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2018 WISCONSIN ANNUAL CONFERENCE

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BOARD OF CAMP AND RETREAT MINISTRIES

In our continuing effort to be a vital part of Imagine Wisconsin Anew, the Board of Camp and Retreat Ministries (BCRM) and our camp staff have worked diligently to carry out the guiding statement of the BCRM: *we are building community, equipping disciples, and modeling care of creation in ways that reflect the love and grace of God.*

In the past year, we ministered to over 6,800 guests of all ages who participated in our summer camp and year-round retreat programs. We continued the ministry of *Camp in the Community*, a program where summer camp staff work with local United Methodist congregations to learn to reach out to their communities.

In 2017, Lake Lucerne Camp was re-accredited by the ACA (American Camp Association). We also completed several projects to help us be more effective at making disciples. This included working with NOMADS to complete a new treehouse at Pine Lake, creating a new worship site at Wildwood, as well as significant improvements to the chapel and a new prayer path at Lake Lucerne.

You will notice significant tree harvesting at Pine Lake. While the grounds may look strangely bare for the first year or two, this long-term forest management effort will keep the forest safe and ecologically healthy. Please watch for educational opportunities to help our Conference understand the importance of this effort as well as service opportunities to help with further clean-up.

On our Giving Tuesday Campaign which was held in November of 2017, God blessed us with donations that came to $65,216 plus an additional $2080.00 for other designated funds. These funds will go toward repairing the roof of the Amphlett Hall (including any unforeseen expenses we discover once work begins). Staff will consider options as to how any remaining funds will be used to improve the effectiveness of Amphlett Hall as a ministry location.

Finally, the BCRM has decided to prioritize increasing the numbers of campers every summer. We have contracted with 2-Story Marketing to help us assess our current abilities and expand our capacity to reach new campers. We are also piloting a program to offer bus service to camp. We further hope that within 3-5 years, we will be able to double the amount of scholarships we award on an annual basis.

Please continue to support the Camping and Retreat Ministries of the Wisconsin Annual Conference as we move into an exciting future. Also, please visit us in person, on Facebook, or online at wiumcamps.org. See you at camp!

*Sharon L. S. Cook, Coordinator of Camp, Retreat and Age-Level Ministries*

CONFERENCE STRATEGY BOARD

In the past year, the Conference Strategy Board (CSB) had a very productive retreat that helped us refocus and become more productive and proactive as a board. The board also continues to fund and support new and beginning ministries and to train leaders.

LAST YEAR IN REVIEW

- We have continued our emphasis on the “seven season for planting a church” as we equip and evaluate new ministries.
- Continued to fund and support New Communities of Faith.
- Graduated 28 students in our second class of Institute of Congregational Development (ICD) students who are equipped for new and renewed ministries.
- Third year of Institute of Congregational Development began in January, 2018.
- Began IDC (Hispanic version of ICD) with 41 students.
- Held a training for our District Strategy Teams (DST).
- Worked on developing funding, support and accountability guidelines for the ministries’ we are funding.
• Divided our board into three committees to better manage finances, new ministries, and support of our church planters.

LOOKING FORWARD:
• Continue to grow both ICD and IDC.
• Work with our District Strategy Teams to identify and support opportunities for new ministries with the goal of at least one new ministry per district each year.
• Share with existing congregations our focus on new ministries in new places with new people.
• Provide ongoing support in terms of mentoring, coaching and shepherding teams for church planters and others developing new ministries.
• Continue to share the language of the Seven seasons for planting a church as a common measurement for new ministries.

Julie Wilson, Chairperson

BOARD OF GLOBAL MINISTRIES

The Conference Board of Global Ministries maintains the connectional relationship and provides for global ministries responsibilities related to the objectives and scope of the work of the General Board of Global Ministries. Its mission is to provide a link between the General Board of Global Ministries and the local church: educating, inspiring and encouraging involvement of our members in the many ministries.

Membership on the Board includes a chairperson and vice-chairperson, the Conference Secretary of Global Ministries, chairpersons/coordinators of nine committees (Mission Motivation, Health and Welfare, Community Ministries, National Volunteers in Mission, International Volunteers in Mission, Conference Partnerships (In Mission Together) Disaster Response, Immigration and Refugee Ministries and Native American Plan as well as representatives from NCJ VIM, UMW and the five districts as well as members-at large. The conference liaison for this board is Don Greer. The Board meets three times annually, (two face-to-face and one phone conference).

The Board envisions a time when all United Methodists in the Wisconsin Conference will understand the many ministries and avenues of involvement in the church, and be inspired to participate through financial and/or individual effort. In order to achieve this goal, the Board provides displays at gatherings throughout conference, develops and conducts District Mission Events, sponsors NVIM and IVIM trips and responds to Disaster needs. The Board can also provide speakers on Sunday mornings and for events throughout the conference.

Health and Welfare Ministries (John Lawson, Chair) is the link between the Conference and fourteen agencies related to the United Methodist Church. They are: Bellin Health System, Cedar Crest, Christian Community Home, Evergreen Retirement Community, Harbor House Crisis Shelters, Hillcrest Family Services, Morrow Memorial Home, Northcott Neighborhood House, Parish Nurse Ministries, Schmitt Woodland Hills, Sheboygan Senior Community, United Methodist Children’s Services, United Methodist Hospital Ministry and Village at Manor Park. Each of these agencies has a representative on the committee and has signed a Covenant of Affiliation with the Wisconsin Conference that is renewed quadrennially.

In 2017 Health and Welfare Agencies were very involved in their communities, broadening recognition and reaching those who needed help. Following the incident in Sherman Park in Milwaukee, the work of two health and Welfare agencies, Northcott Neighborhood House and United Methodist Children’s Services, was extensive -- and was lifted up and praised by local news media.

Mission Motivation (Mary Balson, Chair) in coordination with the Conference Secretary of Global Ministries (Benjamin Morris), District Mission Secretaries and the Rainbow Covenant coordinator (Gail Burgess) make up this committee. Along with BGM vice chair Will Jewson they participated in a DSGM Training on November 2nd at Pine Lake Camp led by Steve and Gail Quigg and other members of the North Central Jurisdiction
Staff and GBGM Offices in Atlanta. At the culmination of the training, dates were set for two District Mission Events in 2018.

The Committee hosted four NCJ staff members, missionary Paul Webster and Silvester, and David Phipps, In Mission Together Coordinator for West Africa, during the Annual Conference. All of the above mentioned people also participated in the Annual Mission luncheon, the Learning Day event and helped with the display tables. Forty-two people attended the Mission Luncheon. The food was tasty and the service was great. The room size could have been a bit larger. The 2017 Thelma Gregg Award was given to Bill and Gwen Gibson who had served as missionaries in Senegal in addition to being active in their home church.

The Learning Day Event – The Broad Spectrum of Opportunities - went very well. The variety of speakers was well-received and the audience asked very good questions. The one drawback was that the audience was smaller than anticipated.

Participation in the Rainbow Covenant doubled; 18 churches participated. This is six times the number of participating churches since 2015! While this may seem to be a small number, we are delighted that the word is spreading and hope that someday all churches in the conference will be participating in a variety of mission and ADVANCE opportunities. Participation in the Rainbow Covenant has a direct impact on the local church since they have the opportunity to learn about and support a variety of projects, agencies and persons through their local giving.

Community Ministries Committee provides funding assistance for ecumenical partnerships in Milwaukee (Interfaith Conference of Greater Milwaukee) and Madison. This committee is responsible for maintaining a relationship with these organizations and recommending other such ministries.

In Mission Together was selected as a Conference Partnership for the quadrennium. IMT is designed to move missional support away from situations of dependency or symptom treatment to a true partnership which enables both Wisconsin congregations and congregations overseas to support and encourage one another. Nancy Carmichael-Stoner, who served as chair for this group, resigned in December 2017.

National Volunteers in Mission (Bruce Koch, Chair) meets in April, September and November. The committee planned and sponsored ten VIM trips which included 231 adults and nine youth. Those trips were to New Braunfels, Texas; Baton Rouge, Louisiana; Hayesville, North Carolina; Marionville, Missouri; Pine Lake Camp (including a Chain Saw Training); Red Cliff Reservation in Bayfield; United Methodist Children’s Services in Milwaukee; Lake Lucerne Camp; and Detroit, Michigan. Hours of labor totaled $7077 and the value of that labor (at $15.50/hour) was $106,696.

International Volunteers in Mission (Nancy Carmichael-Stoner) has changed its focus in the past year from training to actively seeking trained leaders to form teams. Training is now offered on a need basis. This has saved the trainers many hours of travel time and “reserved” dates that in the past several years have been unproductive.

We had teams in Ghana, Uganda and Peru (2) this year. The Hispanic Ministry is interested in organizing trips to Puerto Rico. One of the trips to Peru is aimed at young adults and contains a language learning component. Puerto Rico is a special blend of domestic, foreign and disaster. We are working with Disaster Relief and NCJ who have hired Jason Frazer as a special coordinator for Puerto Rico. We still have pretty much zero compliance with Youth groups going international without training. This is an item on our next agenda.

We likely would have more teams if the project component (cost) would be supported by the local church. It will be an item at our next meeting.

Disaster Response (Bud Budzinski, Chair; Lynnette Jordan, co-chair) trained 21 persons in Wisconsin. The number of persons trained as Early Responders has increased from 3 to 24. Twice as many persons attended the training as had been anticipated! Wider involvement in Disaster Response Training means more folks at the local level are able to participate when disasters occur.

Flood recovery work in SE WIS will continue in 2018. Lynnette Jordan has been working with the case manager, although they are not working together in the tri-county (Racine, Kenosha, Walworth) area, so it is
challenging. Three teams are scheduled to come to work. WI NVIM will be there in April 14-24; North Dakota is coming June/16-20 with 110 folks and Michigan is coming with 20 folks in July.

Tom Rossmiller received the Love In Action Award in 2017. Disaster Response is the first three days, disaster relief is the next thirty days and Disaster Recovery includes VIM teams and can extend for years.

**Immigration and Refugee Ministries (Donna Veatch, Chair)** has been functioning as the Immigration Task Force, however it’s time to accept the long-term nature of this struggle and combine refugee and immigrant concerns. Donna is willing to stay on as chair of the committee through the transition, but will be exploring some new areas of focus still relevant to global ministries in the near future.

**Native American Plan (Holly Helton-Anishinaabeqwa, Chair)** has as its goals to promote better understanding and closer ties with the Native American community, to promote and celebrate diversity and to sponsor bi-annual multicultural fairs that will include information, speakers, food, and singing.

### Board of Global Ministries – Future

**Health and Welfare** is Soul Food in Wisconsin – Bishop Hee-Soo Jung. Health and Welfare is a fulfillment of the Social Principles – Dan Dick. There was scarcely any form of social advance in which he (Wesley) was not interested – establishing societies and institutions, workshops, credit unions, children’s homes and schools, homes for the aged, nurses training and hospitals. He believed that a satisfying spiritual experience could not survive apart from enthusiasm for service to mankind. – Parkinson, History of the Board of Hospitals and Homes.

Your Health and Welfare Ministries are in service across Wisconsin. From Janesville to Superior, from Milwaukee to Hudson, from Sparta to Oshkosh, fulfilling Christ’s call to welcome the stranger, cloth the naked and care for the sick. Here is our Plan for Ministry for 2019 and Beyond.

Direct Service to Others (All our organizations) All our organizations engage in direct service. The funds provided to UMCS, Harbor House, Northcott, and Hospitals Ministry cover administrative expenses not covered by Grants. The funds also serve as matching dollars for grants. This allows the organization to leverage these dollars in to grants as much as four times the size of the matching dollars. As state and federal resources continue to be challenged, this is critically important. In addition to serving those in need, we help to make new disciples through volunteer and vocational opportunities as well as leadership training. Priorities touched: Our faith communities will engage the Diversity of their local settings, Mercy Ministry, Make new disciples.

Dementia Capable Training (John Lawson, Older Adult Ministries) The state of Wisconsin has a state wide initiative on creating dementia capable communities. This includes local churches. About half of United Methodists are over age 50. Many of them are dealing with parents with dementia. Our Older Adult Ministries have expertise and resources which they can share with local congregations. We can also train local leaders. This can help local churches develop a outreach identity in their communities. As a part of this, we propose an Annual Conference Education day session featuring Louann Lawson, former chair of the Indiana Governor’s Task Force on Alzheimer’s and Related Dementias. We will tap administration and emerging needs funds for this program. Priorities Touched: Mercy Ministry, Make new disciples.

Bridges out of Poverty Training (Harbor House, UMCS) Harbor House and UMCS are qualified to equip local churches through this program. They can conduct events and train local leaders to replicate this program. This can help local churches develop an outreach identity in their local communities. We will tap administration and emerging needs funds for this program. Priorities touched: Our faith communities will engage the Diversity of their local settings, Mercy Ministry, Eradicate Racism.

Health Aging Training. (Older Adult Ministries, Parish Nursing). About half of United Methodists are over age 50. Many of them are dealing with parents with dementia. Our Older Adult Ministries have expertise and resources which they can share with local congregations. We can also train local leaders. This can help local
churches develop a outreach identity in their communities/Partnering We will tap administration and emerging needs funds for this program. Priorities touched: Mercy Ministry, Make new disciples, Our faith communities will engage the diversity of their local settings.

As we look to the next 5 years, we these will be our priorities: Direct Service to others. Engaging in helping local congregations develop an outreach identity to enable them to make new disciples. Maintain and strengthen the connection between our organizations and the Conference and its local churches. Provide volunteer and vocational opportunities to persons seeking to live out their discipleship.

**Mission Motivation** is planning three to four Global Mission Awareness Events in 2018. They will continue to promote the Rainbow Covenant with a goal of all churches participating in the many channels of giving.

Bolivia will be added as a **Partnership** option for local churches. This should help to reduce some of the confusion around In Mission Together and help congregations to develop relationships with those in other places.

**NVIM, IVIM and Disaster Response** will continue to work together to respond to needs locally, nationally and internationally.

Will Jewson will take on the role of Board of Global Ministries chair following the 2018 Annual Conference. He has served as vice-chair for over a year in preparation for this role. We look forward to working with him as he leads us in new directions.

*Gail Burgess, Interim Chair*

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**WISCONSIN BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND STUDENT MINISTRY (WBHESM)**

### A. Introductory Comments

The Board of Higher Education and Student Ministry strengthened the United Methodist presence on nine of the University of Wisconsin campuses during 2017 with a combination of ecumenical and local church ministries. Our support of North Central College, Naperville, Illinois and Wiley College, Marshall, Texas continued our historic relationship with these fine United Methodist institutions. Apportionment giving made possible financial grants to the ministries who requested assistance. Informational, inspirational and resource support was provided by individual members of the board as well as through the sharing of collegiate ministry resources provided by the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry. We work closely with our ministries to assist them in providing programs and experiences that are focused upon “making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world”. Our ultimate vision is to see collegiate ministry in Wisconsin as self-sustaining financially while being effective in witnessing to the vision and mission of the United Methodist Church.

### B. Highlights and Accomplishments of 2017

- The Wesley Foundation at Oshkosh was re-established through the dedicated efforts of the local Board and a new minister, Katie Grooms, was hired.
- Three collegiate ministries saw changes in leadership and new staffing at Madison: The Crossing; Platteville and Menomonie have brought new insights and creativity to their positions. The new leaders are: The Crossing: Mallory Moore; Platteville: Rev.Cherly Weaver and Menomonie: Trey Hewuse.
- Each month a story appeared in the conference e-newsletter which highlighted one of our ministries, which is one of our strategies for increasing the awareness of collegiate ministry in Wisconsin. This will be continued in 2018.
- The Asbury Award winner was Diane Schumacher, Treasurer of La Crosse: Common Ground, who was recognized for her years of service above and beyond expectations to enrich the lives of students.
• Two new clergy member were added to BHESM membership, Rev. AHyun Lee, and we welcomed Rev. Allie Scott back to the Board after a year’s absence.
• Several of our collegiate ministers were present during annual conference at our display table. They had conversations with both prospective students and delegates about their respective ministries.
• Allocations to our ministries totaled over $58,000. Ministries receiving grants were UW-Madison: The Crossing; UW-Whitewater: University Ministry; UW-Milwaukee: United Christian Ministries; UW-River Falls: Journey House; UW- Stout: Menomonie UMC; UW- La Crosse: Common Ground; North Central College and Wiley College.

C. How the BHESM relates to the United Methodist Church’s Vision and the Vision of the Wisconsin Conference
• As part of our annual evaluation and budget request process, each collegiate ministry is asked to identify how their ministry is witnessing to the transformative power of Jesus Christ and also addressing the conference concerns for engaging our multi-cultural communities, starting new ministries, revitalizing existing ministries, establishing justice and mercy ministries and creating food ministries to feed the poor. The answers to these questions form a significant component of our discussion with each minister as we assess what our financial commitment will be for the year.
• Given the differing contexts for ministry and the transient nature of the student population, it is the responsibility of the local board as well as the collegiate minister, to see that the vision and mission of the United Methodist Church and the Wisconsin Conference are being met. To assist them the Board provided information and consultation to several of the local boards and will plan for some training opportunities in 2018.
• The BHESM is continuing to work with each ministry to provide suggestions as to how the program offerings and experiences might better address elements of the visions mentioned above. It is an ongoing and cumulative process that is evidenced in those ministries that have been established the longest.

D. Plans for 2018
• We will continue our monthly news articles that highlight a different collegiate ministry as a means of increasing our visibility across the conference.
• BHESM will continue to cooperate with the Connectional Table in achieving the conference priorities for ministry through our work on developing metrics for measuring spiritual growth and discipleship.
• A strategy will be developed that addresses how we can get the names of students from the local churches so that we can share with the collegiate ministers.
• We will seek to bring new members to the Board who represent clergy and a broader cultural spectrum.
• Local Board development and training will be pursued more aggressively to further their awareness of the need for fund raising as well as providing program direction and support of the collegiate minister.
• The BHESM will continue to provide financial support from apportionment giving to our ministries for generally no more than 20% of their annual budget.

Respectfully submitted by Michael Moser, Chairperson, Board of Higher Education and Student Ministry
CONFERENCE BOARD OF LAITY

The Conference Board of Laity ("The Board") enables laity to have full and equal partnerships in collaborative ministry with clergy and throughout the Wisconsin Annual Conference. The Board programs align with:

1. the purpose of The Board as defined in The Book of Discipline 2016 (BOD) ¶631
2. the mission of the church to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world (BOD ¶120 The Mission and Ministry of the Church)
3. the purpose of the annual conference to make disciples of Jesus Christ 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 Purpose of the Annual Conference)

The Board

1. grows lay leadership in the local congregations, the circuits, and the districts
2. provides collaborative ministries between clergy and lay,
3. provides lay opportunities for education and spiritual growth
4. develops principled spiritual leaders for the church and for the world

The Conference Board of Laity ("CBOL") aligns its resources, programs, courses, events and activities with the Mission and Ministry of The United Methodist Church "to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world" through the lens of and infusing them with the Wisconsin Annual Conference quadrennial theme 2017-2020 Imagine Wisconsin Anew to (1) engage our multicultural community, (2) plant new ministries, (3) launch a turnaround movement with vital congregations, (4) commit to mercy and justice ministries in both rural and urban settings, and (5) create soul food in Wisconsin.

The Connectional Table clarified the Imagine Wisconsin Anew 2017-2020 quadrennial theme:

1. Our faith communities will engage the diversity of their local settings in “Kin-dom” building.
2. Make 2,500 new disciples through all the means we can including a pipeline to identify, train/equip, and deploy lay and clergy planters.
3. Faith communities will be held accountable to metrics of discipleship.
4. Develop and teach a “Mercy Ministry System” and communicate and equip faith communities.
5. Eradicate institutional racism and equip leaders. Bishop Jung’s Fruit-Producing Strategy – shift our focus from “scarcity” to “abundance”, shift our energy from “retention” to “recruitment” and celebrate the gifts and giftedness of all God’s people.

The Conference Board of Laity achieves this by study and discussion of the quadrennial themes and incorporating vocabulary, images and scriptural references and by promoting and teaching from materials and resources available and produced to support the understanding and living of the same. At the same time, the purpose of the annual conference “to make disciples of Jesus Christ by equipping its local churches for ministry and by providing a connection for ministry beyond the local church; all to the glory of God”; and “develop principled spiritual leaders for the church and for the world” which is one of the four focus areas of The United Methodist Church, so that they are equipped to create new places for new people and revitalize existing congregations, engage in ministry with the poor and combat the diseases of poverty by improving health globally.

We celebrate and rejoice in Bishop Hee Soo Jung’s faithful support for the laity using his voice throughout the Wisconsin Conference and The Great Partnership with the Conference Lay Leader and the Conference Board of
Laity to empower the laity voice in this Conference in order that God’s work can be accomplished by good stewardship of gifts of the Spirit among all God’s people. The Board is the connectional table for laity leaders throughout the Wisconsin Annual Conference: Conference Lay Leader, Past Conference Lay Leader, Associate Lay Leader, Dean and Associate Dean of Faith Alive!, District Lay Leaders, District Directors of Lay Servant Ministries, President of Conference United Methodist Women, President of Conference United Methodist Men, youth representative, and Cabinet Liaison. The Board is in collaborative ministry to worship, to study, to build relationships among its members, to implement and evaluate programs and events; to develop opportunities for spiritual growth for leaders, to collaborate with other boards and agencies in the Wisconsin Conference, and to vision for effective ministry. The Board meets regularly about nine times a year, about half in person and half by teleconference.

Faith Alive! celebrates eighteen years of spiritual formation courses! Faith Alive! was born to open the world to seekers and seekers to the world - not to keep it the same - but to live into a new day. Faith Alive! is asking us to look forward, with new eyes, with new words, and with new visions. April 29, 2018, Faith Alive! will celebrate the graduation of four students who began their two-year journey September 2016. A new class begins every September and registration for the class beginning September 14-16, 2017 is open now on Faith Alive!’s webpage at WisconsinUMC.org where you will find online registration and information about Faith Alive! some of which can be downloaded and shown in local congregations, community groups, at board and agency meetings and in small groups.

Faith Alive! is a major opportunity for laypersons and clergy to reflect on their role as a spiritual person in their daily lives, not just when serving the church. Students of all ages, men and women, come from all over the state. The group gathers January, April and September each year, giving student’s time to seek out God and practice ways to live more faithfully. The Design Team spends much time prayerfully evaluating and futuring Faith Alive! to make adjustments and changes that will grow and improve the students’ experiences while keeping the core values of the program and how to live as a spiritual person in the WORLD. The Design Team spends many hours preparing with the faculty person for each weekend class to help with discernment and reflection on what is core to Faith Alive! and what can be adapted. Faith Alive! core values that align with the purposes of both the Conference Board of Laity and the Wisconsin Annual Conference are: 1) providing the opportunity to study in community with others seeking to develop a deep faith and 2) providing an environment away from home and work that is conducive to dedicating one’s time to spiritual inquiry and development with diverse students and faculty/leaders. The Faith Alive! brochure has been redesigned in look as well as changes in vocabulary to better invite and appeal to a more diverse faith audience.

The Conference Board of Laity offered the workshop “AC 101: Navigating Annual Conference”, a training for first-time attendees to Annual Conference and for those who want a refresher course on the organization and operation of the 2017 Annual Conference. The training was offered on Friday, June 16, 11:00 a.m.-12:00 pm prior to the beginning of opening worship to give opportunity to both clergy and laity to attend and again at 5:30-6:30 pm.

The 2017 Laity Session of Wisconsin Annual Conference, Marriott West Madison, Middleton, Wisconsin, convened Friday evening, June 16, 2017, preceded by gathering music by Dr. Marcia McFee. The Laity were warmly welcomed by Deanna Shimko, Conference Lay Leader; then she introduced Bishop Hee Soo Jung. Bishop Jung greeted and welcomed Laity to this Annual Conference and thanked the Board of Laity for their work in the Conference and for the ministry and opportunities they provide around the Conference.

Conference Board of Laity were introduced: Imelda Roman, South/South East District Lay Leader; Mark Sheets, South East District Lay Leader; Jan Lorenz, North West District Lay Leader; Bruce Drinkman, North West District Director of Lay Servant Ministries; Steve Mayeshiba, South West District Lay Leader; Corrine Daniels, South West District Director of Lay Servant Ministries; Gail Burgess, Dean of Faith Alive!; Chue Vang, Associate Dean of Faith Alive!; Dorthy Radley, Past Conference Lay Leader; and Sam Royappa, Cabinet Liaison. D Shimko expressed appreciation to the Board for their dedicated volunteer work on behalf of laity throughout the Conference all year long.

The DongBu Conference delegation attended Laity Session. They were warmly welcomed. Bishop Choi Hun Young and his delegation were introduced. Bishop Choi Hun Young, Chair of the Wisconsin Conference-DongBu Conference Sister Relationship Committee in DongBu Conference, and DongBu Conference President of Methodist
Men addressed Laity Session. Gifts were presented to all the delegates of DongBu Conference, and Deanna Shimko expressed thanks and appreciation for the Conferences’ Sister Relationship and encouraged Wisconsin laity to speak with members of the delegation while they are at Wisconsin Annual Conference to explore Wisconsin church to DongBu church relationships/exchanges of youth, women’s groups, men’s groups, and children.

Certified lay speakers attending Laity Session and who had completed requirements pursuant to the 2012 General Conference legislation were recognized by asking them to stand when their names were read. Requirements include the new BASIC course plus six courses in specific topics: worship, prayer, spiritual gifts, preaching, UM heritage and UM polity. Certified lay speakers were appreciated with a round of applause.

The lay delegates to the 2016 General and Jurisdictional Conferences clarified purpose of February 2019 Special General Conference vis-à-vis continuation of 2016 General Conference and task force on A Way Forward as well as General Conference 2020 in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Winding up Laity Session, D. Shimko thanked the Board of Laity and all laity present for their passion and ministry all year long in the many congregations and communities of the Wisconsin Conference. Attendees were invited to the Board of Laity display in the exhibit area of Annual Conference for additional support, resources, information and to make connections with the members of the conference Board of Laity. D Shimko closed Laity Session with a prayer of blessing and thanks and encouragement to Imagine Wisconsin Anew! Dr. Marcia McFee led music for all to sing, and we ended with a meaningful oil anointing ceremony.

Conference Board of Laity sponsored a “door prize”. A completed evaluation of Laity Session was a qualifying entry in the drawing for a $50 gift certificate to Cokesbury Store.

Resources were placed on each chair for the attendees: Evaluation of the Laity Session and drawing entry, bio for Dr. Marcia McFee, GBOD 2017 Resources Catalog for Lay Servant Ministries, and a two-sided sheet: What to look for at Annual Conference! What to do after Annual Conference! Guide to “Methodist Speak” (abbreviations and acronyms)/useful websites and useful contacts.

Conference Board of Laity display booth offered the following resources:

- Faith Alive! brochure for 2017-2019 course
- Conference Board of Laity Wisconsin Conference brochure
- GBOD Lay Servant Ministries brochure
- GBOD 2017 Catalog of Resources for Lay Servant Ministries
- Imagine Wisconsin Anew brochure
- Laity Session evaluations and receiving basket for completed forms
- Walk to Emmaus brochure
- Wisconsin Conference UMW Mission U (July 2017 flyers)
- Deaconess information
- Map of Wisconsin Conference districts
- UMW brochure
- Sign-up sheet for people to request additional information
- Bowls of complementary candy
- Evaluation of Laity Session
- Display copies of 2016 Book of Discipline, Guidelines for Leading Your Congregation (English, Spanish and Korean), UM Book of Worship

The Lay Servant Ministries trains in many and varied topics in the caring, leading and communicating categories, not only preaching. The Board attempts to make this better understood among laity and clergy. Some of the many ministries Lay Servants may explore are: new BASIC, Leading Worship, Leading Prayer, Discovering Spiritual Gifts, Preaching, UM Heritage and UM Polity which are required to be successfully completed to be a certified lay speaker pursuant to General Conference 2012 legislation. Other courses, e.g. are Lay Pastoral Care Giving, Lay Servants Teach Adults, Lay Servants Tell Stories, Lay Servants Lead Bible Study, and Lay Servants Are Servant
Leaders. The Board of Laity publishes a brochure explaining Lay Servant Ministries, requirements for serving beyond his/her local church/congregation and contact information for district directors of lay servant ministries.

The District Directors of Lay Servant Ministries (LSM) arrange for basic and advanced classes in all five districts of the Wisconsin Conference. Look for other than LSM courses/programs now accredited for Lay Servant Ministries credit, e.g. Mission U (Conf UMW), Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation (annual stewardship workshops and seminars). The purpose is to make course opportunities more accessible to laity throughout the large geographic area of the Wisconsin Annual Conference and its districts, and to improve the scope and variety of courses available to meet the needs of laity for their personal, leadership and spiritual growth for their lifetimes.

The Fifth Annual Bishop’s Lay Leadership Convocation with Bishop Hee Soo Jung will be held Friday evening, March 23-Saturday, March 24, 2018, at Reedsburg UMC, Reedsburg. Schedule includes Friday evening laity appreciation banquet followed by a panel: Hispanic Pentecost Emergence Initiative in Wisconsin. Opportunities on Saturday, March 24, include opening worship; Bible Study with Bishop Jung on the unity of the church and the Commission on a Way Forward; buffet lunch; displays and resources; Launch Out!; three workshops: Peace Living as A Core Congregational Value, How do we birth/partner new ministries in our existing churches?, and Why Spiritual Formation in the Church; and closing worship.

The Conference Board of Laity has strong, quality programs that foster spiritual growth, resource and equip leaders and provide new opportunities for church members to be strengthened in their ministries. These are different pathways to the same goal: they all align to revitalize, individually and within a congregation, circuit and conference.

The priorities set by the Board of Laity were initially measured primarily by 1) number of attendees, 2) contact hours, 3) cost per person and 4) feedback. Four programs, Faith Alive!, Lay Leader/Lay Member of Annual Conference trainings, Laity Session and the Laity Convocation obtain written participant evaluations at the conclusion of each event/weekend. These evaluations are compiled and distributed among the leadership/design teams. In this way, we can measure the effectiveness of these programs beyond statistics. We can get to a better place: the heart of the meaning of these programs for the participants in their lives by their own testimony. What we have learned is the transforming power of the design/relevance of these programs and the ministry/witness of the faculty/leadership teams. God is ever creating and recreating; so, the life of these participants is unfolding spurred by a newfound willingness to respond affirmatively to God’s call. We cannot see immediately all that they will become, and we may never know all the fruit of their transformations. We do know already significant changes/decisions and steps forward many have made in their lives. They tell/write their stories and live out their faith in the world.

Submitted by
Deanna L Shimko, Conference Lay Leader

BOARD OF ORDAINED MINISTRY

The Roles and Responsibilities of the Board of Ordained Ministry

The Board of Ordained Ministry is responsible for the recruitment, credentialing and nurture of the clergy of the Annual Conference. The work of the Board is an integral part of the development of principled spiritual leaders for the church and the world. The Board relates to everyone who experiences God’s call to professional ministry in the Wisconsin Conference in order to help them clarify that call and understand the opportunities available within The United Methodist Church to respond to that call, and acts on behalf of the church to determine how the church can best affirm each person’s call to ministry. These primary responsibilities are defined in the twenty-seven specific tasks identified in ¶635.2 a through 635.2aa of the 2016 Book of Discipline, as well as the responsibilities of the Registrar of the Board found in ¶635.3a through 635.3e of the 2016 Discipline.

Effective clergy leadership is one of the keys to equipping local churches for ministry. Working together with the District Committees on Ordained Ministry, which by Discipline are sub-committees of the Board, the Board of Ordained Ministry determines on behalf of the annual conference whether those who offer themselves in service as
clergypersons meet the qualifications, ethical standards, and high expectations of The United Methodist Church for its clergy, so that the churches of the annual conference may have competent, effective, and skilled clergy leadership. The Board then makes its recommendations to the Clergy Session of the Annual Conference for their consideration.

The Board of Ordained Ministry meets twice each year at the Bishop Rader Retreat Center at Pine Lake Camp. The Board interviews candidates for Provisional and Associate Membership, as well as candidates for Full Membership and Ordination. Candidates come to Pine Lake overnight to meet with the Board over a two-day period. In addition to three formal interviews, board members get to know candidates informally over meals, in shared worship and communion, and in other unstructured settings. This format for the credentialing process has significantly improved the ability of Board members to get to know candidates and to make better, more informed decisions about their application for commissioning or ordination. One of the consequences of this interview format is that the Board’s meetings are lengthened. It takes longer to interview each group of candidates, and candidates are at camp overnight, which increases the costs of the interview process. While the Board does everything it can to hold down costs, we believe that this improved interview process is a long-term investment in the future clergy leadership of the annual conference.

At any given moment the Board is caring for 150 to 200 individuals who are exploring a call to ministry, enrolled in the candidacy certification process, serving as Licensed Local Pastors, moving towards commissioning and Provisional Membership, serving as Provisional Members while moving towards ordination and Full Membership, or seeking to transfer their credentials into the Wisconsin Annual Conference from other Annual Conferences of The United Methodist Church or other Christian denominations. Approximately 100 Licensed Local Pastors are supervised by the five District Committees on Ordained Ministry.

Candidates for ministry are required to complete a psychological assessment at LeaderWise, and the Board conducts background checks on all individuals seeking a clergy relationship with the annual conference. Both of these measures are required by The Book of Discipline.

There are currently 12 Provisional Members of the Annual Conference who are under the direct supervision of the Board of Ordained Ministry. The Provisional Members participate in a “Provisional Residency Program” which consists of a summer provisional members gathering/retreat, and two provisional residency seminars - held in October and May. This year’s seminars included reflection on Sabbath and sacramental theology. Participation in the provisional residency program is required by The Book of Discipline. Provisional Members are also expected to participate in a Provisional Mentoring group. There are currently two of these mentoring groups around the conference, which usually meet monthly.

The Board is responsible for administering the Conference’s portion of the Ministerial Education Fund. Through this fund individuals received Seminary Scholarship assistance, and 33 Licensed Local Pastors received scholarship assistance for their required Course of Study Classes or Licensing School in 2017. Our seminary students have been blessed with an increase in scholarship assistance as The Ministerial Education funds have been matched by the Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation Seminary Scholarship Fund, which was established a few years ago from the generous gift of $1,000,000 from Mr. Stanley Cottrill.

The Board consults with the cabinet when clergy from other Annual Conferences or denominations are being considered for transfer into the conference or appointment to serve Wisconsin United Methodist churches. Whenever clergy members of the Annual Conference request a change in their relationship (retirement, various kinds of leave, honorable location, etc.) with the Annual Conference or approval of an extension ministry setting, the Board of Ordained Ministry has a role in that process.

Each August the Board sponsors a two-day “New Ministry Orientation” program. The program is designed to provide an orientation to the ministries of the Annual Conference and training in ethics and boundaries for those clergy persons who are serving their first appointment in Wisconsin, or returning to local church ministry after serving in an extension ministry appointment. In 2014 this program was expanded to include Lay Supply Preachers, who are not clergy, but who have been assigned to preach and lead worship in some congregations under the
supervision of a District Superintendent. Approximately 17 persons participated in the “New Ministries Orientation” in 2017. The Board, Cabinet, Conference Staff, the Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation, and other agencies share information about the work of the Annual Conference with persons who are serving their first appointment in Wisconsin or who are returning to parish ministry from leave or an extension ministry appointment. The retreat also includes intensive training in sexual ethics and the maintenance of proper boundaries.

The work of the Board of Ordained Ministry and the District Committees on Ordained Ministry requires thousands of hours of time each year on the part of the 35 Board members, more than 50 District Committee members, and the 5 District Superintendents. These dedicated people willingly give of their time because they believe in the importance of the work of Clergy Leadership Development in the Annual Conference.

The Board of Ordained Ministry depends heavily upon the staff support provided by the Executive Secretary of the Board, who functions as the registrar and maintains the personnel records for the more than 200 people who are under the care of the Board. He provides guidance for those who are entering ministry, which is an incredibly lengthy and complex process, as well as training for mentors, members of the Board and the District Committees on Ordained Ministry, and the District Superintendents. The Executive Secretary prepares materials submitted by candidates for commissioning and ordination for review by the Board, as well as the Board’s report to the Clergy Session (also known as “The Business of the Annual Conference.”) He also conducts background investigations on all candidates for any clergy position in the Wisconsin Conference, and is responsible for the preliminary evaluation of all psychological assessments for candidates.

Highlights of the Past Year

The Board continues to find ways to strengthen its efforts in recruitment with limited resources. Annual Conference instituted a designated Sunday in October for clergy to speak about their call to ministry and to encourage others. In addition, given the positive response from our seminary students we continue to send greetings and gift cards from the Board in the fall and spring.

In recognition of the importance of leadership development among clergy through continuing education the Chair of the Order of Deacon, the Chair of the Order of Elders, and the Chair of the Fellowship of Licensed Local Pastors and Associate Members are working with other conference leadership to help plan the School for Ministry.

Finally, the Board continues to be in conversation with those who are in disagreement and those who are in support of the Board’s statement of nonconformity.

Plans for the Coming Year

As the Board looks to the future it continues to ask the question, “what can we do to encourage and support persons in ministry so that we can offer strong, effective leadership to the church?” This question shapes much of what we do, beginning with mentoring. In recognition of both the importance of offering support and good information to candidates for ministry, and the need to continually be training new mentors, the Board is working to develop a new online training program for our mentors.

Secondly, work will continue with other conference leadership to plan and develop the School for Ministry as a significant venue not only for leadership development of clergy, but also nurturing our relationships and covenant with one another.

While the School for Ministry is one important venue for continuing education there are many more opportunities that will be beneficial for clergy to address their specific needs according to their ministry context. In recognition of the importance of continuing education and time for spiritual development the Board is working on recommendations for policy changes regarding continuing education and clergy time away.

One future tool we will be offering clergy in hopes that it will be life-giving is a clergy assessment or time to “re-connect with God, their call, and their colleagues”. In February 2018 Board members attended a training by the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry focused on providing resources for the development of this clergy
assessment tool mandated by General Conference. This year work will continue as we utilize these resources to develop a model that will be of benefit to the clergy in our annual conference.

Finally, the Board is aware of the covenantal relationship among clergy and the ways we seek to honor and celebrate those connections, not only through times of worship at annual conference but in policies. It is with this acknowledgment that the Board is working to respond to changes in the 2016 Discipline by identifying a process for the transfer of United Methodist clergy from other annual conferences.

The Board’s goal is to provide the congregations of the Wisconsin Annual Conference with the most qualified, competent and capable clergy leadership possible. As the Board guides candidates through the journey from fitness to readiness to effectiveness in ministry, we are always mindful that the people under our care will have a direct impact upon every United Methodist in Wisconsin for generations to come.

Rebecca Henry, Chairperson
Kevin Rice Myers, Executive Secretary

COMMISSION ON ARCHIVES AND HISTORY

The mission of the Wisconsin Conference Commission on Archives and History’s mission is to lead the Ministry of Memory within our Annual Conference. We aim to continue our outreach to the local church in an effort to make them aware of the resources for ministry that the Archives can provide. The Commission also sets policy and priorities for the Conference Archives in the Conference Center at Sun Prairie, the Conference Museum in Greenfield, WI and the Sanford Archives Center, also located in the Conference Center in Sun Prairie.

As the Commission began a new quadrennium in 2017, it was important to review the by-laws that had not been reviewed for some time. We wanted to be sure that our by-laws in were in line with both the Book of Discipline and the Conference Rules. Commission secretary Julie Schubring was instrumental in proposing many of these changes and in bringing them before the Commission for discussion and approval.

One new initiative of the Commission in 2017 was to institute the “Lois C. Olsen Ministry of Memory Award.” This award will become part of the annual awards recognition and presentation at the Wisconsin Annual Conference gathering. Our award will recognize someone who has demonstrated superior work in archival or historical work within or beyond the local church in the Wisconsin Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church. The Lois C. Olsen Ministry of Memory Award is meant to identify and inspire those Wisconsin United Methodists, especially at the level of the local church, who through their efforts have made significant contributions to the preservation of the records and stories that define us as a faith community. The Commission selected Olsen as the namesake of this award for the dedication that she had shown to the Commission and its work in gathering and preserving local church history for the last 30 years of her life. The Commission looks forward to presenting the inaugural award at the 2018 Annual Conference in June.

Our Commission continues to publish and distribute Flashbacks, a journal compiled, edited, and published by the Commission to promote the “Ministry of Memory.” Flashbacks has been published for decades, and we hope to continue this publication—which is distributed to local church historians and interested parties across the state. The Commission voted to publish the Flashbacks twice each year, in April/May and again in October/November. A special emphasis will be placed on honoring and recognizing church anniversaries. The November 2017 edition was filled with descriptions of several church anniversary celebrations. Due to increased mailing and printing costs, we have also worked to create an email list of recipients of Flashbacks. The Conference website also has current and back issues of Flashbacks available.

One of our major outreach events is our annual Archives Retreat, held each fall at Pine Lake Camp. Our seventh annual Archives Retreat was held on September 8–9, 2017 and was focused on: "A Place in the Pulpit—Women in The UMC Tradition." We took a look back at the sixty years since women gained full clergy rights in the Methodist Church in 1956. But we also learned some of the earlier history of women who preached in in many of our predecessor denominations for many years before this. Conference historian, Sandy Kintner presented an interesting presentation highlighting many of these early women pioneers in our Conference. We were then treated
to the premier of a dramatization of the debate at the 1956 General Conference of the Methodist Church that concluded with the vote for women to gain full clergy rights. Sandy Kintner wrote the dramatization, and key roles were played by the Rev. Charles Bauer-King, Barbara Dick, Sandy Kintner, Becky Halstead, the Rev. Wil Bloy, and the Rev. Jim Droste.

Our group was then very fortunate to have the opportunity to hear firsthand the story of the Rev. Dr. Chomingwen Pond, the first ordained Elder with full clergy rights in the Wisconsin Conference of The United Methodist Church. Our learning continued that evening, as the Rev. Dan Dick, Assistant to the Bishop, led us through an enlightening Bible study on “Powerful Women in Scripture.”

The next morning, we held a local church historian workshop to focus on local church history. We celebrated the 70th anniversary of Camp Lucerne with reflections from Gwen Hinz, who was the wife of the first program director at Camp Lucerne, and with reminiscences from others in the audience. The Rev. Norm Silvester shared and sang a song that he had written and first presented at Camp Lucerne. We then focused on successful strategies for local church historians with a presentation from Carol Knight on the 175th anniversary of the Yorkville UMC. Finally, Conference Archivist, Lynn Lubkeman led a discussion about techniques and issues with preserving and saving photographs and slides.

Our retreat concluded with a fascinating panel of women pastors who shared the stories of their call to ministry, as well as some of their experiences in ministry. We were blessed to hear the stories and interchange between the Rev. Dr. Chomingwen Pond, the Rev. Mao Her, the first Hmong woman ordained Elder in our denomination, the Rev. Jean Nicholas, currently Conference Benefits Officer, and the Rev. Nancy Bauer-King, co-author of the book *How Shall We Be Known—Voices of Women in Ministry in the Wisconsin United Methodist Tradition* (1996).

Early in 2017, our Commission added Sandy Kintner as an intern for the Sanford Center and the Conference Museum. He has worked on the inventory of the materials in the Sanford Center Archives and on preparations for the new displays at the Conference Museum in Greenfield, WI. A photo display has been added to the Sanford Center. Progress has been made on proposed Conference Museum displays including a timeline of our denominational history, women clergy in our Conference, as well as a special feature on Bishop Marjorie Matthews, the first woman elected Bishop in a major Protestant denomination. She served in the Wisconsin Conference for four years.

Our Archivist, Lynn Lubkeman, continued her work toward our eventual goals of completing an inventory of all of the backlog of records and materials held in the Archives, of organizing and processing those records, and finally, of ensuring the preservation of those records. And we continue to add to our collections, through donations from churches and individuals. We are also the repository of closed church historical records as well as the records of the Annual Conference itself. So our collection of materials continues to grow as we pursue the necessary collection development to ensure that today’s history is also being preserved. Our Archives is heavily used—by Conference staff, and by people and churches across our Conference. Our office fielded more than 230 research requests this past year.

Our Commission continues to be thankful the large team of volunteers that give both their time and their talents for all of the various projects in the Archives. Their work is crucial to the Archives and the Commission and we thank them for their continued dedication to our mission.

*Jim Droste, Chair*

**ETHNIC LOCAL CHURCH CONCERN ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2018 REPORT**

The Ethnic Local Church Committee exist to support the Wisconsin Annual Conference in its goal to develop ethnic ministries in the conference. It does this through numerous opportunities that it provides to the ethnic churches with financial resources from the Wisconsin Annual Conference. It also serves as a resource to local churches interested in starting or developing new ethnic ministries in their communities.

Its activities throughout the year includes regular meetings to discuss issues affecting the ethnic churches in pastoral leadership and congregational support. It also looks for new ways of recruiting and developing young ethnic youth
for vocations in ministry through the summer developer program, where grants are given to the churches to explore new faith ministries in their various communities as part of the mercy and justice’s ministries. Through its annual training it provides guidance to engage in such ministries in relation to the goals of Imagine Wisconsin Anew which include New Church Starts, Multicultural ministries, Revitalization, Mercy and Justices and Eradication of Racism.

The committee also through its scholarship program assists clergy with their educational endeavors and as well as those involved the course of study and other training opportunities. It also provides funds to support Youth ministry for nurturing and developing leaders. In partnership with CORR, ELCC organizes retreat for the local ethnic churches and help with any conflict resolution issues. It also through its community development grants assists the ethnic churches to explore new faith ministries.

The committee also helps the various caucuses namely Asian, Korean, Hmong, BMCR, Native American and Hispanic to network with their counterparts in the jurisdiction and national levels for learning opportunities. It also participates in the local activities of the caucuses within their various communities.

Submitted by: Rev. Ebenezer K. Insor
Chairperson, Ethnic Local Church Committee

BLACK METHODIST FOR CHURCH RENEWAL

The Black Methodist for Church Renewal is the organized Black caucus of the United Methodist Church. BMCR represents and is dedicated to the growth and welfare of black churches and their concerns within their communities in the Wisconsin Annual Conference. It also partners and collaborate with the other ethnic caucuses, in the promotion of the diversity and multicultural ministries in the Wisconsin Annual Conference in line with the vision of “Imagine Wisconsin Anew”

Through local churches it provides a contextual experience of the black worship to the communities and promote this in other congregations that seek to engage in interracial ministries. It also partners with other community agencies and others who are interested in the black people and their culture. It has been at the forefront of advocacy for better communities and on issues of racial inequality and injustices especially against black people. Through various activities at the local church especially in worship, the black faith experience is shared to inspire and empower others who may challenged by their circumstances and social justice issues. In recent times this has become more important due to police brutalities and other discriminatory practices that has raised great concerns. Through participation and other contributions various concerns have been raised calling for action.

The Wisconsin BMCR has been in transition in its reorganization in the last couple of years. We are thankful for a core group of people who have been passionate and dedicated to strengthening the organization in its revitalization quest. In addition, the organization has been concerned with the state of the black churches which seem to be experiencing some challenges. Meetings have been held locally in the churches in finding ways to address these issues. The organization met with the New Director of Board of congregation and development to discuss strategies and support for the Black churches. Further meetings at the local church level will required to follow up with these strategies. The future discussions will center around revitalization through shared ministries of the three churches or possible new church start of on Black congregation with different sites.

The organization held other meetings in the year aimed at reviewing the goals of the conference as well as carrying out other activities. It participated in the Jurisdictional meeting which also focused on revitalization of BMCR which offered various resources in Matteson, Illinois. We also had a “Watch Night Service” to commemorate the Emancipation proclamation heritage at Solomon Temple Community United Methodist Church. There was also the celebration of the Black History Month at Solomon Temple Community UMC. The Annual Conference celebration of the Martin Luther King Service also took place at the Brown Deer United Methodist Church. The various churches also engaged in various activities within their ministries in fulfillment of their missions.
In promotion and development of black youth, two scholarships were offered from the Alonzo Robinson scholarship fund to two young black youth, pursuing university education. We hope to continue our quest in revitalization in the coming year with various strategies that are being discussed to make BMCR a stronger caucus to provide support to the black churches.

Report Written by: Rev. Ebenezer Insor

CONFERENCE YOUTH COUNCIL

This past year, we planned a second retreat and again, this retreat was a success as there was an increase in registration numbers. The retreat was expanded from 1 night to 2 nights with an emphasis on ‘retreat’ and fellowship. Not only did we have repeat attenders, but we also had new attendees. We focused on a topic that was important to the work of youth leaders in youth ministry and could be modified for the local context. We, as a council, are thrilled at the positive responses we get each year, that we plan on another retreat in 2019 on the weekend of Daylight Saving Time.

Now that we have shifted our focus “to equip congregations to do effective youth ministry through the means of youth leaders at the local level”, we are able to expand on this goal by getting passionate youth leaders from each district. We are excited for the direction this council is moving in.

In addition, our council was able to support youth from our conference who were chosen to go to the Global Young People Convocation in South Africa. We hope to be able to offer further support through this avenue and therefore will be looking at our Angel Fund application and resources for keeping this fund at a healthy level.

Furthermore, we had an excellent youth panel session at the Wisconsin Annual Conference last year. Attended by the keynote speaker, Adam Hamilton, he was very impressed by the presence of youth and their work as youth leaders in their local community.

Thank you for supporting the youth and those who work with youth, both clergy and lay persons, of the Wisconsin Conference.

God’s blessings to you this day,
Rev. Dan Verdegan

COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

The purpose of the Communications Committee is to advise and provide support for the Communications and Information Technology Office, whose primary responsibilities are to:

- Provide a connective link between the Conference staff and ministries, the churches, lay leaders and clergy, congregations, other agencies of the General Conference, and future disciples of The United Methodist Church, through an appropriate mix of communications tactics to best reach these audiences.
- Provide a source for information, news, ideas, joys and concerns, tools, training and more for Wisconsin United Methodist clergy, lay leaders and members.
- Encourage ongoing dialogue among the different audiences and participation in conversations about topics and events of interest.
- Provide a primary point of access to Wisconsin United Methodists for persons/agencies on the General Conference level.
- Direct, administer and provide maintenance for the Conference’s multilevel communications network. Provide technical support and consultation in conjunction with other conference agencies/boards/committees for our Annual Conference sessions and other Conference events, and integration of communication resources throughout the Annual Conference.
- Provide a primary point of access to the workings of the Wisconsin Conference UMC for both secular news and religious media, and other organizations.
- Provide multiple avenues of outreach to the wider Wisconsin community.
Provide Conference leadership through the Full Cabinet and Discipleship Leadership Executive Team.

In 2017, we ensured the timely communication of the messages, inspiration, tools, and training that support the mission and vision:

- Continued efforts to ensure that Wisconsin Conference UMC communications are executed professionally and consistent in voice and message throughout all media.
- Implemented ongoing communications via a variety of tactics, including our website, Enews e-blasts, Reflections print newsletter and other direct mail, print literature, YouTube, Flickr, U-Stream sites, Facebook, Twitter, audio/visual presentations, video conferencing, Zoom/Skype, TV monitors, public relations and other publications.
- Continued to disseminate Soul Food, as well as video messages from Bishop Jung. Produced a wide variety of other videos for workshops and other inspiring events and news.
- Developed a variety of print, PowerPoint, and video tools for use by staff and churches as part of their ever-expanding communications “tool kit”.
- Helped several boards and agencies upgrade and redefine their messaging and communication efforts, including their website presence and printed materials.
- Generated ongoing publicity for the Wisconsin Conference through United Methodist, and other religious and secular media.
- Provided communications planning and training support for important initiatives.
- Helped plan and promote other key Conference events/initiatives, including Annual Conference, Laity Convocation, Bishop’s Interfaith Bus Tour, Clergy Days Apart, School for Ministry, Holy Land Tour, MLK Day, ongoing Disaster Relief efforts, various stewardship efforts, as well as numerous other ministries and missions for which we provide resources and funding. Part of a team that launched a new Conference Event Planning Process to ensure a timely and professional promotional effort and program.
- Provided ongoing personal consultation and training for clergy and lay leaders.
- Directed website updates to increase utility, effectiveness, efficiency and impact, and reduce redundancies.
- Provided crisis management planning, media direction and PR.
- Continued efforts to streamline equipment and servers, and reduce external reliance on our website and email hosting services.
- Ensured reliability of software, virus protection, and spam filtering, and backup solutions for network and websites.
- Maintained security of internal systems, including the safeguarding of all passwords, procedures and inventory.
- Continued to provide audiovisual and live streaming resources for Conference events.
- Continued testing emerging technologies, products, and services to maintain a state-of-the-art communications and information technology (IT) system for the Conference.
- Provided ongoing upgrades to software and computers to meet professional standards.
- Maintained hotline for after-hours/weekend/holiday support needs.
- Continued to organize and recycle equipment; sold off old equipment.
- Met ongoing needs of internal and external customers for email, web, computers, cell phones, I-pads, VPN, and more.
- Completed the downsizing of email hosting for external audiences to improve security and server performance.
- Continued to monitor relationship with IT vendors.
- Overall, implemented strategies to reduce complexity of network, address problems prior to downtime, update security and prevent hacking, improve performance through upgrades, and quickly handle daily issues through helpdesk Ticket system.
- Continued to provide trouble-shooting for new keyless entry system.
- Continued to trouble-shoot and service our voice-over IP phones.
- Installed TV monitors in the entrance and by kitchen in the Conference office building to promote events and pertinent messages to visitors.
- Installed surveillance cameras for staff security. Implementing a new online doorbell/recognition system to provide additional safety measures for staff in building.
- Documented and implemented several key IT policies to ensure consistency and staff effectiveness.
- Worked on a team of staff to assess current and future database needs. Determined that a customized database was best option; developed an implementation plan and budget; hired a programmer; and launched project at end of 2017.
Continued to provide printing, mailing and sourcing services to staff and Conference.

*To meet our mission for the greater ministry of The United Methodist Church, we have established many goals and strategies for 2018 and beyond. Many of these began in 2017 and are ongoing as we continue through 2019:*

- Develop communication efforts that will support *Imagine Wisconsin Anew* initiatives, as well as the priorities set forth by the Connectional Table, including “kin-dom” building with diverse groups within local settings, development of new disciples and new faith communities, implementation of a Mercy Ministry System throughout Wisconsin, eradication of institutional racism, and leadership development. Ensure these messages and focuses are woven into our Wisconsin Conference’s communications.
- Provide communications leadership and efforts for the Launch Out! Funding Campaign, to help solicit funding for the future of the Annual Conference in the areas of leadership development, creation of new faith ministries, revitalization of existing churches, and the launching of mercy and justice ministries as collaborative efforts in all communities.
- Support the communication efforts of the Commission on a Way Forward; promote and report on the decisions made at the special 2019 General Conference.
- Provide Conference leadership through the Full Cabinet, Connectional Table, CT Resource Team, Launch Out! Team, Council for Finance and Administration, Event Management Team, Nominations Committee, and Communications Committee
- Plan and implement an ongoing communications strategy with supporting tactics to promote our mission and vision, and provide a connective link with the Conference, clergy, lay leaders, congregations and potential disciples.
  
  **Tactics will include, but are not limited to:**
  
  - Website
  - Enews
  - Reflections newsletter and other direct mail
  - Printed literature
  - Soul Food message and social media
  - Public relations (both secular and non-secular)
  - Communication tools/materials for events, such as banners, displays
  - Audio/visual presentations, YouTube, Flickr and U-Stream sites
  - Face-to-face meetings, and webinars, and Zoom/Skype conferences

  These efforts will all work together to ensure that we continually connect in a meaningful way with our churches and ministries, and provide them services, tools and information, and add value to their communities. A major focus of all efforts will be to ensure the voice of the Episcopal leadership can be heard within the Conference, denomination, the ecumenical and secular community, and the media.

- Continue to promote several key events and initiatives for the Wisconsin Conference to ensure their success and support, including Launch Out! Funding Campaign, Annual Conference, General Conference, NCJ events, Apportionment Giving, Finance Promotions, Laity Convocation, Bishop’s Interfaith Bus Tour, Clergy Days Apart, School for Ministry, Holy Land Tour, Connectional Table and Resource Teams Campaigns, District Strategy Teams, Circuit Ministry 2.0, MLK Celebration, World Service Fund, Health & Welfare Ministries, UMCOR and other disaster relief efforts, and boards’, agencies’ and committees’ projects, as well as the numerous other ministries and missions for which we provide resources and funding.
- Solicit and share stories of best practices witnessed in churches, circuits, organizations and districts in Wisconsin.
- Continue to provide research and training as needed for UMC initiatives.
- Develop and promote tools (both those created by the Wisconsin Conference and the general church boards and agencies) to help clergy and lay leaders in their ministry.
- Continuation of Providing Quality Communications and Resources to staff, clergy, and laity
- Partner with other North Central Jurisdiction communicators through United Methodist Association of Communicators and other initiatives, including an annual NCJ Communications Conference.
❖ Continue to upgrade/update our integrated online solution, which interacts with e-blasts, social media, databases, video and other tools.
❖ Continue to provide Help Desk IT consulting for clergy and lay leaders. Continue to provide Spanish translations services as needed. We will also continue to recycle computers when possible for use by churches and organizations.
❖ Maintain appropriate level of computer and IT infrastructure and support for Conference staff and regional offices. Improve staff productivity and workplace satisfaction, as well as streamline processes and reduce costs by continuing the standardizing of desktop equipment and software, and upgrading/replacing necessary servers and systems.
❖ IT will continue to communicate policies and procedures to ensure centralized purchasing of computers and software. We will update strategic IT plans, as well as policies for PCI Compliance and disaster recovery, including redundant backup systems. We will also continue to stay abreast of emerging technologies and launch/invest in them as appropriate.
❖ In addition to computers, IT will also continue to support and/or direct domain name registrations, door locking/security mechanisms, cell phones, I-Pads, music/video licensing, and more. We will develop video tutorials when necessary for staff training.
❖ Continue service for our voice-over IP phone system that saves money and adds more utility.
❖ Continue working on transition to a new customized database solution, entitled ARK (Access Relevant Knowledge).
❖ Utilize technology to assist Cabinet in appointment-making process; including new Smart Board.
❖ Continue to partner with GCFA when needed for IT solutions.
❖ Work with Service Department staff to provide cost-efficient and speedy printing and mailing services.

Michele Virnig, Conference Communications Director

CONFERENCE PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

Introductory Comments
The Conference Personnel Committee is responsible for establishing and implementing policies and procedures, salary scales and criteria for all Conference staff positions. The Committee provides oversight and delegation of the search process, employment and supervision of conference staff positions other than District Superintendents and Assistant to the Bishop. The committee works in consultation with the Bishop (for those positions he supervises), and with appropriate programmatic and administrative groups during a search process, and provides general oversight and coordination for those positions.

The Conference Personnel Committee provides ongoing support, leadership development, and recruitment of an excellent Conference staff that is multicultural, diverse and focused on new ministries, revitalization and mercy & justice ministries. The Committee also supports the Conference staff as they work with the Conference and local churches in aligning with the five priorities set by the Connectional Table: Multicultural Engagement; New Ministries; Revitalization; Mercy & Justice Ministries; and Eradicating Institutional Racism.

Highlights and Accomplishments
• Worked with the General Council on Finance and Administration (GCFA) of The United Methodist Church in conducting a personnel audit of staffing in the Conference Center in an effort to be good stewards of Conference Connectional Giving dollars.
• Selection and hiring process for Director of Congregational Development. Rev. Jorge Mayorga Solis was welcomed into that position, effective March 15, 2017.
• Selection and hiring process for a Conference Benefits Officer (CBO) after the retirement and celebration of Rev. Steve Zekoff’s ministry in that position. Rev. Jean Nicholas was welcomed as CBO, effective July 1, 2017.
• Selection and hiring process for the position of Accountant in the Finance Office. Jason Rasa was welcomed in that position, effective March 6, 2018 after the celebration and departure of Tou Kou Khang as Accounting & Building Manager.

The committee provided oversight to and support for the staff of the Wisconsin Annual Conference as staff provided leadership to the conference in implementing its vision and the focus areas of The United Methodist Church. It also provided oversight and support to insure there is appropriate and sufficient staff to do the work of ministry and to coordinate lay/clergy leadership in its work through various boards and agencies.

The Committee has moved to consolidated responsibility for all conference staff (other than District Superintendents and Assistant to the Bishop), which includes current and future employees of various Boards and Agencies. The Personnel Committee prepared and submitted the 2019 budget, in consultation with appropriate boards and agencies regarding salaries for all staff positions that are now part of this consolidated budget.

The Committee continues to review and update the employee handbook, which has been in operation since the fall of 2013.

The primary goal of the Conference Personnel Committee is to continue working with the Bishop in designing and implementing personnel scenarios based on the priorities set by the Conference Connectional Table and that fit into budget parameters for Conference Personnel set by the Conference Council on Finance and Administration (CF&A) and the Annual Conference.

Jenny Arneson, Chairperson

UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

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

Highlights of 2017

Membership: We celebrate that 6730 women across Wisconsin Conference are members of United Methodist Women.
Mission Action Day was held at Columbus UMC on April 1, 2017. The event was planned by our mission coordinators: Wendy Wilson-Uhl (Social Action), Betty Henderson (Education and Interpretation), and Deb Pattee (Spiritual Growth). This was our third and final year on the topic of homelessness. Our speakers included Kathy Metzenbauer from the Juneau County Extension speaking about SEA (Support, Education and Advocacy) of Change Juneau County, Bruce Wallbaum from Occupy Madison speaking about the tiny home movement and Karen Andro, Director of Outreach Ministries at Madison: First UMC speaking about hosting homeless people at church.

Charter For Racial Justice Program: The Charter For Racial Justice Policies is a document that has been approved by National UMW and adopted by General Conference as a guide for reducing and eliminating racism in both church and society. UMW conference officers wrote a program specifically for use by units in Wisconsin. This program titled “Listening to Native Americans: Stories and Struggles” focused upon the experiences of Native Americans in Wisconsin both historically and in current context. We explored the idea of historical trauma and how this works in the context of the experiences of the Native American community. We looked at the stories of Native Americans in Wisconsin as they faced challenges of stereotyping, health and healthcare difficulties, greater risk for domestic violence and human trafficking.

Northcott Neighborhood House: United Methodist Women continues to support the mission we started at Northcott Neighborhood House over 50 years ago. We are members of both the mission board and corporation and were present at the Annual Meeting. The Annual Meeting was held at St. Martin DePorres Catholic Church on April 30, 2017. At the Annual Meeting attendees brainstormed ways in which Northcott could do more fundraising and work towards a sustainable future.
On December 2nd Northcott held an Open House. Attendees were introduced to all of the various programs hosted by Northcott. In addition, one of the houses built by the Milwaukee Builds project was open for tours. A small amount was raised through a sale of donated items. The plan is to hold several small events over the coming year at which supporters will be able to interact with Northcott and better understand its projects and mission. We continue to encourage units and individuals to give financial and in-kind support to this mission as it works through a difficult time of mission transition and financial strain.

Mission u: From July 24 to July 27, we held our four-day Mission u at the Mead Hotel in Wisconsin Rapids. The studies were: 1) Covenant Community- taught by Rev. Dan Dick, Barbara Dick and Rev. Linda Vance; 2) Climate Justice- taught by Laura Pfeffer; 3) Missionary Conferences – taught by Rev. Rob Odum and Billie LaBumbard. To those who requested, Continuing Education Units were given to pastors and Alternative Advanced Credits through exception credits to maintain status of certified lay speakers, certified lay servants and certified lay ministers to laity who attended the 4-Day session. There also was a class for teens and Limitless (Young) Women led by Corrine Robson, Gloria Carter and Mary Lainberger. Our Dean was Karen Mayeshiba; Assistant Dean, Stacy Ganzer. Overview day, a single day in which a “taste” of each study is presented, was held on Friday, July 28. Our children’s camp Yo-Mi-Ca (Youth Mission Camp) was held at Pine Lake the same week using the children’s study for “Missionary Conferences”.

Seminar Mission Experience: On August 5-12, 2017 twenty-three women and young adults attended a Seminar program in Washington, DC and New York. The Board of Church and Society led workshops on the topic of Climate Justice in Washington, DC. National United Methodist Women led workshops on the topic of Economic Inequality in New York. In Washington DC, the group toured the Methodist Building on the square with the Capitol and held a meeting with Senator Tammy Baldwin’s staff to present requests to work on the topic of climate justice. In New York a tour of Roosevelt island provided a glimpse into the ways in which the geography of this isolated island has been used to segregate unwanted populations such as prisoners, people suffering from small pox, the poor and other “undesirable” persons. During the final day the group developed a letter requesting support from Bishop Jung to continue to work on the topics of Climate Justice and Income Inequality. United Methodist Women will continue to resource units and congregations in partnership with the Board of Church and Society on these topics.

Annual Gathering: Our Conference Annual Gathering was held at Waukesha: First UMC on Oct. 20-21, 2017. Ruby Dow, Vice-President was in charge of this event. An optional opportunity was offered on the Friday afternoon before the event to carpool to Northcott Neighborhood House in Milwaukee for a tour and introduction to the mission of our National Mission Institution. Our keynote speaker was Barbara Dick who spoke on the topic of Covenant Community. In the afternoon a panel of women from the Muslim Women’s coalition spoke on Islam and combating stereotypes and prejudices against Muslims. Our Limitless (Young Women) attended Annual Gathering as part of “Girl’s Night Out” with their own speakers and activities in parallel with our main event. They joined the main event for worship and to hear the keynote speaker and panel as well as to assist leading in worship.

Mabel Heil Scholarships: In the 2017-2018 academic year, Wisconsin Conference United Methodist Women awarded $3400 in college scholarships among 10 applicants for the fall semester of 2017 and $3450 among eight applicants for the spring semester of 2018. This fund was begun by Mabel Heil and is available to United Methodist Women who are seeking a college education, associates degree, bachelor’s degree and beyond. Recipients are chosen through an application process and all members of United Methodist Women are urged to apply. When deciding on scholarship amounts, preference is given to non-traditional students.

Mission Giving: We celebrate that in 2017; Wisconsin Conference United Methodist Women gave $218,187.42 to Mission Giving. This was over our pledged amount and is the first time we have met our pledge in many years. In addition to our Mission Giving we raised $29,422.77 in designated funds for mission projects.

2018 Activities and Celebrations

Mission Action Day: This event is scheduled for April 7, 2018 at Mauston, UMC. The topic will be Health Care Policy and Income Inequality and Racial Justice.

Mission u: Mission u will be held July 23-July 26, 2018 with overview day on July 27, 2018. The study topics will be “Embracing Wholeness: An Earth Perspective for Covenantal Living”, “What About Our Money? A Faith
Response” and “Missionary Conferences of the United Methodist Church in the United States”. There will be classes for Teens/Young Women, as well. Yo-Mi-Ca (Youth Mission Camp) will be held at Pine Lake Camp concurrently with Mission u.

Assembly: The quadrennial gathering of all United Methodist Women from around the world will be held May 18-20 at Columbus, OH. An optional Ubuntu day of service will be May 17th.

Annual Gathering 2018: Our Conference Annual Gathering will be held Oct. 19-20 at Waukesha: First UMC. On optional tour of United Methodist Children’s Services will be offered Friday afternoon. We plan to have our Limitless (young/teen women’s group) retreat on-site again this year to increase fellowship and intergenerational connection.

Imagine Wisconsin Anew: Wisconsin Conference United Methodist Women embraces the Annual Conference theme of “Imagine Wisconsin Anew.” We are working as “One in Christ” as we work towards our 150th anniversary in 2019 by engaging in uplifting our LEGACY endowment fund, as we continue the mission work started by our foremothers, yet reinvented for today’s needs and in growing our next generation of women in mission through our Limitless group. We are engaging in social justice issues with our Mission Action Day and Charter for Racial Justice programs so that all of God’s children may enjoy the bounty of the Lord and the abundant life of community. We always work to empower the laity of our conference (both men and women) with resources, opportunities for spiritual growth and learning engaged in mission in order to deepen the discipleship which leads to the transformation of the world.

Martha Boyer, President

WISCONSIN UNITED METHODIST FOUNDATION, INC.

INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS
The Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation is an adjunct ministry of the Wisconsin Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church. The Foundation’s mission is: “to assist the ministries of the United Methodists in Wisconsin through lifelong financial stewardship”.

HIGHLIGHTS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS
• The Foundation and our investment consultant Robert W. Baird worked with the Minnesota Foundation to secure all the investment assets from the Minnesota Annual Conference.
• An audit of our computer systems, governance, risk and compliance was performed by SVA Consulting. To comply with the audit findings, we have developed technology policies, and a comprehensive disaster recovery plan.
• The total funds under management surpassed the $132 million-dollar mark! This was accomplished through the addition of new accounts, contributions to existing accounts, and investment gains.
• We donated $45,000 to hurricane relief efforts in Texas, Florida, Puerto Rico & the Caribbean.
• We partnered with Vanco to promote and encourage churches to offer electronic giving to help increase their stewardship efforts. 28 churches took advantage of special pricing.
• Three stewardship seminar/retreats were held in February, August and October. These gatherings were well attend with over 150 people representing 40 participating congregations. We have received feedback that the information presented has helped churches increase giving and support ministry.
• Rev Jean Ehnert Nicholas was appointed as the Conference Benefits Officer, and left the Foundation in May after serving the Foundation since 2001. Jim Wells was promoted to full time status with the title of Director of Stewardship & Capital Campaigns.

SERVICES OFFERED
INVESTMENT: The Foundation provides options for local churches and church-related entities to pool their funds for professionally managed investment. Our investment policies are designed specifically to serve the long-term investment strategies of United Methodist ministries, endowments, trustees’ funds and other permanent funds. We seek to provide maximum benefits of
investment growth and earnings, while maintaining a conservative investment strategy and minimizing risk levels. In addition, our funds investment policy operates under the United Methodist Social Principles. We offer investments in our Equity Pool, in our Fixed Income Pool, and in our Church Loan Pool.

PLANNED GIFTS: We provide an on-going educational program available to all church-related groups at no charge. We offer charitable giving seminars and workshops, individual consultation with clergy, laity, and local church groups about charitable giving options and assistance in the technical aspects of completing charitable gifts.

We continue to operate a Charitable Gift Annuity Program. We also serve as Trustee for individually created Charitable Remainder Unitrusts. The Foundation has planned giving software to assist individuals in charitable gift planning. Through continuous promotion, education and awareness we see significant gifts being received by Wisconsin United Methodist Churches and related institutions around the world.

STEWARDSHIP/Education: Our staff is available to help organize, train and provide resources to Wills, Memorials and Estate Committees in the local church. We also provide guidance in the development of local church Endowment Funds and encouragement to on-going program efforts at the local level. We meet with Church Councils, Trustees and Finance Committees to explain the investment options we provide local churches through our professionally-managed Equity Pool, Fixed income Fund and Loan Pooled Fund. Increasingly we are working with circuit gatherings in Stewardship and Planned Giving educational programs.

We hold three stewardship events annually. A retreat at Pine Lake Camp in August, the “Superbowl” of stewardship seminar in February and the “Fall Festival” of stewardship in October. Local church stewardship teams come and learn about stewardship programs and develop a year-round stewardship plan with strategies that will fit their congregations.

We provide an annual “Clergy Tax Seminar” for Wisconsin clergy at no cost to the Conference. We also provide an annual New Clergy Orientation where we meet with newly appointed clergy serving the Wisconsin Conference to update them on Foundation services.

GRANTS, SCHOLARSHIPS AND GIFTS:

The Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation continues to invite applications and award grants throughout Wisconsin. We hope to encourage innovative and creative ministries, provide scholarship assistance, provide resources for United Methodist missions and assist a variety of projects in Wisconsin churches.

GRANTS
Sixty-two grants were awarded in 2017 totaling over $99,290. These grants will help churches and UMC organizations that are starting new ministries and programs. *For additional information on grant recipients please, visit our website www.wumf.org.

An additional $104,475 was given from our Undesignated fund to support hurricane relief and conference needs, and initiatives.

SCHOLARSHIPS
In 2017 the Foundation awarded 37 scholarships totaling $31,000 to promising young United Methodist college students and adults returning for additional education, or persons working towards vocations in church-related fields of ministry.

The Foundation also awarded 10 Scholarship grants totaling $39,500 to Wisconsin UM students attending seminary in preparation for service in the Wisconsin Conference. * For additional information on scholarships, please visit our website www.wumf.org.
CONGREGATIONAL LOAN PROGRAM
As of December 31 2017, our Church Mortgage Loan Program had 25 active loans for churches. Loans total $6 million and are often at better interest rates for the congregations, leaving more funds available for programs and other local church expenses.

CAPITAL CAMPAIGNS
We provide a positive, faith-centered fundraising assistance to Wisconsin United Methodist Churches seeking to raise capital funds in addition to the annual operating budget. We have three options that you may choose from to best suit your congregation. In 2017 we helped three congregations raise funds for building maintenance and additions to their buildings.

STOCK GIFTS
Though our relationship with Robert W. Baird, we are able to process gifts of stock free of all fees to help donors willing to support United Methodist Ministries through stock donations. In 2017 we received and processed 188 stock gifts totaling $1.6 million that went to local churches and other United Methodist ministries.

2017 FINANCIAL RESULTS

The Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation manages accounts for UMC churches and agencies. Below are results for the past year that show our growth in both investments and numbers of churches served. For additional information regarding our investment performance, please visit our website at www.wumf.org

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Foundation Staff

President: Eric P. Churan  
Vice-President of Finance: Tom Schaefer  
Director of Stewardship & Capital Campaigns: Jim Wells  
Loan Officer/Financial Associate: Diane Follmer  
Administration: Emily Peterson  
Treasurer: Rev. Jane Daniels

Respectfully submitted,
Jack Werner, Chairman of the Board  
Eric P. Churan, President
AFRICA UNIVERSITY REPORT

Africa University is deeply grateful to the Wisconsin Conference for investing in the Africa University Fund (AUF) apportionment at 105.24 percent in 2017. Thank you, Wisconsin United Methodists, for leading by example through your generosity and faithfulness to this ministry.

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

Institutional Update:

- Currently, Africa University hosts a vibrant campus community of 1,417 students and faculty and staff from 31 African nations. An additional 392 students are pursuing degree programs on a part-time basis. Amidst a transition in the governance of Zimbabwe, teaching and learning activities have continued uninterrupted.
- Africa University’s annual operating budget of just-under $10.5 million prioritizes student access and retention, with more than $2.2 million in scholarships and financial aid awards disbursed in 2017.
- A new academic structure, which includes the Institute of Theology and Religious Studies, is encouraging innovation and enhancing Africa University’s relevance to The United Methodist Church and to sub-Saharan Africa.
- Through teaching and research, Africa University is making trailblazing, regional contributions in migrant and refugee protection, in child rights, and in Africa’s efforts to eradicate malaria and other insect-borne diseases.
- Africa University has more than 8,000 graduates who engaged in efforts to make disciples, alleviate poverty, improve global health, and better the quality of life in communities across sub-Saharan Africa.

The Wisconsin Conference’s engagement with Africa University represents hope and transformation for young women and men who are answering the call the meaningful discipleship. As Africa University embraces emerging opportunities for service and impact within and beyond the church in Africa, the unwavering support of the Wisconsin Conference is of vital importance. Please remember the students, faculty, administrators, trustees, and alumni of Africa University in your prayers. The university community thanks the Wisconsin Conference for its graciousness and urges local congregations to continue investing in this ministry.

Thank you, Wisconsin Conference, for your foundational role in the Africa University story. Thank you for affirming the power of faithfully sowing and working together in ministry with Africa University. May God bless and keep you always in an abundance of grace and mercy.

Submitted on April 9, 2018 by: James H. Salley
Associate Vice Chancellor for Institutional Advancement
Africa University Development Office
1001-19th Avenue South
P O Box 340007
Nashville, TN 37203-0007
Tel: (615) 340-7438
Fax: (615) 340-7290
jsalley@gbhem.org
www.support-africauniversity.org
In 2017-2018, Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary focused on the following priorities:

- **Responsive and Relevant Theological Education**: Respond to the educational and professional development needs of prospective students, alums, clergy, and laity by providing relevant theological education in a variety of formats and investing in our competent and diverse faculty.
- **Inclusivity in Our Relationships**: Ensure we are equitable, just, and inclusive in our relationships with the variety of diversity we encounter (e.g., racial, cultural, sexual orientation) within both our seminary and local communities.
- **Ensuring a Vibrant Future**: Establish a vibrant future by investing in employees, instituting new policies and procedures, caring for the earth, and generating gifts to sustain the seminary for generations to come.

### RESPONSIVE AND RELEVANT THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

**Scholarships Available for Fall 2018**

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

**Two New Master of Arts Degrees**

**Master of Arts in Public Ministry**

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

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

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

**Connectional Learning**

Connectional Learning is the name for Garrett-Evangelical’s new take on continuing education. We seek to create education and training suited to your unique professional, vocational, and spiritual needs. Our new suite of offerings enables you to choose the programming that fits best for your physical location, ability to travel, learning preferences, time, and budget. We saw tremendous growth in this area with an increase in the number and type of programs we offered online, on campus, and regionally. We are actively preparing our Fall 2018 offerings to announce them at our Annual Conference visits.
Upcoming programs that may be of interest to you are a community organizing workshop held in Chicago on June 18-22, 2018. In Fall 2018, we will launch our online “Financial Management for Churches and Nonprofits” course for clergy to attend with a lay leader. Registration opens in late spring/early summer. This course was designed as part of our Lilly Endowment grant, “Leading Vibrant Congregations: A Collaboration of Faith and Finance.” To learn more about our offerings and stay up to date on future programs, please visit: www.garrett.edu/connectional-learning.

Faculty Scholarship

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


INCLUSIVITY IN OUR RELATIONSHIPS

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

ENSURING A VIBRANT FUTURE

Hope for Creation and Green Seminary Certification Program

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

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

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

Cordially,

Lallene J. Rector, President

CANDLER SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

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

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

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

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

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

Candler has a deep commitment to alleviating student debt and employs a multi-pronged approach to tackle this issue. In 2017-2018, we awarded $5.3 million in Candler scholarships, with 97 percent of MDiv students receiving aid and the average scholarship covering 75 percent of tuition. Plus, our comprehensive “Faith & Finance” program teaches money management skills that serve our students now and will continue to serve them—and the churches they lead—well into the future.
Half of Candler’s faculty are United Methodist and 58% come from traditions within the larger Methodist family. This year, we welcomed fellow United Methodist Helen Jin Kim to the faculty as Assistant Professor of American Religious History, and we sent best wishes along with our colleague Mary Lou Greenwood Boice as she retired after 25 years of remarkable service to Candler.

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

—Jan Love
Mary Lee Hardin Willard Dean and Professor of Christianity and World Politics
Candler School of Theology

BOSTON UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

Dear Colleagues in Ministry:

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

BREAKING NEWS:

• **Students**: Our entering students were the most diverse in our history, creating remarkable opportunities for in-depth exchange and fruitful collaboration.

• **Faculty**: We welcomed three amazing faculty this year: Rebecca Copeland in Theology (focus on environmental theology); Theodore Hickman-Maynard in Black Church Studies; and Cornell William Brooks as Visiting Professor of Social Ethics, Law, and Justice Movements. Thanks to loyal alums, we also endowed the Harrell Beck Professorship in Hebrew Scripture and installed Kathe Darr as the first Beck Professor.

• **Congregations**: The Lilly Endowment awarded the Center for Practical Theology $1.5 million to create an innovation hub, which will foster creative vocational reflection in congregations, and a sharing of the congregations’ wisdom.

• **Doctor of Ministry**: The DMin in Transformational Leadership is soaring with lively student cohorts that are broadly ecumenical, culturally diverse, and global. The model includes intensives, online courses, and faculty mentoring.

• **Scholarships**: We continue our offer of free tuition to UMC registered candidates for ordained ministry, and we continue to build student scholarships and housing as a central campaign priority. New scholarships include the Dale Andrews Scholarship in Practical Theology and Race, Korean Student scholarship, and the Bishop John H. Adams and Dr. Dolly D. Adams Scholarship for candidates for ordained ministry in the AME, AMEZ, and CME churches.

• **Arts Initiatives**: Recent exhibits and events include “Symbols and Art of China, Korea, and Japan” and “Bridging Divided Communities through the Arts”

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

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

• **Religion and Conflict Transformation Clinic**: Internships and workshops that foster justice and reconciliation.

• **Travel seminars**: Courses engaging local communities on Arizona-Mexican border, Israel and Palestine, India, spiritual life centers, and Serbia and Croatia (with focus on interreligious dialogue).
• **Ecumenical partnerships:** Continuing close work with UMC, AME and other Wesleyan denominations, while launching robust Communities of Learning with the Episcopal Church and United Church of Christ.

• **Partnership with Hebrew College:** Joint courses and public events, plus co-sponsoring *The Journal of Interreligious Studies*. The focus is on enriching theological education with interreligious learning and leadership opportunities.

**TAKING ACTION GLOBALLY AND LOCALLY:**

• **Campus action:** Work to improve accessibility and sustainability. BUSTH is the first certified Green School in BU, and is active in the Green Seminary Initiative. It has also been named as one of the “Seminaries that Change the World.”

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

**COMMITMENT TO JUSTICE:** Celebrating differences while joining in action.

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

**OTHER NOTABLE NEWS:**

- Celebration of the 40th anniversary of the Anna Howard Shaw Center

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

*Blessings and gratitude,*

*Mary Elizabeth Moore, Dean*

**SAINT PAUL SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY**

Kansas Area Campus
Saint Paul: Church of the Resurrection
4370 W 109th St, Suite 300
Overland Park, KS 66211

Oklahoma Area Campus
Saint Paul: Oklahoma City University
2501 North Blackwelder

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

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

Saint Paul School of Theology announced a new FLEX schedule for theological education starting Fall 2018. Seminarians will receive a more Flexible Learning Experience that combines convenience and community opportunities with intentional academic scheduling. Students can take a mixture of online, on-campus, and hybrid (blended online and on-campus) courses to complete the required curriculum.
One FOCUS week will be scheduled each semester for hybrid and on-campus students. They will come together with faculty and skilled practitioners to participate in spiritual formation retreats, practicums that teach ministry skills (i.e. funeral planning, technology in worship, financial reporting), and community activities.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Heather Snodgrass, Director of Communications
Saint Paul School of Theology

WISCONSIN COUNCIL OF CHURCHES
www.wichurches.org

We pray and work for the unity and renewal of the church and the healing and reconciliation of the world.

Tracing its roots back to the early 1940’s with an inter-denominational recreation ministry for young people, the Wisconsin Council of Churches (WCC) began in 1947 and now encompasses 19 denominations with approximately 2,000 congregations and over one million church members statewide.

2017 Accomplishments

Equipping Leaders, Empowering Public Witness – events included the Washington Island Forum, with John Dominic Crossan speaking on ways the Christian scriptures deal with violence; the Winter Forum, in which Dr. Drew Hart spoke on changing the conversation on race in the church; and People of Faith United for Justice Advocacy Day, which brought together a broad cross-section of Wisconsin’s religious community, equipping them to advocate with state lawmakers in face-to-face visits.

Executive Director Transition – with the departure of Rev. Scott Anderson at the end of February, the Council was in transition during much of 2017. Laurie Wilkinson served as interim executive during the search process. The Rev. Kerri Parker began serving as the Council’s new Executive Director in late October.
70th Anniversary Dinner and Annual Meeting –
At the anniversary dinner, our keynote speaker Kathryn Lohre, former president of the National Council of Churches, helped us to think creatively about the future of the ecumenical movement. The next day, Katherine Cramer of the UW-Madison riveted the Annual Meeting audience as she spoke about people’s deep struggles with identity and invisibility.

End Child Poverty – We launched this initiative in December with three statewide partners (WISDOM, Kids Forward, and the Citizen Action Education Fund), seeking 10,000 signatures from WI residents committed to the goals of cutting child poverty and racial disparities in half in the next ten years. Read more and sign on at www.endchildpovertywi.org/endorse

2018 Highlights

Washington Island Forum – What is true in life is also true in scripture: the verbs dominate. It’s what we do and don’t do that preoccupies us. Anna Carter Florence will be our presenter for this year’s event, inviting us to find new things to see and hear in our sacred text and our human drama. Join us for 4 days of worship, workshops, discussion and contemplation in a beautiful retreat setting this June. For more information about the Forum and other WCC educational events, go to wchurches.org/events.

Winter Forum – Dwight Zscheile helped us explore faithful innovation in the church, reminding us that “innovation grows out of close listening relationships with neighbors.” Over two days in Stevens Point, individuals and teams explored how church traditions and practices could be clarified, translated and renewed to make sense in today’s contexts.

Unite to End Racism – The journey to an April rally on the National Mall and day of action in Washington DC serves as the anchor for conversations about race, relationship-building, and action planning toward the transformation of our hearts and institutions. Unite to End Racism is more than a field trip – it is a call to action, the launch of an ongoing initiative.

Becoming Welcoming Communities – A series of regional forums will help communities assess their readiness to take the next step in welcoming their immigrant and refugee neighbors.

Addressing Gun Violence – We are preparing resources to help communities have faithful conversations & take action on this critical issue.

Kerri Parker, Executive Director
Wisconsin Council of Churches

HEALTH AND WELFARE AGENCIES

Health and Welfare is Soul Food in Wisconsin – Bishop Hee-Soo Jung

Health and Welfare is a fulfillment of the Social Principles – Dan Dick

There was scarcely any form of social advance in which he (Wesley) was not interested – establishing societies and institutions, workshops, credit unions, children’s homes and schools, homes for the aged, nurses training and hospitals. He believed that a satisfying spiritual experience could not survive apart from enthusiasm for service to mankind. – Parkinson, History of the Board of Hospitals and Homes.

Your Health and Welfare Ministries are in service across Wisconsin. From Janesville to Superior, from Milwaukee to Hudson, from Sparta to Oshkosh, fulfilling Christ’s call to welcome the stranger, cloth the naked and care for the sick. Here is our Plan for Ministry for 2019 and Beyond.

Direct Service to Others (All our organizations)

All our organizations engage in direct service. The funds provided to UMCS, Harbor House, Northcott, and Hospitals Ministry cover administrative expenses not covered by Grants. The funds also serve as matching dollars
for grants. This allows the organization to leverage these dollars in to grants as much as four times the size of the matching dollars. As state and federal resources continue to be challenged, this is critically important. In addition to serving those in need, we help to make new disciples through volunteer and vocational opportunities as well as leadership training.

Priorities touched:
- Our faith communities will engage the Diversity of their local settings
- Mercy Ministry
- Make new disciples

**Dementia Capable Training (John Lawson, Older Adult Ministries)**

The state of Wisconsin has a state wide initiative on creating dementia capable communities. This includes local churches. About half of United Methodists are over age 50. Many of them are dealing with parents with dementia. Our Older Adult Ministries have expertise and resources which they can share with local congregations. We can also train local leaders. This can help local churches develop a outreach identity in their communities. As a part of this, we propose an Annual Conference Education day session featuring Louann Lawson, former chair of the Indiana Governors Task Force on Alzheimer’s and Related Dementias. We will tap administration and emerging needs funds for this program.

Priorities Touched:
- Mercy Ministry
- Make new disciples

**Bridges out of Poverty Training (Harbor House, UMCS)**

Harbor House and UMCS are qualified to equip local churches through this program. They can conduct events and train local leaders to replicate this program. This can help local churches develop an outreach identity in their local communities. We will tap administration and emerging needs funds for this program

Priorities touched:
- Our faith communities will engage the Diversity of their local settings
- Mercy Ministry
- Eradicate Racism

**Health Aging Training. (Older Adult Ministries, Parish Nursing)**

About half of United Methodists are over age 50. Many of them are dealing with parents with dementia. Our Older Adult Ministries have expertise and resources which they can share with local congregations. We can also train local leaders. This can help local churches develop a outreach identity in their communities/Partnering We will tap administration and emerging needs funds for this program.

Priorities touched:
- Mercy Ministry
- Make new disciples
- Our faith communities will engage the diversity of their local settings

**As we look to the next 5 years, we these will be our priorities:**
- Direct Service to others
- Engaging in helping local congregations develop an outreach identity to enable them to make new disciples.
- Maintain and strengthen the connection between our organizations and the Conference and its local churches.
- Provide volunteer and vocational opportunities to persons seeking to live out their discipleship.

*John Lawson, Chairperson*