



**The United Methodist Church  
Louisiana Annual Conference  
Pre-Conference Report**

June 7 – 10, 2015

Centenary College, Shreveport



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## **AS YOU PREPARE FOR 2015 LOUISIANA ANNUAL CONFERENCE**

“I’m glad because of the way you have been my partners in the ministry of the gospel from the time you first believed it until now. I’m sure about this: the one who started a good work in you will stay with you to complete the job by the day of Christ.” Philippians 1: 5-6

Dear Friends:

Soon we will gather as a community of Christ followers in what is called in Methodist jargon “Holy Conferencing.” This is a time of celebration through worship, song, fellowship, learning, and discernment on issues that we hold in common. We come as clergy and laity, seeking to share the love of Christ with one another and with the world. We come to remind ourselves that it is “not about us,” but about sharing the Good News with those outside the walls of the church. We come as those who hunger and thirst after righteousness. We come to receive the gifts of the Spirit, to bear one another’s burdens, and to hear God’s Word anew in our lives.

As you prepare to come to this Conference session:

1. Pray for God’s guidance to be with you and among us all, so that the good work that has begun in us will stay with us to complete God’s work.
2. Read of the many amazing ministries that have occurred or that are anticipated within our connectional Church.
3. Be prepared to share in discussion on issues that are before us.
4. Come thirsty, asking to be filled with the witness to our common faith and common hope.

Our theme invites us to “Come and See.” Come and see what the Lord has done. Come and see what the Lord is doing. Come and see, and then go into the world to serve the One who came to bring God’s love to all.

See you in Shreveport!

## HOW TO SAY WHAT YOU WANT TO SAY: IT'S PETITION TIME AGAIN

Our United Methodist Church is based on democratic principles. Persons who have concerns about what our church does and how we do it may work for change through the legislative process of the Louisiana Annual Conference.

Any individual member or a duly elected body of the local church or a district of the Louisiana Annual Conference may petition the Louisiana Conference session that will meet June 7-10, 2015. Each petition will be assigned to a Board, Committee or Commission for consideration. That group will discuss the issue pertained to in the petition and follow a course of action; i.e., agree with the petition (concur); amend the petition; or not agree with the petition (non-concur). The petition will then be brought before the body of the Conference with that group's recommendation.

If you, your church or organization wishes to write a petition, the following steps will be helpful:

1. Briefly write your concern or the course of action you wish the Conference to follow;
2. Write the reason(s) you feel your concern is important;
3. Develop a formal petition using a recognized format. The format includes a title, the name of the person submitting the petition, the statement of concern, the proposed solution, and the method of implementation. The petition should resemble the format that is on page 3 of this Pre-Conference Report.

Petitions that are written thoughtfully and carefully receive closer attention. They are easier to read and to facilitate.

All Petitions must be typed. Margins of at least ½" are needed for reproduction. Send Petitions (preferably by email) to [johns.bern@gmail.com](mailto:johns.bern@gmail.com) or mail to Rev. Bernadine Johnson, Chair, Committee on petitions, 12500 Old Hammond Hwy, Apt E5, Baton Rouge, LA 7081601090. All Petitions must be **received** by Sunday, May 31, 2015; this is not an arbitrary date but is required by conference rules. Each person or organization submitting a petition must supply 1200 copies printed on the official form (on yellow paper) using "Astrobright Paper" – color – Sunburst on the opening day of Annual Conference. These may be brought to the office located in the Gold Dome.

# PETITION TO THE 2015 LOUISIANA ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Petition Number \_\_\_\_\_ Committee or Commission \_\_\_\_\_  
(the above to be filled in by the Petition Committee)

Subject: \_\_\_\_\_

Petitioner: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Local Church: \_\_\_\_\_  
(If individual petitioner)

Reasons for the Petition (Whereas):

Proposed Action (Be it therefore resolved):

Committee or Commission Report  
(number of votes): Concur \_\_\_\_\_  
Do Not Concur \_\_\_\_\_  
Abstain \_\_\_\_\_

If Concurrence is Sustained Refer to \_\_\_\_\_  
for Implementation.

All Petitions must be typed. Margins of at least ½” are needed for reproduction. Send Petitions (preferably by email) to [johns.bern@gmail.com](mailto:johns.bern@gmail.com) or mail to Rev. Bernadine Johnson, Chair, Committee on petitions, 12500 Old Hammond Hwy, Apt E5, Baton Rouge, LA 70816-1090. All Petitions must be **received** by Sunday, May 31, 2015; this is not an arbitrary date but is required by conference rules. Each person or organization submitting a petition must supply 1200 copies printed on the official form (on yellow paper) using “Astrobright Paper” – color – Sunburst on the opening day of Annual Conference. These may be brought to the office located in the Gold Dome.



## **BUDGET AMENDMENT FORM FOR THE 2015 LOUISIANA ANNUAL CONFERENCE**

Individual Submitting Proposed Amendment

---

**(Please type or print)**

Agency/Church Affiliation

---

(Please type or print)

Report Number (Circle)                      I                      II Apportionment Line Item  
to be Amended (Added) \_\_\_\_\_

Subcategory, if any \_\_\_\_\_

Requested Increase Decrease \_\_\_\_\_

Rationale for Proposed Amendment: \_\_\_\_\_

---

Signature  
Submitted

---

Date

\*Note that in the Conference Rules under Article II, Rule 16, it states that this budget amendment form must be submitted in writing to the CFA no later than 2 weeks prior to the opening of Annual Conference to change the CFA presented budget at Annual Conference. No additional budget amendments will be accepted from the floor without the Annual Conference suspending this Conference rule. Suspension of rules requires a 2/3 vote of Annual Conference.

The deadline for Budget Amendments for the 2015 Session of Annual Conference is Sunday, May 24, 2015.

**2015 PRE-CONFERENCE MEETING**  
**Live Streaming**  
**Sunday, May 17, 2015, 3:00 pm**

**ACADIANA**

**Asbury UMC, Lafayette**  
101 Live Oak Boulevard  
Lafayette, LA 70503

**First Houma UMC**  
6109 Highway 311  
Houma, LA 71306-6659

**BATON ROUGE**

**First Baton Rouge UMC**  
930 North Blvd  
Baton Rouge, LA 70802

**LAKE CHARLES**

**First Lake Charles UMC**  
812 Kirkman St  
Lake Charles, LA 70601-4359

**First Pineville UMC**  
2550 Monroe Hwy  
Pineville, LA 71360-4139

**MONROE**

**First Monroe UMC**  
3900 Loop Rd  
Monroe, LA 71201-3125

**Trinity UMC, Ruston**  
1000 Woodward Ave  
Ruston, LA 71270-2154

**NEW ORLEANS**

**St. Timothy UMC**  
335 Asbury Drive  
Mandeville, LA 704714

**SHREVEPORT**

**Grace Community UMC**  
9400 Ellerbe Rd,  
Shreveport, LA 71106-7404

## HIGHLIGHTS FOR THE 2015 LOUISIANA ANNUAL CONFERENCE

1. The theme for the 2015 Annual Conference session is "**Come and See**". This is a pivotal invitation found in the scriptures that offers the opportunity to a personal encounter with Jesus Christ. The foundational scripture for our time together is **John 1:39-51**, but we will incorporate many such scriptural examples as we renew our own invitation to once again come and see even as we invite others to come and see for themselves.
2. We will once again celebrate local church and corporate images of learning, living and telling the gospel story through creative ministries within our Conference as we gather for the **2nd Annual Wesley Awards**. The great event will take place on Tuesday evening in the Gold Dome. You are invited to come casual or to "dress to the nines" as many did last year.
3. The **Conference Restructure Task Force** report will be presented for a vote at this session. This recommendation is the culmination of a two year process that has included discussions with many lay and clergy throughout the Conference. This recommendation is included in this pre-conference report in conjunction with the Rules Committee report.
4. **Bring bread!** We are asking that each local congregation bring a loaf of bread. You will be invited to share this bread at the Sunday evening worship/communion. The bread not used for the service will be shared with the homeless in the Shreveport area. At the feeding of the five thousand, Jesus taught his disciples to share what they had. Perhaps we, too, can share our blessing with one another and with those who have no bread.
5. The **Offerings** for Annual Conference will go to support two important ministries of our connection. We will receive an offering at the Celebration of Ministry Service that will assist our most recent ordinands in our Conference every other year **Ordinand Holy Land Tour**. This has proven to be an amazing spiritual continuing education experience for these pastors that continues to provide Biblical Context and Spiritual nurture throughout their careers. (Others are invited to participate in this Holy Land Tour as well.) In addition, we will participate in the **75th anniversary of UMCOR** through our offerings. We in Louisiana have received much from our connectional church through the generosity of others through United Methodist Committee on Relief. Now is our chance to provide that same gift to other in a significant way as this arm of our church gives relief to those in disasters throughout our world. Remember, 100% of funds received go for direct assistance.
6. **The District Pre-Conference Meetings** will be held at 3:00 pm on Sunday Afternoon, May 17<sup>th</sup>. As we did last year, Bishop Harvey will lead these events via live streaming technology. Each District has designated locations within the District for the Conference delegates to attend.
7. All are invited to join in a Louisiana Conference family "**Food-Truck**" meal on Sunday prior to our worship. The food trucks and food booths will be located in the parking lots beside the Gold Dome from 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm. Please come dress casual (no need to change clothes for worship). The food options will be varied. You will pay for your meal at the booth/truck. Bring along a folding chair/table, and sit back and enjoy the fellowship.

8. **Worship.** We will gather for worship and Bishop Harvey's Episcopal Address on Sunday Evening in the Gold Dome on Centenary's Campus beginning at 7:00 pm. Ordination will take place at First UMC, Shreveport on Monday evening beginning at 7:00 pm.
9. **Worship Leader** for this Conference session be Stacy Hood, who serves as Director of Worship Related Ministries at Grace Community United Methodist Church in Shreveport. Stacy is a much sought after worship leader throughout our Conference and the larger United Methodist connection. We look forward to her leadership once again.
10. The **Laity Session** will be held on Monday morning, June 8<sup>th</sup> beginning at 7:00 am with the Laity Breakfast followed by The Laity Session at 8:00 am. The Laity will gather at Broadmoor UMC, Shreveport for this segment of our Conference. The Board of Laity will have buses available for transportation from Centenary to Broadmoor. More information on this will be provided at the Pre-Conference meeting.
11. We are pleased to have **three guest speakers** for our 2015 Session. Each speaker will provide insight into our theme, as we explore the current opportunities to "offer them Christ."

**Dr. Elaine Heath**, McCreless Professor of Evangelism, Perkins School of Theology Southern Methodist University.

**Rev. Eric Huffman**, Pastor of St. Luke's contemporary worship community, Houston, Texas.

**Rev. Justin Coleman**, Chief Ministry Officer for The United Methodist Publishing House.

# AGENDA FOR THE 2015 LOUISIANA ANNUAL CONFERENCE

## Sunday Night June 7

2:30 PM		<b>Registration Training</b>
3:00 PM	- 6:45 PM	<b>Registration begins - Fitness Center</b>
4:00 PM	- 6:00 PM	<b>Boards and Agencies - <i>see schedule of meetings</i></b>
5:00 PM	- 7:00 PM	<b>Tailgating in Parking Lot-casual attire</b>
6:15 PM	-	<b>Teller Training</b>
7:15 PM	-	<b>Pre-Service Music - Gold Dome</b>
7:30 PM	-	<b>Opening Service w/Episcopal Address and Communion</b> <i>(Every Congregation brings a loaf of bread)</i>

## Monday Morning June 8

6:45 AM		<b>Morning Prayer - Amphitheater</b> <i>(Sponsored by UMM)</i>
7:00 AM		<b>Laity Breakfast - Broadmoor UMC</b>
8:00 AM	- 5:00 PM	<b>Registration continues - Fitness Center</b>
8:00 AM	- 9:30 AM	<b>Laity Session - Broadmoor UMC</b> <b>Clergy Session - Brown Chapel</b>
9:30 AM		<b>Break</b>
10:30 AM		<b>Gathering Music - Gold Dome</b>
10:45 AM		<b>Celebration of Life Service</b>
11:50 AM		<b>LUNCH BREAK</b> Extension Ministries Luncheon

**Monday Afternoon  
June 8**

1:45 PM		<b>Gathering Music - Gold Dome</b>
2:00 PM		<b>Business Session #1</b> The Convening of the 45 <sup>th</sup> Session Welcome Prayer Roll Call Motions from the Secretary Motions/Rules of Order/Adoption of Agenda Episcopal Committee Report
2:20 PM		Board of Ordained Ministry
3:20 PM	- 3:35 PM	<b>Break</b>
3:35 PM		<b>Business Session #2</b> CFA #1 Resolutions/Petitions #1 Retiree's Recognition #1
4:00 PM	- 5:00 PM	<b>Guest Presentation -Dr. Elaine Heath</b> Courtesy Committee Report Closing Prayer
5:10 PM		<b>Dinner Break</b>
7:00 PM		<b>Pre-Service Music - First UMC, Shreveport</b>
7:30 PM		<b>Ordination Service - First UMC, Shreveport</b> Bishop Cynthia Fierro Harvey - Preaching Reception Following Service (Bain Hall, First UMC, Shreveport)

## **Tuesday Morning June 9**

6:45 AM		<b>Morning Prayer - Amphitheater</b> ( <i>Sponsored by UMM</i> )	
8:00 AM	-	Noon	<b>Late Registration</b>
8:15 AM			<b>Gathering Music</b>
8:20 AM			<b>Guest Presentation - Rev. Eric Hoffman</b>
9:00 AM			<b>Break</b>
9:45 AM			<b>Business Session #3</b> Prayer Committee on the Journal Recognition of Retiree Class of 2015 Restructure Committee/Committee on Rules
10:30 AM			
Noon			<b>Lunch Break</b> Retirees Luncheon
1:45 PM			<b>Gathering Music</b>
2:00 PM			<b>Business Session #4</b> Prayer Retiree's Recognition #2
2:40 PM			<b>Guest Presentation - Rev. Justin Coleman</b>  CFA #2 Equitable Compensation Board of Pensions Courtesy Committee Report Prayer
4:00 PM			<b>Dinner Break</b>
7:30 PM			<b>2015 Wesley Awards</b>

**Wednesday Morning,  
June 10**

6:45 AM	<b>Morning Prayer - Amphitheater</b> ( <i>Sponsored by UMM</i> )
8:15 AM	<b>Gathering Music</b>
8:30 AM	<b>Business Session #5</b> Committee on the Journal Retiree's Recognition #3 Committee on Petitions/Resolutions Committee on Nominations Conference Board of Trustees Episcopal Residence Committee
9:45 AM	<b>Guest Presentation - Dr. Elaine Heath</b>
11:00 AM	The Fixing of Appointments Service of Sending Forth including Passing of the Mantle Deconsecrating of Space and Communion Departure



# **BOARD MEETINGS FOR THE 2015 ANNUAL CONFERENCE**

**Sunday, June 7, 2015**

## **Jackson Hall**

Board of High Education	4:00 – 6:00	Room 111
Board of Church and Society	4:00 – 5:00	Room 109
COSROW	4:30 – 5:30	Room 107
Board of Global Ministries	4:30 – 5:30	Room 108
Council on Finance & Administration	4:30 – 6:00	Room 117
Board of Trustees	5:00 – 6:00	Room 110

## **Smith Building**

Board of Ordained Ministry	4:00 – 6:00	Kilpatrick Auditorium
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# MEAL INFORMATION FOR THE 2015 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

## Monday, June 8, 2015

Breakfast:	<b>Laity Breakfast</b> Speaker: Dean Harvey Tickets are available from your District Lay Leader or purchase your ticket on line at <a href="http://www.la-umc.org/events/detail/4819">http://www.la-umc.org/events/detail/4819</a>	7:00 am	Broadmoor UMC, Shreveport Cost: \$16.00
Lunch:	<b>Traditional Wesleyan Fellowship</b> Speaker: John Lomperis RSVP: Woody Hingle at <a href="mailto:nnhii@bellsouth.net">nnhii@bellsouth.net</a>	12:00 pm	Kilpatrick Auditorium, Smith Bldg. Cost: \$13.75
	<b>Extension Ministry</b> RSVP: Kathy at 225-346-1646 or <a href="mailto:enixmore@bellsouth.net">enixmore@bellsouth.net</a>	12:10 pm	Whited Room, Centenary College Cafeteria Cost: \$15.00
	<b>Clergy Spouse Luncheon</b>	12:15 pm	1 <sup>st</sup> UMC, Bossier 201 John Wesley Blvd Bossier City, LA 71112 Cost: \$15.00
Dinner:	<b>Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary Dinner</b> Call Rev. Heather Leyland (337) 499-7197	5:15 pm	Monjuni's 1315 Louisiana Ave Off of menu
	<b>Asbury Alumni and Friends</b> Speaker: JD Walt RSVP: John Robert Black Call/Text 318-560-7857 or <a href="mailto:johnrobertblack@yahoo.com">johnrobertblack@yahoo.com</a>	5:30 pm	1 <sup>st</sup> UMC, Shreveport Cost: \$15.00
	<b>Perkins Alumni</b> RSVP: Rachel McConnell-Switzer 337-527-5483 <a href="mailto:rmcswitz@hmumc.com">rmcswitz@hmumc.com</a>	5:00 pm	1 <sup>st</sup> UMC, Shreveport Cost: \$20.00
	<b>Duke Alumni</b> Checks payable to: 1 <sup>st</sup> DeRidder UMC 406 Shirley St. DeRidder, LA 70634 or email Dr. Wayne Evans <a href="mailto:wevansumc@gmail.com">wevansumc@gmail.com</a>	5:30 pm	1 <sup>st</sup> UMC, Shreveport, Hunter 104 Cost: \$15.00
	<b>St. Paul School of Theology Alumni</b> RSVP: Rev. Tom Howe <a href="mailto:thowe@christ-umc.org">thowe@christ-umc.org</a>	5:15 pm	1 <sup>st</sup> UMC, Shreveport Cost: \$15.00

## **Tuesday, June 9, 2015**

Breakfast:	<b>LA Fellowship of Local Pastors &amp; Associate Members</b> Speaker: Rev. Matt Rawle RSVP: Pattye Hewitt at 985-778-3094 or email <a href="mailto:pattyehewitt@gmail.com">pattyehewitt@gmail.com</a>	7:00 am	Whited Room, Centenary College Cafeteria Cost: \$12.00
	<b>Order of Deacons &amp; Diaconal Ministries</b> Pay at the door	7:00 am	Bynum Commons, Centenary College Cafeteria Cost: \$15.00
Lunch:	<b>Retirees Luncheon</b> No reservations necessary <a href="mailto:r.stafford@comcast.net">r.stafford@comcast.net</a>	12:00 pm	Noel UMC
	<b>COSROW</b> Speaker: Rev. Katy McKay Simpson RSVP & Tickets: Sarah Shoup at 225-766-4594 <a href="mailto:deaconsarah@stjohnsbr.org">deaconsarah@stjohnsbr.org</a>	12:00 pm	Whited Room, Centenary College Cafeteria Cost: \$16.00
Dinner:	<b>Gammon Dinner</b> Speaker: President Mosley of Gammon Seminary RSVP Rev. James Graham <a href="mailto:jgraham993@aol.com">jgraham993@aol.com</a>	5:00 pm	St. Paul UMC 1001 Pierre Avenue Shreveport, LA Cost: \$15.00
	Centenary College Alumni RSVP by Friday, June 5 <sup>th</sup> to <a href="mailto:alumni@centenary.edu">alumni@centenary.edu</a> or call (318) 869-5155	5:00 pm	Strawn's Eat Shop

## **Wednesday, June 11, 2014**

Breakfast:	<b>4<sup>th</sup> Day Breakfast</b>	7:00 am	Broadmoor UMC Anderson Hall (Gym) Cost: Donation
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# 2015

## LOUISIANA ANNUAL CONFERENCE REGISTRATION FORM

June 7 – 10, 2015, Centenary College, Shreveport

**\$30.00 per Member if pre-registered by May 20. After May 20 - \$50.00!**

Retired pastors who are not serving a church do not have to pay this fee.

If serving a church, retired pastors do pay this fee.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

CHURCH \_\_\_\_\_

PASTORS NAME \_\_\_\_\_

YOUR CELL PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ CLERGY

\_\_\_\_\_ LAITY

Registration is available online at [www.la-umc.org](http://www.la-umc.org) or you can mail this form to your **District Office** with your registration fee payable to your **District Office** (do not send anything to the conference office). Registration will be available at the Pre-Conference meeting on May 17<sup>th</sup>. All delegates, both clergy and laity, must pay the registration fee. Alternate delegates do not need to register or pay the fee.

The deadline for registering is **May 20, 2015**. Registration must be **RECEIVED** in the district office by this date; or you must register online by this date. **After May 20, the registration fee will be \$50.00 per delegate, and you will have to stand in line and register at Annual Conference (that is, you cannot register with the district after May 20).** At Annual Conference, cash or check only will be accepted; we will NOT be able to accept debit or credit cards

## DISTRICT OFFICES 2015 (through June 30, 2015)

### ACADIANA

#### District Superintendent

**Rev. John Cannon**

Mrs. Marny Fife  
850 Kaliste Saloom, Suite #100  
Lafayette, LA 70508  
Office (337) 235-2904 Home (337) 235-3017  
Fax (337) 235-0080  
Email [acadumc@cox-internet.com](mailto:acadumc@cox-internet.com) Marny Fife  
Email [johncannon@hotmail.com](mailto:johncannon@hotmail.com) Rev. John Cannon

### MONROE

#### District Superintendent

**Rev. Ellen Alston**

Mrs. Linda Murphy  
3101 Armand Street, Suite #2  
Monroe, LA 71201  
Office (318) 387-7364 Home (318) 322-9074  
Fax (318) 387-0000  
Email [monroesecretary@bellsouth.net](mailto:monroesecretary@bellsouth.net) Linda Murphy  
Email [monroedistrict@bellsouth.net](mailto:monroedistrict@bellsouth.net) Rev. Ellen Alston  
[Ellen.alston@gmail.com](mailto:Ellen.alston@gmail.com)

### BATON ROUGE

#### District Superintendent

**Dr. Van Stinson**

Mrs. Lynette DeLaune  
527 North Blvd., Suite 306  
Baton Rouge, LA 70802  
Office (225) 293-8868 Fax (225) 293-8869  
DS Cell (225) 892-7159  
Email [brdistrict@brdistrict.org](mailto:brdistrict@brdistrict.org) Lynette DeLaune  
Email [vanstinson@brdistrict.org](mailto:vanstinson@brdistrict.org) Dr. Van Stinson

### NEW ORLEANS

#### District Superintendent

**Rev. Hadley Edwards**

Ms. Shari Smothers  
3117 22<sup>nd</sup> Street, Suite #4  
Metairie, LA 70002  
Office (504) 835-6330 Fax (504) 835-6364  
Email [noladistrict@gmail.com](mailto:noladistrict@gmail.com) Shari Smothers  
Email [hrobroyed@aol.com](mailto:hrobroyed@aol.com) Rev. Hadley Edwards

### LAKE CHARLES

#### District Superintendent

**Rev. Steven Spurlock**

Mrs. Barbara Hogan  
PO Box 41188  
Lake Charles, LA 70601  
Office (337) 439-2982 Home (337) 477-2808  
Fax (337) 439-2969  
Email [lcdistrict@lcdumc.com](mailto:lcdistrict@lcdumc.com) Barbara Hogan  
Email [sspurlock@lcdumc.com](mailto:sspurlock@lcdumc.com) Rev. Steven Spurlock

### SHREVEPORT

#### District Superintendent

**Rev. Ken Irby**

Mrs. Joyce Wilson  
816 Kirkman St.  
Shreveport, LA 71134-1188  
Office (318) 869-5729 Home (318) 861-6922  
Fax (318) 865-9623  
Email [jwilson@centenary.edu](mailto:jwilson@centenary.edu) Joyce Wilson  
Email [kirby@centenary.edu](mailto:kirby@centenary.edu) Rev. Ken Irby

## OFF CAMPUS LODGING FOR 2015 LOUISIANA ANNUAL CONFERENCE

<b>HOTELS AND MOTELS - SHREVEPORT</b>		
Best Western Chateau Suite	Cajun Inn	Comfort Suites
201 Lake Street	2610 Clairborne Avenue	6715 Financial Circle
Shreveport, LA 71101	Shreveport, LA	Shreveport, LA
Phone: (318) 222-7620	Phone: (318) 636-0000	Phone: (318) 364-8801
Alt.: 1-800-845-9334		
Courtyard by Marriott	Fairfield Inn by Marriott	Hampton Inn Shreveport Airport
6001 Financial Plaza	6245 Westport Avenue	5226 Monkhouse Drive
Shreveport, LA 71129	Shreveport, LA 71129	Shreveport, LA 71109
Phone: (318) 686-0880	Phone: (318) 686-0102	Phone: (318) 636-4447
Alt.: 1-800-321-2211	Alt.: 1-800-228-2800	Alt.: 1-800-HAMPTON
Hampton Inn Shreveport	Hilton Garden Inn	Hilton Hotel Shreveport
8340 Millicent Way	5971 Financial Plaza	104 Market St.
Shreveport, LA 71115	Shreveport, LA	Shreveport, LA 71101
Phone: (318) 798-1320	Phone: (318) 686-0148	Tel: (318) 698-0900
Alt.: 1-800-465-4329		Alt: (800) 445-8667
Holiday Inn Express Hotel-West	Holiday Inn Financial Plaza	Homewood Suites
5420 Interstate Drive	5555 Financial Plaza	5485 Financial Plaza
Shreveport, LA	Shreveport, LA 71129-2663	Shreveport, LA
Phone: (318) 686-8328	Phone: (318) 688-3000	Phone: (318) 549-2000
	Alt.: 1-800-HOLIDAY	
Jameson Inn	Mid Continent Inn	Remington Suites Hotel
6715 Raspberry Lane	8580 Greenwood Road	220 Travis St
Shreveport, LA 71129	Shreveport, LA	Shreveport, LA 71101-3298
Phone: (318) 671-0731	Phone: (318) 938-5423	Tel: (318) 425-5000
Fax: (318) 671-0732		Alt: (800) 444-6750
Residence Inn By Marriott, Airport	Shreveport Downtown Hotel	
4910 W. Monkhouse	102 Lake Street	
Shreveport, LA 71109	Shreveport, LA 71101-6003	
Local: 318-635-8000	Phone: (318) 222-7717	
Alt.: 1-866-460-7456	Alt.: 1-800-465-4329	

*See next page for Lodging in Bossier City*

## HOTELS AND MOTELS – BOSSIER CITY

Comfort Inn	Comfort Inn	Courtyard by Marriott
1100 Delhi Avenue	9750 E Texas Street	100 Boardwalk Blvd
Bossier City, LA 71111	Bossier City, LA 71111	Bossier City, LA 71111
Phone: (318) 221-2400	Phone: (318) 742-3444	Phone: (318) 742-8300
Alt.: 1-800-228-5150		
Hampton Inn & Suites	Hampton Inn - Bossier	Hilton Garden Inn
2691 Viking Drive	1005 Gould Drive	2015 Old Minden Road
Bossier City, LA 71111	Bossier City, LA 71111	Bossier City, LA 71111
Phone: (318) 841-9700	Phone: (318) 752-1112	Tel: (318) 759-1950
	Alt.: 1-800-426-7866	Fax: (318) 759-1951
Homewood Suites by Hilton	Towne Place Suites	
2015 Old Minden Road	1001 Gould Drive	
Bossier City, LA 71111	Bossier City, LA 71111-4915	
Phone: (318) 742-9700	Phone: (318) 741-9090	
Fax: (318) 747-4651	Fax: (318) 741-9080	
<b>PET FRIENDLY</b>		

# CENTENARY COLLEGE LODGING & MEAL PLAN REGISTRATION FOR 2015 LOUISIANA ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Sunday, June 7 through Wednesday, June 10, 2015

NAME			
ADDRESS			
CITY		STATE	
		ZIP	
PHONE		EMAIL	
CHURCH NAME			
CHECK ALL THAT APPLY	<input type="checkbox"/> SINGLE	<input type="checkbox"/> COUPLE	<input type="checkbox"/> YOUTH
	<input type="checkbox"/> RETIRED PASTOR	<input type="checkbox"/> SURVIVING SPOUSE	

***The Board of Pensions covers Meal Plan 1 and accommodations for all retired pastors/spouses and surviving spouses.***

## ACCOMMODATIONS

Traditional Hall\* - \$25 per night per person (double occupancy)

**\* LINENS WILL NOT BE PROVIDED \***

Rotary Suites\* - \$35 per night per person (limited room available)

Please list the names of those staying each night and circle gender

Sunday	M F	M F	M F
Monday	M F	M F	M F
Tuesday	M F	M F	M F

Accommodation Sub-total \_\_\_\_\_ (total # of nights stayed) X \$25.00 (\$35.00 for Rotary Suites) = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

## MEAL PLANS

Meal Plan 1 - \$70.00      Includes breakfast, lunch & dinner Monday & Tuesday; and breakfast & lunch Wednesday

Meal Plan 2 - \$27.50      Includes lunch Monday, Tuesday & Wednesday

Meal Plan Cost                      \_\_\_\_\_ (number of Plan 1) X \$70.00 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ (number of Plan 2) X \$27.50 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Meal Plan Sub-total \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**All retirees and their spouses must register for a meal plan to obtain a wrist band even if staying off campus.**

**Meal plan wrist bands must be worn to eat in cafeteria.  
Meal plans do not include catered breakfasts or luncheons.**



CENTENARY COLLEGE LODGING & MEAL REGISTRATION *continued*

PAYMENT METHOD (check one)	TOTAL PAYMENT
<input type="checkbox"/> Paid for by Board of Pensioners	Accommodations \$ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Check made payable to Centenary College	Meal Plans \$ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Master Card <input type="checkbox"/> Visa	<b>Total</b> _____
\$ <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Discover <input type="checkbox"/> Money Order	
Card/Money Order # _____	
Expiration Date _____	
Name on Card _____	
Signature _____	

SPECIAL REQUESTS
Every effort is made to accommodate and are handled on a first come, first served basis with no guarantees.
_____
_____
_____
_____

<b>MAIL REGISTRATION FORM TO:</b> Centenary College Attn: Community Services 2911 Centenary Boulevard Shreveport, LA 71104	<b>CONTACT US:</b> Please direct questions to: Kris Holland, Conference & Events Coordinator Phone: 318-869-5778 Email: kholland@centenary.edu
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Registration Dates: April 1 - May 15, 2015

**\*\*Please check in at the Fitness Center, across from the Conference registration tables\*\***

# **CHILDCARE FOR THE 2015 LOUISIANA ANNUAL CONFERENCE**

\*\*\* For Infants up to 6<sup>th</sup> Grade\*\*\*



## **SUNDAY AND TUESDAY NIGHTS**

Noel UMC  
510 Herndon Street  
Shreveport, LA

Sunday, June 7<sup>th</sup> 6:00 pm – 9:30 pm  
Tuesday, June 9<sup>th</sup> 5:30 pm – 9:30 pm

## **MONDAY NIGHT**

First UMC, Shreveport  
Head of Texas Street  
Shreveport, LA

Monday, June 8<sup>th</sup> 4:30 pm – 10:30 pm



## **DIRECTIONS TO CHURCHES**

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### **DIRECTIONS FROM CENTENARY COLLEGE TO FIRST UMC**

**HEAD OF TEXAS STREET, SHREVEPORT, LA 71101 (318) 424-7771**

From main entrance of campus, turn left onto Centenary Boulevard. Turn left (East) onto Kings Highway for 0.7 miles. Turn left (North) onto Youree Drive (Youree Drive becomes Spring Street) for 3.7 miles. Turn left (West) on Texas Street for 0.5 miles. First UMC is at the Head of Texas Street

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### **DIRECTIONS FROM CENTENARY COLLEGE TO BROADMOOR UMC**

**3715 YOUREE DRIVE SHREVEPORT, LA 71105 (318) 861-0586**

From main entrance of campus, turn left onto Centenary Boulevard, Turn left (East) at Kings Highway for 0.7 miles, Turn right (South) on Youree Drive for 0.6 miles. Broadmoor UMC is on the left.

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### **DIRECTIONS FROM CENTENARY COLLEGE TO NOEL UMC**

**520 HERNDON STREET, SHREVEPORT, LA (318) 221-5207**

From main entrance of campus, turn right onto Centenary Boulevard toward Sexton Street, take the First left onto Columbia Street. Take the 2nd right onto Gilbert Drive. Go about 13 streets and then turn left onto Herndon Street. (Herndon Street is just past Wyandotte Street, if you reach Lister Street you've gone a little too far).



## **DIRECTIONS TO CENTENARY CAMPUS**

### **From the North**

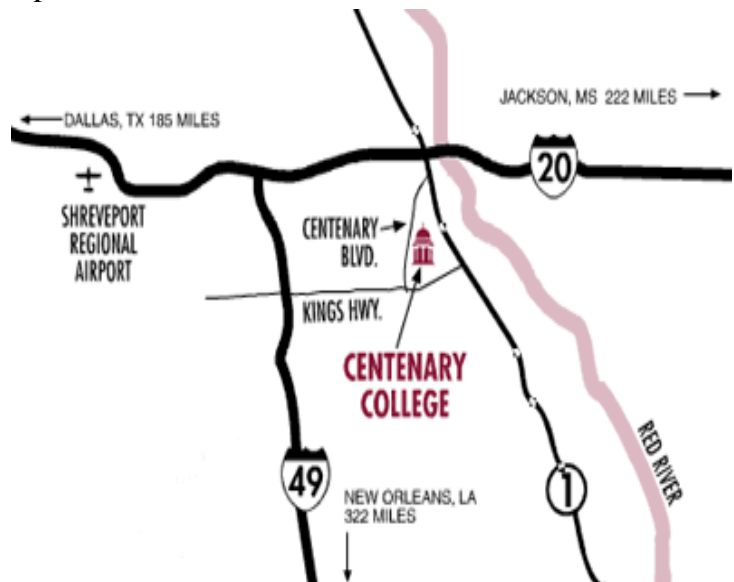
(Arkansas in particular) Take I- 30 west. Exit Hwy. 29 at the first Hope exit and head south. Once in Louisiana, the highway changes to Hwy. 3, which becomes Benton Road in Bossier City. Continue south to I-20 and head west. Take the I-49 South exit. On, I-49, stay in the far right lane in order to take the Kings Highway exit. Off of the exit ramp, turn left onto Kings Hwy. Go through 6 signals to Centenary Blvd. and turn left. The first right is the entrance to the Office of Admissions. The second right is the main campus entrance.

### **From the South**

Take I-49 north to the Kings Hwy. exit. Mall St. Vincent will be on the right as you exit. Turn right onto Kings Highway. Go through 6 signals to Centenary Blvd. and turn left. The first right is the entrance to the Office of Admissions. The second right is the main campus entrance.

### **From the East or West**

Take I-20 into Shreveport. Take the I-49 South exit. On, I-49, stay in the far right lane in order to take the Kings Highway exit. Off of the exit ramp, turn left onto Kings Hwy. Go through 6 signals to Centenary Blvd. and turn left. The first right is the entrance to the Office of Admissions. The second right is the main campus entrance.



# Centenary

COLLEGE OF LOUISIANA

## CAMPUS MAP

2911 Centenary Blvd. • Shreveport, LA 71104  
318.869.5011 • 800.234.4448 • centenary.edu



- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1. 2910 Building   | 17. Jackson Hall                              |
| 2. Brown Memorial Chapel   | 18. James Residence Hall                      |
| 3. Bynum Commons / Cafeteria /<br>Whited Room                      | 19. Jones-Rice Field                          |
| 4. Centenary Fitness Center  | 20. Magale Library                            |
| 5. Canterbury House  | 21. Main Entrance                             |
| 6. Centenary Square  | 22. Marjorie Lyons Playhouse                  |
| 7. Cline Residence Hall  | 23. Meadows Museum of Art                     |
| 8. Crumley Gardens   | 24. Mickle Hall / Carfile Auditorium          |
| 9. Ed Lauck Louisiana<br>Academic Arboretum                        | 25. Moore Student Union Building (SUB)        |
| 10. Facilities Office  | 26. Peavy Climbing Tower                      |
| 11. Frost Gardens  | 27. The Quad                                  |
| 12. Gold Dome / Athletic Complex                                   | 28. Riggs Plaza                               |
| 12a. Mayo Soccer Field   | 29. Rotary Residence Hall Suites              |
| 12b. Shehee Stadium  | 30. Sam Peters Building /<br>Admission Office |
| 12c. Softball Field  | 31. Sexton Residence Hall                     |
| 12d. Tennis Courts   | 32. Smith Building /<br>Kilpatrick Auditorium |
| 13. Hamilton Hall  | 33. Symphony House                            |
| 14. Hardin Residence Hall  | 34. Turner Art Center                         |
| 15. Hargrove Memorial Amphitheatre                                 | 35. Wright Math Building                      |
| 16. Hurley Music Building /<br>Music Library / Anderson Auditorium |   |
| 16a. Anderson Choral Building / Atrium                             |   |
| 16b. Feazel Instrumental Hall                                      |   |

■ = Wheelchair Accessible    ● = Emergency Call Box



## 2015 CONFERENCE JOURNAL Ordering Information

Copies of the 2015 Louisiana Conference Journal will be available as a PDF file on the conference website, [www.la-umc.org](http://www.la-umc.org). Printed copies will be available at [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com). When the Journal is completed after Annual Conference, a notice that it is available will be made through the *Louisiana NOW!*

**DO NOT SEND ORDERS TO THE CONFERENCE OFFICE  
PRINTED COPIES AVAILABLE ONLY AT AMAZON.COM**

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### Journal Request Form for Retired Unappointed Clergy and Surviving Spouse

Any retired clergy, not under appointment, and surviving spouse may receive a complimentary copy by filling out the following form and sending it to the Conference Office. These journals will be supplied courtesy of the Conference Board of Pensions.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Conference Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_

Mail form to:      Treasurer, LA Annual Conference  
                         527 North Blvd  
                         Baton Rouge, LA 70802

**Deadline for receipt of this request is July 1, 2015**

# **STATISTICIAN'S CONDENSED REPORT**

*By Jan Holloway Curwick*

**TABLE I**

<b><u>CHURCH MEMBERSHIP</u></b>	<b><u>2013</u></b>	<b><u>2,014</u></b>
Total Professing Members Reported At Close of Last Year	120,935	120,251
Received On Profession of Faith	1,772	1,513
Restored By Affirmation	134	123
Correct Previous Year's Professing Membership by Addition	382	156
Transferred In From Other United Methodist Churches	1,144	966
Transferred In From Non-United Methodist Churches	867	862
Removed By Charge Conference Action	1,039	1,539
Withdrawn From Professing Membership	168	231
Correct Previous Year's Professing Membership by Subtraction	1,214	981
Transferred Out To Other United Methodist Churches	777	670
Transferred Out To Non-United Methodist Churches	519	337
Removed By Death	1,266	1,281
Total Professing Members Reported At Close of This Year	120,110	118,725

## **RACIAL/ETHNIC GROUP**

Asian	325	294
African American/Black	13,640	13,687
Hispanic/Latino	289	339
Native American	254	264
Pacific Islander	39	36
White	104,947	103,540
Multi-Racial	616	565
Female	69,587	68,739
Male	50,523	49,986
Average Attendance at all Weekly Worship Services	40,755	39,764

## **BAPTISMS**

Number of Persons Baptized This Year (All Ages)	1,528	1,357
Baptized Members Who Have Not Become Professing Members	9,346	9,407
Number of Other Constituents of the Church	17,956	18,036
Enrolled In Confirmation Preparation Classes This Year	1,096	836

## **CHRISTIAN EDUCATION**

Children in Christian Formation & Other Small Group Min.	10,354	10,325
Youth in Christian Formation & Other Small Group Min.	6,354	5,906
Young Adults in Christian Formation & Other Small Group Min.	3,563	3,117
Other Adults in All Christian Formation & Small Group Min.	23,336	22,542
Number of Persons Participating Christian Formation Groups	43,607	41,890
Average Weekly Attend. (All Ages) Sunday Church School	15,180	14,712
Persons (All Ages) Active in Covenant Discipleship Groups		

**CHRISTIAN EDUCATION** *Continued*

	<b><u>2013</u></b>	<b><u>2014</u></b>
Participants in Vacation Bible School	19,846	19,129
Ongoing Classes (All Ages) in Sunday Church School	1,968	2,149
Ongoing Classes for Other Than Sunday Church School	1,112	1,132
Short-Term Classes and Groups (All Ages) For Learning	1,385	1,310

**UNITED METHODIST MEN**

Membership in United Methodist Men	3,151	2,968
Amount Paid for Projects	229,077	205,238

**UNITED METHODIST WOMEN**

Membership in United Methodist Women	6,255	5,914
Amount Paid for Local Church & Community Work	379,924	334,110

**UNITED METHODIST VIM**

UMVIM Teams Sent From Local Church	112	91
Persons Sent Out On UMVIM Teams from Local Church	538	619
Other Mission Teams Sent From Local Church		
Persons Sent On Other Mission Teams From Local Church	23,503	26,783

**COMMUNITY MINISTRY PROGRAMS**

Community Ministries for Daycare and/or Education		
Persons Served By Community Min. for Daycare and/or Educ.	23,503	23,536
Community Ministries for Outreach, Justice, and Mercy		
Persons Served By Comm. Min. Outreach, Justice, & Mercy	280,010	352,273

**TABLE II****PROPERTY AND OTHER ASSETS**

	<b><u>2013</u></b>	<b><u>2014</u></b>
Value of Church Land, Buildings & Equipment	1,112,657,038	822,957,205
Value of All Other Church-Owned Assets	120,375,411	108,467,689
Debt Secured By Church Physical Assets	41,892,249	40,210,134
Other Debt	630,321	127,8495

**APPORTIONMENTS**

APPORTIONED to Local Church - Paid to AC Treasurer	7,427,332	7,415,036
PAID By Local Church to AC Treasurer	7,280,421	7,126,986
APPORTIONED to Local Church - Paid to District	806,492	810,869
PAID By Local Church to District	772,142	793,056

**BENEVOLENCES**

General Advance Specials Remitted to AC Treasurer	362,817	156,269
AC Advance Specials Remitted to AC Treasurer	66,031	139,980
Youth Service Fund Remitted to AC Treasurer	5,882	4,220



**BENEVOLENCES Continued**

	<b><u>2013</u></b>	<b><u>2014</u></b>
All Other Funds Sent to AC Treasurer for		
Connectional Mission & Ministry	78,131	65,845
AC Special Sunday Offerings Remitted to AC Treasurer	3,135	3,285
Given Directly to UM Causes (Not Sent To AC Treasurer)	576,048	694,497
Given to Non-UM Benevolent & Charitable Causes	17,058,428	17,561,344
Human Relations Sunday	10,028	10,318
One Great Hour of Sharing	34,200	28,297
Peace with Justice Sunday	9,254	8,571
Native American Ministries Sunday	12,543	9,303
World Communion Sunday	12,122	15,627
U.M. Student Day	9,596	10,308

**CLERGY SUPPORT AND LOCAL CHURCH**

Paid By Local Church for All Direct-Billed Clergy Pensions	2,636,332	2,387,271
Paid By Local Church for All Direct-Billed Clergy Health Ins.	3,590,374	2,762,822
Paid In Base Compensation to Pastor	11,031,544	11,248,490
Paid In Base Compensation to All Associate Pastors	1,564,390	1,675,411
Paid To/For Pastor & Associate(s) For		
Housing/Utilities/Related Allowances	3,707,225	3,814,657
Paid To Pastor & Associate(s) For Acc. Reimbursements	1,396,512	1,370,813
Paid To Pastor and Associate(s) For Other Cash Allowances	536,344	485,954
Paid In Salary and Benefits for Deacons	464,355	426,239
Paid In Salary and Benefits for Diaconal Ministers	4,325	4,521
Paid In Salary and Benefits for All Other Church Staff	21,065,450	21,592,334
Spent For Local Church Program Expenses	2,884,480	4,745,530
Spent For Other Local Church Operating Expenses	16,554,181	17,628,101
*All Other Current Operating Expenses	11,773,661	12,472,689
*Property Insurance Premium	4,780,520	5,042,722
Paid For Principal & Interest On Debt	8,356,028	6,507,325
Paid On Capital Expenditures For Building	15,682,720	10,209,130
<b>GRAND TOTAL PAID</b>	<b>115,759,386</b>	<b>110,258,586</b>

\*Denotes a breakout of the total amount spent for other local church operating expenses

**TABLE III**

	<b><u>2013</u></b>	<b><u>2014</u></b>
Number of Households Giving to Local Church	38,648	40,238

**RECEIVED FOR ANNUAL BUDGET/SPENDING PLAN**

Amount Received Through Pledges	48,016,067	47,684,852
Amount Received from non-pledging, but identified givers	26,929,064	29,438,866

**RECEIVED FOR ANNUAL BUDGET/SPENDING PLAN****Continued**

	<b><u>2013</u></b>	<b><u>2014</u></b>
Amount Received from Unidentified Givers	2,779,570	2,717,093
Amount Received from interest and Dividends	524,862	562,931
Amount Received from Sale of Church Assets	12,459	421,381
Amount Received through Building Use Fees, Contributions, Rentals	2,009,410	2,493,842
Amount Received through Fundraisers and Other Sources	5,181,399	5,931,264
Total income for annual budget/spending plan	85,452,831	89,250,229

**RECEIVED FOR CAPITAL CAMPAIGNS/OTHER PROJECTS**

Capital Campaigns	5,335,254	4,747,353
Memorial, endowments, and bequests	2,581,594	2,388,295
Other Sources and Projects	4,420,887	4,054,241
Amount received for Special Sundays, General Advance Specials and World Service Specials	1,195,356	1,161,478
Total income for designated causes including capital campaign and other special projects	13,533,091	12,351,367

**RECEIVED FROM CONNECTIONAL CHURCH STRUCTURES/  
OTHER INSTITUTIONAL SOURCES OUTSIDE LOCAL CHURCH**

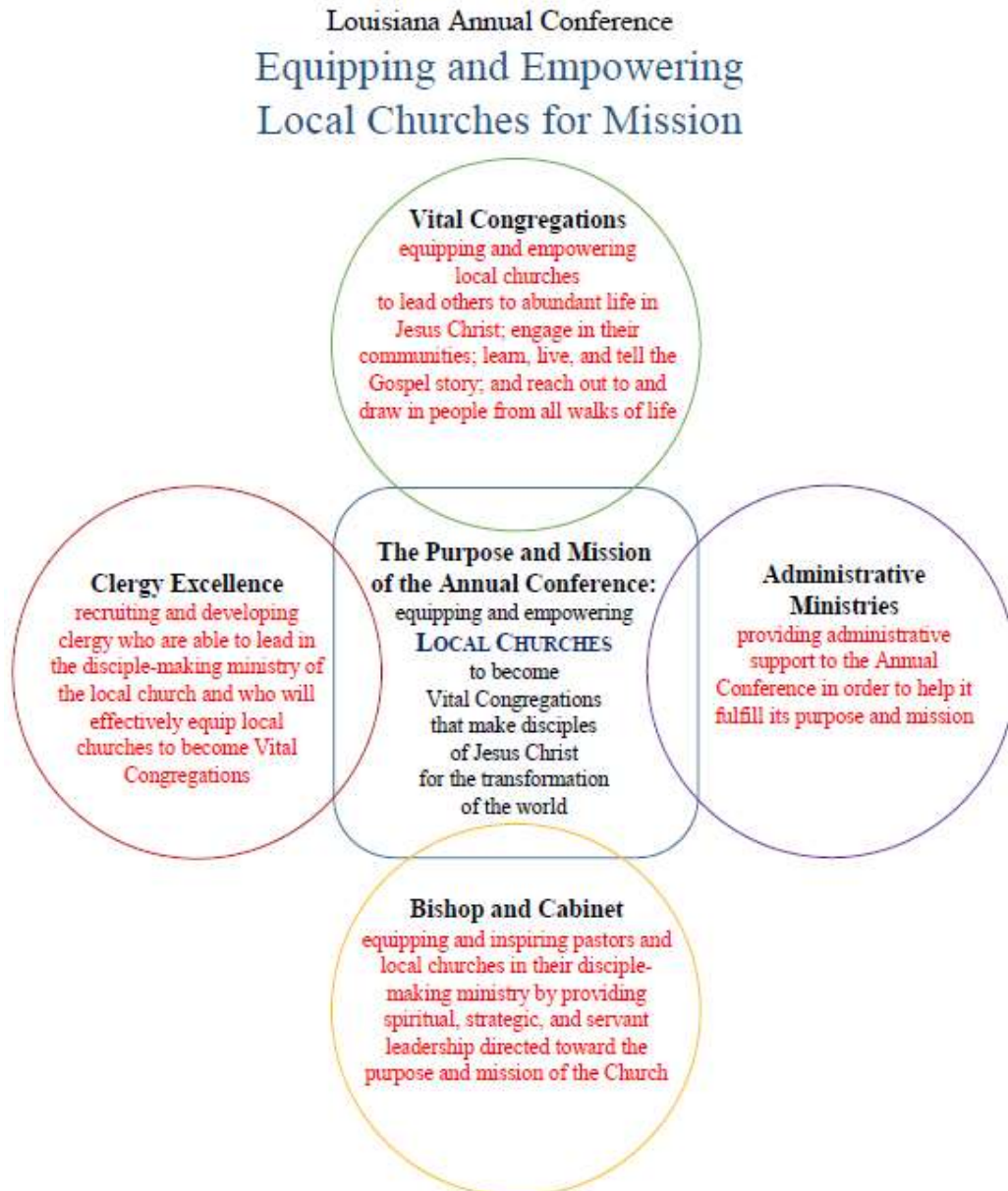
Equitable Compensation Funds received by Church or Pastor	71,795	29,254
Advance Special, Apportioned, and connectional funds received by church	165,884	162,358
Other grants and financial support from institutional sources	258,482	793,440
Total income from connectional and other institutional sources outside the local church	496,161	985,052

## COMMITTEE ON RULES

The Rules Committee has reviewed the Proposal before us [the submission from the Restructure Task Force printed below] (only the one item this year).

The Committee of Rules believes the Restructure proposal meets all technical requirements to be placed before the Conference for consideration. We report the proposal favorably.

D. Scott Hughes, Chairman, Committee on Rules



## **SUBMISSION OF THE RESTRUCTURE TASK FORCE**

EFFECTIVE DATE: JULY 1, 2016

DELETE ARTICLES II & IV OF THE CONFERENCE STRUCTURE AND REPLACE THEM WITH THE FOLLOWING:

### **ARTICLE II: THE MISSIONAL ORGANIZATION OF THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE**

#### **A. PURPOSE AND ORGANIZATION**

1. Our mission is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world, and the local church provides the most significant arena through which our disciple-making occurs (*Book of Discipline*, ¶201).
2. The purpose of the Annual Conference is to advance this mission “by equipping its local churches for ministry and by providing for connectional ministry beyond the local church” (¶601).
3. In order to accomplish this mission, the Annual Conference functions to equip and encourage our local churches to become “vital congregations”: congregations that lead others to abundant life in Jesus Christ; engage in their communities; learn, live, and tell the Gospel story; and reach out to and draw in people from all walks of life (Matthew 22:36-40; Matthew 28:16-20).
4. In order to give priority to our missional purpose and to our commitment to developing vital congregations, the Louisiana Conference will be organized into three Ministry Areas in addition to and as a compliment of the strategic and equipping ministry of the Bishop and Cabinet (¶401ff., ¶414ff., ¶419ff.). The Bishop, Cabinet, and the three ministry areas will work together in a connectional relationship in order to strengthen the local churches in their mission and ministry.
5. The three ministry areas are (1) Vital Congregations, (2) Clergy Excellence, and (3) Administrative Ministries. The purpose of these Ministry Areas is to fulfill the missional purpose of the Annual Conference, to grow vital congregations, and to provide for other ministries as required by *The Book of Discipline*.

#### **B. MINISTRY AREAS**

1. Vital Congregations will serve to equip and empower local churches to lead others to abundant life in Jesus Christ; engage in their communities; learn, live, and tell the Gospel story; and reach out to and draw in people from all walks of life. The purpose of this work is to empower local churches to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. It will do so by fostering shared ministry among local churches and by providing for connectional ministry beyond the local church.

In addition to other responsibilities outlined in the *Discipline* and Conference Rules, a Director of Connectional Ministries (see Article III, A.1.a.) will coordinate this ministry area and convene the leaders of these teams in order to encourage collaboration in our effort to grow vital congregations and to ensure faithfulness to the purpose of the Annual Conference (¶ 601) and the mission of The United Methodist Church (¶ 120).

Vital Congregations will be comprised of the following ministries:

- a. **A Church Planting Ministry** will coordinate the formation of new vital congregations by directing the work of planting new faith communities, mergers of existing churches to form new congregations, and other strategic and creative models for starting vital faith communities. A Board of Congregational Development of no fewer than 7 persons, laity and clergy, will function to support Conference staff assigned to this ministry, provide missional accountability, maintain a budget, and provide financial oversight.

**b. A Church Revitalization Ministry** will coordinate the revitalization of congregations that have potential for new growth. Task forces and advisory teams may be formed to assist in this work as needed.

**c. The Conference Discipleship Team** will assist local churches in making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. The ministry of this team includes, but is not limited to, the ministries outlined in ¶630 of *The Book of Discipline*. In accordance with ¶645, the Discipleship Team will assume the responsibilities of the small-membership-church commission.

Members shall be nominated by the Committee on Nominations and elected for the quadrennium and shall consist of a team leader, four at-large members, the Conference Lay Leader representing the Board of Laity (¶631), one person responsible for the concerns of small-membership churches, and the coordinator of The Academy for Spiritual Leadership. The Discipleship Team may organize task forces or teams in order to accomplish its mission.

**d. The Mission and Mercy Ministries Team** will assist the Conference and our local churches in our response to the needs of our communities, state, nation, and world. The Team will serve the Conference in the following areas:

1. Board of Church and Society (¶629) and Peace with Justice (¶629.2)
2. Board of Global Ministries (¶ 633)
3. Disability Ministries (¶653)
4. Status & Role of Women (¶644)
5. Religion & Race (¶643)
6. Christian Unity and Interreligious Ministries (¶637)
7. Ethnic Local Church Ministries (¶632)
8. Native American Ministries (¶654)
9. Disaster Preparedness
10. Volunteers in Mission

Members shall be nominated by the Committee on Nominations and elected for the quadrennium. The team shall consist of a team leader, two at-large members, and a representative for each of the ministries listed above. The representative of each area of responsibility above will serve to maintain a connectional relationship between the Mission and Mercy Ministries Team and the equivalent General Agencies. The Team may organize task forces or teams in order to accomplish its mission.

**e. The Council on Youth Ministry, Young Adult Ministry, Conference Board of Laity, the United Methodist Women, and the United Methodist Men** shall be organized and function in accordance with *The Book of Discipline*.

**f. The Conference Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministries** shall be organized and function as mandated and described in the *Book of Discipline* (¶634). Members of the Board shall be nominated by the Committee on Nominations and elected for the quadrennium and shall consist of six members. A member of a local Wesley Foundation and a Campus Minister will be selected as ex-officio members without vote. Additional task forces or teams may be added by Board members as needed to fulfill their assigned mission.

**g. A Communications Team** shall be organized for the purpose of meeting the missional needs of local churches and the Conference in the area of communications, with a particular focus on enhancing witness and evangelism efforts of the local church through the use of various and effective forms of communication. The Team will additionally be responsible for the ministry outlined in ¶646. A Director of Communications (¶609) will work with the Communications Team to specifically connect this ministry with the mission of creating vital congregations.

**2. Clergy Excellence** shall actively engage in the recruitment and development of clergy who are able to lead in the disciple-making ministry of the church and who will effectively equip local churches to lead others to abundant life in Jesus Christ; engage in their communities; learn, live, and tell the Gospel story; and reach out to and draw in people from all walks of life. The purpose of this work is to empower local churches to make

disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. A Director of Clergy Excellence (see Article III, A.1.b.) will coordinate the work of this ministry area.

Clergy Excellence will be comprised of the following ministries:

**a. Conference Board of Ordained Ministry**

The Conference Board of Ordained Ministry shall be organized and function as mandated and described in *Book of Discipline*, ¶ 635.

The Bishop shall nominate members of the Board after consultation with the chairperson of the Board, the executive committee, and the Cabinet. The Bishop shall fill vacancies after consultation with the chairperson of the Board.

**b. Center for Pastoral Excellence**

The Center for Pastoral Excellence is to help sustain pastoral excellence by providing support and guidance for our clergy and congregations in difficult situations, conversations, and conflict; coaching clergy as a confidential and trusted resource; offering continuing education opportunities; working on special projects/contexts as requested by the Bishop and Cabinet; and offering other ministries related to the art and science of pastoral leadership.

**c. Conference Committee on Administrative Review**

The Committee on Administrative Review shall be organized and function as mandated and described in the *Book of Discipline*, ¶ 636.

**3. Administrative Ministries** will provide administrative support to the Annual Conference in order to help it fulfill its purpose and mission.

The Executive Director of Administrative Services will act as a liaison between the ministries of this ministry area to ensure faithfulness to the purpose of the Annual Conference (¶ 601) and to the mission of The United Methodist Church (¶ 120).

Administrative Ministries will be comprised of the following:

**a. Conference Council on Finance and Administration**

The Conference Council on Finance and Administration shall be organized and shall function as mandated and described in *The Book of Discipline* (¶¶ 611–619).

**1. Membership and Officers**

The Conference Council on Finance and Administration shall consist of twelve members nominated by the Committee on Nominations and approved by the Annual Conference in accordance with ¶612.2 of the *Discipline*. There shall be at least one lay member more than clergy members. Churches of fewer than two hundred members shall be represented on the council. Members of the General Council on Finance and Administration who reside within the bounds of the Conference shall be voting members. The voting membership shall not include members or employees of any conference agency, nor shall it include members, employees, trustees, or directors of any agency or institution participating in the funds of any conference budget. The CCFA shall elect its own officers in accordance with ¶612.3.

Additionally, the following persons shall be ex officio members without vote (¶ 612.2c):

1. Executive Director, Administrative Services/Conference Treasurer
2. Presiding Bishop
3. One District Superintendent chosen by the Cabinet
4. Director of Connectional Ministries
5. President/Chief Executive Officer, United Methodist Foundation

## **2. Audit Review Committee**

The Conference Council on Finance and Administration may elect an Audit Review Committee (*Discipline* ¶ 617) of not more than twenty-five members; at least half of whom should be persons who are not members of the Council and who are chosen for their expertise in areas related to the work of the Committee. The Bishop shall be an *ex officio* member of the Audit Review Committee.

## **3. Conference Benevolence Budget**

In preparing the conference benevolence budget (¶614.3), the CCFA will consult with and receive recommendations from the Director of Connectional Ministries and the leaders of the teams in Vital Congregations.

### **b. Conference Board of Trustees**

The Board of Trustees shall be organized and function as mandated and described in the *Book of Discipline* (¶2512). The members of the Board shall be residents of the State of Louisiana and of legal age. Lay members shall be members in good standing of local churches within the bounds of the Conference, and clergy members shall be members of the Louisiana Annual Conference.

### **c. Conference Board of Pensions and Health Benefits**

The Conference Board of Pensions and Health Benefits shall be organized and function as mandated and described in the *Book of Discipline* (¶ 639). In addition to membership recommended in the *Discipline*, the Executive Director of Administrative Services/Treasurer shall be a member. One director of the Woolworth Foundation shall be an *ex officio* member, with vote.

### **d. Conference Commission on Equitable Compensation**

The Commission on Equitable Compensation shall be organized and function as mandated and described in the *Book of Discipline* (¶ 625). The membership shall be elected for the quadrennium, and shall consist of six persons, an equal number of lay and clergypersons. At least one lay member and clergy member shall be from churches of fewer than two hundred members.

### **e. Conference Committee on Nominations**

There shall be a Conference Committee on Nominations chaired by the Bishop and composed of the following members:

- Bishop
- Conference Lay Leader
- President, Conference Council on Youth Ministry
- a young adult representative
- up to six at-large members to insure Conference representation, inclusiveness, and a balance of clergy and lay membership

The members of the committee shall serve for the quadrennium. Laypersons must be full members of local churches in the Conference.

The Committee shall nominate to the Annual Conference such officers and members of Boards, Councils, Committees, and Commissions as the *Discipline* or the Conference Rules require, or as the Conference deems necessary to its work. Persons nominated and approved by the Annual Conference are to serve for the quadrennium unless otherwise indicated by the *Discipline* or Conference Rules. The Committee on Nominations may nominate persons for Annual Conference approval to fill vacancies that occur during the quadrennium. Guidelines for inclusiveness shall be followed in accordance with *The Book of Discipline*. Members of General Agencies will serve as additional *ex officio* members of the corresponding Annual Conference agencies, and the Bishop may assign Cabinet liaisons to the ministry areas, teams, boards, and agencies as needed.

### **f. Conference Committee on the Journal**

There shall be a Conference Committee on Journal elected for the quadrennium. Members of the Committee shall be nominated by the Committee on Nominations and elected for the quadrennium.

Membership shall consist of two clergy and two lay members, the duties of which shall include those described in Article I (N) of the Conference Rules.

**g. Conference Committee on Courtesies**

There shall be a Conference Committee on Courtesies elected for the quadrennium, which shall have such duties as described in Article I (M) of the Conference Rules. The membership shall consist of six persons.

**h. Conference Committee on Petitions**

There shall be a Conference Committee on Petitions elected for the quadrennium having such duties as described in Article I (G) of the Conference Rules. The membership shall consist of five persons.

**i. Conference Committee on Rules**

There shall be a Committee on Rules appointed by the Bishop for the quadrennium having such duties as described in Article I (S) of the Conference Rules. The membership shall consist of six persons, equally clergy and laypersons.

**j. Conference Commission on Archives and History**

The membership shall consist of two persons and a Cabinet liaison, if assigned by the Bishop, and conference staff as assigned by the Director of Connectional Ministries.

**C. CONFERENCE COMMITTEES RELATED TO THE EPISCOPACY**

**1. Conference Committee on Episcopacy**

The Committee on Episcopacy shall be constituted, organized, and function as mandated and described in the *Book of Discipline* (§ 637). The membership shall number nine. No member of the Conference staff or any of its agencies, nor any immediate family member of such staff, shall serve as a member of the committee, except as allowed by the *Discipline*.

**2. Conference Episcopal Residence Committee**

This Committee shall be organized and function as mandated and described in the *Book of Discipline*, § 638.

**ARTICLE III: PERSONNEL**

**A. CONFERENCE STAFF**

**1. Conference Ministries Staff**

**a. Director of Connectional Ministries**

The Bishop, in consultation with the Missional Staffing Committee, may appoint a Director of Connectional Ministries to guide the Conference in its mission of increasing the number of vital congregations, to focus and guide the ministries of the Congregational Vitality ministry area, to assume the responsibilities outlined in §608 of the *Discipline*, and to supervise Conference ministry staff. The Director of Connectional Ministries may sit on the Cabinet, without vote. The Director of Connectional Ministries is accountable to the Bishop and shall be evaluated annually by the Bishop to discern effectiveness in accomplishing the specific requirements of the ministry. The Bishop will seek input, as needed, from the Team leaders in Congregational Vitality.

**b. Director of Clergy Excellence**

The Bishop, in consultation with the Missional Staffing Committee and the Board of Ordained Ministry, may appoint a Director of Clergy Excellence to promote and sustain effective clergy leadership and to coordinate the ministries of the Clergy Excellence ministry area. The Director of Clergy Excellence may sit on the Cabinet, without vote. The Director of Clergy Excellence is accountable to the Bishop and shall be evaluated annually by the Bishop to discern effectiveness in accomplishing the specific requirements of the ministry. The Bishop will seek input, as needed, from the Executive Committee of the Board of Ordained Ministry.



**c. Assistant to the Bishop**

The Bishop may appoint an Assistant to the Bishop in order to more effectively and efficiently administer the episcopal ministry. The Assistant to the Bishop may sit on the Cabinet, without vote. The Assistant to the Bishop is accountable to the Bishop and shall be evaluated annually by the Bishop to discern effectiveness in accomplishing the specific requirements of the ministry. The Bishop will seek input, as needed, from the Conference Committee on the Episcopacy.

**d. Conference Mission and Ministries Staff**

Upon recommendation of the Missional Staffing Committee, other persons may be employed in areas deemed helpful to accomplish the mission of the Annual Conference. If the person to serve in any of these areas is clergy, the employment shall not be effective until the Bishop appoints that person to the position. The Director of Connectional Ministries will supervise the Mission and Ministries staff. Staff positions may be amended by action of the Missional Staffing Committee, as long as such changes are within budgeted funds and consistent with the missional priorities of the Annual Conference.

**2. Finance & Administrative Service Staff**

**a. Conference Treasurer/Executive Director, Administrative Services**

The election of the Conference Treasurer/Executive Director, Administrative Services and the functions of the office are prescribed in the *Book of Discipline* (§ 619). The Conference Treasurer/Executive Director, Administrative Services shall be elected by the Annual Conference on nomination of the Conference Council on Finance and Administration. As an employee, the Treasurer/Executive Director, Administrative Services shall be directly amenable to the Conference Council on Finance and Administration and shall be evaluated annually by the CCFA to discern effectiveness in accomplishing the ministry assigned. The Conference Treasurer/Executive Director, Administrative Services shall be amenable to the general oversight of the Bishop regarding the fiscal operation of the Annual Conference.

**b. Administrative Staff**

Administrative and support staff in Administrative Services shall be employed as directed by the Conference Council on Finance and Administration. The Conference Treasurer/Executive Director, Administrative Services will be responsible for supervision of the administrative and support staff. Funding for staff positions shall be derived from the Conference Administrative Fund upon recommendation of the Missional Staffing Committee and upon approval by the CCFA.

**c. Conference Secretary and Conference Statistician**

The duties of the Conference Secretary and Conference Statistician shall be a part of the responsibilities of the Conference Treasurer/Director of Administrative Service, but may be delegated to volunteer or part-time staff under the direction of the Conference Treasurer/Director of Administrative Service.

**3. Personnel Policies & Procedures**

**a. Missional Staffing Committee**

The Missional Staffing Committee shall be composed of a representative who is a member of and chosen by the Conference Council on Finance and Administration, a representative who is a member of and chosen by the Discipleship Team, the Bishop, a District Superintendent, the Director of Connectional Ministries, the Conference Lay Leader, and the Director of Administrative Services. Up to two additional members may be added for inclusiveness. The Committee shall select a chairperson from among its members, but the chairperson shall not be a member of the Conference staff.

**b. Personnel Policies and Procedures**

The Missional Staffing Committee will develop and maintain appropriate personnel policies and procedures. The Committee will further develop and implement a plan for regular supervision and evaluation that will take into account appropriate missional measures and effectiveness in particular areas of responsibility. Supervision will include clear missional goals and expectations of each staff person.

Should termination of employment become necessary, that action shall be the responsibility of the Missional Staffing Committee. If the person to be terminated is serving under appointment, the Committee shall consult with the Bishop before terminating employment.

#### **ARTICLE IV: ASSESSMENT OF CONFERENCE EFFECTIVENESS**

A Conference Ministry Assessment Team will meet twice per quadrennium to evaluate the effectiveness of the Conference in accomplishing its mission. The purpose and mission of the Annual Conference (§601) will serve as the criteria for evaluation, and particular attention will be given to the ministries of increasing vital congregations and improving clergy effectiveness. The Team shall make recommendations to the Missional Staffing Committee concerning revision of ministry descriptions, as needed. The Team shall make recommendations to the Annual Conference concerning changes, if needed, in the Conference organization, staffing structure, rules, practice, or procedure.

To accomplish its ministry, the Team shall request reports, as it deems necessary, from Conference staff, ministry area leaders, team leaders, and other people in Conference leadership. The Team shall conduct interviews as it deems necessary and review metrics relevant to the congregational vitality and clergy excellence. The Team may retain the services of an outside consultant to accomplish its mandate.

The Team will be comprised of five persons who are not concurrently serving on a standing Conference ministry area, board, agency, or team. Membership on this Team shall not preclude a person from serving on ad hoc teams, planning teams, study committees, other Conference ministries of limited duration, or District committees. The members shall be nominated by the Nominating Committee, may be laity or clergy, and shall serve for a quadrennium. The Team shall name its own chairperson and shall organize officers as needed.

#### **RESTRUCTURING FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

##### **What is really different about the new Conference organization?**

Local churches do not exist to serve the Conference; the Conference exists to equip and empower local churches for the mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. At the heart of this new plan is this bedrock principle, and that is the primary difference. Starting with the purpose and the mission of the Conference, other major differences emerge: first, a two-fold emphasis on *congregational vitality* and *clergy excellence* as the two paramount ministries that the Conference has a particular responsibility to engage in; next, streamlining boards and committees for more efficient ministry and better stewardship of our resources; and finally, providing for built-in flexibility as new ministry needs become apparent and as the missional landscape continues to evolve. Importantly, this new plan represents a fundamental affirmation of a vital emphasis: *a focus on the local church as the primary means of accomplishing our disciple-making mission.*

##### **Are we just rearranging the same old committees in a different way?**

No. Simply rearranging the pieces of the old structure in a different way would accomplish little. Instead, the new plan highlights our missional purpose, streamlines Conference ministries, reduces inefficiencies, and promotes greater cooperation between groups. In the new structure, many ministry areas are integrated for heightened connectional work and better stewardship of our resources, some ministries are redefined and enhanced to more directly serve the local church, and a few new ministries are created to undergird critical aspects of the mission. We are being mindful of important requirements of the *Discipline*, but we are also reorganizing with our eyes focused squarely on what it will take to serve Christ faithfully and effectively as we move into the future's next challenges and opportunities.

##### **How does this affect the size of the Conference staff?**

This plan presents a “dream team” of effective Conference staffing, but we are being careful not to lock ourselves into anything that is beyond the requirements of the *Discipline*. We want to be flexible in how we allocate the gifts of people who serve Conference ministries. Many of the positions may be held by either clergy or laity, some work can be fulltime or part time, and some ministries can be combined. This means that from year to year, we can staff based on missional and budgetary needs.

### **How will this impact the Conference budget and apportionments?**

The goal is that this new plan will be as close to budget neutral as possible. Regardless of what structure our Conference ministries take, budgeting factors change from year to year so this is difficult to answer with certainty. Our Council on Finance and Administration will carefully attend to good stewardship of our resources, but the plan itself streamlines ministry areas and reorders priorities in ways that should add to efficiency. Significantly, we are not locking ourselves into rigid committee and staffing structures so we should be able to adjust to missional needs and budgetary realities as we move into the future.

### **Why is the Director of Clergy Excellence added?**

Each local church needs the very best clergy leaders that the Conference can provide. Because this critical ministry is one of the primary obligations of an Annual Conference and is directly related to the effectiveness of our local churches in achieving our mission, it deserves sustained and full-time attention. As in other Annual Conferences, a Director of Clergy Excellence would be devoted to this ministry of fostering excellent spiritual leadership among our clergy. It is recommended that the Director of Clergy Excellence would have the following responsibilities:

1. developing opportunities for continuing education in spiritual leadership, spiritual formation, and congregational growth and development
2. coordinating with and promoting other Conference or connectional ministries that offer continuing education
3. fostering programs of peer learning and other small-group opportunities for enhancing the quality of spiritual leadership
4. consulting with clergy on an individual basis who are seeking or in need of targeted and individualized professional development
5. coordinating with the Board of Ordained Ministry and district Committees on Ministry to recruit gifted persons for licensed and ordained ministry
6. serving as a connection between the Conference and clergy serving extension ministries
7. developing and implementing evaluation tools that promote clergy excellence and lead toward greater congregational vitality
8. serving as a liaison between the Cabinet and the Board of Ordained Ministry and working closely with the Board on issues of clergy excellence
9. supervising specific clergy effectiveness issues (§334.3, §360) in cooperation with the Bishop and Cabinet
10. working on other issues related to developing effective and excellent clergy leadership, as directed by the Bishop or recommended by the Board of Ordained Ministry

### **What does a Director of Connectional Ministries do?**

A Director of Connectional Ministries coordinates and works closely with the Vital Congregations ministry area and ensures that the ministries of the Conference are performed in accordance with the purpose and mission. Paragraph ¶608 of the *Discipline* provides a detailed outline of the critical responsibilities of the DCM. The DCM would also supervise Conference staff, except for personnel who are supervised by the Director of Administrative Services.

### **What does an Assistant to the Bishop do?**

Several other Conferences have found this to be a helpful ministry. While some combine it with the work of the Director of Connectional Ministries or the Director of Clergy Excellence, others have established it as a stand-alone ministry. An Assistant to the Bishop represents the episcopal office and serves to promote the ministries of clergy excellence and congregational vitality through the following recommended responsibilities:

1. consulting with the Bishop and Cabinet on issues related to Conference missional strategy and assisting in overseeing the mission of the Annual Conference
2. traveling throughout the Conference and representing the Bishop at various congregational functions, including preaching opportunities, worship services, special celebrations, and recognitions
3. representing the Bishop at meetings of Conference teams and boards, as needed, in order to promote the mission of the Church, represent the concerns of the Bishop, and keep the Bishop fully informed of issues and decisions
4. representing the Bishop when the Bishop is unavailable, to the extent allowed by the *Discipline*
5. consulting with the bishop on specific projects, issues, and decisions, especially those that concern Conference Rules, *The Book of Discipline*, financial and legal matters, and personnel matters
6. researching and providing information related to Conference actions, potential conflicts of interest, General Conference decisions, Judicial Council decisions, and agency actions

7. serving as a contact person when clergy or laity have concerns; gathering information and performing preliminary research when the Bishop is contacted about complaints
8. coordinating the Annual Conference session agenda and assisting the Bishop in Annual Conference session planning and implementation
9. preparing annual budget requests for ministries related to the episcopal office and reporting expenditures to CFA
10. performing any other duties that enhance and extend the ministry of the Bishop inside and outside the Annual Conference

#### **How will the effectiveness of Conference staff and ministries be evaluated?**

The Missional Staffing Committee has the primary responsibility for ongoing supervision and evaluation. The new plan clearly states that effectiveness in ministry will be evaluated according to missional measures. Additionally, the new plan establishes a Conference Ministry Assessment Team that will review the entire Conference structure every two years. This is an even deeper self-assessment looking at our overall effectiveness in accomplishing our mission and ministry. Evaluation according to our mission is, therefore, a built-in feature of our new structure.

#### **How can so many ministries be accomplished by the Mission and Mercy Team?**

This is a concept that other Conferences are using to achieve greater efficiency and connection among boards and committees. The new Mission and Mercy Team assumes responsibility for all of the ministries listed for their team. This concept allows for sharing of resources and coordination of effort toward common goals. To make sure that each area of ministry is given special attention and to ensure that the Conference has a clear point of contact with general agencies, an individual representative is assigned to each listed ministry. To accomplish its work, the Mission and Mercy Team may establish teams and task forces of volunteers to do specific ministry. This kind of arrangement allows us to expand or contract our work depending on our missional needs and budgetary requirements.

#### **Who will be on these new teams?**

The nomination committee will seek out laity and clergy who are passionate about these ministry areas. Taking into account all the critical issues of diversity, we want to empower volunteers who truly want to serve by giving their time, talents, and energy to the ministries of the Conference.

#### **Why is a Conference Ministry Assessment Team added?**

This is a novel idea for us, but it makes sense. In a time when the missional landscape is rapidly evolving, we need to be flexible and innovative. This team will do a thorough evaluation of our Conference ministry on a regular basis, looking at each ministry area and making recommendations about how it can be strengthened. The criteria for evaluation will be the mission and purpose of the Conference. This is one way we can stay focused on strengthening and empowering the local church for mission and ministry.

#### **How do we organize for new church development and revitalization?**

This is one of the most critical ministries that the Conference is responsible for. In fact, a few years ago, we agreed as a Conference that new-church development would be a top priority for our connectional ministry. Nationwide over the last decades, this work has become incredibly innovative and creative, and we need to be on the cutting edge of effective ways to start new faith communities and revitalize others. The new plan intentionally places these ministries first on the list in Vital Congregations, and because this area is constantly evolving, the plan intentionally allows for flexibility in how we organize the ministry. Depending on the missional and budgetary needs of the Conference, one person may direct both new-church development and church revitalization, or different people may serve in each area. Again, the new structure provides for the establishment of this ministry, but we are not locking ourselves into a particular format.

**Where is the “Joshua Team”?**

The Joshua Team was formed in 2013 as a pilot program to test the effectiveness of a leadership team that would offer advisory feedback for Conference mission and ministry. While its work was fruitful, the new structure allows for the addition of short-term advisory teams as needed.

**So what difference will this new plan really make?**

Good question. We all know that a new structure alone is not cure-all for the missional challenges we face. Sure, the new plan offers efficiencies that could help financially. There is a clearer emphasis on aligning our resources toward our mission. And it certainly offers a focus on what the Conference can do to strengthen the local church. But the true success of our work together depends on how we respond to the grace of God, use our gifts and talents in service, and give witness to the outreaching love of Christ in meaningful ways. We need vital congregations where the ministry of the laity is thriving and making a difference in communities. We need excellent clergy who lead with inspiration and grace and who equip and empower congregations to do the work of Christ. We can't look into the future and foresee what impact a new organization will have on our work together. Certainly, the new plan is not perfect. But it is a huge step in a better direction. And we can feel confident that our intentions are based on solid missional and spiritual footing. In the end, the new plan offers simply a framework for renewal. It's up to us, though, to give it form. And of course, it is only the Holy Spirit who gives us life.

## **BOARD OF PENSIONS**

### **REPORT I**

#### **I. CONFERENCE APPORTIONMENT**

- A. That \$200,000 be apportioned to the charges of the Louisiana Annual Conference in 2016.
- B. Payments made to the pension apportionment shall be exactly proportional to the amount paid on the clergy salary or salaries of a given charge, i.e. if the church does not pay the pension apportionment in full, neither should pastor's salary be paid in full. See Paragraph 622, *The Book of Discipline*.

#### **II. PRE-1982 BENEFITS**

We recommend:

- A. That the funded annuity rate for 2016 be \$714 per service year. In 2015, it was \$701 per service year. Benefits to surviving spouses of clergy shall be 75% of the annuity rate.
- B. The Conference Board of Pensions is recommending that the "Past Service Rate" for years prior to 1982 be set at 1% of the CAC for 2016 (\$714 per year) and that this rate be reviewed annually. The CAC is set annually by the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits. The CAC amount for 2016 is \$71,386.

#### **III. CLERGY RETIREMENT SECURITY PLAN (CRSP) FOR CLERGY AT LEAST HALF (1/2) TIME & UMPIP FOR CLERGY SERVICE LESS THAN HALF (1/2) TIME**

We recommend:

- A. That Participants shall be all Clergy members of the Louisiana Annual Conference including Deacons and Local Pastors under Episcopal appointment to a charge. The Conference Board of Pensions includes in the Louisiana Conference plan Deacons as a definite and integral segment of the program. All local churches and United Methodist agencies whom employ Deacons shall pay for a United Methodist Retirement Plan in addition to salary.
- B. That Participants' Plan Compensation is the sum of: (1) cash salary (including tax deferred annuities and professional expense allowances) received from church-related sources; (2) utilities; and (3) housing allowance, or when a parsonage is provided, 25% of the Plan Compensation as the approximate value of that parsonage.
- C. That the following chart, based on the DAC or CAC, whichever is the lower, be used to determine part-time increment status of an appointment to a charge or conference-controlled agency as it relates to pension years of service and pension billing calculation.

##### **2015 – Based on 60% of the DAC (\$66,259)**

\$1 - \$19,877	=	¼ Time Status	UMPIP Only
\$19,878 - \$29,816	=	½ Time Status	CRSP
\$29,817 - \$39,754	=	¾ Time Status	CRSP
\$39,755 and above	=	Full Time Status	CRSP

##### **2016-Based on 60% of the DAC (\$67,333)**

\$1 - \$20,199	=	¼ Time Status	UMPIP Only
\$20,200 - \$30,299	=	½ Time Status	CRSP
\$30,300 - \$40,399	=	¾ Time Status	CRSP
\$40,000 and above	=	Full Time Status	CRSP

- D. Clergy serving at least half (1/2 time) to a local church or conference-controlled agency, shall participate in the GBOPHB's CRSP plan; and the church's contribution base be set as a percentage of plan compensation according to the following:

Defined Benefit (DB)      10% of Pension Plan Compensation with a cap at \$6000

Plus

Defined Contribution (DC)      3% of Pension Plan Compensation.\*

\*As per General Conference 2012, 2% of the plan comp is deposited automatically into the clergy's personal DC account, and the final 1% of plan comp is deposited into the clergy's personal DC account if the clergy also contributes at least a matching 1% of plan comp into his/her personal UMPIP account. The CBOP is continuing to recommend billing the normal 3% of plan comp for DC, regardless of whether the clergy participates in the matching UMPIP contributions or not. Any excess receipts resulting from this

billing would be used to cover other unfunded administrative expenses of the CBOP and annual billing arrearages for which the Conference is responsible.

- E. Clergy serving less than half (1/2 time) to a local church or conference-controlled agency, shall participate in the GBOPHB's La. Conference-Sponsored UMPIP plan; and the church's contribution base be set as a percentage of plan compensation according to the following:

UMPIP: 10% of Pension Plan Compensation

- F. Contributions for each participant shall be paid directly by the paying unit to the Louisiana Annual Conference, 527 North Blvd., Baton Rouge, LA 70802-5720 by the 25<sup>th</sup> of each month.
- G. Participants may contribute their 1% matching personal contributions and any additional personal funds withheld from clergy compensation to the UMPIP with remittances made directly to the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits, P.O. Box 4609, Chicago, IL 60680-4609. Clergy wanting to contribute personal funds to his/her UMPIP account, must contact the Conference office for an "UMPIP Billing Change" form. Clergy shall have his/her employer make direct deposit into a pre-tax or after-tax account, in accordance with federal government regulations. Further information concerning the United Methodist Personal Investment Plan may be obtained from the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits, 1901 Chestnut Drive, Glenview, IL 60025-1604 (1-800-851-2201).

#### **LOUISIANA CONFERENCE LOCAL CHURCH CLERGY RETIREMENT SECURITY PLAN AND CONFERENCE-SPONSORED UMPIP PLAN PENSIONS RESOLUTION FORM**

[This document shall be a part of stated business of every Charge Conference to be read and executed in the presence of the other members of the Charge Conference.]

**WHEREAS**, the Louisiana Conference voted in 2006 to participate in the Clergy Retirement Security Plan of the United Methodist Church that took effect 1/1/07, and,

**WHEREAS**, Participants shall be all Clergy serving under Episcopal appointment to a Louisiana Conference-controlled charge of the Louisiana Annual Conference including Deacons and Local Pastors, and,

**WHEREAS**, the General Conference Legislation of 2012, no longer requires participants that serve less than full time appointments to participate in the CRSP plan, effective 1/1/14, and;

**WHEREAS**, the General Conference Legislation of 2012, no longer provides the CRSP plan for participants serving less than half (1/2) time, effective 1/1/14, and;

**WHEREAS**, the Louisiana Conference voted in 2013, effective 1/1/14, for participants serving at least half (1/2) time under Episcopal appointment to a Louisiana Conference-controlled charge of the Louisiana Annual Conference including Deacons and Local Pastors, shall participate in the GBOPHB's Clergy Retirement Security Plan (CRSP) plan, and;

**WHEREAS**, the Louisiana Conference voted in 2013, effective 1/1/14, for participants serving less than half (1/2) time under Episcopal appointment to a Louisiana Conference-controlled charge of the Louisiana Annual Conference including Deacons and Local Pastors, shall participate in the GBOPHB's La. Conference-Sponsored United Methodist Personal Investment Plan (UMPIP), and;

**WHEREAS**, "pension benefits" have been legally determined to be "deferred compensation."

**IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED** that the \_\_\_\_\_ United Methodist Church does hereby accept full ethical, moral and legal responsibility for the payment in full of monthly billed pension premiums for the pastor(s) assigned to said church, and,

**IT IS FURTHER HEREBY RESOLVED** that the \_\_\_\_\_ United Methodist Church will pay the monthly billed pension premiums in a timely manner, and,

**IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED** that the \_\_\_\_\_ United Methodist Church understands that failure to pay the monthly billed pension premiums in full will be taken into consideration relative to whether or not the congregation is financially able to support a pastor(s) in the future.

**Church Lay Leader:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Church Council Chair:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Finance Chair:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Staff Parish Chair:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Pastor(s):** \_\_\_\_\_

*If more than one clergy person, each must sign.*

**District Superintendent:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date of Charge Conference at which this document was executed:** \_\_\_\_\_

#### IV. THE COMPREHENSIVE PROTECTION PLAN (CPP)

We continue to recommend:

- A. That participants shall be all clergy and deacons in full connection, provisional, associate members or full-time local pastors under Episcopal appointment, who have a plan compensation of not less than 60% of the DAC or CAC whichever is the lesser and that in 2015 and 2016, the lesser amount is the DAC.
- B. That the churches contribute, on behalf of each participant, an amount equal to 3% of the Plan Compensation as defined in III.B. up to a maximum of 200% of the DAC. Remittances shall be made directly to the Louisiana Annual Conference in conjunction with CRSP payments.
- C. 2015 Benefits Amounts For The Comprehensive Protection Plan

The 2015 Denominational Average Compensation (DAC) is \$66,259 and the 2016 DAC is \$67,333.

The following information generally describes the benefit amounts payable under the Comprehensive Protection Plan (CPP) to eligible participants and their beneficiaries. For more information about CPP, see the *CPP Summary Plan Description* (SPD) available at [www.gbophb.org/TheWell/Root/CPP/3097.pdf](http://www.gbophb.org/TheWell/Root/CPP/3097.pdf). Although all efforts have been made to ensure the accuracy of this document, in the event of a discrepancy between this document and the SPD or CPP plan document, the SPD and plan document will always govern.

**Active Participant Death Benefits**—payable upon the death of an eligible active CPP participant in 2014

- Participant: \$50,000, payable in 12 monthly installments or one lump sum
- Spouse of active participant: 20% of DAC in the year of death Surviving spouse of active participant: 15% of DAC in the year of death
- Child of active participant: 10% of DAC in the year of death Annual surviving spouse a (CRSP) and other Church-related sources
- Annual surviving child benefit of 10% of DAC payable in 12 monthly installments<sup>1</sup>
- Annual surviving child educational benefit up to up to 20% of DAC payable in installments as provided in the documents of the CPP program<sup>2</sup>

**Retired Participant Death Benefits**<sup>3</sup>

Plan Provision	Clergy Who Retire Before January 1, 2013 <sup>4</sup>	Clergy Who Retire January 1, 2013 or Later <sup>5</sup>
Death of retired participant	30% of DAC in the year of death	\$20,000
Death of retiree's spouse	20% of DAC in the year of death	\$15,000
Death of retiree's surviving spouse	15% of DAC in the year of death	\$10,000
Death of retiree's child <sup>6</sup>	10% of DAC in the year of death	\$8,000
Annual surviving child benefit Payable in 12 monthly installments <sup>1</sup>	10% of DAC	10% of DAC
Annual surviving child educational benefit Payable in installments <sup>2</sup>	20% of DAC	20% of DAC

<sup>1</sup> Ages 17 and younger. Benefits are paid through the month in which the child attains age 18.

<sup>2</sup> Ages 18 through 24 and attending school full-time. payable as provided in the documents for the CPP program

<sup>3</sup> To be eligible for death benefits in retirement, a clergyperson must have been covered in CPP for a requisite number of years, e.g., seven of the last 10 years before retirement, as described in the SPD.

<sup>4</sup> Benefit available at this level for eligible retirees who retired before January 1, 2013, regardless of date of death.

<sup>5</sup> Benefit available at this level for eligible retirees who retired on or after January 1, 2013, regardless of date of death.

<sup>6</sup> Age 18 and younger, age 19 and older if dependent upon the participant or upon surviving spouse of the participant due to behavioral or physical condition that existed prior to age 19, or age 24 and younger and receiving surviving child benefit.



### **Disability Benefits**

The disability benefit equals 70% of plan compensation for the plan year in which the first payment is effective, with plan compensation capped at 200% of the DAC. The disability benefit is reduced by any disability benefits payable under the Social Security Act and other reductions may apply in accordance with the terms of the SPD, as determined by the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits

Eligible participants receiving CPP disability benefits may also receive retirement plan contributions to either CRSP or the United Methodist Personal Investment Plan (UMPIP).

- D. The Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits is continuing to recommend one of the options available to Conferences through the Comprehensive Protection Plan. Article 111, Section 3.02 (a) states that persons "appointed to less than full-time service" not participate in the CPP unless special arrangements are made. Special arrangements for such cases may be found in the "Plan" at Article 111, Section 3.03 (a).

The Conference Board of Pensions can offer the CPP on an elective basis which allows a clergy serving as a full member, associate member or a provisional member at less than full-time service (75% or more) to elect to participate. In such a case, the individual participant or salary paying unit would pay the 4.4% of the DAC remitted to the conference office in conjunction with CRSP payments to participate in the plan.

## **V. OPTIONAL UMLIFE PLAN**

The General Board of Pension and Health Benefits adopted the Optional UMLife Insurance Plan on January 1, 2009. This plan is available to all full-time clergy under Episcopal appointment and who are enrolled in the CPP benefit program, as an optional life insurance plan at the cost to the clergy participant. This plan allows the participant to purchase additional life insurance coverage, a spousal death benefit and/or a child death benefit. This plan is sponsored by the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits and insured by Unum Life Insurance Company. For eligibility requirements, please contact the Conference Benefits Administrator at (225) 346-1646. For plan document information, please contact the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits at (800) 851-2201 or [www.gbophb.org](http://www.gbophb.org).

## **VI. LTD AND LIFE INSURANCE PLAN**

The Louisiana Conference Board of Pensions provides a Long Term Disability and Death Benefit to eligible active part-time local pastors who are serving ½ (one-half) time or above under Episcopal appointment to a local church or other conference responsible unit and are not eligible for the CPP benefit as defined in Exhibit B, Part I of the GBOPHB Adoption Agreement. This plan is insured by Unum Life Insurance Company.

A. The LTD plan provides long-term disability income protection benefits at 60% of plan compensation after a 90-day elimination period.

B. The LTD Plan provides a \$25,000 death benefit.

C. The Optional Life Insurance Plan allows the participant to purchase additional life insurance coverage, a spousal death benefit plan and/or a child death benefit plan.

For eligibility requirements, please contact the Conference Benefits Administrator at (225) 346-1646. For plan document information, please contact the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits at (800) 851-2201 or [www.gbophb.org](http://www.gbophb.org).

LTD/Life Insurance Plan is an additional financial obligation of the Louisiana Conference Board of Pensions.

For further information concerning pension benefits and payments contact the Conference Office of Administrative Services at (225) 346-1646.

## **REPORT II**

### **I. MEDICAL AND HEALTH CARE PROGRAMS**

- A. The Conference Board of Pensions is authorized to act for the Louisiana Conference to provide comprehensive major medical expenses, dental care and vision benefits group insurance for the clergy, surviving spouses, dependents and lay (full-time) employees of plan-sponsoring churches and institutions as defined by the plan.

- B. Between sessions of the Annual Conference, the Board may make changes in the program or the carrier with approval of the Council on Finance and Administration and the Cabinet.
- C. The plan and future of the medical and health care programs is being reviewed in light of the Affordable Care Act.
- D. Enrollment must be accomplished within 30 days following the effective date of clergy appointments or the hiring of lay employees. After that time, a participant would be eligible to enroll if a Special Enrollment Provision were met. Such provisions would be either a loss of coverage, or if there is a new dependent as a result of marriage, birth, adoption or placement for adoption. Enrollment under either of these provisions should be requested within 30 days of the loss of coverage, marriage, birth, adoption or placement for adoption. Dependent children are covered to age 26 as required per the Affordable Care Act. Dependent children may be covered beyond this date in certain limited disability situations. See plan document for more details.
- E. There will be an open-enrollment period for eligible participants from October 15 through November 15 with an effective date of January 1 of the following year.
- F. All churches receiving a full-time appointment are required to pay the insurance premium at the rate set for Active Clergy, whether or not the clergy person takes the insurance.
- G. It is required that participants serving full-time appointments beyond the age of 65 retain the Conference's active health insurance regular coverage as primary carrier; if one is on Medicare, it will be secondary until retirement.

## **II. LOUISIANA CONFERENCE SELF-FUNDED INSURANCE PLAN FOR ACTIVE PARTICIPANTS**

Our self-funded group insurance plan is a comprehensive major medical program for participants who meet the requirements to be enrolled in the plan. The 2015 Plan Booklet with terms of eligibility and a Schedule of Benefits and a Letter regarding dental insurance may be found on the Conference Website ([www.la-umc.org](http://www.la-umc.org).) The Schedule of Medical Benefits contains a Preferred Provider Organization (PPO) – BlueCross and BlueShield of Louisiana's Preferred Care PPO. BlueCross BlueShield provides the program for nationwide coverage outside of Louisiana. For further information regarding benefits and claims, please contact the Conference Office of Financial Affairs at (225) 346-1646.

## **III. MEDICARE SUPPLEMENT:**

There is currently a Medicare Supplement plan offered by the Board of Pensions for some retirees who have reached the age of 65 and their spouses who were covered at the time of retirement. There are restrictions on who is eligible to participate and this is set forth in the plan document that can be found on the Conference Web-site ([www.la-umc.org](http://www.la-umc.org)) If coverage under the supplement is waived at time of retirement or later, one cannot re-enter the program. Retired persons over 65 must be enrolled in Medicare/Medicaid (as applicable) to participate. When a participant retires after the age of 65, he/she must re-enroll with Medicare A&B for Medicare to begin paying claims as the primary insurance. Participants **should not** enroll in Medicare Part D. For further information regarding benefits and claims, please contact the Conference Office of Financial Affairs at (225) 346-1646.

## **IV. CURRENT PREMIUMS (AS OF JANUARY 1, 2015)**

### **A. Active Plan Medical and Hospital plus Dental:**

<u>Classification</u>	<u>Annually</u>	<u>Monthly</u>
<b>Blended Rate for Appointed Clergy</b>	\$ 13,260	\$ 1,105
Participant – single coverage	\$ 8,100	\$ 675
Participant – family coverage	\$ 16,320	\$ 1,360
Surviving Spouse (under 65) – single	\$ 8,100	\$ 675
Surviving Spouse (under 65) – family	\$ 16,320	\$ 1,360

### **Payment of Premium**

1. The Conference Board of Pensions will pay ½ of the Medical and Health Care Insurance premium for a surviving spouse under age 65 and dependents unless covered by another plan or serving as a clergy under a full-time appointment, charge or Conference affiliated ministry.
2. Remittances shall be sent by the 25<sup>th</sup> of each month, to the Conference Office of Financial Affairs, 527 North Boulevard, Baton Rouge, LA 70802. Checks should be made payable to Louisiana Annual Conference.

### **Special Grant for Payment of Retiree Premium**

For any clergy person retiring on or before December 1, 2016, a grant of \$250 per month shall be paid by the Board of Pensions towards his/her active insurance premium for any premium due July 1, 2015, until the date the person becomes eligible for Medicare, or December 31, 2016, whichever is earlier. This grant does not apply to the spouse of such clergy person.

#### **B. Medicare Supplement and Prescription Drug Plan:**

<b><u>Classification</u></b>	<b><u>Annually</u></b>	<b><u>Monthly</u></b>
Retiree	\$3,000	\$250
Retiree and Spouse	\$6,000	\$500
Surviving Spouse (over 65)	\$3,000	\$250

#### **Payment of Premium**

1. The General Board of Pension is authorized to withhold from annuity checks the monthly premium for those enrolled in this program. This is the preferred method of payment and the Board of Pensions will pay the fee for this service.
2. Payments which are not withheld from the annuity check of the General Board of Pension shall be deducted from a bank account of the insured by an automatic withdrawal.

#### **C. Special Grant for Retiree Payment of Premium**

### **V. CANCELLATION OF BENEFITS**

- A. If a participant is billed and personally remits payment for the health insurance premium but the payments become three (3) months in arrears, his/her coverage will be discontinued. If a participant's health insurance premiums are being funded by his/her employer/church, and those payments become three (3) months in arrears, then the Cabinet and Bishop will take into consideration that the church/employer cannot support a full time clergyperson/staff and consider reducing the charge to a part time appointment. Also, at any time the church is three (3) months in arrears, the church/employer will be put on automatic draft and must stay on such automatic draft for one year.
- B. If a participant's health coverage has been discontinued, reinstatement will not be permitted for one full year. Payment of the amount in arrears plus one month payment in advance must be remitted before reinstatement.
- C. Active Participants previously covered under this Plan whose coverage ceases due to lay-off, termination of employment or whose coverage lapses from non-payment of any required contribution, and who is re-hired and becomes an eligible Employee shall become eligible for coverage again, for Employee and any previously covered eligible Dependents, subject to all plan provisions required of a new Employee.

### **VI. REPORTING CLAIMS**

Claims must be filed within one year from the date of service in order to be considered eligible for payment. Information on where to file claims is on the insurance cards and may also be found on the Conference web-site (search health insurance).

## **LOUISIANA CONFERENCE HEALTH CARE BENEFITS RESOLUTION**

**Originally Passed 10/16/04 at Annual Conference Special Session and Adopted Through This Report Again**

**WHEREAS**, ¶ 604.13 of *The Book of Discipline, 2012* states, "The annual conference may choose to adopt a conference wide plan for compensation of pastors. Such a plan shall provide the method for setting and funding the salaries, and/ or other compensation elements as specified in the plan, of the pastors appointed to the charges of the annual conference," and;

**WHEREAS**, health care benefits for clergy and their families are considered to be an essential element of clergy compensation, and;

**WHEREAS**, the Louisiana Conference has established a health care plan to provide this essential element of clergy compensation, and;

**WHEREAS**, support of the Louisiana Conference Health Plan is a fiduciary responsibility of a local church, and;

**WHEREAS**, each church in the Louisiana Conference will be apportioned on an amount to be determined annually by the Annual Conference for the support of the Conference health plan, and;

**WHEREAS**, the primary cost of the Conference health plan for full time clergy should be equitably shared by all churches that receive full time clergy appointments;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:**

**THAT** in order to be eligible to receive a full-time appointment, a charge or Conference affiliated ministry, shall agree to support the Conference health plan by fully funding one composite health care premium for each full time clergy appointment, and;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT** in multiple church charges the cost of the composite premium shall be proportionally divided among the churches on the charge, and;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT** failure to fully fund the health care premium shall be taken into consideration relative to whether or not a charge/ Conference Affiliated Ministry is financially able to support the full-time pastor(s) in the future.

## **REPORT III**

### **I. GRANTS**

- A. Recommend that grants for dependents be continued to: Beulah Irving and Larry Leon Scott.
- B. Recommend that a special grant be paid July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2016 from Conference pension funds to:
  - 1. Mrs. Jewell B. Bonds in an amount equal to 75% of the 1968 annuity rate for the service of Rev. John C. Bonds, Sr., covering the period June 2, 1961 – June 6, 1968.
  - 2. Rev. Robert F. DeBusk, Jr. in an amount based on six and one-fourth (6 ¼) years annuity credit at the 1987 rate.
  - 3. Mrs. Patsy R. Garrett in an amount equal to 75% of twelve (12) years of annuity credit at the 1967 rate.

### **II. YEARS OF SERVICE OR STATUS CORRECTIONS**

John Robert Black – commissioned as probationary elder June 2010

John Vining – ordained as deacon June 1972

### **III. RESOLUTIONS RELATING TO RENTAL/HOUSING ALLOWANCES FOR RETIRED, DISABLED, OR FORMER CLERGYPERSONS OF THE LOUISIANA ANNUAL CONFERENCE**

#### **THE LOUISIANA ANNUAL CONFERENCE (THE “CONFERENCE”) ADOPTS THE FOLLOWING:**

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

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

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

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

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:**

**THAT** an amount equal to 100% of the pension, severance, or disability payments received from plans authorized under *The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church* (the “*Discipline*”), which includes all such payments from the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits (“GBOPHB”), during the period January 1 through December 31, 2014 and January 1 through December 31, 2015, by each active, retired, terminated, or disabled Clergyperson who is or was a member of the Conference, or its predecessors, be and hereby is designated as a rental/housing allowance for each such Clergyperson; and

**THAT** the pension, severance, or disability payments to which this rental/housing allowance designation applies will be any pension, severance, or disability payments from plans, annuities, or funds authorized under the *Discipline*, including such payments from the GBOPHB and from a commercial annuity company that provides an annuity arising from benefits accrued under a GBOPHB plan, annuity, or fund authorized under the

*Discipline*, that result from any service a Clergy person rendered to this Conference or that an active, a retired, a terminated, or a disabled Clergy person of this Conference rendered to any local church, annual conference of the Church, general agency of the Church, other institution of the Church, former denomination that is now a part of the Church, or any other employer that employed the Clergy person to perform services related to the ministry of the Church, or its predecessors, and that elected to make contributions to, or accrue a benefit under, such a plan, annuity, or fund for such an active, a retired, a terminated, or a disabled Clergy person's pension, severance, or disability plan benefit as part of his or her gross compensation.

**NOTE:** The rental/housing allowance that may be excluded from a Clergy person's gross income in any year for federal (and, in most cases, state) income tax purposes is limited under Internal Revenue Code section 107(2), and regulations thereunder, to the least of: (a) the amount of the rental/housing allowance designated by the Clergy person's employer or other appropriate body of the Church (such as this Conference in the foregoing resolutions) for such year; (b) the amount actually expended by the Clergy person to rent or provide a home in such year; or (c) the fair rental value of the home, including furnishings and appurtenances (such as a garage), plus the cost of utilities in such year. Each clergy person or former clergy person is urged to consult with his or her own tax advisor to determine what deferred compensation is eligible to be claimed as a housing allowance exclusion.

#### IV. INVESTMENTS

Recommend the continued supervision of investment of Pension Crusade funds by the Conference Board of Pensions Investment Committee and the Investment Committee of The United Methodist Foundation of Louisiana.

#### V. OTHER MATTERS

- A. The benefits listed in this report relating to Pre-1982, CRSP, CPP, UMPIP and LTD and Life Insurance Plans, are a summary of the programs in which this Conference participates through the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits. All claims are subject to the detailed programs and interpretations of the General Board.
- B. The Conference Board of Pensions provides a move benefit for full elders, provisional elders, associate members and full-time local pastors presently under appointment who are retiring. This is a one-time benefit and must be used within one year of the date of retirement. The maximum amount of the benefit is \$6,000. In the event a clergy couple retires, there is only one \$6,000 benefit unless the clergy couple is living in two different homes/parsonages in two different cities in their last appointments. If one member of a clergy couple retires and the other clergy couple member will continue in active status, a benefit is only due if the clergy retiring has been living in a separate home/parsonage in a separate city from the clergy spouse not retiring. The following items may be reimbursed under this benefit: supplies (boxes, tape, packing material); rental of truck, dolly, blankets, and fees paid to non-related packers OR the costs of the moving company; one month's rental of a pod or storage unit not to exceed 10 ft. x 20 ft.; gas purchased for a rental moving truck, if utilized; one night stay on the road and one meal on the road for family members moving with the retiree from the last appointment location to the retirement location; and mileage at the IRS rate between the present appointment location and the retired location for one vehicle. Itemized receipts must be provided to support all expenses. There is a form used to request this benefit and receipts for all expenses must be attached to the form to be reimbursed.
- C. The Conference Board of Pensions provides a moving expense benefit for the surviving annuitant(s) of an active clergy who dies while under appointment in a full connection, associate, provisional or a full-time local pastor relationship. This benefit is for the same amount and under the same conditions as the benefit outlined above for retiring pastors.
- D. The Conference Board of Pensions is pleased to provide housing on the Centenary Campus for those years that the session of the Louisiana Annual Conference will be held at Centenary College in Shreveport, Louisiana for un-appointed Louisiana Conference clergy member retirees and their spouses or surviving spouses who wish to attend Annual Conference session. We recommend that reservation requests be submitted to Centenary from April 1<sup>st</sup> to May 6<sup>th</sup>. The Board is not responsible for any other housing arrangement. Meals will also be provided by the Board in the Centenary Cafeteria. Retired clergy under appointment shall have their expenses paid by the church they are serving.
- E. Retirees who are concerned about late pension checks should not contact the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits before the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month at 1-800-851-2201.
- F. Information about personal pension accounts may be obtained by calling the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits at 1-800-851-2201.

- G. Subscriptions to the LOUISIANA NOW and one copy per year of the Louisiana Conference Journal will be provided to all un-appointed Louisiana Conference clergy member retirees and surviving spouses by the Conference Board of Pensions if they have requested such a copy by the deadlines set forth when ordering information is provided.
- H. The Conference Board of Pensions recommends that any distribution from the United Methodist Publishing House be donated to the Central Conference Pension Initiative.

## REPORT IV

### **VACATION POLICY**

This Vacation Policy for Clergy is to standardize clergy vacations across the Conference. The policy is for clergy appointed within the bounds of the Louisiana Conference.

	<b><u>CONFERENCE RELATIONSHIP</u></b>	<b><u>TIME OF SERVICE</u></b>	<b><u>VACATION TIME</u></b>
(1)	Full-Time Local Pastors in process, Attending the four-week Course of Study		2 weeks paid
(2)	Full-Time Clergy (Full Members, Provisional Members, Assoc. Members, Full Connection Deacons, FTLP) Part-time Local Pastors	5 years or less	2 weeks paid  1 week including 1 Sunday paid
(3)	Full-Time Clergy (Full Members, Provisional Members, Assoc. Members, through completion Full Connection Deacons, FTLP) Part-time Local Pastors	5 years + 1 day of 9 yrs. of service	3 weeks paid  2 weeks including 2 Sundays paid
(4)	Full-Time Clergy (Full Members, Provisional Members, Assoc. Members, more of service Full Connection Deacons, FTLP) Part-time Local Pastors	10 years or more of service	4 weeks paid  3 weeks including 3 Sundays paid

**NOTE:** Years of service refer to years of service in an Annual Conference(s) of the United Methodist Church, not years of service in the local church to which the clergy is appointed. These years of service include years under appointment to Seminary or beyond the local church.

Time used for Continuing Education, as defined by *The Book of Discipline* of the United Methodist Church and according to the rules set by the Conference Board of Ordained Ministry, shall not be considered as vacation time or used in lieu of vacation time. Vacation time is on a conference year basis. Vacation time not used in one year cannot be carried over into the next year.

### **DAYS OFF POLICY:**

The Annual Conference's policy is that each local church's Pastor-Parish Relations Committee establish a days off policy with the pastor(s) of the charge. The minimum standard for days off is as follows: 2 days per week and 2 nights per week. Additional time should be set aside each week for prayer and study for the pastor's use.

If an honorarium is given to a guest pastor while the appointed pastor is on vacation, it shall be paid by the local church and not from that pastor's compensation.

Churches should encourage their pastor(s) to participate in physical exercise programs, good nutrition programs, and to get regular checkups with their doctors.

This policy is to be printed each year in the Journal of the Louisiana Annual Conference. The Cabinet of the Louisiana Annual Conference will send a copy of this policy to the Chairperson of the Pastor-Parish Relations Committee in each District.

### **BEREAVEMENT LEAVE POLICY**

All clergy in any relationship - PTLP, FTLP, AM, PE , PD, Full Connection, or retired if serving an appointment – shall be offered at least 30 days for bereavement leave (BL) for the death of a spouse or child. The District Superintendent shall initiate this process by informing the bereaved clergy of the availability of bereavement leave.

Bereavement leave will be in addition to vacation time, continuing education time and days off. The local church or conference agency to which the clergy is appointed shall continue to provide salary and housing, as well as pension and insurance payments, during the bereavement leave. The clergy will have ninety (90) days, beginning the day after the memorial/funeral service, in which to begin the bereavement leave. Details - pulpit supply, covering hospitals, etc. - will be worked out in conjunction with the District Superintendent and S/PPR chair. The clergy may use the bereavement leave in one block or some smaller blocks of time as he/she wishes, but must complete it within six months of the funeral/memorial service.

In many cases the congregation will have its own resources to secure appropriate pastoral leadership during the bereavement leave, but if the District Superintendent and S/PPR determine that financial assistance is needed to provide a supply pastor, the Annual Conference Board of Pensions will provide a maximum of \$400 per week depending on whether the appointment is part or full time, and the responsibilities expected of the supply pastor. The District office will disburse any funds from the Conference Board of Pensions to the supply pastor. Counseling is available at no cost to all clergy by a confidential request to the Director of Care and Nurturing of the Louisiana Conference Board of Ordained Ministry.

## **REPORT V**

### **STATEMENT OF ASSETS**

<u>Balance:</u>	12/31/2012	12/31/2013	12/31/2014
UMF LA Conf. Pension Reserves	\$ 6,887,222	\$ 7,393,436	\$ 7,365,731
UMF Nell Stipe Endowment Fund	699,386	799,964	794,469
UMF Ava Morton Alford Fund	32,260	34,508	34,185
UMF Carrollton UMC Fund	54,287	58,069	57,526
UMF Daisy Dell Garber Fund II	27,459	29,372	29,097
UMF B. Paxton Fund	16,394	17,536	17,372
UMF LA Conf. Benefits Reserves	3,903,444	3,562,586	4,993,796
UMF Woolworth Foundation Reserves	2,810,280	4,258,631	3,934,001
UMF Health Insurance Active Plan Reserves	782,702	789,802	661,882
UMF Superannuate Endowment Reserve	-	-	322,242
GBOPHB Superannuate Endowment Fund	330,652	387,112	64,339
Subtotal	15,544,086	7,331,016	18,274,639
Conference Operating Accounts	1,116,084	37,387	1,431,930
Total	\$ 16,660,170	\$ 17,868,403	\$ 19,706,569

**NOTE:** The Conference Board of Pensions received \$925,143 from the Woolworth Foundation in 2014.

## **REPORT VI**

### **LOUISIANA ANNUAL CONFERENCE FUNDING PLAN FOR SUPPLEMENT ONE TO THE CLERGY RETIREMENT SECURITY PLAN AS OF JANUARY 1, 2015**

The 2015 Past Service Rate (PSR) for the Louisiana Annual Conference is \$701 or 1% of the 2015 Conference Average Compensation (CAC).

The General Board of Pension and Health Benefits has determined that the portion of the Pre-82 plan liability attributable to the Louisiana Annual Conference is \$30,102,360 with a 3.5% PSR increase assumption, based on a 2015 PSR of \$701. Plan funds currently held with the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits have a value of \$35,448,131 as of January 1, 2013.

The difference between the total plan liability and current plan funding is \$5,345,771. This represents an over-funded plan asset of 118%.

The funding plan as of January 1, 2015, for 2015 assuming the above for Supplement One Liability is that the Louisiana Annual Conference is funded and no additional funds will be needed during 2015 for the pre-82 liability.  
Supplement One Liability Assuming

The CBOP is requesting that the Louisiana Annual Conference set the 2016 PSR at \$714, which will be 1% of the CAC and that in 2016, we continue our true funding plan assumptions of annual CAC increases of 3.5% and setting the future PSR at 1% of the CAC.

The usage of the Pre82 surplus funds to fund other plan liabilities, after consultation with the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits actuaries, will be determined annually by the Conference Board of Pensions. In the past, it has been the recommendation of the conference board to utilize the surplus funds toward the Defined Benefit (DB) contribution portion of the CRSP pension plan. However, the conference board does recognize that if Pre82 surplus funds are used toward other plan liabilities, this could result in future Pre82 liability contributions. The Conference Board of Pensions does not recommend any Pre82 surplus funds be re-directed toward the CRSP DB plan in 2015.

If the funding plan for years beyond 2016 produces an underfunded Pre82 plan liability payment, then the intent is to use earnings (and principal if needed) from the UMF Louisiana Conference Pension Fund 812 to restore the Pre-82 plan to 100% funded status.

Dr. Wayne Evans, Chair  
Brian Shoup, Vice Chair  
Terry A. Love, Secretary  
Jan Holloway Curwick, Conference Benefits Officer  
John Cannon, Cabinet Liaison

## **BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

From April 2014 through April 2015, the Conference Board of Trustees completed the following property transactions:

**Purchased:** Bishop's Residence at 3233 Gilbert, Baton Rouge, LA

**Sold:**

1. Prospect United Methodist Church in Florien to Prospect Community Church
2. Floyd United Methodist Church in West Carroll Parish
3. Former Alexandria District parsonage
4. Ninde Chapel United Methodist Church in St. John The Baptist Parish to Revelation Knowledge Outreach Ministry, L.L.C.

**Donated:** Floyd United Methodist Church Cemetery in West Carroll Parish to Floyd Full Gospel Cemetery, Inc., reserving all mineral rights

**Leased:** Lease of the former Baskin United Methodist Church, Monroe District



**Returned to heirs (reversionary clause in deed):** None

**Other:** None

*A Supplement to the Pre-Conference Report of the Board of Trustees may be filed with resolutions regarding specific property transactions and property being abandoned upon church closings.*

## **COMMITTEE ON NOMINATIONS**

*The full recommendation list will be submitted to Annual Conference at a later date. To date, these are the nominations received from various agencies/ministries:*

### **HOPE MINISTRIES**

#### **Board of Directors and Officers**

##### **Class of 2013-2015**

Tommy Groves	Steve Werner ( <i>Treasurer</i> )	Warren Birkett
Kim Ginn	Mary Karam	Cheryl Olinde ( <i>Secretary</i> )
Holt Harrison		

##### **Class of 2014-2016**

Rev. Ginny Allen ( <i>Chair</i> )	Judson Banks ( <i>Vice-Chair/Chair Elect</i> )	Stephanie Cargile
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##### **Class of 2015-2017**

Allen Posey	Bob Barton	Michael Kirby
Cherryl Kirchoff	Johnny Mann	Kathy Shirley

##### **Ex-officio**

Baton Rouge District Superintendent, UMC	Rev. Van Stinson
President & CEO	Janet Simmons

### **LOUISIANA UNITED METHODIST CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES, INC.**

#### **Board of Directors and Officers**

##### **Ex-officio**

Resident Bishop of the Louisiana Annual Conference	Rev. Cynthia F. Harvey
District Superintendent of the Monroe District	Rev. Juliette Spencer
District Superintendent of the Shreveport District	Rev. Ken Irby
District Superintendent of the New Orleans District	Rev. E. Andrew Goff
District Superintendent of the Lake Charles District	Rev. Steven Spurlock
President of the Conference United Methodist Women	Dr. Barbara Ferguson/Mrs. Jane Ellett
President of the Conference United Methodist Men	Mr. Wayne Prejean
Louisiana Conference Lay Leader	Mrs. Carolyn Dove
Pastor, Grace United Methodist Church	Rev. Bob Deich
Pastor, Trinity United Methodist Church	Rev. Gary Willis
President Emeritus	Mr. Terrel DeVille
President and CEO	Mr. Rick Wheat

##### **Term To Expire In 2016**

Mrs. Jeanne Browning	Mrs. Rosemary Ewing ( <i>Vice Chair</i> )	Mr. Don McGehee
Mr. Matt Vincent	Ms. Joan Warren	

##### **Term To Expire In 2017**

Mr. Fred Banks	Mr. William Henning	Rev. Mike McLaurin
Mr. Bill McIntyre	Mr. Robert Temple ( <i>Chair</i> )	

##### **Term To Expire In 2018**

Mr. Bill Goforth	Rev. Ramonalynn Bethley	Ms. Betty Rowell
Mr. Randy Loewen	Mr. Steve Burkhalter	Mrs. Cindy Qualls

##### **Term To Expire In 2019**

Mr. Richard Lewis	Ms. Stacie Woodard ( <i>Secretary</i> )	Mr. Reid Falconer
Mr. Richie McKinney	Mr. William "Billy" James ( <i>Treasurer</i> )	Mrs. Evelyn Evans

## NORTH RAMPART COMMUNITY CENTER

### **Board of Directors and Officers**

Gina M. Smith ( <i>President</i> )	Lynn Jenkins ( <i>Vice-President</i> )	
Larry Miguez ( <i>Treasurer</i> )		
Casey Adams ( <i>Secretary</i> )	Glenda Johnson	Al Harris
Jason Greenaway	Jeff Kessler	Kayla Gelman
Hazell Williams	Elizabeth Lund	
Ex Officio: Dr. Barbara Ferguson		
Executive Director: Jeffery D. Parker (Coach)		

## UNITED METHODIST FOUNDATION OF LOUISIANA

### **Board of Trustees and Officers**

#### **Term to Expire 2015**

Joseph D. Awotwi ( <i>Chair</i> )	Sandra L. Kuykendall ( <i>Secretary</i> )	James M. Goins
Michael T. Head	Richard N. Lewis	Alice M. Proffit
Fred B. Wideman		

#### **Term to Expire 2016**

Mae C. Belton	Irwin L. Felps, Jr. ( <i>Immediate Past Chair</i> )	Frank W. Harrison
William C. Potter	R. Larry Stafford	

#### **Term to Expire 2017**

Weldon C. Bares ( <i>Grants Chair</i> )	Michael G. Dehart ( <i>Investment Chair</i> )	Omer C. Davis
L. Nettles Brown ( <i>Vice-Chair</i> )		

#### **By Virtue of Position**

Executive Director of Administrative Services:	Jan Curwick
Council on Finance and Administration:	Elaine M. Burleigh

#### **President/CEO**

Robert C. Fairly, Jr.

## **COUNCIL ON FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION**

Because Christ loves us, we reach out to others in His name. Our financial resources not only make possible ministry locally but also help make possible the broader ministry of Christ as we connect with all our United Methodist brothers and sisters to fulfill His Great Commission! The CFA and the Treasurer's offices are available to assist local church pastors and officials any way they can. If you wish further explanation of the Conference Budget or any specific apportionment within it, please call or write the Treasurer's office.

### **REPORT I**

1. We recommend the observance of the following special days with offerings:

#### **A. ANNUAL SPECIAL SUNDAYS WITH OFFERINGS:**

- Retired Ministers' Home Sunday .....September 13, 2015
- \*World Communion Sunday .....October 4, 2015
- \*United Methodist Student Day .....November 29, 2015
- Louisiana U.M. Children's Home Christmas Offering .....December 13, 2015
- \*Human Relations Day .....January 17, 2016
- Louisiana Prison Chapel Foundation .....February 7, 2016
- \*One Great Hour of Sharing .....March 6, 2016
- \*Native American Awareness .....Sunday April 10, 2016
- Louisiana U.M. Children's Home Mother's Day Offering .....May 8, 2016
- \*Peace with Justice Sunday .....May 22, 2016

#### **B. ANNUAL SPECIAL SUNDAYS WITH OPTIONAL OFFERINGS**

- Youth Service Fund .....May 6, 2016
- Christian Education Sunday .....August 16, 2016
- UMMIM Recognition & Awareness Sunday .....September 20, 2015

#### **C. ONE TIME SPECIAL SUNDAY WITH OFFERING**

- Return To The Seventh Ward Sunday .....August 30, 2015

#### **\*General Church Observances**

1. The Council reminds all congregations of the importance of STEWARDSHIP in the life of all Christians. Christ calls His disciples to give as an act of worship of God. We are called to be stewards of all that God has given to us. Paragraph 630.5e of the 2012 Discipline lists among the responsibilities in the area of Stewardship of the Conference Board of Discipleship, "To educate the local church that tithing is the minimum goal of giving in the United Methodist Church". CFA calls upon the Conference Ministry Team, the Conference Board of Discipleship, and the District Ministry Teams to consider methods of assisting our congregations in developing a process of education in a theology of stewardship. The intent of this request is to enhance the ministry of our local congregations, our members, and our Conference and world ministries.
2. The Council recommends a continued emphasis by all churches on Advance Specials, both General Advance and Conference Advance Specials. All churches are to pay in full their designated apportionments before appropriating funds for second-mile projects.
3. Each pastoral charge is asked to continue support of Mt. Sequoyah, the South Central Jurisdiction Conference and Retreat Center, with a goal of \$35 per pastoral charge. Each district is to raise the amount based on the total number of charges in the district and mail it to the Conference Treasurer.
4. Whitney National Bank and J. P. Morgan Chase Bank are designated as the principal depositories for general operating funds of the Louisiana Annual Conference. All cash flow, contingency and surplus funds shall be invested with the United Methodist Foundation. Authority to open accounts is given to the Conference Executive Director of Administrative Services/Treasurer and the President of the Council on Finance and Administration of the Louisiana Conference. Authorized signatures on the accounts and deposit boxes are to be: Conference Executive Director of Administrative Services/Treasurer, designated representative(s) of the CFA, designated conference office director(s) as named by CFA, and the Senior Pastor of First UMC, Baton Rouge.
5. The Council has contracted with Bourgeois Bennett, Certified Public Accountants of New Orleans, to audit the books of the Executive Director of Administrative Services/Treasurer. The auditor's report for the year ending December 31, 2014, is included in the Treasurer's Report found in this report.

6. The Council recommends that the pastoral charge consider for each clergy a vouchered amount of \$7,200 for Pastor's Travel/Professional Expense and an amount of \$7,200 for Utilities/Furnishings Expense.
7. The Council recommends that the local churches reimburse the moving expenses of incoming clergy up to \$6,000. Churches are asked to budget this amount each year. Money not used for moving should be placed in an escrow account to assure such funds as needed. When the recommended amount is exceeded by the incoming clergy, that clergy should pay the additional costs.
8. The Council recommends that the Pastoral Charge pay the Travel, Housing and Meal expenses of its Annual Conference Members (Lay and Clergy) to attend the Annual Conference Session.
9. The Council reminds the clergy of the Annual Conference who will move to another charge that they are to accept salary and expense (including Annual Conference reimbursements) through the end of the conference year (June 30) from the charge they are presently serving. The salary, benefits and expenses paid at the new charge begin July 1.
10. The Council recommends that all clergy under appointment be compensated semi-monthly.
11. The Council reminds all churches that they are to issue a W-2 form (and not a Form 1099) for clergy appointed to the church. Churches and clergy are also reminded that bonuses and gifts are to be included on W-2 forms.
12. Only Accountable Reimbursable Plans are to be used for Clergy Compensation set after January 1, 2015, and there will not be any non-accountable reimbursements for clergy for clergy compensation set after January 1, 2015.
13. In order to comply with the federal income tax regulations, we recommend that the Annual Conference declare by adoption of this report that the utilities and other housing expenses on the Conference Clergy employees' residences and the district parsonages to be a part of their cash compensation as "Housing Allowance."

## REPORT II

1. The Council presents the following Conference General Budget and Apportionments for 2016:

	<u>2015</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>Difference</u>
<b>GENERAL CHURCH</b>			
World Service	\$ 1,083,467	\$ 1,092,570	\$ 9,103
Ministerial Education Fund	371,966	375,101	3,135
Black College Fund	148,381	149,632	1,251
Africa University	33,202	33,496	294
Interdenominational Fund	29,105	29,350	245
General Administration Fund	130,780	131,911	1,131
Episcopal Fund	324,955	352,202	27,247
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,121,856</b>	<b>2,164,262</b>	<b>42,406</b>
<b>JURISDICTION</b>			
Jurisdictional Administration & SMU Fund	21,939	20,585	(1,354)
Lydia Patterson Institute	43,953	43,953	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>65,892</b>	<b>64,538</b>	<b>(1,354)</b>
<b>LA ANNUAL CONFERENCE</b>			
Conference Benevolences	1,868,510	1,799,070	(69,440)
New Faith Communities/Church Transformation	435,375	489,800	54,425
Louisiana Interchurch Conference	20,000	20,000	-
Wesley Center	125,000	125,000	-
Pension Fund	200,000	200,000	-
Pastoral Care Fund	200,000	200,000	-
Louisiana Conf. Admin. Fund	1,664,020	1,663,325	(695)
District Superintendent Fund	913,000	928,200	15,200
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,425,905</b>	<b>5,425,395</b>	<b>\$ (510)</b>
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 7,613,653</b>	<b>\$ 7,654,195</b>	<b>\$ 40,542</b>

**The amount to be apportioned is \$ 7,614,430** (budget less Lily Grant of \$39,765). If the Proposed Reorganization does not pass, the Total Budget would be \$64,500 less, or \$ 7,589,695 (\$ 7,549,930 apportioned). *See next page for NOTES.*

NOTES TO GENERAL BUDGET PROPOSAL:

- The 2011 Annual Conference recommended that the **New Faith Communities and Church Transformation program budget** be 10% of the total Annual Conference Budget and that the amount allocated be increased by 12.5% per year until this 10% figure was reached
- A change in the allocation of the **Pastoral Fund** is recommended for a one year period. The Board of Ordained Ministry will receive \$100,000 less and will use part of its \$469,613 reserve fund for its administrative costs in 2015. This \$100,000 is re-allocated to provide additional funding for the Clergy Transition and the Administrative Leave/ Suspension Funds.

	<u>2015</u>	<u>2016</u>
Administrative Leave/Suspension Fund	\$ 5,000	\$ 55,000
Board of Ordained Ministry Administration	132,250	32,250
Clergy Transition	34,750	84,750
Conflict Resolution	7,000	7,000
Employee Dishonesty Bond	1,000	1,000
General/Jurisdictional Delegate Expenses	10,000	10,000
Response Team	10,000	10,000

**A. Conference Benevolence Budget**

	<u>2015</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>Difference</u>
<b>Conference Benevolence General</b>			
Archives and History	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,150	\$ 150
Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns	700	1,600	900
Church and Society	1,350	1,350	-
COSROW	1,070	1,170	100
Discipleship	3,900	4,900	1,000
Global Ministries	30,600	38,700	8,100
Board of Laity	5,850	6,700	850
Religion and Race	700	350	(350)
Multicultural Ministries	17,500	8,500	(9,000)
Hispanic Ministries	152,000	100,000	(52,000)
Volunteers in Mission	25,000	27,250	2,250
Youth Ministries	29,000	35,000	6,000
Emerging Concerns	17,500	25,000	7,500
Bishop's Program Priority	7,000	4,000	(3,000)
Safe Sanctuaries	1,850	3,000	1,150
LaNow/Communications	17,000	25,000	8,000
Igniting Ministry	20,000	-	(20,000)
Internet Ministry	5,000	7,000	2,000
Academy for Spiritual Leadership	28,490	28,500	10
Center for Pastoral Effectiveness	7,000	7,500	500
<b>Total</b>	<b>372,510</b>	<b>326,670</b>	<b>(45,840)</b>
Wesley Foundations	660,000	686,400	26,400
Centenary College	550,000	500,000	(50,000)
Dillard University	86,000	86,000	-
Africa University Pledge	200,000	200,000	-
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 1,868,510</b>	<b>\$ 1,799,070</b>	<b>(69,440)</b>

NOTES TO CONFERENCE BENEVOLENCE BUDGET PROPOSAL:

- **Hispanic Ministries** and **Multi-Cultural Ministries** have not used the complete line item of the budget for several years and has a reserve that will be used if necessary.
- Multicultural Ministries, Hispanic Ministries, Emerging Concerns and Bishop's Program Priority are exempt from percentage funding.
- **Igniting Ministries** has changed focus from the national level and no additional funds from the Annual Conference are sought this year.

NOTES TO CONFERENCE BENEVOLENCE BUDGET PROPOSAL (continued):

- The Annual Conference has approved a multi-year plan for the Conference support for **Centenary College and Dillard University**. These plans establish two endowments with the Louisiana United Methodist Foundation. Over the course of several years, the Conference continues the apportionment for Centenary College and Dillard University, but with a portion of the apportionments going directly to the Colleges and a portion going into the endowments for the Colleges. The charts below provide for the allocation of the apportionments for 2011 through 2018. When the endowment reaches \$1,000,000 for Centenary College and \$250,000 for Dillard University, an annual 5% draw would be allocated to the colleges. The Conference apportionment would then be set at a level of \$250,000 per year for Centenary College and \$50,000 per year for Dillard University; plus they would receive the proceeds from the endowment. While the Annual Conference will be the major donor to the endowments in these beginning years, individuals, churches, and other groups are encouraged to add to the fund through direct contributions, estate planning, deferred giving, or other means of gifting. The funds provided to the colleges, both directly and through the endowments, when available, will be used at the discretion of the colleges and not considered “designated funds” for any specific program.

The schedule for Centenary College is as follows:

Year	Apportioned	Sent to Centenary	Endowment Fund
2011	\$700,000	\$650,000	\$50,000
2012	\$700,000	\$600,000	\$100,000
2013	\$650,000	\$500,000	\$150,000
2014	\$600,000	\$400,000	\$200,000
2015	\$550,000	\$300,000	\$250,000
2016	\$500,000	\$250,000	\$250,000
2017	\$250,000	\$250,000	\$0
2018	\$250,000	\$250,000	<u>\$0</u>
Total			\$1,000,000

The schedule for Dillard University is as follows:

Year	Apportioned	Sent to Dillard	Endowment Fund
2013	\$86,000	\$36,000	\$50,000
2014	\$86,000	\$36,000	\$50,000
2015	\$86,000	\$36,000	\$50,000
2015	\$86,000	\$36,000	\$50,000
2017	\$86,000	\$36,000	\$50,000
2018	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$0
Total			\$250,000

As of December 31, 2014, the amount in the Endowment account for Centenary is \$527,840.87, including \$27,840.87 in interest. As of December 31, 2014, the amount in the Endowment account for Dillard is \$114,583.20, including \$14,583.20 in interest.

## B. Conference Administration Budget and Funding

	2015	2016	Difference
Area Administration	\$ 8,000	\$ 8,000	\$ -
Annual Conference Expenses	45,000	50,000	5,000
Ann. Conf.-Worship Expenses	20,000	22,500	2,500
Journal	12,000	10,000	(2,000)
Episcopacy Committee	4,500	4,500	-
Episcopal Residence Expenses	50,000	50,000	-
Building Maintenance	65,000	55,000	(10,000)
Building Network IT Expenses	25,000	30,000	5,000
Telephone Expense	18,000	21,000	3,000
Postage	17,000	14,500	(2,500)
Office Supplies	25,000	23,000	(2,000)
Payroll/HR Processing Fees	3,000	9,000	6,000
Support Staff Salaries	452,435		
Staff Pension/LTD/Health Insurance /Employer FICA	135,550		
Staff Health Insurance Premiums	108,800		
Conference Directors' Salaries/Housing	475,610		
Conference Ministries Directors' Travel/Prof Exp	43,600		
Conf. Ministries Staff-Continuing Ed. Expenses	9,000		
Connectional Min. Dir/Provost Travel Expenses	16,225		
Finance Director's Trav/Prof Expenses	14,500		
<b>Total Staff 2015</b>	<b>1,255,720</b>		
Ministry Clergy Directors and Staff			
Salaries/Housing		279,075	
Travel/Professional/Continuing Education Expense		63,425	
Pension		37,000	
Health Insurance		50,550	
Ministry Lay Staff			
Salaries		319,725	
Travel/Professional Expense		6,600	
Pension/LTD//Employer FICA		47,875	
Health Insurance		38,825	
Finance/General Administrative Office Clergy Director			
Salary/Housing/Utilities		109,500	
Travel/Professional/Continuing Education Expense		14,500	
Pension		13,100	
Health Insurance		13,300	
Finance/General Administrative Office Lay Staff			
Salaries		193,100	
CPA License Expense		2,000	
Pension/LTD//Employer FICA		34,400	
Health Insurance		19,550	
<b>Total Staff 2016</b>		<b>1,242,525</b>	<b>(13,195)</b>
Finance Office Expenses	12,500	7,500	(5,000)
Conf. Ministries Programming	5,000	4,500	(500)
Conference Office Staff Contingency	5,000	4,500	(500)
Property & Liability Insurance	30,000	30,000	-
Worker's Compensation Insurance	8,500	8,500	-
Board of Trustees Expense	10,500	10,000	(500)
LA Conf. Chancellor's Fees	30,000	30,000	-
CFA Meeting Expenses	2,500	2,500	-
Conference CPA Audit Expense	10,000	25,000	15,000
Missional Staffing Committee Expense	1,800	800	(1,000)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 1,664,020</b>	<b>\$ 1,663,325</b>	<b>\$ (695)</b>
Lilly Grant	(39,765)	(39,765)	
<b>TOTAL TO BE APPORTIONED</b>	<b>\$ 1,624,255</b>	<b>\$ 1,623,560</b>	<b>\$ (695)</b>

Salary Components were \$ 1,255,720 in 2015 and \$1,242,525 in 2016, which is a \$13,195 decrease even considering the fact that the 2016 Budget includes \$16,000 for housing allowances for a Ministry Clergy Director and a Finance/General Administrative Office Clergy Director that were paid by a CFA Grant in 2015 (up to \$18,000 in prior years).

2. All remittances for 2015 must be received in the Conference Treasurer's Office on or before January 7, 2016.
3. The Annual Conference grants permission to Centenary College and Dillard University to make an appeal for every church in the Conference to send a "paid student" to the institutions.
4. The Executive Director of Administrative Services/Treasurer is authorized to pay from the District Superintendents' Fund for expenses of Cabinet Meetings. The Executive Director of Administrative Services/Treasurer of the Conference is authorized to pay from the District Superintendent's Fund to the Pension Fund an amount for each District Superintendent to meet the General Board of Pension requirement.
5. The base salary of all the District Superintendents shall be equal throughout the Conference. Since District Superintendents are appointed by the Bishop as officers of the Conference, their salary, travel expense, utilities allowance, housing allowance, professional expenses, and the Conference health insurance premium shall be paid by the Annual Conference. We recommend the following income be paid to the District Superintendents from the District Superintendents' Fund: Base Compensation for 2016, \$93,285 (see Conference Rules for the rule concerning salary); utilities/furnishings - \$7,200; and a total pooled amount of \$27,000 to be drawn by voucher and used for professional expenses that the District Superintendent incurs in carrying out the responsibilities of the office. The Council shall provide an automobile travel reimbursement expense for each District Superintendent to be drawn by voucher at the current IRS standard mileage reimbursement rate from a total pooled budget of \$88,375.
6. The Council recommends that each district provide at least three-fourth time secretarial help for the District Superintendent from district budget funds. The Annual Conference requires that copies of the annual budget and audit for each district be mailed to the Executive Director of Administrative Services/Treasurer for the Council not later than April 15 following the previous fiscal year.
7. Each Council, Board, Commission, Committee, etc. of the Conference receiving funding from the Conference shall designate one person, other than the chairperson, as the Finance Officer. The Finance Officer shall keep for that board or agency a current record of financial transactions involving the budget receipts and expenditures for that body. The Finance Officer shall receive all vouchers from members and shall approve and submit them to the Executive Director of Administrative Services/Treasurer. Vouchers must be specific, in detail, accompanied by the appropriate receipts, and must bear the signed approval of the Finance Officer. The Finance Officer shall in turn submit them to the Conference Executive Director of Administrative Services/Treasurer within three weeks. In order to assist the Executive Director of Administrative Services/Treasurer to close the books and set up books for a new fiscal year, all Finance Officers shall submit final vouchers of said board and agency to the Finance Office by December 10, 2015.

#### **OFFICIAL VOUCHER POLICY FOR CONFERENCE BOARDS AND AGENCIES:**

- **Travel** – Within the State of Louisiana – Travel Expense for Conference Boards and Agencies is set at a maximum of 25 cents per mile. When three or more members are traveling together, a maximum of 30 cents per mile will be paid. Regardless of the mode of travel used, the maximum of 25 cents per mile will still apply. Beyond the state, the most economical mode of travel must be used with this new provision: That an amount of \$500 per year be the normal limit for reimbursable travel expense for members of Louisiana councils, boards, commissions and committees who reside outside the state boundaries to attend regular meetings of their conference agency. This limit applies to funds that come from conference line item budgets. A Conference agency may vote to increase this amount if the members choose to make an exception due to the specific need of participation by a particular member. This limit applies only to travel and not to per diem lodging and meal costs. Air travel must be supported by the air ticket stub.
  - **Lodging and Meals** – Reimbursement for lodging expenses will be made for the actual amount of expenses incurred. Moderately priced hotel or motel accommodations are suggested. An itemized bill must accompany the request for reimbursement. Reimbursement will be made for meals for the actual expense incurred, but not for entertainment or room service. Any meals exceeding \$5 must be supported by an itemized receipt. CFA recommends that those submitting vouchers for hotel and food reimbursements use good stewardship to keep costs at a minimum.
8. All institutions and agencies receiving funds from the Annual Conference are required to submit a financial statement at the end of each calendar year. (See Discipline and Conference Rules for Rule on Annual Audits.)
  9. A balance at the close of the year in the Conference Benevolence Budget of any conference board or agency will be placed in the General Conference Benevolences Reserve for the next year. Also, at the end of the fiscal year, any funds remaining in individual line items of the Conference Budget that is over 10% of that line item's budget shall be moved into the Conference's Contingency Fund to help build an emergency fund that could be used in a future disaster or catastrophe, such as another hurricane or gulf oil spill, or liabilities that are a result of severe market decline, lawsuit, litigation, etc. (Budgeted line items that have permission of CFA or Annual



Conference to carry a reserve of more than 10% of their budget will be exempt from this.) The Annual Conference shall continue to place in the Contingency Fund of the Annual Conference all interest from the invested funds of the different conference boards and agencies. The Council shall use the Investment Committee of the Louisiana United Methodist Foundation to assist in the investment of conference funds. Local churches and conference institutions shall consider using the Foundation for the investment of their funds.

10. Louisiana Annual Conference Wesley Foundations shall be given basic support by a decimal item to be apportioned to the churches of the Conference. Amounts of the funds to be given to each Wesley Foundation will be determined by the Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministry.

11. The following procedure is to be used for selecting and continuing with a Conference property/liability insurance broker:

Brokers' selection is to be based on accessibility, reputation, selection of carriers, cost of product and knowledge of product including United Methodist General Church Insurance. An Advisory/Search Committee of the Council on Finance and Administration will publicize through the *Louisiana NOW* when new opportunities or bidding on Conference insurance are available.

After a broker is selected, the broker will normally be retained for a minimum of three years. This term is considered beneficial because of the multi-faceted types of coverage necessary for a variety of persons, property and equipment. If the selected insurance broker's services are considered unsatisfactory or rates are considered excessive during a three-year cycle, the relationship may be terminated and the broker replaced.

The new selection procedure became effective January 1, 1995. This selection is to be utilized for each three-year cycle thereafter. The Advisory/Search Committee members will be the President of CFA; the Executive Director of Administrative Services/Treasurer, the Cabinet liaison to CFA; a representative of Conference Board of Trustees; and one other selected by the President of CFA.

12. The Council on Finance and Administration reminds all persons, clergy and lay, handling funds in local churches to adhere to Paragraph 258.16.4(f) of the 2012 *The Book of Discipline* which states:

"Contributions designated for specific causes and objects shall be promptly forwarded according to the intent of the donor and shall not be used for any other purpose."

This reminder is made by CFA although local churches and institutions are presently and have always been responsible for the proper use of funds.

13. The Council reports the following special grants were approved for 2014 from the General Contingency Fund:

Episcopal Residence	\$20,000
Treasurer Moving Expense	6,000
Audit	30,000
Director's Housing Expense	16,000

14. When Annual Conference property is sold the proceeds of the sale are to be distributed as follows (1) costs of the sale (2) expenses that were incurred by the Annual Conference in maintaining the property between the time the Annual Conference assumed responsibility until the sale (insurance, maintenance, yard maintenance, etc.); (3) legal fees incurred by the Trustee (4) if property from a church, any arrearages of the church in the following order – pension, health insurance and apportionments. The net proceeds are then to be deposited in accordance with the Discipline and Conference rules.

15. The following guidelines for investments are to be used:

#### **COMMITTEE ON FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION FUND MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES**

The Administrative Services Office of the Louisiana Annual Conference serves as an administrator for funds deposited with it by agencies under the jurisdiction of the Louisiana Annual Conference (LAC). The LAC maintains oversight on these assets according to the Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church. Prudent management of the LAC assets requires a carefully conceived investment strategy individually designed to obtain a total return (aggregate return from capital appreciation and dividend and interest income) necessary to preserve and ideally enhance the principal of such funds.

In addition to identifying factors that the LAC must consider in making management and investment decisions, The Uniform Prudent Management of Institutional Funds Act (UPMIFA), adopted by Louisiana Legislative Act 168 in 2010, requires a charity and those who manage and invest its funds to:

- give primary consideration to donor intent as expressed in a gift instrument;
- act in good faith, with the care an ordinarily prudent person would exercise;
- incur only reasonable costs in investing and managing charitable funds;
- make a reasonable effort to verify relevant facts;

- make decisions about each asset in the context of the portfolio of investments, as part of an overall investment strategy;
- diversify investments unless, due to special circumstances, the purposes of the fund are better served without diversification;
- dispose of unsuitable assets; and,
- develop an investment strategy appropriate for the fund and the charity.”

Allocation of assets should be determined for each specific investment based upon the short and long term needs of the funds being invested for each agency of the LAC. The mix of investments styles chosen should maximize the return to the fund and balance market expectations. Agency funds that are expected to be permanent in nature should be invested in an allocation of medium to long term strategies composed of a mix of both equities and fixed income. Expected distributions from those agency funds should be held separately in a money market type investment. The LAC should review the investment time horizon/duration for those funds at least annually and make changes as appropriate. Although each agency fund individually will be comprised of various investments, when taken together as a portfolio, should provide a reasonable return while offering protection from inflation.

CFA encourages the use of our LA Conference United Methodist Foundation for investment purposes. In general, the CFA recommends use of the Fixed Income Fund at the UMF for all short term funds where it is expected the monies may be needed for disbursement in the near future. The CFA recommends use of the Balanced Fund or the Equity Fund at the UMF for long term funds that are more permanent in nature, and for funds where it is not expected that the monies will need to be disbursed in the near future

Elaine M. Burleigh, President  
 Richard Humphries, Secretary  
 Jan Holloway Curwick, Executive Director  
 of Administrative Services/Treasurer  
 Donald C. Cottrill, Cabinet Liaison

*The Audited Financial Statements have not been received and will be filed as a supplement to this report.*

## **BOARD OF CHURCH AND SOCIETY**

The Board of Church and Society continues to emphasize Peace With Justice and Restorative Justice issues. We work to assist in improving the spiritual and physical needs of society. We continually promote the study and practice of the Social Principles of The United Methodist Church.

The Board of Church and Society, through funds received from the Peace With Justice offerings, helps fund programs and ministries that work toward that end.

The Board of Church and Society awarded a grant to Shalom Zone Community, Inc. This is a ministry of First Peck Wesley UMC in New Orleans. The children they serve in the church's neighborhood come from households with a history of generational poverty, and it is a neighborhood of high crime rates. Funding through the Peace With Justice Grant enhances their Let Peace Prevail Project. This program operates from 10am-1pm during the school year on Saturdays. The program serves children ages 6-13. The children participate in several activities and also receive a healthy breakfast and a snack prior to their leaving. The children have behavior problems. They are taught the Lord's message of love for one another, respect for each other, increasing their skills of cooperation and especially reducing verbal and physical aggressive behavior. Art, Digital Photography, and a self-esteem project titled *Being Great* are used to help the children express their feelings relating to each other respectfully. Activities in the *Being Great* class reinforce concepts in Art as they are designed to show the children that all humans are created by God and, thus, are to be honored and held in high esteem. Funding these types of programs helps us live out THE BOOK OF DISCIPLINE, Paragraph 62, III The Social Community, C) Rights of Children. Shalom Zone inspires children with a respect for life, a respect for learning, and for a quality of life free of drugs, violence, and other risky behavior.

Our vision for the future includes continual teaching of The Social Principles of The United Methodist Church. One of our bigger issues is a lack of participation by some members of the Board. As we go forward we will encourage them to be more active. I thank everyone for their help.

John H. Mile, Chair

## **BOARD OF DISCIPLESHIP**

### **Accomplishment and celebration of work:**

In 2014 six *Fresh Expressions* grants were made to churches of our conference to support new and innovative thinking at the local church level as we seek new ways of making disciples in the "wilderness" in which we find ourselves. A total of \$3,000 (\$500 each) was disbursed. The initiatives were varied, and the churches quite different in size and location. Two recipients were in the Shreveport District, two in the New Orleans District, one in Acadiana District, and one in the Baton Rouge District.

Strong support for the Harry Denman Evangelism Awards (HDEA) continues to be received from both the Board of Laity and the Bishop and the cabinet. Several clergy nominations were received, but there is a need for more laity and youth nominations. The following people were chosen and recognized at the Clergy and Laity Sessions during the 2014 Annual Conference: Clergy – Darryl Tate., pastor from the Monroe District; Laity – Amanda Price, from the Shreveport District Lay Leader, a recent Centenary graduate who had served an internship at the Grace Community Church; Youth – Courtney Diane McKinney, from Grace UMC in the Monroe District.

We appreciate the continued support of the Christian Education Sunday (CES) Offering. In addition to fostering a greater partnership with districts and churches, the board is planning to offer a VBS preview in the late fall to allow churches to take advantage of the deep discounts available prior to the first of the year.

### **Goals that are a priority for the coming year:**

We ask each district superintendent to promote the *Fresh Expressions* grants and to send forward the two best requests from their district from which the board will choose one per district (6) for each \$500 grant. Several smaller churches have taken advantage of these grants and we hope that increases.

The board received nominations for the HDEA in March. These will be evaluated by the Board and recipients will be recognized at Annual Conference.

At the end of April the board met to plan for the upcoming conference year including planning two workshops on accountable discipleship. We strategized for the transition into a new organizational structure and ways of doing ministry.

**Concerns and challenges facing the board:**

During the 2015-2016 conference year, we seek to facilitate the movement to a new structure and ways of being in ministry together. We will pursue increasing awareness of and support for the Christian Education Sunday Fund and more effectively use these monies in support of Christian education and discipleship across the conference.

Charlie Langford, Chair

## **BOARD OF GLOBAL MINISTRIES**

The purpose of the Board of Global Ministries is to equip and transform people and places for God's mission both locally, regionally, and internationally. The board continues to focus on three priorities for this quadrennial; celebrating missions and mission opportunities, developing leadership in mission within the Louisiana Conference, and better communication of our mission opportunities, missionaries, and mission events and training.

2014 has been a refocusing, reformatting year for the BGM. There were many accomplishments. Churches throughout Louisiana hosted numerous missionaries including Willie Berman from Mexico, Cindy and David Ceballos from Panama, and Dr. Romero Del Ro from Cambodia. We continued our initiatives to Russia, Cuba, and Cambodia and also began praying for God to show us a new initiative to become involved with domestically.

The Support Action Ministries (SAM) grants awarded renewal grants to AGAPE of Phillips Memorial, Feeding Hungry Souls and Stomachs of Faith Crossing, Tutorial Program of Wesley Foundation of Southern University, The Welcome Table of Mt Zion [New Orleans]. New ministries funded include Access Ministry of First Natchitoches, The Good Book, First Alexandria, Fun in the Son at Chatham and Student Ministry of Downsville. It is the hope of the committee that we are able to increase the amount of funding we are able to provide for SAM grants each year.

For 2015 the Board will continue rebuilding with a new chair and a smaller more involved committee. We are focusing on training of committee members, lay people and pastors. However, our biggest focus will be upon communication of who we are and what we do. Presence will be increased in the Louisiana NOW, District emails, Facebook and other social media outlets.

As always, the board is concerned with budget reductions. The need is great and will, unfortunately continue to grow.

The board does not have any items for vote by the Annual Conference, however, we do ask that each individual and church take a part in missions, locally, domestically, and/or internationally. God has a mission for all!

M Nann McMullen, Chair, Louisiana Conference Board of Global Ministries

## **CAMBODIA INITIATIVE**

In March 2015, a team based at First UMC, Baton Rouge traveled to Cambodia to dedicate a new church funded by First UMC, Baton Rouge and St Luke Simpson.

In July of 2015, a team based at St Timothy will be in mission to Cambodia to participate in a country wide youth training camp. Another church is planned for Mondulkiri. To contribute to this effort, contact First Church, Baton Rouge.

Charles Reynolds

## **CUBA INITIATIVE**

With the many changes that are beginning between the Cuban and U.S. governments, people have asked how those changes have affected the Cuban people. The answers to those questions are twofold: We are hopeful; and we'll see. What we do know is that the Louisiana Conference has been active in joining with the Methodists of Cuba to make disciples for the transformation of the world for the past 23 years.

This year the Cuba Initiative sponsored a Cuba LAVIM team of 10 people to work with the Iglesia Metodista en Ciego de Avila from September 15-26, 2014. The team wired a three-story building for electricity, as well as participated in worship with the members of the church. The church is at a centralized location where the new building will provide a rest stop for Cuban pastors traveling back and forth between Havana and the east part of the island. It will also serve as a parsonage for the pastor and his family. The Louisiana VIM teams have a good reputation with the Methodist Church in Cuba of maintaining relationships with the churches where we have served. Our next mission will be October 5-16, 2015 when we will return to San Marcos Iglesia Metodista in Camaguay, Cuba, where we previously worked in 2012.

During the visit of the LAVIM team, team members were able to deliver a gift of a communion chalice and bread plate given by Bishop Harvey on behalf of the LAUMC to the Seminario Evangelico Metodista (the new Methodist seminary) in Havana. The rector of the seminary and others were excited and appreciative of this gift, as previously they had to borrow the items from the Methodist Church on the first floor, whenever they wished to celebrate communion with the students.

Churches in Louisiana, such as Blackwater, Live Oak, St. Charles, and NewSong UMCs, continue relationships with sister churches in Cuba. NewSong (with funds from their Pumpkin Patch) was able to purchase a new building for a new church start in Romelie (a congregation that was once a mission of Jamaica Iglesia Metodista near Guantanamo). The new church honored NewSong by naming their new congregation, Nueva Cancion de Romelie. The lead and associate pastors of NewSong and their spouses were able to travel to Romelie in April for a sister church visit to celebrate and praise God for the blessing of the new building.

For the latest pictures and news of what God is doing in and through the Methodist Church in Cuba, go to Facebook and "friend" Iglesia Metodista de Cuba. (A translation option is given with each message.)

Dr. Mark R. Martin, Chair, Cuba Initiative

## **RUSSIAN INITIATIVE**

A Louisiana delegation consisting of representatives from Broadmoor United Methodist Church and First United Methodist in Shreveport, spent several days with members of the First United Methodist in Ekaterinburg. A highlight of the mission trip was the opportunity for First UMC in Ekaterinburg and Broadmoor UMC to combine in worship via Skype on February 22<sup>nd</sup>. Team members shared how God had blessed them on the trip and how God was working in their lives. The Skype service was in conjunction with The River contemporary service at Broadmoor.

The mission team also bought bulk food items to prepare food bags to give out to the elderly members of the congregation after Sunday worship. With the political climate in Russia so tenuous, and the economic conditions so dire, many of the elderly are suffering.

A particularly meaningful event was helping deliver hot soup to families in crisis. Families that are going through a life situation that has left them without the necessary support system to adequately survive. In nearly every situation, there was a mother with children and no husband to help provide. The church is providing assistance in a country where there are few social services.

There is a Spirit and energy that is easily recognizable and almost contagious and infectious in the church. After each trip, we are amazed that in a land where life is sometime hard and not fair, Christians will go through difficult circumstances and obstacles to worship God.

What has taken place and continues to take place is a modern day miracle. Countless people have been touched by this church and many more will be. The good news of the gospel is being proclaimed and being lived out. The next mission trip will be June 1<sup>st</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup>.

James Gillespie

## **REVOLVING LOAN FUND**

The Revolving Loan Fund was established in 1974 to make low-interest, unsecured loans to churches and institutions in our conference for needs such as construction, building renovation and repairs, purchase of major fixed equipment and the purchase of land. The maximum loan amount is \$8,000.00 for churches and institutions less than 5 years old. For all other churches and institutions the maximum is \$6,000.00. The maximum repayment term is 10 years for new churches and institutions, 8 years for churches that report attendance of 30 or fewer at the principle weekly worship service, and 5 years for all other borrowers. The loans are interest-free the first year, 2% interest is charged on the unpaid balances at the beginning of the second year and third year and, 4% is charged on the unpaid balances at the beginning of the fourth and remaining years of the loan.

At the end of 2014, there were 6 loans outstanding with balances totaling \$14,730.18. Loan applications and additional information are available from the Finance Officer of the Conference Board of Global Ministries. Contact Joe Burke 108 Firethorn Dr. Gretna, LA 70056, (504) 392 8968, (504) 394 2545 fax.

Joe Burke, Finance Officer

## **SAM GRANTS – SUPPORT ACTION MINISTRIES**

The purpose of the Support Action Ministries (SAM) is to offer grants that will provide a portion of the initial funding necessary for a local church to establish a new mission project. SAM grants are awarded annually for up to \$3,000 and can be requested for up to three years.

The SAM grant committee consists of the District Mission/Outreach Coordinator or a representative from each of the six districts. Members of the SAM grant committee present for 2015 grant review were Rachel Scott – Shreveport district, Carolyn Fletcher – Acadiana district, Mollie McGee – Monroe district, Mary Burton- Baton Rouge district, and Jerry Crise- Lake Charles district.

The committee met to carefully review each of the six renewal applications and one new grant application. SAM grants were awarded to the following:

### **Renewals**

AGAPE, Phillips Memorial UMC, New Orleans  
Feeding Hungry Souls and Stomachs, Faith Crossing UMC, Walker  
Tutorial Program, Wesley Foundation of Southern University, Baton Rouge  
The Welcome Table, Mt. Zion UMC, New Orleans

### **New**

Access Ministry, First Natchitoches  
The Good Book, First Alexandria  
Fun in the Son, Chatham UMC  
Student Ministry, Downsville UMC

These grants assist churches and church-related programs to reach out to many groups in their communities, including at-risk children and youth, homeless individuals and families, ethnic communities, rural and urban areas.

The SAM grant committee applauds the ministry provided by these churches, and acknowledges them for their outstanding leadership in the area of mission and outreach. We are pleased to be able to award funds that assist in furthering the reign of God in many parts of our conference.

Mollie McGee, Chair

## CONFERENCE SECRETARY OF GLOBAL MISSIONS

The Conference Secretary of Global Missions serves as the connection for information, education, and invitation between the Annual Conference and the General Board of Global Missions.

From Zwolle to Zachary, Rosedale to Rayville, and Brushwood to Boadmoor, congregations and individuals in the Louisiana Annual Conference have participated in Global Missions. You have supported missionaries: Karen Ujereh, Willie Berman, David and Cindy Ceballos, Tendai Paul Manyeza, and many others. Red Bird Mission in Kentucky, Sager Brown UMCOR Depot in Franklin, Louisiana and Warne Baby Fold in India represent only a few of the projects in which you have invested.

In 2014 The Louisiana Annual Conference participated in Global Missions by

- **Hosting Missionaries** - Helen Camarace, Cambodia; Willie Berman, Mexico; Romeo Del Rosario, Cambodia; and Cindy and David Ceballos, Panama, visited churches through out Louisiana. Adam Shaw, a liaison for Young Adult Missionaries visited Wesley Foundations in January 2015.
- **The Advance** - This is a complete listing of all the missionaries and projects of the global church. There is information about specific ministries, ways to be involved and ways to give. Gifts can be made on line to specific missionaries and projects. <http://www.umcmmission.org/FAQ.aspx?SectionID=5#TopicAbout%20The%20Advance>
- **Supporting Missionaries and Projects** - For the projects and missionaries of the The Advance, congregations and individuals made 842 gifts totaling \$387,800. These gifts include Covenant Relationships with Missionaries, gifts to specific missionaries and projects, and disaster response through UMCOR. Complete information on all these gifts can be accessed through The Gift Tracking function on the GBGM website. <https://www.ddi.org/scripts/cgiip.exe/WService=umcv2/giftsearch.r>
- **Giving Tuesday** - The General Board of Global Missions offers a special day of holiday online giving on the Tuesday after Thanksgiving. This year, a reserve of \$1 million was used to match the first gifts of the day. Of the \$2.5 million given that day 63 gifts totaling \$15,855 were given from the Louisiana Annual Conference. (These gifts were included in the overall total above.)
- **Young Adult Missionaries** - Arnold Brown and Alyson McCoy from the Louisiana Annual Conference are serving as Global Mission Fellows. This is a two-year term of service with an emphasis on practical application of faith and justice. Brown is serving in China, and McCoy in Germany. More info on opportunities of mission service for young adults can be found at <http://www.umcmmission.org/learn-about-us/news-and-stories/2015/january/0126youngadultmission>

In 2015, plans continue:

- **Hosting Missionaries** - **Kristen Brown** from Palestine, will have made a tour around Louisiana in April. **Becky Harrell**, South Central Jurisdiction Mission Advocate and **Karen Ujereh**, will be our guests at annual conference and will be available to share their stories. Karen will be available in June to visit churches. **Adam Shaw** will return in the early spring of 2015 to again visit Wesley Foundations and youth connections to invite young adults into global ministries.

I will continue as the Conference Secretary in partnership with other conference mission agencies to help make mission connections and relationships through out the congregations of Louisiana. Please contact me for more information or to schedule a missionary to visit your church. [revann70507@gmail.com](mailto:revann70507@gmail.com)

If we do not support our United Methodist Missionaries and Projects, who will?

Rev. Ann Sutton

## **BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND CAMPUS MINISTRY**

**How your work has furthered the mission, vision and core values of the Louisiana Annual Conference:**

“Live are being changed!” “Campus Ministry is making a difference!” These opening statements have been the same for the past two years in this report. On a daily basis, the “emerging adult generation” is being reached! Our Campus Ministries are:

- “Leading others into abundant life in Christ” through innovative programs such as developing an on-campus Christian Sorority at Northwestern.
- “Engaging surrounding communities locally” through programs such as “Engage Mission Stay,” at La. Tech
- “Engaging surrounding communities...globally” with trips such as ULM sending mission teams to Mexico and Guatemala.
- “Learning, living and telling the gospel story” is a daily event at our Campus Ministries through worship services, bible studies, and small groups held regularly at all of our Campus Ministries.
- “Reaching out and drawing in people from all walks of life” occurs at weekly fellowship and meal opportunities, such as the Wesley Fridays at LSU, and weekly lunch offerings many time sponsored by local churches.

What a celebration it is to know that each of our Wesley Foundations and Campus Ministries are fulfilling our Annual Conference Mission and Vision on a daily basis!

The work of the Conference Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministry is done with “Integrity, Accountability, Unrelenting Love for All People, Courage and Risk,” and by “Holding Nothing Sacred but the Mission.” This is evident from the implementation of documents and policies such as the “Criteria for Campus Ministry” and the “Procedures for Selection of Campus Ministry Personnel.” Our Louisiana colleges and university campuses are communities of contrasting culture, deep in diversity. It takes much “courage and risk” and “unrelenting love” to reach out to ALL - students, faculty and staff - on a regular basis.

#### **Goals that are a Priority for the Coming Year**

1. Develop Local Board Training Program
2. Help Develop Restart of a U.M. Campus Ministry serving Grambling State University
3. Help Develop New Model of Campus Ministry at Southeastern Utilizing a Team of Local Churches
4. Continue to Work with Dillard University in possibly developing a Campus Ministry Model in Addition to Their Chaplaincy Model
5. Geographically Connect Every Local Church in the Annual Conference with a Campus Ministry
6. Identify and Lay Groundwork for New Campus Ministries at Colleges/Universities Currently Without a United Methodist Presence

#### **Concerns and Challenges Facing the Board and Our Campus Ministries**

1. Sustained funding from the Annual Conference
2. Fundraising that takes away time and resources from actual ministry
3. Encouraging Campus Ministries to become financially self-sufficient as much as possible

#### **Items for action/vote by the Annual Conference**

Thank you for supporting the Conference Budget for our Campus Ministries in 2015, and thank you for supporting the 2016 Proposed Budget.

Rev. Karl S. Klaus, Chair, CBHECM

### **BOARD OF LAITY**

The 2012-16 Conference Board of Laity is focused upon following our Mission and Vision Statements as we serve the laity of the Louisiana Conference.

**Mission Statement:** As the Conference Board of Laity, we are called to love and to serve All God’s people in All places and in All times.

**Vision Statement:** As the Conference Board of Laity, we are to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world through spiritual growth opportunities, education opportunities, leadership training, and certified schooling for specialized areas of ministry for the people of the Louisiana Conference.



**We celebrate:**

1. The completion of the Laity Excellence in Ministry document.
2. The distribution of Church Starts Ministries funds.
3. The continued dissimulation of changes for the Lay Servant Ministry program.
4. The interest and participation in the Certified Lay Minister program.
5. The funding of twenty students to attend Centenary and Dillard Universities through the Daughenbaugh-Matheny Scholarship Fund.
6. The experiencing of different/creative formats for the Laity Session.
7. The sharing of Mr. Dean Harvey, spouse of Bishop Cynthia Harvey during the Laity Breakfast.
8. The commitment of the CBOL to disseminate information with the Louisiana Conference laity.

**Our Goals and Priorities:**

1. To share information with the laity of the Louisiana Conference so they can:
  - a. Grow in their knowledge of the United Methodist Church's Structure, Policy, and Procedures.
  - b. Strive for Laity Excellence in Ministry.
  - c. Participate in three day spiritual retreats.
  - d. Serve as Lay Speakers.
  - e. Pursue becoming a Certified Lay Minister.
  - f. Become certified in specialized ministries in The United Methodist Church.
2. To continue to open more avenues of communication:
  - a. With local churches sharing learning/training opportunities with other churches.
  - b. With districts sharing information of training opportunities throughout the conference.
  - c. With districts sharing information within their districts.
  - d. With the conference BOL sharing information with local churches through any/all avenues available.

**Concerns and Challenges:**

1. The continual need to improve communication with the local church laity.
2. The continual need to improve communication with each district laity leadership.
3. The continual need to schedule opportunities for learning/training events.
4. The continual need to support the laity delegates for General and Jurisdictional conferences.
5. Challenging the laity to focus on God, be excellent in our ministry to God and the church in ALL we are called to perform in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

As the conference BOL attempts to serve the laity of the Louisiana Conference we ask for your prayers, support, and guidance that we might not only serve the laity but our Lord to the best of our ability.

Carolyn Dove, Conference Lay Leader  
Terrel DeVille, Associate Conference Lay Leader

**LAITY EIM**

# LaityEiM=L<sup>3</sup>

*Laity Excellence in Ministry Equals Laity Living and Leading.  
Expectations of Excellence in Ministry in the Louisiana Conference of The United Methodist Church*

**Forward**

Because lay ministry has been instrumental in the spread of the gospel from the earliest times, especially in the establishment of The United Methodist Church; and because God, through baptism and confirmation, continues to call each believer into ministry, the Board of Laity lifts up the crucial importance of lay ministry and urges lay people to take our call seriously, committing ourselves to grow in faith and expression of that faith in ministry. Jesus calls all to follow him and experience the abundant life he offers. Laity can grow into mature disciples by partnering with clergy to discover and develop our personal gifts for ministry and to join the universal church in this great adventure of kingdom building.

**This document is intended to:**

1. Be lifted up to the laity as a vision for all disciples to work toward;
2. Help laity consider leadership as a way of life;
3. Help laity evaluate their leadership as they plan for continued growth;
4. Assist the local church in the selection and training of its leaders.

**I. THE CALL TO MINISTRY OF ALL BAPTIZED**

All members of Christ's universal church are called to share in the ministry that is committed to the whole church of Jesus Christ. Therefore, each member of The United Methodist Church is to be a servant of Christ on mission in the local and worldwide community.

**Excellent ministry is:**

1. Joyful participation in the abundant life Christ offers;
2. Enthusiastic fulfilling of our call to share in the ministry and mission of Christ in our community and the world;
3. Living as, and making, disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world;
4. Striving to be faithful to Jesus Christ and to the community of faith and fruitful in the ministry to which God has called us.

**II. GROWTH IN FAITHFUL DISCIPLESHIP**

Faithful membership in the local church is essential for personal growth and for developing a deeper commitment to the will and grace of God. As faithful members, we involve ourselves in private and public prayer, worship, the sacraments, study, Christian action, systematic giving, and holy discipline. We grow in our appreciation of Christ, our understanding of God at work in history and the natural order, and understanding of ourselves as disciples.

**III. VISION AND HOLY IDEALS FOR LAITY LIVING AND LEADING**

**A. COMPELLED BY CHRIST'S LOVE, WE, THE LAITY OF THE LOUISIANA ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH, COMMIT TO THE VISION AND PREFERRED FUTURE OF THE CHURCH AND WILL LEAD AND SERVE THE CHURCH BY LEADING OTHERS TO ABUNDANT LIFE IN CHRIST BY:**

1. **Engaging with** our surrounding communities locally and globally through use of the talents and spiritual gifts developed through prayer, reading and understanding the word;
2. **Learning, living and telling the gospel** at every opportunity;
3. **Reaching out** and drawing people from all walks of life resulting in vibrant alive and vital congregations.

**B. ESSENTIALS FOR LIVING AND LEADING:**

1. **Integrity:** We will live and lead with integrity. We will describe honestly what we see with grace and compassion. We will be forthright and transparent in all that we do.
2. **Accountability:** We will live and lead with accountability. We will measure our actions and decisions by their connection to our mission and we will be accountable to each other for our actions.
3. **Love:** We will live and lead with unrelenting love for all people. We will place the needs and interests of people before the needs and interests of the institution. Transformative relationships will have priority over sustaining buildings and budgets.
4. **Courage:** We will live and lead with courage and risk. We believe that new times call for new actions. We are willing to trust ourselves and each other and risk acting in new courageous ways in order to transform a declining institution into a vibrant movement of faith and action.
5. **Spirit Led:** We will live and lead open to God's Spirit. We will place the creative movement of God's Spirit above institutional priorities.

6. **Growth:** We will live and lead by pursuing spiritual growth. We will set aside time to deepen our relationship with God, to grow in faith and expression of faith for the nourishment and renewal of body, mind and spirit.
7. **Servant hood:** We will live and lead as servants. We will place the good of the kingdom above our own desire for power, status and preferences.
8. **Representative:** We will live and lead as representatives of Christ in the world, revealing God's goodness, grace and love in all we say and do so that all might come to know and love Him and join the fellowship of believers.
9. **Unity:** We will live and lead united with other believers. We will participate in the corporate life of a local congregation, the body of Christ, in ways that build up believers and glorify God.
10. **Partnership:** We will live and lead as those called to ministry by partnering with clergy. We understand this partnership is essential to the health and mission of The United Methodist Church. Partnership occurs when clergy and laity join together in ministry at the local church level and beyond in leading, caring, nurturing and communicating.

As professing United Methodists, we celebrate the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit who accepts us where we are and continues to work within us. We recognize that no one is perfect; we are all moving on to perfection. No one reaches and maintains excellence in all areas of ministry, all the time, or alone. Discipleship, then, is a journey toward perfection through word and deed in partnership with the Holy Spirit. We are called to grow continually towards perfection in each characteristic. This is a high and holy calling, but as disciples of Jesus Christ, anointed by the Holy Spirit into priesthood of all believers according to the will of the Father, we shall fulfill this calling with excellence.

### EVALUATION OF LAITY (Laity EiM=L<sup>3</sup>)

This document has been assembled so that an individual layperson, a committee of laypersons, a church council, or the church body can ascertain where the individual, group, or church is in terms of lay servants who are living the values listed below. After the initial assessment of the individual, group, or church, it is recommended that the assessment be repeated no sooner than six months; recommended re-evaluation is annually.

**Directions:** Each person as an individual completes the table below, placing the person, group, or church where they believe the entity to be functioning.

1 = no action at all toward the individual characteristic listed in bold

3 = middle of the scale; engaged in the characteristic

5 = top of the scale; the individual or group is fully engaged in this characteristic

2 and 4 = placement in either of these two areas means that the individual or group is not at a level of 1 or 3, but between the two and the individual or group is not at the mid-point or the top, but is between the two points

Revised March 15, 2015

Vision and Holy Ideals for Laity Living and Leading	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Integrity:</b> We will live and lead with integrity. We will describe honestly what we see with grace and compassion. We will be forthright and transparent in all that we do.					
<b>Accountability:</b> We will live and lead with accountability. We will measure our actions and decisions by their connection to our mission and we will be accountable to each other for our actions.					
<b>Love:</b> We will live and lead with unrelenting love for all people. We will place the needs and interest of people before the needs and interests of the institution. Transformative relationships will have priority over sustaining buildings and budgets.					
<b>Courage:</b> We will live and lead with courage and risk. We believe that new times call for new actions. We are willing to trust ourselves and each other and risk acting in new courageous ways in order to transform a dying institution into a vibrant movement of faith and action.					
<b>Spirit Led:</b> We will live and lead open to God's Spirit. We will place the creative movement of God's Spirit above institutional priorities.					
<b>Growth:</b> We will live and lead by pursuing spiritual growth. We will set					

aside time to deepen our relationship with God, to grow in faith and expression of faith for the nourishment and renewal of body, mind and spirit.					
<b>Servanthood:</b> We will live and lead as servants. We will place the good of the kingdom above our own desire for power, status and preferences.					
<b>Representative:</b> We will live and lead as representatives of Christ in the world, revealing God's goodness, grace and love in all we say and do so that all might come to know and love Him and join the fellowship of believers.					
<b>Unity:</b> We will live and lead united with other believers. We will participate in the corporate life of a local congregation, the body of Christ, in ways that build up believers and glorify God.					
<b>Partnership:</b> We will live and lead as those called to ministry by partnering with clergy. We understand this partnership is essential to the health and mission of The United Methodist Church. Partnership occurs when clergy and laity join together in ministry at the local church level and beyond in leading, caring, nurturing and communicating.					
<b>TOTAL</b> = add up the columns using the header number times the number of responses in each column. Add all columns to get the composite score for the individual or group. Example—a score of 3 in all 10 areas is a mean score of 30 for the individual or group. All individuals or groups should strive to be as close to 50 as possible.					

## EVALUATION OF: Laity EiM = L<sup>3</sup>

Designed for Lay persons who have been in the United Methodist Church for less than 5 years—it is meant to engage individuals, small groups, and churches. It is based on the five questions that laity pledge when joining the United Methodist Church.

**Directions:** Each person completes the table below, placing the person, group, or church where they believe the entity to be functioning. Recommended frequency is annually.

1 = no action at all toward the individual characteristic listed in bold

3 = middle of the scale; engaged in the characteristic

5 = top of the scale; the individual or group is fully engaged in this characteristic

2 and 4 = placement in either of these two areas means that the individual or group is not at a level of 1 or 3, but between the two and the individual or group is not at the mid-point or the top, but is between the two points

Question	1	2	3	4	5
Pledge to attend church and church events (Attendance)					
Pledge to pray for the church, individuals, the world, etc. (Prayer)					
Pledge to give of our gifts, both human and financial, to the church (tithe)					
Pledge to serve the church, locally, state, national, and global (Service)					
Pledge to witness to people who do not know God or belong to a faith community (Witness)					
<b>TOTAL</b>					

When finished this evaluation, for each check in column 1, multiply the number of √s by 1; for each check in column 2, multiply the number of √s by 2; and so on. Add the total score from the totals at the bottom and divide by 5 to get an average composite score for the functioning of the individual, group, or church family.

Pray and think about ways to improve the score of the individual, group, or church family.

Revised, March 16, 2015

## CHURCH STARTS MINISTRIES

Church Starts Ministry is dedicated to the goal of assisting The Louisiana Conference of the United Methodist Church in:

- Planting and constructing new churches
- Restarting, relocating, and renovating existing churches
- Assisting existing churches in repairs and construction

Funds for CSM are raised by each district (Annual Conference year July to June 30) through donations by local churches and interested individuals.

During 2014 CSM granted \$80,000 to The New Church on Louisiana Avenue in Lafayette; \$30,000 for the rebirth of The Carrollton Sanctuary in New Orleans; and \$20,000 to One Love United Methodist Church (formerly Kenner and El Mesias) in Kenner.

This ministry is a second mile giving opportunity directed by the Conference Board of Laity, working closely with the Conference. Church Starts Ministry is open to the creative movement of God's spirit, not institutional priorities, in order to serve the mission.

Eloise Cox, Director  
Meredith Brooks, Assistant Director

## CONFERENCE COUNCIL ON YOUTH MINISTRY

The Conference Youth Ministry's focus is to equip young people for ministry and ministry leadership; to foster and enhance spiritual growth in youth and those who work with youth; to resource local congregations in the area of effective youth ministry; to provide training for those who work with young people; to actively participate in and promote the "connection" through district, conference, jurisdictional, national and international events and programs and through meeting disciplinary structural guidelines.

The theme for this conference year was IHope based on Romans 12:12 - Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. Youth and Youth Workers reflected on the Hope that we have in Christ in all that we face on our Spiritual Journey. There is much to celebrate and much to be thankful for as we serve our youth, laity and clergy in the Louisiana Conference. There are ministries in our Conference thriving and truly going outside the walls to share the love of Jesus with the world. Churches are bringing their youth on local and global mission trips, churches are leading outreach ministries with the poor, youth are leading worship and churches are building spaces that are truly youth friendly with open doors. Churches are showing they are making disciples of Jesus Christ with our youth leading the way.

Youth events and activities are planned, organized and implemented by youth representatives of the Conference Council on Youth Ministries (CCYM). Conference Retreats are organized by youth for youth of the Louisiana Annual Conference with the purpose of spiritual growth and formation. Youth leaders on CCYM build and strengthen leadership skills, and serve as models of serving others while discerning their call in ministry.

In 2014/2015 we served 218 participants at Junior High Retreats, 250 at Senior High Retreat and over 350 during Youth Ignite. Our goal for future events and participation in CCYM activities is to create an even greater impact while making it more affordable for disadvantaged youth and smaller churches throughout the Conference.

Looking ahead Youth Ministries will strive to create more spaces for celebrating youth, equipping our youth workers, honoring leadership and lifting up the work of local churches.

- Youth coordinators and directors will have the resources, training and support they need to lead to grow youth ministry and connect to the greater community.
- Youth voice and leadership will be incorporated in local church and conference level ministry strategies.
- We will continue to develop effective methods for sharing information, collaboration, sharing best practices and creating effective processes for youth ministry.
- Opportunities to reinforce the denominational connection on the district, conference, jurisdiction and national level will be a focus.

Youth Ministries for the Louisiana Annual Conference is focused on strengthening our capacity by creating spaces for diverse demographics and sustaining our work by diversifying our funding sources. The Annual Conference has been very clear about changing how we "do" Youth Ministries, based on the feedback received from pastors, youth workers, youth and local churches.

We want our work to be evaluated by more than just the number of youth served at Conference events, but rather shifting our focus to the impact our work is making on the local church level. Our budget and goals are directly in line with the core values of Louisiana Annual Conference to take risks, but also staying true to the mission focusing on 'making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world'.

Julie LaFosse, Youth Ministry Strategist

## DAUGHENBAUGH-MATHENY SCHOLARSHIP FUND

Louisiana United Methodist students attending Dillard University or Centenary College are encouraged to apply for the Daughenbaugh-Matheny scholarship. They must maintain a 2.5 grade point average and be active in the local church. A letter of recommendation from their pastor and a teacher must also be submitted to the Conference Director of the Daughenbaugh-Matheny Scholarship Fund. We celebrate the work of our District Daughenbaugh-Matheny Scholarship Chairs who work very hard to raise funds from their respective districts to fund the

scholarship. During the 2014-2015 school year the following students received the Daughenbaugh Matheny Scholarship in the amount of \$1000 each. Recipients attending Dillard are Tamara Johnson, Micolette Jackson and Jordan Johnson. Those recipients attending Centenary College are Hannah Bergeron, Cameron Brandao, Alissa Brown, Robin Chailland, Calvin Davis, Abigail Dillard, Benjamin Green, Alexandra Hornsby, Collin Hughes, Cole Lavergne, Paige Pritchett, Victor Robert, Logan Settoon, Emma Viskozki, Amanda Willis, and Abbie Woods. These young people are appreciative of the help and work very hard to maintain not only their grades but active participation in service projects. Here is one example of many thank you notes we receive because of your generosity. *“As a 4 year recipient of the Daughenbaugh Matheny Scholarship, I would like to extend my sincere gratitude for all those that have invested in the lives of young leaders in our Annual Conference. Because of your support, I will graduate from Centenary in May, 2014 and transitioning to Perkins School of Theology in Dallas Texas to pursue a M.Div. and ordination as an elder in the UMC. Thank you for believing in me and investing in my education.” Amanda Price.*

District Chairpersons are as follows: Jane Blackwell (Acadiana District), Rhonda Whitley (Baton Rouge District), Tara Lavergne (Lake Charles District), Jan Rose (Monroe District), Nick Harris (New Orleans District) and Beth Cole (Shreveport District). We appreciate the leadership of these chairpersons. We have seen creativity at its best as a wide variety of activities have occurred throughout the conference in order to raise funds for the scholarship. Our concern is that there are still a number of people in our conference that remain unaware of the Daughenbaugh-Matheny Scholarship. Several email applications were sent to pastors so students in the local church would be informed as well as the *Louisiana Now*. As a committee, we would like for every church in the Louisiana Conference to make a monetary donation annually to the Daughenbaugh-Matheny Scholarship Fund regardless of the size of the offering. It would show support and ownership of efforts to assist students in developing into strong leaders in the Methodist church. Our efforts to inform all churches will continue as we strive to increase the giving and serve more students in the Louisiana Conference with the funds collected.

This year the Daughenbaugh-Matheny Scholarship Fund Committee had the esteemed privilege of selecting Tamara Johnson from Dillard University to receive the William Hutchinson Scholarship in the amount of \$1000. Former Louisiana Bishop Hutchinson will also choose a student from Centenary College to receive a \$1000 scholarship. Our duties are expanding and we are excited to serve in this capacity.

Dianne Wilkinson, Director, Daughenbaugh-Matheny Scholarship Fund

## LAY SERVANT MINISTRIES

Lay servants have a wide range of functions both in the church and in the community. The three tenets of lay servant ministries are *LEADING, CARING, and COMMUNICATING*. These words describe what lay servants do in mission and ministry both within and beyond The United Methodist Church.

The hundreds of laity who have gone through lay servant ministries training are activity involved in churches throughout the conference. We continue to promote lay servant ministries as a way for laity to receive training to become better servants and leaders to the world around us. Beyond the basic course, there over a dozen advanced courses in more specific areas such as worship, preaching, storytelling, evangelism, prayer, caring, missions, etc.

Lay servant ministries courses were held throughout the Louisiana Conference this year. Great effort is being made to insure that the Local Servant, Certified Lay Servant and Lay Speaker courses are designed to meet the needs of the conference churches. We are communicating better between districts so that each district is advised well in advance of all scheduled lay servant ministry courses throughout the conference. If the time/location/topic in your district does not meet your schedule, you are encouraged to register for a lay servant course that is being held in another district.

Clergy, PLEASE call upon our lay servants to serve in the areas of ministry to which they have been gifted or called.

I attended the annual Association of Conference Directors of Lay Servant Ministries conclave in Williamsburg, VA in January 2015. Each time I attend these conferences I am more convenience that the Louisiana Annual

Conference has one of the most robust Lay Servant Ministries programs and definitely leads the denomination in our Certified Lay Ministry program. There are some changes being proposed to the Book of Discipline that if adopted in 2016 could perhaps make slight changes to the Lay Servant Ministry and the Certified Lay Minister programs.

The Louisiana Annual Conference currently has 13 Certified Lay Ministers. Several lay persons attended the orientation and training session in April 2015 and are discerning their calling to this ministry. The discerning process includes prayer and consultation with their pastor and the ministry to which they want to connect. Certified lay ministry is not just a next step after becoming a Certified Lay Servant or Lay Speaker. There is a greater commitment and obligation to a service where special talents and spiritual gifts can be used.

Information about the certified lay minister program can be found on the Louisiana Conference website.

The Louisiana Conference is blessed to have such dedicated and talented district directors of lay servant ministries leading each district program. During late 2014 new directors were needed to fill positions in the Lake Charles District and the Shreveport District. Randy Esters and Paul Marcel, respectfully, stepped up to fill these positions. Thank you, Randy and Paul. I also want to express my sincere appreciation to the District Lay Leaders for their support in helping to develop directions for this ministry.

Al Franks, CLM, Director of Lay Servant Ministries

## **UNITED METHODIST WOMEN**

The organization of United Methodist Women is no longer under the General Board of Global Ministries, but has become its own entity under the United Methodist Church. We have been advised to refer to ourselves as a member of the United Methodist Women organization, rather than as a United Methodist Woman, since all women who are United Methodists are United Methodist women.

Through pledges and gifts, and through other sources of income, such as the profits from the UMW publishing entity, the organization of United Methodist Women supports global ministries and supports mission activities, especially, for women and children.

Our organization in Louisiana continues to be active in about 40% of the United Methodist churches. Of the United Methodist churches that do not have an organized unit of UMW, the great majority of them report having an organized group of women dedicated to mission and spiritual growth. These groups generally refer to themselves as United Methodist Women ministries.

The Louisiana Conference of United Methodist Women convene three conference-wide events each year: Annual Meeting, Mission u, Spiritual Growth Retreat (and in alternating years, Social Action Event.) At the Annual Meeting, units who complete the necessary criteria can receive certificates, such as, Reading Program Certificate, Exemplary Social Action Award, Mission Today Unit certificate, and Mission Studies Certificate.

Information on the above and information about your Louisiana Conference United Methodist Women can be found on our newly launched website: [umwla.org](http://umwla.org)

Please visit our website and learn more about your conference organization of United Methodist Women.

Dr. Barbara Ferguson, UMW Conference President

## **BOARD OF ORDAINED MINISTRY**

No words of gratitude are adequate to express my regard for the members who serve on the Board of Ordained Ministry. Even as they work faithfully in pastoral leadership and other places of ministry, function as active lay servants or retain the well-earned status of retirement, the men and women of the CBOM give considerable extra



time and effort to tend to this important work on behalf of the Louisiana Conference. Their dedication and abilities are truly inspirational, and I am grateful for each one of them. In addition to the excellent voluntary production from our members, we are blessed by the support of our Conference Coordinator, Rev. John Edd Harper. We all owe a debt of gratitude to this disciplined manager who has administered processes, maintained records and conducted trainings effectively for years, allowing all of us to accomplish so much more and enabling leaders to be developed and equipped for the future.

The Board of Ordained Ministry continues to respond adaptively to the changing needs and context of the church. As the Cabinet focuses on missional appointments and entrepreneurial leadership, the Board is evaluating the factors within its control that could potentially create more flexibility in the credentialing procedures. A task group will begin to assess the feasibility of varying or reducing the time required for the Provisional process. With average seminary debt at an all-time high, conferences and general agencies are looking at ways to counsel candidates and fund education. Some discernment elements need to happen earlier in a candidate's process to tailor developmental priorities, provide financial planning and clarify leadership potential prior to incurring seminary debt. Early assessments might also provide guidance in moving from a one-size-fits-all process to a more responsive model.

Inescapable shortages in the supply of eligible clergy certainly increases the urgency of recruitment and the adaptation of credentialing procedures. At the same time, leadership excellence and important standards of ordination must be preserved. Desperation cannot drive us. Instead, we must be principled *and* creative, unified *and* open, champions of our creed *and* compelled to evolve. "Rethinking Church" must impact the leadership selection process, and the Board of Ordained Ministry, working with the Bishop and Cabinet, are committed to discovering new ways to cultivate, recognize and prepare God's called leaders.

One idea the Board will be exploring in the coming months, the introduction of formal, pre-seminary internships, has the potential to provide early appraisals of candidate's prospective fruitfulness, direct the candidate's future course of credentialing and provide practical preparation for ministry. Models from other conferences will be studied in the coming year.

The Board continues to respond to the challenges of clergy effectiveness. As always, appropriate procedures have been followed in cases of clergy misconduct allegations and status recommendations. New accountability measures are being implemented for beginning Local Pastors, including sermon evaluations and in-parish visits. Provisional processes include additional project assignments to gauge leadership abilities. Communication has been enhanced between District Superintendents, who serve as supervisors, and CBOM Division leaders, who assess readiness. Evaluating effectiveness in ministry has never been an exact science, and it is made more difficult by context variables and subjective based observations. Tools are being tested and accountability procedures are being enhanced to improve evaluative appraisals.

Finally, I would like to challenge everyone to develop a sense of urgency regarding the need to raise up leaders within the church. A greater awareness of that need must translate into conversations and encouragement on our part with those persons whom God is calling into service. You may just be God's voice in the life of one who needs to hear his or her name invited into vocational ministry.

Gary D. Willis, Chairperson, Louisiana Conference Board of Ordained Ministry

## **DIVISION OF ELDERS**

For the past two years, it has been my privilege to submit this report on behalf of the Division of Elders of the Louisiana Annual Conference. First and foremost, I want to thank the 24 ordained and lay members of our Division that continue to dedicate themselves to the work of our Division. Each of them put in countless hours reading theological papers and bible studies, watching and reviewing sermons, visiting the churches where our provisional members are serving, not to mention spending many days and hours in interviews with, reviews of, and deliberations over each person in our process. The Division of Elders is one of the hardest working committees in our Conference and I continue to be blessed by the effort, integrity, prayer, and dedication that each of our members show.

As it always seems to be, it has been a very busy year for our Division of Elders of Elders. We visited with all of our seminary students in their seminary settings in an effort to be supportive of their educational process. We have continued to enhance our communication with Bishop Harvey and the Cabinet in regards to the progress and ministry of all our Provisional Elders and candidates. I and our vice-chairperson, Rev. Jack O'Dell, now meet with Bishop Harvey and the cabinet in the fall and spring to discuss each person in our process. The focus of these meetings is to work together to inform each other of our experiences with each candidate in an effort to make the Provisional process as effective as it can be. It also has afforded all of us the opportunity to be on the same page with regards to any issues we might address or assistance we might offer each Provisional Elder as they progress into effective ministry. In January, we formed a joint task force made up of equal representation from the Division of Elders and the Division of Deacons. The purpose of this task force is to evaluate the possibility of reducing our Provisional Process from 3 years to 2 years. This task force will obtain information from other conferences that presently and effectively employ a 2 year process. We will review those processes, evaluate their effectiveness versus our present effectiveness, and, hopefully, present our findings to the entire Board of Ordained Ministry at our January 2016 Annual Meeting. This will take a great deal of work and I thank all of those, from both Divisions, who are giving their time and effort to this task.

In August, I, along with other leadership of our Board, was blessed to attend the General Board of Ministry mid-quadrennial meeting in Denver, Colorado. The focus of this 4 day meeting was the firewall that exists between the work of the Board of Ordained Ministry and the work of the Bishop and Cabinet. While there are certain aspects of this firewall that must remain intact, we have made a strong effort to address those aspects of this firewall which should be extinguished. After visiting with many other Elders Division Chairs from across the country, I was very proud to hear that our Conference is far ahead of other conferences in having already addressed some of these issues and we will continue to do so.

As always, the Division of Elders continues to fine-tune our process in every area of our work and I am proud to say that our process remains a model that many Boards of Ordained Ministries across the connection have adopted. I am honored and blessed to lead our Division of Elders and I continue to solicit the prayers and support of every United Methodist in Louisiana as we do our work.

Rev. Michi Head, Chairperson, Division of Elders

## **DIVISION OF DEACONS AND DIACONAL MINISTERS**

It has been my pleasure and honor to serve as the Chair of the Division of Deacons and Diaconal Ministers of the Louisiana Conference of The United Methodist Church. It is a pleasure working with individuals who give their time and treasure as servants of God. Serving with this group is a once in a lifetime experience. I thank God for this experience and opportunity.

The Division of Deacons and Diaconal Ministers is a supportive group of clergy and laity providing service to the local church and beyond. Diaconal Ministers, are lay people serving in various ministry areas within The United Methodist Church. Deacons and Diaconal Ministers are similar in that they both are serving ministries.

Deacons, from among the baptized, are called by God to a lifetime of servant leadership, authorized by the Church, and ordained by the Bishop. Deacons fulfill servant ministries in the world and lead the Church in relating the gathered life of Christians to their ministries in the world, interrelating worship in the gathered community with service to God in the world. Deacons give leadership in the Church's life: in teaching and proclaiming the Word; in contributing to worship and in assisting the Elders in administering the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper; Preaching; informing and nurturing disciples; in conducting marriages and burying the dead; in embodying the church's mission to the world; and in leading congregations in interpreting the needs, concerns, and hopes of the world. Further, the Book of Discipline empowers Deacons in both person and function to embody, articulate and lead the whole people of God in its servant ministry. Deacons in their leadership responsibilities have evolved over the years.

Deacons are the bridge between the local church and the community. They are to take the church to the community and the community to the church. We have a hurting, broken and dying community that is desperate to be free and to hear the good news of the gospel.

As stated in the 2012 Book of Discipline, the Deacon has evolved in United Methodism over many years with the continuing of the Deaconess and the Diaconal Minister. Their gifts and their work are very important to us. Our Diaconal Ministers are required to interview before the division each quadrennium.

We often state that a Deacon may serve beyond the local setting of the church. They may serve in United Methodist agencies, local congregation, Hospice care chaplain, attorney and the nursing field.

As members of the Order of the Deacons, all deacons in full connection are in covenant with all other Deacons in the Louisiana Annual Conference and shall participate in the life of the order.

The 2015 Division of Deacons and Diaconal Ministers is in a good place and all the business of the Division is being taken care of. We provide our candidates with an atmosphere that is conducive to the Deacon process. Currently, we have one possible Deacon in full connection (third year RIM) who will be ready for Ordination. One Deacon will be starting her second year (RIM) process.

No one knows the future; however those us of who are a part of the Division hope and pray that God will continue to bless us and encourage others to accept the call if and when God touches their heart to become a Deacon in full connection.

Linda A. Joseph, Chair

## **DIVISION OF LOCAL PASTORS AND ASSOCIATE MEMBERS**

We take seriously our charge to do the very best we can to fulfill our responsibility as part of the Board of Ordained Ministry to resource, evaluate, and recommend to the Bishop those who we believe have the calling, gifts, graces, and abilities to serve as effective licensed local pastors to the people of the Louisiana Annual Conference. Our process is designed in such a way that it ensures fairness to our candidates and fidelity to you, the people of the Louisiana Conference, so that we can be even more confident that when we tell the Bishop and cabinet someone is 'appointable' we have done all we can to ensure that you are receiving someone qualified to do ministry in your charge.

In this third year of the quadrennium, we are seeing many fruits of our 'new' model of doing our work, wherein we are budgeting more time in our annual interviews with those who are amenable to us so that we can have as clear and full a picture of their ministry and calling. By carefully and intentionally taking the time to review their prior work and structuring our interviews to where we can talk about the substantive issues that must be addressed for us in good conscience to present a list of 'appointable' men and women to the appointive authorities, we have continued our pursuit of perfecting this process as much as possible.

As we did last year, our division interviewed approximately 90 candidates who are serving in the Local Pastor status as well as those in our midst who are members of other Christian traditions and sister denominations. The men and women we were honored to interview are some of the most amazing people you will ever meet, taking the good news of the gospel to all corners of our state, and are to be commended for their faithfulness to Christ and His church. We especially note the work of our part-time local pastors, for many of them serve as pastors in addition to their work in a secular field; may we never forget that 'part-time' refers to a salary chart - their calling (and indeed much of their service) is one that is with them 24/7.

In closing, we want to thank the people of St. Timothy's-on-the-Northshore, FUMC-Baton Rouge, Asbury UMC in Lafayette, FUMC-Monroe, and FUMC-Shreveport for their generous hospitality as we set about to do our work. We also cannot express enough our gratitude to Bishop Fierro Harvey and her cabinet for their enthusiastic support and encouragement; our hope is that our efforts have helped them do their work in this year's appointment process. A word of appreciation also goes to Revs. John Robert Black and Pam Roy for their leadership of the

License to Preach School, which is the first educational stop for those entering the local pastor process. Additionally, we want to express our gratitude to Rev. John Edd Harper for his work as the Coordinator of the Board of Ordained Ministry, and to Rev. Pattye Hewitt for her leadership of the Fellowship of Local Pastors and Associate Members. Through their excellence in their specific roles, Revs. Harper and Hewitt have had a great impact our work within the division and to our pastors.

Rev. Lamar C. Oliver, Chair

## **ORDER OF ELDERS**

The purpose of the Order of Elders is spelled out in paragraphs 305-309 of the 2012 Book of Discipline. In part, the Order is to provide “for regular meetings of its members for continuing formation in relationship to Jesus Christ through such experiences as Bible study, study of issues facing church and society, and theological exploration in vocational identity and leadership; assist with plans for individual study plans and retreats; develop a bond of unity and common commitment to the mission and ministry of The United Methodist Church and the Annual Conference; enable the creation of relationships that allow mutual support and trust; and hold accountable all members of the Order in fulfilling these purposes.”

To fulfill these purposes the Order of Elders is working in partnership with the Fellowship of Local Pastors and Order of Deacons to reimagine how we can work together to offer times of growth and learning for clergy without duplicating the efforts of the numerous other groups in our Conference also tasked with this responsibility.

We are developing an exciting new possibility we believe will be a source of inspiration and renewal for all who participate.

You can look for information about this endeavor by the end of 2015.

Donnie Wilkinson, Chair

## **ORDER OF DEACONS AND DIACONAL MINISTERS**

The Order enjoyed its annual breakfast during 2014 Annual Conference, where new and retiring members of the order were recognized.

The Chair of the Order attended the GBHEM Mid Quad event August 12-15 in Denver. The importance of communication and collaboration among the Orders, Divisions, and the Cabinet were emphasized and resulted in productive conversation among those representing Louisiana. Plans are underway for a joint event among elders, deacons, and local pastors in 2015.

On October 5-6, the Order met in Woodworth for our annual retreat and conversation with the Bishop. On Sunday evening, Shannon Sandifer led the group in creating prayer beads and provided a very helpful guide for praying with prayer beads in the Protestant tradition.

On Monday the 6<sup>th</sup>, those present spent time sharing reflections on living into the Order of Deacons Rule of Life. Bishop Harvey reflected on balancing self-care with enormous and conflicting demands on her time. Janet Davis and Linda Joseph offered information from the Mid-Quad event on "Appointment Covenants for Deacons" and Bishop Agiya's presentation vis a vis our Louisiana processes for recruiting and shepherding clergy - specifically applicable to deacons and their recruitment/appointments. Although Bishop Harvey had not been present for that particular presentation, she did speak to Louisiana Annual Conference's processes and expectation.

Janet Davis, Chair

## FELLOWSHIP OF LOCAL PASTORS AND ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

The Louisiana Chapter of the Fellowship of LP & AM continues to serve the Conference with joy!

On Friday February 6<sup>th</sup> and Saturday February 7<sup>th</sup>, the Fellowship sponsored 'A Time Away' for local pastors and associate members at the Wesley Center. Learning and practicing a method in which to work through difficulties and brainstorm ideas in a trusted group proved successful. Real situations currently being experienced in our churches were brought forth and worked through. Participants then prayed for the pastor and his/her congregation. On Saturday morning Bishop Cynthia Harvey joined us for conversation, a time of Q&A and closing worship service with the sermon brought by Rev. Robert Johnson. Forty-one persons were in attendance for this joyful time of sharing and conversing with our Episcopal leader and with one another.

All are invited to attend the annual LP & AM breakfast on Tuesday June 9<sup>th</sup> at 7:00am in the Whited Room on the campus of Centenary College. Tickets are \$12.00 per person. Our guest speaker this year will be Rev. Matt Rawle, pastor of The Well UMC in Ponchatoula, LA. Author as well as pastor, Matt is on a mission. He sees Christ all around him-in books, movies, TV shows, rock music-and he wants to share what he sees. As Matt says, *"God offers the raw ingredients, and 'culture' is whatever we cook up."* ***'How to Accept and Re-narrate Culture from the Pulpit'*** will be Matt's presentation during our time together. Reservations can be made by contacting Rev. Caroline Wilkinson at 318-564-3723 or via email at [cwilkinson@fumcshreveport.org](mailto:cwilkinson@fumcshreveport.org)

We celebrate the ministry of Local Pastors and Associate Members who serve the Louisiana Annual Conference. They are gifted, devoted and dedicated to sharing the love and grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is an honor serving alongside them in mission to the world.

Pattye Hewitt, Fellowship of LP & AM Chair

## CARE AND NUTURE

### Confidential Counseling Grants Are Available

**Who may receive the grants?** Clergy of the Louisiana conference and/or their immediate family members.

**How much is the grant?** Grants are for up to \$300 per request.

**How do I apply for the grant?** Write a letter to CBOM Care & Nurture Chair:  
Rev. Dr. Elenora M. Cushenberry  
3501 Champion Lake Blvd. Apt. 1602  
Shreveport, LA 71105  
Cell phone: 504-416-2882

Include the name, address, and credentials (the letters behind the name) of the licensed mental health professional for whom you are requesting payment. Payment is made directly to the provider. Include the detailed address to which you, the applicant, want your letter of confirmation sent. Some prefer correspondence sent to their church, while others want information sent to their home or other location. Please specify in your letter of request to the CBOM Care & Nurture Chair to help the process go smoothly.

**How is my name kept confidential?** The name of the client does not go beyond the letter requesting the grant, and is kept absolutely confidential as the process is implemented. The grant is requested through the CBOM Coordinator and Treasurer to be sent to the provider (with no applicant name attached). The CBOM Care & Nurture Chair sends the provider a separate, confidential letter stating for whom the check is to be used when it is received. Records of correspondence from the applicant are seen and kept only by the Chair of Care and Nurture, and are destroyed at the end of each calendar year along with any correspondence sent to the licensed mental health professional.

**How long does the process take?** The letter of request will be processed within a week from the date of receipt, and the conference office will prepare and send the payment at the next time for check-writing (usually within another week). The applicant requesting the grant is sent a letter verifying that the process is under way. If the applicant has not received a response from the CBOM Care & Nurture Chair within 10 days of making application, please contact the CBOM Care & Nurture Chair to make sure the request was received.

## **COMMISSION ON ARCHIVES AND HISTORY**

The mission of the Conference Commission on Archives and History is to manage the historic records of the Louisiana Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church and its predecessor conferences. During 2014, our work with the Conference Archives at Centenary College of Louisiana included significant achievements in collecting, preserving, and making available the historic records of our conference.

### **Accomplishments from 2014**

- Research requests using Louisiana UMC records = 169.
- Acquisitions of historic records created by Louisiana United Methodist churches, district offices, and individuals = 9 collections (6.75 linear feet).
- Collections processed with finding aids available online = 7 collections (11 linear feet).
- Exhibits created using Louisiana UMC records = *The Presence of African-Americans at Centenary, 1871-1965* (214 online views); *Permission to Publish: Material from Centenary College's Archives* (154 online views); *Centenary College's Christian Leadership Center, 1974-2014* (94 online views).
- Digitized Louisiana Methodist Episcopal Church conference journals, 1865-1938 (5,200 pages). These publications are now accessible online. Partnership with Dillard University Archives and Special Collections, and Northwestern State University College of Nursing and Allied Health Shreveport Education Center Library.
- Led workshop for Shreveport District church historians. Attended by 8.
- Managed student intern from Centenary's Christian Leadership Center. Intern worked 40 hours and processed the Norma Winegeart papers, 1844-2006.

### **Goals for 2015**

- Prioritize unprocessed Louisiana UMC collections, then process and create online finding aids.
- Migrate old website for Conference Commission on Archives and History onto the website maintained by Louisiana Conference of the United Methodist Church.
- Offer workshops for church historians outside of Shreveport District.
- Restore online access to conference newspaper, *New Orleans Christian Advocate*, 1850- 1946.

Chris Brown, Chair Pro Tem

## **COMMISSION ON CHRISTIAN UNITY AND INTERRELIGIOUS CONCERNS**

The Office of Christian Unity and Inter religious Relationships (OCUIR) has furthered the mission, vision and core values of the Louisiana Annual Conference in the following ways:

To make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world, OCUIR has focused on Jesus' High Priestly prayer for unity contained in the Gospel of St. John 17. OCUIR has promoted interfaith dialogue and action between the Louisiana Conference and other judicatories. OCUIR provided each district office with the annual free sample kits containing materials to aid January 18-25, 2015 week of prayer for Christian Unity observance or at any time during the year.

Additionally, OCUIR brainstormed to offer conversation starters for revision and renewal of the church and its mission questions were offered for dialogue in the LA Now and E-letter:

- + What are the realistic challenges in ministry regarding ecumenical and inter-religious relationships?
- + What are the opportunities for meeting those challenges which are identified in the first question?
- + What are the practical aspects for ecumenical and interfaith cooperation and relationship building?
- + What are the major frontiers for the ecumenical movement today that call us from our current landscape and challenge us in the ecumenical journey?

We focused on the vision of the Louisiana Conference by identifying previous OCUIR ecumenical and interfaith award recipients and invite them to share their story in The LA Now and E-letter. Our goal was to engage the community for leading, learning, drawing in others and telling the gospel. Five ministries responded. CommUnity Hands of Livingston Parish affiliated with First UMC Denham Springs was featured to inform others about 'what is happening' in hopes of duplicating good ministries, stimulate ideas for new ministries, create opportunities for dialogue, share ideas and create partnerships among ministries. The following ministries will be featured when photos are available to accompany their articles: Stop Hunger Now! at Aurora UMC, Ball Community Food Pantry at Palestine United Methodist Church, School for Contemplative Living at Parker Memorial United Methodist Church, United Christian Women at Cheneyville UMC and 'Bread and Stones' whose goal is reduction of children in poverty.

OCUIR members covenant to serve as a working committee in the spirit of unconditional love for each other. In October 2014 with a sad heart we remembered the gentle, vibrant spirit of Rev. Barry Hoekstra who passed away. He contributed as a member of OCUIR in so many significant ways, we miss him and remember his family.

OCUIR members attend interfaith conferences and workshops to dialogue, network, remain informed about relevant, cutting edge ministries which enhance our promotion and fulfillment of our mission. The events include: 44<sup>th</sup> LA Interchurch (LIC) Annual Assembly March 4-5, 2014 in Lake Charles, 45th LIC Annual Assembly March 2-3, 2015 in Alexandria, 2015 National Workshop on Christian Unity April 20-23, 2015 in Charlotte, North Carolina, Bread or Stones Public Policy Task Force events and LIC Fall Board Meeting 2015 Sept. 21-22, 2015 in Baton Rouge.

OCUIR goals for the upcoming year, concerns and challenges have centered on our reduced budget and a global call to redo leadership vision for the survival and relevance of ecumenical and interfaith ministry. We are committed to seeking new ways of doing mission by participating in alternative gatherings, identifying and using new relevant terms to reach more people for ecumenical and interfaith ministry.

Rev. Erica R. Jenkins, Chairperson; Rev. Monica Monk, Vice chairperson  
Rev. Heather Leyland, Secretary; Mr. Glenn Turner, Treasurer  
Mrs. Joyce Annison, member; Rev. Steve Bush, member  
Mrs. Mary Harris, member; Rev. Hulen Warren, member; Father Dan Krutz, member

## **COMMISSION ON EQUITABLE COMPENSATION**

The Commission on Equitable Compensation has the mission of providing a resource to the appointive cabinet to augment the compensation of a pastor deemed a good match for the continued ministry of an appointment not having the complete resources to fully support said pastor. The Book of Discipline clearly states that the primary responsibility for payment of pastoral salaries remains with individual pastoral charges (see par. 624). In addition, the Annual Conference provides a program of support for the ministers (not the individual churches) to assure them of a livable level of financial support when serving a full-time appointment. Towards this end, The Commission on Equitable Compensation recommends the following policies:

Local churches whose ministerial leadership is receiving an Equitable Compensation Grant are expected:

1. To raise their local compensation by a minimum of 5% annually until there is no longer a need for Conference support.
2. To pay all apportioned ministerial items (Equitable Compensation, Episcopal and District Superintendents Funds), World Service and Conference Benevolences.
3. To conduct an Annual Stewardship Campaign.
4. To carry Louisiana Worker's Compensation insurance on their minister and staff.
5. Pay 100% of Health Insurance as set by the Board of Pensions and remain current on local congregation's clergy pension obligations.
6. When the local church treasurer realizes that a delinquency is impending either in payment to pastor of a regularly scheduled payroll or full payment of regular direct billed benefit payments such as pension and health care, and every effort has been made to produce the necessary funds to mitigate the delinquency,

notification must be made to the pastor and district superintendent within no less than seven days of the impending delinquency (first expected missed payment).

- A. The minister's Conference relationship sets the Equitable Compensation she/he is eligible to receive as outlined below. Any changes in Conference relationship during the year will change eligibility. The formula rate for full time is 60% of the lower of the Denominational Average Compensation (DAC) or Conference Average Compensation (CAC) each year. The formula for 2016 grants will be based on the 2016 Denominational Average Compensation (DAC). Thus, the full time amount for 2016 will be \$40,400 (60% of the DAC of \$67,333).

**2016**

<b>Conference Relationship</b>	<b>Full Time Compensation</b>	<b>Percent Applied</b>	<b>EC Base</b>
Elder	\$40,400	104%	\$42,016
Associate Member	\$40,400	103%	\$41,612
Provisional Elder	\$40,400	102%	\$41,208
Full-time Local Pastor	\$40,400	100%	\$40,400

- B. For the purpose of determining the Equitable Compensation Grants, the minister's total plan compensation includes: base salary, cash allowances, utilities and housing allowance (or, when a parsonage is provided, 25% of the plan compensation as the approximate value of that parsonage).
- C. Ministers receive an additional \$100 for each year of service as a full-time minister up to a maximum of 10 years of service.
- D. Ministers receive an additional \$200 a year for each church over one.
- E. Equitable Compensation pays its share of CRSP and CPP based on the minister's income.
- F. Equitable Compensation pays up to \$75 for one Annual Conference sponsored Continuing Education Event per year for clergy who are currently receiving Equitable Compensation Grants.
- G. Annual Grants approved by the Commission shall be paid in monthly installments on the basis of available funds at the beginning of the calendar year.
- H. The charge to which the minister is appointed must be classified by the Cabinet as a full-time appointment for the minister to be eligible for full compensation. The policy of the Louisiana Annual conference is not to provide Equitable Compensation Grants for Associate Pastors.
- I. District Superintendents must submit to the chairperson of the Commission on Equitable Compensation, an application for each minister in their District seeking assistance from the Equitable Compensation Fund. These are to be sent after Charge Conference but no later than December 31. For new appointments, application forms furnished by the Commission should be turned in as soon as possible.
- J. All ministers receiving Equitable Compensation Grants are required to renew their applications when receiving a change in appointment, and to notify the chairperson of the Commission on Equitable Compensation of any change in compensation or Conference relationship.
- K. Special consideration will be given in unique cases upon recommendation of the Cabinet and concurrence with the Executive Committee of the Commission on Equitable Compensation.
- L. To facilitate Mission appointments, certain funds will be made available to the Cabinet to "provide for supplementing base compensation beyond the minimum base compensation schedule." (par.625.6, The Book of Discipline, 2012)

**Regarding Moving Expenses:**

Charges of 250 members or less that have frequent changes in pastors shall be eligible for assistance from the Conference with moving expenses on the following basis:

- A. If the pastor is moved after one year and the charge has not initiated the change, the Conference shall pay to the charge 1/2 of actual moving expenses up to a maximum of \$500.
- B. If the pastor is moved after two years and the charge has not initiated the change, the Conference shall pay to the charge 1/2 of actual moving expenses up to a maximum of \$300.
- C. If the pastor is moved after three or more years, no assistance shall be available to the charge.
- D. The pastor must be living on the charge in order for the charge to receive such assistance.



- E. Verification of moving expenses shall be made by submitting a copy of the bill to the District Superintendent in whose District the charge is located.
- F. Request for assistance shall be initiated by the charge, approved by the District Superintendent (in whose District the charge is), then submitted to the Chairperson of the Commission on Equitable Compensation.
- G. Special consideration will be given in unique cases by the Cabinet's recommendation, by the willingness of the District making the request to provide 50% of the requested amount, and concurrence with the Executive Committee of the Commission on Equitable Compensation.

Receiving Equitable Compensation Funds for July 1, 2014 – December 31, 2014: Charles (Chuck) Christensen  
Fitzgerald Charge

Receiving Equitable Compensation Funds for January 1, 2015 – June 30, 2015: None

James B. Moore, Chair

## **COMMISSION ON THE STATUS AND ROLE OF WOMEN**

Purpose: *“To continue a commitment to the full and equal responsibility and participation of women in the total life and mission of the Church, sharing fully in the power and in the policy-making at all levels of church life.” In Louisiana, we have added laity, racial/ethnic persons, and young adults to the list.*

### **Accomplishments and Celebrations:**

- We continue to hold meetings and conversations through e-mails and tele-conference calls to discuss our role as advocates for the inclusion of women in local church and conference wide.
- We had our 2014 Annual Conference COSROW Luncheon where we celebrated and honored the following;
  1. All women in ministry who had accomplished a milestone in their ministry;
    - i. 2 ordained as Elder in Full Connection and 1 ordained as Deacon in Full Connection
    - ii. 2 commissioned as Provisional Elders, and 1 Provisional Deacon.
    - iii. 3 women completed the Course of Study and 1 received the Professional Certificate.
  2. We presented our annual Sojourner Truth Award to Dwane Hudson from Brooks Shaw Temple in the New Orleans District. This was in recognition of her advocacy services with the less fortunate in her community.
  3. COSROW sponsored training in Advocacy and Monitoring work facilitated by Audrey Krumbach from the office of General COSROW. Different groups from our LA Conference attended this event held at First UMC Baton Rouge.

### **Goals that are priority for the upcoming year:**

1. To continue advocating for diversity in candidacy for any ministry and clergy mentors. We would love to see a good representation of age, racial and ethnicity of persons.
2. To advocate for more support for clergy women as regards to the challenges they encounter in their ministry settings. This will be done in dialogue with conference leadership and the boards concerned.
3. To be involved in justice issues and speak against human trafficking and women abuse. We will work with the Board of Church and Society and UMW.
4. To advocate for inclusiveness in our Annual Conference Meetings through monitoring who gets to speak.
5. We will have our annual COSROW Luncheon at conference on Tuesday, June 9, at noon where we will recognize women who have accomplished a milestone in ministry. Our Guest Speaker will be Rev. Katie McKay Simpson from First UMC Baton Rouge.
6. We will continue our tradition of giving the “Sojourner Truth Award.”

### **Concerns and Challenges:**

To continue to be innovative with technology in finding ways of encouraging people to become aware of social issues concerning women and be able to participate in advocacy work.

Eunice Chigumira, Chair

## COMMITTEE ON COMMUNICATIONS

The Conference Communications department continues to work to share the message of mission and ministry through the Louisiana Annual Conference, within the state and throughout the denomination.

In all Conference media, the concepts of our Preferred Future, Vision and Core Values and our Mission--to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world—are emphasized.

The *Louisiana Now!*, our printed Conference magazine, was launched in 2014, replacing the long-running traditional newspaper. The magazine is published quarterly, with Winter, Spring, Summer and Fall editions. This quarterly magazine is filled with interesting feature stories about cutting edge ministry in our own conference. The focus of the publication is to provide inspiring examples of ministry and best practices that can benefit our local churches. Vibrant pictures and uplifting stories make this new publication enjoyable to read, offering the right complement to the weekly Conference e-letter.

The weekly e-letter produced by the Conference Communications department relays up-to-the-minute news to our clergy, laity and subscribers, free of charge. The e-letter is filled with short features and links to important information about helpful church resources, coming events, trainings, examples of church ministry and spiritual opportunities.

The Communication Director has also continued to strengthen our Conference presence on the Web and on Facebook, providing resources through Conference media to local churches that help them follow suit.

The department is currently working on a “re-do” of the existing Conference website, consulting with technology professionals and gathering feedback from clergy and laity in our local churches regarding ideas about what type of design makes for an even more helpful, functional website.

In collaboration with local churches, the department is also planning communications workshops in North Louisiana and in South Louisiana, tentatively scheduled for April of 2016. The focus of these workshops will be web content and construction, along with practical advice on managing an effective communications schedule in the local church (with or without the help of a Communication Director!)

As part of the Rethink Church initiative, through a grant received from United Methodist Communications, the Communications Department worked with local church volunteers to facilitate and organize the third annual conference-wide Louisiana Skeeter Run, a Louisiana Annual Conference-sponsored 5K walk/run which raised funds and awareness for Imagine No Malaria. Approximately 1,300 runners, walkers and volunteers enjoyed this year's run!

More than 5,800 walkers, runners and volunteers have participated over the past three years in the Skeeter Run. Approximately \$175,000 has been raised, collectively, through these three statewide events for the United Methodist global initiative.

This year, the communications strategy for the *Louisiana Skeeter Run* followed the same format for previous Rethink Church events, implementing a statewide media initiative which included broadcast media and billboard campaigns. Additional publicity included a series of feature articles; the use of social media; creation of a digital press packet for local churches to use in publicizing their efforts; media coverage of the statewide event; and appearance on morning TV talk shows and radio shows in every major market in the state.

The communications strategy for the *Louisiana Skeeter Run* was assisted with help from our friends at **United Methodist Communications**. In addition to the use of social media, in-conference promotion through our newspaper and website, and an extensive publicity campaign, we added these components provided by UMCOR:

- A professionally designed microsite where race participants registered for the event
- Graphic art support for event flyers and web/e-letter banners for our local churches and supporting groups
- Funding for statewide radio and billboard campaigns and for Facebook ads
- A t-shirt design and t-shirts for race participants

UMCOM committed a grant in the amount of \$30,000 for the 2014 event. Major funding for the race was supported by the Igniting Ministry/Rethink Church fund which is part of the Communications Ministry budget. Additional grant funding was provided by the United Methodist Foundation of Louisiana.

Because of structure changes with Igniting Ministry/Rethink Church grant funding, only Conferences, Districts and groups of three churches/Wesley Foundations or more are eligible to receive these grants. In addition, the funding is only provided when there is a community outreach component/event (like the Skeeter Run.) Although the Conference is stepping away from seeking a grant from UMCOM at the Conference level, the Communications Director plans to work with Districts/church groups within the Louisiana Conference as a guide for navigating the process of applying for their own IM/RC grants, if they are interested in doing so.

Betty Backstrom, Director of Communications

### **COMMITTEE ON EPISCOPACY**

Bishop Cynthia Fierro Harvey continues to lead the Louisiana Conference of the United Methodist Church in living out our vision of a preferred future:

- Leading people to an abundant life in Jesus Christ
- Engaging our surrounding communities in significant ways
- Learning, living, and telling the gospel story
- Reaching out and drawing in people from all walks of life resulting in vibrant, vital, and alive congregations.

This vision challenges our existing congregations, and also calls on new initiatives to reach more effectively and more engagingly into our mission field to make life-changing, world-changing disciples of Jesus Christ. Our energetic episcopal leader meets frequently with numerous groups and gatherings across the conference, for strategic conversations and discernment about creating and cultivating vital congregations, and for encouraging bold leadership among clergy and laity alike.

In particular ways Bishop Harvey is guiding the Louisiana Conference to respond by:

- Assessing and aligning structure, process, and resources across the conference;
- Discovering ways to identify, measure, and improve our effectiveness in leadership and mission;
- Connecting with developmental opportunities for inspiration and growth in effectiveness and fruitfulness;
- Recruiting and raising up new generations of leadership;
- Telling the stories of discipleship and mission through various platforms of media and narrative;
- Energized and celebratory annual conference sessions lifting up our “local” talent and leadership, while pointing to horizons of vision lived out in ever more alive and dynamic ways.

Bishop Harvey hosted the Committee on Episcopacy (COE) at the Episcopal Residence in November 2014, with engaging discussion about the needs of the conference and ways our leadership is responding and moving forward. In Spring of 2015, the Conference COE is conducting an evaluative process with Bishop Harvey, and the results will be shared with the South Central Jurisdictional Committee on Episcopacy, which will receive such input from each conference COE to assist in making bishop assignments for the new quadrennium at the 2016 Jurisdictional Conference.

The Louisiana Conference appreciates sharing the life and journey of faith with Dean Harvey as well, who has found a spiritual home among us and offers his capable leadership in various ways.

On a personal note, daughter Elizabeth Harvey will be getting married in November of 2015. We offer our blessing and best wishes in this new chapter for the whole family!

Ellen R. Alston, Chair

## **EPISCOPAL RESIDENCE COMMITTEE REPORT**

The sale of the Episcopal Residence Committee located at 7344 Woodstock Drive in Baton Rouge was completed in September of 2014. The sale of this property completes the process approved at the 2013 meeting of the La Annual Conference to sale the Episcopal Residence in Shreveport and the Episcopal Residence on Woodstock Drive in Baton Rouge, and purchase a new Episcopal Residence in Baton Rouge.

The Committee is now focused on the maintenance and upkeep of the new Episcopal Residence.

Jim DeLaune

## **ACADEMY FOR SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP**

*The Path of Spiritual Direction and Christian Formation in the Congregation:* This two-year process is taught in six sessions, designed to train both clergy and lay leadership in Spiritual Direction and Congregational Christian Formation. In October 2014 we began our eighth cycle of this training with 19 participants, Wendy Miller led this retreat. Dr. Dwight Judy and Dr. Daniel Wolpert are our new instructors. The addition of Dr. Judy and Dr. Wolpert has attracted more men this time. This current class is 10 women and nine men; 13 lay people and 6 clergy. During 2016 we have the last two retreats for this group and we hope to begin our ninth class.

*The Discerner's Academy:* The ASL works with the Board of Ordained Ministry to enlist and recruit a new generation of Spiritual Leaders who are called for representative ministry in the church. The Discerner's Academy provides opportunities for people to gather, study, serve and worship with others who are in a season of discernment about what God is calling them to do. These retreats offer opportunities for young adults and lay people to learn the United Methodist process for becoming representative leaders and network with others who are beginning the process in this Annual Conference. This is an excellent setting for relationships of the connection to be formed and nurtured.

*Contemplative Retreat:* Each summer 40 men and women, both clergy and lay, who are Academy for Spiritual Leadership alumni are provided an opportunity to gather at St. Joseph's Abby in Covington to nurture and nourish their souls with an extended period of silence with attention paid to praying the hours of the day. This is their time of reflection and renewal.

*5 Day Upper Room Academy of Spiritual Formation:* In 2011, Rev. Donnie Wilkinson received a short-term grant from the UM Foundation to bring this retreat to The Wesley Center. The ASL provides two honorariums for the guest speakers to defray the costs to the participants which in 2015 was already over \$600 for the event.

*On-line small groups and training sessions:* The ASL remains committed to using technology to help people grow in their spiritual leadership skills at home and create online leadership connections so that spiritual leaders can maximize time, energy and money. During 2016 we plan to continue to grow this aspect of resourcing spiritual leaders in Louisiana.

*Ongoing Training and Development of Spiritual Directors:* In partnership with Journey Partners of Mississippi and of Texas, the Academy for Spiritual Leadership is creating a group of 12 men and women previously trained in Spiritual Direction and Spiritual Formation in the Congregation who will coordinate the supervision of the practicing Spiritual Directors of the Louisiana United Methodist Annual Conference. This training began in 2015 and will be completed in February of 2017. There will be three large group retreats over three Februarys and four additional small group retreats specifically for our team from Louisiana. This money will be used for the key note speaker at the February 2016 retreat and to defray travel expenses for our small group leaders who are Carole Cotton Winn, William Thiele and Cherri Johnson.

As God lights our path into the future may we on occasion look back for assurance.

## **CAMPING MINISTRIES**

The directors of the three regional camps, Caney Conference Center, Camp Istrouma, and Uskichitto Retreat Center, and the Wesley Center continue to communicate regularly to build relationships and collaborate regarding the various challenges and opportunities that the camping/retreat ministries encounter in today's environment.

**Camp Caney Conference Center - Matt Hankins, Director**

P.O. Box 707, Minden, LA 71055 (1163 Methodist Camp Rd.)

[www.caneycamp.com](http://www.caneycamp.com)

Camp Caney completed major renovations and reopened in April of 2014. Work included the complete renovation of our main buildings and cabins, and a major updating of the infrastructure. We are now fully prepared to serve our local churches and as a disaster relief hub for the state of Louisiana.

We returned home for summer camp and thoroughly enjoyed our updated facilities. Our summer season was the most successful in years. We saw an increase in campers, retreat groups, and non-Methodist camps. We had a group of dedicated staff and volunteers that worked tirelessly to make this our best summer yet. We remain dedicated to serving and affirming our campers and cultivating Christian leadership in our staff and volunteers.

We look forward to serving our churches and community in the days ahead. We have a great summer and retreat season in store. We continue to make improvements to the camp every day and we are excited about major improvements on the horizon.

**Camp Istrouma - Garth Frenzel, Executive Director**

P. O. Box 333, Greenwell Springs, LA 70739 (25975 Greenwell Springs Rd.)

[www.campistrouma.com](http://www.campistrouma.com)

During the 2014 summer camp season, Camp Istrouma had over 890 campers that participated in its summer camp program where they experienced temporary community, participated in new adventures surrounded by the grandeur of God's creation, mentored by loving summer staff and were given a chance to discover the truth that God loves them and has an amazing plan for their lives. The number of campers reporting that they had accepted Christ as their savior was 149 and for that we give the glory to God.

Over the 2014 off season, Camp Istrouma had served 5,545 guests, which included churches, school organizations, business and other non-profits. The newest edition to Camp Istrouma was the Wilderness Camp program that allowed campers to experience a new adventure in the outdoors by learning outdoor skills, sleeping in tents, cooking over a camp fire and having authentic worship. At Camp Istrouma we live out our motto, "Developing Disciples, Forming Friendships, and Impacting Lives Forever through the transforming power of Jesus Christ."

**Camp Uskichitto Retreat Center - Matt and Sharon Shaw, Co-Directors**

P.O. Box 118, LeBlanc, LA 70651 (590 Retreat Road )

<http://camppurc.net>

Last summer, we had 287 kids from our own conference attend summer camp, plus nearly 200 kids and staff from socially-conscious camps. Our total for first-time professions of faith was 28 campers, while we had 56 campers profess rededications of faith. For the fourth year in a row, URC has broken its previous record for retreat income. Because of generous churches involved in our cabin sponsorship program, we were able to update a few of the buildings. We remodeled the floors in three of our five cabins, and repainted interior in two cabins.

Our main goal for 2015 is to have a greater environmental focus implemented in our camp programming, in addition to the Christ-centered curriculum we typically run. We are building raised garden beds for the campers to cultivate tomatoes and other camp produce, as well as raising chicks to be a laying flock for next year's summer season. Our goal is always to see the people who enter our grounds acquire a deeper relationship with God before they leave again.

## **CENTER FOR PASTORAL LEADERSHIP**

As The Center has these conversations, we will continue many of the ministries already offered. Some of those include:

- 1) Through the BOM, ministry with the RIM 1, 2 and 3 (monthly meetings and two overnight retreats);
- 2) Abbey Retreat for RIMs and other Clergy
- 3) A monthly *Leadership Resource* through The Center
- 4) Continuing education opportunities and webinars including:
  - a. The Center is working on webinars to offer. One of those is with Dr. Alyce McKenzie, preaching professor at Perkins School of Theology, SMU.
  - b. Other webinars are still in the process of being planned, along with on-site seminars.
- 5) Clergy Peer Group(s) (In 2014, started an additional Clergy Peer Group.)
- 6) Transitions Seminar for clergy changing appointments entitled *Manna for the Journey*. In 2014, the Center travelled to several districts to work on-site with their clergy in transition.

- 7) *Seminar—The Art of Conflict Transformation and Courageous Conversations*. Also, brought in an outside facilitator, Stephanie Hixon, the Executive Director of JustPeace to co-facilitate this seminar with Craig Gilliam.
- 8) 3M Network (Maintaining Ministers in Ministry Network)
- 9) Being a resource for our ministers, congregations and Cabinet as needed. This list is a sample of the ministries offered through The Center for Pastoral Excellence. In addition, coaching for clergy, discernment and visioning for congregations, team building for staff, having courageous conversations and conflict transformation for congregations are some of the individual ministries offered through The Center.
- 10) The Center may offer additional opportunities as clergy needs arise; however, income will offset expenses.

As God lights our path into the future may we on occasion look back for assurance.

## **CONGREGATIONAL DEVELOPMENT MINISTRY**

“You will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.” With these words in the Book of Acts, Jesus sent his apostles into the world to carry the Gospel message. While our existing local churches are commissioned to carry out this disciple-making ministry in their communities, a vital part of our work as a Conference is to explore new opportunities to reach new people in emerging mission fields. The ministry of Congregational Development seeks to do this through establishing new faith communities, multi-campus congregations, vital mergers, and other means of increasing the reach of the God’s grace into the world.

This conference year has been one of transitions. We have been working hard with the Cabinet to develop clear guidelines and procedures for the ministry. Some of this work resulted in the appointment of Rev. John Cannon as Director of Congregational development in addition to his duties as the Acadiana District Superintendent. He will help coordinate these ministries in cooperation with the Cabinet and Board of Church Extension. In this next year, you will see the formation of new systems for identifying and equipping new church planters, a renewed emphasis on churches planting churches, and a new emphasis on exploring a greater variety in the types of new faith communities planned. We hope to build on the wisdom learned from our past experiences and to incorporate some of the latest wisdom in the ministry of new-church starts. This should prove to be an exciting time.

We are in the midst of a few ongoing projects:

- **Foundry** – The Rev. Chad Brooks has been actively building a launch team of significant size and capacity. Foundry has rented a storefront space that has been used for preview events as well as being offered as a community space for local groups. Several increasingly well attended preview "Echo" services have been held leading toward the launch of public worship during late summer/early fall of 2015. Follow their progress at <http://www.wearefoundry.com/>
- **Louisiana Avenue, Lafayette** – The Rev. Robert Johnson is leading teams to the streets of Lafayette in a "Brown Bag" ministry feeding 145 people each week. Average worship attendance for 2014 was 125 and growing stronger—up from 26 from the predecessor congregations. The church has ministry going on seven days a week with Bible Studies, Confirmation, Choirs, Drama, Step and Cheer Leading Teams. Several area United Methodist Churches have partnered with the Louisiana Ave. UMC on mission projects and evangelistic outreach.
- **1Love** – The Rev. Beth Tu’uta is leading the new church that launched from the merger of the El Mesias and First United Methodist Churches of Kenner. The new church conducts bilingual worship services in the former First Kenner facility with a multi-cultural, multi-racial, constituency aged birth to 92. The transition team has committed to a common pattern of deep, outward oriented discipleship. Mission teams are helping prepare the facility for expanded worship opportunities and space that could be used for an intentional missional community.

One project, the **New Church on South Carrollton**, came to a close. This was a difficult and prayerful decision. Despite the hard and faithful work of all involved, in the end, the high financial resources expended and personnel committed were not resulting in a level of participation that could become viable and self-sustaining. The existing Carrollton United Methodist Church remains open and active in ministry, but Conference funding has ended. In order to learn from this experience, we are taking a hard and honest look at what led to this end, and we hope to discover the better practices that will carry ministry in that part of New Orleans forward in the future.

Our exciting new project is the appointment of Rev. Hadley Edwards to lead the Conference's mission in the **Seventh Ward of New Orleans**. With the support of a "dream team" board of directors, committed volunteers, and a network of strategic partners, Rev. Edwards will be taking his buoyant spirit and love for Jesus out into the streets for creative disciple-making ministry.

Congregational development and transformation needs the thoughts and prayers of everyone in the Conference. The priority is reaching new people and sharing the love of Christ in an ever growing mission field. Your creativity is always welcome. If you have ideas or questions concerning congregational development, email John at [cannon@la-umc.org](mailto:cannon@la-umc.org).

## **DISASTER PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE MINISTRIES**

### **EARLY RESPONSE TEAM**

Early Response Teams are a conjoint ministry of Volunteers in Mission (VIM) and UMCOR, with the mission of "providing a caring Christian presence in the aftermath of disaster." Specifically, we seek to serve in the immediate hours and days following a disaster and preceding the longer-term rebuilding phase. Two major emphases have marked our year: preparation and on-site service.

Training events with leadership by our own UMCOR-certified trainer Ken Musick were hosted by First Denham Springs, Aldersgate (Slidell) and Northwood (Lafayette). Representing our conference at the SouthCentral Jurisdictional Disaster Academy were Diane Reich, Darryl Tate, and Bob Deich.

All ERT team members serve at their own expense, while funding for outfitting our three ERT trailers is provided through Conference VIM funds. We are truly grateful for the support of our Conference VIM leadership!

Thankfully, this has been a relatively quiet year for disaster response work. One team deployed beyond the bounds of the conference, serving in the wake of the EF-4 tornado that struck the Vilonia-Mayflower, Arkansas area in April of 2014. In October of 2014, the Monroe/West Monroe area was struck by an EF-2 tornado, to which many local churches and several teams from around the conference responded. Supplementing the on-site work, Louisiana Methodists served in support and leadership roles, working with area agencies to bring a coordinated recovery effort to the most severely affected people. Conference Disaster Coordinator Darryl Tate, Monroe District Superintendent Ellen Alston, and ERT Coordinator Bob Deich represented our conference in multiple roles during the recovery.

Callouts for Early Response Teams are made to those who have been trained, and there is a great need for more trained workers. Plans for future training events, held in conjunction with disaster preparedness training, are underway and will be publicized throughout the conference. Please consider attending an ERT training, making it possible for us to serve others in greater ways!

Inquiries regarding training are always welcome and may be addressed to Rev. Bob Deich at [ladisasterpastor@gmail.com](mailto:ladisasterpastor@gmail.com).

Rev. Bob Deich & Darryl Guy, Conference ERT coordinators



## EPWORTH PROJECT

The Epworth Project in Slidell, Louisiana continues to repair homes needing repair from storms. The project hosted 1142 Volunteers (31 Teams) from 21 states and 3 foreign countries; 85 of the volunteers were from Louisiana. Epworth logged 37, 205 man hours for an in kind donation of \$ 823,718.00. In the Greater New Orleans area, 72 projects were completed. Epworth Project fund raised more than \$370,000.00 to fund their projects. Epworth Project currently has 947 volunteers scheduled for 2015 and the numbers are growing every week.

Dale Kimball

## DISASTER PREPAREDNESS/DISASTER RESPONSE

### (1) Summary of the response that we offered for victims of the Tornados in Monroe and West Monroe:

In the month of October 2014, the Monroe District received three tornados that travel a path of 10 miles by 3 miles wide. Rev. Tate responded within a few minutes by working with Northeast United Way, The American Red Cross and area Local United Methodist Churches. For a period of three months, Rev. Tate worked alongside of these organizations to see if the Federal Government would declare a disaster zone. Over 700 dwellings were affected with many businesses that were out of service within a week. The Federal Government didn't declare a disaster, without the assistance of FEMA, there weren't funds available to serve the needs to the people in Monroe. We in the Louisiana Conference were blessed that Bishop Cynthia Fierro Harvey, Dr. Donald C. Cottrill, the Provost, Rev. Ellen Alston, DS of the Monroe District, Rev. Darryl A. Tate, Conference Director of Disaster Response and Rev. Bob Diech. ERT Coordinator spent one day traveling through the area seeing firsthand the needs. Bishop Harvey requested and received a UMCOR Emergency Grant of \$10,000 for the services of the Monroe District.

### (2) Financial Report dated 2/1/2015

Balance at the La UMC Foundation as of 12/31/14	\$309,055.00
Balance at Hancock Bank (Operational Account) as of 2/1/2015	\$ 3,126.72
Balance at Hancock Bank (Payroll Account) as of 2/1/2015	\$ 713.80
Outstanding Liabilities (Payroll and Insurance)	\$ 0
Grand Totall of Funds for LADRM/LAUMC	\$312,895.52

### (3) Insurance:

We are fully covered through (General Limitability, Workman Comp and D & O)

### (4) Board of Directors

We are looking into rewriting our By-Laws in the coming Conference year!

### (5) Disaster Preparedness Program:

In May 2015, UMCOR and Rev. Tate conduct a Cabinet Training for the Members of Appointed Cabinet.

In the area of Disaster Preparedness for our Annual Conference, this current conference year I will host three training events across the conference. I have led training events in all seven districts over the past three years. You will find our Annual Conference Disaster Manual at our website [www.la-umc.org](http://www.la-umc.org). Furthermore, on the Conference website [www.la-umc.org](http://www.la-umc.org), you will find our Conference Disaster Plan.

- a. Since we have conducted training events across the conference over the past three years, with Connecting Neighbors, we will now offer the second level of training to our churches in the Louisiana Annual Conference.

This the conference year 2015-16, we will work in conjunction with LAVIM and ERT to offer a Disaster Academy one the southern part of the conference and one in the northern part of the Conference

1. Introduction to Basic Disaster Ministry
2. Understanding UMCOR and/or UVMIM
3. Discussion session on how to write your CN plan (Not if you do the full workshop)
4. ERT discussion session (pre-requisite that attendees have been ERT trained)

b. Our options for Saturday classes

Most classes will be taught on Saturday from 8:00AM to 4:00PM. In light of so many having had Connecting Neighbors, we will offer 4 options for participants to select over the next two conference years (2013-14 and 2014-15):

- Basic Disaster Ministry (6hrs)
  - Writing Workshop (4-6hrs)
  - Ministry of Care (6hrs)
  - On Site Management 94 hrs, prerequisite of ERT basic Class
- 1) ERT Basic class (8hrs)
  - 2) ERT Recertification class (4hrs), could take this class and 1 of the 200 series (2hrs)
  - 3) Ministry of Care basic class (6hrs)
  - 4) Environmental Stewardship (3-4 hrs)
  - 5) Basic Disaster Ministry (6hrs)
  - 6) Understanding the conference response plan
  - 7) Connecting Neighbors writing workshop (Let churches work together on an outline that they can take back and fill in names/numbers/etc. Prerequisite would be having taken CN class, more or less a guided discussion class)

Darryl A. Tate, Conference Director of Disaster Response, President of LADRM, Inc.

### **DULAC COMMUNITY CENTER**

Our mission is to provide social services, emergency response and learning opportunities to people in lower Terrebonne parish with emphasis on women, children and Native Americans in response to the Gospel. We are a National Mission Institution of the United Methodist Women, National Office of the United Methodist Church, located in Dulac, Louisiana.

The Center today continues to find ways to meet the physical, social, economic, and emotional needs of the community in fostering programs and services that are responsive to the needs of the people we serve. We have many partners that assist us in carrying out our mission. Some of our current programs are: GED Classes, Tutoring Classes, Computer Lab, After-school Recreation, Volunteers-In-Mission, Housing Rehabilitation Program, Thrift Store, Community Events and Dinners, Food Bank and Food Distributions, Vacation Bible School, Bayou Eagles Native American Culture and Dancing, Disaster Relief Services, Acupuncture, Community Service Worksite, Community Gardening and Community Health Fairs. Our newest program we have introduced is our Community Rehabilitation Program/ Worker Adjustment Training.

Program Highlights:

- Assisted **80** homeowners with housing rehabilitation/ repair and hosted 376 short and long-term volunteers that contributed **12,458** volunteer hours to housing rehabilitation/ repair projects with a value of **\$240,813** of volunteer labor.
- Assisted over **850** individuals with clothing assistance and household items with our thrift store and provided food provisions to **984** families from our food bank and food distribution programs.
- Improved quality of life, produced nutritious food, reduced family budgets, and created opportunity for **25** families through our “edible” community garden.

Strategic Goals that are a priority for the upcoming year include:

- Attract more community volunteer participation and ownership in the center.
- Evaluate and offer programs that are responsive to the needs of the community.
- Develop board and staff leadership and development.
- Identify and pursue both resources and funding for continuity and sustainability of the center.

Concerns and challenges facing our agency include:

- Lower level facilities prone to flooding/ repetitive loss.

- Increasing financial pressure, sustainability, fundraising/ raising funds.
- Human resources/ staffing, and attracting and motivating people given the often limited resources.
- Increase concerns about efficacy.

Identified gaps, challenges, and barriers facing our community: Food Security, Housing, and Health & Wellness

- 35.4 percent of households are below poverty level and lack access and availability to nutritious foods.
- 60 percent of housing was built before 1979 and families lack resources to fully recover from past storm events and to preserve their homes and make them safer for their families.
- 38.9 percent obesity rate amongst citizens of Terrebonne Parish.
- 13.5 percent occurrence of diabetes within the general population compared to 22 percent in local American Indian population; many lack knowledge on nutrition and diabetes management.
- 37.4 percent unemployment rate for persons with disabilities.

John Silver, Executive Director

## **EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS AND GENERAL BOARD**

### **AFRICA UNIVERSITY**

Thank you, Louisiana United Methodists, for maintaining a strong commitment to Africa University. In 2014, the faithful support and generosity of local congregations in the Louisiana Conference resulted in an investment of 96.09% of the asking to the Africa University Fund (AUF) apportionment.

In Africa University, the leaders and local church members of the Louisiana Conference have started a good work and nurtured it for over two decades with second mile gifts for scholarships and other needs. We thank the Louisiana Conference for this long-standing partnership and for the ongoing \$1M scholarship campaign. Together, we are transforming individuals and communities and bringing new people into relationship with Jesus Christ.

**Student Enrollment:** Full-time student enrollment at Africa University held steady in 2014 with 1,478 young men and women from 25 African countries. Female students were a record 53.4% of the total enrollment in a context where women consistently lag behind men in access to higher education.

**Graduation:** In June 2014, 480 young people were awarded degrees from Africa University at the 20<sup>th</sup> graduation ceremony, bringing to total number of alumni to just under 5,300. Without your support, a college education would have been unattainable for the majority of these students.

**Training and Research:** Africa University is addressing critical skills and capacity gaps in sub-Saharan Africa. A collaboration with the Raoul Wallenberg Institute in Sweden supports a new master's degree program in Human Rights, Peace, and Development. Africa University is preparing to launch its first PhD program, which links issues of Peace, Leadership, Governance, and Development, and targets policymakers.

**Leadership and Service:** Africa University graduates are answering the call to serve, heal, and uplift communities. More than a dozen Africa University graduates are currently helping disadvantaged communities to experience God's love and care through service as Global Mission Fellows and missionaries in Africa, Europe, and Latin America. In the Africa Central Conferences, graduates of Africa University are evangelists, agriculturalists, managers, educators, health professionals, mediators, and more. Many are key decision-makers and they're making a difference.

**Strategic Priorities:** Following a successful leadership transition in 2014, Africa University is engaged in a vigorous review of its academic programs and service delivery. This effort is aimed at enhancing its students' potential for life-long success. Professor Munashe Furusa took the helm in July 2014 as the fourth vice chancellor in the university's 23-year history. He was formally installed in March 2015 and has put fiscal accountability, student quality of life, and support for academics, at the top of his agenda.

**As you gather for annual conference, we urge you to embrace 100% support for the Africa University Fund and other shared ministries as your goal for 2015.** Last year, the Louisiana Conference's shortfall in the asking to the AUF was \$1,303.88—amount that is equivalent to the cost of meals for a year for an Africa University student. The shortfall represents an unrealized opportunity to change a life and the future prospects of a community. Africa University exemplifies what it means to journey together in connection—it unifies and heals, while nurturing and equipping disciples “to be hope” in dark places. This is the mandate that you have entrusted to Africa University and your ongoing investment is vital to helping this ministry to expand its impact.

We hope that the Louisiana Conference will continue to invest, engage and allow our shared journey to model what it means to be the church in the world.

For every individual who has been touched by the ministry that is Africa University, there are many others—tens of thousands, in fact—who are awaiting the miracle of an answered prayer.

Thank you, Louisiana Conference, for what you have already done and for what you will do in the future. May God bless and strengthen the leadership and fellowship across the conference.

Mr. James H. Salley, Associate Vice Chancellor for Institutional Advancement

## CANDLER SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

For 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 Christian leaders who put faith and love into action, transforming the world in the name of Jesus Christ. Here, students are challenged academically, encouraged spiritually, and immersed in Christian service from the first day they arrive on campus. This unique approach ensures that our graduates are ready to serve wherever God leads.

One of 13 official seminaries of The United Methodist Church, Candler is grounded in the Christian faith and shaped by the Wesleyan tradition. We are one of seven graduate professional schools of Emory University, a top-tier research institution offering extensive resources and a rich context for study. Our location in the city of Atlanta offers a learning environment that reflects the highly diverse communities of the 21st century world. There is no better place for ministry preparation that addresses our major denominational priorities: developing leaders, starting and growing churches, ministry with the poor, and improving global health.

During the 2014-2015 academic year, Candler celebrated its Centennial, marking our 100th anniversary with a series of commemorative events highlighting memories of the past and visions for the future. The yearlong celebration began in the fall of 2014 with the dedication of the final phase of our new LEED-certified building and the premiere of *Religion and Reason Joined: Candler at 100*, a new book on our history. The commemoration continued through the spring of 2015 with guest lectures, exhibits, and “Prophetic Voices,” a major academic conference addressing the challenges and opportunities facing theology in the 21st century.

Not only has Candler expanded its physical space this year—we have expanded degree offerings as well. In response to the changing needs of the church, Candler introduced five new degrees to equip Christian leaders: the Doctor of Ministry, the Master of Religious Leadership, the Master of Religion and Public Life, and two dual degrees with social work and development practice.

Candler's student body reflects the diversity and breadth of the Christian faithful. Our enrollment stands at 447, with 320 seeking the Master of Divinity, 43 the Master of Theological Studies, 14 the Master of Religious Life, 20 the Master of Theology, 29 the Doctor of Ministry, 10 the Doctor of Theology, and 11 enrolled as Non-Degree students. The student body is 52 percent women, 35 percent people of color (U.S.), and the median age of the entering class is 27. Students represent 42 denominations, with nearly half identifying as United Methodist.

Candler draws considerable strength and inspiration from its relationship with The United Methodist Church. Our ability to fulfill our mission of educating faithful and creative leaders for the church's ministries in the world depends upon your support, gifts, and prayers. Thank you for the countless ways you advance this vital ministry in

the life of our denomination. Visit us in person in Atlanta or online at [candler.emory.edu](http://candler.emory.edu) to see firsthand how Candler prepares *real* people to make a *real* difference in the *real* world.

Jan Love, Dean and Professor of Christianity and World Politics

## CENTENARY COLLEGE

We celebrate our connection to the Louisiana Conference of the United Methodist Church as we work together to raise wise, caring, moral leaders for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Our commitment to the values of United Methodism remains strong as we develop and empower leaders to transform the world through the experiences of a quality education, meaningful and transformative internships and service to the world, and intentional connections of purpose, passion, and profession.

### Accomplishments and Celebrations:

#### *Campus*

The College completed the more than \$1 million Mickle Hall restoration project between June 2014 and February 2015, which has made this busy academic building more structurally-sound, more energy-efficient, and more attractive. These improvements will extend the life of the building, protect the outer shell, reduce energy costs, add accessibility in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and create a more comfortable teaching and learning environment.

#### *Community*

Our faculty, staff, alumni, and students maintain a level of excellence in their professional lives that continues to be a source of pride for the College:

Several Centenary community members were honored for creative excellence in advertising at the February 2015 ADDY Awards Gala sponsored by the American Advertising Federation of Shreveport-Bossier. Student Elena Hibbs received a Silver ADDY in the Student Division for her *Femme creole de la Nouvelle Orleans* book cover design, and Professor Jessica Hawkins was awarded a Bronze ADDY and a Special Judges Award for freelance work produced as BlueJay Creative. Centenary's Department of External Relations also received a Bronze ADDY for the 2014-2015 Viewbook produced to support student recruitment efforts by the Office of Admission.

Centenary alumnus Nathan Winner '07 is building support for a grassroots movement as one of the co-founders of *Hollaback New Orleans*, a local chapter of an international movement to end street harassment.

Centenary President David Rowe was named chair of the Louisiana Association of Independent Colleges and Universities (LAICU). He assumed the position June 1, 2014 and will serve a one year term with the option for a second year. Dr. Rowe is also currently serving a term as a member of the Board of Directors of the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities (NAICU).

Centenary College's Director of Human Resources Edie Cummings is currently serving as State Director for the Louisiana Society for Human Resource Management (LASHRM) and was one of the first Human Resources professionals in the nation to sit for and pass a new credentialing administered by the national Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) during the society's Leadership Summit in November 2014.

Chemistry major Tierra Range '15 was one of 17 students in the nation awarded a prestigious American Chemical Society International Research Experience for Undergraduates fellowship in summer 2014, allowing her to spend ten weeks conducting research on solar cells at the University of Singapore. Tierra also entered her research in ACS's ChemChamps competition in fall 2014 and was the youngest of ten semi-finalists.

Centenary's Dr. David Havird, Professor of English, and his wife Ashley Mace Havird, served as poets in residence for the Steelville Arts Council in Missouri in June 2014. Both poets also presented several readings from their works in the fall, including a well-attended event in December 2014 at the Meadows Museum on campus.

Assistant Professor of Political Science Matt Murphy presented a paper entitled “Transitional Justice in the Middle East: Arab Spring and Fall” at the annual meeting of the Southern Political Science Association in January 2015.

Associate Professor of Music Todd Gabriel spearheaded the creation of the Centenary Youth Orchestra, comprised of more than 40 young instrumentalists from Shreveport, Bossier City, and Haughton who auditioned for a spot in the group. The Youth Orchestra presented two concerts at Centenary’s Anderson Auditorium in its inaugural season, featuring Shreveport natives Marcus Rose and John-Henry Crawford as guest soloists.

Centenary’s Director of Global Engagement, Chris Lavan, earned his Ph.D. in Urban Higher Education from Jackson State University in December 2014. In addition, Dr. Lavan and Dean of Students Mark Miller authored the article “Centenary in Paris: Developing an International First Year Experience,” which was selected for publication in the peer-reviewed 2015 NASPA *Knowledge Communities* publication.

Centenary’s Director of Educational Outreach Jennifer Hill was appointed to the Mayor’s Women’s Commission by Shreveport Mayor Ollie Tyler following Tyler’s election in December 2014.

The Centenary College Choir performed for former President Jimmy Carter as part of Shreveport-based Community Renewal International’s 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration in October 2014. Community Renewal International is the community partner for Centenary’s World House for Peace, and this partnership has given students the opportunity to serve in local neighborhoods and learn about peaceful communities.

Centenary completed a four-year reclassification process and achieved full membership status in the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA)’s Division III in September 2014. Membership in Division III opens new opportunities for richly-deserved national recognition for student-athletes in both team and individual competition, and makes the College eligible to host regional and national tournaments in its athletic facilities.

Four members of the Centenary community were selected as recipients of the prestigious *40 Under 40 award* given annually by the Greater Shreveport Chamber of Commerce Young Professionals Initiative: director of Student Involvement Ashlie Daigle ’04, director of Advancement Services Patrina Johnson, head men’s basketball coach Adam Walsh, and alumna Kasie Mainiero ’97. The *40 Under 40* award recognizes successful young professionals from northwest Louisiana for their outstanding professional achievements, leadership, community involvement, and commitment to improving the Shreveport-Bossier City community.

In October 2014, Centenary’s Masters of Art in Teaching program was granted official accreditation for seven years by the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP).

Ben Green ’16 and Cadie Hancock ’15 were selected to present their exhibit concept, “#exhibit: Reinterpreting Art from the Permanent Collection” at the annual meeting of the Southeastern Museums Conference in Knoxville, Tennessee in October 2014. The pair created the exhibit concept in Professor Lisa Nicoletti’s Modern and Contemporary Art course at Centenary, and brought the exhibit to life at the College’s Meadows Museum from February 21 through May 3, 2015. Green and Hancock also delivered a curators’ talk to a packed house at the Meadows on February 28, 2015.

Centenary’s Marjorie Lyons Playhouse was the host site for a televised U.S. Senate debate on October 14, 2014. The debate, sponsored by Louisiana Public Broadcasting, the Council for a Better Louisiana, the AARP, and the Shreveport Chamber of Commerce, aired live on LPB stations around the state. The College also hosted a Mayoral Forum televised by KTBS News 3 on October 28, 2014, and Centenary political science professor Dr. Chris Parker moderated a post-forum discussion on KTBS.com.

### ***Christian Leadership Center***

For 2014-15, the 50 students enrolled in the CLC studied the purpose, role, and practices of Servant Leadership. In the fall semester, they explored the twelve marks of the new monastic movement as it relates to the basic principles of servant leadership. In the spring semester they explored the ideal verses the real of servant leadership, in conversation with Rev. Nadia Bolz-Weber’s *Pastrix*, regarding Christian leadership, practice, grace, and community. This May, ten CLC students graduated from Centenary, six of whom received the CLC endorsement.

The CLC hosted its ninth annual fundraising dinner featuring renowned author, Nadia Bolz-Weber. Earlier in the fall, CLC and the Department of Religious Studies held a last lecturer series to honor Dr. Peter Huff. In January, CLC partnered with Community Renewal International's Yellow House of Highland to bring in new monastic leader, Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove.

### ***Globally Engaged Leaders***

Taking seriously their commitment to service, Centenary students have spent the year performing service work throughout the community.

Over 300 Centenary community members worked together in celebration of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, performing service projects such as painting homes, building raised beds in a community garden, packing boxes for food bank clients, cleaning facilities, and decorating tote bags for students.

In September 2014, Centenary's World House for Peace received recognition as the [National Association of College and University Residence Halls'](#) Community Service Program of the Month for the implementation of the We Care Team. An offshoot of a community-wide initiative by Community Renewal International, the World House for Peace's We Care Team sponsored four events on campus to promote thoughtfulness and a caring environment. Centenary's World Houses for Peace, Justice, and Environmental Sustainability – common residences with a common purpose – are important components of Centenary Leadership, a nationally acclaimed student development model that helps every student develop leadership skills in tandem with his or her academic experiences in the classroom. In August 2014, World House students joined Shreveport-area community organizations for a day of service before their classes began.

Centenary students from Chi Omega, Kappa Sigma, and Zeta Tau Alpha social fraternities volunteered their time with Common Ground Community in Shreveport during the organization's Fall Fest in October 2014. Common Ground is committed to building community through compassionate outreach, genuine care, and acceptance of all people by following Jesus Christ's example. Fall Fest provided carnival games and trick-or-treating in a safe environment for children in Shreveport's Cedar Grove neighborhood.

Centenary students wrote over 340 cards to donors thanking them for not only their donations but also their faith in the College and its students in celebration of Student Engagement and Philanthropy Day in February 2015.

Centenary continued its participation in the Yellow Ribbon GI Education Enhancement Program. This provision of the Post 9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2008 pays up to the national maximum toward Centenary's tuition. Centenary then contributes up to 50 percent of the remaining tuition expense, and the Department of Veteran Affairs matches that amount.

Centenary College students who entered in fall 2014 began their college experience with immersive study in Paris, France during *Centenary in Paris*, a 10-day portion of the College's new intensive, immersive segment of the fall semester. Students who participated in the inaugural *Centenary in Paris* program reported that the experience increased their desire to learn more about other cultures, gave them a new perspective on American culture, and helped them form strong relationships with their professors and fellow students.

### ***Recognition***

Centenary's accomplishments continue to be recognized by the media in multiple national rankings. For the fourth year in a row, *U.S. News & World Report* named Centenary a Tier One National Liberal Arts College. *Kiplinger's Personal Finance* recognized Centenary on its list of the country's best values in private colleges, representing colleges that provide high-quality academics at a reasonable cost during continued tough economic times. Forbes named Centenary one of the South's "Top 100" colleges for 2014, and the College climbed nine spots to 99 from the 2013 list. In December 2014, Centenary was named for the eighth year in a row to the President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll, which recognizes the nation's leading higher education institutions that reflect the values of exemplary community service and achieve meaningful outcomes in their communities.

### ***Religious Life***

Centenary is grateful for the Board of Higher Education and Ministry's support for religious life on campus. The conference grant provides support for alternative break missions. In 2014-15, it helped send students to the Mississippi Delta to and to support local outreach in Shreveport. On campus programs include a weekly student-led

worship service known as Stepping Stones, the United Methodist Student Movement, and the Lighthouse, which is open on weekends to provide a supportive and wholesome social environment for students. In addition, Centenary students have the opportunity to engage religious life programming through the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, Canterbury House, Baptist Collegiate Ministry, and the Catholic Student Organization.

Centenary also continues to celebrate the clergy families of the Louisiana United Methodist Conference who have entrusted the College with the education of their students. We are proud to count among our students a number of clergy dependents. Clergy dependents are eligible for up to \$5,000 in annual Methodist grant funds.

**Vision and Goals:**

1. Defining church-related liberal arts education for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.
2. Strengthening our connection with the Louisiana United Methodist Conference through increased communication and service.

**Concerns and Challenges:**

A continuing challenge for the College is to find meaningful and effective ways to connect with United Methodist students and bring them into the Centenary family. We believe that the education and experience offered by the College strengthens a young person's commitment to Methodism, which in turn ultimately benefits the Louisiana United Methodist Conference. We continue to seek partnerships to bring more of Louisiana's Methodist youth to Centenary to pursue their undergraduate education and ensure that those students are supported emotionally, academically, and financially in those endeavors.

**Items for Action:**

We request the Louisiana United Methodist Conference's endorsement of the listed membership of the Centenary College Board of Trustees. We appreciate the Louisiana United Methodist Conference's financial support through apportionments and scholarships. This generosity affirms the churches' dedication to higher education and to Centenary College of Louisiana.

Dr. Valarie Robideaux, Director, professional Discernment & Chaplain

## **DILLARD UNIVERSITY**

**Furthering the Mission, Vision and Core Values of the Louisiana Annual Conference**

In accordance with its role as a United Methodist-affiliated institution of higher education, Dillard University continues to embody the mission, vision and core values of the Louisiana Annual Conference United Methodist Church. As an institution committed to teaching, research, outreach and engagement, Dillard University promotes economic, social, cultural and environmental progress for the people of New Orleans, the nation, and the world. This mission is achieved by producing graduates who are competitive in the global economy, supporting a continuous search for new knowledge and solutions. In the 2014-15 academic year, Dillard provided approximately 1,200 students from diverse backgrounds with a rigorous, service-oriented education. Here are a few of the highlights from Dillard's past year:

*Students and recent graduates exemplify the value of a Dillard education*

We have students and recent graduates who are doing amazing things and demonstrate the value of their Dillard education. Students like Calvinesha Weaver, junior biology major, who completed Phase I of an internship in Peru during the winter break in a Tropical Pathology and Infectious Disease Association Medical Internship Program (TPaIDA). Calvinesha will return to Peru in May for the second phase of the program. Calvinesha's faculty mentor is Dr. Eric Buckles, associate professor and coordinator of biology. Recent graduate Nicole Tinson was named by the White House as a 2014 HBCU All-Star. Nicole credits much of her success to faculty mentors Dr. Nchor B. Okorn, professor of political science and Dr. Gary M. Clark, associate professor and program coordinator of political science. Takunda Jora, also in the class of 2014, was offered a full-time job after spending 11 weeks as an intern at Google's headquarters last summer. Takunda was mentored by Dr. Lynda Louis, assistant professor and coordinator of computer science. These students are great examples of what a Dillard education can do.



#### *Brain Food Lectures continue to nourish the intellect*

The Brain Food lecture series continues to draw people from the community and feed the intellectual appetite of our student body. Recent speakers included Charles Blow in February 2015 and Iyanla Vanzant in March 2015. Blow has been a New York Times Op-Ed columnist since 2008. He spoke to students, staff and community members about the challenges of growing up in rural Louisiana and his journey to one of the most coveted posts in journalism. Vanzant is one of America's most profound spiritual leaders and acclaimed empowerment legends. She used the story of her relationship with her sister, now deceased, to discuss the importance of forgiveness and letting go of past wrongs. Copies of Vanzant's latest book, *Foregiveness*, were made available to students and staff through support from the Lilly Endowment.

#### *SAFE Fund assistance marked pivotal point in students' academic future*

For Richard Johnson, nursing major, the \$1,300 he received from the SAFE Fund was a life saver. "It basically saved my life and that of my two girls," he said. Johnson found himself in an unimaginable position last spring when he was suddenly thrust into the role of a single parent to his two and three year old daughters. Although Johnson worked at the casino at that time, he was forced to take another job that would allow him more time with his children and still maintain his studies at Dillard. Unfortunately, his employment at Winn Dixie was not enough to make ends meet and he and his children sought shelter where they could find it. They eventually found themselves homeless. Dillard's Keys to Success, which provides accommodations for single parents was able to assist him with housing on campus; however, he still fell short of funds needed to continue his education. That's when he was referred to financial aid and applied for emergency help through the SAFE Fund. He is now back on track with his studies and should be a sophomore by the end of the semester. Johnson is one of six siblings and the first in his family to attend college.

#### *Dillard Establishes Center for Law and Public Interest*

Announced to the public in February 2015, the Center for Law and Public Interest grew out of Dillard University's commitment to undergraduate students who seek careers in law, governmental service, criminal justice, social work, public policy, and environmental justice. Numerous Dillard students pursue pre-law studies and will benefit from an enriched learning environment, mentoring from legal professionals, preparation for the law school entrance exam (LSAT), public lectures, workshops, undergraduate research, internships, and scholarships.

In addition, the Center's activities will include advocacy on issues critical to public interest and will focus on social justice and research. The already established Annual Revis O. Ortique Jr. Lecture on Law and Society serves as an integral part of the Center's public interest initiatives.

#### *Dillard garners funding for research, training and planning*

- Pulse Laser Deposition (PLD)/Polymers

Dr. Abdalla Darwish, Interim Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs and Professor of Physics, over the past couple of years has secured about \$1.75M from the U.S. Department of Defense for PLD and laser ablation research and the development of new technologies. As a result, Dillard and Dr. Darwish currently have a patent pending, with two others planned for 2015 related to this technology. This research has also helped Dillard maintain a top 20 ranking nationally in Physics.

- Clinical Research Associates / Health Disparities Research

Dr. Charlotte Hurst, Associate Professor of Nursing, through her work with the Dillard-LSUHSC Minority Health Disparities Research Center implemented a successful model to train nurses as Clinical Research Associates (CRA) which also address a major on-going challenge in healthcare- effectively increasing the number of minorities participating in clinical trials. Dr. Hurst was recently awarded a grant from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), to further her research along with Dr. Michael Hagensee at LSUHSC on "*Education of Health Disparate Woman about Human Papilloma Virus (HPV), Cervical Cancer and Preventative Vaccines*".

- Dillard Works With Gates Foundation on Student Success

Dillard University was recently chosen as one of nine Historically Black Colleges and Universities to work with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to develop strategies for improving student success in post-secondary education. Dillard was awarded a \$75,000 grant through the Gates Foundation's HBCUs Pursuing Transformative Change initiative. The initiative brought together Gates staff members, HBCUs, and planning consultants to address

challenges to higher education, including: rising costs and skyrocketing student debt; difficulty transitioning students to the college environment; and a lack of clear pathways to completion and employment. In addition to Dillard, Claflin, Delaware State, Fayetteville State, Jackson State, Johnson C. Smith, Morehouse, Spelman and Xavier were selected to participate.

#### *Office of Community Relations plays vital role in New Orleans community*

Through the Office Community Relations, Dillard shows its commitment to Christian values and community service. Community Relations has improved the lives of individuals living in southeast Louisiana by:

- Hosting housekeeping workshops at Fischer and Guste housing communities for the elderly and disabled so that they may live independently and maintain their homes;
- Working with 50 student volunteers to install raised garden beds and a community garden for the Fischer Senior Housing Development in Algiers;
- Sponsoring healthy cooking demonstrations for the Gentilly community;
- Holding the “Mind, Body and Soul Health Experience” at various churches and community centers throughout the city;
- Hosting 150 students for a six-week summer program focused on careers, leadership skills, and educational development;
- Working with volunteers to do landscaping work for five Gentilly homeowners;
- Hosting a meeting between the Kiewitt-Pittman Joint Venture construction company and minority-owned businesses in an effort to engage and connect small Black business enterprises;
- Partnering with Dillard Nursing students and Daughters of Charity to hold a Gentilly Health Fair;
- Hosting a Housing and Home Improvement Fair for current and aspiring home owners.

#### *Office of the University Chaplain reschedules its offerings to increase attendance*

Dillard’s Office of the University Chaplain continues to help all students in finding the path for their lives that is divinely intended. Earnest Salsberry joined Dillard in fall 2014 as the new University Chaplain. Since the start of his tenure, he has refocused the Office around student-oriented programming that fits into students’ busy schedules. Sunday services have been rescheduled from the morning to the evening, which has increased attendance significantly. Rev. Salsberry has also redesigned Message in the Middle, a preaching series bringing local clergy to campus for the benefit of the entire campus community, so that it is more convenient for faculty, staff and students to attend. The Office of the Chaplain has also increased the number of student Chorale members, Liturgical Dancers, Mimes and Ushers from 29 in spring 2014 to 50 in fall 2014. Overall, while the model for religious programming remains largely the same, the new Chaplain has incorporated a Pastoral Care approach to leadership by being more actively involved in the care of students’ spiritual and emotional needs. Students are encouraged to learn the importance of presence and how to be actively involved in the well-being of others. This approach has helped them to become leaders that are empathic and supportive of the people they serve. The program has also challenged students to become critical thinkers and to be well versed in religious studies as well as philosophical theories to make them more diverse academically.

#### **Goals and Priorities in the Upcoming Year**

Dillard’s goals for the upcoming year include:

- Implementing *The Blueprint: Dillard University Strategic Plan, 2015-2018*.
- Identifying Dillard’s “Signature Programs” and increasing their visibility among internal and external constituents.
- Finding financial resources for the Office of the Chaplain to continue to offer a full calendar of religious activities following the end of a grant from the Lilly Endowment in December 2014.

#### **Opportunities for Growth**

As Dillard continues to play a vital role in the intellectual, social and spiritual lives of its constituents, the need to find ways to provide financial support to students remain a top priority. The student retention data tell us that students who are in good academic standing, but have a gap of \$2,000 or more are at great risk of not attaining a college degree. The SAFE fund has played a vital role in assisting over 120 students over the past year, but even that has not saved all of them. Since implementing the fund, our retention rates have improved significantly, so there is evidence that the fund is helping. We will continue to make fundraising for SAFE and our scholarship program a strategic priority.

Last year, we launched a fundraising campaign targeting Louisiana UMC ministers. The goal is to raise \$100,000 to assist in programs like SAFE that directly impact students' ability to remain at Dillard until they graduate. We have realized several thousand dollars from the campaign and will continue to reach out to ministers across the state to support our efforts.

## **ILIFF SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY**

Greetings from the Iliff School of Theology in Denver, Colorado. We wish you blessings as together we continue the work of strengthening the Church and offering a compassionate presence to the World.

The Iliff School of Theology's commitment to the Wesleyan tradition of providing intellectually alive and spiritually grounded theological education for our students continues. From Tanzania to Texas, Denver to Delhi, Missouri to Mexico, Iliff students and graduates are holding constructive tension with the human condition as it is and courageously standing with those who seek justice.

This past year saw one of Iliff's largest enrollments since its founding by the United Methodist Church in 1892 - 333 students, 60% female and 40% male, 35% Methodist – all actively engaged in both the classroom and a host of ministry contexts. Some are leading congregations toward revitalization while others are doing ministry by establishing new forms of community.

Interest in online and hybrid classes continues to grow from across the nation in our Journey MDIV Program - one of the first to bring quality theological education online. As a concerted move by Iliff to reduce student debt and grow the ability of students to lead financially sound, engaged communities, many MDIV students are also participating in the Spiritually-Integrated Financial Resiliency Program, funded by a \$250,000 grant from the Lilly Endowment.

We welcomed participants to our first Spanish-Speaking Local Pastors Licensing School hosted in partnership with the Rocky Mountain Conference and participated in healing events for commemoration of the Sand Creek Massacre. In addition, Iliff students participated in an immersion trip to Africa University and are planning an additional experience this year. We look forward to continuing these vital relationships.

Iliff created numerous events for area clergy and supporters. Via forums on leadership, policing, the role of faith in world events, and more, campus speakers included: Amy Goodman, Garry Kasparov, and the Rev. Dr. Rebecca Chopp, this year's Jameson Jones Preacher. Bridging theological education to new arenas was further cultivated through Iliff's Authentic Engagement™ Program with trainings for civic and non-profit groups. Our efforts were duly noted by McCormick Theological Seminary's Center for Faith and Service when we were named as one of the nation's "Seminaries That Change the World."

We continue to look to the future with courageous theological imagination. We are grateful for our denominational connection.

Rev. Dr. Thomas V. Wolfe, President and Chief Executive Officer

## **LYDIA PATTERSON INSTITUTE**

It is with great honor and respect that I submit this report to you on behalf of your ministry on the border, Lydia Patterson Institute (LPI). I first and foremost wish to thank the Bishop and every member of the conference for your love, prayers and support for the well-being of our 400 students, whose future is in our hands.

The past year has been one of monumental and historical accomplishments for Lydia Patterson. We began with the celebration of its 100 years of ministry in a Centennial Gala attended by over 450 friends and supporters from El Paso, Juarez, and friends from throughout the jurisdiction and beyond. Distinguished alums were honored as were the faculty, parents, and board members. The highlights of the evening were the words of encouragement and praise by our Congressman Beto O'Rourke and Former First Lady Laura Bush.

As a part of this celebration, LPI is engaged in a \$15 million campaign for the renovation of its facilities and development and enhancement of new programs. The funds raised will go to build a new chapel and fine arts

center, a new science lab, a computer lab and a media and research center. Fourteen classrooms have already been renovated and equipped with the infrastructure for the latest technology.

This year, we introduced the ELPILearn program. This is a unique program and the only one of its kind in the country. The program was designed to add a middle school to our existing high school. Students will now be learning English, while they are introduced to the core subjects of the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade. We made news in El Paso with the introduction of learning pads and SmartBoards to the classroom as well as being the only school in the area to replace textbooks with Ebooks. The program development plan will bring the same latest state of the art technology to the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade in the next school year and the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade in 2016.

The accomplishments to date have been made possible by the gifts and pledges of friends, both local and throughout the country, and the commitment of several annual conferences to the capital campaign. The addition of the Middle School was funded through a commitment of the Central Texas Conference to whom we are most grateful. Although we still have a long way to go, we are confident that the ministry of LPI merits every dollar invested, and that we will reach our goal.

We are proud of the accomplishments of the campaign, but we are far more proud of the accomplishment of our students. In the past year, we graduated 83 seniors, 82 of whom are in college today. We continue to maintain a 98% rate of students attending a college or university. Students are presently attending 15 of our United Methodist colleges throughout the country. The lay ministry students served in 21 internships last summer, one will graduate from seminary and receive ordination this year, and four are leading churches throughout the country.

This has been a year of excitement and jubilation for Lydia Patterson, but the best is yet to come. ***THIS IS OUR YEAR.*** We will reach our goal and see that LPI is prepared to go into the next 100 years with the best facilities, the most advanced programs, and the best tools to form leaders in our communities, to serve the church and to transform the world, all in the name of Jesus Christ. On behalf of the past and present students and the many more to come, please receive my appreciation for investing in this capital campaign that will change many more lives in the next 100 years.

Dr. Socorro Brito de Anda, President

## PERKINS SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

Perkins celebrates our vital connections with the Louisiana Annual Conference:

- Five M.Div. and two D.Min. Louisiana Conference students are enrolled at Perkins;
- Eligible 2014–2015 students from the Louisiana Conference each received a Perkins Annual Conference Endowment (PACE) grant in the amount of \$4,000, with qualifying students receiving an additional \$6,000 each in need-based aid;
- One Louisiana student currently is serving as an intern in Louisiana;
- Perkins celebrates the distinguished accomplishments and service of our alumni/ae in Louisiana, including Bishop Cynthia Fierro Harvey (M.Div.'99).

Total enrollment at Perkins exceeds 400 students, of which approximately two-thirds are United Methodist and more than one-third are ethnic minority students. Master's degree programs comprise approximately 51% female and 49% male students. The D.Min. program includes students from southern Asia taking classes in Singapore and Dallas. Our Ph.D. program comprises 30 active students, including two Latino Ph.D. students supported through a grant from the Luce Foundation to Perkins' Center for the Study of Latino/Christianity and Religions.

Dr. Jack Levison (Ph.D., Duke, 1985) joined the Perkins faculty as the third appointee to the W.J.A. Power Chair of Biblical Hebrew and Old Testament Interpretation. Dr. John Martin, new director of Development, came to Perkins after serving as president of Roberts Wesley College in Rochester, New York. Following a nationwide search, a senior scholar and teacher eligible for appointment to the Lois Craddock Perkins Chair in Homiletics is expected to join the Perkins faculty in fall 2015.

Perkins restructured its Master of Divinity degree, effective spring 2015, enabling full-time students to complete the program in three years and reducing overall cost of the degree. The M.Div. now requires 73 term hours of academic credit, including the nine-hour internship.

A new “Master of Arts in Ministry” (M.A.M.) degree has replaced the C.M.M. The M.A.M. offers five tracks: two previously-existing tracks in Christian Education and Urban Ministry, and new tracks in Theology and Social Justice, Christian Spirituality, and Evangelism and Mission.

As part of SMU’s “Operational Excellence for the Second Century” (OE2C) initiative, Perkins streamlined its organizational structure in early 2015.

A \$2.5 million gift to SMU will establish the new Susanna Wesley Centennial Chair in Practical Theology at Perkins.

Perkins thanks our many alumni/ae and friends in Louisiana for continuing generous support, including referrals of prospective students, as we continue our vital mission of preparing women and men for faithful leadership in Christian ministry.

William B. Lawrence, Dean and Professor of American Church History

## **ST. PAUL SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY**

Saint Paul School of Theology is a seminary of the United Methodist Church that educates leaders to make disciples for Jesus Christ, renew the Church, and transform the world. We are one institution with two campuses, in Oklahoma and Kansas.

In July 2014, Saint Paul welcomed a new President: Rev. H. Sharon Howell, who most recently served as the Executive Director of the Scarritt-Bennett Center in Nashville. In August, Dr. Elaine Robinson became the Interim Vice President of Academic Affairs and Dean for both campus locations. CFO Laura Snow was honored by the Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce as CFO of the year for a nonprofit. She has been a driving factor in getting the seminary debt free.

This past academic year, Saint Paul enrolled 231 students from 23 annual conferences and 5 countries on both campuses. The Course of Study School at Saint Paul served 237 students at the Kansas City, Missouri, Springfield, Missouri, and Oklahoma City, Oklahoma locations.

Saint Paul is pleased to announce the Saint Paul Fellows Program due to collaborations with the Oklahoma United Methodist Conference and United Methodist Church of the Resurrection. Saint Paul Fellows is a first-of-its-kind pastoral program designed to eliminate student loan debt, immerses students in varied church settings.

Four full-ride scholarships were given to seminary students commencing study in 2015. The three-year Fellows program offers a groundbreaking opportunity to equip candidates called to full-time ministry with excellent academic formation and real-life pastoral experience while reducing the need for student loans. The awards will cover tuition, books and fees for three years. Two Oklahoma Conference Fellows will receive a student appointment to pastor a small church, including a parsonage and salary to cover living expenses; the two Church of the Resurrection Fellows will receive a stipend to cover living expenses while serving at the 21,000 member congregation’s suburban campus in Leawood, KS within the Great Plains Annual Conference.

Saint Paul introduced a new curriculum this year for its masters’ degree programs. The Master of Divinity degree has been reduced to 79 credit hours and includes exciting new components to better prepare students for a lifetime of ministry. Each semester students take short courses called “practicums” that are taught by ministry practitioners. These offerings include such skill areas as “budgets and finance”, “funerals” and “ministry with children.” Students are also required to attend off-campus spiritual formation retreats which are intended to deepen their spirituality. Saint Paul continues to offer the core curriculum that is vital for ministry and emphasizes our long-standing model of action-reflection in which students learn to reflect theologically upon the practice of ministry.

The Native American Ministries Program hosted a group of Native American scholars, elders and clergy who have together written a book on Native Christian Theologies entitled, *Coming Full Circle*. This book will be published by Fortress Press in August 2015 and proceeds will go toward funding Saint Paul's Native American Ministries Program.

Throughout the year we have connected with graduates and donors face to face at gatherings called Holy Conversations. We look forward to more in the upcoming year.

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

## **SOUTHERN METHODIST UNIVERSITY**

SMU is celebrating the centennial of its founding in 1911 by the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and its opening in 1915. Highlights of recent developments follow:

- In fall 2014 SMU's total enrollment of 11,272 included 6,391 undergraduates and 4,881 graduate students. Ethnic minority students made up 25 percent of total enrollment. An international enrollment of 1,483 represented 92 foreign countries, with the largest numbers from China, India and Saudi Arabia.
- SMU ranks among the nation's top universities. In the 2015 *U.S. News & World Report* listings, SMU ranks 58<sup>th</sup> among 280 of the "best national universities." Several individual schools and academic programs also earned national rankings.
- SMU received \$31 million in external funding during 2013-14 for research in the U.S. and worldwide. Current research subjects include water quality, natural hazards, learning disabilities and treatments for cancer and diabetes.
- SMU Unbridled: The Second Century Campaign is the largest fundraising effort in the University's history, with a goal of \$1 billion. To date, SMU has received more than \$927 million to support student quality, faculty and academic excellence and the campus experience.
- Recent campaign gifts have supported five residence halls and a dining center, opened in 2014, and a new education building, under construction. Other 2014 campaign gifts support several endowed faculty positions and new centers focusing on research, cyber security, communities in education, victims of crimes against women, family law and legal research in science and technology.

SMU treasures its Methodist heritage, and we ask for your continued prayers and support.

R. Gerald Turner, President

## **UNITED THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY**

Is God calling you to the ministry of Jesus Christ? Come and check out amazing opportunities for study and spiritual growth in person or online at [www.united.edu](http://www.united.edu)!

Why United?

- United offers an excellent, accredited M.Div. degree required for ordination in The United Methodist Church.
- United students participate in a community of deep faith and avid learning.
- Degree programs include traditional and/or online classes.
- United specializes in preparing persons for ordination and pastoral ministry.
- Join our graduates' long track record of successful service!
- United's focus on church renewal will prepare you to become an agent of new life and revitalization, Spirit led, a faithful leader in the mission of Jesus Christ!

- At United you can enroll in a hybrid UM Course of Study program.
- United's D.Min. program leads the nation through the faithful ministries of its pastoral graduates.
- United is committed to teaching the Bible and the historic Christian faith, cultivating spiritual formation for personal and social holiness, and renewing the Church for the mission of Jesus Christ in the world.

What could be more interesting, important or exciting?

In addition to expanding residential offerings in Dayton, Ohio, United continues to extend its service across the U.S. and the world. United's degree programs are accessible anywhere with Internet service in conjunction with periodic intensive weeks of class and community activities in Dayton.

Please let us know if you have questions about how United can best assist you.

If you would like to help make it possible for a future pastor to study at United, please let us hear from you.

We invite you to call or visit soon! For more information, please contact [admissions@united.edu](mailto:admissions@united.edu).

Thank you for your prayers, partnership, service and support in the ministry of Jesus Christ!

Wendy J. Deichmann, President

## WESLEY THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

At Wesley, we are a church-based seminary committed to **multiplying the number of people who love God and love their neighbor** locally, nationally and globally. Our degrees and programs – traditional and new alike – reflect our dedication to the Great Commandment and Great Commission. We ask you to pray for us, hold us accountable, and join us in this Kingdom work.

### *Equipping Faith Leaders through Degree Programs*

In fall 2015, our new master of divinity curriculum launches. We thoroughly redesigned the M.Div. to prepare leaders for both church and society. This 81-hour degree offers flexibility and an excellent core curriculum focused on empowering passionate, mission-focused leaders.

Wesley also offers a 36-hour Master of Arts and a 60-hour Master of Theological Studies to equip those called to ordained deacon ministries or a wide range of ministries.

In our doctor of ministry program, we continue to offer the most practical and spiritually renewing tracks in theological education. These include leadership excellence, pastoral counseling, arts, and new mission-focused tracks. Wesley is accepting applications to two tracks based in Cambridge, England. These tracks, *Transformative Leadership in Wesleyan Perspective* and *Creative Ministry for Church Renewal in a Changing World*, are each limited to 20 students.

Wesley provides more than \$2 million dollars annually in scholarships to our students thanks to the consistent support of graduates, congregations and friends of the seminary.

*Talk to someone at (202) 885-8659 or [admissions@wesleyseminary.edu](mailto:admissions@wesleyseminary.edu) about how Wesley's degree programs equip people to lead others to loving God and neighbor.*

### *Providing Resources to Faith Communities and Leaders*

Wesley's Lewis Center for Church Leadership continues to be the go-to resource for actionable best-practices for clergy and laity. The center's free *Leading Ideas* e-newsletter provides well-researched, discipleship-growing ideas to more than 15,000 people. Visit [www.churchleadership.com](http://www.churchleadership.com) for resources in: Taking Church to the Community, Doing Good Well, Funding Your Congregation's Vision, and Reaching New Disciples. Also, learn about the newest book by the Rev. Tom Berlin and the Rev. Dr. Lovett Weems Jr., *High Yield: Seven Disciplines of the Fruitful Leader*.

In early 2015, we developed the Institute for Community Engagement at Wesley Downtown to help the church turn itself inside-out. The institute encompasses the existing Urban Ministry Program and the Missional Church Program, which includes Heal the Sick, an initiative to congregations for public health work in their parishes.

The third component of the Institute for Community Engagement is Wesley's emerging Center for Public Theology. Under the leadership of Distinguished Professor of Public Theology, Mike McCurry, we are developing this center to provide churches and their leaders, and seminary students tools to help navigate the connection between faith and public policy.

The Luce Center for Arts and Religion remains the only seminary-based program uniting arts and theology. The center celebrated the 25th anniversary of the Dadian Gallery in late 2014.

Wesley faculty members are continually development resources to the faithful, including books by Drs. Carla Works, Deborah Sokolove, F. Douglas Powe Jr., Cedric Johnson, and Lovett H. Weems Jr.

Throughout the academic year, Wesley hosts Second Mondays – a series of lectures on campus and streaming live. This year we explored “Living Matthew 25 – Focusing on the Big Things.” In this chapter of Matthew’s Gospel, Jesus challenges us to heal the sick, feed the hungry, and welcome the stranger. In their lectures, Wesley’s faculty unlocked the Holy Scriptures and the church’s history, traditions and theology to clarify these Gospel imperatives. These presentations are available at [www.youtube.com/c/wesleyseminaryedu](http://www.youtube.com/c/wesleyseminaryedu) and via live stream at [www.ustream.tv/channel/wesley-seminary](http://www.ustream.tv/channel/wesley-seminary). Sign up for the monthly electronic newsletter *eCalling* at [www.wesleyseminary.edu/ecalling](http://www.wesleyseminary.edu/ecalling) to be reminded of this opportunity.

*Learn more at [www.wesleyseminary.edu](http://www.wesleyseminary.edu) about the exciting ways Wesley’s resources are equipping people to spread the love of God and love of neighbor.*

The Rev. Dr. David McAllister-Wilson, President

## **GENERAL BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND MINISTRY**

Greetings from the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry! In 2014 and 2015, GBHEM staff has been busy with a number of initiatives assigned to the Board by the 2012 General Conference, including the Young Clergy Initiative and the Central Conference Theological Education Fund. Here are some of the ways GBHEM has been working to resource our church:

- GBHEM continues to train Group Candidacy Mentors, and Conference Board of Ordained Ministry (BOM) members, BOM staff, District Committee on Ministry members, and District Superintendents on ministry legislation and best practices for navigating the ordination process with new candidates.
- Work continues on the Young Clergy Initiative (YCI). Forty-six YCI grants were awarded during the second round of applications in August 2014, bringing the total amount awarded to \$5.5 million. The grants support programs geared toward increasing the number of young clergy in the UMC and supporting young clergy already serving the denomination.
- The Commission on Central Conference Theological Education continues to distribute the \$5 million fund for theological education in Africa, Europe, and the Philippines. So far, the commission has awarded 130 grants to fund training for local pastors, faculty development, provision of e-readers, curriculum development, and libraries at theological schools across 22 countries.
- Africa University continues to graduate scholars who are changing the face of Africa. The \$50 million Endowment Campaign, a fundraising plan to ensure Africa University’s financial independence, is well underway. Contribute online to Africa University at the new giving website, [support-africauniversity.org](http://support-africauniversity.org).
- More than 680 college students, campus ministers, and chaplains attended Imagine What’s NEXT last fall, an event which focused on helping students plan how they can be active in God’s dreams for their communities and the world.
- For the 2014-2015 academic year, GBHEM’s Office of Loans and Scholarships awarded 2,293 recipients a total of over \$5 million. Explore all scholarship opportunities within the UMC using the scholarship portal at [scholarship.umc.org](http://scholarship.umc.org).



- Registration is open now for Exploration 2015, a three-day event where young adults ages 18-26 ages come to hear, discern, and respond to God's call to ordained ministry in The United Methodist Church. This year's event will be held in Orlando, FL, November 6–8. Read more or register at [gbhem.org/exploration](http://gbhem.org/exploration) and follow @explorecalling on Twitter for updates.
- Technology enables us to make our training resources more readily available to the church. The UMC Cyber Campus provides free video training sessions and lectures, as well as an online listing of continuing education courses, at [umccybercampus.com](http://umccybercampus.com).
- GBHEM and Discipleship Ministries continue to expand the E-Reader Project, a simple, sustainable, and cost-effective way for theology schools in remote areas of Africa and Asia to access current textbooks. Through financial support from annual conferences, local churches, universities, and individual donors like you, we're making theological education available to more people in more places than even before. Learn more or donate at [umcereader.org](http://umcereader.org).

## **HISPANIC/LATINO MINISTRIES**

During 2014, The LA Conference continued progressing and experimenting with multicultural settings for Hispanics that should allow expansion to all the districts.

After a period of adaptation and experimentation, on May 2014 El Mesias UMC and First Kenner UMC passed a resolution to officially merge into a new church plant to be called ILove UMC. The act of renaming is in process, as is the continued visioning for the ways the current buildings will be used for the mission of the church. A renovation of the 2 buildings has begun and is proceeding slowly, as funding is available.

Rev. Beth Tu'uta is the Senior Pastor of ILove UMC. So far, this experiment seems to be working well for both congregations using bilingual worship services and activities. The Spanish language GED program has been successful. Plans for ESL and Spanish classes are in the works. A very successful Vacation Bible School was conducted with 70 participants.

Rev. Beth Tu'uta and lay speaker Martha Canizales (declared candidate for Local Pastor) have been selected to participate in Perkins School of Theology's Cultural Sensitivity Training. They look forward to using that experience to help the Louisiana Conference be more sensitive to meeting the ministerial needs of all people. Recent celebrations of Hispanic and Black Heritage months have resulted in increased understanding and appreciation of our varied congregation.

GBGM Missionary Rev. Dr. Oscar Ramos made the arrangements and coordinated the efforts to bring to Louisiana a multicultural event focused on worship and music in multicultural congregations or churches looking to develop this kind of ministry. This GBGM-sponsored event was conducted early in May 2014 and it was a success. For this event, Oscar worked with Kenner UMC, Gretna UMC, Saint Mark UMC, First Grace UMC and the GBGM. It is now being considered to have a second event that will be focused on how to create these multicultural ministries, share stories and learn from each other. At this event, our multicultural congregations in Louisiana will have the opportunity to share their experience in this area.

Dr. Ramos continued spearheading through La Semilla, a non-profit organization, the successful educational component of the ministry. It focuses on educating the Hispanic/Latino community in the New Orleans area. About 250 people have enrolled in the English, Spanish, and GED classes offered this current school year. Special efforts have been put on the encouragement of young people to continue their education beyond High School. Also, Dr. Ramos has made the necessary connections with other organizations to establish a strong Hispanic/Latino presence in the New Orleans area.

First Grace UMC has Sunday services in English and in Spanish, and is discerning a weekly bi-lingual worship service for the fall of 2015 to once again transcend the boundaries that keep us from being the body of Christ.

Under the supervision of GBGM Missionary Rev. Juanita Ramos, another Hispanic/Latino ministry was established in coordination with Gretna UMC. A Steering Committee was developed under the leadership of Silvia Sanchez. English classes started early in April and over 100 students registered for these classes. Rev. Juanita Ramos is working with the Steering Committee from Gretna UMC developing, not only the ESL program, but also a coordinated effort to reach out the Hispanic/Latino community already established in the area. Pastor Bertrand

Griffin II, Senior Pastor, expressed that reaching out the Hispanic/Latino community will continue to be a priority at Gretna UMC this year. We are very excited about this ministry.

### **Overall Accomplishments**

- 1) Consolidated, expanded and enhanced the existing educational opportunities for the H/L community via La Semilla Center for Educational Development;
- 2) Continued supporting and improving the quality of life of many Hispanic/Latinos in distress; and
- 3) Continued achieving definite performance enhancement in the areas of leadership development and congregational development.

### **Priorities for Coming Year**

In September 2014, Bishop Cynthia Harvey invited a group of UMC leaders to be part of a Hispanic Dream Team in Louisiana. The continual growth of the Hispanic population in Louisiana clearly indicated the need to establish a Conference wide strategy. The members of this group are as follows: Don Cottrill, Doug deGraffenreid, Steven Spurlock, Shawn Anglim, Donnie Wilkinson, Juan Huertas and Pete Aguila. This group is to identify the growing needs of the Hispanic Ministry in our Conference and needs each participant perceives emerging in his particular area.

Bishop Harvey also invited Don Cottrill, Pete Aguila and other members of the Dream Team to participate in the Third National Convocation of the National Plan for Hispanic/Latino Ministry (NPHLM) held at Duke Divinity School in Durham, NC on March 12-14, 2015. As indicated by Rev. Francisco Cannas, Director of the NPHLM, "At this consultation, we want to honor and recognize the existing talents and gifts among our youth and young adult people. Consulting, listening and utilizing many of their own understandings, perspectives and vision about the needs and opportunities of our communities could be the key for the UMC to become truly a church for all."

### **Concerns/Challenges**

The mobility of the Hispanic/Latino community continues to be a challenge. Last year we experienced again an increase of ICE raids being conducted in the New Orleans Metropolitan area, thus creating a lot of instability in the community that often ends on moving to other areas.

We are planning to continue engaging with a small group this spring to continue dreaming and imagining what the Hispanic/Latino ministry might look like in the Louisiana Conference. In 2015, we may have multicultural churches all throughout the districts.

Pete Aguila, Chair

## **HOPE MINISTRIES**

### **Mission**

Prevent Homelessness. Promote Self-Sufficiency and Dignity.

### **Vision**

A thriving community with access to resources to meet needs and the opportunity to move forward.

In 2014, HOPE's team began looking at our programming to see if we really were helping the community and making a difference in the lives of our clients. From this evaluation we determined that our delivery of services could use some tweaking. After having survived a massive fire which resulted in multiple vandalisms, HOPE was getting back on its feet and needing to strongly move forward. As a result we redefined what we do into two categories: meeting needs and moving forward. Any program we implemented had to be in one of those two categories. We combined two programs, the Family Mentoring Program and the workforce development program, into one program called HOPE Works© and we added a component to our training, began writing our own curriculum and extending our education piece to include clients from the Client Choice Food Pantry (CCFP) who could benefit from these classes. The former curriculum called *Getting Ahead in a Just-Gettin'-By World*© was replaced with HOPE written curriculum called *Going Beyond*© and several short (30 minutes) classes were added to

assist CCFP clients with education while they waited to be served through the food pantry. Additionally, during this time HOPE became the agency of choice for the Baton Rouge Area Violence Elimination (BRAVE) program assisting families of gang members who have chosen to get out of a life of crime and become stable. In the first year of BRAVE's implementation violent crime in the 70805 zip code was reduced by 25%. HOPE collaborates with the Baton Rouge Police Department, Sheriff's office, District Attorney's office and other social services providers and the faith based community to help reduce crime in one of the US's highest crime rate zip-codes.

### **Power of HOPE and HOPE Fest**

HOPE Ministries held the fourth bi-annual Power of HOPE event featuring congenital amputee Kyle Maynard. Kyle spoke about endurance, perseverance and NO EXCUSES to a room full of almost 500. We also gathered roughly 600 at-risk 7th and 8th graders from six of the East Baton Rouge School system middle schools. These children were bussed into Baton Rouge High School and heard Kyle's story about overcoming adverse circumstances. The Power of HOPE event raised \$70,000 for HOPE's programs.

More than 300 people graced HOPE's campus for our fall festival called HOPE Fest. ExxonMobil, BRAVE and the North Baton Rouge Industrial Task Force were all sponsors for the event. The Peace with Justice grant helped to pay some of the costs associated with the event. ExxonMobil set-up their Science, Technology, Engineering and Math booth and the ExxonMobil jazz band played to the delight of all who attended. District Attorney Hillar Moore, the Baton Rouge Police Department and Sheriff's office all attended. Police officers brought a canine officer to entertain the children. There were many booths, fun, games and food.

### **2014 Accomplishments and Celebrations:**

**HOPE Works:** This in-depth case management and work force development program matches a qualified participant with a case manager and career counselor who help guide the family or individual on its path to self-sufficiency.

77 participants (outreach to 485)

- HOPE provided at least 2,067 hours of case management and had over 600 client meetings for HOPE Works.
- In addition, HOPE provided around 850 hours and spent roughly \$44,000 on case management of individuals that are not in a case management program.
- Results from HOPE Works:
  - 84% achieved affordable housing
  - 70% employed
  - 75% increased personal stability
  - 56% sustained overall stability
  - Average number of months on the same job - 24
  - Average number of months continuously employed - 23
  - Avg. mos. at current/greater income level - 22

**Going Beyond©:** This 40-hour workshop series is made up of 16 sessions conducted twice a week for 8 weeks. The program helps participants identify the root causes of poverty, increase financial literacy, recognize and build on existing resources, and design an action plan for becoming self-sufficient.

- 139 clients YE 2014
- Added 30 minute mini-workshops which are conducted during pantry intake to help increase knowledge to food pantry clients and to offer more than food to pantry clients
- Added a robust pre/post test assessment and are measuring outcomes
  - 100% of clients increased knowledge in order to move forward
  - 55% of clients set goals to improve stability and identified action steps
  - 100% of clients acquired necessary tools to change behavior and understood how to use them -By World

**Client Choice Food Pantry:** HOPE's unique pantry serves clients in a grocery store like setting. This is a unique food pantry atmosphere – one of dignity that allows clients to select the food that best suits the nutritional and health needs of their families.

- 1070 unique households -- 14,194 individuals received services in the food pantry
- Distributed 261,771 pounds -- an average of 18 pounds per client per visit.

- An estimated 74 clients received SNAP assistance from Jan 2014 - Jun 2014 (new initiative). 44 clients received SNAP assistance here at HOPE and an estimated 30 additional clients called the food bank's SNAP Outreach Coordinator after being referred by HOPE.
- 735 clients were referred for additional services, either into other HOPE programs or to various community partners
- 61 clients participated in financial literacy classes (now part of Going Beyond© program. 95% of them reported that they felt their ability to manage their financial life would improve as a result of the class.
- 11 food pantry clients successfully completed Going Beyond© 40-hour workshop series

#### **Volunteers donated 3,626 Hours of service**

##### *HOPE Projects:*

Eagle Scout, Griffin Copeland, replaced client benches and the cabinets and countertops in the pantry

Broadmoor UMC removed all the shelving and painted the pantry

Lee Soileaux and the St. Andrew's Men have been traveling to Grocery Salvage in Pumpkin Center to pick up donated milk, orange juice and meat

##### *Groups:*

In addition to our regular church volunteer groups. Other groups this year include:

AmeriHealth Caritas Louisiana, LSU's Geaux Big, Ameriprise Financial, National Charity League, AKA Sorority, Blackwater United Methodist Church Youth Group,

Youth Build, ExxonMobil, Youth Oasis, First United Methodist Church Mission Day Camp, Zachry Industrial, Inc., and Junior League of Baton Rouge

##### *Volunteer Recognition:*

- Youth Volunteer Tre' Scott featured in *inRegister* May 2014 (Youth in Baton Rouge: Difference Makers)
- Monique Cole July Power of 9 Honors recipient
- Lee Soileaux New Orleans Saints Community Quarterback Award and \$1000 grant for HOPE

**Social Enterprise:** HOPE Ministries helps at-risk families reach self-sufficiency, and we believe our agency should be self-sufficient as well. In 2014, we continued our state wide training, *Understanding the Dynamics of Poverty*, a full-day poverty awareness workshop for social service workers and other professionals who interact with persons living in poverty. To date we have trained over 254 companies and organizations employees totaling 1,032 individuals.

#### **Goals for Upcoming Year:**

**Programs/Services** – Continue to provide services to meet the needs of impoverished families trying to gain self-sufficiency through all programs; grow HOPE Works and continue to secure industry support

**Social Enterprise** – Continue to bring our poverty awareness training to organizations and individuals throughout the state; become a state accredited Small Business Employee Training (SBET) provider and begin to produce and market our curriculum

**Administrative** – Continue to grow funding base of support and to secure additional support from United Methodist Churches as well as other local churches and congregations; Continue to work with UMW, UMM and local circles

**Fund Development** – Continue to secure additional individual donors to HOPE and implement seasonal appeals

**Public Relations** – Continue to increase awareness through marketing and social media

#### **Challenges:**

- Additional sources of revenue
- Lack of staff
- Capital improvements to facilities
- Logistics because we are housed in an old church and are challenged by the design of the building
- Ongoing public relations and public awareness of the plight of homeless and impoverished in our communities, and the role of HOPE Ministries in addressing these issues

#### **Items for Action/Vote by Annual Conference:**

We request Conference endorsement of our Board of Directors.

Janet Simmons, President and CEO

## **LOUISIANA INTERCHURCH CONFERENCE**

Originally formed in 1970, and today with a membership of 16 Christian denominations, and an Associate Member – The Order of St. Lazarus, and including representation from Church Women United, the Louisiana Interchurch Conference (LIC) seeks greater Christian Unity through sharing a common faith in witness, worship, study, and service. Dr. Steven R. Harmon, a Baptist theologian from Gardner-Webb University School of Divinity in North Carolina was the keynote speaker at the 45th Annual Assembly of the LIC, held on March 2-3, 2015, at the Wesley Center in Woodworth, LA. The theme was: “*The Church: Towards a Common Vision*”. The Rt. Rev. Jacob Owensby, Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Western Louisiana, was installed as President during the Assembly Worship service held at First United Methodist Church in Alexandria on Monday evening, March 2, 2015. Bishop Cynthia F. Harvey serves *ex officio* as a Board Member and was the preacher at this Annual Assembly Worship Service. Other representatives to the Assembly included Board Designate, Dr. Don Cottrill, Mr. Glen Turner and Rev. Heather Leyland – both members of the LA Conference OCUIR, Rev. Jan H. Curwick, Rev. Hulen Warren - Board Member at Large, and Rev. Larry Miller - Treasurer of the LIC. The Week of Prayer observance [*Jesus said to her, “Give me a drink.”* (John 4:7)], was commemorated with several events around the state. The LIC task force on Social Justice and Public Policy has initiated a campaign to explore and implement ways to reduce child poverty in LA. Member churches are enacting portions of *Bread or Stones*, a plan that offers practical ways for churches, their leaders and members to address the problems of chronic poverty in Louisiana and help overcome this blight on our State.

The LIC Board met in September in Lafayette, LA, and addressed the theme: “*Proclaiming and Living the Good News Today*”. The Keynote Speaker was Rev. Laura Everett, Executive Director of the Massachusetts Council of Churches. Among LIC Commissions, the Stewardship of the Environment has advocated for the Restore Act that involves coastal restoration working in coalition for rebuilding the gulf coast. The Criminal Justice Commission continues to focus on juvenile justice reform implementation and ending capital punishment. The Commission has also been active in collaborating with Coalitions involved with reentry programs for those leaving correctional centers in states, parish and local facilities. Farmer’s Advocate, Mrs. Betty Puckett continues to work as a contract employee, ready to assist farm families on an as-needed basis. The LIC continues to partner with the Louisiana Prison Chapel Foundation in completing the building of Chapels on the grounds of State correctional centers. The LPCF has one more Chapel under construction at the State Police Barracks.

Largely funded by the member churches we are grateful for the support of the LA Annual Conference and its commitment to ecumenical relationships that keep before the churches Christ’s vision of unity in mission, service and witness. The member churches strive to proclaim the Gospel message *To Live The Faith We Hold In Common*. Our website is: [www.lainterchurch.org](http://www.lainterchurch.org).

Executive Director: The Rev. C. Dana Krutz

## **LOUISIANA UNITED METHODIST CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES**

Compelled by God's love, and with the continued support of the Louisiana Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church, our 560 staff members intentionally and vigorously pursued our mission in 2014.

During this year we cared for 277 children among our three United Methodist children's homes. 199 boys and girls received care at Louisiana Methodist Children's Home in Ruston, we cared for 40 boys and girls at Methodist Children's Home of Greater New Orleans, and we cared for 38 boys at Methodist Children's Home of Southwest Louisiana in Sulphur. In total, during 2014, we provided 42,692 days of care to children whose significant treatment needs could not be met elsewhere in Louisiana – not in less therapeutic group homes or in foster care.

From our family preservation work in Lake Charles to opening the doors of Family Lodge at the OWL Center so families can spend weekends with their children who are residents of Louisiana Methodist Children's Home; from a Development worker inspiring a couple's generosity to the elementary school children who benefit from treatment we offer in their school; from the mental health specialist in our Home in Mandeville whose care allows young boys to sleep without fear to our nurses who provide medical care to all our residents - wherever we are, wherever the Home is - we are actively pursuing our mission to guide children and families home to experience God's love by following the teaching of Christ.

The three United Methodist children's homes are strategically located in the bootstrap, heel and toe of Louisiana's boot-shaped state. From these three children's homes, we also reached into communities across Louisiana with services for families and children.

These community-based services included the Family Counseling Center in Ruston (8,924 served); family preservation services in Monroe, Shreveport and Lake Charles; the Outdoor Wilderness Learning Center (more than 10,000 served); Howard School (the only alternative school in Lincoln Parish and located on the grounds of Louisiana Methodist Children's Home); the Allen Career Center (a vocational education center where at-risk children receive training and certificates in barbering, welding and construction); Family Plus Counseling Centers in Monroe, Shreveport, Alexandria, Leesville, and Natchitoches; and the Life Skills Training Center in north Louisiana for foster care children who are preparing for independence.

Our services are the outward expression of Christian love through quality care, responsible stewardship, and charitable compassion. Louisiana United Methodist Children and Family Services has three primary strategic goals: 1) continue perfecting our residential services in our three children's homes in Ruston, Mandeville and Sulphur, 2) continue expanding services to children and families into Louisiana's communities and 3) creating a permanent home for Methodist Children's Home of Greater New Orleans.

We are grateful for the prayers and unceasing support of the Louisiana Annual Conference. Your faithful support is an active demonstration of God's love at work in the world. Thank you for making it possible for us to care well for Louisiana's most desperate children and families!

Rick Wheat, President and CEO, Louisiana United Methodist Children and Family Services, Inc.

## **MACDONELL UNITED METHODIST CHILDREN'S SERVICE, INC.**

MacDonell United Methodist Children's Services (Houma, LA) continues its mission of providing a safe haven for youth and young adults as well as offering healing ministries including both clinical and spiritual care.

### **Accomplishments and celebration of work completed**

- MacDonell maintains a Non-Medical Group Home with twelve (12) male beds.
- We served 33 youth and had a total of 4,063 days of care in 2014.
- The percentage of occupancy increase from 79% to a 93% rate of occupancy during 2014.
- AVG daily census for 2014 increased to 11.13.
- The 30<sup>th</sup> Annual Volunteer Activist Gala was held in August 2014, third year in a row that the proceeds from the GALA exceeded the previous year.
- MacDonell has been chosen to house and operate a Juvenile Detention Alternative program on behalf of Terrebonne Parish Consolidated Government, in April of 2015 it will become operational.
- Development of Partnership with Options for Independence Social Service Non-profit which will lease space on campus to house girls ages 11-17, with opening date sometimes in 2015.
- Hooper Cottage which has been unoccupied since 2012 has been completely renovated through donations and volunteers from the community through the efforts of Options for Independence. Hooper has been transformed into a beautiful, safe and much needed shelter for teen girls. Plans for opening Hooper in April 2015.
  - Pressure Cleaned and Painted exterior.
  - New Windows and Screens
  - New Furniture & Appliances
  - Bathrooms updated, New Stalls, Sinks, Toilets, Faucets and Countertops.
  - Interior Painting of Walls, Cabinets, new lighting fixtures, cabinet and door handles.
- The Wesley House, a historic antebellum plantation home is currently undergoing renovations.
  - The Terrebonne Parish Sheriff's office trustees pressure washed, scraped, sanded, primed and repainted the exterior of the Wesley House.
  - The metal roof that was installed in the late 1990's was refurbished all the roofing screws and sealing washer were replace, the flashing was resealed and the entire roof was primed and repainted.
  - The ceilings in the upstairs bedrooms were replaced and the walls have been primed and repainted.
  - Downstairs wallpaper in the living room, dining room and the French room has been removed.
  - The Kitchen and Breakfast area the wall board as well as the ceramic tile floor ant its underlayment were removed.
  - Continue seeking funding to complete remainder of the renovations.

### **Goals that are a priority for the upcoming year**

- Accreditation
- Continuation of financial solvency.
- Increase community giving; pursue options for additional fundraisers.
- Development of a new Out-patient Counseling Center.
- Development of new strategic and marketing plans.

### **Concerns and challenges facing board or agency**

The two biggest concerns that MacDonell continues to face is the ongoing changes to the Department of Health and Hospital's Louisiana Behavioral Health Partnership/ managed behavioral health care system. DHH has plans this year to transition the partnership from one managed care company coordinating the treatment and services for children to the 5 Medicaid Bayou Health Plans. This transition will most likely create a delay in payments which will could create cash flow problems for our organization. Secondly, if may force MacDonell to have to invest in an

electronic medical record as well as begin utilizing a 3<sup>rd</sup> party billing agency to bill the 5 Bayou Health Plans. Our agency will also continue to consider changing our designation from a non-medical group home to Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facility or a Therapeutic Group Home, as well as consider offering outpatient services.

**Items for action/vote by the Annual Conference**

Continued prayers and donations through the Churches of the Conference are appreciated.

**METHODIST HEALTH SYSTEM FOUNDATION, INC.**

In the last decade, as a legacy foundation, Methodist Health System Foundation, Inc. (MHSFI) has, in so many ways, been a healing catalyst for our community. Goals we had designed from our inception evolved in ways we could not have foreseen. In these brief ten years MHSFI has played an integral role in the recovery and establishment of a new generation of self sustaining individuals. From the unborn to the elderly, and every person in between, MHSFI has partnered with community wide organizations and health care providers to ensure the health and well being of the East New Orleans communities and beyond. This cohesive alliance has allowed MHSFI to prudently distribute funding to help meet the community's most basic needs, while laying a framework for the future.

In our ever expanding vision to help those in need, MHSFI has partnered with those in the community who have actively prevented illness and diminished hunger through no cost immunizations for children and community food pantries. These programs have affected not only the quality of life for the children and their families but for the future of the community as a whole. We are addressing the present needs of the communities we serve, while preparing for the future through the continued support of college nursing students through education scholarships and expanding quality healthcare where accessibility is a factor, in high school and college level, School Based Health Centers.

As this decade of difference concludes, we move forward into the next decade of service building from our Christian foundation and the valuable collaborations we have created. For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2014, we are pleased to report that MHSFI has expended to the communities we serve \$3,358,020.50, in support of our Mission.

The team that is Methodist Health System Foundation, Inc. thanks you for your continuing support as its members endeavor to meet critical community needs in the next decade and beyond.

Mr. Frederick C. Young, Jr, President

**MINISTERS EMERGENCY AID FUND**

The Ministers' Emergency Aid Fund is supported by the clergy of the Louisiana Annual Conference who voluntarily contribute one-half of one percent of their base salary annually. We recommend the following guidelines for the Ministers' Emergency Aid Fund:

1. That each clergyperson under appointment in the Louisiana Annual Conference be asked to give an amount equal to one-half of one percent of their base salary for 2015 to the Ministers' Emergency Aid Fund (line 5030 on the Conference Remittance Sheet).
2. That this fund be used to provide emergency benefit aid to the clergy of the Louisiana Conference and their immediate families, subject to the following guidelines:
  - a. The maximum amount allowed for a single emergency shall be \$1,500.
  - b. Exceptional situations may be given special consideration by the Cabinet.
  - c. Only one grant will be provided to any one individual in a twelve month period.
3. That each clergyperson and local church be requested to provide an adequate medical insurance program for family protection.

In 2014, conference clergy contributed \$11,952.42 to the Minister's Emergency Aid Fund and \$547.58 was transferred from prior year reserves. Nine grants totaling \$12,500 were distributed to clergy families.

Dr. Van A. Stinson, Cabinet Secretary



## **MOUNT SEQUOYAH CENTER, INC**

Mount Sequoyah continues to both enjoy and count on the Louisiana Annual Conference, its laity, ministers, and leadership as both partner and participant in programs and ministry. Louisiana participants not only learn from but help design Mount Sequoyah programs and offerings by expressing their needs in carrying out their home conference ministry. The Louisiana Conference has eloquently described its own mission and core values in a way that very much parallels those of Mount Sequoyah. Events such as At the Cross, personal retreats, conferences addressing ways to invest in low income and marginal youth, mission events, educational and ministry retreats for lay and professionals in geriatric settings, hosting Christian motorcycle groups, to name a few, Mount Sequoyah seeks to equip leadership to lead others into abundant life in Christ and to strengthen and deepen their own faith. In such assemblies the Gospel is not only learned but also lived and retold as persons enter back into daily life. Summer camps, Christian year worship observances, recreational offerings, and Bikes, Blues and BBQ help Mount Sequoyah teach others to engage in community locally and globally and offer Louisiana participants new ideas and opportunities to engage their own communities upon reentry. At this juncture, Mount Sequoyah is working with Louisiana teams who are scheduling UMVIM teams for the coming year. Louisiana Methodists of all walks of life have participated in several of these events throughout the year. We are also happy to add and continue to be thankful for the Louisiana Conference Friendship Plaza, often a pivotal gathering place of hospitality for many of these events and ministries.

Mount Sequoyah advances the mission of the Louisiana Conference by delivering radical Christian hospitality to all guests. Use of facilities increased 28% for meetings and 29% for lodging. Staff-sponsored programs attracted 450 youth which number is projected to exceed 700 youth this summer. Over 200 collegiate women meet weekly on our Campus as well as a Boy Scout Troop and other small groups. An international corporation conducts training for midlevel supervisors from around the world.

Program Manager, Emily Gentry, oversaw the growth of youth programs and helped improve programs to address the spiritual and physical needs of adults. More children than ever before participated on our Marlin Swim Team, and the number of Kampers who attended Kanakuk KampOut doubled. We were also blessed with the opportunity to work with two interns from the Lydia Patterson institute this summer.

Denni Palmer M. Div., a United Methodist diaconal minister, joined our staff as Christian Education and Spiritual Formation Coordinator. By the close of 2014, more Christian based educational training seminars and workshops were on the calendar for 2015 than in the previous six years. Denni designed and wrote *Bible Studies to Go* that, along with daily devotionals, are available for any guest with individuals staying on the grounds for weeks of training specifically in mind.

Our goal for the coming year is to provide more religious training and educational seminars for United Methodists across our Jurisdiction and to plan and present programs which reach across denominational lines and into the unchurched and under-churched segments of our society to address real life crisis. Examples are religious based Divorce Recovery and Financial Peace programs. We will continue to develop programs to attract children and young parents to our campus through an expanded swim program, a new tennis program, and an academy for Lay Servant for youth. We share The United Methodist Church's belief that our future lies with the youth.

The challenges with which the Board is faced are shared by most churches and non profits: raising funds for capital improvements and identifying the areas in which we can be most effective in carrying out the Mission of The United Methodist Church. To assist in this process, our Board engaged Run River Enterprises to conduct a long-range Jurisdiction wide review of our mission and programming and to provide guidance in development of a strategic plan to better serve the South Central Jurisdiction.

The Board has worked toward upgrading our facilities. Capital improvements of \$536,000 have been completed. The United Methodist Foundation of Arkansas matching grant has \$150,000 of the \$300,000 remaining available for capital improvements. So it is our belief while the challenges continue, progress had been made and will continue.

If you have not been to Mount Sequoyah in the past two years, you will be astounded by the renovations and remodels. Many of our guests rooms have been redecorated and are now equipped with more modern amenities such

as flat screen TVs, Wi-Fi, and coffee makers. It is truly amazing what a difference our staff, with your support, has made on our facilities.

We miss you and hope you will visit us soon so that you can experience our radical Christian hospitality for yourself.

Lamar Pettus, Interim Executive Director

## **NATIVE AMERICAN MINISTRIES**

The Ministry of the Louisiana Conference Native American Ministries (LACONAM) celebrates the many accomplishments in 2014 in Making Disciples for Jesus Christ and transform the world through HIM. LACONAM has been the presence of Native American United Methodists in Dulac through Clanton Chapel to empower and equip Native American United Methodists and others to be part of the Body of Christ and do His Will and work in Dulac.

- WE celebrate the many groups who came to Dulac to work with Clanton Chapel and Clanton Chapel Christian Preschool as Partners in Mission, and the Volunteers in Mission that came to work with the Dulac Community Center to help the church and community.
- WE celebrate the many meetings held concerning the environment and other concerns at the Dulac Community Center.
- We continue to celebrate the work of Clanton Chapel in the Native American inclusiveness of culture in worship and the sharings from many United Methodists who came to Dulac.
- WE celebrate the many new diverse members of Clanton Chapel.
- WE celebrate the inclusiveness of Clanton Chapel in helping others beyond the local church through Clanton Chapel Preschool and other outreaching programs of the local church.
- We continue to celebrate the over 130 years of Methodism in Dulac, and Clanton Chapel in Making Disciples for Jesus Christ, and the Dulac Community Center's over 80 years of service to the residents of Dulac.
- We celebrate the Working Poor Ministry of Clanton Chapel to bring material help as well as offering spiritual help through Making Disciples for Jesus Christ as efforts continue to make the facilities open to help train willing United Methodists to come work with Clanton Chapel in this important Ministry.
- WE celebrate the active participation of Rev. Gary Billiot (originally from Dulac) of Dayspring Native American United Methodist Church of East Peoria, Illinois with LACONAM and Clanton Chapel.

### **Goals that are a priority for next year:**

LACONAM has identified the need to empower Native Americans within the United Methodist Church and other churches as for too long Native people were not instructed of the many roles that need to be fulfilled within the work of the church and many opportunities were not offered to those Native Americans who became part of the Faith Community and as a result, losses were incurred that may never be recovered, but the hope is that through education in the diversity of the United Methodist Church, others will come into Methodism. LACONAM has included many young Native Americans from Clanton Chapel as members and future leaders of Clanton Chapel and institutions of the United Methodist Church. LACONAM seeks to help develop more speakers on Native American needs in Louisiana and invite anyone interested to take part to share our story. LACONAM seeks to invite groups and individuals to help in the ministries of Clanton Chapel and the Dulac Community Center, two unique, separate ministries who seek the make a difference in the lives of the people of Dulac. In 2015, LACONAM would like to request that all churches in the Louisiana Annual Conference have one person designated at charge conference to promote and inform church members of the 2015 Native American Ministries Sunday Offering to better support our ministries in Louisiana and all over the world.

### **Concerns and challenges:**

LACONAM seeks to continue to identify and invite Native Americans and others interested within Louisiana Annual Conference Churches to take part in the support of LACONAM throughout the conference to support Clanton Chapel Ministries and the Dulac Community Social Programs in Dulac.. LACONAM thanks all who have contributed to the Native American Ministries Sunday Offering and would like for more persons to support our Native American Ministries. A new concern is that the Louisiana Annual Conference Native American Ministries would like to urge clergy and laity to be in consultation with LACONAM if there is any question on Native

American traditions or issues to avoid any problems. WE are also concerned that as the community of Dulac changes due to the constant migration of people further north to avoid hurricane flooding that as a committed church, Clanton Chapel can continue to grow in service to Making Disciples for Jesus and serve all the needs of the church and community.

**Items for action by the Louisiana Annual Conference:**

The Louisiana Annual Conference Native American Ministries (LACONAM) would like to request the continued support of the Multicultural Ministries committee under the leadership of Juan Huertes, LACONAM Liaison Dr. Don C. Cottrill, and support of the Clanton Chapel-Clanton Chapel Christian Preschool Ministries, and the Dulac Community Center Social Programs by the Louisiana Annual Conference, Bishop Cynthia Fierro Harvey, the Cabinet, Clergy and Laity. LACONAM would like to ask for the continued support of the Federal Recognition of the United Houma Nation and the Morganza to the Gulf Hurricane Levee Protection System to protect our people and Ministries along the Gulf Coast. YOU are invited to drive to Dulac and see the progress being made on building the Levee System: Had Clanton Chapel not sounded the alarm years ago and the Louisiana Annual Conference not backed our efforts, half of Dulac would be loss today.

Pastor Kirby Verret, Clanton Chapel, Dulac, Louisiana

## **NORTH RAMPART COMMUNITY CENTER**

Greeting in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ!

Since the inception of North Rampart Community Center, Inc. (NRCC) in 2007 it has always and will continue to be built on the strong heritage of activism and social renewal in denominational work and in partnerships with our Christian brothers and sisters as well as secular organizations to meet the growing needs of the children, youth, women, and families of Greater New Orleans and the surrounding parishes. We are so grateful to have partners from both worlds, 'for profit and non-profit' that are standing toe to toe and eye to eye with the Center as we fulfill the Great Commission of Jesus Christ, meeting the physical and spiritual needs of the people that are marginalized by generational curses as well as situational curses.

In Matthew 25:35-36, Jesus is telling his disciples, *"I was hungry and you fed me, I was thirsty and you gave me a drink, I was homeless and you gave me a room, I was shivering and you gave me clothes, I was sick and you stopped to visit, I was in prison and you came to me. Whenever they did one of these things to someone overlooked or ignored, that was me—you did it to me."* The Message (MSG)

2014 brought about more transformation in the Center as we continue to move forward in planning for the programs, donors, funders, and partnerships for the year. We went into the year with concern about the budget. It looked dim for us for a moment but we maintained a steady flow and made cuts where we were able to make cuts to meet the mission, goals, and objectives for the Center. Our partnerships with local universities and American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) helped out tremendously because we were able to get volunteers to work with the children in the After School Program. Second Harvesters Food Bank provided snacks and meals along with churches in the Conference who provided Friday's Fellowship Meals and school supplies.

In June, the Summer Camp began. The United Methodist Women Organization, Inc., helped fund the camp. They provided us with a grant in the amount of \$15,000.00. They have been more than generous to the mission of this Center. They have always been one of our major funders helping to keep the Center open for the children to come and have a safe place to learn while having fun with their friends and making new ones. This also allowed their parents to go to work and not have to worry about the safety of their child or children. We thank the churches throughout the Conference who were able come and fellowship and see firsthand how the program was operating.

We can truly say that the United Methodist Women Organization, Inc., Louisiana Annual Conference, local churches, along with so many other Friends of North Rampart Community Center are right by our side helping us transform lives within our communities while Building Character, Exploring Talents, and Developing Leaders.

### **What is (are) your future goal (s) and objectives for 2015**

Our Future Goal is to continue reaching out into our communities and finding those partnerships that have the love and the heart for the children, youth, and their families to help bring wholeness into their lives. We are looking forward to expanding our Afterschool Program by bringing back our Music Program providing we get adequate funds.

We are so grateful for your giving of your time, talents, and gifts so that the Great Commission could be fulfilled and the Center continue to meet its mission, goals, and objectives once again for another year.

Jeffery D. Parker (Coach), Executive Director

## **RETIRED MINISTERS' HOMES BOARD**

The purpose of our report is to keep this ministry before the local churches of the Annual Conference, represented here by lay and clergy delegates. There are new delegates to the Conference each year that may be unaware of the ministry of our Board.

When United Methodist ministers retire, there is no longer a parsonage provided, and they may not have been able to build up equity in a home. Some cannot afford to purchase a home and make monthly mortgage payments from limited pension incomes. Presently the Board owns thirty-one homes across the state. Our residents pay a monthly maintenance and insurance fee of nine cents per square foot. For instance, the monthly fee for a 1,200 square foot home is \$108.00. Currently, there are homes available in Amite and Ruston.

Our greatest financial support comes when we receive the donation of a home that can be used by a retiree, or can be sold for funds to use toward the purchase of a new home. In 2015, our most recent additional home was purchased in Lafayette using such funds. We are also open to partnering with a church or individual to provide a home for a particular retiree. Also, when funds are available, the Board will provide matching funds for the purchase of a home.

Each year, on the second Sunday of September, the Annual Conference observes Retired Ministers' Homes Board Sunday. Local churches are to present this ministry and receive an offering for this work. Our goal is to fund our administrative costs with this annual offering. The administration of this program is approximately \$27,000 yearly and we received \$19,533 in 2014's offering. Our goal can easily be reached if churches would contribute only 60 cents pocket change per member. Also, the success of this offering enables us to keep the monthly fees charged to retirees as low as possible.

We offer a heart-felt "thank you" to churches and individuals who support this ministry.

We also recommend this:

### **Resolution for Rev. Bobby Potter**

Whereas Rev. Bobby Potter served most effectively as the Executive Director of the Retired Ministers' Homes Board for the past twelve years:

Be it so resolved that this note of appreciation be entered into the minutes of the 2015 Annual Conference Session. With gratitude for a "task well done", we commend Rev. Bobby Potter for his compassionate leadership of and service to the Retired Ministers' Homes Board. A gift of \$1000.00 has been made to the Robert and Joan Potter Scholarship at Centenary College in recognition of Rev. Potter's commitment to this ministry.

Jerry Hilbun, Executive Director

## **SOUTH CENTRAL JURISDICTION**

The South Central Jurisdictional Conference will be held July 13-16, 2016 in Wichita, Kansas. In the history of the SCJ, since 1939, the Quadrennial meeting has never been held in the state of Kansas. The newly constituted Great Plains Annual Conference is eager to host this meeting. Information will be forth coming as the plans are made.

Your SCJ Staff, on behalf of the ministries of the Jurisdiction, thanks you for your faithful attention to the funding of Mount Sequoyah, Lydia Patterson Institute, and the Jurisdiction Office. This is the last year of an apportionment for the SMU Wesley Foundation. The North Texas Annual Conference assumes responsibility for that ministry in 2016 an onward.

Rev. David Severe, Exec. Director of Mission & Administration

## **UNITED METHODIST FOUNDATION OF LOUISIANA, INC.**

### 2014 YEAR-END STATISTICS

- The United Methodist Foundation manages 1005 accounts of which 646 are custodial accounts and 359 are gift accounts. \*
- Funds under management total \$145,754,584; custodial funds account for \$109,627,385; gifts from individuals and operational funds account for \$36,127,199.
- 14 new custodial funds totaling \$806,330 were established.
- Gifts from individuals totaled \$917,521 at donation.
- The United Methodist Foundation has 120 deferred gift accounts. (See Table 1). Life insurance policies constitute 5 additional gifts at a total face value of \$1,116,000.
- The market value of United Methodist Foundation loans to local churches and institutions totals \$8,878,045. During 2014 the Foundation made 3 new loans and increased current loans by a total of \$160,500.
- In 2014, grants made by the United Methodist Foundation to support Methodist programs totaled \$298,201. This includes “service” loans whereby debt incurred for seminary education is extinguished through employment in the Louisiana Conference totaled \$95,100.

**Table 1 – Deferred Gifts**

<b>Gift Type</b>	<b><i>Number of Accounts</i></b>	<b>Market Value as of 12/31/14</b>
Annuity Trust	1	\$254,168
Charitable Unitrust	23	\$3,635,068
Charitable Gift Annuity	94	\$2,365,539
Life Estates	2	\$537,000

\* Custodial accounts represent funds managed for local churches and institutions.  
Gift accounts represent gifts received from individual donors.

## **VOLUNTEERS IN MISSION**

LAVIM supported over 400 volunteers in 2014 to share the love of God in ways that make a Christian difference. This support included mission team leader training; recruiting team members; providing contacts for UMMVIM insurance, travel agencies, and mission projects; and supplying sample budget worksheets, team forms, and other useful resources.

For the first time, we offered mission grants of up to \$500 for material support. These monies were meant to aid mission teams and to encourage new leaders or projects. We awarded six grants in 2014 and have budgeted for eight in 2015.

Thirty-eight mission teams engaged communities through construction projects, medical services, and educational programs. Domestically, teams served in Louisiana, Arkansas, Mississippi, Tennessee, and Texas. Globally, volunteers partnered with projects in sixteen countries as diverse as Russia and Haiti.

We are very grateful for Brenda Coppit, our LAVIM Administrative Assistant, who connects people and projects, provides resource support, maintains our database and communication system, prepares training materials, keeps a myriad of statistics, and provides support for ERTs.

In the coming year, LAVIM plans to offer team leader training with an August event scheduled in Ruston and an additional one in Baton Rouge in January. Training has been streamlined and updated based on the "Helping Without Hurting" model that focuses on building enduring partnerships rather than providing short-term services.

On the General UMC level, VIM has joined with Disaster Response to better coordinate efforts and communication. In LA, the various coordinators, including ERT, have partnered in leadership planning. Our training events will include opportunities for all the groups.

Several challenges are concerning to LAVIM. The number of mission teams has remained relatively constant over the last five years with the exception of 2013, which was lower by more than 30%. This anomaly might have been due to the transition of the LAVIM structure, but likely was influenced by public perception of safety concerns in Mexico. While missions to other countries have continued or expanded, our once thriving partnership with Mexico has suffered. Mexican Methodist Border Mission Coordinator, Willie Berman, assures us that mission teams have not experienced any difficulties related to the violence prevalent in the news media. He asks that we continue to partner and support this mission.

Another challenge pertains to team reporting. Although we are required to supply mission team statistics to Jurisdictional leadership, we rely on team leaders to alert us or to register their team on our website. Accordingly, we would greatly appreciate churches and/or team leaders sharing their mission information with us.

At our January training event several new persons volunteered to assist with the future work of the LAVIM Leadership team and we hope to continue as a vital resource in living and sharing the gospel at home and to the nations.

For more information, please visit our website at [lavim.org](http://lavim.org). You can also find us on Facebook at LAVIM and Twitter @Lavimumc.

Diane Reich, LAVIM Coordinator

## **WESLEY CENTER BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

How can a physical facility assist in the goal of making "disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world"? The Wesley Center doesn't preach sermons, we don't heal the sick, we don't feed the hungry, nor do we visit those in prison. No, we don't do any of these ministries, but we are a very vital ministry within the Louisiana Annual Conference.

We offer to all people of the United Methodist Church, as well as others, a place to come and seek spiritual direction, come and renew your spirit, come and have fellowship with other people who are on their journey, come and enjoy the quiet comfort where God can speak to each of us, come and seek the risen Savior.

This ministry at the Wesley Center includes events such as the Junior and Senior High retreats, quarterly Cursillo retreats, the Spiritual Academy, annual United Methodist Men's retreat, United Methodist Women's meetings, and many other spiritual opportunities for laity and pastors. We also welcome other denominational groups, family reunions, Louisiana Public Defenders and others to utilize our wonderful Center for their needs as well.

As the ministry of the Wesley Center continues to grow for our Conference, the Board of Trustees understands the expectation to create a sound financial model that will allow future generations to utilize the wonderful facilities that have been created. We have been "surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses" that had the vision to build our wonderful facility. As such, we will be reviewing how we can attract additional groups and individuals to utilize the campus, especially during weekdays when we have the greatest vacancies.

One of the other challenges we foresee for the future is the ongoing need for maintenance and updating of fixed assets such as air conditioners, roofs, lodge rooms, kitchen equipment, washing machines, dryers, lawn equipment, etc. These are not the "spiritual" tools we often think about when we envision the Wesley Center but they are necessities if we as a Conference want to maintain the vision that was provided to us 24 years ago. As such, new long-term financial programs will be developed to ensure the sustainability of the Wesley Center. These programs, in all likelihood, will include annual fundraising campaigns and memorial giving.

If you haven't been to the Wesley Center in a while, or you have never visited us, you are encouraged to make an effort to come and experience one of the many opportunities available to everyone. You can also see the wonderful Wesley Center by visiting the website at <http://www.thewesleycenter.com>.

Scott Sutton, Chair

## NOTES





