



Volume I

West Michigan Conference
2018 Historical Reports



Michigan Area

The United Methodist Church

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Detroit and West Michigan Conference Leadership Team	2
Summary of 2018 Budget	2
Africa University	3
Archives and History, Commission on	4
Church and Society, Board of	4
Clark Retirement Community	5
Cooperative Ministries Committee	6
Disability Concerns, Committee on	6
Equitable Compensation, Commission on	6
Evangelism, Board of	no report
Finance and Administration, Council on	7
CF&A Joint Presidents.....	8
Global Ministries, Board of	9
Conference Secretaries of Global Ministries	10
Mission u.....	11
Town and Country Committee.....	11
Grand Rapids Metro Ministry	11
Higher Education and Campus Ministry, Board of	12
Adrian College.....	14
Albion College.....	no report
Central Michigan University Wesley Foundation	15
Ferris State University Wesley House.....	15
Wesley Fellowship at Grand Valley State University.....	no report
Wesley Foundation of Kalamazoo	16
Michigan State University Wesley Foundation	17
Committee on Hispanic / Latino Ministries	17
John Wesley Association	no report
Lake Louise Christian Community, Camp and Retreat Center	18
Laity, Board of	no report
Methodist Children’s Home Society	19
Michigan Area Communications	no report
Michigan Area Emergency Preparedness / Disaster Response Team	20
Michigan Area Episcopacy, Committee on the	21
Michigan Area Haiti Task Force / Michigan Haiti Covenant Partnership	21
Michigan Area Loan Funds	22
Michigan Area United Methodist Camping	23
Michigan Area United Methodist Historical Society	24
Michigan Area Youth Ministry Development	25
Michigan Conference Human Resources Committee	25
Michigan Conference Protection Policy Transition Task Force	26
Michigan Indian Workers’ Conference Executive Committee	26
New Church Development Committee	30
Revitalization.....	31
Ordained Ministry, Board of	33
Candler School of Theology.....	36
Duke Divinity School.....	37
Gammon Theological Seminary.....	38
Methodist Theological School in Ohio	39
United Theological Seminary	40
Pension and Health Benefits, Board of	40
Prison Ministry and Restorative Justice Concerns, Committee on	no report
Racial Ethnic Local Church Committee (RELC)	41
Religion and Race, Commission on	42
School for Pastoral Ministry	no report
Status and Role of Women, Commission on	no report
Trustees, West Michigan Conference	42
UMCOR/Hunger Committee	no report
United Methodist Community House	43
United Methodist Foundation	44
United Methodist Women	44

DETROIT AND WEST MICHIGAN CONFERENCE LEADERSHIP TEAMS

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

As the Conference Leadership Team is dissolved following the 2018 session of the annual conference, we are so appreciative of the all that our conference boards and agencies have done this past year. They have worked together as unified entities to implement the next steps to forge the Michigan Conference. The leadership and collaboration have brought us to this point in which we are ready to become one. We offer words of appreciation to Ned Weller, for his leadership as the West Michigan Conference Leadership Team and for all he gave in his service and commitment to the Church. We also offer thanks to Jerry DeVine for his leadership as the Detroit Conference Director of Connectional Ministries.

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

Benton Heisler, Director of Connectional Ministries
Amy Mayo-Moyle, Conference Leadership Team Chairperson

WORLD SERVICE AND CONFERENCE BENEVOLENCES Summary of the West Michigan Conference 2018 Budget [As approved by the Conference Leadership Team]

	2016 Budget	2017 Budget	2018 Budget
World Service & Conference Benevolences			
1. World Service	\$839,057	\$858,047	\$852,749
2. Conference Benevolences			
Coordination and Meeting Expenses:	-	\$2,750	\$2,750
Commission on Christian Unity	\$250	-	-
Commission on Religion & Race	\$250	-	-
Commission on Status & Role of Women	\$250	-	-
Board of Evangelism	\$500	-	-
United Methodist Men	\$500	-	-
Hunger Committee	\$500	-	-
Prison Ministry	\$500	-	-
Board of Church & Society	\$500	-	-
Board of Discipleship	-	-	-
Communications Commission	\$36,000	-	-
Disability Concerns Committee	\$500	-	-
Cooperative Ministry Committee	\$500	-	-
Board of Christian Camping	\$253,725	\$183,000	\$200,000
District Youth Ministry Grants	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000
Board of Global Ministries	\$105,000	\$62,750	\$56,000
Racial/Ethnic Local Church	\$179,550	\$149,895	\$118,000
Higher Education & Campus Ministry	\$324,000	\$193,000	\$203,000
Young Adult Ministry			-
Connectional Ministries Staff	\$515,000	\$467,000	\$422,600
Board of Lay Ministries	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000
Conference Personnel Committee	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$1,500
Indian Workers' Conference	\$123,633	\$111,270	\$100,000
Vital Church Initiative	\$55,000	\$52,500	\$50,000
Hispanic/Latino Committee	\$45,000	\$43,000	\$40,000
CLT Pooled Ministry Fund	\$10,000	\$30,000	-
Contingency	-	-	-
Conference Benevolences Total	\$1,675,658	\$1,316,665	\$1,216,850
Total World Service & Conf. Benevolences	\$2,514,715	\$2,177,712	\$2,069,599
TOTAL ANNUAL CONFERENCE BUDGET	\$5,967,263	\$5,747,215	\$5,645,541

AFRICA UNIVERSITY

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

The university community – students, faculty, administrators and support staff, trustees, alumni, partners and friends – is deeply thankful to the West Michigan Conference for investing in the Africa University Fund (AUF) apportionment at 100 percent in 2017. Thank you, West Michigan United Methodists, for your continuing generosity and faithfulness to this ministry.

Institutional Update:

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

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

United Methodist congregations in the United States established a new record for the AUF in 2017. They invested 96.77 percent of their budget commitment to the AUF – the highest percentage ever invested by United Methodists in one of the seven general church funds.

As Africa University embraces emerging opportunities for service and impact within and beyond the church in Africa, the ongoing support of the West Michigan Conference is vitally important. As you gather for the 2018 West Michigan Annual Conference, please keep Africa University in your prayers. Thank your congregation of its graciousness and urge members to continue to invest in mission because every gift matters.

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

Thank you, West Michigan Conference, for your foundational role in the Africa University story. Thank you for being a part of this incredible year of blessings. We stand on the promise of Luke 6:38: "Give, and it will be given to you. A good portion – packed down, firmly shaken, and overflowing – will fall into your lap. The portion you give will determine the portion you receive in return."

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

James H. Salley, Associate Vice Chancellor for Institutional Advancement
Africa University Development Office

COMMISSION ON ARCHIVES AND HISTORY

This is the final year of reporting as the West Michigan Conference Commission on Archives and History. In fact, we began holding joint commission meetings with that of the Detroit Conference in 2017. Mary Whitman, chair of the Detroit Conference commission, has agreed to chair the commission for the Michigan Conference in 2018. We have been working with the Michigan Conference Design Team to rewrite the Constitution and Bylaws to fit the new conference commission configuration.

Our conference staff representative, Rev. Benton Heisler, has been working with our Archivist, Justin Seidler, at Albion College, and with the Detroit Conference Archivist, Rebecca McNitt, at Adrian College, to develop a third archival space at the former Salem United Methodist Church near St Johns. This space was needed since the other two storage areas are near or at full capacity.

We anticipate a significant historical year in 2018, not only as the West Michigan and Detroit conferences are coming together to form the Michigan Conference, but also as it marks the 50th anniversary of The United Methodist Church when, in 1968, The Evangelical United Brethren Church and The Methodist Church came together. The joint commission contacted Bishop David Bard to make ourselves available to him in any planning to celebrate this anniversary.

On a related note, the Michigan Area United Methodist Church Historical Society, as it involves some members of our commission, is holding its 2nd annual gathering on April 7, 2018 that will focus on EUB history. Its 1st annual gathering was held on April 23, 2017 where local churches were acknowledged who were 175 years old or older. Our keynote speaker was Rev. Dr. Christopher Momany, Chaplain of Adrian College, and we met on the campus of Central Michigan University.

We look forward to our further work together as a Michigan Conference commission. Together, we are planning to address a task that has been on hold for a few years, that is, to name some conference historic sites. Some of the sites that we have been considering have history in both the Detroit and West Michigan conferences, and now we can move forward without concern for those boundaries in attending to the ministry of memory.

Melanie Young, Chair

BOARD OF CHURCH AND SOCIETY

Members of the West Michigan Conference Board of Church and Society advocate the Gospel of Jesus Christ in the church and world. We focus on issues of peace and justice in the Michigan area, as well as around the globe. Through our work we seek to reflect the compassion of Christ for all humanity and for God's gift of life and creation.

At the 2017 Annual Conference, the West Michigan Conference's Board of Church and Society and the Detroit Conference's Board of Justice, Advocacy and Equity shared a meal together. The featured speaker was Susan Burton, Director of Women's and Children's Advocacy at the General Board of Church and Society. The Lifetime Peacemaker award was received by Paul Perez. No petitions were submitted for the 2017 Annual Conference.

We continue to promote the Peace with Justice and Global AIDS Fund offerings each year. One half of these offerings goes to the general church for peace and justice work and HIV/AIDS prevention and education. The second half stays within our conference.

We currently administer the conference's Peace With Justice fund, United Methodist Global AIDS Fund, and peace scholarship funds available from the Brubaker/Thompson Peace Fund.

In 2018 we continued to bring many issues of justice and peace to the forefront: concerns for stewardship of the earth, peace, immigration, race and gender equality, LBGTQ rights, refugee rights and more. Seeking to be instruments of God's peace, we continue to work for a world that reflects God's love and grace, praying and working for justice and peace.

Amee Anne Paparella, Chair

CLARK RETIREMENT COMMUNITIES

As part of the Grand Rapids community for the past 112 years, Clark has been serving seniors and their families with an unwavering focus on our mission of “*Creating communities of dignity, compassion and respect centered on the lives of older adults and those who care for them.*” Every day we touch the lives of over 2,000 people through the continuum of care on our campuses as well as our collaborations of home and community-based services. We are so proud to say that we have active, vibrant and wonderful communities to serve seniors with an unsurpassed, positive culture and environment.

To meet the needs of residents, enhance quality, and remain focused on our mission, Clark’s strategic direction will include the expansion of independent living. Currently, there are growth initiatives underway and proposed on both campuses. There will also be enhancement of programming and services for memory care.

Residential Communities

Clark at Franklin

Our legacy campus, Clark at Franklin, was founded in 1906 through a generous donation by Melvin and Emily Clark. This thriving, ecumenical community welcomes people with open arms, warm smiles and provides a fun-loving, engaging and caring environment. Living options include independent townhomes and apartments, assisted living, specialized dementia and Alzheimer’s care, and skilled nursing.

Clark at Keller Lake

Situated on a 40-acre campus, Clark at Keller Lake is a beautiful natural environment with groomed nature trails winding around the lake. It is conveniently located near shopping and dining establishments. Our independent living option includes spacious townhomes clustered around Keller Lake. There are two small assisted living manors, each located on the edge of the lake with large decks overlooking the water. They provide a caring, nurturing and activity filled environment with specialized services for residents with dementia.

Montessori for Aging & Dementia

Clark has spent the last year in a pilot program of Montessori for adults with dementia that is the first of its kind in the United States. People with memory loss often live a life of emptiness with little or no purpose. The Montessori program offers an exciting, evidence-based approach for setting a revolutionary new standard of excellence in dementia care through providing purpose and creating independence.

Collaborations for Home and Community-Based Services

Atrio Home Care is a collaborative effort of three home health care providers – Clark, Holland Home and Resthaven – that was formed to provide a new level of compassionate, skilled, and quality home care services. This includes a comprehensive range of personal private duty home care services as well as skilled home care services.

Emmanuel Hospice is a partnership of four local faith-based senior services organizations, including Clark, that provides dignified end-of-life support to patients and their loved ones. Their mission is to put the patient’s wishes first and asks the question, “*How do you want to LIVE?*”

TANDEM365 represents an innovative concept aimed at helping older adults navigate the complexities of healthcare while enabling them to remain in their homes. Through customized care coordinated by a team of health care professionals, participants in TANDEM365 have access to the best services and support available with a single point of contact.

Rethinking Dementia ~ Accelerating Change is a “collective impact” working to provide education, awareness, access, and aggregation of dementia services to our community.

Clark Foundation

Philanthropy is a major component of many services provided to our residents and supported through the generous gifts of our donors. The Clark Foundation gives opportunities to support the mission of Clark, primarily through gifts to Benevolent Care which provides financial support to those residents who, through no fault of their own, have depleted their financial resources. Other services include the Montessori program, Music Therapy, and many life enrichment activities as well as support to capital projects and initiatives.

At Clark, we are truly living our mission, placing residents first and foremost. Our employee “I Believe” giving campaign is a testament to our staff’s commitment and belief in the work we do every day. We see an exciting future ahead for fulfilling the needs and desires of the seniors of our community. Our anchoring assumptions are designed to keep Clark vibrant, competitive, and financially healthy in the years to come.

Brian A. Pangle, President/CEO

COOPERATIVE MINISTRIES COMMITTEE

Cooperative Ministry can be as simple as a few churches joining together to offer a local food pantry or community Good Friday worship services. It can be as complex as two or more local churches entering into a covenant, creating a ministry team, or combining committees to carry out the mission of the church. By its nature such ministry needs to be flexible and contextual. Cooperative Ministry allows individual churches to share their strengths and accomplish things they could not do on their own. Paragraph 206 of the *2016 Book of Discipline* outlines the variety of forms Cooperative Ministry can take and the various roles and responsibilities of local churches, annual conferences, and cabinets.

The Cooperative Ministries Committee goals and objectives include:

- Continued support and consultation of the formal Cooperative Ministries (groupings of churches which have entered into covenantal relationships by church conference action) and informal Cooperative Ministries in West Michigan. We currently are exploring ways of connecting across the state as we form a new Michigan Conference. We know there are many informal arrangements of shared ministries throughout the conference.
- Identify and develop tools, guidance, and training materials as well as identifying persons with experience in effective cooperative ministry in order to resource local churches and the cabinet. We hope to make much of this “resource library” available online and have taken the initial steps in developing this.

We look forward to developing this vital ministry with local churches in the coming years.

Jodie R. Flessner, Chair

COMMITTEE ON DISABILITY CONCERNS

The Disability Concerns Committee continues to evaluate and discern how to be in ministry with the conference. The committee continues to be in conversation with our counterpart in the Detroit Conference as we begin to work together as a new conference. We covet your prayers as we continue to discern how best to be in ministry with the members of the churches of the West Michigan Annual Conference.

Mark R. Babb, Chair

COMMISSION ON EQUITABLE COMPENSATION

The purpose of the Commission on Equitable Compensation (CEC) is to annually propose the minimum compensation schedule for clergy in various appointment categories and to assist local churches in making disciples of Jesus Christ by helping to meet minimum compensation standards for their pastors when local church resources are not sufficient. In fulfilling the obligations of ¶342, ¶624, and ¶625 of *The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church*, and in using Ministry Shares to ensure compliance with their purposes, the work of the CEC is firmly rooted in our strong connectional heritage. The CEC takes seriously the stewardship of Ministry Share resources entrusted for this purpose.

A 2% minimum salary increase for clergy was approved by the annual conference in June. This increase is mandatory for the first 10 years of pastoral service and recommended for each year, thereafter.

In 2017, a total of 13 charges, representing 17 churches, received \$62,151 in direct financial assistance from the Commission on Equitable Compensation for support of pastoral compensation. Grants ranged from as little as \$1,000 to as much as \$8,000, with an average grant of \$4,781 per charge. The chairperson of the CEC participated with The Mission Church Task Force in 2014. As a result of the task force’s work, the mission churches were removed from the Commission on Equitable Compensation as of the 2016 grant cycle. This gave the commission members a truer picture of churches that require temporary assistance from the CEC budget and also explains the reduction in both grant totals and churches served.

The CEC also approved \$20,000 in pulpit supply grants for sustentation (pulpit supply) and \$300 in administrative expenses while slightly exceeding our 2017 approved budget of \$76,500.

The Commission on Equitable Compensation considers it part of the CEC’s assignment to assist churches with stewardship campaign techniques – programs such as the Vital Church Initiative, ¶213, and unconventional fundraising ideas – to help reduce the need for salary support from the CEC in future years.

Because the CEC members want to help churches in any way they can as to Equitable Compensation, in 2016 our grant application process became more user-friendly through electronic submission. Electronic submission is easier for both the applicants and the CEC. Some minor glitches are still being resolved.

Beginning in 2009, the CEC was more intentional about paying attention to the rate of payment of Ministry Shares from congregations receiving Equitable Compensation support. The CEC added a statement regarding the expectation of full payment of Ministry Shares to the conference guidelines in 2010. Included in this statement was the stipulation that in consultation with the district superintendent and/or the cabinet, a church not meeting its conference obligations could find its Equitable Compensation grant reduced or rescinded.

In 2019, with the commencement of the new Michigan Conference of The United Methodist Church, the Detroit and West Michigan Conference Commissions on Equitable Compensation have prepared and will submit a minimum salary schedule and guidelines for receiving an equitable compensation grant as one commission to be approved at the 2018 Detroit and West Michigan Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church.

The Commission on Equitable Compensation thanks the churches that are faithful in payment of Ministry Shares in full, making it possible for the CEC to continue its work of seeking to support local churches in making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Nancy J. Patera, Chair

COUNCIL ON FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

We would like to thank you West Michigan for your financial support of the shared mission and ministry by giving to Ministry Shares. In 2017, the pay-in rate was 83.4% which was almost 3% higher than in 2016. This giving was able to provide 98.6% of the conference budget that was approved by the Annual Conference. Total remittances to the conference were \$7,437,176 of which \$5,664,567 went to conference Ministry Shares, \$433,612 went to district funds and \$1,338,997 went to special giving.

CONFERENCE & DISTRICT MINISTRY SHARES GIVING		<u>12/31/15</u>	<u>12/31/16</u>	<u>12/31/17</u>
CONFERENCE	Ministry Shares & District	\$6,111,364	\$6,051,036	\$6,098,179
	Pay-In Rate	79.6%	80.5%	83.4%
	Special Giving	\$1,032,463	\$1,026,677	\$1,338,997
ALBION	Remittances Year To Date	\$796,609	\$829,797	\$768,945
	Pay-In Rate	83.2%	89.1%	85.0%
	Special Giving	\$119,444	\$141,021	\$156,143
HEARTLAND	Remittances Year To Date	\$692,336	\$627,287	\$654,525
	Pay-In Rate	79.5%	73.0%	77.4%
	Special Giving	\$109,504	\$140,735	\$123,426
GRAND RAPIDS	Remittances Year To Date	\$1,888,088	\$1,807,106	\$1,860,155
	Pay-In Rate	86.5%	84.8%	88.6%
	Special Giving	\$295,962	\$289,425	\$403,709
GRAND TRAVERSE	Remittances Year To Date	\$813,430	\$792,763	\$818,088
	Pay-In Rate	78.8%	80.1%	83.8%
	Special Giving	\$112,809	\$112,704	\$178,138
KALAMAZOO	Remittances Year To Date	\$874,770	\$931,589	\$970,867
	Pay-In Rate	68.0%	70.1%	75.6%
	Special Giving	\$232,576	\$180,645	\$257,812
LANSING	Remittances Year To Date	\$1,046,131	\$1,062,494	\$1,022,040
	Pay-In Rate	77.7%	83.1%	85.3%
	Special Giving	\$162,168	\$162,147	\$205,442
SPECIAL GIVING		<u>12/31/15</u>	<u>12/31/16</u>	<u>12/31/17</u>
1.	Imagine No Malaria	\$ 62,879	\$ 13,295	-
2.	Camp Endowment Campaign	25	2,000	579
3.	Christian Education Sunday Offering	3,000	2,928	3,335
4.	Racial Ethnic Local Church Sunday Offering	5,427	5,986	5,490
5.	Human Relations Day Offering	13,227	12,913	12,652
6.	Rural Life Sunday	3,480	3,933	3,453

7.	Peace With Justice Sunday	10,819	13,043	12,309
8.	Camp Sunday	4,966	4,933	3,633
9.	Native American Ministry Sunday	15,899	15,374	16,036
10.	Golden Cross Sunday Offering	3,920	4,038	3,696
11.	United Methodist Student Day Offering	9,157	9,918	12,079
12.	World Communion Offering	17,436	17,104	16,621
13.	One Great Hour of Sharing	65,285	65,028	60,005
14.	Global Aids Sunday	248	180	166
15.	Africa University Endowment Fund	496	840	485
16.	World Missionary Support	119,311	124,509	129,398
17.	World Mission Projects	124,044	98,265	108,050
18.	United Methodist Children's Fund			1,420
19.	National Missions	38,743	43,776	41,236
20.	U.M.C.O.R.	358,618	335,009	731,644
21.	Ethnic Ministries	20,921	18,883	19,634
22.	Conference Ministries	147,834	224,598	124,938
23.	Other Benevolences	6,727	10,123	32,138
GIVING SUMMARY:				
	Special Giving	\$1,032,462	\$1,026,676	\$1,338,997
	District Funds	\$444,784	\$446,819	\$433,612
	Ministry Shares Received	\$5,666,581	\$5,604,218	\$5,664,567
	TOTAL RECEIPTS	\$7,143,827	\$7,077,713	\$7,437,176
	Conference Budget	\$6,321,843	\$5,967,263	\$5,747,216
	% of Conference Budget Received	89.6%	93.9%	98.6%

Connectional Giving

The United Methodist Church is proud of their heritage where many local churches are engaged in various local ministries. Part of that heritage is our connection to each other and our combined ministry around the world. In fact, the *2016 Book of Discipline* ¶ 812 says that payment in full of each local church's Ministry Shares is the first benevolent responsibility of that local church. Because of your increased giving, more ministry was able to be accomplished both here at home and also world-wide.

2019 Proposed Budget

The joint Council of Finance & Administration will be proposing a 2019 budget at the 2018 Annual Conference which will reflect a reduction from the 2018 separate budgets for each conference. Please be present at Annual Conference to hear the presentation of the 2019 budget and how it was created. Both Council of Finance & Administrations took into consideration how the local churches are being affected but at the same time working with the program areas of the conferences to provide resources to both the local churches and the districts so that they can do effective ministry.

We look forward to seeing everyone at Annual Conference and if you would like to meet the Treasury staff, please stop by the Treasurer's office at Annual Conference. We would love to speak with you all.

Susan Cobb, President, Council of Finance & Administration
David Dobbs, Director of Administrative Services and Conference Treasurer

COUNCIL ON FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION – Joint Presidents' Report

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

BOARD OF GLOBAL MINISTRIES (BGM)

Committee Leadership and Membership: This report is provided by Delberta Troutman, chair of West Michigan Conference Board of Global Ministries (BGM). Mark and Sharon Burkart continue as Conference BGM Secretaries. The board commends Mark and Sharon and the work they have done managing itinerations in 2017 of Delbert and Sandy Groves, Paul Webster, and Ut Van To and his wife Karen To. In addition Mark and Sharon attended a jurisdictional event in Wisconsin as well as attended regular scheduled meetings throughout the year to work on combining the two conference BGMs for the new Michigan Conference.

The **District Mission Secretaries** continue to be an important presence to the board, providing a connection between the Conference BGM and the District Mission Committees. These individuals provide the main connection between global ministries through District efforts. We are blessed with District Mission Secretaries for 2018: John Williams, Albion; Tim Wright, Grand Rapids; Mike Neihardt, Grand Traverse; and Kathy Shepard, Heartland. Kalamazoo and Lansing districts both have open positions for District Mission Secretaries as of 2018.

District Superintendent Anita Hahn continued to serve the board in a liaison role with other district superintendents as well as providing excellent support of district and conference levels with the board.

The remainder of the West Michigan **BGM Membership** consists of persons representing specific areas of ministry as well as members representing the church at large.

BGM Highlights 2017: The following is a sampling of activities and challenges this year:

- **Advance** – This will become “Engage” as of January 1, 2019, the effective date of the new Michigan Conference. Sharon Burkart has spent endless hours with Detroit Annual Conference counterpart Jackie Euper in identifying missions that will be published.
- **Mission u** – Sue Stickle came onboard on behalf of the Conference United Methodist Women. Mission u was held at Albion College July 13-15, 2017.
- **Annual Conference** – Last June brought together the West Michigan Conference and Detroit Annual Conference BGMs for a combined special dinner.

Notable Challenges:

- **Michigan Area Conference** – Sharon, Mark and Del continue to meet with our counterparts of the Detroit Annual Conference BGM on a regular basis as we discern God’s plan for combining the boards. Brenda DuPree has been named the chair of the new Michigan Conference BGM commencing July 1, 2018. Brenda joins us at our meetings as we bring together our common goals for the future of BGM in the new Michigan Conference.

In conclusion, and on behalf of the committee, thank you for your attention and support of the West Michigan Conference Board of Global Ministries.

Delberta Troutman, Chair

CONFERENCE SECRETARIES OF GLOBAL MINISTRIES

This position, which answers to the bishop and the Conference Board of Global Ministries, has three primary responsibilities:

1. To itinerate missionaries.
2. To promote Advance Special giving
3. To serve between the Annual Conference and the Board of Global Ministries.

During this time of transition in Michigan we were still able to welcome with open arms seven missionaries to our conference.

Emmanuel and Florence Mefor joined us for a short visit in June. Dr. Emmanuel serves as a medical doctor in Mutambare, Zimbabwe and states "God's mission is being carried out through my work by the unending stream of patients being cared for physically, spiritually and psychologically." Being a native of Kano, Nigeria he is very understanding to the needs of his patients and the difficulties they face. Florence serves utilizing her skills as a nurse mid-wife. She shares with us the importance of caring for women and children and providing them with a higher chance of survival. The churches that had the opportunity to greet them were inspired by their warm and gentle enthusiasm.

The warmer weather of August brought to us the Rev. Ut Van To and his wife Rev. Karen Vo-To. Karen and Ut come to us by way of Vietnam. Rev. To works with Christian leaders in developing new congregations and nurturing Christians in Vietnam. He utilizes Wesley's model of class meetings or cell groups into the Vietnamese culture, traditions and social settings of the country in his effort to establish new congregations. Rev. Karen works with the need of battered women, victims of sexual abuse and harassment, the homeless and those struggling with substance abuse. Through her work they provide job training and food for the hungry. On their last day in West Michigan we met at Grand Rapids United Methodist Community House where we shared lunch with the seniors who participate in the meal program there. We also were able to have a tour of the facility and spend time with the director of Community House. Much of the work the To's do in Vietnam is similar to the work done by Community House. The afternoon was filled with exchanges of ideas and prayers for the work being done for those marginalized in both countries.

Within days of the To's visit Rev. Paul Webster joined us along with Silvester, a young man from Zambia that Paul is mentoring. Paul has been a familiar face to many of us in West Michigan and as always he brought with him many exciting stories of the Majila Falls Agriculture Center in Kanyama, Zambia and the work that is happening there. While here they were able to visit several farm operations and spent some time at Michigan State. Often we forget the importance of sharing our story with the missionaries while they are with us because we are so excited to hear of their work. So during their visit here we made time for them to go, see and learn some of the ways we care for our farms and livestock.

This brings us into October when we welcomed Delbert and Sandy Grove who serve at the New Life Center, Zambia. Delbert shared with us the amazing work that is being done with new start churches and the amount of people they are able to help with the PET program. He shared how through the PET program lives are being changed. Sandy who has been working with education at the Center is now focusing on the start of preschool for the younger children. Her hopes are to develop a program and train personnel so they can go out into the sister churches and begin the program there as well. She says that through her work with the older students she has realized how important it is to start the younger children with a strong foundation.

We also have seen changes with the General Board of Global Ministries. They have relocated their headquarters to Atlanta, Georgia and have shortened their name to Global Ministries. They have also started to offer a newsletter called "Engage," if you are interested in subscribing to this newsletter go to www.umcmmission.org and you will find a place on their home page. Our North Central Jurisdiction mission advocates Steve and Gail Quigg were able to join us at Annual Conference this year along with Tammy Kuntz who serves as the coordinator for UVMIM. We are blessed to have them available to work with us as we continue the mission journey.

Looking to the future we will begin a new mission program called ENGAGE which will be launched at Annual Conference 2018. Our hopes and prayers for this new program are that we as the new Michigan Conference be more engaged in learning, doing and joining together in mission here and around the world.

Remember the words of Matthew 5:16, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven," is lived out together. We pray that all of our actions and words bring praise and glory to God the Father as we go forth into a new year.

Mark and Sharon Burkart

MISSION u

United Methodist Women and the Board of Global Ministries of the West Michigan Conference sponsored the 2017 Mission u at Albion College, Albion, Michigan from July 13-15, 2017. There were 90 women and men, 14 youth, and 10 children in attendance. Every adult was lead in the Spiritual Growth Study, "Living as a Covenant Community," by Rev. Deb Johnson. Attendees could also choose between "Missionary Conferences of The United Methodist Church in the United States," lead by Rev. Julie Yoder Elmore or "Climate Justice a Call to Hope and Action," lead by mother-daughter team Clarice McKenzie and Suzanne Hewitt. Steve and Gail Quigg, North Central Jurisdiction Missionary Advocates, were also able to share with us. The youth and children studied the Missionary Conferences also. There was good food, fellowship, and fun as we had a talent show, time for district parties, a campfire with smores and lots of singing and worship, closing with communion. A good time was had by all!

Linda Burton-Collier, Dean / Simmie Proctor, Assistant Dean

TOWN AND COUNTRY COMMITTEE

At Annual Conference 2017 we were able to host a luncheon for both conferences. It was a time to get to know each other across conference lines, share our concerns and dreams, and introduce what the West Michigan does by offering scholarships for those clergy serving small, rural churches, scholarships for seminary, and Course of Study. This past year we were able to help six pastors for a total of \$3,000.00. Local churches can also request start-up funds for a new program in their church or community, none were requested this year.

Once again we joined with the Detroit Annual Conference to sponsor the Town & Country/Circuit Rider Retreat in November for clergy and spouses, at West Branch. Rev. Matt Hook was our speaker and the topic was "Gaining Traction for Your Soul and Your Church." The cost for the event, not covered by registration fees, was shared by the two conferences, and our share was \$657.60. The money to cover the scholarships, church requests, and retreat come from local churches Rural Life Sunday Offering. Please continue to support this special Sunday offering.

Linda Burton-Collier, Chair



GRAND RAPIDS METRO MINISTRY OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Grand Rapids Metro Ministry is a nonprofit organization called by God to:

- Educate the Grand Rapids Community on local issues around poverty, justice, and mercy;
- Build community collaborations around issues of poverty and injustice; and
- Launch and fund programs that address the root causes of poverty and injustice.

2017 was an exciting year for Grand Rapids Metro Ministry! Not only have we found a home for our administrative offices at La Nueva Esperanza United Methodist Church in Grand Rapids, we are now the administrative organization over three dynamic programs that are changing lives right here in Grand Rapids. We are ending poverty in Grand Rapids through prevention, education, and community collaborations:

- **Circles Grand Rapids** is engaging the entire community to own the solution to poverty. Circles empowers low-income participants to permanently move out of poverty and increases the poverty IQ of the larger community to motivate strategic action to resolve systemic barriers to self-sufficiency. This innovative and highly focused program is coming at poverty from a new angle and the impact is incredible. Circles Grand Rapids is not simply managing poverty. Circles Grand Rapids is ending poverty.

- **ReadGR** creates community partnerships between local organizations, congregations, and public schools to get books into the hands of at-risk children and develop a community based support system for our public schools. Second only to parent education level, the presence of books in the home is the biggest indicator of childhood literacy. We know that students with higher literacy rates are far more likely to graduate high school and pursue post-secondary education. We also know that higher education levels are linked to a drastic decline in the likelihood of experiencing poverty as an adult. These life-changing outcomes all start with your very own book.
- **The Native American Elders Program** supports and empowers Native elders to be healthy and strong leaders for their families and communities. Native Americans as a community experience lower income and education levels, higher levels of poverty, and less access to resources and services than any other minority group. This program provides a safe space for anywhere from 30 to 60 Native senior citizens to gather twice a week for a hot meal, health screenings, educational resources, service referrals, community building, as well as information on housing, employment, legal assistance, and other needs as they arise.

Everyone at Grand Rapids Metro Ministry is grateful for the support of the conference, district, and congregations that allows us to serve as the hands and feet of Jesus in the Grand Rapids area on behalf of The United Methodist Church.

To learn more, visit www.GRMetroMinistry.org or contact Executive Director Holly Downer at Holly@GRMetroMinistry.org or 616-552-3392.

Holly Downer, Executive Director

BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND CAMPUS MINISTRY

Good morning and God bless you! It is my privilege to share this final West Michigan Conference Volume 1 report for the Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministry. The mission of the Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministry (BHECM) is to advocate, secure and allocate resources, hold accountable, promote and evaluate United Methodist Campus Ministries in West Michigan.

We celebrate the students involved in our collective campus ministries, our BHECM members, Wesley Directors, local Wesley Boards of Directors, local church congregations related to our ministries, and the many staff members for the creative, energetic, and inspiring ministry they offer in Christ's name.

Bold and effective young adult leaders are made on campus through The United Methodist Church. They are made in the fullness of time with lasting impact. Discipleship opportunities are immediate and intense in our Christ-centered campus ministries. Our conference mission is being accomplished in unique and energetic ways through them.

The *2016 Book of Discipline* expanded the section on "The Mission of the Church":

¶ 120. The Mission – The mission of the Church is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. Local churches **and extension ministries of the Church** provide the most significant arenas through which disciple-making occurs (*The Book of Discipline*, 2016, Part IV, The Ministry of All Christians; **emphasis added**).

Our campus ministries are extension ministries of the Church. We oversee the extension of local church ministry to five campuses and our two Michigan United Methodist-related schools:

- Central Michigan University (Wesley@CMU)
- Ferris State University (Wesley House)
- Grand Valley State University (Wesley Fellowship)
- Michigan State University (Wesley at Michigan State University)
- Western Michigan University (Wesley of Kalamazoo)
- Adrian College
- Albion College

Their individual reports are in this same volume.

Disciple-making on campus is unique and fitting for the most concentrated population of young adults in our culture. Young adults encounter watershed moments and decisions. They choose life directions in their years on campus and are in a position of growing independence where they can be active agents of ministry.

Campus ministry is accelerated and fluid disciple-making. Campus ministries are perpetual new church starts that call for theologically trained leaders with consistent and sufficient financial resources to do their work.

We completed scheduled site evaluations for Grand Valley Wesley Fellowship, Wesley@CMU, and Ferris State Wesley House during the year. The site evaluation for Wesley at Michigan State University is being scheduled for the first half of 2018. The Grand Valley Wesley Fellowship evaluation in February and update in October led us to suspend their funding for program ministry for 2018 as the Wesley Fellowship Board enters a discernment time for the future of their ministry. The Wesley@CMU evaluation in October resulted in a recommendation of "Approved with Monitoring. Next site evaluation in two years (2019)." The Ferris State Wesley House evaluation in November resulted in a recommendation of "Approved. Next on-site visit in four years (2021)."

We continued to use these three basic goals for evaluating our ministries:

- Regular contact with at least 50 students, defined as students participating or interacting in Wesley Ministries or Wesley Leadership two times a month.
- Church Covenant Relationships: At least 10 per Wesley ministry (total of 50) by 2025.
- Local Church Internships: At least one intern per Wesley ministry.

Relationships with local churches were enriched through Covenant Church partnerships, campus ministry interns in local churches, and local churches independently hiring college or university students. **At our Annual Conference campus ministry meal, we prepared approximately 70 certificates for local churches related to our campus ministries.**

We used a proportional distribution process for our conference funding this year to our five Wesley ministries. This resulted in individual distributions to the ministries ranging from \$44,000 to \$33,010. We adopted the initial model in November 2016. It was amended at almost every subsequent meeting due to the complexity of including relevant factors for valuation. We learned that this process created fear, resentment, confusion, and distrust among the ministries. While we experienced very engaging, thoughtful, and creative discussions, the use of the model in a context of scarcity did not bring about sufficient positive results. In other funding advocacy, we supported \$8,000 for Grand Valley Wesley Fellowship in 2018 at the 2017 Grand Rapids District Conference.

Rev. Cora Glass served as our Campus Ministry Fund Developer through July 2017 when she accepted the position of Assistant Director of Annual Giving and Alum Relations at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary. We celebrated the development of her ministry. We were grateful for her service to us in creatively responding to the approximately 40% conference budget cut BHECM experienced in 2017. In the Fall, **Samson Kobbah III** became our new Campus Ministry Social Media Coordinator, replacing a portion of Cora's position.

As of the writing of this report, these are the active BHECM-related social media sites:

- Donate to campus ministries: <https://campusministry.networkforgood.com/>
- Follow Michigan UM campus ministry on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/umconcampus/>
- BHECM presence on the web: <https://umconcampus.org>
- Portal for individual Michigan UM campus ministries: <http://miwesley.org>
- Loans and Scholarships: <https://www.gbhem.org/loans-and-scholarships>

Last year, I reported that in light of the conference budget cut we hired Cora and, with the Detroit Conference BHECM, contracted with NetworkForGood for fundraising development. Cora met with our Wesley ministries and Adrian College to orient them to the program and support their local efforts to strengthen their fundraising programs. Cora succeeded in establishing our BHECM fundraising program with NetworkForGood as well. The reduction of \$131,000 in conference funding was substantial. We raised approximately \$2,000 through NetworkForGood in our first year with the program. We have funding for the contract through September 2018.

Again this year, we applied for funding through the Rule2 (Do Good) Grant program with the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry (<http://umcollegiate.org/initiatives/grants-scholarships/>). **Our Michigan area ministries received a total of \$9,000 which we distributed evenly (\$3,000 each) to the BHECM, Wesley of Kalamazoo, and Motor City Wesley.** A new fundraiser this year for us was the Annual Conference Golf Outing. It was very successful and we look forward to an improved 2018 version.

Another resourceful, creative effort in funding campus young adult leadership development in local churches came through EncounterMICall 2.0. Paul Perez was awarded a \$60,000 grant to continue this program through the Young Clergy Initiative (YCI) at the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry. From Carl Gladstone's 2/23/15 Michigan Area news article, "In the fall of 2014 three clergy

from the Area – Paul Perez, Carl Gladstone, and Lisa Batten – designed this program intended as a network of interns sent from campus to be mentored in local churches. The General Board of Higher Education and Ministry approved a grant request for EncounterMiCall in the amount of \$64,000.”

We directly administered the annual **Conference Merit Scholarship** funded by the UM Student Day offerings of our churches. Our 2017 recipient was **Josh Lee**, a student at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary. Our West Michigan undergraduate and graduate students also benefited from the Loans and Scholarships administered through the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry. **Josh was one of 17 West Michigan students who received a grand total of \$46,828 in grants and scholarships in 2017!**

Each year the BHECM chooses a recipient for the **Francis Asbury Award**. From the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry (GBHEM), “the award recognizes individuals who have made a significant contribution to fostering the church’s ministries in higher education at the local, district, or annual conference level of the church. The award is named for Bishop Asbury and is based on his admonition to the people called Methodist to erect a school in the vicinity of every church.” Our 2017 recipient was **Ruth Jones**, nominated by the Wesley@CMU Board. We presented Ruth her award at the 50th-anniversary celebration of ministry in the current Wesley@CMU building in September.

Thank you for submitting local church student names for campus ministry through your Church Conference process. For the 2017-18 school year, 36 local churches sent us 217 student names who were attending 49 different schools (colleges, universities, community colleges, military). We compiled your information as we received it and made it available to our local Wesley ministries.

Maintaining and nurturing campus ministries bring out the best in The United Methodist Church both now and in the future. We are in the right place and doing the right thing to be substantially committed to our campus ministries. In joint meetings with our Detroit BHECM colleagues in January, May, and October, we affirmed the collaborative and mutually supportive ministries we already have. **We enter the new Michigan Conference with an appreciation for TEN campus ministries and a commitment to support them in their common ministry of outreaching love in Christ’s name.**

Jeff Williams, Chair

ADRIAN COLLEGE

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

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

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

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

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

Highlights of Recent Work in Chaplaincy Include:

- A Wednesday Noon Chapel Series
- A Nationally-Respected Pre-Seminary Program that Unites Student Discernment with Formal Academic Study
- Continued Leadership across the Nation Regarding the Issue of Human Trafficking

You, too, can join our movement. Contact Dr. Chris Momany at 517-265-5161, Ext. 4211.

Christopher P. Momany, Chaplain, Part-Time Professor, and Director of Church Relations

THE WESLEY FOUNDATION at CENTRAL MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY (CMU)

Summary of ministry for the year

Wesley@CMU's mission is to create Christian community for CMU students. We do this through weekly gatherings: Christ-centered worship and study for Christians, and meals, dancing, exercise, movies, and service opportunities in a Christian environment for all. In addition to these weekly offerings, we provided short term classes, monthly special events, and an alternative Spring Break in Mission, South Dakota, with the Lakota people. Every year is a "new church start:" we lose 25 to 35% of our students as they leave CMU, and we bring in new students as they discover a need for Christian community. Every year, we offer the Gospel to people at a pivotal point, as they decide what they are going to do with their adult lives. We appreciate your support – spiritual, emotional, and physical.

Number and profile of the students, staff, and other campus members participating

In 2017, we averaged 57 "regular attendees" (students participating at least twice a month). This is our first decrease since 2013, and returns us to our 2015 level. Over 200 members of the campus community attended at least two different Wesley-sponsored events over the year. 79% of the regular participants were undergraduate students (cf 88% of CMU campus); 65% were female (cf 56% of CMU campus); 14% were members of ethnic minorities (cf 23% of CMU campus, a large increase from prior years). We had a quarter-time elder as director (working + volunteering 45+ hours a week), a 25 hour/week deputy director, and 3 part-time students (all undergrad, white, 1 male / 2 female) on staff.

List of outreach beyond campus

Wesley@CMU is specifically focused on creating Christian community on campus, but one of the things our community does is serve off campus. In 2017, our outreach dealt primarily with poverty in our area, working with the Isabella County Restoration House (ICRH), the local clothing-closet, and an intern serving at Lincoln Road United Methodist Church's "Hope House."

Brief summary of cooperative activities with local churches

We are covenant partners (sharing our prayers, presence, gifts, service, and witness) with four churches in the Mount Pleasant area. Examples of our activities include shared meals, helping lead in worship, joint funding of "EncounterMICall" interns, and hosting youth retreats and worship.

Training received by staff

Staff and interns received training in organizational health and/or family systems theory.

Other pertinent information the Annual Conference needs to be aware of

As anticipated, the 40% cut in conference funding in 2017 threatens the significant growth we have made in recent years. Without the expectation of income to hire students for the full year, our student staff hours decreased by 18%, with a corresponding decrease of 17% in the number of regulars. Although it is not always this direct, we have seen this correlation between student staff hours and the number of students for several years. Conference and district monies made up less than one third of our cash revenue this year – less than one fourth of our revenue when counting the value of volunteer labor. Wesley Foundations in Michigan are well on the way to becoming a ministry of individual Christians, rather than the Campus Ministry of The United Methodist Church.

Charles Farnum, Director

WESLEY HOUSE AT FERRIS STATE UNIVERSITY (FSU)

Overview of the Ministry

According to the Wesley House Board of Directors, our purpose is "to develop faithful active Christians who show God's love." The mission of our organization according to the student leadership team is, "to provide an open, welcoming, and safe space for students to grow spiritually and to encounter the love of God." These two statements sum up what we believe our call to be as we seek to connect with both Ferris students and the community of Big Rapids. With the cut of conference funding our Director has taken on an additional appointment to the Big Rapids Parish. This appointment assists in keeping the ministry of the Wesley House financially stable. It has also led to a greater emphasis on the development of student leaders. This year we have a team of twelve student volunteers taking on leadership, in addition we hired a student to serve as our Student Food Pantry Director. Students have been equipped and empowered to lead small groups, plan events, assist and plan worship and Bible study, and serve meals in the community. In addition, we continue to connect with local churches in both the Grand Traverse and Heartland districts. We appreciate the 17 covenant partner churches with whom we have developed intentional prayer-filled relationships. Wesley House is a ministry of community in all aspects, and we cherish our time spent at the Grand Traverse hub conferences, in local worship services or mission meetings, anywhere we have the opportunity to share about what your gifts are doing in the lives of young adults through the ministry of the Wesley House. We especially enjoyed our fall youth overnight, which drew students from Grand Traverse,

Grand Rapids, and Heartland districts. We continue to work with nearby United Methodist churches at our monthly Church in a Café worship service, which reaches a variety of people in the community. We also continue our strong tradition of engaging students in service. Our spring break mission trip was comprised of 18 students and six adult chaperones. We headed to Choctaw, MS, where we engaged with the Choctaw Native American community and their history.

The fall of 2017 continued to offer us opportunities for growth. This is the second year of our Student Food Pantry. The number of students utilizing the pantry has quadrupled since last year. In the fall of 2017 we served an average of 75 students each month.

In addition to student involvement at Wesley House and on campus we have five student interns serving in local churches through the help of the EncounterMiCall grant. Two students are serving at Big Rapids First United Methodist Church and three are serving in the churches of the Big Rapids Parish. These students are serving as youth and children's ministry interns, in congregation care, administration, and pastoral ministry.

By the Numbers:

In 2017, the Wesley House at Ferris State¹:

- 250 students have been directly contacted by invitation in Fall 2017
- 140 students have engaged with our ministry on any level in the last term
- 100 students are involved in our ministry (1/month) 100
- 33 students are invested in our ministry (1/week) 33
- 133 total students engaged at least once a term, involved at least once/month, and invested at least weekly in our ministry this past academic year
- 10 students moved on due to graduation or changing schools

Why Campus Ministry at Ferris State University?

The Wesley House Board of Directors is made up of persons dedicated to reaching young adults with the love of God, opportunities for spiritual growth, service, and leadership development. We believe this is crucial to the strength of our churches, but most importantly to the lives of young adults who will have the tools to stay spiritually strong. We believe this because we have seen the fruit of our ministry together and are excited about what God has in store for the Wesley House!

Devon Herrell, Director

WESLEY at WMU (Wesley Foundation of Kalamazoo)

Wesley Campus Ministry serving Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo Valley Community College and Kalamazoo College where we seek to be an authentic, transforming, Christ centered community.

Wesley of Kalamazoo serves 134 students (25% black, 2% Latinex, 1% Native American, 5% Internal Students, 67% white), through various ministries that include:

Developing Leaders: Twelve leaders and eight EncounterMICall interns studied Bowen Family Systems Theory, spiritual practices and engaged in contemplative prayer.

Mission: During the 2017-18 academic year, Wesley served at the Kalamazoo Freestore and Boys and Girls Club, participated in Motown Mission, and a spring break service learning trip to Atlanta.

Justice: Wesley of Kalamazoo is working toward becoming an anti-racist institution through a critical collaboration with ERACCE, a community organization that works to dismantle systemic racism. This new partnership has led to hosting quarterly trainings for the community and campus. Seven of the twelve board members have received training, along with all permanent and student staff.

System of Connection: 2017 we collaborated with 35 area congregations and three strategic on campus partnerships and two community partnerships.

Discipleship: Three weekly worship services average 38, 20, and 35. We also reach campus through weekly small groups, that meet a variety of needs. Wesley is in its sixth year of the Wesley Intentional Living Center in which students live in a covenantal relationship through prayers, presence, gifts, service and witness.

We look forward to another great year of growing leaders, doing mission, working for justice, building connections, and growing leaders!

Lisa Batten, Director and Campus Pastor

¹ These statistics come from our BHECM evaluation which took place 10/2017, report is available for further info

WESLEY at MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY (MSU)

Grace and peace to you in Jesus Christ our Lord. MSU Wesley is a Christian community of young adults that loves without exception, serves without judgment and rejoices without restraint. 2017-18 has been a challenging year for Michigan State University. Exposure of broken boundaries, sexual assault and flawed leadership has left members of MSU academic community feeling stunned, embarrassed and ashamed. This challenge has revealed the desperate need for the MSU Wesley campus ministry vision of community. The Gospel calls MSU Wesley to love without exception; so that we are a diverse community sharing God's love with those who have been abused, those who have abused and those who have been bystanders. The Gospel calls MSU Wesley to serve without judgment, so that prejudices are laid aside in the service of the needs of the neighborhood. This service transforms the lives of the servant and the served. This service prepares principled and ethical leaders for the church and for the world. The Gospel calls MSU Wesley to rejoice without restraint; so that, in moments of serious self-reflection, MSU Wesley boldly gives God praise because we know that God has not abandoned this community.

This year MSU Wesley students will go on an alternative spring break mission trip to Charleston South Carolina. Your student missionaries will work with Habitat for Humanity on a home build.

The MSU Wesley Praise Band, Sanctify, led worship at nine venues for the Lansing District Cluster Meetings. This was a great way for Lansing District local churches to get a taste of our worship style and a brilliant opportunity for MSU Wesley students to visit local churches.

Last summer, through the Academic Orientation Program, MSU Wesley connected with 204 freshman students who self-identified as United Methodists. These students are in our care throughout their tenure at MSU.

Thank you for partnering with MSU Wesley with your full participation in Ministry Shares, your prayers, presence, gifts, service and witness.

William W. Chu, Campus Minister
Andrew Dillon, Chair, Board of Directors

COMMITTEE ON HISPANIC / LATINO MINISTRIES

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

Descriptions of the Three Areas:

Initiative 1 – Youth Engagement: The purpose of the Youth Engagement Initiative is to empower Hispanic/Latino youth to become bold and effective leaders so that they can lead and guide the development of Vibrant Congregations.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Sonya Luna, Michigan Area Director, Hispanic/Latino Ministries

LAKE LOUISE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY, CAMP and RETREAT CENTER

VISION

A sanctuary empowering personal growth, faith, and knowledge within community.

Mission

We offer an environment and provide leadership for opportunities promoting healthy relationships, personal wholeness and spiritual well-being.

Ministry

To nurture faith and equip Christian children, youth, families, adults and community leaders to live and work from a place of wholeness, and in so doing, they shall be bearers of promise and hope as they transform the world.

Core Values

- ❖ Sacred space and time
- ❖ Diversity and Inclusiveness
- ❖ Community and Hospitality
- ❖ Knowledge and Understanding
- ❖ Spiritual Growth and Renewal
- ❖ Our Heritage and our Future

Lake Louise came into being in 1934 through the generosity of the Horner family of Eaton Rapids as a gift "to all the Methodists of Michigan." The Horners had acquired a large tract of cut-over timberland after the logging era of Michigan was over. As the Great Depression descended upon the country, the Horners approached their pastor, Rev. Stanley Niles, with the idea of giving 5,500 acres away. The idea of a church youth camp began to take shape. Through the action of a group of visionary people, the plan culminated in the creation of the Lake Louise Christian Community, encompassing a youth camp and creating cottage sites around the lake upon which clergy families could build a place of their own. The Lake Louise Christian Community would hold the land in trust for the two Michigan conferences. Christian camping began at Lake Louise in 1935 and has continued without interruption ever since. Approximately half of the original gift was sold to the State of Michigan in 1935 to provide for the development of the site. LLCC still holds title to 2,400 acres of the original gift. The land is managed under the Conservation Forestry Act and the Forest Legacy Conservation Easement, providing for the sustainable harvesting of timber and insuring the undeveloped character of the land and the lake.

Lake Louise is a cottager community of 126 families connected to a camp, retreat and conference ministry affiliated with The United Methodist Church. Lake Louise is governed by a 15-member Board of Trustees, including four members appointed by Detroit Annual Conference and four members appointed by the West Michigan Annual Conference. By Lake Louise bylaws, trustees generally serve three (3) three-year terms, for a total of nine (9) years.

Lake Louise's summer camping ministries continued to make an impact on hundreds of youth, teens, adults and families each summer. In the summer of 2016, there were four high school camps, two family camps, a multi-age Choir Camp (grades 4-12), three elementary camps and a middle school camp, in addition to a variety of volunteer groups, adult retreats, and mission work teams. Our summer program offerings are enriched by the addition in 2017 of a water trampoline, a 19' 10-person "Red Shark" water sled, an adventure tree climbing program, and a bottle rocket construction and launching program. Summer 2018 promises to bring a few more exciting activities that will engage campers and support our 2018 theme, "Run the Race." Check out our website at <http://www.lakelouisecommunity.org/camps.html> to see all the exciting camps scheduled for 2018.

Lake Louise's year-round retreat ministry continued to grow in 2017, serving pastors, lay people and youth from the Michigan conferences, regional Protestant and Catholic parishes and the local community. The Boyne Country Service Project provides mission and ministry opportunities in various projects around Charlevoix and Otsego counties. BCS is a week-long work mission experience for youth groups. Groups stay at Lake Louise and work each day with community service agencies around our area. We are currently accepting reservations for our 2018 Boyne Country Service schedule. If your youth group is looking for an exciting work mission project within Michigan, we invite your participation.

Lake Louise continues to pursue a scheduled program of facility improvements supported by major gifts from donors and volunteers from churches. We are indebted to work groups from Mason, Alden, and Holland First United Methodist churches. These groups gave countless hours and immeasurable skill to projects ranging from painting to helping construct a new modern health center. This health center will complete the new camping village that has been constructed and dedicated over the last several years. We have also begun a renovation project on five original log cabin structures while enhancing the inside facilities to include small kitchenettes and individual bathrooms.

Lake Louise is proud of its heritage as a “gift given to all the Methodists of Michigan.” We remain an asset to churches, clergy, ministry professionals and community groups seeking a place of rest and renewal in a beautiful natural setting. We invite all members of the United Methodist conferences in Michigan to pay us a visit, to join us for a retreat, to send their children to our camps, and to volunteer as a counselor or work camp volunteer. We are glad to be partnering with you in this ministry.

Jim Willford, Executive Director

METHODIST CHILDREN’S HOME SOCIETY

Methodist Children’s Home Society (MCHS) celebrated its centennial in 2017 – 100 years of service to children, families and the community! Founded in 1917 by two women, Sophie Sprague and Anna Kresge, with the vision and backing of the Kresge Foundation and countless supporters and volunteers from the Methodist community, we’ve been able to keep our doors open to the thousands of children and families who have experienced the trauma of abuse and neglect and came to us over the last century searching for brighter and safer futures.

Last year, through our residential program, we were able to serve 90 boys – children who come to us at some of their lowest points in their young little lives, having seen a lifetime of hardships throughout their journey through multiple homes before they arrive at our doorstep. Our foster care and adoption programs found safe havens and forever families for nearly 150 boys and girls who were searching for their childhood to begin. For our teens aging out of foster care in our independent living program, we provided the life-skills and support necessary for 14 young men to find jobs, enroll in school, and work toward being the successful and principled young adults they have always wanted to be.

A centennial capital improvements project was a highlight of the year, and eight of our 22 buildings were completely renovated. With many of these building having been built approximately 80 years ago, there was intensive work which needed to be done. The outcomes are absolutely outstanding, and the children and families served through MCHS’s program now have access to new family visit rooms, therapy rooms, an expanded school as well as recreational activities in our rec center including a movie room, fitness center and game room.

Furthermore, MCHS received tremendous community support of the agency’s new signature special events. The agency’s Annual Dinner, and volunteer and supporter appreciation event, allowed for the chance to thank the countless individuals who work to continue our life-changing work. Volunteer of the Year awards were presented, and long-time board member, Neil Wester of Birmingham First United Methodist Church, was presented with the Legacy Award. Our 2nd Annual Golf Classic allowed many of our corporate partners to hit the links “fore” the kids, and the outing’s sister event, the In Bloom Luncheon, was held on the agency’s campus in Redford and featured Rev. Faith Fowler, Senior Pastor of Cass Community United Methodist Church and Executive Director of Cass Community Social Services, as the keynote speaker. Finally, the agency’s Centennial Celebration Gala was the premier event of the year, bringing together hundreds of supporters of the agency’s mission in honor of the successes achieved over the past 100 years.

There is so much you can do to get more involved with the life-changing works provided by MCHS! Invite one of our staff members to speak at your service, bring a group for a tour of our 80-acre campus, host a drive to fulfill the Christmas wish lists of our children, or take up a second collection in honor of our summer school program or to go towards our basketball team – the opportunities truly are endless. If you are interested in learning more about MCHS or want to find other ways to give back, please contact Brooke Adams, Chief Marketing Officer, at badams@mchsmi.org or 313-531-9464.

Kevin Roach, Chief Executive Officer / Brooke Adams, Chief Marketing Officer

MICHIGAN AREA EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS / DISASTER RESPONSE

During 2017 Bob Miller, Disaster Response Coordinator of Detroit Annual Conference, and I have continued to work together in implementing the Michigan Area Emergency Preparedness and Disaster Response (EP/DR) plan by supporting the deepening of our Early Response Team (ERT) bench strength and training our new District Disaster Coordinators. In July we got deeply involved with the Great Lakes Bay Area Long Term Recovery Group (LTRG) by supporting relief and recovery efforts in the Midland, Michigan area.

ERT Support

In the first half of 2017 Bob Freysinger held two ERT training sessions, one in February at Newton United Methodist Church training four people, and one in May at Cornerstone Church training 12 people. Then Bob had complications from his knee surgery which put him on the injured reserve list. He's on the mend.

In March Dave and Jane Rasmussen were trained by Lynette Jordan in Wisconsin since that saved them an eight-hour drive from the UP to one of our "mitten" trainings. Met Lynette in November at Sager Brown.

We recommended Bob McCormick for our second Early Response Team Trainer in August to help increase our ERT bench strength. Bob McCormick held five training sessions from October through November training 77 people. Great Job Bob Mc! He has seven more sessions planned from January 20 through March, which may include a venture to the UP. Our new total is 97 Trained ERTs.

Our current dilemma is we don't have any team leaders trained to lead teams. We are working on that problem for 2018. I'm in contact with Mike Williams in the East Ohio Conference as they have an ERT Team Leader training session in February. We are also looking at both Bob McCormick and Bob Freysinger being able to add this scope of training to their kit.

District Disaster Recovery Coordinators

Bob and I shared the leadership role with assistance from Cathy Earl and Christi Smith of UMCOR in training our District Disaster Recovery Coordinators (DRCs) in October. Currently we are in the process of re-assignments based on the new Nine District Model for the Michigan Area Conference. We need two coordinators, one for District 3 and one for District 8. In our mode of operation, we are working as one conference in EP/DR.

In November both Bob and I went to the UMCOR Symposium at Sager Brown in Baldwin, Louisiana, learning about the damage done from the hurricanes in Texas, Florida and Puerto Rico directly from the respective disaster relief coordinators. We are currently working on getting the Puerto Rico specific process worked out with UMCOR to vet Special ERTs to work in the high altitude hot and humid conditions that have no electricity. At last report only 48% of the island had daytime electricity through the utility grid.

Midland / Saginaw Bay Area Long Term Recovery Group

The last weekend in June, torrential rain caused the Tittabawassee River in central Michigan to rise from 17 feet to 33.9 feet in 48 hours resulting in historic flooding of hundreds of homes in the Midland and Saginaw area. The area was declared a disaster area, and the federal government provided FEMA disaster assistance coordinators. Bob Miller and I began our participation in mid-July on the LTRG. It became readily apparent that the area needed Disaster Case Managers. Paul Perez wrote the grant request to UMCOR to fund two Disaster Case Managers for a year, and we received the grant. Bob, Paul and I along with key local agency heads, Nancy Money of Midland Homes and Jan Lampman of The Arc of Midland, interviewed over a dozen candidates choosing two from the local area, Anne Wortley and Katie Vokal.

A week later Christi Smith, a consultant from UMCOR, came to Midland and lead four days of training for Anne and Katie along with folks from the support agencies. Anne and Katie are in the midst of going through over 1,400 cases to verify unmet needs of families and participating in the process to get funding for the rebuilding of homes. Currently there is a list of 10 homes needing some level of rebuilding. Dan Kozakiewicz of Three Rivers Construction is volunteering his time to coordinate the rebuild activities. A team from Chesaning United Methodist Church donated their time between Christmas and New Years to insulate and drywall a basement of a nine-person family home, where three daughters helped with the return to their family's new normal. Dan Kozakiewicz is also engaging the Council of Associated Builders and Contractors to engage their apprentice training program to tackle one of the larger home basement rebuilding projects in the next two months. Disaster Case Management will continue into the fall of 2018.

Conference Objectives for EP/DR

Our focus:

- Work through the Conference Re-districting for 12 to 9 districts
 - Nominate and get appointments for District DRCs for districts 3 & 8
 - Develop new relationships with relocated and new District Superintendents

- Re-build Early Response Team (ERT) bench strength
- Re-build ERT Team Leader bench strength
- Add ERT Trainer capacity to 4 people
- Engage current base of ERTs in recovery/rebuild work in the Michigan Area
- District DRCs to roll out connecting neighbors to their district churches
- District DRCs canvass local churches to develop DRCs in local churches
- District DRCs to connect and develop relationships with local EMAs in their districts
- Passionate, networking, motivated to connect with local churches and EMAs in their districts

National Activities

Coordinate and vet teams from Michigan wanting to go to Puerto Rico for training, health and understanding the requirements for doing recovery work in Puerto Rico.

Work with UMCOR and Michigan State Police/Home Land Security on the resettlement of evacuees from Puerto Rico through a grant for Disaster Case Management in Detroit and Grand Rapids.

Dan O'Malley, West Michigan Disaster Relief Coordinator

MICHIGAN AREA COMMITTEE ON THE EPISCOPACY

The Michigan Area Committee on the Episcopacy is comprised of 18 members of the new Michigan Conference. The committee is made up of 6 active pastors, 2 retired pastors and 10 laity members.

The work of the Committee is defined by *The Book of Discipline*. This year the committee met three times. The committee seeks to be a support group for Bishop Bard, much as a Staff Parish Relations Committee is for pastors in the local church. The Committee seeks to share the joys and concerns of the Michigan Area. We are blessed by Bishop Bard's spiritual leadership and for helping to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. This year the committee is charged with an evaluation of the Bishop. The North Central Jurisdiction Episcopacy Committee has developed a process that includes a survey of leaders around the conference in evaluating the Bishop. Another responsibility of the committee is assisting the Bishop in the upkeep of the Episcopal residence.

We also are grateful for the leadership of Reverend John Boley in the role of Clergy Assistant to the Bishop and the support of Deana Nelson as Executive Administrative Assistant to the Bishop and Jennifer Weaver as Executive Administrative Assistant to the Clergy Assistant to the Bishop.

Jay Hook, Chair

MICHIGAN AREA HAITI TASK FORCE **Michigan Haiti Covenant Partnership**

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

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

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

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

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

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

In addition to powerful prayer warriors, teams are regularly needed in Haiti to work towards clean drinking water in hundreds of villages throughout the country, delivering medical care through mobile medical clinics, providing cloth sanitary napkins (Days 4 Girls Kits) through personal health training in schools and churches throughout the country, teacher training to equip teachers to educate effectively in our 110 Methodist schools, assisting in the paying of Methodist teacher salaries where many are more than six months behind in receiving paychecks, helping to fund local micro credit banks (\$6,500 per community) already organized and set up by UMCOR, and planting trees for reforestation and family fruit consumption.

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

Karl L Zeigler, Chair

MICHIGAN AREA LOAN FUND
of The United Methodist Church
Missions & Church Extension Trust Fund

2017 was a year of growth and consolidation for the Michigan Area Loan Funds. New records were established in amounts invested and millions of dollars were loaned to churches. The Loan Fund operations continued steady and met the challenges of both investor and borrower relationships. The Michigan Area Loan Fund consolidated the boards of MALF with the Extension Fund of Detroit to create a more comprehensive entity capable of new ministries and funding opportunities. The 2017 Annual Conference sessions took action to place each of these agencies under the management of the United Methodist Conference of Michigan. This should prove to be a salutary development.

Dr. Wayne Barrett, CFP®, serves as Resident Agent of the Fund. He serves as Chief Executive of the Fund and brings certification in financial planning and a Series 63 securities license from the State of Michigan. He directs the operations of the Fund from his Grand Rapids office.

Office operations are directed by Marian Coles from the Grand Rapids office. Ann Buck, well-known to many from her years with the conference treasurer's office, has assumed the position of Director of Account Services.

Our website, www.michiganarealoanfund.com, is being used by prospective investors and borrowers alike. You are invited to visit our site for updates on interest rates.

Investors were rewarded during 2017 with a rate of return that was attractive in comparison to many similar investment options. Investors earned 2.75% on their investment accounts. This fund offers investment opportunities for both congregations and individuals within the state of Michigan and a loan source for the 900 congregations of The United Methodist Church in Michigan. Mortgage loans are available with a variety of amortization schedules and a current rate of 4.74%. Promissory notes are also available for smaller funding needs at a rate of 5.24%.

The Fund is registered with the Securities Bureau of the State of Michigan and is managed by its Resident Agent. As of December 2016 the loan portfolio included 35 loans and mortgages with a total value of approximately \$10,000,000. Investments burgeoned during 2017 and exceeded \$15,000,000, highest level in the fund's history.

A complete audit of the Fund is available upon request from the administrative office, 3347 Eagle Run Dr NE Suite B, Grand Rapids, MI 49525.

The future of the Fund looks strong in spite of weakened loan demand. The financial strength of the Fund should be secure as the net corpus of Fund assets continues to grow and allow the Fund to serve the needs of Michigan United Methodist congregations. The Board continues to look for ways to expand our fund base so we may be competitive in the broader loan market. Congregations as well as individual United Methodists are invited to invest in our Fund.

The Fund is grateful for the leadership of a fine volunteer Board of Trustees that guides the vision of our ministry.

Charles Veenstra, President
Wayne Barrett, Resident Agent

MICHIGAN AREA UNITED METHODIST CAMPING

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

Celebration

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

History and Progress

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

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

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

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

- An Annual Fund
- Capital Campaigns
- Endowments

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

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

1. Sending children to summer camp – even neighborhood children who are not from your church;
2. Taking a group on a church retreat to one of our retreat centers, and;
3. Making use of our campgrounds for your family vacations will help us with this goal.

This year we look forward to:

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

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

Staff Updates

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

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

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

How You Can Help

We need your help to:

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

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

George Ayoub, Executive Director

MICHIGAN AREA UNITED METHODIST HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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

The Society has as their purpose the following:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Diana Spitnale Miller, President

MICHIGAN AREA YOUTH MINISTRY DEVELOPMENT

With one staff person, Bridget Nelson, now covering the Michigan area in Youth Ministry Development, we are looking forward to the conference being a consistent and more effective resource to local churches in Michigan. The focus on development is intentional to make staff available to help local churches start or grow youth ministry efforts in their church or area. There will also be priority placed on the organizing of events that youth groups can attend and participate with other youth groups. In November, Mt. Pleasant First United Methodist Church, along with conference staff, hosted Connection 17, a conference for youth groups. About 180 youth and youth workers were in attendance.

The Youth Worker Network is in its third year offering training, education and encouragement to adults working with youth across the state, as staff or volunteers. Plans are already getting underway for busses to take Michigan youth groups to Youth 2019 in July 2019 in Kansas City.

Local churches are always welcome to call and talk with Bridget Nelson about any concerns in youth ministry – I am available to meet by phone or in person to help local churches develop safe, fun and meaningful youth ministry programs.

Bridget Nelson, Coordinator

MICHIGAN CONFERENCE HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE

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

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

During 2017, the committee developed job descriptions and interviewed candidates for positions in keeping with the Plan of Organization of the Michigan Conference. In addition, job performance appraisal guidelines were initiated and will be formalized in 2018 as well as an employee handbook. The committee reviewed budget projections for 2019, housing and parsonage policies, the transition plan and timeline,

recommended compensation levels, and in partnership with Conference Communications we are developing a social media use procedure.

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

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

Ellen Zienert and Jean Snyder, Co-Chairs

MICHIGAN CONFERENCE PROTECTION POLICY TRANSITION TASK FORCE

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

The task force continues to meet monthly to discuss implementation of the training and other needs expressed by United Methodists committed to having protection for children, youth, and vulnerable adults at conference and district events. We spend half a day reviewing all applicants' files, a necessary step before they can become authorized to be care givers at district and conference events.

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

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

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

Judy Herriff, Facilitator

MICHIGAN INDIAN WORKERS' CONFERENCE (IWC) EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Executive Committee:

Chairperson: Fran Church-Pratt (Salem UMC)

Vice Chairperson: Judy Johnson (Greensky Hill UMC)

Secretary/Treasurer: Valerie Maidens (Northport UMC)

Grand Traverse District Superintendent: Anita Hahn

Detroit Conference: Jerry DeVine, Director of Connectional Ministries

West Michigan Conference: Benton Heisler, Director of Connectional Ministries

2017 Meeting Dates:

April 21-22 @ Bradley Indian UMC

October 6-7 @ Mt. Pleasant-Chippewa Indian UMC

IWC Church Delegates:

Jan Jensen – Greensky Hill Indian UMC

Steven Antoine – Kewadin Indian UMC

Charlene John – Northport Indian UMC

Marion Jarman – Bradley Indian UMC

MaryEllen Raterink – Salem Indian UMC

Judy Bannister – Mt. Pleasant Chippewa Indian UMC

Native American Church Pastors:

Jonathan Mays – Greensky Hill UMC

George Pamp – Kewadin UMC

Terry Wildman – Northport UMC

Todd Williamson – Bradley and Salem UMCs

Owen White Pigeon – Mt. Pleasant Chippewa UMC

CHURCH REPORTS (2017 SUMMARY)**Greensky Hill Indian UMC:**

- ❖ Sunday worship services at 9 am with Pastor Jonathan Mays. Evening services at 5 pm alternating with Pastors Sam McClellan, George Pamp, Thomas John and Bob Dominic. Lay servants offer the message on 4th Sunday evening each month. Our combined morning and evening attendance average around 65 people. Sunday attendance average 30-40 for each service. Sunday School continues during the morning service. Tonya Pamp is our accompanist for both services.
- ❖ Our fund-raising activities (2017) include the Men's Club Variety Show (120 attendees); Craft and Flea Market with good participation of vendors and customers; and our Annual Fall Harvest Dinner (September 24th) served 300 paying guests.
- ❖ WMC Annual Conference Dinner (148 guests); added a game night (ages 5-8) average 20 participants; Women's Drum Group remains very active; Greensky Hill members and friends participated in prayer events for our Great Lakes and to support the shutting down of Enbridge/Pipeline 5.
- ❖ Youth Heritage Camp was a great success (July 13-15). We had 23 children (ages 8-12) and they were the most mindful, kind, active, involved and participating group of kids we ever had in camp.
- ❖ Our Annual Summer Camp Meeting (July 28-29) was great success. Our guest speaker was Rev. Dr. Glenn Wagner who published a book on how interwoven and impactful each person's actions can be, "God Incidents – Real-Life Stories to Strengthen and Restore Your Faith." Dr. Wagner contributed an article for our renewed quarterly church newsletter.
- ❖ Major church restoration project started. In 1964, State of Michigan named the church a state historical site. Received a grant (\$53,000) from the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians in February (2016). The Hayes Township will serve as the fiduciary on this restoration. Additional donations (\$4,400) received from a community foundation and national historical agency. Still need to raise another \$25,000 to complete the restoration.
- ❖ DNA has been taken from old trees in hope of growing the original trees.
- ❖ Our biggest praise is the increased participation of young adults in all parts of our ministry. They are taking on leadership roles and are a blessing. Another praise is the committee work for the cemetery record-keeping project. We sent four members (including a teen) to web training through a UMCOM web development grant.
- ❖ Our greatest challenge is maintaining our church budget. We continue to struggle with all phases of the budget and our treasurer moves funds from one line item to another to cover ongoing expenses.
- ❖ Grandmother Moon ceremonies were held quarterly in 2017.
- ❖ We had 21 baptisms and 33 new members. Some of the baptisms were full immersion in Lake Charlevoix (during warmer weather).
- ❖ Monthly WMC Ministry Shares and church expenses are paid to date.
- ❖ Long time church member Daugherty Johnson, Jr. walked on to the Lord's new life for him in July (2017). Continued prayers for family and our church as we are still mourning his loss; he is greatly missed.

Kewadin Indian UMC:

- ❖ Sunday worship service at 11 am with a Bible study at 5 pm. Attendance averages between 15-20 for Sunday worship and 10-12 for Bible study. On January 1, 2018, George Pamp will be our half-time DS-appointed pastor.
- ❖ June (2017), group of 15 youths and 3 leaders from Chillicothe, IL, camped and provided 10 days of service to our church. They painted, re-roofed the tabernacle, erected signs, and other fix-it projects. In exchange, church membership provided them a cultural education and opportunities to learn about Native Americans in northern Michigan.
- ❖ Events during 2017: NYE watch service; Spring Revival (April 7-8-9) with Charles Nahwegahbo as our speaker; Easter Sunday children's program (April 16th); Mother's Day service and luncheon (May 14th); Summer camp meeting (July 13-17) with Sam McClellan as our speaker; held end of summer BBQ (August) for congregation at nearby beach; Heatherlee Yorty, local anthropologist gave a presentation on the Lost Tribe of Manasseh (Oct 7th). Our Tuesday senior luncheons average between 5-6 Elders and includes a craft program; Tuesday evening Native American language classes average

12-15 participants; hold cultural activities on Wednesday evenings; and AA meetings held on Thursday evenings.

- ❖ On October 1st – four young members joined our Church Board of Trustees – Jordan Shomin, Holly Alberts, Misty Calloway and Mark Shananaquet. We are so pleased our young people have become more involved.
- ❖ Participated in the 150 Bicentennial Celebration of Milton Township in the summer 2015. A collector's edition was published featuring the township's settlement with many photos of Kewadin Indian Mission families (submitted by Steven Antoine).
- ❖ Recently submitted a 2% allocation grant request to the Tribe in hope of purchasing a ground penetrating radar sensing (GPRS) device to map gravesites. Steve Antoine has been cemetery caretaker since 1974 and working on mapping grave sites. There is one section with headstones dating back to 1860.
- ❖ Requested \$20,000 from IWC budget to help pay pastor's 2018 salary compensation.
- ❖ Near completion on repairs to Pastor's parsonage.
- ❖ Exploring the possibility of historic designation for the church building and cemetery.
- ❖ Continued prayers for church elder Sharron Schneider who is under hospice care in her home.
- ❖ Monthly WMC Ministry Shares and church expenses are paid to date.

Northport Indian UMC:

- ❖ July 1st (2017) marks our 2nd year with Terry and Darlene. Sunday worship services at 11 am. Pastor's coffee hour at 10:15 am. Pastor Terry attended WMC/UMC licensing school to become a licensed local pastor and graduated on November 12, 2017.
- ❖ There is serious concern our church roof may not survive the winter months. A local contractor and his wife were driving by one Sunday after worship and felt God's nudge to stop and ask about the curling roof shingles. He offered to provide free labor in replacing the entire roof. He suggested he would do the worst sections first – fellowship hall and middle. The materials would cost approximately \$4000. Then next spring, he will do the remaining sections for an additional \$2500 in materials. Pastor Terry put out a call for volunteers to help remove the old shingles on Saturday, October 14th. Central UMC's Mission Team came to help and donated monies toward the materials. We sincerely appreciate Jim Huckle and the Mission Team's devoted connection with our church.
- ❖ Easter Revival March 30-April 1 with Pastor George Pamp. On Easter Sunday, candy bags and Easter egg hunt for the children. Fall Revival November 10-12 with Pastor Thomas John.
- ❖ Held an Open House for Annual Conference delegates on Wednesday, May 31st (2017). Approximately 50-60 people attended. Central United Methodist Church's van transported a group to visit our all Native American cemetery. The group was impressed with the history and upkeep of the cemetery. There are 2 Civil War veterans who served in the 1st Michigan Sharp Shooters Company K regiment, an all-American Indian unit. Jenny Brown (member of the Saginaw Chippewa tribe) was a big hit with her basket weaving demonstration and skills. Basket weaving is a dying Native American craft and she demonstrated how baskets are made, from harvesting the black ash to weaving and showcasing her finished baskets. She also taught how to weave a book marker from strips of black ash.
- ❖ Our Annual Summer Camp Meeting was held August 10-13 (2017). Guest speaker was Pastor Larry (Griz) Brown from Apple Valley, CA. His native heritage is Creek and Cherokee. Pastor Griz is a songwriter and recording artist and blessed everyone with his music. His testimony and storytelling brought a powerful witness to Jesus. Everyone we spoke with would love his return.
- ❖ Spirit Journey Camp (August 2017): Spirit Journey youth camp was a great success with over 55 local youth (ages 8-13). Many of our church members attended the Friday evening talent program. These children are very talented and full of humor and energy. It is obvious they are learning valuable life skills and spiritual lessons. We are very pleased to provide our church campgrounds and facilities for Spirit Journey's youth camp.
- ❖ The Grand Traverse District fall HUB meetings included a chili cook off contest. Pastor Terry submitted his chili entry called Holy Smoke. Tasters voted for their best chili with dollars and the chili entry with the most dollars (votes) won the entire pot of dollars. No one knew who made the different pots of chilis. After the dollars (votes) were counted, Pastor Terry's chili entry won, \$638! Added Holy Smoke chili winnings to church roof replacement fund.
- ❖ Central UMC donated 15+ Blessing Food Bags (filled with items to make a Thanksgiving meal) and our church added a \$15 gift card to each Blessing Bag (to help with purchase of a turkey or ham). Blessing Bags and cards were given to families in need.
- ❖ Monthly WMC Ministry Shares and church expenses are paid to date.
- ❖ Pastor Terry set up our church website: www.northportindianumc.org.

Bradley Indian UMC:

Sunday Services are at 9:30. In November (2017), Pastor Todd graduated from WMC/UMC licensing school and now a full-time Licensed Local Pastor. Communion served 1st Sunday each month. Todd meets with other pastors in community at least one Monday each month.

Todd has updated the technology for Bradley and Salem in order to engage more with the youth through Social Media and bring them into the church. Todd has developed a music ministry with Bradley/Salem Singers. Casey Church was our guest speaker on Sunday, April 24th. Jjak Camp Meeting held August 25-28, well attended. Gun Lake Tribe paved the parking lots of Salem and Bradley this past spring (2017). Pastor Todd started combining services with Bradley and Salem the first Sunday of the month in August (2017) and Communion is offered to everyone. After the service, we have fellowship and a potluck luncheon. We voted in a one-board model of governance for our church. Three church members walked on in the past few months: Rudolph John Bush, Leah Sprague Fodor, Melvin Fought and local Native resident – William Barker. Three previous church members returned: Dwight and Anna Bixler and Steve Collins. Tom Jarmon is renovating the church fences. Tom and Marian Jarman and Cheryl Selby represented Bradley Mission at the 150-year celebration of Almena UMC. Monthly WMC Ministry Shares and church expenses are paid to date.

Salem Indian UMC:

Sunday Services at 11:30. In November (2017), Pastor Todd graduated from WMC/UMC licensing school and now a full-time Licensed Local Pastor. Gun Lake Tribe presented Salem/Bradley with a 10-year endowment to help support a pastor full time. Todd is interested in attending a Native American Ministry program. Todd feels blessed to be ministering two Native American churches and grateful for their support and encouragement in his ministry and long learning process. Salem has a Bible study headed by our Ad board chair, Betty McBride. Gun Lake Tribe has donated all proceeds from its Annual Summer Golf Outing to Bradley and Salem. We are blessed to have this close relationship with the Gun Lake Tribe and we hope to do great work together for our community. Todd Williamson continues to develop his ministry and music skills. Pastor Todd brought back the old Anishinabemowin hymns to both Bradley and Salem. Casey Church held a Native American ministry workshop on February 11th (2017) at Hopkins UMC. Monthly WMC Ministry Shares and church expenses are paid to date.

Mt. Pleasant Chippewa Indian UMC:

Sunday worship service 11 am and 7 pm; Thursday evenings at 7 pm. Sunday youth class has grown to 24 youths. Third Sunday worship with Joe Sprague and includes a meal of hotdogs and a crafts workshop. Last Sunday of each month is an all song service with response readings. Members share liturgy readings. Events (2017): NYE watch; Easter (April 13-16); Camp Meeting (August 28-September 4); Fall (November 23-26). Church doing very well, and Pastor keeps in touch with other local pastors.

Native American Elders Program (Grand Rapids) – Pastor Sandy VandenBrink:

Pastor Sandy retiring December 2017. She served as Program Director for 11 years. Voiced her concerns on the leadership for the Elders Program as no one has volunteered (to date) to head the program. Meet every Tuesday and Thursday at Northland United Methodist Church in Grand Rapids. Average 200 meals each week; average 50 Native American elders attend regularly. Nursing students from Calvin College and GVSU continue to monitor blood pressure and sugar levels. Case worker from DHS available once a week for resources. Regular visits by staff from Native American Community Service to keep Elders informed of programs available to them. Transport Elders who have no other means of transportation to: appointments, funerals, Powwows. Plan to transport Elders to Salem/Bradley for their 1st Sunday combined worship service. Special celebration for all holidays and grandchildren are invited. Hold a monthly Bingo. Provide Feeding America food truck throughout the summer months. Conduct funerals and memorial services for members of the community. Michael Peters (4 Fires Ministry) holds a service on Wednesday evenings. Program needs approximately \$35,000 a year to run adequately. Received \$25,000 from IWC. Need additional funding to meet payroll of 3 part-time staff, van expenses, to purchase food and supplies. Pastor Sandy mailed out 380+ letters to Tribes and churches asking for donations.

Valerie Maidens, IWC Secretary / Fran Church-Pratt, IWC Chair

NEW CHURCH DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

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

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

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

In 2016 the General Conference challenged us to make one million new disciples by the end of 2020. To reach that goal, the Connectional Table set a number of strategic goals. As these relate to the Michigan Conference in the area of Congregational Vibrancy, our challenge is to start 13 new churches using a variety of models, 130 new faith communities (new worship services or new venues for worship with attendance 50-100), and 1,300 new small groups. The New Church Development Committee has and will continue to focus on reaching these goals and accomplish our mission through the following ways. Discerning, distributing, and supporting existing and new churches with grant requests to launch new faith communities utilizing a variety of models, including: church adoptions in Bay City and Lansing/Pottsville; multi-site congregations from Friendship Church: Shelby Campus, Birmingham First Campus at Berkley, and Marquette Hope. New worship services launched at Rochester St Paul's, Utica, and Muskegon Central United Methodist churches. Supporting a new church start in Traverse City. And helping launch smaller venue faith communities in pubs, cafés and restaurants to reach more people.

We continue to support the work of churches and new faith communities started in previous years, including Vietnamese and Hispanic congregations in the Detroit area. And celebrate with DownRiver United Methodist Church, a 5 year-old Vital Merger new church start, which had moved into a new permanent building.

A significant part of creating a multiplication DNA in our churches is accomplished by starting new ministries. One method which any church can accomplish to multiply and reach new people is to launch new small groups. The NCDC began offering micro grants of \$300 for each new small group started that intentionally reaches unchurched people.

Lastly, the Reach Summit conference, held in Grand Rapids in 2017, has been and continues to be a way our NCDC is "equipping churches to reach more people." In the 2017 Reach Summit we experienced the powerful preaching of Rev. Olu Brown, a new church start pastor from Atlanta, and informed and encouraged participants through workshops from creating more multi-cultural churches to connecting youth. The uniqueness and true impact of Reach Summit are the five Network Groups that participants can join for monthly encouragement and training in reaching more people (Reach Leadership, Reach Systems, Reach Multiply, Reach Multi-ethnic Church, Reach Connecting Youth). Reach Summit 2018 is scheduled for November 2-3 and will feature Dr. Elaine Heath, dean of Duke Divinity School, as the keynote speaker.

Dirk Elliott, Director of Congregational Vibrancy
Anthony R. Hood, Co-chairperson
Matt Stoll, Co-Chairperson

REVITALIZATION

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Gary Step, Director of Congregational Excellence

Vital Church Initiative Michigan Conference

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

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

Expectations of Participating Congregations and Pastors

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

Criteria for Fruitfulness: Five Practices

(see *FIVE PRACTICES OF FRUITFUL CONGREGATIONS*)

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

Developing Core Competencies

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

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

Vital Church Statistical Update

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

77% of church moved on to Phase II

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

68%- there was significant identifiable movement towards Vitality

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

11%- there was some identifiable movements towards Vitality

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

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

21%- There was no identifiable movements towards Vitality

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

Most common impedance: Entrenched cultures very resistant to change

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

BOARD OF ORDAINED MINISTRY

“So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!” 2 Corinthians 5:17

A new creation – our Michigan Board of Ordained Ministry – will be birthed this summer. Since July of 2016, Board of Ordained Ministry (BOM) members from the West Michigan Conference and the Detroit Annual Conference have been meeting together almost every month to design this future board. Members serving on this task force are: from West Michigan, Annette Erbes, Dean Prentiss, Carolin Spragg, our administrative assistant Sus’ann Busley, and myself as co-chairperson; from Detroit, Ruby Anderson, David Eardley, Mary McInnes, administrative assistant Nancy Arnold, and co-chairperson Laura Speiran.

Through countless hours of conversation in person and by video conference, we have discovered that our two boards do essentially the same work, though we do it differently. In our dreaming and planning, we have attempted to find a third way – a new way. We know that the structure we have created is not perfect. Certainly, it will be refined and further developed by future board members. Yet we offer this as a beginning point. Our first meeting as a new BOM will be an overnight retreat at Lake Louise Camp in September of 2018.

Looking back on the year 2017, a lot of our energy went into planning annual conference. This was the first time that everything was done together as an entire Michigan Area, from opening worship to the closing ordination service. Specifically, our two boards needed to prepare for: our first joint clergy session; the service of recognition, commissioning and ordination (in conjunction with the bishop's office and the AC worship planning team); a luncheon for those exploring a calling to licensed or ordained ministry; a dinner for retirees; and a new event called Celebrating the Journey of Ministry. This latter program was a melding of previous traditions: Marking Sacred Time in West Michigan and Celebration of Ministry in Detroit. It included the recognition of retirees, the introduction of clergy entering either conference, and the celebration of those who serve in specialized ministries. As we look forward to the 2018 Annual Conference, many of these new traditions will be repeated and improved based on the things we learned last year.

The Board of Ordained Ministry is the primary credentialing body within The United Methodist Church. Our responsibilities are outlined in ¶ 635 of *The Book of Discipline 2016*. Even though much of our attention over the past year has been directed toward the formation of a new Michigan board in the coming year, we have continued our ongoing work as the West Michigan BOM in the interim. This includes conducting two interview weeks – for full membership in the fall and for provisional membership in the spring. We were very pleased to recommend provisional membership and commissioning for two elders, as well as full membership and ordination for two deacons and two elders at our 2017 Annual Conference. At the same time, we celebrated with three local pastors who completed Course of Study.

Ongoing connection with local pastors is made by the District Committee on Ordained Ministry (dCOM). The BOM provides coordination and oversight, since each dCOM is considered a subcommittee of the board. We appreciate the service of these district committee members as they engage with ministry candidates at the very earliest stages of the process. With the move to nine districts in the new conference, we know there will be shifts in dCOM membership. It is our hope to provide training early on for these newly formed committees, sharing “best practices” with those who serve on them and bringing consistency to the process for candidates.

Steps toward harmonizing the candidacy process have already been taken through the semi-annual Candidacy Summit which is now offered in both the winter and the summer. This undertaking has been sponsored by the whole Michigan Area since its beginning in 2016. Through the two-day Candidacy Summit and the three group sessions which follow, candidates explore ministry as a vocation and receive guidance from peers and mentors in a small-group discernment process. Thank you to all the board members from both sides of the state, as well as other clergy colleagues, who have given of their time preparing for and participating in these events.

Though the work of our BOM is most visible at the entry points when clergy are first beginning their journey toward ordained or licensed ministry, we are also responsible for guiding and supporting clergy throughout their continued years of service. Through the Conference Relations Committee, the board works with clergy who are changing their status: those going on leave of absence or honorable location, those requesting part-time service, those transferring in or out of the conference, and those transitioning to extension ministry or to retirement. Further, our board promotes opportunities for continuing education and spiritual growth. In the future, the BOM (in conjunction with the cabinet) will be creating and implementing a process for the personal and professional assessment and development of each clergyperson as outlined in ¶ 349 of *The Book of Discipline*. This will occur every eight years.

Aware that our two boards will be coming together this July, we have been gradually downsizing our numbers for the past couple of years. I am grateful for the willingness of current BOM members to assume an extra load during this transition period. Also, I want to express appreciation for our members who will be rotating off the board in the coming year: Eric Beck, Pat Brook, Bo Rin Cho, Marty Culver, Jeanne Garza, Diane Gordon, Harris Hoekwater, Allen Horstman, Mary Ivanov, Phyllis Jackson, Deb Johnson, Lynn Pier-Fitzgerald, and Carolin Spragg. Thank you for your service!

I have greatly enjoyed serving as chair of the West Michigan Board of Ordained Ministry during these past four years. Thank you to all the persons on our board who have supported me, particularly the members of the Executive Committee. It has been a joy to work with so many gifted and committed people. In particular, I am indebted to our BOM administrative assistant, Sus'ann Busley, for keeping us organized. Sus'ann is a true servant of Christ and I don't know where we would be without her.

During these last two years, it has been my privilege to work closely with Laura Speiran, chair of the Detroit BOM. Laura is a very insightful and very dedicated leader. She and I have shared countless phone calls, e-mails, and face-to-face meetings. We have made a good team. I know the board will be in excellent hands as she provides leadership in the days ahead. The BOM will also be blessed by the leadership gifts of the Rev. Dr. Jennifer Browne who was recently appointed as Director of Clergy Excellence. We look forward to coordinating many functions of the Board of Ordained Ministry through the new Office of Clergy Excellence.

Please pray for God's blessing upon this new creation of our Michigan Board of Ordained Ministry as we seek to recruit, prepare, and support clergy who will be bold and effective leaders in The United Methodist Church.

Sherri Swanson, Chair

ORDER OF ELDERS

As The Order of Elders we are called to a four-fold ministry of Word, Sacrament, Order, and Service. While we live out our callings in congregations and extension ministries we are also connected through the covenant of The Order of Elders. It has been an honor working with Dean Prentiss as co-chair of the Order of Elders. This year has included time for prayers, planning, and preparing for the final steps of becoming the new Michigan Conference as we both work with the Board of Ordained Ministry Task Force.

Last Spring we were blessed to gather at the Bishop's Day with the Order of Elders in Midland. Our scripture focus for the day with Bishop Bard was based on Galatians 5:22. We spent time making new friends, seeking out prayer partners, we had conversations in breakout sessions, we shared a meal together, worshiped – but the true blessing of the day was Bishop Bard's sermon and prayer over our ministries. We are thankful for Midland First United Methodist Church's hospitality and help in making the day possible.

So now we move forward to figure out what is next. A small group of elders have volunteered to take your input and find ways to gather and connect to one another in meaningful ways as we live out our callings and strive to be effective clergy. Look for upcoming invitations to study, pray, and grow together as a covenant. There are many changes all around us, new conference, new districts, Commission on a Way Forward, not to mention all the issues in our communities and appointments. May we be brave enough to lean into our covenant relationship to give us courage during changing times, may we keep centered on our calling, and remember who called us for such a time as this.

I have been praying for each of you by name over this last year. I encourage you to do the same. Open up those Journals and lift one another up in prayer. If you do not have a covenant group that you meet with regularly, now is the time to reach out and find one. Covenant groups can help keep us accountable, reminds us that we are not alone, and encourage us during difficult times.

Mary McInnes, Chair

ORDER OF DEACONS

Deacons across Michigan and the world are working in ministries of Word, Service, Justice and Compassion. This February we sought to meet but the weather prevented us to meet in person. However, we are moving forward with plans of ministry in our diverse locations in places not only in Michigan but in the world. We are looking to encourage the growth of the heart, hands, minds, and joy of the conference through our ministries – this variety of ministries created by Christ, Holy Spirit and God to serve and show grace in innovative ways.

Deacons hope to remove all barriers to the love of Jesus and grace to heal the wounds and bring hope. As Michigan continues to grow into one conference, the order of Deacons seeks to support this growth and offer support in all corners of the globe.

Georgia N. Hale, Chair



CANDLER SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY – Atlanta, Georgia – candler.emory.edu

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

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

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

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

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

Candler has a deep commitment to alleviating student debt and employs a multi-pronged approach to tackle this issue. In 2017-2018, we awarded \$5.3 million in Candler scholarships, with 97 percent of MDiv students receiving aid and the average scholarship covering 75 percent of tuition. Plus, our comprehensive “Faith & Finance” program teaches money management skills that serve our students now and will continue to serve them – and the churches they lead – well into the future.

Half of Candler’s faculty are United Methodist and 58% come from traditions within the larger Methodist family. This year, we welcomed fellow United Methodist Helen Jin Kim to the faculty as Assistant Professor of American Religious History, and we sent best wishes along with our colleague Mary Lou Greenwood Boice as she retired after 25 years of remarkable service to Candler.

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

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



DUKE DIVINITY SCHOOL – Durham, North Carolina – divinity.duke.edu

Under the leadership of Elaine A. Heath, dean and professor of missional and pastoral theology, Duke Divinity School has continued to work on our strategic planning process. In the academic year 2017–2018, the strategic planning committee was assembled, composed of representatives from the faculty, staff, student body, and Duke Divinity’s Board of Visitors. The committee has sought extensive feedback from stakeholders, including alumni, church leaders, and donors as well as our community of faculty, staff, and students; and it is paying close attention to developments within theological education and the cultural changes affecting both church and academy. The committee anticipates presenting a framework document in the spring of 2018 with a strategic plan submitted for approval in November 2018.

This year we launched several new programs to equip laypeople and to support students. The Neighborhood Seminary, a partnership with the Northern Piedmont District of the Western North Carolina Conference, is a two-year, noncredit training program that began this year with a cohort of 18 people. The cohort participates in four team-taught courses per year led by faculty, staff, and graduate students from Duke Divinity School in partnership with local practitioners and ministries. The cohort also undertakes an intentional, contemplative model of spiritual practice combined with sequenced contextual learning experiences with local practitioners throughout the two-year program. Heidi Miller, Ph.D., directs the Neighborhood Seminary program.

We also launched a new academic support program to help incoming students learn how to think and write theologically. The Refresher and Intensive for Scholarly Enrichment (RISE) program began with a two-day pre-orientation workshop for new students this August. Over half of the incoming class, 83 students, registered for this self-selecting program that includes lectures, panels, and workshops to help them navigate academic work and succeed at seminary. Academic support continues throughout the year, with Divinity School professors and preceptors as well as academic support staff in contact with each other and struggling students to develop plans to help them.

This year we welcomed students from a range of backgrounds who are called to serve God and the church. In 2017, our total enrollment was 606 students: 369 are enrolled in the M.Div. degree program; 58 in the M.T.S.; 10 in the Th.M.; 46 in the Th.D.; 83 in the D.Min.; 23 in the M.A.C.P.; 4 in the M.A.C.S.; and 10 who are special students or auditors. Thirty-seven percent of our students are United Methodist, with an additional 3 percent from other Wesleyan traditions, and 46 percent of our M.Div. students are United Methodist. Eleven percent of all students are Baptist, 8 percent are Anglican or Episcopalian, 4 percent are Roman Catholic, 10 percent are Presbyterian or Reformed, with the rest from 21 other denominations or faith traditions.

Three new certificates were approved this year. The Certificate in Missional Innovation, which can be earned as part of a master of divinity degree, is intended for students interested or involved in innovative forms of ministry. They will receive training in contextual evangelism and church planting with the goal of converting, gathering, and discipling people who are often neglected or unreached by existing church structures. The Certificate in Theology and the Arts, which can be earned alongside the M.Div., M.T.S., or Th.M., aims to help students appreciate and articulate the mutual enrichment of theology and the arts and to create opportunities to involve local churches and communities in the arts. The Certificate in Theology and Health Care is a new fully accredited residential graduate program that provides robust theological and practical engagement with contemporary practices in medicine and health care. The certificate aims to equip Christian health care practitioners with foundational courses in Christian theology, Scripture, and the practical issues they encounter.

In 2017, the Duke Forward comprehensive campaign concluded, having raised critical endowment and expendable funds to support the people, programs, and activities of the university. Duke Divinity School raised \$114.1 million, 143 percent more than the goal of \$80 million. This support enables the Divinity School to provide scholarships and fellowships to students, build faculty excellence, and launch new programs and research efforts. We are grateful to God for the generous partnership of many alumni, other

individuals, churches, and foundations. These gifts are helping to move Duke Divinity School forward into preparing men and women who will serve their neighbors and lead the church of the future.

Our faculty continue to provide exemplary service in the classroom, for the church, and to the wider culture. Just one example is Edgardo Colón-Emeric, assistant professor of Christian theology, continues the Duke Divinity tradition of Methodist engagement in ecumenical initiatives. As part of the Joint International Commission for Dialogue between the World Methodist Council and the Roman Catholic Church, Colón-Emeric presented to Pope Francis the Spanish translation of the latest bilateral statement. Colón-Emeric has also been actively involved in Methodist churches and seminaries in Latin America, including an effort to train lay pastors in Guatemala that has involved Duke Divinity staff and doctoral students.

A number of efforts and programs at Duke Divinity School this year have sought to further our commitment to supporting and learning from students and communities that have been too-often marginalized. Our Convocation & Pastors' School featured professors, pastors, and activists who addressed ways that the church can dismantle bias and hate. The Center for Reconciliation had a full slate of programs, including a conversation series on navigating conflict that was open to the public; a pilgrimage to significant sites in Durham; and participation in reconciliation events in East Africa and Northeast Asia. Thanks to a grant from the General Board of Higher Education & Ministry's Young Clergy Initiative, Duke Divinity School received a grant to help develop leadership for the Black church within The United Methodist Church through mentorships, funded field education placements with experienced Black pastors, and attendance at the Convocation for Pastors of Black Churches. Within our school, Dean Elaine Heath has met regularly with the leaders of the Black Seminarians Union and a team of faculty and staff to address concerns around implicit bias in grading, training in cross-cultural competency, additional scholarship support for students, and staffing needs to support an increasingly diverse student population.

We remain deeply grateful for the relationships among The United Methodist Church, this Annual Conference, and Duke Divinity School. We look forward to working with you in the task of preparing men and women for Christian ministry. To learn more about Duke Divinity School, please visit our website at www.divinity.duke.edu.

Elaine A. Heath, Dean



GAMMON THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY – Atlanta, Georgia – www.gammon-itc.org

Gammon Theological Seminary, located in Atlanta, GA, is the United Methodist constituent member of the Interdenominational Theological Center (ITC), a consortium of historically African-American theological schools. Gammon/ITC is a co-educational, professional graduate school of theology. Its faculty personifies vigorous scholarship, rigorous academic discipline, and significant research in the service of the church and other communities in the world. Gammon/ITC is the world's premier resource for black church scholarship and faith-based solutions to the spiritual and socio-economic challenges confronting the African American community and beyond.

Founded in 1883 by the Methodist Episcopal Church and with assistance from the Freedman's Aid Society, today Gammon Theological Seminary is one of the 13 theological schools of The United Methodist Church. The faculty and administration of Gammon/ITC create an environment in which critical thinking, investigative reflection, decision making, and responsible action are fostered. Gammon/ITC is a member of the Atlanta University Center Complex, the world's largest enterprise of African American higher education. It is also a member of The University Center of Georgia and the Atlanta Theological Association. The school is fully accredited by the Association of Theological Schools and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

Gammon/ITC offers the following degree programs: the Master of Divinity, the Master of Arts in Christian Education, and the Doctor of Ministry. Admission is open to qualified men and women of The United Methodist Church.

The support of this Annual Conference helps Gammon/ITC students carry on a proud tradition. They are taught to think independently and communicate effectively. They are also challenged to become involved in finding solutions to problems that affect the human condition, and to become active in the community beyond this campus. Additionally, graduates of this institution are encouraged to maintain a lifelong desire for intellectual growth, spiritual development, and the acquisition of skills for the practice of ministry.

Gammon/ITC has had a very exciting and busy year living out its mission, which is to recruit, support and educate pastors and leaders for The United Methodist Church. Gammon Theological Seminary is extremely grateful to this Annual Conference for your support of theological education, and for your commitment to ensuring that God's church will be served by persons who are called and trained to lead us forward.

Ken J. Walden, Ph.D., President/Dean



METHODIST THEOLOGICAL SCHOOL IN OHIO – Delaware, Ohio – www.mtso.edu

Thank you for this opportunity to bring you news from MTSO. Here are a few highlights from a productive year.

Healthy Congregations Inc. moves in

MTSO entered into a mutually beneficial partnership with Healthy Congregations, an interfaith organization that equips leaders for thinking more clearly about families, relationships and faith communities. The MTSO campus now hosts Healthy Congregations' staff and offices, as well as many of its events. The relationship affords MTSO's students, faculty and staff the opportunity to participate in Healthy Congregations events at reduced cost.

MTSO and Ohio State unite around innovative food hub

The Ohio State University Initiative for Food and AgriCultural Transformation (InFACT) awarded MTSO a \$35,000 grant, which will help fund the development and testing of a new food hub model in Franklinton, a low-income Columbus community. This work brings together residents of Franklinton, the Franklinton Farms urban gardens, and faculty, staff and students from Ohio State and MTSO, including the staff of MTSO's Seminary Hill Farm. To increase Franklinton residents' access to affordable, local food, the project will use an online food ordering interface – a departure from the traditional brick-and-mortar model of food hubs.

Homiletics events encourage prophetic preaching

The year provided MTSO with two major opportunities to contribute to the craft of preaching. Women from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds gathered in September for Chloe's Circle, presented by MTSO's Theological Commons and WomanPreach! Inc., an organization founded by MTSO Interim Academic Dean Valerie Bridgeman to bring preachers into full prophetic voice. Participants explored the ways preachers can share truth in the face of disparity and injustice. In February, the Schooler Institute on Preaching featured lectures and preaching by Wil Gafney, associate professor of Hebrew Bible at Brite Divinity School and author of "Womanist Midrash: A Reintroduction to Women of the Torah and of the Throne."

Students take cross-cultural trip to South Africa

Cross-cultural immersion is a key part of MTSO students' preparation for ministry. Every Master of Divinity student at MTSO takes a cross-cultural immersion trip before graduating. In January, a group of students and faculty visited South Africa for 18 days. Among the stops was Soweto's Regina Mundi Catholic Church, which was central to the anti-Apartheid movement.

Danny Russell, Director of Communications



UNITED THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY – Dayton, Ohio – www.united.edu

“Now to him who by the power of God at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine...” (Ephesians 3:20)

United Theological Seminary in Dayton, Ohio, celebrated a 77% increase in new students for the fall of 2017. While 71 new students enrolled in September 2016, 126 new students enrolled in September 2017. This was made possible by increasing student aid opportunities and empowering faculty members, trustees and administrators to personally recommend candidates for a \$5,000 grant toward tuition. United experienced God’s provision, trusting what God said through St. Paul: “[God] is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine” (Ephesians 3:20).

Many of the seminary’s new students are current pastors who want to become more effective leaders for the Church through a Doctor of Ministry degree. United’s Doctor of Ministry program has 170 students enrolled this year from 29 states, 2 non-US countries and 27 Christian denominations. The average number of doctoral students in all Association of Theological Schools (ATS) is 60 students, making United one of the largest Doctor of Ministry programs among ATS member schools.

The Doctor of Ministry program provides academic rigor, peer group support, spiritual growth and practical application. Pastors identify a need within their community and, with the support of a peer group, mentor and United faculty, they develop a model of ministry that will resolve the challenge in their congregations or communities.

Rev. Rudy Rasmus, pastor of the 9,000-member St. John’s United Methodist Church in downtown Houston is a current doctoral student, who says he has been both challenged and supported in the DMin program.

“The program is rigorous,” Rev. Rasmus says. “It is contextual, it is intentional and the professors and staff are at the top of the form.”

United also has 212 students enrolled in the Master of Divinity degree program who usually seek to serve as pastors in local congregations. 88% of entering students are ordained or seeking ordination to serve a local congregation compared to 56% in other ATS member schools.

United also provides a two-year Master of Arts in Christian Ministries degree, which many persons serving as Directors of Christian Education or other local church positions pursue.

United provides flexible course options: 90% of students take at least one course online, and courses are also available as traditional on-campus courses, week-long on-campus intensive classes and virtual courses that meet simultaneously on campus and in the cloud via webcast.

If you are interested in pursuing further seminary education, contact United’s Office of Admissions at admissions@united.edu or call [800-322-5817](tel:800-322-5817).

Kent Millard, President

BOARD OF PENSION AND HEALTH BENEFITS (CBOPHB)

PENSIONS, DISABILITY BENEFITS, and HEALTH CARE

As we prepare to begin a new history in 2019 as the Michigan Conference, this will be the final historical report for the West Michigan Conference. On behalf of the CBOPHB, we are pleased to share the following information which identifies and affirms a positive direction for our future.

Regarding 2017 Retirement (CRSP) and Welfare (CPP & UMLife) benefits: Thank you to all for your continued faithfulness in funding this ministry through our monthly billings.

View to the future: Beginning in 2019, churches will recognize the direct billing for the retirement and welfare plans under the new name of Benefits Ministry Shares. Benefits Ministry Shares will be billed monthly to every local church to fund current conference benefits plan liabilities as well as all ministries of the conference benefits office. The amount of the Benefits Ministry Shares will be calculated using a fixed percentage of each church’s clergy compensation. The percentage will be determined on an annual basis, and adjusted to reflect appointments of half time or less, retiree appointments, or District Superintendent Assignments.

Regarding health care: The CBOPHB reaffirms its commitment to providing a comprehensive, sustainable group health care plan while constantly assessing the financial realities for all involved parties. The active and retiree group health care plan designs for the Michigan Conference are currently being finalized and will become effective January 1, 2019. Details will be presented in the Summer and Fall of 2018 as they become available.

Current Health Care Plans: The current active and retiree group health care plans will remain in effect through 2018.

Retiree Plan: The plan design of the retiree supplemental plan may experience changes in 2019. However, per 2017 Annual Conference action, the eligibility, funding, and termination provisions of the West Michigan retiree group health care plan are scheduled to remain in effect for all members of the former West Michigan Conference who are retired or who are eligible to retire by January 1, 2024. Members who are not eligible to retire by January 1, 2024 will follow the provisions of the new retiree group health care plan of the Michigan Conference once they are established.

Details of both the current active and retiree health care plans are available through the Conference Benefits Office.

Post-Retirement Health Care Liability: One item that will disappear in 2019 is the monthly billing to finance the unfunded liability for post-retirement health care. Per 2017 Annual Conference action, an additional \$6.1 million (according to the 2017 Actuarial Valuation Study) will be available when designated reserves for post-retirement health care combine that will immediately relieve the current unfunded status. This is a positive result of our unity, and means that the post-retirement liability for all subscribers in the new conference will be fully funded as of January 1, 2019.

A TRANSITIONAL WORD

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

Louis W. Grettenberger, President
Donald J. Emmert, Director of Conference Benefits & HR

RACIAL ETHNIC LOCAL CHURCH COMMITTEE (RELC)

The purpose of this committee is to develop, strengthen, and support ethnic churches, ethnic and multi-ethnic ministries and discipleship with diverse people and communities in West Michigan Conference. This has been a mission priority, "a plan to organization" for four decades. Not only has it been a plan, it is a "reality."

Forty years ago, RELC consisted of only one African-American church and three Native-American missions. Understanding the urgency in our current social condition – to make disciples of Christ for the transformation of the world – I asked the Conference Leadership Team to teach ethnic church leaders how to "fish" and build lives through God's abundance for diversity, equality, and inclusion.

Since 1978, West Michigan Conference has established and provided support for more than fifteen racial ethnic churches and ministries conference-wide. Today RELC is a rainbow of diverse races, cultures and nationalities – African-American, American, Korean, Vietnamese, Hispanic, African, and multi-ethnic congregations. West Michigan Conference, you have earned a "hallelujah praise" for your support and commitment to and for a diverse conference / church.

RELC has seen many changes over the years with increase and decline of ethnic churches, ministries, and memberships.* We can be compared to the New York Stock Exchange.

Currently, we support three churches and two multi ethnic ministries:

1. Washington Heights, Battle Creek (African-American);
2. La Nueva Esperanza, Grand Rapid (Hispanic)
3. Grand Rapids Vietnamese Church

Highlighting a few of RELC accomplishments for 2018:

1. An increase in church membership, church attendance, and church programs – especially the men and the under 35 age group.
2. Envisioning and creating “out of the box” ministries, such as:
 - a. 3Ps - Park, Play and Pray project. Project designed to reach youth and young adult males.
 - b. Camp Christine, a UMW program designed to find shelter, health resources, job training, and job placement for the homeless; working one-on-one in a group of three.
 - c. Increase involvement in creating partnerships with community agencies, churches, schools, Greek organizations, etc.
 - d. Our Vietnamese church celebrated 30 years of United Methodist worship in the US. More than 250 individuals attended.

* Editor’s note: Responsibility and funding of the several Native American congregations was transferred to the Michigan Indian Workers Conference in 2015.

Mildred Mallard, Chair

COMMISSION ON RELIGION AND RACE

The work of the Commission on Religion and Race is to create a Church, which at all levels reflects the values and diversity of God. We hope to build the capacity of The United Methodist Church to become contextually relevant and reach more people, younger people and more diverse people as we make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. We do this through work in three core areas.

Institutional Equity

We will critically examine expressions of ethnic, racial and cultural injustice in local and global contexts: setting goals for overcoming them, intentionally measuring progress, and resourcing culturally competent leaders to promote and sustain systemic equity.

Intercultural Competency

We will partner with leaders in the denomination to develop inter-culturally competent leaders who are engaged in ministry that promotes and honors intentional diversity and equity.

Vital Congregations

We will work with the churches in the conference to create churches which reflect the diversity of the community in which they are located. We hope that churches will initiate holy conversations about race, cultural diversity and systemic equity. We will share the results of these conversations in the hope that they will grow a movement that honors all of God’s creation.

The General Commission on Religion and Race has developed a series of videos to promote Vital Conversations on Race, Culture and Justice. Our West Michigan CORR has been promoting pilot programs to hold these discussions in local churches.

We hope that this work will continue with the new Board of Justice.

Michael Johnson, Chair

TRUSTEES, WEST MICHIGAN CONFERENCE

The Board of Trustees of the West Michigan Conference is incorporated in the State of Michigan and is organized and functions under the mandate of the *2016 Book of Discipline*, ¶2512.

We are pleased to report and celebrate with you a brief review of some activities in 2017:

1. The Board of Trustees cared for conference property and equipment. The board holds the deeds to all conference real estate including one camp site (Lake Michigan) that is operated by the Michigan Area United Methodist Camping Board of Directors. Other conference real property directly managed by the board includes two parsonages, the former Conference Center in Grand Rapids, and the bishop’s residence in DeWitt Township which is jointly owned with the Detroit Annual Conference.
2. The Board of Trustees transferred the deeds to four camp sites from the conference to MI Area United Methodist Camping as of January 1, 2017. The four camps are: Albright, Crystal Springs, Lakeview and Wesley Woods.

3. The Board of Trustees along with the Detroit Annual Conference Board of Trustees entered into two lease agreements. One in DeWitt for a new office building that houses the Treasury, Benefits, Clergy Excellence and Congregational Vibrancy departments and the second in Grand Rapids that houses the Grand Rapids District Office, Director of Connectional Ministries and other conference staff.
4. The Board of Trustees has been working to finalize the sale of the former West Michigan Conference Office located at 11 Fuller Ave SE in Grand Rapids. It is expected that the sale will be completed before Annual Conference.
5. The Board of Trustees has been working to finalize the sale of the former Christ United Methodist Church located in Lansing. It is expected that the sale will be completed before Annual Conference.

William Gehman, President
David Dobbs, Conference Treasurer

UNITED METHODIST COMMUNITY HOUSE

Summary of ministry

United Methodist Community House (UMCH) has been a venerable, trusted resource in Grand Rapids, Michigan, providing expansive services for everyone from infants to senior citizens in a warm, inclusive, multi-cultural atmosphere since 1902. UMCH continues to fulfill its mission *“to increase the ability of children, youth, adults and families to succeed in a diverse community”* by treating people with dignity and respect while providing the support services they need. Some of UMCH’s strengths include:

- Proximity of the facility to its client base.
- Proven and recognized history of innovation in a full spectrum of services.
- The series of support services that UMCH provides (child care, food, transportation) that eliminates barriers for people in need of services.
- UMCH’s long history of collaboration with other service providers in and around Grand Rapids.

The work we do at UMCH is a direct result of the needs that are emerging in our target population. We are centrally located in a neighborhood that is vulnerable and whose residents are in need of a trusted community center that has supportive services. Increased pressures on families and single-parent homes, reductions in school services, increases in crime and drugs, prostitution, alcohol and tobacco addictions combine to create a situation of crisis for many of the individuals in our neighborhood.

Programming includes:

- ⇒ Need: Quality, affordable child care
Addressing the Need: UMCH Nationally Accredited Child Development Center
- ⇒ Need: A safe and nurturing place for children to go before and after school
Addressing the Need: Before and After-School Center through the Grand Rapids Public Schools LOOP Program
- ⇒ Need: Assistance for seniors adults (meals, activities, transportation)
Addressing the Need: UMCH Senior Development Center
- ⇒ Need: Assistance for women involved in the vicious cycle of prostitution and substance abuse
Addressing the Need: UMCH First Step House (transitional housing for women)

Annually, UMCH serves over 800 individuals through our four areas of programming: children, youth, adults and seniors.

Staffing Changes

At the end of 2017, UMCH said goodbye to two prominent staff members, Richard Clanton, CEO, and Anita Christopher, Director of Senior Programs, as they welcomed retirement. UMCH has welcomed a new CEO, Eric Williams, to the agency and we are excited to see his plan for the agency unfold.

Staff is encouraged for the future, as we embark with new leadership and a renewed vision for the agency. We encourage you to visit www.umchousegr.org and take a firsthand look at all that is happening at UMCH. Through our efforts we focus on honoring and respecting our tradition, but look forward to an exciting, dynamic future. We hope you share our journey as we continue to transform the organization under our new leadership.

Eric Williams, Chief Executive Officer

UNITED METHODIST FOUNDATION OF MICHIGAN

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

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

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

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

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

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

David S. Bell, President and Executive Director

UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

The year 2017 began as three more conference team members attended the annual national Leadership Development Days (LDD) held in Charlotte, North Carolina in January. The rest of the team had attended the same training in November of 2016, in St. Louis, Missouri. Conference officers from across the U.S. attend these training sessions which are led by the skilled women from the National Office of United Methodist Women.

An additional plus to attending this week-end training was that the two UMW conference presidents in Michigan had several opportunities to discuss a process to bring the two groups together as the two conferences become the new Michigan Conference. The decision was made to establish a steering committee and begin meeting as soon as possible. Initially this committee was comprised of the executive committee members of both Detroit and West Michigan Conference UMW, including the Detroit Conference webmaster, plus three national officers. The steering committee began meeting in March and met almost monthly throughout the year. University United Methodist Church in East Lansing graciously welcomed this group for their monthly meetings.

Within months the committee expanded to include the communications coordinators. The committee's primary purpose was to review all UMW procedures, including the standing rules, finances and budget, and preparation of a slate of proposed conference officers, in preparation for the two Michigan conferences transitioning into the new Michigan Conference by the end of 2018.

The organization, now known as United Methodist Women, began in 1869, and is in the middle of a five-year celebration of the 150 years of this and its predecessor organizations. The training for conference liaisons for the 150th Anniversary of United Methodist Women was held at Scarrett Bennett Training Center in Nashville, Tennessee, in February. Women in their local units, districts and conferences across the country have been and will continue making contributions to the 150th Anniversary Endowment Fund. This included

the third annual United Methodist Women Day of Giving on March 23, 2017. The culmination for this celebration, and hopefully reaching the goal of \$60 million, will occur in 2019.

In June, at the joint Detroit and West Michigan Annual Conference, held at the Grand Traverse Resort in Traverse City, United Methodist Women from both conferences shared display space for their promotional materials and hosted a joint luncheon with close to 150 women in attendance. The program consisted of getting acquainted and updating everyone about the process and progress of the two conferences transitioning into the new Michigan Conference.

All six districts in West Michigan Conference held various events throughout the year, i.e., spring renewals / spiritual growth retreats, mission days, social action days; and, hosting their respective district annual celebrations and business meetings in September. The 12 districts in the Michigan Area (6 districts each in West Michigan and Detroit conferences) will be realigned to 9 new districts in the new Michigan Conference. The Conference Annual Celebration and Business Meeting was held October 21, at Mt. Pleasant First United Methodist Church. The keynote speaker was Devon Herrell, Wesley Foundation Director at Ferris State University. On Friday, October 20, a district officer training was held on the Charter for Racial Justice. The special participants on the panel included: Randie Clawson, Conference Mission Coordinator for Social Action; Nichea VerVeer Guy, previous Conference President; Simmie Proctor, Conference Mission Coordinator for Spiritual Growth; and Marchelle Phelps, the President of Detroit Conference United Methodist Women.

Several members of our conference team attended the Detroit Conference UMW Leadership/Counterpart Training and annual celebration and business meeting at Brighton United Methodist Church, October 27-28. The keynote speaker was Marva Pope, pastor of People's United Methodist Church in Detroit.

Mission u (of the south) was held in July at Albion College. Mission u of the North was held in October at the Gaylord United Methodist Church. This event is a wonderful example of how the two Michigan conferences have already worked together for the last 38 years. The new 2017 studies included: "Missionary Conferences in the US," led by Julie Yoder Elmore, pastor of Coldwater United Methodist Church; and "Living in a Covenant Community," led by Deb Johnson, retired pastor. The repeat study was "Climate Justice," led by Clarice McKenzie and Suzanne Hewitt.

In November, seven members of the conference team, plus our representative on the Program Advisory Group, attended the annual Leadership Development Days in St. Louis, Missouri.

We, who are United Methodist Women, are very proud of the fact that this is the largest faith based organization of women in the world.

Linda Darrow, President

WEST MICHIGAN CONFERENCE UNITED METHODIST WOMEN TREASURER'S REPORT

December 31, 2017

CONFERENCE PLEDGE TO MISSION 2017		<u>\$151,746.00</u>
MISSION GIVING – 2017		
Pledge to Mission	\$117,471.27	
Special Mission Recognition	6,865.00	
Gift to Mission	3,067.50	
Gift in Memory	4,375.26	
World Thank Offering	<u>11,032.88</u>	
TOTAL MISSION GIVING		\$142,811.91
MISSION GIVING PLUS – 2017		
Call to Prayer and Self-Denial	\$6,082.02	
UMW Legacy Funds	15,562.66	
UMW Special Funds	2,367.42	
National Missions – UMCH Operations	2,325.00	
UMCOR	<u>2,725.25</u>	
TOTAL MISSION GIVING PLUS		\$29,062.35
TOTAL 2017 REMITTANCE TO UNITED METHODIST WOMEN, INC.		<u>\$171,874.26</u>
GIVING TO CAMPUS MINISTRIES – Wesley House: CMU, WMU & FSU		<u>\$1,308.82</u>
ADDITIONAL AMOUNT COLLECTED FOR UMCH MAINTENANCE	\$21,228.56	
ADMINISTRATIVE and MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT EXPENSES*		<u>\$71,317.67</u>

*Amount retained by Conference for Conference/District Expenses

Julia Paradine-Rice, UMW Treasurer