table, financial assumptions used and premiums change the liability projections overtime. The most recent Actuarial Valuation of Postretirement Health Care Plan as of January 1, 2017, completed by PRM Consulting Group, used the RP2014 mortality table projected with scale MP2014 along with a lower discount rate (3.8%). The valuation reports the Expected Postretirement Benefit Obligation of $13.0 million and the Accumulated Postretirement Benefit Obligation of $11.5 million.

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**Item 206 Rental/Housing Allowances for Retired, Disabled or Former Clergy**  
Adopted/Adopted as Amended/Defeated

**Submitted by and contact information:** Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits, Katherine Schill, Chair, 651-925-6872.

**Action:** That an amount equal to 100% of the pension, severance, or disability payments received from plans authorized under *The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church* (the “Discipline”), which includes all such payment from Wespath Benefits & Investments (aka General Board of Pension and Health Benefits), during the year of 2017 and 2018 by each active, retired, terminated, or disabled Clergyperson who is or was a member of the Conference, or its predecessors, be and hereby is designated as a rental/housing allowance for each such Clergyperson; and

That the pension, severance, or disability payments to which this rental/housing allowance designation applies will be any pension, severance, or disability payments from plans, annuities, or funds authorized under the *Discipline*, including such payments from Wespath and from a commercial annuity company that provides an annuity arising from benefits accrued under a Wespath plan, annuity, or fund authorized under the *Discipline*, that result from any service a Clergyperson rendered to this Conference or that an active, a retired, a terminated, or a disabled Clergyperson who is or was a member of the Conference, or its predecessors, be and hereby is designated as a rental/housing allowance for each such Clergyperson; and

**Relationship to the Scriptural Imperatives and Rationale:** WHEREAS, the religious denomination known as The United Methodist Church (the “Church”), of which this Conference is a part, has in the past functioned and continues to function through ministers of the gospel (within the meaning of Internal Revenue Code section 107) who were or are duly ordained, commissioned, or licensed ministers of the Church (“Clergypersons”);
WHEREAS, the practice of the Church and of this Conference was and is to provide active Clergypersons with a parsonage or a rental/housing allowance as part of their gross compensation;

WHEREAS, pensions or other amounts paid to active, retired, terminated, and disabled Clergypersons are considered to be deferred compensation and are paid to active, retired, terminated, and disabled Clergypersons in consideration of previous active service; and

WHEREAS, the Internal Revenue Service has recognized the Conference (or its predecessors) as the appropriate organization to designate a rental/housing allowance for Clergypersons who are or were members of this Conference and are eligible to receive such deferred compensation;

NOTE: The rental/housing allowance that may be excluded from a Clergyperson’s gross income in any year for federal income tax purposes is limited under Internal Revenue Code section 107(2) and regulations thereunder to the least of: (1) the amount of the rental/housing allowance designated by the Clergyperson’s employer or other appropriate body of the Church (such as this Conference in the foregoing resolutions) for such year; (2) the amount actually expended by the Clergyperson to rent or provide a home in such year; or (3) the fair rental value of the home, including furnishings and appurtenances (such as a garage), plus the cost of utilities in such year.

Implementation: The Minnesota Annual Conference adopts this resolution.

Outcome: The rental/housing allowance may be excluded from a Clergyperson’s gross income in any year for federal income tax purposes under IRS Code Section 107(2) for pension, severance, or disability payments from plans, annuities, severance, or funds authorized under the Discipline as a result of the Clergyperson’s service.

Resources required and potential financial impact: None

Item 207 Equitable Compensation Schedule for 2018 Adopted/Adopted as Amended/Defeated

Submitted by and contact information: Rod Stemme, Equitable Compensation Executive Secretary, 507-964-2898, stemme@usfamily.net.

Action: The following be adopted as the Equitable Compensation Schedule.

Equitable Compensation Schedule for 2018

The minimum base compensation for 2018 is defined as the 2017 base compensation of $36,349 plus the Cost Of Living Adjustment (COLA) used by the federal government for the year we are in (that is, the Cost Of Living Adjustment announced last October for 2017 SSA which was 0.3%). In addition there is a step increase of $700 for years of service for the first 8 steps. In keeping with our ongoing policy, the first step normally begins on January 1 following 18 months of service in the Minnesota Annual Conference.

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In considering additional compensation beyond these steps noted above the Staff/Pastor–Parish Relations Committee is encouraged to consider the announced Cost Of Living Adjustment and merit increases in their mutual negotiation with the pastor.
Further, this proposal does not intend to reduce current compensation levels recommended by Staff/Pastor Parish Relations Committees and approved by the Church/Charge Conference during the ongoing tenure of a pastoral appointment.

Further, in recognition of the financial realities and to allow for flexibility in the appointment process, exceptions to above equitable compensation policy can be approved by a ¾ vote of the Cabinet and the voluntary consent of the pastor involved.

Seniority for clergy from other denominations and communions who have had their orders recognized by the Minnesota Annual Conference shall have their seniority status established by the Cabinet before their first appointment in the Minnesota Annual Conference. The Cabinet is urged to consider years of service in the ministry exercised in other denominations, especially those coming from the churches of the Commission on Pan-Methodist Cooperation and Union and other member churches of the Churches Uniting in Christ (See ¶625.10 in The 2012 Book of Discipline).

**Relationship to the Scriptural Imperatives and Rationale:** This proposed action does not have a direct relationship to the imperatives but does speak to the context of ministry in which the imperatives are to be implemented. The Annual Conference is required to approve conference standards for pastoral support.

**Implementation:** The Board of Ordained Ministry and the Cabinet will implement this policy and monitor its effect in light of the needs of congregations, the realities of appointments that are made by the Cabinet, and the resources of the annual conference for equitable compensation support.

**Outcome:** Having a schedule for equitable compensation can enhance the morale of pastors and congregations when there is some sense of collegiality and equity related to cash compensation whatever the setting of the appointment. Since we have an appointment system, rather than another system of clergy placement, a schedule does permit a pastor to serve where gifts and graces are needed without issues of compensation being the overriding concern. Hopefully such a schedule allows focus on ministry and fulfilling the imperatives rather than undue focus on compensation issues.

**Resources required and potential financial impact:** None required beyond support already included in the recommended annual conference budget with equitable compensation support funded through the Investing in Congregations Grant process (authorized by 2007 Annual Conference).
Dear Clergy and Lay Members of the Minnesota Annual Conference:

Attached is the 2018 recommended budget that was developed through our collaborative process. The CFA (Council on Finance and Administration) established guidelines for the 2018 budget. Teams, committees, and boards submitted their apportioned budget requests to the budget process team in January 2017. The budget process team, which consists of representation from the conference teams, boards, and committees, made necessary changes to stay within the annual conference and CFA guidelines. The annual conference voted in 2016 to revise the ceiling rule to allow up to a maximum of a 3% increase over the prior year budget. At a time when we are seeking to fund our strategic initiatives, the budget process team felt it important to present to you a conservative yet slightly increased budget that reflects a 1% increase over the 2017 budget. There are no new major initiatives in this budget. The 1% increase is simply the result of cost of living salary increases for staff, office rent adjustments, and robust ministry teams continuing to expand their work to achieve our strategic initiatives.

Following the work of the budget process team, the CFA and the Common Table reviewed the 2018 budget in April 2017. The final CFA recommendation of a balanced budget (within the guidelines) is included here for your review, as is required by our conference rules of procedure.

The Conference Council on Finance and Administration 2018 budget recommendation is for an apportioned budget of $6,177,090. This recommendation is a 1% increase over our 2017 budget of $6,106,460. When the uncollectible contingency amount of $725,000 is added, the total to be apportioned is $6,902,090.

The format for the 2018 budget recommendation is organized around key missional areas, which express our primary work together as an annual conference. We strongly encourage you to read the materials provided here prior to your arrival in St. Cloud.

For the Council on Finance and Administration:

Barbara Brower
Director of Finance and Administration

Rev. John Mitchem
Chair Council on Finance and Administration
2018 Recommended Apportioned Budget

2018 Budget Executive Summary

The Council on Finance and Administration (CFA) and the Common Table recommends a 2018 apportioned budget totaling $6,177,090. This amount is 1% larger than the 2017 budget and in compliance with the budget guidelines established at the 2017 Annual Conference, not to exceed 3% of the prior year budget.

CFA and Common Table Recommended Budget

Following a collaborative process that included input from the conference ministry teams, boards, and agencies, CFA and the Common Table recommend an apportioned budget of $6,177,090 with the uncollectible contingency of $725,000, the total to be apportioned is $6,902,090. The uncollectible contingency accommodates anticipated shortfalls in some churches’ apportionment payments.

The 2018 budget recommendation is organized around our primary work, expressed in six missional areas:

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<th>2018 REQUESTED APPORTIONED BUDGET</th>
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<tr>
<td>Apportioned</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ministry Area</td>
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<tr>
<td>Developing Missional Leaders</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clergy Active, Retiree and Lay Health Plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Equipping Missional Congregations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Extending Missional Impact</td>
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<tr>
<td>Generating Missional Resources</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aligning Our Work: Leadership of the Annual Conference</td>
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<td>Aligning Our Work: Support of the Annual Conference</td>
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<td>Uncollectible Contingency under direction of CFA</td>
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<td><strong>Total to Apportion</strong></td>
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The 2018 apportioned budget represents approximately 40% of the total budget of $15.4 million. Approximately $1.3 million of this remaining $9.3 million non-apportioned budget had historically been included in the apportioned budget, but has recently been funded through investments from the Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits. Starting in 2008, we began judicious use of benefit reserve funds and MAC Plan reserve funds to replace apportioned funds. As reserve funds allowed, we increased the use of reserve funds for retired clergy health insurance, CRSP-DC match, and active clergy health insurance.

The remaining non-apportioned budget includes funding through the Reach • Renew • Rejoice capital campaign donations, the self-funded conference health insurance program, camping and youth ministry, and voluntary group workers’ compensation, mainly funded by premiums or fees. None of these non-apportioned programs would be possible without the internal support system provided by staff, technology, stewardship, and management processes funded by apportionments in the budget category of “leadership and support of the annual conference.” This internal support system allows 100% of donations for ministries and Advance Specials to go to the specified cause. Apportionments provide avenues of giving so that we can be strong local churches and annual conferences, both missional in our context and connected in mission around the world.
Missional Budget Areas

**Developing Missional Leaders** $1,031,407 15%

We train, coach, and support leaders as they increase in their skills and commitment to ensure our churches reach new people, grow in love of God and neighbor, and heal a broken world.

Includes: camping youth ministries, campus ministry, clergy leadership development, attracting and developing the next generation of clergy leaders, board of ordained ministry, candidate travel and seminary visits, clergy health insurance and retirement benefits, lay leadership development, common table training fund, quadrennial training for elected leaders, and staff.

**Equipping Missional Congregations** $820,726 12%

We resource congregations to catalyze innovation, encourage revitalization, generate multiplication, and support connections in communities here and around the world.

Includes: new church starts, congregational development, investing in congregations grants, safe sanctuaries work, Resource Center for Churches, congregational vitality, and staff.
Extending Missional Impact

$1,982,951 29%

Our missional impact is local, national, and global. It is developed through relationships and resources. We engage in tangible actions to assist with human needs and address systemic issues.

Includes: General Conference apportioned funds (World Service, Episcopal, General Administration, Interdenominational Cooperation, Ministerial Education, Black College, Africa University) totaling $1,749,790, North Central Jurisdiction, Minnesota Council of Churches, ministries of compassion and justice (Church and Society Ministry Team, Mission Promotion Team, Commission on Role and Status of Women, Commission on Religion and Race, Southeast Asia partnership), small church Volunteers in Mission scholarships, school-church partnership grants, other United Methodist and local and connectional giving (Minnesota Conference and General Conference Advance Specials, UMCOR, Special Sundays, Love Offering, etc.), and staff.

Generating Missional Resources

$269,788 4%

We tell stories of lives changed, leverage apportioned dollars, and encourage cycles of generosity through resources for churches and individuals.

Includes: Communications, Minnesota United Methodist Foundation, conference Official Journal and Yearbook, staff.

Aligning Our Work – Leadership of the Annual Conference

$907,488 13%

Leadership of the annual conference develops vision and strategy; works to align all parts of the conference; addresses adaptive challenges in our geographical, cultural and demographic context.

Includes: Bishop and Cabinet, Area office, Episcopal residence, District Offices, District Superintendents, elected leaders and volunteers, Common Table meeting expense pool, contingency fund, Annual Conference sessions, delegate expenses for General and Jurisdictional conferences, reserve fund to host General Conference in 2020, staff.

Aligning Our Work – Support of the Annual Conference

$1,164,730 17%

Internal support systems provide accounting, accountability, risk management, insurance, legal, property, and good stewardship of all resources. In addition to providing internal support systems for all Minnesota Conference outcomes, internal support systems paid by apportionments allow 100% of gifts to advance specials and all other benevolences to go to the designated mission or ministry.

Includes: District parsonages, discontinued church property, Archives & History, financial administration, finance office, audit, risk management, insurance, legal, central office rent, equipment, supplies, property and liability insurance, group workers’ compensation policy, staff in finance, archives, technology, camp accountant, general office, plus human resources administration and certain costs and benefits for staff in all ministry areas.

Recent Apportioned Budget History

A recent history of apportioned budgets is below:
Benefit Reserve Funds

The benefit reserve funds, which are outside of plan assets, and invested at Wespath Benefits and Investments (previously the General Board of Pension & Health Benefits), remain at a healthy level. In addition, the denomination’s pension plan assets held in trust by Wespath Benefits and Investments are funded at levels from 102% (for the Minnesota portion of Pre-1982 plan) to 105% for the Ministerial Pension Plan (MPP) annuities to 108% for the Clergy Retirement Security Plan – Defined Benefit (CRSP-DB).

The MAC Plan health insurance premium has stayed level since 2011. However, costs, specifically drug costs continue to climb. As part of the Financial Advisory Consulting Team (FACT) analysis, a recommendation was made to the Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits (CBOPHB) to review alternatives to our MAC self-funded health plan. Based upon detailed analysis, the CBOPHB decided to move to Health Flex a self-insured program offered through Wespath Benefits and Investments effective January 1, 2018.

Total Operating Budget

There are significant other sources of funding in the total operating budget of the annual conference. The total operating budget includes approximately $9.3 million in other sources of revenue in addition to the amount apportioned. Some of the items in the total operating budget are pass-through items where 100% of the amount donated is remitted to the appropriate ministry or mission of the church without reduction for administrative costs. Even though the funds are pass-through, they are stewarded and accounted for in accordance with our responsibilities under the United Methodist Book of Discipline and generally accepted accounting principles.

The 2018 total operating budget for the Minnesota Annual Conference is shown on the last three pages.

2016 Financial Highlights

Thank you to all the churches that paid 100% of their apportioned amount for 2016 and those that increased their level of payment for 2016. Our final receipt rate for 2016 was 87.7%. This is a slightly lower percentage than last year (89.1%). Approximately 75% of our churches paid 100% of their 2016 apportioned amount. This is similar to prior years.
We used $191,000 in investment reserve funds to pay the general church apportionments in full. Approximately 25% of our conference-apportioned funds are budgeted to pay the general church apportionments.

In addition to apportioned giving in 2016, Minnesota United Methodists contributed more than $1.5 million to Reach • Renew • Rejoice, 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.

Our investment returns in 2016 were 8.23% on $62.6 million invested as of December 31, 2016. Our invested funds include $52.5 million for benefits, $1.7 million in conference reserves, $2.0 million in charitable trusts and annuity contracts, $6.4 million in other accounts such as the Permanent Church Extension Fund, the Capital Facilities fund, and other designated or restricted funds.

We are grateful for your generosity in addressing pressing needs here and around the world. Apportionments provide the connectional framework that makes it possible for 100% of second-mile giving to go where it is directed. Your full participation in connectional giving helps plant new churches or satellite campuses, revitalize churches, provide congregational development grants and make a difference in many ways. We praise God for your faithfulness and generosity. We ask that all churches that did not reach 100% payment in 2016 consider how they can increase their participation until they are paying 100% of their portion of our shared ministry.

Questions?

Additional information on the conference budget and conference finances may be found at www.minnesotaumc.org. Please contact Director of Finance and Administration and Conference Treasurer Barb Brower at barbara.brower@minnesotaumc.org or 612-230-6135 with any questions.
# 2018 Budget for All Income and Expense
including non-apportioned items and pass-through amounts

## Income

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Apportionments, including uncollectible</td>
<td>6,902,090</td>
<td>42.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Income - Various Reserves, Misc.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benefit Reserve Accounts</td>
<td>830,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAC Plan reserves</td>
<td>350,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permanent Church Extension Fund, legacy funds, and Reach. Renew. Rejoice. (campaign)</td>
<td>539,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For personnel</td>
<td>429,300</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area office &amp; Episcopal residence support</td>
<td>14,200</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtotal</td>
<td>2,162,500</td>
<td>13.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Income - Insurance premiums</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voluntary group workers comp policy</td>
<td>200,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAC Plan - direct billed premiums, Medicare Part D, stop loss recovery</td>
<td>5,000,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtotal</td>
<td>5,200,000</td>
<td>32.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Income - Events</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual Conference Session</td>
<td>200,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth events - UMYs, JUMYs, confirmation</td>
<td>100,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtotal</td>
<td>300,000</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Income - Discontinued Church buildings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contracts for Deed, Leases, event fees</td>
<td>405,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtotal</td>
<td>405,000</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Income</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misc.</td>
<td>15,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camping Special Asking</td>
<td>65,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamline Special Asking</td>
<td>30,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pass-through Benevolences</td>
<td>1,070,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtotal</td>
<td>1,180,000</td>
<td>7.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Income</strong></td>
<td>16,149,590</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Expenses

### Developing Missional Leaders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Camping</td>
<td>166,250</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campus Ministry</td>
<td>32,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clergy Leadership Development</td>
<td>404,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clergy Benefits</td>
<td>6,197,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lay Leadership Development</td>
<td>22,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff</td>
<td>624,182</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subtotal</strong></td>
<td>7,445,432</td>
<td>46.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Equipping Missional Congregations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New Church Starts</td>
<td>859,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congregational Vitality</td>
<td>294,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff</td>
<td>327,001</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subtotal</strong></td>
<td>1,480,001</td>
<td>9.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Extending Missional Impact
- Connectional & Ecumenical Church: $1,809,790
- Compassion, Justice, and Youth: $192,150
- All Other UM Local and Connectional Giving: $1,100,000
- Staff: $81,011
- Subtotal: $3,182,951 (19.7%)

## Generating Missional Resources
- Communications: $50,450
- Annual Conference Journal: $5,900
- Minnesota United Methodist Foundation: $50,000
- Staff, including RRR staff: $163,438
- Subtotal: $269,788 (1.7%)

## Aligning Our Work - Leadership of the Annual Conference
- Bishop and Cabinet: $79,000
- District Offices and Superintendents: $689,071
- Elected Leaders and Volunteers: $27,000
- Conference Sessions, NCI, reserve for 2020 GC: $214,000
- Staff: $112,617
- Subtotal: $1,121,688 (6.9%)

## Aligning Our Work - Support of the Annual Conference
- Property: $432,360
- Financial Administration: $76,500
- Risk Management: $261,000
- Operations: $504,173
- Staff: $650,697
- Subtotal: $1,924,730 (11.9%)

Uncollectible contingency: $725,000 (4.5%)

**Total Expenses**: $16,149,590
May 18, 2017

Greetings Members of Minnesota Annual Conference,

You may have noticed an action item in your legislation packet called, “Updates to the Minnesota Annual Conference Policy and Procedure Manual.” This proposal is to adopt a complete manual that has been edited, updated and revised. Because of the numerous changes that were needed to conform with our current practices, AND with the goal of making this a more useful and manageable tool for everyone, we thought it would be helpful to do a complete revision and bring the whole manual to be voted on at the Annual Conference Session this June.

Several people have helped update, review and approve this new manual. If you have questions or concerns, we would appreciate hearing them before Annual Conference Session. (Please contact Janet Beard with questions.) If there are frequently asked questions, we will provide an “FAQ” document at Annual Conference, in order to reduce the need for excess discussion on the floor concerning minor edits. If this version, as it is written, would be adopted this year, then any changes could be presented as amendments to the manual next year.

If any of you would like to see the 2016 version of the manual with changes marked on it, please contact Janet Beard, who will send you a link to that document.

This has been a large project completed over many months with the help of many people! Thanks to all who helped produce this manual and thanks to all who will review it for consideration at Annual Conference Session this June.

Sincerely,

Janet Beard  Cindy Gregorson
Conference Secretary  Director of Ministries
MN Annual Conference, UMC  MN Annual Conference, UMC
conf.sec@minnesotaumc.org  cindy.gregorson@minnesotaumc.org
612-230-6156
INTRODUCTION
This manual was developed in response to action of the 1997 annual conference session and has been revised by action of subsequent annual conference sessions. The purpose of this manual is to codify the conference and local church operational procedures of the Minnesota Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church. The manual can be accessed through the conference website: www.minnesotaumc.org. Conference leaders and local church officials are encouraged to read, review and refer to any parts of the manual that are applicable to their ministry area as they perform their responsibilities in the work of the church.

Sections amended by annual conference action will be noted every year in the conference Journal in the reports of applicable legislative action. Beginning in 2003, an ongoing composite list of amended sections and subsections with revision dates will be kept by the conference secretary. Each year the website will contain the full Policy and Procedure Manual as updated.

Each conference structure unit is urged to annually review those parts applicable to their ministry focus for any legislative action to be recommended to the annual conference.

The Minnesota Annual Conference will operate on the basis of The Book of Discipline, which is amended by action of the General Conference. “The Book of Discipline” will be abbreviated “BOD” throughout this document, when paragraph references are used.

Questions regarding this manual may be directed to the Conference Secretary or Director of Ministries.

AMENDMENTS
Amendments to this manual become effective upon a majority vote of those present and voting at the annual conference session.
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01. General
   a. Purpose and Structure
      The purpose of the annual conference is 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, all to the glory of God. (BOD ¶601)

      Annual Conferences are permitted the flexibility to design conference and district structure in ways that best support the mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ in an increasingly diverse global community. (BOD ¶610.1)

      Every team and board needs to effectively assist the annual conference, local church and individuals in fulfilling our mission to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world and is asked to evaluate their work on an on-going basis by asking, “How are we intentionally reaching new people for Jesus Christ through our ministries?” and “How are we helping new people grow and mature as disciples of Jesus Christ through our ministries and areas of responsibility?” (BOD ¶610)

   b. Vision
      The Minnesota Annual Conference is engaged in an intentional Journey Toward Vitality with the aim of every congregation being a vital expression of the gospel imperatives to grow in love of God and neighbor (Matthew 22:37-40); reach new people (Matthew 28:19-20) and heal a broken world (Luke 4:16-21). We do this because we believe Jesus is life and that the fullness of the resurrected Christ is discovered and lived out in vital Christian communities. Our baptismal promise is that we will be a community of love and forgiveness. The power of the early church was that people saw they were a transformed people and community, and that shaped how they lived and loved together. This is the church we are called to be in and for our world today.

      The staff and resources of the annual conference are focused on increasing our capacity in four key areas:
      - Equipping Missional Congregations
      - Developing Missional Leaders
      - Generating Missional Resources
      - Extending Missional Impact

      The Extended Cabinet, which consists of the Bishop; District Superintendents; Director-Level Staff; and Lay Leader(s), is the strategic leadership team for the annual conference.

02. Annual Conference Session
   a. Equalization Formula
      1) Clergy Membership: (BOD ¶ 602.1)
         a) Deacons and elders in full connection (BOD ¶ 333)
         b) Provisional members (BOD ¶ 327)
         c) Associate members
         d) Retired associate members
         e) Affiliate members (BOD ¶ 344.4, 586.4)
         f) Local pastors under full-time and part-time appointment to a pastoral charge (BOD ¶ 317)
         g) Retired local pastors (voice but not vote)
         h) Other denomination ministers serving UM churches or in ecumenical service
         i) Wesley Foundation Campus Ministers

      2) Lay Members
         a) A professing member from each church
         b) Each charge served by more than one clergy shall be entitled to as many lay members as there are clergy members. ("Clergy" shall include deacons for whom the local church is their secondary appointment.)
c) One additional lay member from churches with 600 or more members with one pastor under Episcopal appointment, the election of the additional lay member being based on the membership of the church as reported in the most recent conference Journal

d) Diaconal ministers

e) Conference lay leader

f) Conference Lay Servant Ministry Registrar

g) District lay leaders

h) Conference president of United Methodist Women

i) Conference president of United Methodist Men

j) General Conference lay delegates for the quadrennium following their election

k) Lay persons who are members of General Conference Board and Agencies and the lay representative to the Jurisdictional Council on Ministries

l) Lay members of Conference Elected Leader Administrative and Ministry Teams

m) Wesley Foundation Campus Ministry student

n) Lay director staff, conference treasurer, and conference secretary, if they are members of a United Methodist church

o) Deaconesses and Home Missionaries serving within our conference

p) One young person between the ages of 12-17 and one young person between the ages of 18-30 from each district to be selected by the district

q) Additional lay persons, divided equally among the districts and selected by each district so as to balance the total number of clergy members

b. Ecumenical Representatives

(See BOD ¶ 602.9) The Bishop shall invite an ecumenical representative to participate in the Service of Life and Ministry (Ordination) Service.

c. Plenary Session Guidelines

1) *Pre-Conference Reports and Recommendations:* There shall be pre-conference materials containing reports and recommendations to the annual conference session, to be edited and produced by the conference secretary and to be distributed as economically as possible to members of the annual conference at least 30 days prior to opening of the session. The Annual Conference Sessions Planning Team will provide an opportunity to opt in to pay for a hard copy. Materials intended for publication in the pre-conference materials shall be sent to the conference secretary at least 75 days prior to the opening of the session.

2) *Late Materials:*

a) Legislative items received after the deadline shall not be brought to the annual conference for inclusion unless the subject matter has urgency due to events that have occurred after the deadline for submission of materials.

b) Persons bringing the late items shall provide 800 paper copies of the proposal which will be distributed to and viewed by the members before a vote of consideration shall occur.

c) Late items will be considered and added to the plenary agenda only when a 2/3 majority of those members present and voting affirm this decision.

3) *Consent Calendar:* The Annual Conference Sessions Planning Team will review the submitted legislation before the annual conference session for its action. The Annual Conference Sessions Planning Team will prepare a Recommended for Adoption list and/or a Recommended for Rejection list for Annual Conference Action. Items placed on the RAL or RRL by the Annual Conference Sessions Planning Team may be removed by a petition signed by ten members of the annual conference and presented to the conference secretary by the announced deadline. Following the reading of the RAL and/or RRL lists, at least one hour shall lapse before final disposition. These rules shall not be suspended except by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting.

4) *Public Statements and Press Releases:* Public statements and press releases regarding the deliberations and conclusions of the annual conference shall be designated as to whether they are:

- The official position of the Minnesota Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church
5) Rules of Procedure Presented at Opening Session: Rules of procedure, including the setting of the bar of conference, shall be presented by the Conference Secretary and adopted by the conference at its opening session.

d. Election of Lay Members
Lay members of the annual conference shall be elected for the quadrennium by the pastoral charges in accordance with The Book of Discipline and the equalization formula adopted by the annual conference.

e. Love Offering
The Mission Promotion Ministry Team shall be the responsible body for administering the Love Offering of the annual conference session. The Mission Promotion Ministry Team in consultation with the Extended Cabinet shall select a recipient for its Love Offering by December 31.

The conference Journal and Policy and Procedure Manual shall be published annually.

03. Elected Leadership

a. Conference Structure and Elected Leadership
   1) The conference structure and elected leadership are noted below.
   2) Changes in conference structure shall be processed through the Extended Cabinet and Common Table.
   3) The election of all elected leadership shall be subject to confirmation by the annual conference session, unless otherwise provided by The Book of Discipline.

b. Lists of Members and Officers
All people’s names used in conference, district or other mailings and lists of officers, including the local church, will be their lawful name and not nickname.

c. Membership and Term Limits
The membership and term limits for each organizational unit shall be consistent with The Book of Discipline and all mandated functions will be incorporated into the functions of one of the administrative or ministry teams. As teams are formed, attention shall be given to the gifts, passion and skills of the team members, as well as seeking to have a variety of voices representing the whole conference in all its diversity.

d. Term of Office
The term of office will be set at four years. Persons will be eligible to serve no more than two consecutive terms of service with the exception of the Board of Ordained Ministry where The Book of Discipline allows for three consecutive four year terms. Vacancies between sessions will be filled by the conference Elected Leader Team.

e. Administrative Teams
Administrative Teams hold the primary responsibility for the governance functions of the annual conference. Because of the fiduciary responsibility of these teams, its members shall be nominated by the Elected Leader Team, and elected by the annual conference session.
   1) Board of Ordained Ministry
      a) Administrative Review
      b) Committee on Investigation
   2) Board of Pension and Health Benefits
   3) Board of Trustees
   4) Conference Elected Leader Team
   5) Council on Finance and Administration
   6) Episcopacy Committee
Ministry teams are formed to implement specific initiatives to fulfill the work of the annual conference to equip congregations in the making of disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. The chair of the team along with the assigned staff person invite persons to serve on these teams. The current list of Ministry Teams and its composition shall be presented to annual conference session annually for their information and affirmation.

1) Annual Conference Sessions Planning Team
2) Church and Society
3) Commission on Archives and History
4) Commission on Religion and Race
5) Commission on the Status and Role of Women
6) Dakotas and Minnesota Area Camp and Retreat Council
7) Dakotas and Minnesota Area Church Multiplication Team
8) Higher Education
9) Investing in Congregations Granting Team
10) Journey Toward Vitality Lead Team
11) Lay Ministry Team
12) Mission Promotion Team
13) Youth Ministry Team

g. Project Teams
Project Teams are either a working group for a specific task and are under the supervision of an administrative team or a group of people who have coalesced around a specific missional focus. Project teams are not considered “elected leaders” of the annual conference although the teams and their membership will be listed in the journal for informational purposes.

h. A Common Table
The chairs of the Administrative and Ministry Teams along with the Director-level staff will gather as a Common Table two times a year for the purposes of 1) alignment and coordination of ministry to the vision and mission and 2) leadership development. This will include discussing yearly direction and goals, evaluating outcomes and stewarding faithfully the resources of the annual conference by engaging in the budgeting process. The Director of Ministries and Lay Leader(s) shall set the agenda and convene the Common Table.

i. Administrative Policies for Ministry Units
1) Meals for members attending meetings called by ministry units will be paid for from the common pool for ministry teams to meet and/or common pool for training. Actual meal expense will be paid, but the total amount shall not exceed $7 per meal or $12 per day to help defray costs only. Actual lodging expense will also be paid, providing the amount does not exceed sixty percent of the IRS guidelines for that city ($84 in 2017 for the Twin Cities), and further providing that the individual(s) will need to leave home before 6 a.m. to attend a meeting. Receipts shall be required for all reimbursements except mileage.

2) Travel allowance for lay and clergy attending meetings called by ministry units is to help defray expenses at a rate that shall be recommended annually by the Council on Finance and Administration. Payments shall be made by voucher.

3) Upon request, financial renumeration may be made by ministry units to its members for dependent care (child and elderly) as a legitimate meeting expense.

4) Each conference structure shall designate one person to serve as budget coordinator. Before the conference treasurer will make any payment, it shall be the duty of the budget coordinator to approve and review all vouchers for completeness and appropriateness. The conference treasurer will prepare monthly finance reports. Reimbursements for expenses from the previous year are due at the Finance Office the Friday following the 3rd Monday in January.

5) The representatives from the Commission on the Status and Role of Women and the Commission on Religion and Race are authorized to attend any meetings of the administrative and ministry
teams as they deem necessary to fulfill their role in reviewing and evaluating the priorities of the annual conference for racial, ethnic, and gender inclusiveness. Teams are also encouraged to invite representatives from Commission on the Status and Role of Women and Commission on Religion and Race to attend meetings to foster positive communication and practice regarding racial, ethnic and gender inclusiveness.

6) Announcements and agendas of all meetings of elected committees shall be published in advance, when possible and appropriate, on the conference website. Minutes will be posted on the conference website after they are approved by the group and may include supplemental information, as appropriate. When legal, regulatory, supervisory, employment, pension or benefit issues of a sensitive nature are to be discussed, the published announcements, agendas, and minutes should reflect the group entering into executive session. The Board of Ordained Ministry; the Board of Pension and Health Benefits; and the Council on Finance and Administration, when considering personnel issues, are the only elected groups exempt from this requirement.

04. Board of Ordained Ministry

1) The Board of Ordained Ministry shall be composed of 42 members placed in two or three classes of four-year terms, nominated by the presiding bishop after consultation with the chairperson, executive committee, and Cabinet.

2) The 42 members shall be so divided:
   - 24 from the order of elders, including the chair of the order and a cabinet representative
   - 8 from the order of deacons, one of whom shall be the chair of the order of deacons
     (One elder or one deacon may be retired. One elder or deacon shall be from an Extension Ministry.)
   - Up to two local pastors or Associate Members who have completed the Course of Study
   - 8 laypersons (can include one or more diaconal ministers)
   - Attention shall be given to the representation of women and ethnic persons

3) The board shall have the following structure:
   - The board shall elect a chairperson, a vice-chairperson, secretary, registrar(s), and budget coordinator.
   - Executive Committee composed of the officers, chair of the order of elders, chair of the order of deacons, and conference related persons (elders and deacons)
   - Committees as needed
   - Interview teams as needed

05. Council on Finance and Administration

a. Operations Policies

1) The conference treasurer and the chair of the Council on Finance and Administration, the Director of Ministries, and an additional director may, any or all of them, be authorized by the Council on Finance and Administration to sign conference checks.

2) The blanket bond shall be maintained whereby the conference treasurer and other persons authorized to sign checks and handle money are covered by office and not by name.

3) The conference treasurer shall have custody of and disburse all conference funds and also the funds of all ministry units that are not separately incorporated. District funds not kept by the conference treasurer shall have an annual report published by the district with a copy to the conference treasurer.

4) At the end of every fiscal year, balances of all budgeted funds shall revert to the respective conference treasury reserves. Exceptions to this rule may be made on request to the Council on Finance and Administration if the funds have in fact been designated for specific purposes.

5) The conference treasurer shall perform the duties of treasurer as outlined in The Book of Discipline, the minutes of the annual conference, and the directives of the Council on Finance and Administration. The conference treasurer may, with the approval of the Council on Finance and Administration, assume other responsibilities as may be requested or determined.
6) All employees of the conference, including district superintendents, will be compensated for all ordinary and necessary conference business expenses, including air and rail fare or automobile travel at rates determined by the Council on Finance and Administration and approved by the annual conference, and lodging while away from home.

7) The conference treasurer is authorized to borrow up to $250,000 for conference operations. Any borrowing shall be repaid within the next fiscal year.

8) The total amount of the conference apportioned budget may be increased annually by no more than 3% over the current year’s approved apportioned budget.

9) As required by *The Book of Discipline*, all ministry units, agencies, colleges, or hospitals requesting authorization for a conference-wide appeal for funds from local churches must receive approval from the annual conference. These requests are to be reviewed annually by the Council on Finance and Administration and submitted to the annual conference.

### b. Developing the Conference Budget

The procedure for developing the conference budget to be presented to the annual conference shall be as follows:

1) All proposals with financial implication to be brought before the annual conference for adoption shall contain the total conference financial consideration with verification by the Council on Finance and Administration.

2) Budget requests from ministry units shall be submitted on forms provided by the Director of Finance and Administration.

3) The Council on Finance and Administration or a committee designated by them shall conduct budget hearings.

4) The Ministry Teams will develop a budget according to program priorities and report the budget requests to the Council on Finance and Administration.

5) The Council on Finance and Administration shall receive the budget requests and prepare the total budget for presentation and recommendation to the annual conference. *(BOD ¶ 613)*

6) In the event that Council on Finance and Administration determines a budget total that is below the maximum allowed by formula, the budget total may be subject to review by a "ceiling review committee," at the request of a conference structure or by action of the annual conference. This committee shall be named by the Bishop and shall be composed of the Director of Ministries, the conference treasurer, and one representative each from: Board of Pension and Health Benefits, Board of Trustees, conference Lay Leader(s), Cabinet, Council on Finance and Administration, and an at large ministry team chair. At least three of the latter seven shall be laypersons. The representative of the Council on Finance and Administration shall serve as convener. The "ceiling review committee" shall report its action to the annual conference session at the time of the initial presentation of the budget.

7) The report of the Council on Finance and Administration to the annual conference of the budget shall be received without motion for adoption until the entire budget proposal has been heard, including modifications that may be made by the Conference itself. Action on the total budget shall be taken after all amendments and budget proposals are considered. Requests for additional funds not included in the budget presented by the Council on Finance and Administration or changes within the budget shall be referred to the Council on Finance and Administration. The Council on Finance and Administration shall consult with the leaders of the ministry teams as to whether equitable adjustment can be made within the budgetary limitations and shall report to the conference for its action(s).

8) If the annual conference wishes to raise the budget maximum, the rule must be suspended by a 2/3-majority vote; specific items amending the proposed budget upward should then be submitted and voted upon one by one. When the total budget is before the conference, action shall be taken upon it.

9) The district superintendents’ salaries shall be determined annually based upon 160% of the Conference Average Compensation minus the built-in housing allowance based on the figures
c. Reserve Funds
To assist the conference in its operations, there are three reserve funds.

1) A General Operations Reserve Fund shall be established in support of normal conference activities. The primary purpose is to provide the working capital for daily operations, allow responsible budgeting by providing an interim allocations source, plus be a source of funds for unexpected exposures or opportunities arising between sessions. This fund shall have a minimum balance equal to 20% of the budgeted expenditures less any amounts where the premise is the amount received is the amount paid out. This percentage is applied to the reserve level at the beginning of the year compared to the expense level for that year. Where the amount is lower than the desired level, an amount equal to the difference up to 10% of the required reserve level is to be placed into the next year's budget to be apportioned. (It will not be included in the expense level for the next year in calculating the next year's relation to the 20%). Any excess in reserves will be used to assure the required levels for all RESERVE funds and in consideration of any projected needs that would reduce these funds below their identified bases. Interest earned on this fund will be used to support the General Operations, Legal and Capital Equipment and Improvement Fund in maintaining their minimum balances. Any additional available amount will be used to increase all three fund balances.

2) A Legal Reserve Fund of $200,000 will provide a financial protection buffer to absorb significant and unexpected legal costs of the conference. This fund may be used at the direction of the bishop, dean of the Cabinet and Director of Ministries. Should any amount be used and the fund balance falls below the described level and if the shortfall cannot be recovered from operational reserves or other sources at the end of that year, the amount of shortfall shall be placed into the next budgeting process. Interest earned on this fund will be used to support the General Operations, Legal and Capital Equipment and Improvement Fund in maintaining their minimum balances. Any additional available amount will be used to increase all three fund balances.

3) A Capital Equipment and Improvement Fund of $50,000 may be used for purchase of equipment or remodeling expense in support of conference operations. This disbursement would be in excess of any budgeted amount.

When funds are disbursed, replacement necessary to restore the fund to the $50,000 level shall be from any excess general reserves at year-end, by budgeting the amount necessary in the next budget cycle or by funding the depreciation on the capital asset over a reasonable time period. Interest earned on this fund will be used to support the General Operations, Legal and Capital Equipment and Improvement Fund in maintaining their minimum balances. Any additional available amount will be used to increase all three fund balances. A team comprised of a Cabinet member, two trustees, two representatives from the Council of Finance and Administration, the conference lay leader, the Director of Administration and Finance and chaired by the Director of Ministries shall be responsible for disbursements from the fund.

d. Designation of Conference Advance Specials, Special Askings and Other Askings

1) Conference Advance Special – Designation of Advance Special status allows a group to solicit for funds in the annual conference. It means that a ministry has the endorsement of the Minnesota Annual Conference, is compatible with the mission/teachings of The United Methodist Church and that the conference encourages congregations to support these ministries. Conference Advance Special status is recommended by the Mission Promotion Team and approved by the annual conference session.

2) Special Askings are institutions, agencies or ministries that have been given the right to send, with the apportionments to each church a suggested amount for the ensuing year. Special askings status is recommended by the Council on Finance & Administration Team upon application by the requesting institution, agency or ministry and approved by the annual conference session.
3) Other Askings are institutions, agencies or ministries that have been given permission to solicit funds from local churches once each year. Other asking status is recommended by the Council on Finance & Administration Team upon application by the requesting institution, agency or ministry and approved by the annual conference session.
   a) In all three categories above, one set of mailing labels for churches will be provided upon request per year without cost. Additional sets are available at a cost of $10 per set. At no time will labels or names of individuals in the conference database be provided. All other costs associated with soliciting the churches shall be borne by the institution, agency or ministry undertaking the solicitation.

4) Provisional Advance Special status (second mile giving approval) may be granted to new ministries between annual conference sessions upon the recommendation of the Mission Promotion Team.

06. Board of Pension and Health Benefits

a. Administration
   1) The Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits (CBOPHB) shall be governed by BOD ¶ 639 and ¶ 1506-1509.
   2) It is recommended that there be not less than twelve members on the CBOPHB, one-third clergy (one of whom shall also be a member of the Board of Ordained Ministry), one-third laywomen, and one-third laymen.
   3) The plan for pension program in the Minnesota Annual Conference shall be presented annually by the CBOPHB.

b. Pension Contributions
   Pension contributions will be paid by the salary-paying unit as follows:
   1) Modified direct billing paid to the Minnesota Annual Conference for the Clergy Retirement Security Program (CRSP): An appointed clergy’s plan compensation (also known as pension compensation on the Clergy Compensation form 5) is the sum of cash salary received from the church related sources, housing allowance (or when a parsonage is provided, 25% of the cash salary), and any tax-deferred annuity contributions paid by the salary paying unit during the year.
   2) The contribution base is calculated using the appointed clergy’s pension plan compensation for the year, and the appointment increment.
   3) The church (salary paying unit) pays the amount billed for the CRSP by the Conference Benefits Office.
   4) Direct billing paid from the salary-paying unit to Wespath – Benefits Investments (formerly known as the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits) for the United Methodist Personal Investment Plan (UMPIP): The amount by salary reduction agreement that is submitted by the pastor is the pastor’s personal contribution, either on a before tax or after tax basis.

c. Long Term Disability and Death Benefit
   1) The Death Benefit Program, as of January 1, 1982, will be provided by the Comprehensive Protection Plan (CPP).
   2) Modified direct billing paid to the Minnesota Annual Conference for the Comprehensive Protection Plan (CPP): Prior to January 1, 2017: The church billing rate shall be 3% of the pension compensation for each fulltime participant. Beginning January 1, 2017, the church billing rate will be 1% of the pension compensation for each ¾ and fulltime participant. The Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits will fund 2% of the Comprehensive Protection Plan (CPP) from pension reserves starting January 2017 and will review the funding continuation beyond 2020.
   3) Effective January 1, 2017, Full and Provisional Members (Elders and Deacons), Associate Members, and Clergy of Other Methodist Denominations appointed in the Minnesota Conference at ½ time will have death and disability coverage through UMLifeOptions, a fully insured UNUM Plan via Wespath.

d. Hospitalization/Health Plan
   There shall be a Group Hospitalization and Health Plan in the annual conference.
1) The CBOPHB shall present, annually, a summary of benefits and annual premiums to the annual conference.

2) The premium cost to local churches, and the clergy share of the premium, shall be determined by the CPOPHB.

3) The premium cost to ministerial members receiving disability benefits shall be subsidized by an amount determined by the CBOPHB and be approved and paid by the annual conference.

4) The premium cost to retired pastors shall be subsidized by an amount determined by the CBOPHB and be approved and paid by the annual conference.
01. Requirements and Admission into Ordained Ministry
   1) An ordained minister seeking admission into full membership on credentials from another denomination shall be a provisional member for at least two years.
   2) Relationships and Qualifications: The Board of Ordained Ministry appointee to the District Committee of Ordained Ministry may be the secretary of the district committee. The appointee shall submit a copy of all district, conference and/or district committee actions to the resident bishop, the conference board registrar for candidacy, and to the district superintendent.

02. Clergy Appointment Guidelines
   a. Appointment Increment Guidelines
      It is the assumption that all appointments are full time. In the event that they are not, then appointments are made in ¼ increments.

      In any appointment, given the multiple demands of ministry and because it is not a 9-5 job, it is important that clear, shared expectations are formed between the pastoral leader and the Leadership Team creating a job description/covenant that specifies roles, responsibilities and outcomes. The pastoral leader needs to hold responsibility for the management of their time in order to accomplish the tasks/outcomes and be accountable to the appropriate personnel team in how they are structuring their time and investing their energy.

      • Full time work for clergy is generally considered to be 45-50 hours a week. Clergy are encouraged and expected to take a day off during the week (often Mondays or Fridays) to compensate for Sundays and to build a schedule that works for their season of life that takes into account evening and weekend work so that they are not working all the time.

      • When less than full time, the District Superintendent will create an agreement at the onset of the appointment with the pastor and SPRC about the time increment, the key functions that will be cared for, and how the pastor’s hours will be structured for this appointment so there are realistic expectations given the less than full time compensation.

      • One practice is using “The Rule of Thirds” which is dividing each day into three segments (morning, afternoon and evening) of about 4 hours each, and then monitoring the segments worked to ensure a healthy work/life balance.
         o ¼ time: Sunday plus two segments
         o ½ time: Sunday plus 4 segments
         o ¾ time: Sunday plus 7 segments
         o Full time: Sunday plus 9 segments

   b. Pastoral Service
      Pastoral service on a field is a responsibility of the pastor in charge, and requests for such service from others than the pastor in charge breaks loyalties, hinders the work of the Kingdom, and embarrasses pastors. In order that this may be prevented the following shall be the policy of the Minnesota Annual Conference:

      1) No pastor shall perform pastoral acts in any parish other than the one assigned, except by the invitation of the pastor in charge, or in cases of emergency with the consent of the district superintendent.

      2) Lay persons shall refrain from requesting pastoral service from a former pastor, a pastor from another parish, or a retired pastor, thus embarrassing both the pastor in charge and the pastor asked for such a service.
We recommend that retired pastors shall refrain from making their homes within the charge that they had been serving immediately prior to retirement.

Clergy who are retired or on leave shall refrain from participating in the church they most recently exited for a minimum of one year, and any future relationship, must be at the invitation of the current pastor.

03. Clergy Compensation

Compensation for clergy is set by the District Superintendent and Staff Parish Relations Committee at the time of the appointment, and approved by the charge conference annually. Compensation includes base cash salary and housing (allowance or parsonage). Health insurance, pension and disability benefits are offered based on eligibility. Professional expenses including mileage, continuing education and cell phone use are reimbursed through an agreed upon accountable reimbursement plan and budget. See Local Church Section 300.03 for a complete description of Clergy Compensation.

04. Medical/Incapacity Leave

Incapacitation means that a clergyperson under appointment to a local church or charge is judged by the District Superintendent and the Staff/Pastor Parish Relations Committee to be unable to perform the duties of the appointment because of illness, surgery, or accident. The period for medical/ incapacitation leave shall be no longer than 26 weeks or until it is determined that the clergy person applies for disability benefits through the Comprehensive Protection Plan or UMLifeOptions.

There shall be a Medical / Incapacitation Leave Compensation Program in the Minnesota Annual Conference.

1) Medical leave compensation means financial assistance provided by the Minnesota Annual Conference through its Board of Pension and Health Benefits (CBOPHB) to a church or other funding entity (charge, district or annual conference) within the conference connectional structures when an appointed clergyperson, because of impaired health (illness, surgery or accident), is judged by the Cabinet to be temporarily unable to perform the essential duties of the appointment.

2) Incapacitation leave compensation means financial assistance provided by the Minnesota Annual Conference through its Board of Pension and Health Benefits (CBOPHB) to a church or other funding entity (charge, district or annual conference) within the conference connectional structures when an appointed clergyperson, because of extended impaired health (illness, surgery or accident) beyond the medical leave compensation program, and documented by the physician stating the clergy is unable to perform the essential duties of the appointment in writing to the District Superintendent.

3) Incapacitation leave with application of disability benefits from the Comprehensive Protection Plan. In accordance with BOD ¶356.1, “When a clergy member is granted incapacity leave by the annual conference, if the medical evidence has not yet met the standards for receipt of benefits as set forth in the Comprehensive Protection Plan, section 5.04, the Conference Board of Pensions may authorize payment of benefits in the amount that would otherwise be payable from the Comprehensive Protection Plan.” When a clergy member applies for disability benefits from the Comprehensive Protection Plan and the Conference Board of Pensions authorizes payment of benefits, known as a conference grant, the medical/incapacitation leave compensation program will end and the clergy member’s appointment will be to incapacitation leave. Financial responsibility for medical premiums changes to the eligibility/subsidy policy for clergy appointed to incapacitation leave receiving benefits from the Minnesota Conference or from the Comprehensive Protection Plan.

4) When a clergy member identified for a change of appointment is on medical/incapacitation leave or with the intention of applying for disability with benefits from the Comprehensive Protection Plan, the clergy’s local church appointment will end when the local church appointment receives a newly appointed clergy. The clergy will apply for benefits with conference grant in the amount that otherwise would be payable from the Comprehensive Protection Plan while the application is under review. If approved the Comprehensive Protection Plan will be responsible for benefits, if not approved for Comprehensive Protection Plan benefits, the conference grant will end with a maximum of 26 weeks of medical/ incapacitation compensation.
5) Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits compensation for a medical leave or incapacitated clergyperson shall be provided with the following stipulations.
   a) Throughout any period of medical/incapacitation leave the entity funding the position shall always provide housing and utilities for the clergyperson until the appointment is changed.
   b) Through the first 8 weeks of incapacitation the funding entity shall, in addition to housing and utilities, continue to provide full support (i.e. salary at the current level, health insurance, Clergy Retirement Security Program - CRSP, and Comprehensive Protection Plan – CPP or UMLifeOptions). For this 8 week period, however, the Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits, when requested by the Cabinet, may provide funds for pulpit supply or other services essential to the position. The Cabinet’s request shall include a brief description of the need for financial assistance as well as identifying the effective date of the clergyperson’s incapacitation status.
   c) Following the first 8 weeks of incapacitation, the funding entity shall continue to provide housing and utilities for the pastor, but the CBOPHB, when requested by the Cabinet, may fund the incapacitated clergyperson’s CRSP, Comprehensive Protection Plan, church share of health insurance premium, and salary support at the applicable equitable compensation level (not the clergyperson’s current salary level). Funds for pulpit supply or other services integral to the position are no longer provided unless the incapacitated clergyperson’s compensation assistance is only partial and the Cabinet regards funding of pulpit supply or other services provided by the particular funding entity to be essential for the missional needs of the Minnesota Annual Conference.

6) Should there be a Recurrence of Incapacitation within the same funding entity, the following shall apply:
   a) No local church, charge, district or annual conference funding entity shall be required to provide more than 8 weeks of full support for incapacitation within any five-year period. Accordingly, whenever a clergyperson is placed on incapacitation and the funding entity, because of a previous incapacitation, fulfills its five-year obligation of full support for 8 weeks prior to completion of full support for the first 8 weeks with the current incapacitation, the CBOPHB will at that point offer the financial assistance which ordinarily begins only after the first 8 weeks of incapacitation. In this circumstance, until the first 8 weeks of incapacitation are completed, the CBOPHB will compensate salary at the current level; after the first 8 weeks, the salary component reverts to the applicable equitable compensation level.
   b) In the case of recurrence, funds ordinarily provided for pulpit supply or other essential services are reduced in proportion to the funds which the CBOPHB provided in the first 8 weeks for the incapacitated clergyperson’s compensation.

7) The period for medical/incapacitation leave compensation shall be no longer than 26 weeks:
   a) Medical/incapacitation shall be considered a continuation if recurrence takes place within 13 weeks of resumption of essential duties and results from, or is contributed to, by the same or related causes as those of the previous medical/incapacitation.
   b) The status of a clergyperson on medical/incapacitation compensation shall be reported monthly by the Cabinet to the CBOPHB.

In any situation, the Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits will pay no more than 26 weeks of medical/incapacitation/or conference grant compensation for a clergy member in a five-year period without written request by the Cabinet on the special circumstances and must be approved by the Comprehensive Protection Plan.

05. Leave Benefits

1) Adoptive Aid: The Conference Board of Pension/Health Benefits will provide an adoptive aid payment of $1000.00 to active clergy, with coverage under our current medical plan, for the adoption of a child, other than a blood relative or lawful/legal child of either spouse. Blood relatives are to be defined as nephews, nieces, grandchildren, cousins, or child of a previous marriage of either spouse. 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 and the Cabinet should be reminded annually that this benefit is available to clergy. The Conference Board of Pensions will be responsible for this communication.

2) Maternity/Paternity Leave: There shall be a Maternity/Paternity Leave Program in the Minnesota Annual Conference:
   a) In accordance with The Book of Discipline a pastor may take up to 13 weeks of maternity/paternity leave at birth or arrival of a child into the home for purposes of adoption. Compensation to the pastor, pension and medical coverage will be maintained by the church for no less than the first 8 weeks.
   b) Pulpit supply will be arranged by the church prior to the leave and funds will be provided by the Conference Board of Pension and health Benefits when notified of the need for pulpit supply funding during such leave. Pulpit supply funds will be provided for no less than the first 8 weeks of leave, and for such additional period, up to 13 weeks as the church continues clergy salary.

3) Sick leave and vacation benefits are listed and described in the Local Church section: 300.03.d

06. Moving

a. Procedures and Policies

1) The Minnesota Annual Conference shall be responsible for moving the households of clergy under appointment within the boundary of the Minnesota Annual Conference, subject to the following stated limitations. The Minnesota Annual Conference shall be billed directly, with any charges over the stated limitations to be reimbursed by the clergy, who shall pay this overage amount to the Minnesota Annual Conference within 30 days of the Conference billing. For overages exceeding $500.00, a monthly payment plan can be established so as to not produce a financial hardship.

2) This moving policy and its limitations shall apply to clergy coming directly from seminary, local pastors, provisional members, full elders and deacons, and clergy from another denomination appointed to a local congregation with the Minnesota Annual Conference and lay persons assigned by a District Superintendent to a charge. (Should storage be required due to the variance of graduation and the moving date, contact should be made with the District Superintendent or the Director of Moving.)

3) The Minnesota Annual Conference shall provide insurance coverage for clergy household goods while they are being moved. This coverage will be $1.25 per pound. (Example: 10,000 lb. load will have $12,500 worth of coverage.) Additional insurance will be made available from the mover.

4) The Minnesota Annual Conference shall, on the recommendation of the Moving Team, employ one moving company, associated with a nationwide carrier, to schedule and move clergy household goods, in consultation with the Director of Moving and the Cabinet. (The mover is Metcalf-Mayflower Moving and Storage Co., Inc.)

5) In compliance with IRS rules, the Minnesota Annual Conference will issue a 1099 Miscellaneous Income form to all retiring clergy and those moving to a new appointment that is less than 50 miles from the previous appointment (the IRS considers these commuter moves and not necessary). To help offset the tax liability, a grant may be available. Contact the Director of Moving for details.

b. Limitations

1) Maximum Weight: 14,000 pounds. Clergy Couples: 16,500 pounds.

2) Limit for packing material, packing, and wardrobe service is $300. (Clergy Couples: $400) Materials can be secured through the conference mover at significant savings or through reimbursements with receipts.

3) Maximum for moves within the Greater Twin City (7 county) area shall be 13 hours of tariff. (3 persons and a van) because an hourly rate is charged for metro moves. Should extra stops for pickup and delivery be necessary, the annual conference is limited to 1 and 1/2 hours of tariff in addition to the 13 hours.

4) For retiring and/or retired clergy and spouses, or surviving spouses of clergy who have died while in active pastoral service, the annual conference shall pay the moving expense for one move only. The maximum claim allowed for such moves shall be $3,200.00 (moving and packing supplies). The
annual conference shall not be responsible for any expenses incurred over the $3,200 maximum. This benefit will be available for up to five years from the date of retirement.

5) Payment for one extra pickup and delivery will be allowed in those situations where the clergy’s study/office is not located in the pastor’s residence.

6) Payment by the annual conference shall not cover storage, servicing appliances, warehousing, handling in and out of warehouses, or storage insurance for any move.

7) Payment by the annual conference shall not cover lodging, dining, and gasoline expenses incurred for those using the Conference Mover or another national mover. For those moving themselves, special consideration may be given in consultation with the Director of Moving.

8) Items to be moved must be free from pests, such as fire ants and fungus. The annual conference and its designated moving company shall not be held responsible for refusing to move any items containing or infested with insects or other pests.

9) When clergy in effective relation is appointed to a one-year sabbatical leave, there will be a maximum of $2,500 allowed for moving and/or storage of household goods. Of this amount, up to $700 will be paid at the time of the move, and the balance will be payable upon return to the Minnesota Annual Conference for appointment to a local church or conference staff position, upon submission of authorized bills.

10) Intra parish moves (i.e. moving to a different parsonage while still serving the same appointment) are not to be covered by conference funds, and such disbursements of funds will not be approved by the director of moving.

11) Adjustments in the Moving Policy of the Minnesota Annual Conference and moving expenses may be made upon recommendation of the Cabinet and/or the Moving Team to the Director of Moving.

c. Grant for Partial Reimbursement of Tax Liability for Moves of Less than 50 Miles
In order to help offset the tax liability of moving costs when a move is less than 50 miles, the Moving Director will notify those who qualify for applying for such a grant. Grants will be determined by tax liability incurred and the number of completed applications. In no case will a grant be more than $500.

07. Clergy Housing
The historic parsonage system is the basic housing policy. In recognition of changing circumstances which may indicate that the basic policy of a church-provided parsonage may not be desirable in every situation, provision for exceptions may be made.

All pastors as defined by BOD ¶ 339 serving half time or more in local churches, all conference staff members who are clergy and district superintendents shall be provided housing. Housing of clergy is for the convenience of the local church or the annual conference and may be in the form of a parsonage or a housing allowance, whichever best enables the various ministries and the itinerant ministry of the annual conference.

1) The guidelines for providing a housing allowance are as follows:
   a) Housing for clergy and pastors: the housing allowance is established at the time of the appointment, and is set by the District Superintendent in consultation with the SPRC and pastor. The housing allowance is determined by the fair market value (rent or purchase) of a median priced 3-4 bedroom home in the community including the cost of utilities. A clergy can choose to set aside more of their compensation towards housing in alignment with IRS regulations if he or she choose housing to meet their desires and needs that exceed the amount provided by the housing allowance.
   b) Housing for district superintendents: at the time of an appointment of a new superintendent, the bishop, in consultation with the new superintendent and the district superintendent committee will make a determination of the needs of the district and the superintendent and will inform the Board of Trustees if a parsonage is required or if the district superintendent will receive a housing allowance. Housing allowances for district superintendents will be set by the Council on Finance and Administration.
   c) Housing for conference staff: clergy under appointment to the conference staff are eligible to set aside a portion of their compensation as housing allowance. The Council of Finance and Administration will approve such housing allowance designations annually.
d) Housing for new-church-start pastors: Negotiations to establish a housing allowance for a new-church-start pastor will include the new-church-start pastor, the Director New Church Development, and the district superintendent. Final arrangements must be mutually agreed to by these parties.

2) It is recommended that a housing allowance be based on the rental value of the current parsonage or, if the church/charge does not own a parsonage, on the rental value of a three to four bedroom home in the parish setting that substantially meets conference parsonage standards and IRS regulations. In addition to the housing allowance, an agreed upon allowance or the actual cost for utilities should be paid. The down payment and closing costs on a house and all other costs of purchase and maintenance are the responsibility of the pastor and shall not be loaned or given to the pastor by the local church or by the congregation’s members.

3) Once initiated, a housing allowance is expected to continue for the duration of a pastoral appointment. The allowance shall be subject to annual approval of the charge conference. The charge conference shall not have the authority to reduce the housing allowance without negotiation and consent of the pastor, the SPRC, and the district superintendent.

4) The local church/charge shall allow the pastor who receives a housing allowance to live where he/she chooses in the community served. If the pastor needs or chooses to live outside the communities served, this must be agreed upon with the SPRC and the district superintendent.

5) The housing allowance may be used for purchase, rent, or lease as desired by the pastor.

6) The incoming pastor shall have no obligation to purchase the home of his/her predecessor.

7) If a pastor refuses to live in a local church-provided parsonage that meets annual conference parsonage standards, then the local church is not required to provide a housing allowance.

8) Clergy couple housing compensation: Each person of a clergy couple is entitled to housing.

9) When a clergy couple serves two or more separate congregations and there are two or more parsonages and they only need one to live in, conversations with the District Superintendent, the SPRC(s), and the clergy couple will determine housing arrangements and which parsonage will be used. The church(es) owning the parsonage(s) that is/are not used will not be required to provide a housing allowance. The churches involved in this arrangement are responsible to negotiate reasonable sharing of expenses of housing such as utilities and home maintenance expenses for the clergy couple’s residence in the other church’s parsonage.

10) Recognizing that BOD ¶ 331.10b does not list housing as part of the compensation package of a deacon, it is strongly recommended that the SPRC and the District Superintendent consider costs relating to housing for deacons, whose primary appointment is the local church, appointed to local churches as the compensation package is developed and set.

11) Other clergy housing policies are listed and described in the Local Church section: 300.04

08. Rental/Housing Allowance for Retired/Disabled Clergy

WHEREAS, the religious denomination known as The United Methodist Church (the “Church”), of which this Conference is a part, has in the past functioned and continues to function through ministers of the gospel (within the meaning of Internal Revenue Code section 107) who were or are duly ordained, commissioned, or licensed ministers of the Church (“Clergypersons”); and

WHEREAS, the practice of the Church and of this Conference was and is to provide active Clergypersons with a parsonage or a rental/housing allowance as part of their gross compensation; and

WHEREAS, pensions or other amounts paid to active, retired, terminated, and disabled Clergypersons are considered to be deferred compensation and are paid to active, retired, terminated, and disabled Clergypersons in consideration of previous active service; and

WHEREAS, the Internal Revenue Service has recognized the Conference (or its predecessors) as the appropriate organization to designate a housing/rental allowance for Clergypersons who are or were members of this conference and are eligible to receive such deferred compensation;
NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: That an amount equal to 100% of the pension, severance, or disability payments received from plans authorized under The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church (BOD), which includes all such payment from Wespath Benefits & Investments (aka General Board of Pension and Health Benefits), during the year of 2016 and 2017 by each active, retired, terminated, or disabled Clergyperson who is or was a member of the Conference, or its predecessors, be and hereby is designated as a rental/housing allowance for each such Clergyperson; and that the pension, severance, or disability payments to which this rental/housing allowance applies will be any pension, severance, or disability payments from plans, annuities, or funds authorized under the BOD, including such payments from Wespath and from a commercial annuity company that provides an annuity arising from benefits accrued under a Wespath plan, annuity, or fund authorized under the BOD, that result from any service a Clergyperson rendered to this Conference or that an active, a retired, terminated, or a disabled Clergyperson of this Conference rendered to any local church, annual conference of the Church, general agency of the Church, other institution of the Church, former denomination that is now a part of the Church, or any other employer that employed the Clergyperson to perform services related to the ministry of the Church, or its predecessors, and that elected to make contributions to, or accrue a benefit under, such a plan, annuity, or fund for such active, retired, terminated, or disabled Clergyperson’s pension, severance, or disability as part of his or her gross compensation.

Note: The rental/housing allowance that may be excluded from a Clergyperson’s gross income in any year for federal income tax purposes is limited under Internal Revenue Code section 107(2) and regulations thereunder to the least of: (1) the amount of the rental/housing allowance designated by the Clergyperson’s employer or other appropriate body of the Church (such as this Conference in the foregoing resolutions) for such year; (2) the amount actually expended by the Clergyperson to rent or provide a home in such year; or (3) the fair rental value of the home, including furnishings and appurtenances (such as a garage), plus the cost of utilities in such year.
01. Apportionments 
1) The conference treasurer will publish a complete list of all apportionments in the conference Journal. No later than September 1 of each year, the Council on Finance and Administration shall indicate to each church its apportionment for: Clergy Support Fund, BOD ¶ 614.1; Administration Fund, BOD ¶ 614.2; and World Service and conference Benevolence Fund, BOD ¶ 614.3 and ¶ 812.

2) Apportionments are a primary responsibility of each local church and take precedence over any special gifts or advance specials.

3) Local churches shall make monthly remittances to the conference treasurer.

4) The conference treasurer will close the conference financial books by January 10, and churches should have final remittances to his/her office by that date.

5) Should there be errors in factors used in calculating apportionments, a letter explaining this should be sent to the district superintendent and the conference treasurer's office prior to January 15 of the year being adjusted.

6) Release from unpaid apportionments: Unpaid apportionments remain a responsibility until paid unless released. Beginning in the 2001 annual conference year, all churches who pay their annual conference apportionments in full and have any unpaid prior years’ apportionments will receive a 25% release per year.

02. Insurance Coverage 
1) All churches will carry worker’s compensation insurance for all employees, including the pastor(s).

2) All churches will make adequate provision for automobile liability insurance covering all cars that may be used for transporting persons or groups in activities under church sponsorship.

3) All churches are encouraged to consider the necessity of carrying malpractice insurance.

4) All churches will carry adequate fidelity bonds on elected officials responsible for funds in the local church.

03. Clergy Compensation 
   a. Cash Compensation 
1) Cash Compensation, the process of setting the pastor’s compensation, is a task that many churches find the most difficult part of the budget process.

  a) The Staff/Pastor Parish Relations Committee (S/PPR) has one of the most important roles in the process. Recommendations of the S/PPR are presented to the church council. Budget items are reported to the Committee on Finance to be incorporated in the proposed budget for the coming year. The S/PPR’s recommendations and the total budget are then considered by the church council.

  b) The resulting decisions are presented to the charge/church conference for final approval. The chairperson of the charge/church conference will lift the compensation of the pastor(s) out of the budget for individual passage.

  c) Adequate time must be allowed for this important decision making process. By meeting with the pastor(s) at least four times year a relationship can be built allowing for open communication and frank discussion which will create better understanding. Early in September, four months before the beginning of the fiscal year, is an appropriate time to start considering compensation for the coming year.

  d) In order to share in the process each pastor and staff member should meet individually with the S/PPR Committee. Try to make this an experience of affirmation. We all function better in an atmosphere of support.

  e) To consider the appropriate compensation for your pastor(s), you may want to examine support levels of churches of similar size in your area from the reports in the conference Journal. Membership figures will be found in the Statistical Reports and pastor’s compensation in the Financial Reports.
You may also want to make inquiries of compensation of similar size congregations in your community, or consider the income of other professionals of like educational preparations.

2) Base Cash Compensation
   a) There shall be a base cash compensation for each charge of the conference to be calculated upon two factors: Minimum cash compensation and increments for seniority of the pastor.
   b) The minimum base compensation for 2017 is defined as the 2016 base compensation of $35,741 plus the Cost Of Living Adjustment (COLA) used by the federal government for the year we are in (that is, the Cost Of Living Adjustment announced last October for 2016 SSA, which was 1.7%).
   c) In addition there is a step increase of $700 for years of service for the first 8 steps. In keeping with our ongoing policy, the first step normally begins on January 1 following 18 months of service in the Minnesota Annual Conference.

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   d) In considering additional compensation beyond these steps noted above the S/PPR is encouraged to consider the announced Cost Of Living Adjustment and merit increases in their mutual negotiation with the pastor.
   e) Further, this proposal does not intend to reduce current compensation levels recommended by S/PPR and approved by the Church/Charge Conference during the ongoing tenure of a pastoral appointment.
   f) Further, in recognition of the financial realities and to allow for flexibility in the appointment process, exceptions to above equitable compensation policy can be approved by a ¾ vote of the Cabinet and the voluntary consent of the pastor involved.
   g) Seniority for clergy from other denominations and communions who have had their orders recognized by the Minnesota Annual Conference shall have their seniority status established by the Cabinet before their first appointment in the Minnesota Annual Conference. The Cabinet is urged to consider years of service in the ministry exercised in other denominations, especially those coming from the churches of the Commission on Pan-Methodist Cooperation and Union and other member churches of the Churches Uniting in Christ (See BOD ¶ 625.10).

b. Reimbursable Accounts
   1) Continuing Education
      a) In addition to the base cash compensation, the charge shall budget an allowance for continuing formation and spiritual growth. The conference minimum is $800 per year. It is recommended that the amount be equal to 2.5% of the Conference Average Compensation, which for 2017 is $63,142 or $1,578.55. (See 1988 Journal, "Program of Continuing Education" under III.B.5, page 234). This amount is to be expended only on a vouchered basis as a reimbursement.
      b) In addition to vacation time, the charge shall provide a period of time for continuing formation and spiritual growth. The conference minimum shall be one week per year. It is recommended that in addition, a one-month period be provided within each quadrennium. (See BOD ¶ 351.2).

   2) Mileage: The pastor shall be reimbursed for vouchered actual mileage driven in parish work at least equal to the Internal Revenue Service approved rate. Fifty cents is the reimbursement rate for a wheel-chair accessible van when necessary.
300. LOCAL CHURCH

3) All churches shall pay actual parsonage utilities for church-owned parsonages. (Utilities costs are considered a part of the housing allowance provided when no church-owned parsonage is provided.)

4) Professional Expenses:
   a) Each charge shall establish and budget for an accountable reimbursement plan for pastor’s business-related expenses, which meets Internal Revenue Service requirements for such a plan. The conference minimum is $500.
   b) It is vital that the SPRC and pastor(s) agree beforehand on the expenses to be reimbursed and then estimate the amount necessary to pay these expenses. At a minimum, the amount should include money to attend annual conference, pay dues to the local Ministerial Association and other civic organizations where the pastor represents the religious community--Rotary, Lions, Kiwanis--as well as sufficient funds to cover participation in retreats, camps, confirmation trips, and other church events where the pastor is expected to attend and/or provide leadership.
   c) In addition, money may be allocated toward entertainment expenses (pizza for the youth group) or cleaning of robes and vestments, cards and gifts given to parishioners at weddings, confirmations, books and periodicals purchased for the practice of ministry (though, up to 1/4 of a pastor’s continuing education allowance may be used for books and periodicals).

It is important to agree ahead of time on what expenses are to be covered and how to handle reimbursement if agreed upon expenses are greater than expected. Doing this will avoid disagreements over reimbursement. Remember, it is vital that the pastor submit a voucher stating the date, cost, and business purpose of the expense before receiving payment. Simply giving 1/12 of the budgeted amount for reimbursement voids the tax advantage. (Doing so makes the reimbursement fully taxable income.)

This is also true of mileage reimbursement and continuing education. They also must be vouchered each month and the pastor paid only for business miles driven or continuing education events attended since the last reimbursement. If mileage, business expenses, or continuing education expenses do not reach the budgeted amount, they may not be distributed as a bonus to the pastor. This action also makes the entire reimbursement for the year taxable.

One other caution--pastors may not reduce their salary for the purposes of creating a larger business expense reimbursement account. This is confusing because pastors may sign voluntary salary reduction agreements for housing appurtenances, tax deferred retirement annuities and cafeteria plans to pay for medical expenses and childcare.

A pastor may negotiate a smaller raise and a larger reimbursement plan so long as the salary still meets the conference minimum salary specifications.

Churches receiving minimum salary support are expected to provide a $500 Accountable Reimbursement Plan.

5) The pastor shall pay the Social Security Self-Employment Tax which is not eligible as a reimbursable account.

C. Compensation Funding Procedures

1) Charges unable to meet base cash compensation may be temporarily assisted by receiving a grant from the Strategic Leadership Fund (formerly called the Equitable Compensation Fund). Charges needing more than temporary assistance are encouraged to consult with the Cabinet for alternatives rather than receiving funds from the Strategic Leadership Fund. The District Superintendent is the authorized agent of the Strategic Leadership Fund and grant distribution requires Cabinet approval.

2) A single church charge with paid program staff other than the pastor will not be aided.

3) Each pastor who is in good standing and who is appointed to full time service shall have a right to receive no less than base cash compensation established by the annual conference for persons in full time service (BOD ¶ 342.1), and therefore, with Cabinet approval may receive support from the Strategic Leadership Fund. Clergy may waive their right to minimum compensation for missional reasons.
4) Each pastor who is in good standing and who is appointed by the bishop to less than full time service is eligible for support from the Strategic Leadership Fund in one-quarter increments.

5) Student pastors do not have claim upon the conference Strategic Leadership Fund.

6) Deacons do not have claim upon the conference Strategic Leadership Fund unless licensed and serving as a local pastor.

7) Agreements between district superintendents and Staff/Parish Relations Committees for Equitable Compensation support when a new pastor’s compensation level is different than the predecessor’s level have priority in the use of Strategic Leadership Funds. Further, these agreements may supersede the policies outlined in subsections 1 through 6 outlined above.

8) The procedures for and granting of Strategic Leadership Fund of the annual conference are the responsibility of the Cabinet and are budgeted through the Investing in Congregations line item.

9) Every church receiving Strategic Leadership Fund assistance will develop a financial plan for sustainability as Strategic Leadership Fund grants are only given for up to a three-year period.

10) Because of our connectional system, each church receiving base compensation assistance shall be up-to-date on apportionments.

d. Benefits

1) Health Insurance: In addition to the base cash compensation, the charge shall pay that portion of the conference health insurance program for pastors and their families as adopted by the annual conference.

2) Pension Benefits: In addition to the base cash compensation, the charge shall pay the pastor’s monthly pension contribution for Clergy Retirement Security Program (CRSP) and death/disability coverage for the Comprehensive Protection Plan (CPP) or UMLifeOptions. In addition to the base cash compensation, the charge shall send to Wespath the amount by salary reduction agreement that is the personal contribution for UMPIP either on a before tax, ROTH, or after tax basis. The clergy person is responsible for submitting the appropriate documentation to the Benefits Officer or to Wespath and to necessary congregational officers.

3) Sick Leave: The Minnesota Annual Conference expects that cooperative and constructive conversations will take place between the Staff/Pastor Parish Relations Committee and the pastor in consultation with the District Superintendent when there is negotiation of any issues. When illnesses or unanticipated special circumstances arise for a pastor or pastoral family, the goal is to meet the needs of both the pastor/pastoral family and the congregation. Circumstances of unexpected health concerns often are accompanied by emotion and challenge. Pastors and congregations are encouraged to make extra effort to embody the best of our Christian graces in caring for each other and finding a way through unanticipated situations.

4) Vacation: Congregations shall grant pastors an annual vacation of at least four weeks with pay including at least four Sundays, and upon completion of ten years of service in the conference, congregations shall grant pastors an annual vacation of at least five weeks with pay, including at least five Sundays. The pastor, in consultation with the Committee on Pastor-Parish Relations, shall provide for services in the church when the pastor is on vacation. Eligible vacation days for one year shall be counted from July 1 to June 30, to correspond with the annual conference appointment process. Exceptions, as in cases of midyear or special appointments, should be negotiated through the district superintendent and the Committee on Pastor-Parish Relations. The pastor shall be given the privilege of dividing his or her vacation into two or more periods of time. These policies shall also apply to district superintendents and other personnel of the Conference. For pastors in their first appointment in the Minnesota Annual Conference, the following graduated schedule shall be considered a minimum and is to be worked out in consultation with the Committee on Pastor Parish Relations of the charge served:

- First Year: two weeks vacation
- Second Year: three weeks vacation
- Third Year: four weeks vacation
- Tenth Year: five weeks vacation
Vacations should be scheduled with discretion in relationship to camp and/or conference responsibilities. Any pastor who moves may feel free to take his/her vacation during the first summer on the new charge.

5) District and conference Work: Each pastor is encouraged to devote time to work at conference and/or district camp experience or seminar each year. This time is not to be construed as vacation time.

6) Maternity/Paternity, Adoptive Aid and Incapacity Leave benefits are listed and described in the Clergy section: 200.05

e. Termination of Pastorate
The Bishop and Cabinet shall annually determine the termination date for the salary and pastoral service of pastors moving to a new charge.

f. Parsonage Penalty Adjustment
This adjustment is designed to offset the pension penalty of pastors who reside in parsonages. This amount will vary from year to year. It is based on 3% of the difference between the average housing allowance and the average parsonage value. For the base on which the pension amount is figured housing is added to the base compensation figure. In the case of a parsonage it is 25% of the cash salary. In the case of a housing allowance it is the actual dollars of the housing allowance. This parsonage penalty adjustment is potentially taxable income to the pastor. In order to have the result be more equity in pension contribution, it is strongly recommended that this amount of money be invested by the pastor in the UMPIP (United Methodist Personal Investment Plan). In retirement the entire amount of pension received from Wespath to the extent it is used to provide housing is non-taxable income per current IRS rules.

g. Yoked Charges
When a charge of the Minnesota conference is yoked with a church of another denomination and served by a pastor who is member of the Minnesota Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church, the base compensation shall be determined by the provisions of this conference, but when the charge is served by a pastor of the other denomination the base compensation shall be determined by the provisions of the denomination to which the pastor belongs.

04. Parsonages
1) No assets from the sale of a church-owned parsonage shall be used for current operating expenses of the charge (BOD ¶ 2543). The Board of Trustees of the local church shall assure that, from the proceeds of a church-owned parsonage being sold, at least 20% of the cost of a home in the area that meets Minnesota Annual Conference parsonage standards, plus an amount to cover closing costs shall be held in escrow. It is recommended that the principal account on the escrow be adjusted annually to provide equity with inflation and the real estate market. Interest received from an escrow account may be used toward the provision of a housing allowance. Any such sale of a church-owned parsonage must include consent of the pastor, district superintendent, district Board of Church Location and Building, and the charge conference, according to the process outlined in the current Discipline.

If the parsonage is not sold, but held for rental purposes, rental income should normally be applied toward a housing allowance for the pastor or for current expenses. Said rental parsonage shall be maintained at the conference and local community rental housing code standards and inspected annually by the local Board of Trustees, in readiness for possible future use as the parsonage. Assets from the sale of a new-church-start parsonage, prior to the constituting church conference, will conform to agreements made at the time of the original purchase of the parsonage.

2) If a church needs to purchase a parsonage for an incoming pastor, or if a parsonage is not ready for the new clergy-family residents, appropriate housing accommodation shall be provided for the clergy until the parsonage is ready and any extra moving costs shall be the responsibility of the local church. If a pastor requests a housing allowance, after living in the parsonage, the costs of moving to another home using a housing allowance is the pastor’s. If a church requests the move to a housing allowance, the move costs are borne by the church.
3) The SPRC in cooperation with the trustees shall provide and properly maintain an adequate and comfortable residence for the pastor (and family). This committee shall use these minimum standards as the standards for parsonages in the Minnesota Conference. The District Board of Church Location and Building is required to approve plans for all major changes in the housing situation. Each committee, at the convenience of the parsonage family, should inspect its parsonage, using the annual parsonage evaluation form as a guide. If anything fails to meet minimum standards, necessary steps should be taken to accomplish the work required. With the concurrence of the parsonage family and with the advice of appropriate district board, when necessary, the committee shall establish a mutually agreeable order of priority and schedule for the completion of the work. Each committee should study the present parsonage with the thought of providing a comfortable and adequate home as well as a sound investment. If the parsonage is not structurally sound, or if too much expense is required to bring it up to minimum standards, steps should be taken to provide another home as the parsonage. All hazards to personal safety shall be immediately corrected. The annual parsonage evaluation shall be included in the annual charge conference reports and a copy provided for the district superintendent's file.

Reference: BOD ¶ 2544.3.b.1a, b, c, 2, 4.d.1, 2, 3 as follows:

3. b) After approving a purchase proposal, the charge conference shall be deemed to have authorized and directed the board of trustees to proceed with the purchase. In the case of the purchase of a parsonage, the board of trustees shall either:
   (a) purchase a parsonage that has on the ground-floor level:
      (i) (a) one room that can be used as a bedroom by a person with a disability;
      (ii) (b) one fully accessible bathroom; and
      (iii) (c) fully accessible laundry facilities; or
   (b) purchase a parsonage without the accessible features for persons with disabilities specified above and remodel it within one year’s time, so that it does have those features.

4) Parsonage Minimum Requirements
a) A safe and dependable hot and cold water system throughout the house including water softening equipment where needed. All of the plumbing shall meet state and local codes.
b) A central automatic heating system. The heating system shall have sufficient capacity to bring the entire habitable part of the house to a comfortable temperature and meet state and local codes.
c) The house shall be fully insulated, with storm and screen doors and storm and screened windows as required. (It is recommended insulation be brought to local codes.)
d) All movable windows shall be in operating condition.
e) The grounds around the house shall be well drained. In the event that there is flooding in the basement, a sump pump shall be provided.
f) There shall be provision for adequate television reception (cable/antenna/satellite)
g) The laundry: automatic heavy-duty, large capacity washer with direct plumbing to the washer, large capacity dryer with either a 220 volt outlet or a gas connection for dryer, a 4-inch vent for the dryer, a deep sink or stationary tub with dedicated hot and cold faucets, and indoor drying space. Decision makers are encouraged to consider energy efficient appliances.
h) All electrical power outlets and wiring shall conform to state and local codes. (Check with your local building inspector to make sure things conform.)
i) There shall be adequate shelter (in good condition and conveniently located) for the appointed pastor’s car.
j) All parsonage grounds shall be safe for children.
k) Appropriate floor coverings and window treatments shall be provided in living and dining room.
l) The kitchen shall be furnished with good tile, linoleum, or carpet on the floor; and equipped with a good range and oven, sink, adequate refrigerator-freezer, adequate storage cabinets and lighting.
m) Adequate closet and storage space shall be provided throughout the house.
n) Each parsonage shall have at least a kitchen, living room, dining area, three bedrooms, bath and a half, and an area for utilities.
o) The church office, when located in the parsonage, shall be furnished with bookshelves, desk, chair, locking file cabinets, safe or fireproof file for membership records and other permanent records, private telephone line, a computer with software for word processing and office applications and internet service, and sufficient lighting.

p) The parsonage shall be of sound construction with attention and repair being given to cracked walls and sagging floors.

q) These same standards shall apply in cases of multiple parsonages, even when rented by the congregation. If an apartment is to be used as a parsonage, it must have the approval of the District Board of Church Location and Building and the District Superintendent.

r) Church owned parsonages, residences, shall have an adequate number of smoke/fire detectors, CO detectors, and other appropriate detectors for the area in which the home is located.

s) Church owned parsonages shall be tested for radon. Testing shall be done in accordance with the current protocols for radon measurement in homes adopted by the American Association of Radon Scientists and Technicians. If the testing shows that radon is found to be at an unacceptable level, the congregation must take steps to bring the levels into the acceptable range. Because radon levels can and do change, it is recommended that this testing be redone every three years.

t) When bedrooms are in the basement, there shall be alternate access, or exit door, other than the stairs to the main level. Split-levels with bedrooms on lower level shall have an alternate exit door, or exit windows, to meet standards of the Minnesota Uniform Building Code. (Check with your local building inspector to make sure things conform.)

u) Recommendations: for the care of the parsonage grounds: power lawn mower, ladder, hose, seed, fertilizer; Automatic dishwasher; Eating space should be provided in the kitchen; Consideration should be given to a family-recreation room, and/or additional sleeping area for guests.

v) Small dry powder ABC fire extinguishers shall be furnished in the kitchen and near the heating plant.

w) Consider improving accessibility for handicapped persons.

x) An amount equal to at least 2-1/2 percent of the replacement value of the parsonage shall be annually budgeted for maintenance of the parsonage or placed in a sinking fund to be used for future parsonage maintenance.

5) Utilities and Standards

a) In addition to the base cash compensation, every charge shall pay actual utilities for church-owned parsonages. Utilities include: heat, electricity, water, water softener (including salt) where needed, sewage, garbage disposal, basic TV/internet/phone services for the parsonage.

b) The Parsonage Maintenance/Improvement Fund (See 1987 Journal, p. 167): Each charge shall set up an annual parsonage maintenance/improvement fund in a separate checking account from the congregation’s general fund account (suggested minimum to begin each year $1000).

c) Parsonage Standards: Parsonages as provided will meet all appropriate state and local building codes. It is expected that the parsonage will be appropriate for the community in which it is located. Any house proposed to be purchased or built as a parsonage shall have the approval of the District Board of Location and Building or, in matters dealing with the purchase or building of conference parsonages, the conference Trustees. (See the following references in BOD ¶ 2544.3b 1+2 and 2544.4d 1, 2 + 3).

6) Minimum Requirements for New Parsonages (Built or Purchased)

a) Central heat, preferably zoned, with gas, oil or electrical fuel source.

b) Central humidifier (unless closed heating system).

c) Basements on lower levels shall be dry and usable.

d) Two-car garage.

e) Give attention to sound conditions from room to room by offsetting heating and electrical outlets and providing insulation for sound control.
f) It is recommended that there shall be at least three bedrooms, living room, dining room, kitchen with eating area, two bathrooms, an area for utilities, and storage space.

g) The living room area shall have at least 235 square feet.

h) The dining area shall not be less than 120 square feet.

i) A foyer shall be provided which shall be a separate central area, with a coat closet of not less than 5 linear feet.

j) The floor plan should provide access from the kitchen area to the sleeping area without going through the living room.

k) Overhangs shall be provided over entrances in newly built homes.

l) The master bedroom should be at least 180 square feet. The other bedrooms should be no less than 120 square feet. These sizes are exclusive of closets, which should be at least 2 feet deep.

m) Each full bath should be no less than 40 square feet.

n) The kitchen, including eating area and adequate built-in cupboard space, should be at least 200 square feet and should be equipped with hood or exhaust fan.

o) Each exception shall be allowed by a 3/4 vote of the District Board of Location and Building or a 3/4 vote of the Conference Board of Trustees in matters dealing with the purchase or building of conference parsonages.

7) Recommendations for New Parsonages (Built or Purchased)

a) Wall to wall carpet, except kitchen and bath.

b) Family room and/or study.

c) Tool space and workbench.

d) A bedroom and a half bath on ground level.

e) Fireplace (see energy statement).

f) A patio area (see energy statement).

g) Air conditioning (see energy statement).

h) Strongly urge consideration of needs of handicapped persons. (e.g. door widths, stairs) The building committee shall provide on the ground-floor level of a newly constructed parsonage: one room that can be used as a bedroom by a person with a disability; one fully accessible bathroom; and fully accessible laundry facilities.

8) Recommendations on Energy Conservation and Building Maintenance

With the growing awareness of the need for energy efficiency in our lifestyle as a key to energy conservation, the following recommendations are urged as factors to be considered in purchase, construction, or remodeling.

a) New or replacement appliances should be energy efficient.

b) Fireplaces, patio doors, air-conditioning installation or use be considered in light of energy consumption/loss/cost factors.

c) In new construction or remodeling consider:
   • 6" studs and insulation
   • Insulating sheathing on exterior basement, or lower level, to have rigid insulation to meet energy code requirements. This is mandatory on newly built parsonages.
   • Triple-glazed windows
   • Insulated exterior doors
   • Vestibules at all exterior entrances

d) Maintenance is sometimes a problem on building exteriors. Consider installation of maintenance-free exterior siding, soffit, fascia (steel, aluminum, vinyl)

9) Parsonage Damages

a) We remind all parties concerned that houses are built for occupation. Pastors and their families are just like any other families in that they wish to live comfortably in their home. No local church should expect that the parsonage will be treated any differently than any other home. A home is to be lived in, to be used, to be enjoyed as a place of residence, and is to experience normal wear and tear.

b) We remind all persons involved that the parsonage is not only the property of the local church, but that it is also the private home for a family while they are the occupants. This means that the
pastor and their family members are to view the parsonage as personal property, respecting the need for continued maintenance, and that they assume responsibility for damages which are beyond normal wear and tear.

c) The following facts need to be reported to local churches and pastors:
   • BOD ¶ 2533.4 says: “The chairperson of the board of trustees or the chairperson of the parsonage committee, if one exists, the chairperson of the committee on staff-pastor-parish relations, and the pastor shall make an annual review of the church-owned parsonage to ensure proper maintenance.”
   • Our Parsonage Standards Policy (Policy & Procedure Manual 300.04(3) states: “Each [Staff-Pastor-Parish Relations] Committee, at the convenience of the parsonage family, should inspect its parsonage, using the annual parsonage evaluation form as a guide. If anything fails to meet minimum standards, necessary steps should be taken to accomplish the work required.”
   • Our interpretation of these two statements is that this should be an on-site inspection, with no part of the parsonage as off-limits, except for the personal property of the pastor and family.

d) We believe that Christian people can responsibly come to an acceptable agreement that will satisfy all parties involved.

e) An on-site inspection of the parsonage shall be made one month before the pastor is to move to a new appointment, involving the chairperson of the Staff-Pastor-Parish Relations Committee, the chairperson of the board of trustees, and the pastor. If extraordinary damage is evident, the pastor shall meet with the chairperson of the Staff-Pastor-Parish Relations Committee and the trustees to assess the amount of damage and to establish responsibility for financing the needed repairs. The district superintendent is to be notified of such a meeting, previous to the meeting, by the chairperson of the Pastor-Parish Relations Committee. If the issue is not resolved, the Staff-Pastor-Parish Relations Committee chairperson shall again contact the district superintendent asking for intervention.

f) If the district superintendent is asked to intervene, s/he shall ask the District Board of Church Location and Building to meet with the responsible parties to resolve the issue. If the pastor is judged to be responsible for the damages by the District Board of Church Location and Building, but still refuses to accept responsibility, the local church shall withhold from the last month’s salary, or a part thereof, for payment of damages.

10) Other clergy housing policies are listed and described in the Clergy section: 200.04

05. Exceptions to the Ministerial Support and Services Policies
   The Board of Ordained Ministry will review these policies annually, and any exceptions will be approved by the cabinet.

06. Charge Business Expense
   a. Office Equipment and Supplies
   In order that there may be an efficient use of a pastor’s time, talents and education, each charge of the Minnesota conference:

      1) Shall provide for its pastor and associate pastor(s) a study, preferably in the church building, which shall be equipped with a desk and chairs, adequate locking filing space, sufficient book shelves and proper lighting.
      2) Shall provide safe or fireproof file for membership records and other permanent records. It is recommended that membership records also be saved electronically.  
      3) Shall provide modern office machines and equipment (including phone and computers with internet service), necessary for the efficient conduct of the charge’s business, and shall pay office expense, such as postage, stationery, office supplies. The charge shall pay all of the repair and maintenance costs.
      4) Is strongly urged to provide secretarial help for the parish, with office space separate from pastor’s study.
      5) As cell phones have become a primary tool for communication, we encourage churches to create a cell phone use policy and provide a financial allowance for clergy and staff.
b. Pulpit Supply
The congregation is responsible for the cost of pulpit supply when the pastor is away from the charge for vacation, local church programming, service in conference or district programs, absence required or requested by the annual conference or general boards or agencies, approved sabbatical leaves and continuing education, and sickness or family emergencies.

07. Golden Cross Sunday
Golden Cross Sunday will be observed by the churches of the Minnesota Annual Conference on its traditional date, the first Sunday in May. The Minnesota Annual Conference authorizes a special Golden Cross Offering to be received on that day to be used for the work of authorized health care ministries within our annual conference. An alternate date on which to observe Golden Cross Sunday and to receive the Golden Cross Offering may be determined by individual churches.
1) **Theological Context:** As members of the Minnesota Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church, we confess our love for God as the source and giver of all life, as the Holy One with sole authority over life and final power over death. We acknowledge God’s self-revelation in acts of mercy and justice in the Church’s witness to Jesus as God’s decisive self-revelation; as evidenced in the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures; throughout the created order; within the movement of history; and in the broader context of human relationships.

Further, we know ourselves to be created in God’s own image. As creatures of God, together with the example of perfect humanity given to us in Jesus, we are called to live in right relationship with God, with one another, and with ourselves (The Great Commandment, Mark 12:29-31). As the prophet instructs, we are called to “do justice, love mercy and walk humbly with God” (Micah 6:8). This calling to live in the fullness of our God-created humanity requires that we sustain a vital relationship to God so that we may maintain the dignity of all life, and treat each other with respect.

As we increase in our awareness of the many instances of sexual misconduct occurring within as well as outside of the Church, it is imperative we recognize the following:

- Human sexuality is a gift from God for the enhancement, not the degradation, of human life.
- All powers, capacities and gifts of the human person are given by God and must be exercised with consideration and respect due to self, others and God.
- The commission of sexual exploitation, harassment and abuse constitute sin against God, against the Church, against one another, and against the integrity of the self.
- The Church, as ordained by Christ, is intended to be a Spirit-inspired arena for confronting and confessing of human sinfulness; for healing all human brokenness, including the brokenness caused by sexual violations and experienced by victims, by offenders, and by the larger witnessing community.

We recognize that while we are in need of God’s redemptive grace, we must remain committed to providing just and merciful responses to instances of sexual misconduct in the church, whether understood to be exploitation, harassment, or abuse. We must acknowledge to ourselves and to God the need for restoration of what is broken and lost when any member of the body of Christ is sexually violated by another. Finally, we recognize our commission as members of Christ’s body to be healing agents of justice for victims of sexual misconduct, as well as for offenders, families, congregations and others affected by such violation.

2) **Standards of Conduct:** The following Standards of Conduct, which underlie this policy, apply to clergy members, lay employees and unpaid ministry servants in the annual conference, such as committee members, camp counselors and conference youth workers. Additional moral and ethical expectations for ordained clergy are specified in *The Book of Discipline*. Our expectations for healthy, ethical conduct include:

a) Persons are responsible for avoiding misconduct of a sexual nature by establishing and maintaining appropriate personal and social boundaries in all interpersonal relationships.

b) Persons are responsible for their conduct regarding the emotional, spiritual and physical protection of all persons who come to them for help or over whom they have any kind of authority.

c) Persons shall strive to be as psychologically, emotionally and spiritually healthy as possible at all times, and have adequate preparation and education for helping those individuals under their care and know when to make appropriate referrals.

d) When bringing incidents of sexual misconduct to the attention of proper authorities, the greatest possible care shall be taken to assure that the least possible additional harm is done to the complainant, respondent, and/or victim(s), and the congregations. In no case is the person reporting expected to judge the validity of the reported complaint. Secrecy and withholding of information about sexual misconduct allows damage to continue to grow.

e) Misconduct of a sexual nature breaks the sacred trust that is inherent in all ministries of the Church. Such misconduct is a violation of the ministerial relationship, in which a person in a position of religious
leadership takes advantage of, rather than protecting, another person. The General Conference names "sexual harassment and sexual abuse within the ministerial relationship as incompatible with biblical teachings of hospitality, justice and healing and will continue its efforts to eliminate sexual harassment and abuse in the denomination and its institutions."

f) It is our understanding that misconduct of a sexual nature means any sexual conduct that is contrary to the ethical principles of The United Methodist Church, as defined by The Book of Discipline, or is unlawful as defined by the laws of the State of Minnesota. Misconduct of a sexual nature includes, but is not limited to, sexual abuse and sexual harassment. It is also the understanding of the Minnesota Annual Conference that retaliation in response to a report of sexual misconduct is a continuation of the original instance of the sexual misconduct.

3) Definitions of Sexual Misconduct
   a) Sexual abuse includes criminal sexual conduct or sexual contact by force, threat, or intimidation that is in violation of the Minnesota Criminal Sexual Conduct Code. As it applies to adult/child or vulnerable person interactions, sexual abuse is the subjection of a child or vulnerable adult by any person responsible for their care to any sexual act that is a violation of the Minnesota Criminal Sexual Conduct Code. To uphold the moral standard of The United Methodist Church as defined by this document and The Book of Discipline, no person less than 18 years of age or any vulnerable adult may give consent to sexual acts.
   b) Sexual harassment is defined by The United Methodist Church (BOD ¶ 161 section I) as “any unwanted sexual comment, advance or demand, either verbal or physical, that is reasonably perceived by the recipient as demeaning, intimidating or coercive. Sexual harassment must be understood as an exploitation of a power relationship rather than as an exclusively sexual issue. Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to, the creation of a hostile or abusive working environment resulting from discrimination on the basis of gender.” For the purposes of this policy, we acknowledge that sexual harassment may occur in any environment where the work of the church takes place.
   c) Sexual misconduct may also take the form of an abuse of power through sexual contact or activity (not limited to sexual intercourse) which exploits the vulnerability of a parishioner, client or staff person, or causes/allows those persons to engage in sexual behavior with a person who is in a professional relationship (whether paid or unpaid) to the annual conference.
   d) Sexual misconduct may also include any sexual contact or activity (not limited to sexual intercourse) between a person in a therapeutic or a counseling role/relationship with a congregant/client. It may include being asked to date the counselor or any representation by a counselor that sexual contact will help in dealing with the emotional struggles the client is having. (This is called “therapeutic deception.”) Consent by the complainant is not a defense. Such behavior is illegal under Minnesota law, as is sexual contact by a person who is, or claims to be, clergy with someone during private meetings for spiritual aid and comfort.

4) Reporting Misconduct of a Sexual Nature
   It is encouraged that any instances of suspected or actual misconduct of a sexual nature on the part of the individuals named above be reported to either the bishop, one of the district superintendents or the Director of Ministries. Investigation is not the responsibility of the person reporting such misconduct.

5) Commitment to Action
   a) Seek justice in all cases of sexual misconduct;
   b) Emphasize reconciliation and resolution as the continuing goal of this process;
   c) Provide trained individuals to serve as advocates and/or support persons for all aggrieved parties including the complainant, respondent and congregation involved;
   d) Provide a program of ongoing education and training for local congregations on the nature and scope of sexual harassment, sexual abuse, and sexual misconduct;
   e) Provide a series of ongoing training sessions for clergy, conference staff and volunteers which will promote proactive measures designed to lower the risk of sexual misconduct on the part of these individuals;
   f) The wide dissemination of this policy along with additional materials that will aid in the understanding of the roles and processes outlined in The Book of Discipline.
Safe Gatherings “BEST PRACTICES” in Ministry

Guidelines, Policies and Procedures for the purpose of maintaining transparency, accountability, and integrity in ministry with children, youth, and/or the developmentally disabled.

Following are church-established best practices for all ministry areas. In some instances it may be impossible to adhere to them, so allow common sense and grace to prevail. These practices pertain to those serving consistently in direct contact with children, youth, and vulnerable adults. It is recommended for all leaders to be Safe Gatherings http://www.minnesotaumc.org/safe-gatherings certified. Recertification should be done every 3 years.

General Best Practices for all Congregations
Adults serving in ministry areas with children and youth shall have been active participants in the congregation for six months before beginning their ministry assignment and have completed a background check that demonstrates that they have never been convicted of any form of child abuse.

Adult ministry workers with children and youth shall observe the “two adult rule” at all times so that no adult is left alone with children or youth on a routine basis. In unavoidable circumstances where only one adult is present, the door must be open or all present be in a space where they can be observed. It is never appropriate for an adult to be alone with an individual child at any age.

Ministry workers in all areas should wear lanyards and nametags identifying them as the designated ministry worker and there should be some sort of check in process with name tags for infants/toddlers and children for the nursery and children’s programming.

If the situation arises when two adult persons cannot be present in a nursery setting, the ministry worker should recruit another person to join them, or, at minimum, invite someone to serve as a “rover” to be readily accessible to assist in any classroom situation.

When the pastor is alone and a congregant arrives seeking spiritual care, the pastor should meet with the person where there is a space with a window and/or leave the door open to the room where the communication is occurring. Other options include asking the person to meet at a public space. If it is not a crisis, tell the congregant you are obligated by church policies to schedule the appointment when other people are in the building. If it is a crisis, call another church leader to be in the building where you meet.

When a youth leader is asked to provide transportation to a student for a youth event, and knows that they will be alone in the car with the student, the leader will always obtain parental permission before giving a ride. It is always best that a leader is not alone in a car with a student.

“BEST PRACTICES” FOR CHILDREN’S MINISTRY (Children, Age 0 – Grade 5)
During all children’s programming and events caregivers should wear the appropriate lanyard/nametag. Remember guidelines also apply to your own child while you are in your ministerial role.

Security Guidelines:
- Minimum of two unrelated care providers at all times. Care providers should not be alone with a child.
- Care providers should always have supervision or a witness present when with a child of same or opposite sex for a sustained period of time.
- Release only (birth-2nd grade) to a person with a proper pick up form. In cases of lost pickup form or any problems, the child may be released by a staff member. For those in 3rd to 5th grade, if parent designates, perhaps an older sibling can be allowed to pick up child.
Discipline Guidelines:

- Establish and post expectations and guidelines, and provide to care providers and parents.
- Praising specific behaviors you want to see in your group (i.e., “good listening”, “thank you for waiting”).
- Corporal punishment of any kind is never appropriate.
- A firm gentle voice addressing and redirecting the behavior (i.e., “you are running; walk, please”). Any words or tone that would cause a child to think he/she is a “problem”, rather than a specific behavior being addressed (i.e., screaming at a child).
- Any words that could cause feelings of condemnation or shame about any aspect of their person . . . including degrading references to anything physical, emotional, mental, or position (or station) in life, such as saying, “Are you a strong boy? Strong boys don’t cry.” Or “Shame on you.”
- Confidential parental discussion when necessary, involve church staff as appropriate.
- Age appropriate “time outs” or withdrawal from activity. Help child rejoin the group when he/she is ready using encouraging language and methods.
- Communicate through verbal and nonverbal messages that you have faith in the child’s ability to practice self-control and (after they’ve calmed) encourage him/her to explore possible solutions to the situation.

Physical Contact Guidelines:

- Appropriate physical contact: non-demanding, gentle touch of shoulders, hands, arms, head or back; sitting child on leg (appropriate only at preschool or kindergarten age level); “high fives” or shaking hands, if gentle.
- Inappropriate physical contact: kissing; demanding hugs and kisses; touching chest, genital region, upper legs, buttocks, waist, stomach; sitting child in center of your lap; sitting child between legs; sitting child above age 6 on one or both legs; opposite sex piggy back rides; seductiveness or suggestive contact.
- Physical contact of any kind which is done for the pleasure or satisfaction of care providers is never appropriate.
- Any touching used to express power or control over a child is not permitted.

Bathroom Procedures:

At ANY age, it is inappropriate to be alone with a child, especially in the bathroom.

Infant: Diapering should be done in the Nursery by a parent/legal guardian, a ministry supervisor or paid staff person only. Diapering in a secluded area or without the presence of other care providers; bathroom doors closed is never permitted.

Toddler-Potty Training: If a toddler has an “accident” in underwear/clothing, only the parent/legal guardian may change the clothing. Volunteers and staff are not to change underwear/clothing after an “accident”.

2 to 5 year old: Permission is granted to use bathroom unless special help is required. After the care provider has ensured that the bathroom is clear, the care provider should wait outside the bathroom door, which will remain slightly open. Child may require some assistance. Care providers should never be in a closed door situation with a child or “Help” without a request for assistance from the child.

Kindergarten Age or Older: Permission granted to use facility; unless special help (if a child has temporary physical limitations, i.e., broken arm, crutches, etc.) is required. After the care provider has ensured that the bathroom is clear, the care provider should wait outside the bathroom door, which will remain slightly open. Care giver should never be in a closed door situation with a child or accompany a child inside the bathroom when special help is not required.

Special Needs: Diapers or spoiled clothes should be change by a family member or an adult (preferably a staff member) with another adult as a helper.
Youth ministry has a profound moral and legal obligation to reduce the possibility of abuse from ever occurring. These best practices have been formed with that obligation in mind. Abuse causes deep and sometimes lifelong psychological damage to its victims and their families. Furthermore, when abuse occurs in the context of a Christian organization, the reputations of the organization, its staff and other volunteers are jeopardized. Thank you for your support and partnership in adhering to what is outlined in these pages so that students for years to come can grow in Christ in a safe and trustworthy environment.

**Guidelines for Conduct with Students Meeting with Students**

All meetings, gatherings, and events associated with Youth Ministry will adhere to a two unrelated adult minimum rule.

On the occasion when a worker needs to meet individually with a student outside of regularly scheduled programs, a parental consent must first be obtained. All meetings must occur in a public place where other people are present (restaurants, coffee shops). Students and workers will meet at the public place and depart from the public place separately. If a meeting occurs during regularly scheduled program time, it must be in a common visible area.

When providing rides to students, youth workers should have a third person in the car. Although situations may require the driver to be alone in the car with a student of the same gender (e.g. picking up the first student) this should be the exception rather than the norm and parental consent must be obtained. Care should be taken to plan ahead to avoid finding oneself in these situations. Under no circumstances shall any worker be alone in a car with an individual student of the opposite gender.

As a rule, youth workers shall not be alone in a home or building with an individual student. If the situation becomes unavoidable (e.g. a student is the first to arrive or last to be picked up), the adult shall wait with the student outside the home or building. In bad weather, when meeting off site, the adult may leave the main entry or front door open and remain inside with the student in the front room or entryway. If this situation occurs, please report it to a staff member in charge of that program as soon as possible.

In group sleeping arrangements (e.g. camp cabins, ski trips, mission trips) two unrelated adults must be present with any number of students during the stated “lights out” time. Under no circumstances shall any volunteer share a bed with a student. In dorm or hotel settings, students and adults should sleep in separate rooms (connecting rooms are acceptable). Room checks will be performed at stated lights out time. There should be separate sleeping areas for males and females. Any leader who is a minor must be under direct adult supervision at all times. A leader who is a minor must be at least five years older than the students participating in the event in order to be considered a leader. When college-aged counselors are used, an adult 23 years or older must be the second adult where there are senior high youth present.

**Physical Touch**

Although physical affection can have an appropriate place in ministry, workers shall use discretion as to the frequency and type of physical affection they provide to students of either gender. Specifically, youth workers should refrain from giving or receiving massages of any type. Whenever possible front-to-front hugs should be avoided. Workers should never have students sit on their laps or vice-versa. Kissing of any sort is inappropriate. Touching should be in response to the need of the student and not the need of the adult. It should generally be in response to a student’s initiative. A worker shall never touch a student’s breasts, buttocks, or groin.

Corporal punishment is never permissible. Physical restraint should be used only in order to protect the health and welfare of the student, other students, volunteers or staff.

**Modesty**

You are an example to students in every way. For that reason strive that your dress, behavior, and body language be of the highest standard. Please be conscious of what your appearance will speak to both genders.
Disciplinary Action

If at any time your behavior towards students becomes questionable or specific expectations outlined here are violated, the steps below will be taken by the appropriate ministry leader, staff and/or SPRC team. A meeting will be scheduled with the person(s) overseeing the program in which you are volunteering. The action in question will be discussed and the guidelines in these best practices will be reviewed.

If it is determined that questionable behavior has occurred, other appropriate staff members and SPRC representatives will be contacted and will become involved. If questionable behavior continues after the meeting, a temporary or permanent removal from your volunteer position will follow. If behavior warrants immediate removal from volunteer position, the church reserves the right to enforce disciplinary action as needed. In all situations, we will communicate our purpose in discipline and keep it in confidence within the church guidelines. If you become aware of other volunteers or staff violating these guidelines, report the situation immediately to a staff member or the SPRC team.

Camping & Mission Trips with Youth

Camping & mission trips, regardless of location, are unique experiences where persons of all ages are general outside their comfort zones. Thus, persons on these trips are more vulnerable because of the new situation, away from familiar surroundings, close proximity of others and sharing experiences that are often life-changing.

It is highly recommended that adult team leaders have completed Safe Gatherings training/certification [http://www.minnesotaumc.org/safe-gatherings](http://www.minnesotaumc.org/safe-gatherings).

When a single youth is part of a group, the youth should either have a room of their own or two adults (not related to one another) in the room.

If open showers are the only facilities, separate shower times for youth and adults should be designated. Youth and adults should not shower together. There should be shower monitors, and swim suits may be required for showers in some instances.

Adults should be sensitive to privacy concerns of children and youth, such as dressing and undressing in public spaces.

Two adults should be present at the work site at all times.

When travelling to different areas of the camp/mission site, there must always be at least three people (two counselors & 1 camper, 2 campers and 1 counselor).

When counseling or talking with a camper about a personal/private matter, you must do so in an open space where anyone can walk by and see what is happening.

No youth will be allowed to be alone with an adult from a host mission.

Mission/Camp team members are not to be alone with a youth from the host mission/camp.

The same boundary best practices apply to youth from host teams consistent with those for mission team members.

Recommended Ratio of Adults to Youth

Retreats/rallies/meetings  One adult: ten youth
Offsite camps/mission trips  One adult: eight youth

Whenever smaller ratios are required, the stricter requirements will be communicated to all participants, parents and sponsors prior to the event.
"BEST PRACTICES" FOR DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED (Children, Youth and Adults-special needs)

General Approach.
For years, people with disability were segregated from the rest of society. Because of federal legislation, persons with disability are being integrated into the mainstream of education, employment, and community activities. The present generation is growing up in situations where people with disability are a natural part of school, church and community life. Below are some general principles to keep in mind when working with the special needs population.

A person with a special need may be slower physically or mentally, but take time to get to know them. People with disabilities need to practice meeting the standards of the "normal" world while they are growing up so they can gain confidence and independence.

People with a disability do not need to be pitied. If you perceive a person with a disability as someone to be pitied, someone from whom little should be expected or demanded, probably little will come. If, on the other hand, you expect the person to succeed and grow, to learn to act independently, then chances are good that the person will grow to become successful and independent.

Help a person with special needs only when help is needed. A person with a special need may take longer to complete a certain task, but you may be surprised by what he or she can do. Too much help can become a hindrance if it robs the person of opportunities to learn and practice independence. Do not assume that a task cannot be done, and do not redo work that is not perfect. Ask if help is wanted before providing it.

With special considerations, communicate with a special needs person like you would any other person. One impairment that some volunteers have trouble with involves speech and language. Whether the communication impairment results from a physical disability such as cerebral palsy or a speech disability such as stuttering, the listener tends to anticipate what the disabled person is trying to say and not allow that person the time he or she needs to communicate. This should be avoided. Be patient, and remember that a person with a speech impairment has had to communicate with people other than you. Whenever possible, speak directly to persons with disability, using their name. Do not limit your conversation only to the parent or companion. Speak clearly and slowly, not necessarily loudly. A person with a speech impairment is not necessarily hearing impaired.

Remember that a warm smile and friendly greeting are very reassuring. There are special considerations for people with special disabilities. For example, keep in mind that people who have visual impairments depend upon what they hear and touch to bring them information about their surroundings. Provide opportunities for the visually impaired person to handle things that those with normal vision can simply look at. It is also helpful to describe new people, things, and events as they come into the person's environment. Allow time for the person to ask what is going on.

People with hearing impairments must depend on sight for most of their knowledge. Make sure the hearing impaired person can see the face of whoever is speaking; many cues are picked up through lip-reading and facial expression. Arrange for seating near the teacher or leader. Do not assume that a person understands you just because you have his or her attention. Ask whether you have been understood. People with mental impairments can get along better when directions are short and clearly stated. Break down tasks into a series of steps that can be completed in sequence. Maintain a routine, teach new procedures, and give time for practice.

EXPECTATIONS OF VOLUNTEERS
*Meet and greet your child/student and family. Welcome them and check for any last minute instructions or information that we might need.
*Participate. All volunteers and participants are expected to participate, as much as possible, in the activities of the day. Stay together. Talk with them, encourage them and include them in whatever is happening in the programming or class.
*Bathroom breaks with a child. Need two unrelated volunteers to accompany the child to the bathroom. If the participant can’t go alone, simply wait for them, at the door of the bathroom.
*Help with snacks/meals. Some of our participants will need help carrying things, cutting food into manageable pieces and cleaning up after themselves.
*Have fun! This ministry is a great experience for those who attend.
Sample Electronic Communication Policy

The use of computers and electronic communications are essential tools to support (organization)'s ministry. In using (organization)'s computers and electronic communications systems, it is important for all employees/users to be aware of (organization)'s policy regarding responsible use. It is the responsibility of each User to ensure that this technology is used in a manner that 1) is responsible, professional, and legal; 2) does not compromise the confidentiality of proprietary or other sensitive information; 3) does not compromise the security of (organization)'s computer resources; and 4) is consistent with good stewardship and the mission and ministry of (organization).

Internet Access and Electronic Mail

(organization) employees and volunteers designated to have access to the Internet are required to use their access to the Internet in a legal, responsible and informed way, conforming to network etiquette, customs and courtesies.

Internet activity and email is not a private, confidential communication. The confidentiality of any message should not be assumed.

Internet activity and email should never be used in any way that may be disruptive, hurtful or offensive to others.

Use of the Internet is a privilege, not a right, which may be revoked at any time for inappropriate conduct. The willful misuse of Internet access by any employee may result in other disciplinary action, including but not limited to, termination of employment. Examples of inappropriate conduct include, but are not limited to: use of inappropriate or offensive or abusive language in either public or private messages; unlawful activities; gambling, defamation; infringement of copyrights; misrepresentation of oneself or (organization); logging on or accessing obscene, pornographic, sexually explicit, racist or violent sites; pirating software or transmitting software programs or other copyrighted or trademarked material; engaging in transactions or activity for personal financial gain; jeopardizing (organization)'s tax-exempt status; creating unauthorized contractual liability for (organization); violating any (organization) policy or procedure; engaging in any activity or communication that is inconsistent with norms of professional and business conduct; and sending messages that might result in congestion or disruption of networks and systems.

Employees must abide by security policies, procedures and guidelines in their use of the Internet, and are to refrain from practices which might jeopardize (organization)'s computers, data, network, systems security or work in general. Employees must guard against computer viruses and security breaches of any kind.

No Privacy

The Internet is not a secure communication channel and should not be used for sending or receiving confidential or sensitive information.

Employees/users do not have a personal privacy right in any matter created, received, sent, or stored on (organization) computer resources, whether or not the matter is designated as private or confidential. (organization) reserves the right to access all (organization)-owned/provided computer resources for the purpose of supporting its mission and ministry, assuring compliance with statutory requirements, as well as internal policies supporting the performance of internal investigations, and assisting with the management of (organization)'s information systems.

The Staff-Parish Relations Committee of (organization) reserves the right to monitor and review email messages, Internet access and general computer usage of employees, without prior notice. This includes the right to monitor Internet sites visited, duration of employee's Internet use and files which have been viewed, accessed, or downloaded. E-mail messages and Internet access are not private, and employees should not consider their email messages and Internet access to be private. An employee's access code or password does not give him or her any right to privacy with respect to using the [organization]'s email and Internet systems.
Any violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment. An employee who discovers a violation of this policy is expected to report it to the Chair of the Staff-Parish Relations Committee.

General computer usage and electronic communications resources of non-church employees may be monitored by the appropriate representatives appointed by the Administrative Council of (organization).

SAMPLE COMPUTER USER CONTRACT/USE AGREEMENT

(Organization) holds the expectation that all users of church-provided computers, internet access, email and other electronic communications will exercise appropriate judgment and maintain high ethical standards. Access to church equipment and services is a privilege, not a right.

(Organization) reserves the right, at its discretion, to review any user's electronic files and messages stored on or sent from church computers and servers to the extent necessary to ensure electronic media and services are being used in compliance with the law, this policy and other church policies.

(Organization) may routinely gather logs for most electronic activities or monitor employee communications directly for the following purposes:

1. Cost analysis;
2. Resource allocation;
3. Optimum technical management of information resources; and
4. Detecting patterns of use that indicate employees or volunteers are violating church policies or engaging in illegal activity.

Appropriate members of the Staff Parish Relations Committee may be appointed to review employee computer and communications activity.

Employees and volunteers should not assume electronic communications are completely private. Accordingly, if they have sensitive information to transmit, they should use other means.

By signing this user agreement, I acknowledge that I have read this agreement, will abide by it and have received a copy of it.

_________________________________  ____________________
Name                                             Date
3 Simple Rules for Social Media

Social media guidelines for Minnesota United Methodists

John Wesley, the founder of the Methodist movement, lived by and taught three simple rules: Do no harm, do good, and stay in love with God. Those simple rules can be applied to many facets of life, including our use of social media. The Minnesota Conference’s Extended Cabinet supports the use of social media and believes it can be a valuable tool for ministry. We affirm these guidelines to help use social media in a manner that positively represents the church, the Gospel, and Jesus Christ and that helps us fulfill our Gospel imperatives to grow in love of God and neighbor, reach new people, and heal a broken world.

No. 1: Do no harm

One of the benefits of social media is that it provides the opportunity to share views, thoughts, joys, and concerns about all areas of life. Our social media contributions can be very effective tools for ministry if we apply caution before we post. We will be careful that our posts are not “doing harm” by insulting or damaging the reputation of others. We will make sure our posts are respectful and in good taste. And we will remember that everything we post—status updates, comments, tweets, blogs—becomes public immediately after we click “send” (even if we’re using a limited-access setting). We can’t take it back once it’s out there, so we will use discernment with everything we post.

TO THINK ABOUT
- Is the post “doing harm” to the reputation of the church, Christ, or another person or organization?
- Can the post be interpreted as harmful, offensive, rude, or distasteful? If I’m posting photos, do I have the permission of the people pictured?
- If using the post as an outlet to vent, what’s the most productive and least harmful way to seek resolution or reconciliation? Is there a less public, more respectful way to do so?

No. 2: Do good

Social media can serve as an effective method of church networking and communicating. It has the potential to have an encouraging influence on our congregations and communities and to serve as a powerful tool for delivering the Gospel message to a large audience that extends beyond our contact list. It’s also a great way to share news about our church and ministry—and to invite others to join us in worship and service. Additionally, it can be a useful tool for obtaining feedback and ideas from our audience and can be used to gain insight for sermons, Bible study topics, worship times, and needs of the community. The “good” and positive uses of social media are endless.

TO THINK ABOUT
- Can the post be described as “good”?
- Will it help the kingdom and fellow believers? How will it be perceived by non-believers? How will the post be received by people with different cultural or faith backgrounds?
- Are we communicating effectively by asking questions in addition to providing information?

No. 3: Stay in love with God

Social media is a great way to find meaningful devotional materials, thought-provoking blogs, inspiring worship videos and media resources, and current articles and tools for our ministry. Users have reported that their social media usage helps keep them informed and enthusiastic about their ministry on a daily basis. While it can definitely help us “stay in love with God,” it also can be very distracting. We will make sure our use of social media does not occupy so much of our time that we are no longer fully participating in meaningful devotion, worship, Bible study, and conversations with our fellow brothers and sisters in Christ. Social media can serve as a tool to aid, promote, and conduct discussions, studies, and devotional times but should not be our primary source of interaction with the world.

TO THINK ABOUT
- How is social media helping me to stay in love with God? How is it hindering me?
- How am I helping others stay in love with God by my social media contributions?
- How am I engaging in meaningful interactions that don’t involve social media? When is personal dialogue more beneficial?

Our character and faith are reflected in each post we make, so if we are unsure about something, we won’t post it.
May 18, 2017

Greetings Members of Minnesota Annual Conference,

At this year’s Session of Annual Conference in June, we will be required to take a written ballot on five proposed Constitutional Amendments. I thought a little explanation might be helpful in this process.

The Constitution is in *The Book of Discipline*: Part 1, Paragraphs 1-61. In order to change the Constitution, a Constitutional amendment must be ratified. This requires a two-thirds vote at General Conference and a two-thirds majority of the total voters at all annual conferences around the world. Because five proposed amendments to the Constitution received two-thirds vote at General Conference 2016, Minnesota Annual Conference is required to take a written ballot on these proposed amendments at the session this June 2017.

Those entitled to vote on these amendments will receive a paper ballot in their registration materials. The vote will be called by the Bishop during a plenary session. When the vote is called, you will be asked to take out your ballot and to check boxes (either “yes” or “no”) for each amendment. The ballots will be collected and tallied and sent to the Council of Bishops by the Conference Secretary. No result will be announced at our session. The Council of Bishops will certify and announce results after all worldwide voting concludes.

The following document contains information to help explain both the voting process and the content of each of the amendments. The first two pages contain a summary of the voting process and an interpretation of each of the amendments written by Heather Hahn, a reporter for the United Methodist News Service (revised). Pages 3-6 are the required documents sent by the General Conference with the Proposed Amendments and Rationale. **All of these refer to the same five amendments.** We have included all of this information with the hope that it will help you come to Annual Conference Session prepared to make an informed vote.

If you have any questions regarding this document, please contact me. I am looking forward to our time together in June!

Sincerely,

Janet Beard

Conference Secretary
Minnesota Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church
conf.sec@minnesotumc.org
612-230-6156
Instruction concerning constitutional amendments:

General Conference delegates had their say last year. Now, it’s up to annual conference voters to determine whether five amendments will become part of The United Methodist Church’s constitution.

In the coming months, the voters will consider changes that address matters of gender equality, inclusiveness in membership, delegate and bishop elections, as well as bishop accountability.

To be ratified, a constitutional amendment first requires at least a two-thirds vote at General Conference, which happened in May 2016. Then, it must win at least a two-thirds majority of the total voters at annual conferences around the world.

The voting started at the Liberia Conference in February and will continue through potentially early next year, depending on when annual conferences schedule their meetings. The Council of Bishops will certify and announce the results after all voting concludes. Individual Annual Conferences are asked to refrain from announcing any results since the vote of each annual conference is only a portion of the larger total and publicly reporting individual sections of the total vote prior to the balloting by other annual conferences could be seen as having influence or charting an early projection of the cumulative results. Since the session of the annual conference is an open meeting, any results announced during the session are available for reporting by any journalistic or social media and could have the unintended effect of pre-empting the announcement by the Council of Bishops as required in ¶59 BOD.

Amendments Overview:

1. Gender equality

This amendment declares, “men and women are of equal value in the eyes of God.” It goes on to say that maleness and femaleness are characteristics of human bodies, not the divine. It also asserts that The United Methodist Church will “seek to eliminate discrimination against women and girls, whether in organizations or in individuals, in every facet of its life and in society at large.”

The amendment, if ratified, would become the new Paragraph 6 in the Book of Discipline, the denomination’s governing document. Subsequent constitutional paragraphs would be renumbered.

General Conference approved the measure by a vote of 746 to 56.

Carol Napier, a Sunday school teacher for 17 years at Glenn Memorial United Methodist Church in the North Georgia Conference, submitted the amendment.

“I hope that this amendment will help churches remember that girls and women are of equal worth to boys and men because everyone is made in the image of God,” she said. “I believe that when churches remember and live out of this truth in all of their ministries, then villages, cities and even nations will be transformed to reflect Jesus’ perfect love for all of us.”

2. Inclusion in membership

If adopted, this amendment would add gender, ability, age and marital status to the list of characteristics that do not bar people from membership in the church. Specifically, the amended Paragraph 4 would say that no member shall be “denied access to an equal place in the life, worship and governance of the Church because of race, color, gender, national origin, ability, age, marital status or economic condition.”

The vote at General Conference was 509 to 242.

The United Methodist Commission on the Status and Role of Women submitted the amendment and put together a site seeking to answer frequently asked questions about the changes.
For example, the agency notes that gender refers simply to men and women. The amendment also has the support of United Methodist Women, Discipleship Ministries and the DisAbility Ministries Committee.

“Paragraph IV, Article 4 protects people in The United Methodist Church against discrimination in membership based on age, gender, marital status and ability, while still protecting exclusivity in groups like United Methodist Women, youth groups and singles ministries, to name a few,” said Dawn Wiggins Hare, top executive of the Status and Role of Women agency. “We are enthusiastically supporting the ratification of this amendment for the betterment of The United Methodist Church.”

3. Delegate elections

This amendment to Paragraph 34 specifies that elections of delegates to General Conference as well as jurisdictional and central conference meetings will include open nominations from the floor at annual conference sessions. The measure also calls for the election of delegates “by a minimum of a simple majority of the ballots cast.”

General Conference supported the amendment by a vote of 767 to 22.

Paul Clinton Law of the Democratic Republic of the Congo submitted the amendment. The current provision in Paragraph 13 states that delegates “shall be elected in a fair and open process by the annual conferences.” Law said that is “unduly vague in some cultures without a democratic tradition.”

4. Bishop elections

This amendment to Paragraph 46 states that central conferences are to elect bishops at a regular, not an extra session of the central conference “except where an unexpected vacancy must be filled.”

General Conference voted for the change by 621 to 15.

Lonnie D. Brooks, a member of the Alaska Conference, said the amendment aims to treat bishop elections in the central conferences — church regions in Africa, Asia and Europe — in much the same way they are treated in U.S. jurisdictions.

When bishops are elected in a special session, he said, “some of the delegates who would be present at the regular session will either not be present at a special session or will be placed in a hardship condition by the call of a session for the purpose of electing bishops.”

5. Bishop accountability

Under this amendment to Paragraph 50, General Conference can adopt provisions for the Council of Bishops to hold individual bishops accountable.

General Conference approved the amendment by 715 to 79.

The Western Pennsylvania Conference submitted the legislation to address a ruling by the denomination’s top court, the Judicial Council. That ruling holds that it is unconstitutional for the Council of Bishops to hold its members accountable. Currently, any complaints against bishops are to be handled in the jurisdictions or central conferences where they are elected.

The Rev. Robert Zilhaver, who wrote the legislation, said the goal is to keep primary responsibility for a bishops’ accountability where they are elected, while also creating a mechanism for the Council of Bishops to step in for global accountability if needed. Zilhaver is the senior pastor of DuBois Lakeside United Methodist Church in Pennsylvania.

“It moves us to a position, where in our church we might hold ourselves accountable for a sin that rises to global expressions,” he said, pointing to the example of a bishop holding slaves, which led to the denomination’s split in 1844. At the same time, he said, he wants to protect “cultural expressions from being labeled a sin and being prosecuted.”
Proposed Constitutional Amendment I

On May 16, 2016, at a session of the General Conference of The United Methodist Church held in Portland, Oregon, the following Constitutional Amendment was adopted by a recorded vote of 746 Yes, 56 No (Calendar Item 121, DCA p. 2106). It is now presented to the Annual Conferences for vote.

In the 2012 Book of Discipline, Division One, add a new paragraph between current ¶¶ 5 and 6:

As the Holy Scripture reveals, both men and women are made in the image of God and, therefore, men and women are of equal value in the eyes of God. The United Methodist Church recognizes it is contrary to Scripture and to logic to say that God is male or female, as maleness and femaleness are characteristics of human bodies and cultures, not characteristics of the divine. The United Methodist Church acknowledges the long history of discrimination against women and girls. The United Methodist Church shall confront and seek to eliminate discrimination against women and girls, whether in organizations or in individuals, in every facet of its life and in society at large. The United Methodist Church shall work collaboratively with others to address concerns that threaten the cause of women's and girl's equality and well-being.

If voted and so declared by the Council of Bishops, this would become the new ¶6, and the current ¶¶ 6-61 would be renumbered as ¶¶ 7-62.

Proposed Constitutional Amendment II

On May 20, 2016, at a session of the General Conference of The United Methodist Church held in Portland, Oregon, the following Constitutional Amendment was adopted by a recorded vote of 509 Yes, 242 No (Calendar Item 429, DCA p. 2212). It is now presented to the Annual Conferences for vote.

In the 2012 Book of Discipline, Division One, ¶4, Article IV, amend by deletion and addition as follows:

After “all persons” delete “without regard to race, color, national origin, status, or economic condition”. After “because of race, color, national origin,” delete “status,” and add “ability”. At the end of the paragraph, add “nor shall any member be denied access to an equal place in the life, worship, and governance of the Church because of race, color, gender, national origin, ability, age, marital status, or economic condition.”

If voted and so declared by the Council of Bishops, ¶4 would read:

The United Methodist Church is part of the church universal, which is one Body in Christ. The United Methodist Church acknowledges that all persons are of sacred worth. All persons shall be eligible to attend its worship services, participate in its programs, receive the sacraments, upon baptism be admitted as baptized members, and upon taking vows declaring the Christian faith, become professing members in any local church in the connection. In the United Methodist church, no conference or other organizational unit of the Church shall be structured so as to exclude any member or any constituent body of the Church because of race, color, national origin, ability, or economic condition, nor shall any member be denied access to an equal place in the life, worship, and governance of the Church because of race, color, gender, national origin, ability, age, marital status, or economic condition.
Proposed Constitutional Amendment III

On May 16, 2016, at a session of the General Conference of The United Methodist Church held in Portland, Oregon, the following Constitutional Amendment was adopted by a recorded vote of 767 Yes, 22 No (Calendar Item 111, DCA pp. 2105). It is now presented to the Annual Conferences for vote.

In the 2012 Book of Discipline, Division Two, Section VI, ¶34, Article III, (2016 Book of Discipline, Division Two, Section VI, ¶34, Article III) amend by addition as follows:

After the first sentence, add, “Such elections shall include open nominations from the floor by the annual conference, and delegates shall be elected by a minimum of a simple majority of the ballots cast.”

If voted and so declared by the Council of Bishops, ¶34 would read:

The annual conference shall elect clergy and lay delegates to the General Conference and to its jurisdictional or central conference in the manner provided in this section, Articles IV and V. Such elections shall include open nominations from the floor by the annual conference, and delegates shall be elected by a minimum of a simple majority of the ballots cast. The persons first elected up to the number determined by the ratio for representation in the General Conference shall be representatives in that body. Additional delegates shall be elected to complete the number determined by the ratio for representation in the jurisdictional or central conference, who, together with those first elected as above, shall be delegates in the jurisdictional or central conference. The additional delegates to the jurisdictional or central conference shall in the order of their election be the reserve delegates to the General Conference. The annual conference shall also elect reserve clergy and lay delegates to the jurisdictional or central conference as it may deem desirable. These reserve clergy and lay delegates to the jurisdictional or central conferences may act as reserve delegates to the General Conference when it is evident that not enough reserve delegates are in attendance at the General Conference.

Proposed Constitutional Amendment IV

On May 20, 2016, at a session of the General Conference of The United Methodist Church held in Portland, Oregon, the following Constitutional Amendment was adopted by a recorded vote of 621 Yes, 15 No (Calendar Item 468, DCA p. 2217). It is now presented to the Annual Conferences for vote.

In the 2012 Book of Discipline, Division Three, ¶46, Article I, amend by addition, as follows:

To the end of the paragraph, add “provided that episcopal elections in central conferences shall be held at a regular, not an extra, session of the central conference, except in the case where an unexpected vacancy must be filled.”

If voted and so declared by the Council of Bishops, ¶46 would read:

The bishops shall be elected by the respective jurisdictional and central conferences and consecrated in the historic manner at such time and place as may be fixed by the General Conference for those elected by the jurisdictions and by each central conference for those elected by such central conference, provided that episcopal elections in central conferences shall be held at a regular, not an extra, session of the central conference, except in the case where an unexpected vacancy must be filled.
Proposed Constitutional Amendment – V

On May 17, 2016, at a session of the General Conference of The United Methodist Church held in Portland, Oregon, the following Constitutional Amendment was adopted by a recorded vote of 715 Yes, 79 No (Calendar Item 446, DCA p. 2214). It is now presented to the Annual Conferences for vote.

In the 2012 Book of Discipline, Division Three, ¶50, Article VI, amend by addition, as follows:

After the last paragraph, add “These provisions shall not preclude that adoption by the General Conference of provisions for the Council of Bishops to hold its individual members accountable for their work, both as general superintendents and as presidents and residents in episcopal areas.”

If voted and so declared by the Council of Bishops, ¶50 would read:

The bishops, both active and retired, of The Evangelical United Brethren Church and of The Methodist Church at the time union is consummated shall be bishops of The United Methodist Church.

The bishops of The Methodist Church elected by the jurisdictions, the active bishops of The Evangelical United Brethren Church at the time of union, and bishops elected by the jurisdictions of The United Methodist Church shall have life tenure. Each bishop elected by a central conference of The Methodist Church shall have such tenure as the central conference electing him shall have determined.94

The jurisdictional conference shall elect a standing committee on episcopacy to consist of one clergy and one lay delegate from each annual conference, on nomination of the annual conference delegation. The committee shall review the work of the bishops, pass on their character and official administration, and report to the jurisdictional conference its findings for such action as the conference may deem appropriate within its constitutional warrant of power. The committee shall recommend the assignments of the bishops to their respective residences for final action by the jurisdictional conference.

These provisions shall not preclude that adoption by the General Conference of provisions for the Council of Bishops to hold its individual members accountable for their work, both as general superintendents and as presidents and residents in episcopal areas.
Rationale for Proposed Constitutional Amendments
The United Methodist Church
Voted General Conference May 2016

I. (New ¶ 6) The Constitution contains a paragraph on racial justice but not one on gender justice. The language of this petition is parallel to the language of Article 5 on racial justice already in our Constitution. It is an affirmation that, as part of our core foundational beliefs, this church will forever stand against any actions, organizations or individuals that discriminate or dehumanize women and girls anywhere on this planet.

II. (¶ 4) Adding “gender” (meaning male and female) to the Constitution affirms and protects The United Methodist Church’s commitment to gender equity throughout our worldwide connection. “Gender” is the disciplinary term for fair treatment of women and men (e.g., ¶16). The addition of the proposed final clause allows gender-specific groups like United Methodist Women and United Methodist Men.

III. (¶ 34) The provision in ¶ 13. Article I. 2, “Delegates shall be elected in a fair and open process by the annual conferences,” is unduly vague. The addition of this one sentence to paragraph 34 of The Book of Discipline helps clarify that General Conference delegates shall be elected by the body of annual conference instead of simply being appointed by the bishop. Bishops appointing delegates without delegates being properly elected has been a practice in some central conferences.

IV. (¶ 46) As is the case for the jurisdictions, episcopal elections in the central conferences should be held in the regular sessions of those conferences, except when unexpected vacancies occur because of the death or early retirement of one or more bishops.

V. (¶ 50) Judicial Decision 475 ruled unconstitutional the Council of Bishops holding its individual members accountable for their work, referencing ¶ 50 of the Constitution. This legislation follows Judicial Decision 1275 requirement of a legislative resolution from General Conference so the Council of Bishops may provide oversight of its members.
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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 highlights of our work for the year 2016-2017:

Relationship Change Processes: The BOM has completed a three year process of revisiting and revising all processes for avenues into ministry.

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 qualities. The BOM Chairs continue to serve on the Bishop’s Human Sexuality Task Force.

Clergy from Other Denominations/Fellowships: We now have a registrar, Brooke Heerwald-Steiner, with direct oversight of the processes around clergy from Other Denominations and Fellowships serving within the Minnesota Annual Conference. We also piloted a program where Board members are a part of the process when Cabinet members meet Clergy from Other Denominations for the first time. Though that meeting is not for approval, we better align our first impressions.

Licensed Local Pastors: The number people licensed for ministry continues to grow across the conference. We celebrate the vibrant, faithful leadership being provided through so many Licensed Local Pastors.

Recruiting: We are broadening our areas of recruiting through engaging the Chairs of the Ethnic Caucuses, the ongoing Eli Project for interns and continued seminary visits.

Cultural Competency: This has been and continues to be an area of continued growth for the BOM. With many BOM members beginning anew, each new member took the IDI and followed up with training from Marj Evans-Carpio. Members continue to take Kaleidoscope training. We continue a process of asking questions of ourselves before and after each candidate interview around cultural competency.

New Clergy Leadership Academy, Soul Leaders: As we continue to support the well-being of clergy at all stages of ministry, we have support the New Clergy Leadership Academy, Soul Leaders, retreats for clergy and the new clergy cohort groups.

We find great meaning in serving as the Minnesota Annual Conference as Co-Chairs of the BOM. We rely on the Holy Spirit throughout our meetings and processes. We continue to bathe our interviews in prayer. We are thankful to find the Board members to be faithfully diligent. We are thankful to work with Bishop Ough and the Cabinet. The candidates we interview give us hope for the future of the church.

**Pam Serdar and Rhodie Jacobson**, Co-chairs

Board of Pension and Health Benefits

The Conference Board of Pensions and Health Benefits (CBOPHB) is composed of twelve lay and clergy persons, assisted by one consultant, Wespath Benefits and Investments (formerly General Board of Pension and Health Benefits of The United Methodist Church) 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.
2016-17 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.

   The CBOPHB started review of the health benefit programs in 2015. A decision was finalized April 2016 to contract with Blue Cross Blue Shield of Minnesota for fully insured retiree supplement medical and prescription drug policies for the Medicare eligible retirees and those on long-term disability with Medicare coverage effective January 1, 2017. Presentations were held in October and November in 6 locations around the state. The cost to participants remains the same as in 2016 with enhanced benefits and a lower out of pocket Rx maximum.

   The CBOPHB has started communication with Wespath to the work on the Economic Projection Process in 2017. 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 reserves. A subcommittee met with the Investment Committee to discuss monitoring of benefit reserve assets and asset allocation.

2. In the calendar year of 2016 the benefit reserves funded $1.25 million of cost that provided relief to apportionment and local church expenses. The items funded from benefit reserves include retiree medical subsidy, active medical subsidy, CRSP-match, medical/maternity/paternity leave, medical grant, and benefit office staffing. In the calendar of 2017 the benefit reserves will fund approximately $1.6 million with the addition of the following items that will reduce local church direct cost and keep the apportionments within the ceiling rule for 2017: reducing the Comprehensive Protection Plan (CPP) billing rate to the local church from 3% to 1%, district superintendent and conference staff benefit costs for pension and death & disability plans.

3. 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, beginning 1/1/2017. The prior billing rate was 3% of compensation (salary + housing), the new rate is 1% of compensation. 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 has announced a CPP premium holiday for the years 2018 and 2019 due to the mortality schedule 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% from direct bill to the local church, the conference can fund the 2017 CPP cost (3% billed from Wespath) and continue the 1% CPP rate through 2021 and possibly beyond. It is understood that completely removing a cost to the local church for a year or two and then bringing it back 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 (114%) as of January 1, 2015, the most recent Final Valuation from Wespath. The Pre-82 funds are committed to the payment of the obligations of 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 2017 as of 1/1/2015 indicates the Pre-82 plan for all conferences, on a minimum contribution basis, with a funded ratio of 114%. While Minnesota’s funded ratio is reported at 114% there are 13 conferences with funded ratios of less than 100 percent, and of those, 6 conferences are reported to have a funded ratio 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. Wespath has informed all conferences of a change in
assumption to the RP 2014 mortality schedule effective January 1, 2016 for 2018 which increases life expectancy increasing the conference’s liability for Pre-82. The preliminary valuation report as of 1/1/2016 for 2018 reports a funded ratio of 102%, a 12% reduction in funded status from the 1/1/2015 for 2017 due to poor returns in 2015 and increased life expectancy. The Minnesota Annual Conference has reserves if there is an unfunded liability for the Pre-82 service.

5. The Annual Conference 2016 payment to Wespath for the Clergy Retirement Security Program defined benefit component (“CRSP-DB”) was paid on December 31, 2016 from funds collected through direct bill to the local churches. The 2016 contribution to CRSP-DB plan on December 31, 2016 was $1,269,130. 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 2016 was not prudent, which was the procedure since 2007. 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 2018 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 Deposit account invested at Wespath. The total 2016 CRSP-DC Match contribution was $127,841. 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 2018.

7. General Conference 2012 approved changes to ¶1506.6, stating, “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 2018 to Wespath in March 2017 for review and written opinion. The Comprehensive Benefit Funding Plan will be submitted to Annual Conference Session for approval annually.

8. The health of MAC Plan participants, health care claims and the financial sustainability of the plan are all considered when premiums are set or plan changes are considered. The trend of health care claims is difficult to forecast. In the past few years claims have been lower or similar to forecast allowing the premiums to remain the same from 2011 through 2017. Financial sustainability continues to be a concern with ongoing investment and healthcare uncertainty. Any health plan group experiences swings in paid claims from year to year and the MAC Plan is no different. While the CBOPHB celebrates the level claims, we remain cautious in our approach to setting premiums or making changes to the plan design. As a self-funded insurance plan, the only sources of funds to pay claims are premiums, investment earnings, and reserves, if any. The CBOPHB approved the use of MAC Plan reserves to fund the “active clergy health subsidy” for 2015 thru 2017, which reduced the conference apportionment budget by $350,000. When the 2018 MAC Plan premiums are calculated, MAC Plan reserves will be considered in the calculation process for the “active health subsidy” prior to finalizing the church and clergy premium portions.

January 1, 2012 the fitness reimbursement program was added to the MAC Plan benefit. The fitness reimbursement program provides MAC Plan participants, who work out at a participating fitness center at least 12 days per month, a financial reimbursement up to $20 per month based on their fitness center monthly membership fee. In 2016, the fitness reimbursement program paid $18,651 in reimbursements to members.

The claims experience along with good reserve levels allowed the Under age 65 premium and the Retired over age 65 premium to stay the same for 2017 as in 2016. When possible, premium increases have been moderated by using reserves, Medicare Part D subsidies and other reimbursements. The following chart shows percentage premium increases since 2006.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Premium Increase For Under age 65</th>
<th>Premium Increase For Retired Over age 65</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>1.75%</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>8.5%</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>6.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>18.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>-5.18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014 - 17</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The preliminary proposed increases for 2018 budget are 0% for Retired over age 65 with Medicare subgroup and 0% for active or retirees Under age 65 depending on medical trend (inflation) and actual claims experience compared to projected experience. The earnings on reserve funds along with claims level in 2016 have increased the financial position of the MAC plan. To keep the MAC Plan financially sustainable, reserve levels will be monitored regularly and careful consideration given for use of reserves to moderate increases in premium.

| MAC Plan update: |
|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Income**          | 4,263,874        | 4,454,255        | 5,133,768        | 5,135,013        | 5,382,805        | 5,677,974        |
| Claims + Stop/Loss| 3,806,492        | 3,917,905        | 4,406,160        | 4,401,454        | 4,042,308        | 3,823,347        |
| Health Initiative Programs | 68,933 | 64,192 | 69,228 | 70,745 | 74,884 | 83,666 |
| Administrative Fees | 276,053 | 308,020 | 355,676 | 339,766 | 321,946 | 327,561 |
| Gain/ (Loss)      | 112,396          | 164,138          | 302,704          | 23,048           | 943,667          | 1,443,400        |

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

9. The Minnesota Annual Conference UMC contracted with Wespath’s Virgin Pulse program starting January 2012. The Virgin Pulse program allows participants the opportunity to earn incentive dollars by meeting quarterly goals. There were 216 enrolled in 2016 with 81 participants that earned at least one financial reward or more. The total rewards and bonuses paid in 2016 was $21,248 of which $8,000 were bonus incentives for meeting multiple quarter goals in 2015. The financial incentives are funded by the MAC Plan. Each participant has the opportunity to earn up to $200 per year ($50 per quarter) when meeting all four quarterly goals.

10. The Federal Government rolled out the Medicare Part D program January 1, 2006. The MN Annual Conference’s MAC Plan prescription drug coverage meets or exceeds Medicare Part D coverage and was approved to receive the federal subsidy starting in 2006 and continuing each year since. The federal subsidy is based on the prescription drug claims for the retired Medicare eligible participants in
the MAC Plan. The subsidy received in 2016 for the 2015 Medicare eligible participants drug claims was $95,366. The federal subsidy has allowed the plan to keep the Retired over age 65 premium increases very small for years 2007 through 2012 with a reduction in 2013 and no change in 2014-2017.

Effective 1/1/2017 Medicare primary retirees were removed from the self-insured MAC Plan coverage and enrolled in Medicare supplement medical and drug plans. MedicareBlue Rx provides prescription drug coverage for all Medicare primary retirees. For retirees whose state of residence is Minnesota, their medical supplement coverage is a Group Platinum Blue (Cost) Plan through Blue Cross Blue Shield of Minnesota. For retirees whose state of residence is not Minnesota, their medical supplement coverage is a Senior Gold Plan through Blue Cross Blue Shield of Minnesota. The change to these new plans provide enhanced benefits to these retirees while reducing potential liability risk to the self-insured MAC Plan due to the prescription drug pricing climate.

11. 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, 2017 for plan year ending December 31, 2017, which reported the Expected Postretirement Benefit Obligation (or present value of benefits) to be $13,043,819 using the RP 2014 mortality schedule and discount rate of 3.8%. 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, 2015 for 2017, according to the most recent final valuation report issued September 2016 from the GBOPHB. Future changes in actuarial assumptions, earnings or payments could alter this annual projection either up or down. The following partial chart illustrates the progress made since 1982.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Pension Rate</th>
<th>Total Liability</th>
<th>Funded Liability</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>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>706</td>
<td>40,315,977</td>
<td>46,619,244</td>
<td>(6,303,267)</td>
<td>115.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>720</td>
<td>38,222,522</td>
<td>43,608,031</td>
<td>(5,385,509)</td>
<td>114.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SUMMARY OF PAYMENTS FROM BENEFIT FUNDS ON DEPOSIT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CRSP-DC Match</td>
<td>$127,841</td>
<td>$129,677</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Grants &amp; Pulpit Supply</td>
<td>17,340</td>
<td>49,467</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retiree Medical Subsidy</td>
<td>590,996</td>
<td>599,959</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$736,177</strong></td>
<td><strong>$779,103</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></th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>392 Retired Clergy Participants</td>
<td>$6,822,827</td>
<td>$6,616,188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>141 Retired Clergy’s Surviving Spouses</td>
<td>1,404,512</td>
<td>1,424,761</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>533 Total Persons Receiving Pension Benefits</strong></td>
<td><strong>$8,227,339</strong></td>
<td><strong>$8,040,969</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Comprehensive Protection Plan (CPP)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disability Benefits to Pastors</td>
<td>$213,689</td>
<td>$240,722</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPP Benefits to Children &amp; Spouses</td>
<td>29,122</td>
<td>31,654</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$242,811</strong></td>
<td><strong>$272,376</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

INFORMATION RELATING TO MEDICAL INSURANCE—MAC PLAN

1. **General Information:** The Minnesota Conference in August of 1995 initiated a self-insured medical insurance program administered by Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Minnesota (BCBSM) called the MAC PLAN. BCBSM has arranged a network of health care providers committed to expert, cost-effective care. Use of network providers maximizes cost savings and quality of care provided. Non-participating providers may be used; however, the cost to the participant is greater.

2. Effective January 1, 2017 retirees over age 65 (Medicare eligible) and long-term disability members with Medicare have been enrolled in fully insured Medicare supplement plans and removed from the self-insured MAC Plan. (see “Conference Year Highlights #10 above)

3. **MAC Plan Rates:** The following charts show rates as of January 1, 2017

COSTS AS OF JANUARY 1, 2016 (Church and Pastor shares after subsidy from reserves)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>With ACH*</th>
<th>W/OACH*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ACTIVE PASTORS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>$8,029.20</td>
<td>$7,137.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family</td>
<td>$16,953.00</td>
<td>$15,069.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>W/OACH</strong></td>
<td>$7,257.60</td>
<td>$15,309.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*ACH=Automatic withdrawal from bank or pension account
RETIREE & DISABLED RATES BEFORE SUBSIDY AS OF JANUARY 1, 2016

<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; MEDICARE</td>
<td>$3,624.00—Single $7,248.00—Couple</td>
<td>**</td>
<td>**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retiree under age 65</td>
<td>$8,920.80—Single $18,837.00—Family</td>
<td>**</td>
<td>**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retired (clergy and spouse) One over 65/one under 65</td>
<td>$12,544.80—Couple</td>
<td>**</td>
<td>**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

** Subsidy Rules apply (See #3 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 Plan immediately prior to retirement is required for continuation on the MAC Plan in retirement. Participation in Medicare Part A and B is required for continuation on the MAC Plan 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>Full or Mandatory</th>
<th>Lesser of 100% of premium or $320 per month</th>
<th>Lesser of 100% of premium or $160 per month</th>
<th>Lesser of 100% of premium or $4 per month per year of service</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<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 $160 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>
<td>No Subsidy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For the complete detail of the legislation look in the 2003 Journal, action item 509 on pages 161–164.

Approved action item 205 in the 2016 Journal on page 74 adjusted the years of service used for clergy retiring after 1990 to include the year 2017. The Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits will regularly review the years of service used for subsidy.

5. **MAC Plan eligibility**: A complete listing of categories of persons eligible for mandatory or optional participation in the MAC Plan was updated and approved by the Minnesota Annual Conference in 2007 and published in the 2007 Journal starting on page 138.

Note: Participation in the health plan is mandatory for certain clergy categories of those eligible. Billing is issued monthly by the MAC Plan. Complete details regarding the coverage and operation of the program are on file with the benefits officer of the Minnesota Conference and with BCBSM. As of January 2017, 235 pastors, lay employees and retirees under age 65 are enrolled in the self-insured MAC Plan plus their dependents. As of January 2017, 321 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.

MAJOR MEDICAL BENEFITS — Aware Network Provider (In Minnesota)
BlueCard Traditional Network Providers (Outside Minnesota)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Deductible:</th>
<th>Individual—$1,000</th>
<th>Family—$2,000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maximum Out-of-Pocket</td>
<td>$3,000</td>
<td>$6,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Health Plan**— After deductible pays 80% to Maximum Out-of-Pocket, then 100%. No deductible for office visits for illness or urgent care, and preventative care is paid 100%.

**Prescription Drug**—Step therapy with a tiered system.

**31 day limit**
- $20 Generics
- $40 co-pay or 25% whichever is greater for Brand Formulary
- $80 co-pay or 30% whichever is greater for Brand Non-Formulary
- $120 co-pay or 30% whichever is greater for Specialty Drugs

**90 day limit**
- $40 Generics
- $80 co-pay or 25% whichever is greater for Brand Formulary
- $160 co-pay or 30% whichever is greater for Brand Non-Formulary
- $240 co-pay or 30% whichever is greater for Specialty Drugs

Maximum out of pocket expense of $2,000/year/person and $4,000/year/family. (This is a separate out-of-pocket maximum from the medical plan.)

**Mental Health Care Benefits**—on separate schedule.

**Maximum Lifetime All Benefits**—PPACA eliminated limits.

**OTHER BENEFIT PROGRAMS**

**FLEX PLAN:** A benefit plan established for clergy in the Minnesota Annual Conference on conference medical coverage, and for clergy and lay employees of the Annual Conference office, 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 expenses. Carryover of unused funds is not permitted. The Flex Plan medical reimbursement maximum was $2,550 in 2016. The 2017 medical reimbursement maximum was increased to the IRS maximum of $2,600 for the plan year beginning January 1, 2017. On September 9, 2014, the CBOPHB approved a motion to fund the monthly participation fee from the MAC Plan reserves and not charge the fee to the participant beginning with the 2015 Plan Year and continuing for the 2017 Plan 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 CBOPHB 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 2018 Minnesota Conference Average Compensation (CAC) is $64,591. The 2018 Denominational Average Compensation (DAC) is $70,202. DAC is defined as cash salary plus housing plus any tax-deferred contributions made on the pastor’s behalf.

The 2018 Clergy Retirement Security Program (CRSP) and Comprehensive Protection Plan (CPP) billing to churches is calculated as follows:

- **CRSP – DB (defined benefit)**
  - Fulltime appointment: $5,517.36
  - ¾ time appointment: $4,138.08
  - ½ time appointment: $2,758.68

- **CRSP – DC (defined contribution)**
  - 2% of Compensation (Salary + Housing)

- **CPP** - ¾ and fulltime appointment = 1% of Compensation (Salary + Housing)

*The Wespath legislation adopted by General Conference 2016 changed the Comprehensive Protection Plan eligibility effective January 1, 2017 for ¾ time clergy appointed 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 contribution 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

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**Board of Trustees**

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 reinvested for the work of congregational development. Working on behalf of the Annual Conference, the Board of Trustees, along with Congregational Development, assist transitioning congregations at the beginning or end of their lifecycle.

A significant event in 2016 was the sale of Historic Wesley Church building, a well-known and well-loved important piece of our history and ministry. We received the Wesley Church building on January 1, 2010. Some excerpts from a study prepared for the Board of Trustees on the use of the building state that, “Wesley Church was declared an historic site by the Minnesota Annual Conference in 1983 and is considered the Mother Church of Minneapolis Methodism”.

When the Board of Trustees take on an obligation like Wesley, the investments may be larger than the Annual Conference can afford but we take seriously the responsibility to care for the legacy of our church denomination. Through the years, the Board of Trustees worked with a number of nonprofits to continue Wesley. They also approved many repairs on the building including a new roof and remodeled bathrooms. The additional needed repairs were estimated to exceed $6 million. All repairs made on discontinued church property are paid for by the Board of Trustee reserve funds and not with apportionment dollars or other funds of the Conference. Therefore, this building was too expensive to hold.

In July 2016, The Board of Trustees agreed to sell the Wesley Church building to a nonprofit, Historic Wesley Center on Grant Street, for a $1 million contract for deed that has a balloon payment due in five years. The nonprofit continues to use the facility for worship, wedding rentals, Wesley Meals, concerts and nonprofit rental space.

The Board of Trustees also worked with Congregational Development to transition the St. Croix Valley Church into Embrace Church. The Conference will continue to own and hold the church and parsonage and lease them to Embrace Church until they meet certain benchmarks determined by Congregational Development. We also facilitate the corporate role for developing new churches such as Uptown church in the former Joyce UMC building. The Board continues to maintain this church and parsonage utilized by the pastor of Uptown Church.

The Board also works closely with our Camping and Retreats Board. This year we actively pursued several conservation easements for our Star Lake property. We also pursued the expansion of our Northern Pines camp. We continue to work strategically to invest funds with camping at Koronis in the tabernacle and we purchased three lakeside cabins in accordance with our strategic plan. We also continue to maintain the land in Sartell (former New Horizons UMC land) and Decision Hills camp in Spicer while they are for sale.

The Board of Trustees also sold the church building in Kelly Lake, MN, maintained the episcopal residence and district superintendent parsonage in Alexandria.

I am grateful to the Board of Trustees for their dedicated service. My thanks to the outgoing members: Joyce Nedbalek, Murray Thurston, and Avra Johnson. My continued thanks to our current members, Jeffrey Larson, Karen Andrew, Craig Lilja, Gordon Orde, Kim Portz, Alan Bolte, Shirley Dubuque, and our newest members Rachel Morey, Justin Halbersma and Bart Seebach.

Robert Braudt, Chair
Church and Society

The Church and Society Team of the Minnesota Annual Conference seeks justice in a variety of social issue contexts. Since January we have revised our Peace with Justice Grant guidelines and application form. We approved a grant to Earthkeepers. We support educational trips such as the July mission trip to Washington, D.C. and the General Board of Church and Society. We also provide support for workshops that address social justice. We are looking for ways to help local congregations who are interested in acting for social justice.

Gail Chalbi, Chair

Commission on Archives and History

- The Commission on Archives and History (CAH) met quarterly in 2017. We are pleased that 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.
- We welcomed a new member, Randy Koppen; Cindy Yanchury withdrew.
- At our first meeting we had our annual review of our Book of Discipline duties.
- We continued to promote the 15 official Conference Historic sites. A complete listing is available on the conference website.
- We registered Koronis Ministries (Historically “Lake Koronis Assembly Grounds”) as a “Historic Site” of the General Commission on Archives and History.
- We continue our supportive role on the First Finnish Fellowship which promotes the site of First Finnish Methodist Episcopal Church, Salem, near Moose Lake. Thelma Boeder, the Conference Historian and a member of our commission, serves as the convener of the Fellowship. This year a miniature model of the building was constructed and donated to the Moose Lake Depot and Fires of 1918 Museum.
- In April, we sent a letter to the MN Delegates to the General Conference from the MAC urging that they support the continuance of a General CAH.
- The Commission assisted in marking the 2016 Annual Conference session as its 160th Anniversary. We produced a time line along the wall of the conference center and provided hand-held fans for outdoor events (thanks to a grant from the UM Historical Society of MN) that had historic images showing the ways our conference has been missional.
- We sent three delegates to the Jurisdictional Convocation of the CAH hosted at Iowa in July. Two other members also attended. We offered to host the 2019 Jurisdictional Convocation of the CAH in MN.
- The Commission supports the UM Historical Society of MN, and a number of the Commission members serve as leaders in the Society. The Historical Society is currently inactive and leaders are discerning its role and function in the future.
- We agreed to open our archives to a Swedish genealogical company ArkivDigital who will be scanning the records of some of our early Swedish Methodist Conference churches to share on their website.
- We placed the General CAH historical marker on Jacob Fahlstrom’s gravestone.
- We drafted a plan of action for any historic site that has a change in ownership or situation that might affect our ability to promote it as a historic site.
- We provided nine clergy grave markers to families for clergy who passed away in 2016.
- We engaged in some deeper discussion exploring ways for offering local churches support in compiling their histories and keeping their records. We agreed to promote UM Heritage Sunday ideas among the MAC churches.

David Werner, Chair

Commission on Religion and Race

The Minnesota Commission on Religion and Race (CORR) continues to encourage and empower the Minnesota conference to build capacity and to be contextually relevant. We appreciate and follow the ministry model developed by the General Commission on Religion and Race (GCORR), which is centered on three focus areas: Intercultural Competency, Vital Conversations, and Institutional Equity.
During the past year, we accomplished the following:

- **Blessed Ramadan.** In partnership with the MN Council of Churches, we distributed 300 signs to clergy and laity to wish our Muslim neighbors Blessed Ramadan.

- **Prayer at Annual Conference 2016.** We offered a prayer of lament at Annual Conference 2016 in recognition of the one-year anniversary of the shooting at Mother Emmanuel AME.

- **Prayer Vigil.** In response to the police shooting of Philando Castile, we offered a prayer vigil that was attended by 200+ people. The vigil included songs, stories, and a time of prayer at the St. Anthony police department. MN CORR was appreciative of the Bishop’s statements following the deaths of Jamar Clark and Philando Castile.

- **If It Matters Do Something.** We hosted Rev. Dr. Willis Johnson, Rev. Shawn Moore, the Camphor Chorale, and spoken word artist Joe Davis at an all-day learning event attended by 75+ people. Dr. Johnson discussed his experience with anti-racism work in a faith-based community in Ferguson, Missouri. Rev. Moore presented his work on racial reconciliation and led us in exercises on power and privilege.

- **Intercultural Competency.** We continued our emphasis on developing culturally competent leaders. We offered the seminar “Fundamental Skills for Building Inclusive Community” two times during the year. The seminar is based on material developed by the Kaleidoscope Institute and facilitated by KI catalysts and rising associates Richard Webb, Marj Evans-de-Carpio, Marquita Stephens, and Rev. Donna Dempewolf. Each person who participated was given the opportunity to complete the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI), and to receive an individualized development plan. Additionally, the IDI was given to the ELI interns, along with a one-hour training session on intercultural competency.

- **Black Methodists for Church Renewal.** We are beginning to reform our relationship with Black Methodists for Church Renewal (BMCR). Richard Webb was able to attend their 50th anniversary, “Celebrating a Legacy of Faith, Hope, and Renewal: More Rivers to Cross, More Milestones to Reach.”

- **Pre-conference Event.** We partnered with GSCROW, UMW, and NAMAT on a pre-conference learning event, “Re-forming our Neighborhoods: Becoming Pentecost People.”

- **Community Engagement.** Several members of the committee, along with many others, participated in local and regional demonstrations and conversations for racial justice and institutional equity (including the Standing Rock Clergy Call). Significant systemic work remains to be done in our urban cities, suburbs, and rural communities. The MN CORR desires to partner with other clergy and laity in the Minnesota Conference who seek to name racial injustices and work for racial equality.

In 2017-2018, we intend to continue our focus on implementing the General Commission on Religion and Race ministry model, which includes intercultural competency, vital conversations, and institutional equity. Our focus will be solidifying a systemic approach to developing intercultural competence, while also exploring a developmental approach to developing racial competence for individuals, congregations, and conference-wide. Other initiatives include hosting a conference-wide event next fall, and developing a relationship with colleagues in the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

We join with the General Commission on Religion and Race (GCORR), which is tasked with empowering the Church to pursue racial equity and cultural competency to build a stronger, more vibrant UMC.

*Donna Dempewolf and Richard Webb*, Co-chairs
2016 was an important year for women of the United Methodist Church since it was the 60th anniversary of full clergy rights for women. COSROW recognized this important event by:

- Gathering stories from MN clergywomen and developing a booklet of their stories and pictures.
- Distributing at the 2016 MN annual conference printed copies of the booklet entitled, “Stories in Celebration of 60 yrs. of Full Clergy Rights for Women in the MN Annual Conference of the UMC.”
- Distributing ribbons to clergywomen noting the number of their years in ministry.
- Encouraging the continuation of telling clergywomen’s stories through the MN annual conference website.

COSROW’s pre-conference seminar, held June 20, 2016, was on the topic of domestic violence. A disturbing statistic is that 1 in 4 women experience domestic violence in their lifetime. Other groups assisting with the pre-conference seminar included the MN UMW and MN Parish Nurses Association. Pre-conference speakers included directors of women’s shelters in both Duluth and St. Cloud, as well as a survivor of domestic violence. Discussions followed the speakers, and revolved around what churches and individuals can do to help both victims and survivors.

Monitoring of the MN annual conference took a different form since the format of the conference was structured so that more young people would be in attendance. Monitoring took on the function of recording reactions, reflections and anecdotal stores rather than numeric data.

David Weiss, author of *When God Was a Little Girl*, was a guest speaker at the COSROW fall meeting. The possibility of the book being part of the UMW reading program is being explored.

COSROW supported the following ministries during 2016: Reimagining, Breaking Free, MN Women’s Consortium & the Religious Coalition as well as providing a scholarship for a woman to attend Mission u.

The MN COSROW co-chairs attended the GCSRW meeting in Nashville, TN, in Nov., 2016. An emphasis of the meeting was legislation Paragraph 4, Article IV which was passed by the 2016 General Conference. It now needs to be presented at each UMC annual conference throughout the world in order to be part of the UMC constitution. The legislation provides non-discrimination language to be added into the UMC Constitution (it already is in the Book of Discipline). The proposed language adds gender, age, marital status and ability to the non-discriminatory clause in the membership section of the UMC’s constitution. The legislation needs approval of 2/3 of those voting in order for it to be adopted into the UMC constitution.

*Debra Collum and Faye Christensen*, Co-Chairs

**Director of Camping and Retreat Ministries**

**2016 Minnesota United Methodist Camp and Retreat Ministry highlights:**

- Welcome Leslie Hobson as Director at Northern Pines Camp
  - In August of 2016, after spending the summer months serving as interim director of Northern Pines Camp in Park Rapids, Leslie Hobson became your newest camp director. Leslie has served the camping ministry in numerous ways over the years including as a camp dean, board member, Integration Specialist coordinator, capital campaign staff, and with the camp Minnesota Foundation
- Operations ended in the black
  - For the second year in a row your camp and retreat program ended 2016 financially in the black. Success is attributed to unified financial system, newly established financial controls and review process, staff management, review and establishing rates based on actual costs, and real-time access to accurate data and information
- Camp Chill Fundraiser
  - In February, Bishop Ough and several other Minnesota United Methodist leaders plunged into the icy waters of Lake Koronis to raise funds for camp scholarships. Together, we raised over $23,000 in 2016/2017 and a total of $44,000 since Camp Chill began in 2015
Central office staffing transitions
  o In March of 2017, camping registration support and customer service shifted to a centralized focus. This decision came after the resignation of our Dakotas camping coordinator as well as the time and attention needed to hire and train a new staff person during the busy spring registration season. Camping and conference leaders are currently assessing staffing and ministry needs and anticipate hiring a new area camping staff person based out of the Dakotas conference in the fall of 2017

Kowakan
  o We are happy to welcome Levi and Lara Ziegler as program leaders for Kowakan Adventures, the Boundary Waters Wilderness arm of Camp Minnesota. Levi and Lara come with a wealth of camp and ministry experience and a deep love of the out-of-doors as avid hikers, canoers, and nature enthusiasts

Camp Ambassadors
  o In November of 2016, the camping ministry contracted with Rachel Devereaux, long-time camping leader, to fill a seasonal role as the Area Camp Ambassador Coordinator. Rachel worked in collaboration with camping administrative office staff, campsite directors, and the Area Camp and Retreat Ministry Director, to lead and implement an updated and enhanced outreach that identified and strengthened relationships with local church representatives (Camp Ambassadors) who encourage their churches and communities to attend an area United Methodist Camp

Strategic Ministry Plan Updates:

  • Koronis
    o Tabernacle
      ▪ Design completed. Reviewing phased building options
      ▪ $1M committed using proceeds from sale of camp property, Fundraising on-going
    o Purchase of three cabins along lakeshore
    o Dock replacement plan in place
    o First floor retreat center update at Koronis completed
  • Northern Pines
    o Significant repairs and replacement of nearly every septic and sewer system
    o Demolition of three facilities
    o Cabin Replacement – fall 2017
  • Star Lake
    o Members of the Minnesota Conference’s Board of Trustees voted in 2016 to pursue selling conservation easements over individual parcels of Star Lake Wilderness Camp land

Other Updates and Reminders:

  • Shared Area Mission, Core Values, Outcomes
    o Mission: Inviting campers and guests to experience Christ, creation, and community through camp and retreat ministries
    o 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
    o Desired outcome (continued from earlier established 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
    o Dakotas and Minnesota Camps utilize Campwise, a widely-used camp and retreat software program, for camper and guest registration, data management, and reporting
  • Site advisory teams
    o Campsites continue to develop and strengthen their site advisory teams. These site advisory 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 extended the reach of each site. People interested in serving on a site team should contact the director of the site
• Governance
  o The Dakotas and Minnesota conferences’ camp and retreat ministries combined their strengths and leadership and have come together to form a joint governance council. This new arrangement will expand 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 new Camp and Retreat Council is made up of equal representation from each conference and meets quarterly.

Other areas your camping ministry continues to uphold highest priorities in consistency, quality, and effectiveness of are:

• Accreditation safety standards
  o All three locations are accredited by the American Camp Association
  ▪ camping industry safety standards and best practices
• Risk Management
  o camper and guest safety and security
  o staff training
  o property/facility review
• Marketing and Outreach
  o Local Church Camp Ambassador outreach continues to grow
• Staff continuing education and professional development
• Camp Minnesota’s Integration Specialists (I.S.) program was recently shared nationally and continues to grow

Camping statistics and additional highlights - see 2016 missional report

Thank you for your continued support of Camp Minnesota, the Camping and Retreat Ministry of the Minnesota Annual Conference. 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 Koronis, 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 Minnesota United Methodist Camps has changed the lives of generations of our Annual Conference leadership. Thank you - you are appreciated!

“Camp Gives Kids a World of Good!”

Keith Shew

Director of Communications

The past year has been a time of transition for the communications ministry area. In December, we said goodbye to Communications Associate Amanda Willis, who left to pursue another career path. Amanda’s tremendous graphic design skills set a new bar of excellence within the annual conference, and her skills were an incredible asset that will be greatly missed. On April 1, we welcomed Karla Hovde as our new communications specialist. Karla is skilled in graphic design, video, and social media—and she recently spent a year working for a nonprofit in Bangladesh. Despite the staff transition, it’s been an incredibly busy and productive year. Here’s a look at some key initiatives over the past year:

• Breakthrough communications workshop: On April 1, communicators from Minnesota, the Dakotas, and United Methodist Communications teamed up to offer a “Compelling Communication” workshop to United Methodists throughout Minnesota. The workshop equipped participants with best practices and practical tips to help their churches reach new people and better engage with members through strategic and purposeful communication. The daylong workshop included sessions on marketing and branding, social media, e-newsletters, photography, and live streaming. Roughly 50 people attended in person, and 21 sites participated remotely via live streaming. The feedback was overwhelmingly positive. Each year, the conference offers several “breakthrough” workshops to help churches experience breakthroughs in the areas of growing in love of God and neighbor, reaching new people, and healing a broken world. All of the workshops are live streamed so that people can participate without driving long distances. Big thanks to our Technology Coordinator Laura Miles and Event Coordinator Gail Johnson, who coordinate the live streaming at these events.
• Local church website offering: This spring, all Minnesota churches were invited to create a website through Brick River, a company that specializes in annual conference websites and that recently began offering local church websites as well. In addition to training churches on how to create their websites, the Minnesota Conference agreed to pay for each website for the first three months. Three local churches took advantage of this offering and are in the process of building their sites. A lot more churches indicated interest but weren’t quite ready to dive in, so we’re exploring the possibility of extending this same offer later on in the hopes that more churches (especially those without a current website) will take advantage of it. Research shows that eight out of 10 people check out a church’s website before visiting for the first time; a website is a critically important tool for every church.

• Online video conferencing: In early 2016, the Minnesota and Dakotas Conferences jointly contracted with Blue Jeans, an easy-to-use online video conferencing service that allows conference leadership and ministry teams to have remote meetings from anywhere. Usage within the first year was significant. From March 2016 to March 2017, there were 1,081 meetings across the Dakotas-Minnesota Area, with the average meeting lasting about 40 minutes. Many conference groups are finding this service to be valuable and convenient, and it is providing a huge cost savings in the form of reduced travel. Blue Jeans works well with the DAVID system that the conference has been using for several years for remote meetings (there are several DAVID sites throughout Minnesota, and groups can go to those sites to connect face-to-face through a television screen with people at other sites).

• E-newsletters: We continue to use two 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; the idea behind the bulletin insert is to facilitate deeper connection between individual congregations and the conference.

• Social media: Social media continues to be a significant vehicle to help the conference stay connected on a daily basis. As of April 5, 2017, 1,865 people “like” the Facebook page (up 565 from a year ago), and 2,068 follow the conference on Twitter (up 368 from a year ago). These channels allow us to reach different people than those who receive information through our conference website or e-newsletters. In June 2016, the conference also started an Instagram channel that’s helped us to reach additional people—particularly those between the ages of 18 and 29, as that’s Instagram’s biggest user demographic. As of April 5, 2017, our Instagram channel had 177 followers. We also experimented with Snapchat, another social media platform, during the 2016 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. Our filter was very popular and got lots of use!

• Outreach: We continue to work with individual churches to assist them with their communications strategies and media outreach, and we pitch stories to the media about newsworthy happenings that help tell the story of the United Methodist movement in Minnesota. Thanks to proactive outreach, Arlington Hills UMC in Maplewood was featured in a *Star Tribune* article after opening its building to Karen refugees looking for a religious home, and Delano UMC was featured in an article about “Ashes to Go” thanks to its pastor’s efforts to impose ashes out in the community on Ash Wednesday.

• Print and video projects: We use a variety of printed pieces to help churches and individuals stay informed about key opportunities and progress throughout the year. Projects include quarterly newsletters for the Reach • Renew • Rejoice capital campaign, the Camp Minnesota summer catalog and related materials, annual conference session materials, a missional report that highlights key conference initiatives (a “missional toolkit” is also debuting in 2017), and a wide variety of brochures and promotional materials (for workshops, internship program The ELI Project, etc.). We continue to work closely with the Dakotas Conference communicators 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.

• Accolades: In March, we earned 10 awards from the United Methodist Association of Communicators (UMAC), comprised of communicators from across the denomination:
  - Donn Doten Award of Excellence/Best in Class: “Northern Light’s ‘love letter’ to Orlando reaches United Methodist pastor”
We are here to serve you and always love to hear from you. Please let us know if you have story ideas, or if there are particular resources or tools you’re looking for. We’ll do whatever we can to equip you to reach new people in your community.

Christa Meland

Director of Ministries

Our focus for this past year was Living Generously—Unleashing God’s Gifts! I have seen those gifts unleashed in so many ways!

- We were awarded a $1 million dollar Lilly Grant to address the economic crisis facing clergy. It was a gift to be invited to apply for the grant, and the generosity of a collaboration of Val Walker (MN Foundation), Sheri Meister (Dakotas Foundation), Rebecca Trefz (Dakotas Director of Ministries) and myself to write the grant made it possible. We are excited that Diane Owen has stepped into the role of Program Director for the grant and believe this gift will be multiplied as the programs and grant processes are developed.
- A new team—the Journey Toward Vitality Lead Team—was formed to guide us the primary challenge of the FACT report process: in increase the urgency around our evangelistic task. A group of people were invited to make a commitment to this team and generously said yes to lead in this arena! Dave Nuckols, agreed to serve as Conference Co-Lay Leader, with a primary task of leading this team with me.
- We were able to add two key positions to our staff through reconfiguring positions. Jody Thone came on board as our Director of Leadership Development, and Joelle Anderson returned to our staff in a new capacity: Connectional Ministries Project Coordinator. Both women bring extraordinary gifts and passion to this work.
- We launched a new model for Clergy Covenant Groups, building on a Wesleyan model for sharing life and ministry together. I give thanks for the leaders who stepped up to offer their time and gifts to lead these groups.
- We redesigned annual conference session, moving it to mid-June, with an emphasis on engaging younger people. We spent significant time building relationships and creating space for dialogue. A powerful Spirit was present and the Party in the Park was a hit!
- Janet Beard, our Conference Secretary and myself, worked through the entire Policy and Procedure Manual to re-organize and edit it. In and of itself, that does not seem exciting, but it has been one of those things on the to-do list for many years, and to have a partner to take it on in order to get it done has been huge!
- Robert Kutter, our co-lay leader has served so ably the past four years, helping to re-boot lay speaking ministries in our conference. He will be completing his term at this annual conference and we say thank you!
- We continue to give thanks for the generosity of all those individuals and churches who are making their financial commitments to our Reach, Renew and Rejoice Campaign. Because of you, 12 churches have been able to participate in transformational processes in 2016-17.
- There is so much more I could share: the wisdom and gift of mentors in our Clergy Leadership Academy, the gift of time and space for those who participated in the Soul Leaders retreat series, the investment of youth leaders and camp counselors in connecting our kids to Christ, the engagement of our clergy and congregations in witnessing for justice whether that was in St. Anthony or at Standing Rock, and that just names a few. There are so many ways that together we are making a difference by sharing generously of our gifts!
I am honored to lead a talented and dedicated staff and to journey with clergy and congregations as we all seek to grow in our love of God and neighbor, reach new people and heal a broken world!

*Cindy Gregorson*

**Director of New Church Development**

New places for new people to know and follow Jesus. We are pleased to report that the Spirit has been doing new things in and through our connection over the last year. Here is a brief overview:

**SPROUTING:**
The Beloved began public worship in fall 2016 with Shawn Moore as pastor developer. The Beloved has a strong focus on racial reconciliation and has developed a relevant presence in St Paul during a time of critical community need. They are ministering out of the former Epworth St. Paul church.

Centennial St. Anthony Park launched late 2016 with Whitney Sheridan as planter pastor working closely with Eric Bjorkland as worship leader. Whitney and Eric worked hard to reach into the local community to connect with new people while enfolding SAP attendees and Centennial individuals. The repurposed building of St. Anthony Park UMC breaths a new welcome to that community.

North Summit Church launched early 2017 with Josh Meyer as planter pastor. North Summit is reaching significantly into the millennial community. Josh reports many people who have found Jesus through a church that they can relate to. North Summit is currently nested and worshipping at Blaine UMC.

The Well in Rosemount (formerly Rosemount UMC) is a now a multi-site congregation launching its new Apple Valley congregation at the local theatre in February 2017. With nearly 70 people supporting the effort, this new campus is helping to create new mission-focused DNA in both congregations. Nate Larson provides campus leadership for The Well Apple Valley.

**GERMINATING:**
The seeds are deep into the soil in a variety of places with three planting leaders. Jesus Purisaca is developing Iglesia Pedro Viva in Minneapolis and Toubee Vang is developing Robbinsdale Hmong UMC. Tyler Sit is developing New City Church in Minneapolis. We give thanks to God for these leaders who are responding to the Spirit in the ways that will connect with their mission focus making new room for new people.

**GROWING:**
The following are congregations that continue to develop and grow to maturity as they press into missional effectiveness:

Crossroads Elko New Market led by Gordon and Melissa Duel; Embrace St. Croix, led by Austin Walker; Uptown Minneapolis led by Jeremiah Lideen; Northern Light Anoka led by Cullen Tanner; Homestead Rochester led by Luke and Bethany Nelson.

In addition to this listing, we celebrate a variety of congregations that are multiplying their impact by starting new services to reach new people. Thanks be to God!

*Ben Ingebretson*

**Episcopacy Committee**

The functions of the conference 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 2016/17 we continued our pattern of meeting in the Fall with the Dakotas Committee on Episcopacy, and in the Spring on our own. Fall 2016 we met in Mitchell, SD in fall 2017 we will meet in Minneapolis.

Providing support and encouragement for Bishop Ough and for Char is an important focus of our work. We were happy and grateful to the North Central Jurisdictional Committee on Episcopacy for assigning Bishop Ough to the Dakotas Minnesota Area for another quadrennium. We trust that Bishop Ough will continue to lead us with a strong missional focus, a willingness to try new things, an openness to the Holy Spirit’s movement in our midst and an unflagging commitment to leading our Conference in effective disciple making for the transformation of the world. We are grateful for all the strategic and leadership gifts he brings 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 enthusiastic support of Bishop Ough and of our Conference. We appreciate the ways she continues to minister to and with clergy spouses/significant others. In addition to his responsibilities in this Episcopal Area, Bishop Ough is the President of the Council of Bishops. We are proud that our bishop is leading the Church in these difficult times with his steady, non-anxious presence, an open heart and mind and the ability to be both prophetic andpastoral at the same time. We encourage the Bishop to continue to find ways to care for himself and his family amidst all these responsibilities, and we offer our prayer support to him as he continues in this leadership role in our denomination.

Finally, our committee celebrates the ministry and work of Sheilah Kyburz, Administrative Assistant for the Dakotas-Minnesota Area of The United Methodist Church. For over twenty-five years, Sheilah has served in the Minnesota Conference Episcopal Office. She has dedicated her whole heart, mind and soul to serve with efficiency and excellence, all the while being gracious, kind and hospitable. We thank her for deep commitment and willingness to support all the additional tasks that came with Bishop Ough becoming President of the Council of Bishops, and most of all, we want her to know how much we appreciate her.

Judy Zabel, Chair

Finance and Administration

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 2016, congregations within the state collectively remitted 87.7% of the requested apportionments—slightly down from 89.1% in 2015 but about even with the four-year average of 87.8%. We received $5.9 million in apportioned revenue on a total apportioned amount of $6.7 million. Nearly 75% of our churches paid the ir 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 $190 thousand of investment reserve funds to pay the 2016 General Conference apportionments of $1.6 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 2016 Love Offering, an annual offering that Minnesota churches take annually to support missions, totaled $96,400. The Minnesota Council of Churches Refugee Services received 40 percent of that
total, the United Methodist Committee on Relief received 10 percent to cover the cost of shipping more than
13,000 health kits that Minnesota churches assembled and prepared, International Child Care in the Dominican
Republic received 40 percent, and Volunteers in Mission scholarships received 10 percent.

The finance and administration department serves with a variety of Boards, Councils, and Action Teams. We
continue to work with these teams to implement recommendations received through the Financial Advisory
Consulting Team (FACT) process. These recommendations include strategic planning and budgeting and
engaging in an economic projection process with the General Church regarding health and retirement benefit
reserves.

**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, 2016, Capital Facilities had four loan guarantees in place with a total value of approximately
$1,768,200. 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 citymaple@earthlink.net, or Barbara Brower at (612) 230-6135 or
barbara.brower@minnesotaumc.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 2017 using approximately 190 thousand
  from conference reserves
- Participated on the Financial Advisory Consulting Team – we continue to work on various
  recommendations from their report including enhanced budgeting on an annual and five-year basis
  using strategic planning model and work toward increasing unrestricted liquid net assets
- Approved conference-wide appeals and Special Asking’s
- Reviewed the annual audited financial statements
- Developed the 2018 budget and uncollectible amount
- Released prior year’s unpaid apportionments
- Approved clergy housing allowances

We also have members serving as liaisons to conference committees including Greg Johnson, Chair of the
Audit Committee and Chair of the Investment Action Team and Steve Richards Chair of the Budget Process
Team. Our thanks to those churches that shared in the connection this year through apportionment
payment. Our collection rate for apportionments was 87.7% for 2016, down slightly from 89.1% in 2015. The uncollectible amount for 2017 is budgeted at $725,000 or 11% 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.

**Episcopal Residence Committee**

The current Episcopal residence received minor routine maintenance in 2015. Upkeep needs of the property continue to be monitored regularly and addressed as needed.

**Investment Action Team**

**Conference Reserves and Investments**

Invested funds as of end of 2016 totaled $62.6 million, up from $57.9 million at the end of 2015. The Conference portfolio had an asset allocation of approximately 65% equities, 33% fixed income, and 2% cash. The Conference continues to make socially-responsible investments. The Conference weighted average investment returns were 8.23% in 2016 similar to market returns. The Conference utilizes several investment monitoring criteria and the Investment Action Team reviews these funds quarterly.

During this past year, the Investment Action Team reviewed several proposals for investment management for funds not held by Wespath. A majority of the conference funds that are held for retirement and healthcare are invested with and continue to be invested with Wespath. For other Conference funds, the Investment Action Team interviewed a number of managers and selected Baird and Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation.

There are three generations of clergy pension and retirement plans being administered by the conference; each is funded above 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.

**Conclusion**

We are grateful to the many volunteers who work diligently in this ministry. It is an honor and joy to serve on these teams.

*Barbara Brower,* Director of Finance and Administration  
*John Mitchem,* Chair of Council on Finance and Administration  
*Greg Johnson,* Chair of Investment Action Team

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**Higher Education Ministry Team**

The Minnesota Conference Higher Education Ministry Team continues to seek to find ways to help 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 2016.

Among our accomplishments for the year:

- Continued focus on adding new members to our team
- Used our small budget to support campus ministries including the Wesley Foundation at the University of Minnesota (the recipient of a significant portion of our budget) and the campus ministry at the University of Minnesota, Duluth;
- Presented the Asbury Award to Rev. Laurie Boche at the 2016 Annual Conference
• Facilitated scholarships related to the United Methodist Student Day offerings which are now administered directly by the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry
• Heard updates from campus ministries
• Said congratulations and goodbye to our long-time chair the Rev. David Bard as he was elected Bishop.

In 2017 we are implementing a new 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 Furness Tollgaard, Chair**

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**Human Resources Team**

The Human Resources Team continued their work with conference staff to help the MN Annual Conference equip for the changing ministry needs of our conference. We saw some of our key staff retire after many strong years of service and we had new members join our staff to direct our conference ministry. Reflecting on staff feedback, performance reviews and input from conference leadership, we can confidently affirm that our conference staff is highly efficient, creative and has adapted well to a continually changing ministry field. We are proud of our staff and the hard work that they perform on a daily basis.

The HRT meets on an annual basis with two of our key conference leaders- Cindy Gregorson, Conference Director of Ministries and Barb Brower, Conference Treasurer. Cindy and Barb have the responsibility of the day to day supervision of our conference staff. The HRT also meets regularly with the Bishop to consult on performance reviews and make decisions regarding conference staffing, salaries and benefits.

This year the HRT completed a review of the conference employee handbook, consulted on the new Lily Grant, hired Judy Thone as the new Leadership Development Director. We also reviewed and recommended the HRT 2018 budget for the Annual Conference.

As a means of showing our appreciation to our hard working conference staff, the HRT also planned a summer staff outing that was well received and quite fun.

As part of the reevaluation of conference structures and administration, the HRT has elected to fold our ministry responsibilities into those of the Committee on Finance and Administration following the 2017 Annual Conference.

**Tom Biatek, Chair**

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**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, Rachel Warner, Lyndy Zabel (conference staff), and staff support from Gail Johnson. Thank you to each of the team members. Each conducted their ministry with enthusiasm, wisdom, and diligence. Thank you especially to the four new team members who answered the call to serve in this way.
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 (ranging from homeless shelter, to youth staffing, to racial reconciliation ministry, to pollinators, to recovery ministry, and many more.) It was inspiring to read the exciting, innovative, and high quality applications that we received.

Grant applications were evaluated on the following criteria:
- The church has a strategic congregational ministry plan and this effort fits into the overall plan.
- The grant is not just the last minute, bright idea of a select few in the congregation, but the concept and implementation has been well thought out and is owned by the leadership of the congregation.
- The congregation and pastor have the leadership capacity and competency to implement this effort.
- The ministry demonstrates creativity, innovation and experimentation appropriate to the context.
- The grant is being used for ministry and/or staffing, not capital expenses.
- For the renewal of a grant, the congregation has demonstrated measurable results from the previous year of the grant.

For those churches requesting more than $2500, these additional criteria are applied:
- The congregation has a long term plan and capacity for the funding of this ministry beyond the grant.
- The effort has specific benchmarks to mark progress and clear, measurable outcomes.

Grants were approved for a total of $198,050 for calendar year 2017.

The following congregations were approved for microgrants during 2017:

The following congregations were approved for grant renewals during 2017:

The following congregations were approved for new investing in congregations grants during 2017:
- Corcoran: Immanuel UMC, Detroit Lakes UMC, Hopkins Korean Evangelical UMC, La Crescent UMC, North Branch: Main Street UMC.

Amy Jo Bur, Chair

Lay Ministry Action Team

Lay people of the Minnesota Annual Conference are called to become a vital expression of the conference scriptural imperatives to grow in love of God and neighbor, reach new people and heal a broken world. The Lay Ministry Action Team (LMAT) is responsible for offering opportunities for lay people to create, improve and expand spirit-driven ministry in the local church. The LMAT offers training opportunities for lay people through classes and workshops through the year and throughout the conference.

One of the most successful trainings was the weekend-long retreats for equipping lay persons as certified lay speakers. The retreat format provides lay people the opportunity to complete six courses on lay speaking that includes written reports, a video of speaking and an interview by a team from the LMAT. Members of the Lay Ministry Action Team conducted many lay speaker interviews in 2016 to complete the process for lay speaker certification. Over 50 lay people are now listed as certified lay speakers who are equipped to do pulpit supply in churches across the conference.

A class on Aging and Ministry was offered in the fall of 2016 along with opportunities for lay people to attend several Breakthrough Workshops throughout the year. In early 2017, Ministry Discernment Retreats were held to help lay people discern their call to ministry whether that be as a lay servant, lay speaker, a Certified Lay Minister, a licensed local pastor, a deacon or an ordained elder.

The LMAT is made up of a dozen lay people from around the state including a Conference Co-Lay Leader, the Conference Director of Leadership Development, and one pastor.

Janet Beard and Bob Kutter, Co-Chairs
**Mission Promotion Team:**
Mission Promotion Team continues to heal a broken world through ministries of compassion and justice. Together, churches in our conference participate in thirty-three local, national and international hands-on volunteer projects, help support eighteen United Methodist missionaries, respond to disasters through UMCOR, advocate for justice for women and ethnic minorities, and continue our long-standing relationships with OC Ministries, Compatible Technology, Emma Norton Services, Project Ag Grad, Simpson Shelter and Wesley Meals.

Highlights of the past year include:
- The reformation of a conference Church and Society Team
- Formation of a Haiti-MAC Coalition
- Formation of a Laos/Thailand - MAC Coalition
- Thirteen new school-church partnerships
- New family VIM trips to Spirit Lake Ministry Center in North Dakota
- Over $92,000 given through the Love Offering to help support refugee resettlement in MN, children with disabilities in Dominican Republic, and VIM scholarships
- Over 15,000 health kits assembled and sent to refugee camps in the Middle East
- Welcoming Emanuel Adeyemo, our new Project Ag student
- MAC Mission Summit at Northfield UMC
- Receipts of over $50,000 in support if our missionaries
- Receipts of over $62,000 in support of Conference Advances

Thanks to Mission Promotion Team members and all of those in our local churches who seek to live out the love of God, and daily be the hands of feet of Christ!

**OC Ministries:**
OC Ministries enters its twenty-eighth year of ministering to minds, bodies and souls in Jamaica, Liberia, and Sierra Leone. This year also saw the addition of teacher training in Haiti. Highlights of the year include the beginning of the United Methodist Secondary School in Baiwala, Sierra Leone, sponsorship of 150 students, harvesting of avocados in Jamaica, support for pastors in West Africa, several wells dug, and delivery of tens of thousands of meals from Feed My Starving Children. Our first ever "annual" fundraiser gala in October was exciting and successful, featuring MPR's Kathryn Wurzer and Reverend Athlone Harrison from Browns Town, Jamaica. We thank everyone for their continued support!

**World Beat Connection:**
Volunteers from around the state and country played two dozen fundraising concerts in Minnesota and the Caribbean. Musicians in Jamaica joined us on our annual tour to Browns Town. All musicians at every level are welcome to join us on our tours.

**Lyndy Zabel,** Director of Missional Impact

**Youth Ministry Team**

It was another great year for youth in the Minnesota Annual Conference!

Last June, there were two options for students to participate in Annual Conference. A leadership track was added for high school students. Students participated fully in the conference, but also had a chance to get together with other students, process what they were experiencing, ask questions, and talk about what it means to be called to ministry. Students also Stormed the Conference. The leaders of Storm Camp provided a Stormlike experience for middle school and high school students to serve the St. Cloud area during Annual Conference. Teams of students spent two days painting and landscaping for people in St. Cloud, ending their experience serving communion at closing worship.

For the third year in a row, The Event was held the first weekend in November with over 300 middle school students and leaders enjoying a weekend at Cragun’s Resort in Brainerd. The weekend was packed with
worship, learning and most importantly, FUN! The theme this year was #blessed, and speaker Chris Carr inspired students to think about all the ways they are blessed and what it looks like to bless others. Through breakouts, students created blessing bags with supplies for people experiencing housing insecurity for winter, as well as created Instagram Stories about what they think it means to be blessed, and participated in group building games where they were able to bless each other.

The new element added to The Event this year was our internship program. Six high school students assisted in running The Event. Their responsibilities included assisting with hospitality, worship, breakouts and building relationships with participants. The interns were able to get some hands on leadership experience, learn about leadership from all The Event adult leaders and were able to process what they were learning about themselves throughout the weekend.

The annual Confirmation Gathering was held the first weekend in March at Good Samaritan in Edina. One hundred Confirmation students and leaders from across the conference gathered to learn about what it means to be a disciple. Students were encouraged to look at discipleship through a covenant discipleship lens, highlighting worship, justice, devotion and compassion. Experts in these areas from across Minnesota shared with students what those facets looked like in their own lives.

We are so excited for the ways we have seen God at work in the lives of young people throughout the conference in the last year and look forward to seeing that continue in the next year!

Erica Koser and Lindsey Nuehring, Co-Chairs
Reports from Affiliated Organizations

General Board of Higher Education and Ministry (GBHEM)

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

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

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

EDUCATION
- The Collegiate Ministry Office at GBHEM hosted Imagine What’s NEXT, a three-day event for young adults ages 18-26 to discern their call of lay or clergy leadership and learn ways to connect that God-given call through the work of the church. Nearly 700 students participated in NEXT, an increase of nearly 40 percent from prior years.
- The Young Clergy Initiative funds innovative projects across the church to attract young people to ordained ministry. The $7 million initiative has funded more than 75 projects. A biennial event, Exploration provides a platform for young adults ages 18-26 to hear, discern, and respond to God’s call to ordained ministry. In 2015, 475 attended Exploration. The 2017 event will take place in Portland, Oregon, November 3 - 5.
- The agency has a Global Methodist Education Network that includes more than 1,000 institutions of higher education around the world. GBHEM supports Schools, Colleges and Universities across the U.S. The Schools, Colleges, and Universities Office at GBHEM hosted 30 of the school’s presidents at the CEO Meeting of the Council of Independent Colleges in Orlando, Florida in January 2017. In addition, the office hosted 35 presidents at the National Association of Schools & Colleges of The United Methodist Church (NASCUMC) winter meeting in Washington, D.C.
- Global Education and New Initiatives at GBHEM provides technical assistance, financial support, scholarships and recruitment aids for five target regions across the globe: Africa, Asia Pacific, Latin America, Europe and the U.S. Global Education works with the United-Methodist related schools, particularly institutions of higher education and theology schools. In addition to schools, the office supports international and regional associations, as well as oversees the Methodist Global Education Fund for Leadership Development.
- The Black College Fund invests in the hopes and dreams of those students attending United Methodist-related historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs). The Black College Fund distributes 95 percent (on average more than $9 million) of all funds received equally to the 11 HBCUs. The fund provides for faculty development, infrastructure maintenance, and for students who need financial support and scholarship, helping the HBCUs to keep tuition and fees competitive. The Black College Fund was pleased to announce that five of its HBCU’s enrolled 22 Hispanic students as part of the Latino student access program in 2016.
- The agency works with the Commission on Central Conference Theological Education (CCTE) to distribute grants for the theological education of pastoral leaders in the Central Conferences. The 2012 General Conference established a $5 million CCTE fund, and more than 250 grants have been awarded across 22 countries to date. Due to its impact, the fund was doubled at the 2016 General Conference. New grant recipients were announced in March 2017.
- In 2016, GBHEM’s Office of Loans and Scholarships awarded 2,025 students with more than $3.1 million in scholarships and 406 students with more than $1.9 million in loans. The loans and scholarships are open to United Methodist students and seminarians who are seeking to further their education.
- GBHEM reestablished its publishing ministry in 2016 to engage, nurture, and advocate for the intellectual life of The United Methodist Church. Through this ministry, GBHEM produces academic resources for the constituencies of the agency, including single-author and multi-author works, as well as edited volumes. More than 10 new and revised books have been released under the publishing ministry.
MINISTRY

- In partnership with Discipleship Ministries, GBHEM provides e-readers to theological schools in remote areas of Africa and Asia, offering access to the latest textbooks and references books. The **E-Reader Project** has distributed nearly 1,500 devices to 22 theological seminaries, loaded with publications in English, French, and Portuguese.

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

- **Course of Study** and **Specialized Theological Education** provides resources for local pastors to gain the education and training needed for service across the church, with courses available in Spanish. The office launched Portuguese Course Study programs in 2016 and will continue to expand. GBHEM launched three new education options for part-time pastors in December 2016: an Extension of the Course of Study School of Ohio (COSSO) located at United Theological Seminary, a satellite Course of Study program with Saint Paul School of Theology in Hays, Kansas, and a pilot Escuela de Cursos de Estudios (ECE), a Spanish Course of Study, in Denver, Colorado. Chaplains and pastoral counselors are credentialed through the **United Methodist Endorsing Agency**, which provides resources for chaplains and counselors serving inside and outside the walls of the church. UMEA supports those working in 25 ministry settings such health care, military, prison, workplace, marriage and family, specialized and more. The office is completing the second pilot initiative to evaluate the effectiveness of a hybrid Clinical Pastoral Education program sponsored by GBHEM.

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

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

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**GBHEM Office of Communications**

**Minnesota Council of Churches**

**A Tradition of Innovation**

- Community Engagement, which includes Respectful Conversations, Taking Heart Ramadan Dinners, #BlessedRamadan, Black Clergy Speakers Bureau, Native American Relationships.
- Refugee Services, which includes case management, education, employment and immigration.
- Advocating Justice, which includes Joint Religious Legislative Coalition, Minnesota FoodShare, Racial Justice.
- Supporting the Faith Community, which includes operating the Minnesota Church Center, Congregational partnerships, Volunteer Opportunities and News for the Common Good.
2016 Report
25 denominations are members of Minnesota Council of Churches. Over the last year we:

- Gathered bishops and executives of almost one million constituents for prayer and discernment in retreat, prayer breakfasts, and board meetings.
- Reached a cumulative 2,531 Minnesotans participating in 87 Respectful Conversations on topics ranging from “race” relations to guns to processing the election.
- Welcomed 459 refugees from 17 countries
- Organized Bishops and executives from Mainline Protestant, Evangelical, Roman Catholic, Jewish and Muslim communities for historic press conference in support of refugees.
- Brought 1,100 Christians and Muslims together in relationship at 20 cross-cultural Ramadan Iftars.
- Helped 192 uninsured Mankato Community Residents apply for state health insurance programs.
- Witnessed to the good work of the body of Christ in 93 media articles.
- Promoted peace with over 3,000 #BlessedRamadan lawn signs.
- Coordinated a cycle of 54 ‘Mother' Emanuel AME prayer vigils hosted by congregations from 16 different traditions each week.
- Helped 94 refugees secure employment.
- Joined Minnesota FoodShare to raise $7.9 million for food shelves and 5.2 million pounds of food in the March Campaign.
- Partnered with 11 congregations that co-sponsored Refugee Families.
- Successfully advocated for $1.5 million to train law enforcement and health care in human trafficking awareness.
- News for the Common Good reached over 3,500 congregational decision-maker subscribers every other week.

Rev. Canon Peg Chemberlin, CEO

Professional Association of United Methodist Church Secretaries, 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 April 2016, we held a Retreat with the theme “Spiritual Photography” at UMC Camp Koronis in Paynesville Minnesota. Pastor Michelle Hargraves and Professional Photographer Janet Campbell attended and taught us about photographic subjects, techniques for getting a good photograph and the act of photography as a spiritual discipline and worship. We practiced our new knowledge on the campgrounds at beautiful Lake Koronis.

Our Annual Meeting and workshops were hosted by Mounds Park UMC on October 24, 2016. Pastor Tyler Sit from New City Church spoke to us about developing a unique theme and logo for our church asking us – “What are we great at doing at OUR church?” He helped us to think about how we market or brand our church in meaningful ways. In the afternoon, Pastor Dennis Alexander led us in Communion. We then had a round-table discussion with administrators representing a small, medium and larger UMC church recommending what is working well in the communications areas for their churches followed by questions. May 4-6, 2017, we are planning to send at least 4 members from the Minnesota PAUMCS chapter to our national PAUMCS convention - “Feel the Spirit in the Windy City” - being held in Chicago.

PAUMCS is open to all who are in a position supporting the United Methodist Church. In the 2016-2017 membership year we had 47 members from across the conference. This included 8 new members and 7 national members. Our hope is that every church would encourage their support staff to be members by sponsoring them to connect to this “vital link” ministry. Connect with us online at www.minnesotaumc.org/paumcs or become part of our Facebook group: MN PAUMCS.

Laura Ann Miles, President
Resources, from great ideas to streaming video to curriculum, are a key support for healthy, vital communities of faith. The Resource Center for Churches connects you with outstanding resources that spark your imagination and enrich your ministry.

Lay leaders, faith formation staff, and clergy of the churches of the Minnesota Annual Conference United Methodist Church contact us to consult, access resources, and share wisdom. We gather the recommendations of our users across denominations to lift up outstanding web, video, print and other resources for all areas of church life. Here’s our FAQ. (http://rcc-mn.org/2015/12/14/frequently-asked-questions-about-the-rcc/)

Early in 2016, the RCC began publishing a weekly post. Six New Things (http://rcc-mn.org/tag/six-new-things/) allows you to scan timely resources of all types quickly and easily, following a link or two that may interest you. These posts are available by email, and easily accessible and searchable from our homepage. (http://rcc-mn.org/) You can also see them on our Facebook. (https://www.facebook.com/resourcecenterforchurches) Response from our users has been enthusiastic; we hope this is an innovative and convenient way to call great resources to your attention.

The events of 2016 led us to lift up new resources on racism and privilege, immigration and refugees, Islam, bullying, creation care, and other issues of faith and justice. We publish concise lists of the best resources for topics and seasons at rcc-mn.org. Contact us to consult on resources that fit your context.

Through Minnesota CEF (Christians Engaged in Faith Formation), we highlight current resources for those ministering with young people. We serve as the planning hub for The ConNext Summit 2017, which will focus on Original Blessing in faith formation with children and youth.

Christa Meland, your Director of Communications and President of our Board, has been a creative and wise voice in developing the RCC and spreading the word about us: thank you.

The Resource Center for Churches is deeply grateful for all your support. Every time you contact us, whether you visit, email, check Six New Things or recommend us to another leader at your church, you enlarge our network and deepen the wisdom and experience we share. Blessings on your ministries in the coming year! We hope to be a lively partner for you and your church.

Lizabeth Bougie, Director

United Methodist Foundation

In October, 2016, the Foundation sponsored a stewardship seminar,” The Joy of Generous Giving; A Call to Financial Stewardship” led by Dr. David Bell, President of the Michigan Area United Methodist Foundation. The seminar was live-streamed from Cross Winds UMC, Maple Grove, and enabled people from churches across the state to participate from remote locations.

Through a $1 million grant received from the Lilly Endowment, beginning in summer, 2017 the Foundation will actively participate with the Dakotas-Minnesota Area to implement a holistic model of building financially healthy congregations led by clergy who have developed their own financial management and stewardship skills. The program design will incorporate the Wesleyan principles of Earn, Save and Give to lead, teach and model.

Nineteen Legacy Giving and three Estate Planning Seminars were presented in local churches and three successful capital campaigns were held during the year. MUMF staff consulted with Finance Committees in 14 local churches to plan Annual Budget campaigns.

Under the direction of Val Walker and Jack Fistler, the Foundation has produced newly written materials for a Legacy Giving program that are available to local churches. Included is information about wills, bequests, charitable gift annuities, charitable trusts, etc. The Foundation also offers a Planned Giving Information Kit in addition to creating a new booklet outlining a year-round planned giving emphasis for local churches. Be sure to
visit the Foundation website, www.mnumf.org, which contains information concerning investments, planned giving, seminars, annual budget consulting, capital campaigns, and programs for Finance and Stewardship Committee information and training.

The Foundation continues to participate in the “Dollars for Scholars” Endowment program with the United Methodist Higher Education Foundation. In 2016, we provided scholarship assistance for eight persons who are training for Christian ministry at UM institutes of higher education and seminaries.

The Foundation continues its advantageous partnership in the Pooled Investment Fund with the Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation. The first quarter of 2017 was very strong for the Foundation and all our rates of return have been positive. As of 4/1/2017, the investment portfolio amounted to $26,595,000. MUMF invests funds for 176 churches, boards and agencies within the MN Annual Conference. You can view all of our fund performance listed on our website.

The Foundation wishes to express its appreciation for your continuing support as we seek to provide programs, materials and services to local churches and conference agencies. Our prayer is that your church will experience renewed spiritual vitality through renewed growth in financial stewardship.

Val Walker, Executive 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 7,000 individual members in 262 units (of the 343 churches) in Minnesota. 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 Shepherdesses 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 UMW. We are proud that she served the following committees and boards for 2016: Reading program, Planning and Assessment, Acts of Repentance working group, General Board of Global Ministries, and Emma Norton Services. She was elected Secretary of National UMW.

Several Conference and District leaders attended the North Central Jurisdiction meeting in Grand Rapids, Michigan from June 24-26. We are proud that our own Theresa Riecke was elected Vice President of North Central Jurisdiction for 2017-2020.

The 2016 Minnesota Conference Mission u & Mission u Too were held at St. John’s University near Collegeville on July 12-15 for the weekday event, and July 16 for Mission u Too. The three mission studies for 2016 were Spiritual Growth: The Bible and Human Sexuality Issue study, Social Justice: Climate Justice, Geographic: Latin America-People and Faith. Also offered were a Children’s Study: God’s Extravagant Garden, Climate Justice and a Youth Study: Joining Voices for Climate Justice.

The Minnesota Conference UMW 43rd Annual Gathering was held Saturday, October 8, 2016, hosted by First United Methodist Church of the St. Cloud Region UMW (Big Waters District) in Sartell, MN. Approximately 200 United Methodist Women were on hand to hear Cindy Saufferer and Larry Mens discuss the Document of Discovery. New officers were elected and new and continuing officers were installed. Minutes from 2015 Annual meeting will be emailed for approval. The 2015 financial report was presented and was sent to audit on December 15, 2016. A budget for 2017 was approved. The Minnesota Conference Pledge to Mission for 2017 is $190,000 and Emma Norton Goal for 2017 is $53,000.

The Minnesota Conference UMW Program Committee led a Leadership Development Retreat for District UMW officer training November 5-6, 2016, at Kelly Inn in St. Cloud. Yvette Richards, immediate past president of UMW National was the presenter.

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 UMW:
- on the Emma Norton Services Board, Executive Committee, and chaired the UMW/UMC Committee
- at Annual Conference in St. Cloud June 21-23. She also attended the pre-session sponsored by Committee on Status and Role of Women (COSROW) She attended the COSROW meeting and took part in workshops. Several people stopped by her display table and inquired about UMW.
at the Jurisdiction Meeting in Grand Rapids, MI June 24-26
on the Financial Advisory Consulting Team (FACT) committee of the Minnesota Annual Conference United Methodist Church.
at the World Federation Meeting in Houston, Texas August 29-31
at Church Women United Annual Meeting at Rosemount UMC on September 10
at the Church Women United Common Council (proxy for state president who could not attend) and 75th Anniversary in Louisville, KY October 11-15
at Leadership Development Days in Tempe, AZ November 18-20

Sandra Meyer, President (2016-2019)
Africa University ended 2016 poised to celebrate its Silver Jubilee and eager to embrace new opportunities for transformative ministry over the next 25 years.

It is a great joy to recognize and thank the Minnesota Conference for a 100 percent investment to the Africa University Fund (AUF) apportionment in 2016. Seven of the 11 conferences in the North Central Jurisdiction led by example, giving to the AUF at 100 percent or higher for the second consecutive year. In 2016, the tremendous commitment to connectional giving of local churches enabled 34 of the 56 United Methodist annual conferences in the United States — up from 32 in 2015 — to invest 100 percent or more of their asking to the AUF.

The university community acknowledges, with heartfelt appreciation, the many ways in which the Minnesota Conference has been active, faithful, and generous in helping Africa University to realize its mission. Through Africa University, the Minnesota Conference helps young people to discover and sharpen their gifts for leadership. Students are equipped and they respond to the call to transform the world. Thanks to your generosity, the mission of the global United Methodist Church is alive in the contributions of the university’s 7,000+ graduates.

More than 90 percent of these graduates are still in Africa, serving communities in 32 countries. Currently, more than two dozen Africa University graduates are missionaries in Africa, Latin America, Asia and Europe, under the auspices of the General Board of Global Ministries of The United Methodist Church. Young people who would otherwise be on the margins are actively bringing God’s grace, peace and abundance to the lives of others.

Over the past year, your Africa University has continued to evolve and serve by:

- Restructuring its academic units in order to remain relevant and provide a broader-based education to meet new demands in the African workforce.
- Providing leadership formation experiences and learning for more than 1,400 students from 26 African countries. (Contrary to the norm for African higher education institutions, women represented more than half of the student body.)
- Generating new knowledge and capacity to support peacebuilding in Burundi, South Sudan, Central African Republic, Somalia, Nigeria and Uganda; and to improve food security, human rights, and leadership for the African continent.

The ongoing support of the Minnesota Conference is of vital importance to Africa University. On the occasion of the 25th anniversary, we invite the individual members as well congregations and districts of the Minnesota Conference to celebrate their journey with Africa University. Engage in a season of daily prayer for Africa University. Join Africa University’s honorary alumni association. Consider hosting a special “AU@25” event or Africa University Sunday in your local church or area. Use your event to increase awareness of Africa University’s ministry and invite attendees to each give at least $25 each in honor of the 25th anniversary. Let the celebrations spur a renewed focus on and greater engagement with the ministry that is Africa University.

Thank you, Minnesota United Methodists, for your unwavering response to the continuing call to faith, hope, and renewal in the world.

James H. Salley, Associate Vice Chancellor for Institutional Advancement

Boston University Theological Seminary

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

- **Congregations**: We welcomed Jonathan Calvillo as a new faculty member in sociology of religion, leading us toward better understanding of congregations and faith identity. See also our website of congregational resources: [http://www.bu.edu/cpt/current-projects-2/congregational-research-and-development/](http://www.bu.edu/cpt/current-projects-2/congregational-research-and-development/).

- **Doctor of Ministry**: The DMin program in Transformational Leadership is soaring with deeply committed student cohorts who are widely ecumenical, culturally diverse, and increasingly global. The blended model includes intensives, online courses, and close work with faculty mentors.

- **Scholarships**: We multiplied funding for student scholarships and housing, including the Vincent Machozi Scholarship for African students who seek to cultivate ministries of compassion, justice, & peace in their homelands.

- **Religion and Arts Initiative**: The Initiative sponsored a hymn-writing contest this year, complementing the photography contest last year and STH’s rotating art exhibits. The current exhibit focuses on ecological healing: “Sense of Place” by women print-makers from Ecuador and Maine.

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

- **Congregational courses**: Courses in congregations with church leaders and students learning together.

- **Religion and Conflict Transformation Clinic**: Internships, workshops, and projects that foster justice and reconciliation.

- **Travel seminars**: Courses engaging local communities on Arizona-Mexican border and in Cuba, Germany, and Indonesia.

- **Ecumenical partnerships**: Continuing close work with UMC, AME and other Wesleyan denominations, while building strong programs with the Episcopal Church and United Church of Christ.

- **Partnership with Hebrew College**: Joint courses and public events, plus co-sponsoring *The Journal of Interreligious Studies*. The focus is on enriching theological education and developing religious leaders who are faithful and wise.

TAKING ACTION GLOBALLY AND LOCALLY:

- **Campus action**: Work with Boston University to improve accessibility and sustainability: to provide full access for all persons (a work in progress) and to live sustainably with the planet.

- **Internships in global service and peacemaking**: Student-initiated internships for service with communities across the world, and for just peacemaking projects with international organizations.

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

- **Standing with Standing Rock**: Several BUSTH students and alums joined indigenous peoples at the Oceti Sakowin Camp in North Dakota to protest the pipeline on sacred Sioux land.

- **Deep conversations**: Faculty, students and administrators have led deep conversations on issues that divide, but with respectful listening that builds community life and communal action.

OTHER NOTABLE HEADLINES:

- Our own **Associate Dean Pamela Lightsey** was featured in Boston University’s 2016 Annual Report for her pursuit of justice, empowerment, and change.
• Our graduating senior, Rev. Mariama White-Hammond (AME) led the Boston Women’s March, and some 75 STH faculty and students marched, calling for social and ecological justice as we build new futures in the United States.

• Students of all theological and social orientations are asking and then acting: “What can I do to make this world better?” “How can I witness to my Christian faith?”

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

Mary Elizabeth Moore, Dean

Candler School of Theology

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

One of 13 official seminaries of The United Methodist Church, Candler is also one of seven graduate professional schools of Emory University, a top-tier research institution offering extensive resources and a rich context for study. Our location in Atlanta provides a learning environment that reflects the highly diverse communities of the 21st century. Simply put, there is no better place for ministry preparation that addresses our major denominational priorities: developing leaders, starting and growing churches, ministry with the poor, and improving global health.

In order to keep pace with the needs of the church and the world, Candler offers 17 degrees: seven single degrees and ten dual degrees pairing theology with bioethics, business, international development, law, public health, or social work. One of our newest degrees is a Doctor of Ministry that is 90 percent online, so students can remain in their places of ministry as they study and apply what they learn in real time. We’ve also partnered with the University of Georgia’s School of Social Work to create an MDiv/MSW where students learn to maximize their effectiveness by combining pastoral skills such as spiritual counseling with social work practices such as family therapy and community assessment.

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

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

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

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

Jan Love, Dean and Professor of Christianity and World Politics
In 2016-2017, Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary is focusing on the following priorities:

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

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

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

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

**PUBLIC THEOLOGY**

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

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

**CONNECTIONAL LIFELONG LEARNING**

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

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

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

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

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

*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*

As I complete my second year as Hamline University’s 20th president, I have gained a deeper understanding and appreciation for everything that Hamline means to, and does for, this community and the world. The passion and commitment to “do all the good we can” is deep and genuine. Our faculty are distinguished in their academic disciplines and care deeply for their students, whose well-being (academic, social, and emotional) always comes first. More students than ever are choosing Hamline—not only because of our expanded Honors Program but also because of many other “high-impact learning” opportunities—career internships, study abroad, collaborative research, writing- and speaking-intensive courses, service-learning opportunities—which prepare them exceptionally well for success in the top graduate schools and careers.

Our Wesley Center for Spirituality, Service and Social Justice, led by Chaplain Nancy Victorin-Vangerud, continues to exceed expectations in community service:

- Again this year, Hamline University was named to the national President’s Community Service Honor Roll with over 156,629 hours of service to the community (representing curricular and co-curricular programs) and for the third year, achieved “Distinction” in the category of Interfaith Service. Signature
programs include the **LEAP into St. Paul** with 32 community sites, **MLK Jr. Day of Service**, Community Service and Gap Year Service Fairs.

- At Hamline Elementary School across the street, we live into the vision that “college begins in kindergarten,” connecting children with our university theater, arts, creative writing, swimming, and the Oxfam Hunger Banquet. Over 55 of our students tutor at the school’s **America Reads and Counts** program, and 40 serve as buddies in the **Hand in Hand** program. A new **Math and Coding Literacies** program through our math department joins 10 other academic class pairings.

- We continue to see the good fruit of our connections with the UMC here in Minnesota and nationwide. Wesley staff member Nur Mood, “Better Together” student leader Andrew Banker, and Chaplain Victorin-Vangerud attended the “**Called to be Neighbors: United Methodist Higher Education Convening on Interfaith Cooperation**” at Oklahoma City University. The team presented on “Interfaith Strategies for UM Campuses: What Makes Hamline Interfaith Programs Successful.” As a result of our participation, we proposed (and received) a United Methodist Innovation Grant for $3,000 in partnership with the national **Interfaith Youth Core**. These funds will support Student Affairs staff training, a student leadership development retreat, and a resourcing event with the St. Paul Interfaith Network (SPIN).

Our partnership with Hamline Church is growing, and our collaborative Hamline SPROUT Garden was recognized by Mayor Chris Coleman with a 2017 Sustainable Saint Paul Award in the category of “Local Food Organization.” Last summer, student interns Joseffa Smith and Hannah Hoeger, working with the children and youth of the church, raised 1,000 lbs of food, which was shared with the Hamline Midway Elders home program. Hamline Church also hosts several ministry and communications student interns, as well as student childcare workers. In winter, 14 students participated in the first overnight Bread Baking Retreat led by Rev. Bryce Johnson and Ross Safford. Students also participate in the community pizza baking events, Sacred Pop and Sacred Poetry evenings.

Hamline University served as the host site for the annual fundraiser and celebration for the Wesley Foundation at the University of Minnesota, in connection with Rev. Cody Nielsion. This year, the Hamline A Cappella Choir performed in worship at Hamline Church UM, Richfield UMC, Centennial UMC and Hennepin Avenue UMC. The Hamline Gospel Choir performed in worship at Camphor Memorial UMC, Hamline Church, Living Spirit UMC, and Fellowship Missionary Baptist Church.

In its 13th year, the McVay Youth Partnership, led by Jane Krentz, has allowed Hamline to live out its commitment to social justice and community service and strengthened the effectiveness of the churches in their communities. The after-school program has had great impact on the academic success of urban youth, and some have gone on to attend Hamline and, in turn, become McVay mentors. This year, over 50 Hamline students were McVay Fellows, Associates and Interns, serving up to 200 youth each week. Sites include Arlington Hills UMC (since 2008); Liberty Plaza Resource Center (since Jan. 2005) with partner Dayton Ave. Presbyterian; Mounds Park UMC (since Sept. 2013) with partner Faith UMC (St. Anthony Village) and, since fall 2016, Washington Technology Magnet with partner Hamline Church. This summer the McVay Partnership will offer 5 weeks of programming at all sites for urban youth.

Finally, there were notable opportunities for study, discussion and spiritual growth this year. The Mahle Endowment in Progressive Christian Thought supported the weekly Spirituality Scholars program with 10 students, who were also involved with the Mahle Symposium in “Healing, Wholeness, Holiness: Religious Responses to Trauma and Illness.” Dr. Shelly Rambo from Boston University gave the keynote: “Resurrection in the Afterlife of Trauma: Making Sense of the Wounds that Mark Us.” Workshop leaders included Dr. Monica A. Coleman, Rabbi Eric Weiss, Dr. Sherry Jordon, Rev. Kathi Austin Mahle, Rev. May Kay Sauter, Prof. Julie Neraas, Dr. Rolf Jacobson, Rev. JoAnn Post, and John Hermanson. The Mahle Endowment also hosted New Testament scholar Dr. Bart Ehrman from the University of North Carolina on campus for three days, as well as a two-week hosting of local artist John Noltner’s new photographic installation “American Stories: A Peace of My Mind”.

*Fayneese Miller, Ph.D.*, President
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 6 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 2016-2017 year include:

• The College ended the 2015-2016 fiscal year with a balanced budget for the 50th consecutive year.
• Rust College received a $145,000 grant from the Hearin Foundation to support needy students seeking financial aid.
  The total grant equaled $580,000, over a four-year period.
• The Lettie Pate Whitehead Foundation has provided a grant of $140,000 to the Rust General Scholarship Fund for 2016-2017.
• Dr. Gemma Beckley, Chair and Professor of Social Work, received the Mississippi Humanities Teacher of the Year award.
• Rust College students won first place at the Southern Conference on African-American Studies Quiz Bowl in Atlanta, GA on February 10, 2017.
• As a part of the White House Initiative on Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Rust College juniors, Savahn Jordan and Jasmaine Dean were recognized as 2016-17 Historically Black Colleges and Universities All-STARS.
• Awarded a $10,000 Legacy’s Tobacco Free Campus Initiative Grant from the American Legacy Foundation.
• Awarded a $25,000 Grant from the Global Health Unit of Global Ministries for the Rust Health Explorers Program.
• Awarded a $1,000,336.00 from the Lilly Endowment UNCF Career Pathways Initiative for a Career Pathways Initiative Implementation Grant.

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 Trustees from the Memphis Annual Conference: George Holden, Leon Medin, and Dr. George Menshik (Emeritus).

Dr. David L. Beckley, President
Saint Paul School of Theology

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

This past 2015-2016 academic year, Saint Paul enrolled 168 students from 15 annual conferences and 5 countries on both campuses. The Course of Study School at Saint Paul served 194 students in three midwest locations. Course of Study will expand course offerings to Hays, Kansas beginning Fall 2017.

Rev. Neil B. Blair became president of the seminary July 2016. Blair is a 1980 Master of Divinity graduate of Saint Paul and an ordained elder. He most recently served as the Executive Director for Institutional Advancement for the UM General Board of Higher Education and Ministry.

Saint Paul School of Theology and Oklahoma City University partnered to offer a 3+3 accelerated degree program. Under this arrangement, OCU students will complete 3 years of undergraduate studies in the pre-seminary track and begin their 4th year as an MDiv student at Saint Paul School of Theology. Students prepare for ordination/entry into ministry in six years instead of the usual seven, while earning both B.A. and M.Div. degrees. The accelerated program saves students time and money.

Saint Paul and The Academy for Spiritual Formation have partnered to offer a Doctor of Ministry (DMin) in Prophetic Witness and Service with an emphasis in Spiritual Formation. This is the first time a seminary has worked with The Academy for Spiritual Formation, a ministry of The Upper Room, to co-develop an advanced degree.

Saint Paul is also partnering with the Academy to host a 5-Day spiritual formation retreat with the theme “Draw the Circle Wide”. The summer retreat includes community and individual reflection about how spiritual disciplines help develop our listening and global language of love. Dr. Amy Oden, Professor of Early Church History and Spirituality, is a lead organizer.

Rev. Casey Sigmon served as a visiting professor in a year-long professorship as part of the Vanderbilt program in Theology and Practice. Sigmon co-taught a preaching class with Dr. Mike Graves this fall and a course entitled, “Preaching in the Digital Age” based on her dissertation research this spring.

Saint Paul now offers a Certificate in Theological Formation. The certificate is 24 credit hours of courses all taught by Saint Paul faculty. Classes may be completed entirely online or through a combination of online and on-campus offerings.

Dr. Angela Sims’ work in oral history preserves the memory of elder African Americans in her recently published book, *Lynched: The Power of Memory in a Culture of Terror*. Collaborative faculty books include *Transforming Community: The Wesleyan Way to Missional Congregations* by Saint Paul professor Dr. Hal Knight and Dr. F. Douglas Powe, Jr. and *Coming Full Circle: Constructing Native Christian Theology* by Saint Paul professor Dr. Elaine Robinson and Rev. Steven Charleston.

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

*Rev. Neil Blair*, President

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United Theological Seminary – Twin Cities

**School Status**

United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities is an approved seminary by the University Senate of the United Methodist Church to train clergy for ordination in the United Methodist Church. We continue to partner with the Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Iowa Annual Conferences in recruiting and training clergies for various vocations. United welcomed Dr. Lewis P. Zeidner who has been installed as the 9th President of the Seminary. Dr. Zeidner’s professional career spans over 35 years as a psychologist, healthcare executive, entrepreneur, and executive consultant. Dr. Zeidner serves as both President and Professor of Psychology at United. Dr. J. Samuel Subramanian (Elder, Iowa Conference) who has been serving as Assistant Professor of New Testament Theology has been promoted to Associate Professor of New Testament Theology. Dr. Subramanian
who has more than 18 years of pastoral ministry experience in the United Methodist Church is currently teaching the United Methodist History and Polity. Dr. Demian Wheeler (a graduate of Iliff School of Theology and Union Theological Seminary) who has been a Louisville Institute Scholar has been appointed as Assistant Professor of Philosophical Theology and Religious Studies. Dr. Pamela Ayo Yetunde who grew up as a United Methodist has been appointed as Assistant Professor of Pastoral Care and Counseling and Director of Interfaith Chaplaincy. Rev. Sara Wilhelm Garbers has been appointed as Director of Spiritual Formation.

**Students**

We have currently 25 United Methodist students at various stages in their theological education and ministerial formation. We have admitted an international student in the M.Div. degree program from the Philippine Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church. Our UM students participate in a Spiritual Journey program especially framed for United Methodist piety, lead community worship, and engage in small group study.

**The United Methodist Center**

To nurture and grow in the connexion, the UM students meet monthly at the United Methodist Center with Dr. Subramanian and Dr. Mark Sundby (Elder, Wisconsin Conference), Professor in the Practice of Leadership and Director of the North Central Ministry Development Center. These meetings are designed to instill the Methodist ethos and provide guidance and spiritual nourishment in the ministerial formation.

Together with Hamline University (a UM-related Institution), the UM Center organized a public lecture on “A Plain Account of Integral Ecology: A United Methodist Affirmation of Laudato Si” given by Dr. Timothy Eberhart (Elder, Dakotas Conference), Assistant Professor of Theology and Ecology at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, Evanston, IL. We invited Bishop Bruce Ough from Minnesota Conference to speak on “Adoptive Leadership.” We hosted a public lecture with Dr. John Cobb, Jr., a leading UM Process Theologian, on the theme, “John Wesley’s Theology for the Future.” We organized a study group for all UM students, faculty, staff, and the public to articulate “A Wesleyan Vision for Theological Education and Leadership for the 21st Century”. We invited Rev. Kathi Austin Mahle, a Judicial Council Member, to speak to our students enrolled in the UM History and Polity course.

**Chapel**

Together with Chaplain John Lee, the UM students conduct and coordinate chapel and luncheon discussions. Invited preachers at Chapel have included: Rev. Dr. David Bard (Senior Pastor, First United Methodist Church – Duluth), Rev. Cynthia Williams (District Superintendent, River Valley District), Rev. Judith Zabel (Senior Pastor, Hennepin Avenue UMC), Rev. Gloria Roach Thomas (Senior Pastor, Camphor UMC), Rev. Stacey Smith (Senior Pastor, St. Paul AME Church), and Rev. Kathi Austin Mahle (Elder and a Former Judicial Council Member). Dr. Fayneese Miller, President of Hamline University delivered our commencement address, May 1, 2016.

**Curriculum**

United received two grants from ATS. The first grant is an Innovative Grant from ATS. This grant will be to develop a pilot program to implement the use of life story narratives into the Formation program and to test the hypothesis that there is a link between redemptive sequences and generativity. The second grant from ATS will be to train faculty on assisting students with the process of narratives and redemptive sequences.

We invited Rev. Susan Nienaber, District Superintendent, Big Waters District, to teach a course on Leadership. We offered a new course on Theology of John Wesley in the Summer Term, taught by Dr. Subramanian. Both our students and the public greatly benefited from it. We are planning to offer the same next summer.

We are so happy and proud that Rev. Dr. David Bard, a United graduate, has been elected as Bishop of the United Methodist Church from the NCJ Conference, July 2016. Bishop Bard currently serves as Bishop for the Michigan Episcopal Area. We are grateful that our graduates are servings as church pastors, church planters, social workers, bishop, chaplains, and many other ministries. We thank you for your continued support.

May God bless you, your family, and your ministry.

**Dr. J. Samuel Subramanian**, Associate Professor of New Testament Theology  
**Dr. Sharon M. Tan**, Academic Dean/Vice-President for Academic Affairs
At Wesley Theological Seminary, we are building on 135 years of faithful preparation of church- and world-changing leaders by continuing to innovate and grow. We are excited to partner with you in the ministry to which God has called you now – and wherever you may be called in the future. Keep reading for good news that you can use…

So you can grow as a leader (and share with others)
Wesley’s Lewis Center for Church Leadership continues to be the internationally respected go-to resource for actionable best practices for clergy and laity. The center’s free Leading Ideas e-newsletter provides well-researched, discipleship-growing ideas to more than 17,000 people. Sign up for Leading Ideas athttps://www.churchleadership.com/category/leading-ideas/.

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

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

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

The Institute for Community Engagement at Wesley Downtown continues to help the church turn itself inside out. The Institute at Wesley now offers an innovative online Health Minister Certificate Program from Heal the Sick, an initiative to prepare congregations for public health work in their parishes. Some scholarships are available for this program. Please contact Tom Pruski at tpruski@wesleyseminary.edu for more information or to register for future certificate classes.

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

The Luce Center for Arts and Religion remains the only seminary-based program uniting arts and theology. The Luce Center invites the public to artist talks with each new exhibit and has regular classes and workshops with visiting artists. For information on past and upcoming opportunities visit luceartsandreligion.org.
If you’re a current or future seminarian
Wesley’s Master of Divinity degree can now be completed via online, weekend, short-term intensive, and weeknight courses in 5 years. This format is designed to be more accessible to those with busy ministry, work, and/or family commitments throughout the region.

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

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

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

If you’re a pastor, alumnus, or just want to keep up on the news
Wesley’s Doctor of Ministry program continues to offer the most practical and spiritually renewing tracks in theological education. We are excited to announce the launch of our third track based in Cambridge, England: Holiness, Effective Ministry and Engagement with the World, beginning in January 2018. Other 2018 tracks include Art and Theology, Church Leadership Excellence and Soul Care for Pastors, Chaplains and Clinicians. Find out more or apply now at https://www.wesleyseminary.edu/doctorofministry/

The Lewis Center for Church Leadership moves to an exciting new phase in its 14-year history with the transition of leadership from founding director, the Rev. Dr. Lovett Weems Jr., to new director, Wesley faculty member, the Rev. F. Douglas Powe, Jr., effective July 1, 2017. Dr. Weems will continue to be part of the Lewis Center as part-time Senior Consultant, continuing his ground-breaking work in denominational conference resourcing. Meet Dr. Powe and Dr. Weems in a video discussion at https://www.churchleadership.com/news/lewis-center-announces-a-new-director/ Please save the date – September 28-29, 2017 – and join Wesley in celebrating the outstanding academic contribution of founding director the Rev. Dr. Lovett Weems,Jr. More information to come about this celebration at www.churchleadership.com.

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

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

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

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

The Rev. Dr. David McAllister-Wilson, President
1. The business meetings of this session of The Minnesota Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church shall be conducted according to regular parliamentary procedure as outlined in Robert's Rules of Order.

2. The agenda for the annual conference session shall be that which was made available in the Conference Materials Packet.

3. Copies of all motions and amendments shall be delivered in writing to the conference secretary.

4. These rules shall not be suspended except by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting.

5. Any proposed change or amendment to the standing rules shall be referred to the Sessions Action Team and presented in writing no later than the day prior to the proposed action thereon.

6. The bar of the conference shall be the seats at tables on the floor and dais at the River's Edge Convention Center, excluding those seats set aside for visitors.

7. Times set in the program will be observed insofar as possible. If debate causes delay, the schedule as printed in the program will follow consecutively.

8. Announcements will appear on video projection screens during the plenary sessions.

9. Items can be removed from the Recommended for Adoption/Recommended for Rejection List (RAL/RRL) by presenting a petition with the signatures of ten (10) conference members to the Conference Secretary by 10 a.m. on Wednesday, June 21.

10. The total amount of the conference budget recommended by the Council on Finance and Administration shall be increased annually by no more than 3% over the previous year's budget. If the session wishes to raise the budget maximum, this rule must be suspended by a two-thirds majority vote. Specific items amending the proposed budget upward shall then be submitted and voted on. When all amendments to the budget have been presented and voted on, the total budget is before the session and action shall be taken on it.

11. Unless otherwise directed by the chair, a member wishing to speak must raise a hand or go to a microphone and be recognized by the chair before speaking. The member should begin by stating his/her name and church or other credentials indicating conference membership.

12. All people who are not members of the annual conference and who desire to address the conference shall first obtain consent from the Conference Sessions Action Team. The presiding officer shall determine time limit for statements.

13. Individual speeches from the floor shall be limited to three (3) minutes. The conference secretary will monitor the time and indicate with a sign the amount of time left to each speaker.

14. A motion to end debate cannot be honored until members have had the opportunity to hear two (2) speeches for and two (2) against each motion. The maker of the motion may present one of these speeches.

15. A teller must be chosen from each table should a teller vote be called. Teller responsibilities are explained in the white teller folder on each table.

16. The District Superintendents shall receive members’ notification of inability to attend portions of the conference session and will forward this information to the Conference Secretary to be included in the official roll call.

17. No material extraneous to the conference session business shall be distributed except in the display/registration/lobby area.

18. The Board of Ordained Ministry shall report to the conference session on the character of clergy as per The Book of Discipline ¶605.7.
**Parliamentary procedure**

These guidelines, based on *Robert's Rules of Order*, will ensure an orderly plenary session. Follow the procedures outlined below so your voice can be heard and the discussion is fair.

**Making a motion**
You can introduce a motion when there are no other motions pending.

1. Write down the text of your motion before approaching the microphone. Be prepared to give it to the conference secretary.
2. Approach a microphone and wait to be recognized by the bishop.
3. Say: My name is ___________. I am from ___________ United Methodist Church in ________(town name). I move __________.

   *For example: “My name is Sue Wesley. I am from Open Hearts UMC in Rivertown. I move that the Minnesota Annual Conference hold future conference sessions in Hawaii.”*

   *(Pause and wait for someone to second your motion and for the bishop’s permission to offer your explanation.)*

**Caution**

- Do not approach the microphone without knowing the specific wording of your motion.
- Wait for the bishop to acknowledge your motion and state whether it is in order (that is, follows the conference’s rules of procedure).
- Do not defend your motion until someone seconds the motion and the bishop invites you to speak.
- Do not exceed the time limit allotted.
- Bring a written copy of your motion to the conference secretary, who sits at the front table with the bishop.
- Don’t be intimidated by frequent, confident participants in the discussion. Your voice is needed. If you have a concern, please come to the microphone and join the discussion.

**Proceeding in debate**

1. Approach the microphone and wait to be recognized by the bishop.
2. State your name and church affiliation. State whether you are in favor or opposed to the motion on which you are speaking.

   *For example: “I am Charles Ingalls of Walnut Grove UMC. I oppose this motion. While I enjoy traveling, my church could not afford the plane fare for our pastor and lay member.”*

**Caution**

- Your speech will be most effective if you focus on one point. Write down your point before you come to the microphone.
- State whether you are in favor or opposed. Do not make the bishop guess.
- Keep your comments focused on a rational point related to the action item or amendment itself. Speak respectfully of the faith, intelligence, and sincerity of those who disagree with you. Make sure your speech is calm and directly addresses the content of the action item. This will make your comments more persuasive.
Amendments

1. If you want to improve a motion by amending it, write down your amendment neatly. Be prepared to give the conference secretary a copy of your amendment.

2. Approach the microphone and wait to be recognized by the bishop. State your name and church affiliation. Say that you would like to amend the motion.

3. The bishop will let you know if an amendment is in order. Amendments must be seconded. They are debatable, amendable, and must be voted upon (or withdrawn by the maker).

   For example:
   Member: “My name is May O’Brothers. I am from Great Healer UMC in Rochester. I’d like to move an amendment.”
   Bishop: “What is your amendment?”
   Member: “I move the following amendment: that the words ‘study the possibility of holding’ replace the word ‘hold.’ The amended motion would thus read: ‘Moved that the Minnesota Annual Conference study the possibility of holding conference session in Hawaii.’”

   Caution
   - Do not approach the microphone before you have written down the specific wording of your amendment. The bishop will not develop your amendment for you.
   - Again, do not explain the purpose of your motion until someone seconds the motion and the bishop invites you to speak.
   - While an amendment is on the floor, debate addresses only the amendment, not the original motion.
   - Be prepared to give the conference secretary a written copy of your amendment.
   - Because amendments can themselves be amended, be sure to follow the debate closely.

Point of order

1. If you think the rules of procedure are being overlooked, you can come to the microphone and raise it to the bishop’s attention.

2. The bishop will determine whether the point of order is well taken.

3. Points of order are not debated and not voted upon.

Point of information

1. You may rise to the microphone to ask for a point of information if you have a question about the motion or seek clarity.

2. You raise that question to the bishop. The bishop asks the question of the maker of the motion or another authority, who responds directly to the bishop.

   Caution
   - Do not try to mask a speech in favor or against a motion as a point of information. The bishop will rule out of order.
   - This is not an opportunity to debate with the bishop or the provider of information.
Ending debate

If you think the motion being debated has received enough attention and it is now time to vote, you may “move the previous question.” Approach a microphone and, when recognized by the bishop, say “Bishop, I move the previous question on the motion before us.”

Caution
A motion for the previous question is not in order by our rules until there have been at least two speeches for and two speeches against the motion being considered.

Voting

The bishop will call for a vote if debate has ceased.

Vote is taken in the manner prescribed by the rules of procedure or by the bishop's determination.

Referring the motion

If debate flushes out unanswered questions about an action item, you may move that it be referred to a conference ministry team or group. Know which group should receive it. For example, most concerns relating to the conference's mission, outreach, and spiritual development can be referred to the Common Table.

Referring the motion

If you want to recommend that debate cease on a motion without vote, you may move to postpone it indefinitely. This effectively kills the motion and can avoid embarrassing the maker of a poor motion. This must be seconded, is debatable, and cannot be amended.
Internet access: Wireless Internet access is available at no cost to all conference attendees. Here’s the process for connecting:

1. Choose the network “Rivers Edge”
2. On login page, enter user name “Rivers Edge” (case sensitive) and password 0701201603, and check the box to accept the terms of use.
3. On the welcome page, click the “Rivers Edge” button
4. Swipe through the ad spots
5. On the “thank you” page, click to access Wifi

Meals: Lunch is provided each day to all conference attendees. On Wednesday, there are special interest groups spread throughout the convention center. Box lunches will be distributed from several stations—grab one and take it to a meeting. For lunch on Thursday, there will be a room for each district to gather. Box lunches will be available in each room. (Box lunches are being used to reduce the time spent waiting in line.) Other breakfasts and dinner each night are on your own. Those who pre-paid for breakfast pool-side at the Kelly Inn or Wednesday night dinner at the convention center will see it indicated on their receipt (provided at check-in).

Parking: Convention center parking is available in the ramp located below the building, and there are also metered spots in both the parking lot in front of the building and along the west end of the building. Additional parking is available in the Grand Central Ramp located across the street from the building. Parking in the convention center ramp costs $5 each time you enter, although you can park for as long as you’d like after you have entered. Visa, Mastercard, and Discover are accepted as payment.

Buses: St. Cloud Metro Bus operates many routes to and from the downtown area. Visit www.ridemetrobus.com or call (320) 251-7433 for information about a specific route. Your conference name tag will allow you to ride any Metro Bus for free during the conference. Representatives of the Visitors & Convention Bureau will be on hand Tuesday with information assistance.
**Revival celebration in the park:** You can walk, drive, or take a shuttle to the event at Lake George Park (1101 7th St. S., St. Cloud) on Tuesday evening—which will feature a Spirit-filled worship experience with great music and dynamic preaching by Discipleship Ministries General Secretary Junius B. Dotson. It is a pleasant walk of just under a mile from the convention center. There is parking at the park and across the street at the school—and there will be a shuttle between the convention center, the park, and the Holiday Inn. Please note that the bus is not accessible; plan accordingly.

**Hearing assistance:** Hearing assistance units are available at no cost from the registration/information center. They work in Haws A & B (plenary and worship space).

**Scooters:** Scooters are available for $50 per day and can be rented by visiting the registration/information center.

**UMCOR collection:** Items for the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) will be collected near the registration/information center through Wednesday evening. The Midwest Mission Distribution Center will deliver donations to the locations where they are needed most.

**MissionInsite:** Every church in the Minnesota Conference has access to MissionInsite, a web-based demographics program built for churches that provides valuable demographic data about your community and offers new ways to think about church ministry, church planting, and church growth and outreach. If you’d like to receive an individualized, printed report that you can take home, stop by the conference registration/information center.

**Statistical tables and apportionment calculations:** Conference Database Coordinator/Statistician BJ Olsen will be available from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Wednesday to answer questions about statistical tables and apportionment calculations. You’re welcome to stop by her table, which will be in the hall between Haws C and Carlson. If she’s meeting with someone else, you can sign up for a time to meet with her later in the day.

**Temperature:** Temperature control in the large rooms of the convention center is challenging. It is often chilly in some areas and warm in others. Attendees are encouraged to dress in layers and bring a sweater to be as comfortable as possible.
A recognized visionary leader in church revitalization, the Rev. Junius B. Dotson is the General Secretary (chief executive officer) of Discipleship Ministries, an international agency of The United Methodist Church. He began his tenure on July 1, 2016.

Prior to his present position, Rev. Dotson was pastor of Saint Mark United Methodist Church in Wichita, Kansas, where he was instrumental in transforming the 3,500-member church into a multi-campus congregation. The church is also the host to the E.C. Tyree Health & Dental Clinic that provides affordable care to thousands of patients annually.

Rev. Dotson received his undergraduate degree in political science, with a concentration in economics, at the University of Texas at Arlington. While attending UT-Arlington, he was president of the local chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha, the nation’s oldest African-American fraternity.

Rev. Dotson began his graduate work at Perkins School of Theology at Southern Methodist University in Dallas, Texas, and earned his Master of Divinity degree from the Pacific School of Religion in Berkeley, California. He was ordained in June 1992.

In 1996, Rev. Dotson responded to the challenge of planting Genesis United Methodist Church, a new and innovative church in the Silicon Valley of California, which grew into a diverse faith community of nearly 500 people.

As a leader who responds to challenges and opportunities in new and creative ways, Rev. Dotson believes that effective ministry is about training, developing, and empowering leaders to establish ministries that address the needs of the whole person—body, mind, and spirit.

Rev. Dotson’s unique innovations have generated a great deal of interest. His ministry has been featured in The San Jose Mercury News, The San Francisco Examiner, The Sacramento Bee, The Wichita Eagle, religious journals and segments on CBS Radio’s “The Osgood File,” as well as on ABC, NBC and CBS affiliates in San Francisco, San Jose and Wichita. A dynamic preacher and public speaker, Rev. Dotson is highly respected for his ability to establish networks that get things done in the faith and larger communities.

Rev. Dotson served on the Board of Ordained Ministry and the Revitalization Taskforce of the Kansas West Conference (now part of the Great Plains Conference). He has served as facilitator for the Fitzgerald Program, a Discipleship Ministries program to equip pastors to begin start-up congregations. From 2009 to 2012, Rev. Dotson served on the Board of Directors of Discipleship Ministries where he was chair of the New Church Starts/Path1 division of the agency. Rev. Dotson also served on The Wichita Food Bank Executive Board, Wichita Children’s Home Board, W.G. Williams Community Foundation Board, Wichita Ministerial Alliance and as a three term appointee by the governor of Kansas to serve on the Kansas Sentencing Commission.

Rev. Dotson resides in Nashville, Tennessee, and is married to Christina Price. They have two children, Wesley and Janelle.
2017 Love Offering for Missions

The theme of the 2017 Annual Conference session—taking place June 20-22 in St. Cloud—is “Encounter the Spirit: Live Expectantly,” and funds from this year’s Love Offering will go to three projects.

United Methodist University of Sierra Leone—School of Applied Health (60%)
Sierra Leone has one of the lowest life expectancies in the world, and one in every five children die before their fifth birthday. The vast majority of the country’s citizens don’t have access to health services, and there is an acute shortage of trained health professionals. This portion of the Love Offering will be used to expand United Methodist University of Sierra Leone by creating a School of Applied Health Sciences in the city of Bo. Funds may be used for rehabilitating an existing classroom building, hiring staff, preparing a curriculum, and purchasing materials. The school will be adjacent to United Methodist-affiliated Mercy Hospital, where students will receive practical, hands-on training. Midwives, nurses, community health officers, and technicians who graduate from this new institution will significantly improve the accessibility and quality of health care throughout Sierra Leone.

Emma Norton Services (30%)
Emma Norton Services helps women, children, and families achieve victory over homelessness, mental illness, and chemical dependency. The Twin Cities-based nonprofit provides safe, affordable housing through Emma Norton Residence, which supports 50 women in transition at any given time, and Emma’s Place, which houses 13 families on a permanent basis. In addition to housing, Emma Norton Services provides case management, peer and individual support programs, youth programs, life skills and out-of-poverty training, mental health support, and advocacy for women with disabilities. Through Emma Norton Services, families receive resources and coaching to equip them on their path toward stability.

Volunteers in Mission Scholarships (10%)
Mission trips transform the lives of participants by giving them an opportunity to grow in faith and gain a new perspective of the world. Through the United Methodist Church’s Volunteers in Mission program, teams spend up to two weeks working on mission projects domestically or abroad. Most teams from Minnesota are engaged in hands-on projects that build infrastructure to ensure that nutritional, medical, and educational programs in developing countries become sustainable and locally run. Team members pay their own way, and the Love Offering helps offset the cost for first-time participants.
Glossary of terms

**Action Items**: Proposed legislation brought before the Minnesota Annual Conference session for vote by the members of conference. These include policy, budget, legal matters, and resolutions on social issues.

**Advance (The Advance for Christ and His Church)**: The program for promoting special gifts to missionary causes over and above apportioned World Service and conference benevolences.

**Annual Conference**: Both: (1) the basic administrative body in the United Methodist Church, made up of churches in a geographic region and (2) the yearly meeting (session) of annual conference members, who determine conference policy, pass a conference budget and, as this group, speak for the annual conference (no other person or body may do so).

**Appointive Cabinet**: A Minnesota Conference leadership team that’s comprised of the bishop, the district superintendents, the director of ministries, and the director of congregational development. The group’s primary responsibility is the appointment of clergy. It typically meets multiple times each month.

**Appointment**: The pastoral charge or other position to which an ordained or licensed clergy person is assigned by a bishop.

**Apportionment**: A method of sharing funds for mission and ministry that proportionally allocates The United Methodist Church budget to conferences (which subsequently apportion to local churches). This enables United Methodists to engage in ministries and mission projects that no single church, district, or annual conference could do alone.

**Bar of the Conference**: The spatial area within which the business of the Annual Conference is transacted. Those who are not clergy or lay session members (elected by their congregations) may sit outside of this area to observe but not vote.

**Bishop**: A general superintendent of The United Methodist Church; bishops are assigned to “episcopal areas” that may comprise one or more annual conferences.

**Church, Local Church**: A congregation of people who have professed faith in Christ, have been baptized, have assumed the vows of membership in the United Methodist Church, and are associated in fellowship as a local congregation.

**Clergy**: Deacons, elders, and licensed local pastors, who are called to set-apart ministries of church leadership and accountability. These are all appropriately referred to as “reverend.”

**Commissioning**: The church’s act of publicly acknowledging God’s call and the response, talents, training, and gifts of those moving toward ordination as deacons or elders. It marks their entrance into a time of probation as they prepare for ordination. Before commissioning, clergy meeting in session also must approve such candidates for provisional clergy membership in the conference.

**Common Table**: A leadership group that’s comprised of conference and ministry team leaders; it meets regularly to confer and share ideas to promote the mission and ministry of the conference.
**Congregational Development:** Assistance, training, and promotion for starting new congregations and helping existing ones to grow in love of God and neighbor, reach new people, and heal a broken world.

**Deacon:** An ordained clergy person called to a lifetime ministry of word and service. Some are appointed to specialized ministries, primarily in the congregational context, and others serve in appointments beyond the local church. In their set-apart leadership, they preach and teach God’s word, lead in ministries of service, assist elders in the administration of the sacraments, and relate the worshipping community to their ministries of service in the world. To allow for flexibility in these varied sites of ministry, deacons seek their site for ministry and request the bishop’s appointment. They are members not of congregations but of the annual conference.

**Deaconess:** A lay woman who has been commissioned by The United Methodist Church to a lifetime commitment to ministries of love, justice, and service. The office was formally recognized in the Methodist tradition in 1888. Deaconesses are accountable to the church through the General Board of Global Ministries. (See also Home Missioner)

**Discipline:** The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church, containing the constitution, policies, and social principles of The United Methodist Church. It is revised every four years by General Conference.

**District:** The major administrative subdivision of an annual conference, established by the conference and formed by the bishop after consultation with the district superintendents. It comprises a number of pastoral charges and is supervised by a district superintendent. There are currently five districts within the Minnesota Conference: Big Waters, North Star, River Valley, Southern Prairie, and Twin Cities.

**District Superintendent:** An elder appointed by the bishop to administer the work of a district.

**Elder:** An ordained clergy person called to a lifetime ministry of word, sacrament, order, and service. In their set-apart leadership, they preach and teach God’s word, provide pastoral care, administer the sacraments of baptism and Holy Communion, and order the life of the church for service in mission and ministry. Their ministry of service consists of leading God’s people in worship and prayer, leading people to faith in Christ, exercising pastoral supervision, and ordering the church in mission in the world. They are itinerate—they make themselves amenable to appointment by the bishop. They are members not of congregations but of the annual conference.

**Elected Leader:** Lay and clergy Minnesota United Methodists who are elected at annual conference session to serve voluntarily on conference ministry and action teams and other conference agencies.

**Episcopal:** Of or relating to a bishop. Bishops serve together as the general superintendents of the denomination. (The word “episcopal” comes from the Greek word episcopus, which means “bishop,” or overseer.)

**Episcopal Area:** One or more annual conferences under one bishop’s supervision.

**Extended Cabinet:** A Minnesota Conference leadership team that’s comprised of the bishop, the district superintendents, director-level conference staff, and two conference lay leaders. The group meets regularly to discuss key strategic conference initiatives and progress in key focus areas.

**General Conference:** The legislative body for the global United Methodist Church. It meets every four years and has full legislative power over all connectional matters (other than constitutional amendments, which also require a vote of the members of all the annual conferences). It is composed of an equal number of elected clergy and lay delegates from all the annual conferences.

**Holy Conferencing:** The United Methodist practice of gathering to make decisions by expressing one’s views honestly, showing love and respect for each other, and seeking God’s will.

**Home Missioner:** A lay man who has been commissioned by The United Methodist Church to a lifetime commitment to ministries of love, justice, and service. Home missioners are accountable to the church through the General Board of Global Ministries. (See also Deaconess)
**Itinerancy:** The system in The United Methodist Church by which pastors are appointed to their charges by bishops; pastors are “itinerate,” meaning they are amenable to appointment to serve any congregation(s) in the conference.

**Jurisdictional Conference:** The quadrennial meeting of clergy and lay delegates from the annual conferences within the boundaries of one of five U.S. jurisdictions. The Minnesota Conference is part of the North Central Jurisdiction. Jurisdictional Conferences convene every four years. Business includes the election and assignment of bishops.

**Local Pastor:** Those clergy who are not ordained but are appointed to preach and conduct divine worship and perform the duties of a pastor while appointed to a particular charge or extension ministry may be licensed for pastoral ministry. The license is valid as long as the appointment continues and is subject to annual renewal.

**Love Offering:** An offering taken in congregations and presented at annual conference session, used to support missions projects in Minnesota and around the world.

**Members:** Members of the annual conference, who are entitled to vote and speak at the yearly conference session, include all clergy and an equivalent number of lay people. Each local church may elect as members the number of lay people from their church equal to the number of clergy people appointed to their church. (Local pastors have voice at conference session but are limited in vote.)

**Ordination:** The rite through which the church affirms the set-apart ministry of those called to serve the church as deacons or elders. Ordained ministry is a lifetime commitment, and those who enter into it dedicate their whole lives to the personal and spiritual disciplines it requires.

**Pastor:** An ordained or licensed clergyperson who orders the ministry of a congregation, preaches, and administers the sacraments.

**Provisional Member:** A clergy member of the annual conference who is preparing for full membership. A provisional member is under examination as to character and effectiveness in ministry.

**Session:** The annual meeting or conference of the regional annual conference body.
Getting to Lake George

Walk or drive - 5th Ave. to 5th St. to the park

Shuttle between the Convention Center Door D, the park, and the Holiday Inn

Parking lot on the park grounds or across the street at the tech school