

Annual Reports to the California-Nevada Annual Conference, 2018

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Leadership Development Area

Young People's and Camping Ministry Report - ACS 2018

Young People's Ministry in the CA-NV Annual Conference continues to thrive! This year we held two Confirmation Retreats with Bishop Carcaño, including one at the Lake Tahoe UMC & Retreat Center in Kings Beach CA - a new location for our Confirmation Retreat making it easier for those youth from Great Northern District to attend. Additionally, our Youth Workers Retreat at the UM Waller Center in San Francisco was well-attended with fruitful information shared.

This year at Annual Conference Session, we have more Young Adult delegates attending than we have in the recent past. Our Conference Committee on Young People's Ministry (CCYPM) continues to support Youth and Young Adult delegates to Annual Conference Session as well as a variety of other mission, service, and events. One such event is Global Young People's Convocation in Johannesburg, South Africa in July 2018. We have three Young People from our Conference attending this event of celebration and leadership development of United Methodist Young People in the global community. A few days are added on to the end of the trip for mission and service in South Africa.

A variety of opportunities are available for Camp this Summer: Lodestar Camps, Monte Toyon Camps, Asian Camps, Fijian Camp, Hispanic Camp, and Family Camps! In addition to these many Summer Camps at various locations, we look forward to September 2018 for Faith Xtreme 5, a Youth Retreat based around faith development through praise, worship and message with time for fellowship, service, and connecting with youth around the Conference. For Young Adults, we have an event - 'I Am Called' - in the works as well. In 2018, we have much to celebrate and much to look forward to in Young People's Ministries in the CA-NV Conference.

Congregational Development Area

Committee on Native Americans (CONAM)

*Number on agency: 12 Number present when voting:
Voting for: 7 Voting Against: 0 Abstaining: 0
Adopted: June 15, 2018 Number of Meetings: 10*

The past year tells stories which carry highs and lows amidst the challenges and opportunities facing our four churches serving Native American communities and also saw the beginning of efforts to reach out to Native members of other local churches..

In response to the ACS's 2016 Act of Repentance, Berkeley Methodist United Church designed and crafted beautiful quilts and made an intimate, informal presentation to CONAM at ACS 2017, asking that the quilts be passed on to each of the four churches.

Volunteer work crews did extensive repair to the deck at the church in Klamath, with funds from the 2016 ACS offering helping to pay for materials. Continued planning occurred for other work at the other three churches.

CONAM Chair Derrick Rainbow and Schurz UMC pastor Nathan Sam-Whistler attended the Northeastern Jurisdiction CONAM Conference in Vineland, New Jersey in October of 2017. It was an opportunity for learning, and sharing with brothers and sisters involved in more developed CONAM ministries and connection. Nathan also served as an observer at the United Nations at the request of the Executive Secretary of Indigenous Ministries of the GBGM. CONAM supported Nathan's continued participation in ClayM trainings, where he was joined by Pastors Isabel Budinger (Church of the Redwoods, Klamath) and Roy Pina, (Round Valley UMC). Growing local Native spiritual leaders is a key component to supporting Native ministries.

Beginning in October 2017, a team composed of Conference Superintendent Linda Caldwell, Kevin Murphy, Derrick Rainbow, (both CA/NV CONAM), Charles Browers (Alaska Missionary Conference) and Kristina Gonzalez (Pacific Northwest) planned a gathering of the eight conference CONAMs in the Western Jurisdiction for March, 2018, to explore the creation of a Jusdictional CONAM.

CONAM Chair Derrick Rainbow was a workshop presenter (Living in Balance) at the Annual Meeting and Celebration of Cal/Nevada United Methodist Women on October 21, 2017 at Loomis United Methodist Church, Loomis, CA. CONAM member Doug Sibley reached out to connect with Native members of local churches in urban areas. An active Conference CONAM Facebook page regularly shared updates on various Native concerns from around the U.S., and connected Conference church members with national Native UMC leaders.

CONAM members remain committed to a renewed effort over the next year to apprise local churches of the challenges and opportunities facing the four churches serving Native peoples: Round Valley UMC (near Covelo, CA, a confederated Tribal community), Schurz UMC (Walker River Paiute Reservation, Nevada), Church of the Redwoods UMC in Klamath, CA, (near the Yurok nation) and St. Paul's Community UMC in Point Arena (near the Manchester/Point Arena Pomo). St. Paul's UMC blessed Pastor Debbra Lysek in anticipation of her departure after four years of service, during which local tribal members joined the church.

CONAM members gratefully recall the authentic expressions made at the 2016 Act of Repentance and look forward to renewed relationships and new connections with Native peoples and Native members of local churches, as well as with our four UMCs located on or near Native reservations.

Committee on New and Vital Congregations

Submitted by Rev. Matt Smith

The Committee on New & Vital Congregations has been in a year of significant transition. It has funded seven ministry projects over the last year. *Elko* received a grant in the amount of \$10,00 for ministry in Elko. *Embrace* received a grant in the amount of \$15,000 for ministry in Oakland. *Alum Rock* received a

grant in the amount of \$7,500 for Spanish Extension Ministry. *First UMC San Jose* received a grant in the amount of \$13,500 for Spanish Extension ministry in San Jose. *St. Mark's* received a grant in the amount of \$7,500 for ministry in Orinda. *Fresno Hmong New Faith Community* received a grant in the amount of \$7,500 for ministry in Fresno. *Reno Faith Fellowship* received a grant in the amount of \$7,500 for ministry in Reno.

Compassion and Justice Ministry Area

Advocacy and Justice Committee

Rev. Michael Yoshii, Chair
Rev. Jeanelle Ablola, Vice-Chair
Mona Sargent, Secretary
Yvonne Turner, Chair - Israel/Palestine Task Force
Rev. Jeanelle Ablola, Chair - Philippine Solidarity Task Force
Linda Kuruhara, Chair - Immigration Task Force
Rev. Hyok In Kwon, Chair - Korea Unification & Peace Task Force
Joyceanne Beachem, Chair- Disability Awareness Task Force
Rosie Bachand, Chair - Recovery Ministries
Jenny Kwon, Chair - Comfort Women Task Force
Jim Cramer, Peace with Justice and Ecumenical Grants
Jean Reynolds, Peace with Justice Coordinator
Belinda Robinson, Member at Large
Rev. Hubert Ivery, Member at Large

The Advocacy & Justice Committee houses several task forces which have their own work groups and establish their own specific goals. The A & J Committee supports these individual ministries and has been working to establish stronger partnerships and create a collaborative sense of mission and purpose.

To these ends, the committee organized an annual conference gathering on April 7, 2018 commemorating the 50th anniversary of the assassination of Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. The event was held at the Taylor Memorial United Methodist Church in Oakland and focused on the triple evils of racism, militarism, and poverty as articulated by King during the last year of his life. Our theme, "Building Beloved Community" underscored the inter-relatedness of our various ministries while creating a collaborative spirit among our different task force groups and participants. The event included worship, and keynote speeches by Rev. Phil Lawson, Council of Elders and David Wildman, Executive Secretary for Human Rights General Board of Global Ministries. Break out groups were facilitated by members of our committee and other conference resource persons making the connections between different issues. The event was also co-sponsored by other committees of the annual conference including: Leadership Development MFA, Reconciling Ministries Network, Black Methodists for Church Renewal, UMW, Christian Unity and Interreligious Relationships, Mission Service Committee, and Partners in Ministry. Over 200 persons attending the event

and one of the follow up actions of the event was the endorsement of the Poor People's Campaign - which also draws on the legacy of Dr. King.

The committee also administers the Peace with Justice Grants and Ecumenical Grants. Peace with Justice grants supports social justice projects from local congregations. Ecumenical grants supports social justice ministries beyond the local church which partner with United Methodist congregations and/or the annual conference.

Partners in Ministry Area

Connectional Resources

Council on Finance and Administration

Number on agency: 13 voting, 4 non-voting;

Number present when voting: 10 voting, 2 non-voting;

Number voting for: 12; Number voting against: 0; Number abstaining: 0;

Date adopted: April 1, 2018; Number of meetings held: 6

For the first time in living memory, the California-Nevada Annual Conference paid our general and jurisdictional apportionments in full! As the annual conference rises to the call of faithfulness through the apportioned tithe, Cal-Nevada is more fully supporting mission and ministry at all levels of the connection. Thank you!

Tithe collections for 2017 increased by \$251,671 or 4.7% compared with 2016, exceeding the Council's budgeted revenue target amount. Spending was below budget by \$246,423.

At the close of books for 2017, the balance of the conference operating fund was \$1,779,544 or 3.9 months reserve. By standing rule, the Council targets a fund balance between 2.5 and 3 months reserve. The amount above the maximum reserve, totaling \$363,284, was added to the projected amount Cal-Nevada could pay in general and jurisdictional apportionment payments for 2017, thus resulting in 100% fulfillment.

The Council brought a 2018 budget recommendation to the 2017 Annual Conference Session. The aspirational budget of \$6,450,000 was passed as recommended.

The Council's outgoing and incoming presidents actively participated in the Core Team meetings during 2017. The Council's president was among those who received the draft report of Wespath FACT consulting process; the Council looks forward to engaging the recommendations identified therein in the coming year. Additionally, the Council was represented on the Cal-Nevada United Methodist Foundation's investment committee.

The CFA Unit Insurance committee continued to contract with Philadelphia Insurance Company for the program's property and liability insurance. The committee monitors the claims experience of our churches while seeking to maximize coverage at the lowest cost possible. The premiums paid by churches are subsidized by savings realized from the portion of our property insurance that is self-funded. The net asset balance of this fund was \$140,305 on December 31, 2017. The net asset balance of the earthquake relief grant fund was \$1,641,478.

The Council and Conference Personnel Committee began a new performance evaluation process, followed by work with PayScale to establish pay ranges for our staff positions. The Council plans to move into a system that would include the potential for merit increases during 2018, effective for 2019 pay.

The Council received the 2016 audit of the California-Nevada Annual Conference (excluding the Board of Pensions) from Macias Consulting Group, public accountants. The audit received an unqualified opinion meaning that the conference's financial records and statements are fairly and appropriately represented. Due to change in the structure of Macias Consulting Group, the decision was made to seek a new auditing firm. After a regional RFP and interviews, the audit subcommittee of the Council selected the Sacramento firm, Gilbert Associates with whom we will be working for the 2017 audit.

CFA monitored the financial condition of the conference with the help of financial reports prepared by conference staff Karen Foster, Lesya Susid, and Ajesh Kumar. The Council thanks Scott Wylie for his service as out-going president and Diane Knudsen for carrying out her broad range of duties for the last 23 years as our Conference Treasurer and Director of Administrative Services.

Conference Statistician's Report 2018

ANOTHER YEAR ...

Thank you to everybody who has been involved in gathering the information on which this statistical report is based! It is never a fun task, and the results are not always popular, but nevertheless it is a valuable tool in our understanding of the annual conference.

In this report, I will present a summary of the 2017 statistics, and then take a longer look at the conference statistics over the life of the United Methodist Church

SUMMARY

This year, we received full or partial statistical reports from 346 of the 354 churches in the conference due to report - 278 by the deadline, an improvement on last year. We will continue a similar process for next year of sending initial requests by email and following up later by paper mail and telephone as necessary.

Looking first at church membership, we added 1,554 members during the year – 1,246 on profession or reaffirmation of faith (297 of which were by confirmation), 18 on net transfer from other UM churches and 290 on net transfer from non-UM churches. This is slightly higher than in 2016.

Overall, though, conference membership continued to fall with 1,051 removed by death, 1,091 by charge conference action, 253 withdrawals and 421 removed as a result of membership audits. At the end of 2017, conference membership stood at 71,004 – down 1,262 from last year's figure of 72,266.

Average worship attendance was down from 28,907 to 27,622 (including 723 worshipping online – the first year we have reported this number).

The detailed statistics are found elsewhere in the Conference Journal and on the conference web site.

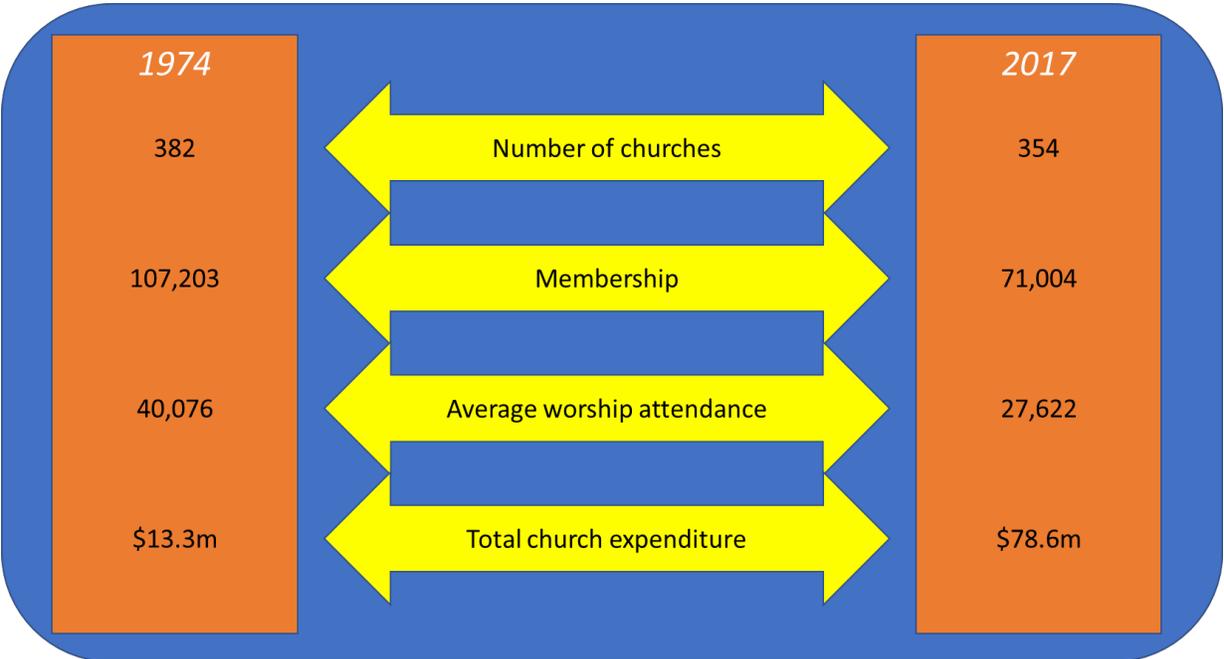
FIFTY YEARS (ALMOST) OF THE CALIFORNIA-NEVADA ANNUAL CONFERENCE

In the year that we mark 50 years of the United Methodist Church, it seems appropriate to look back at this period and observe some trends ... and perhaps look forward a little.

As in last year’s report, I am grateful to the Data Services team at GCFA in Nashville for making historical statistical reports available in an easily digestible form. Currently, these only go back to 1974, so we will restrict our analysis to 44 of the 50 years since formation.

A word of caution is appropriate first, however. In 1974, all statistical gathering was done on paper which was then transcribed into print in the conference journals, and later imported in a machine-readable form. It is quite possible that some errors may have crept in during this time! In addition, the statistical forms have changed a number of times – mostly on quadrennium boundaries. Some data that were collected in earlier years are no longer collected – other items have been added in later years. The historical view attempts to report comparable numbers throughout the period, but there may be some discontinuities. Finally, the instructions of *what* to report have changed from time to time – and in some cases this seems to have had a significant effect on the reported numbers. So, grab yourself a bag of salt and let’s dig in ...

Summary



To those who have read the statistician’s report over a number of years, it will come as no surprise to know that the absolute numbers – membership and worship attendance – have been falling over this period.

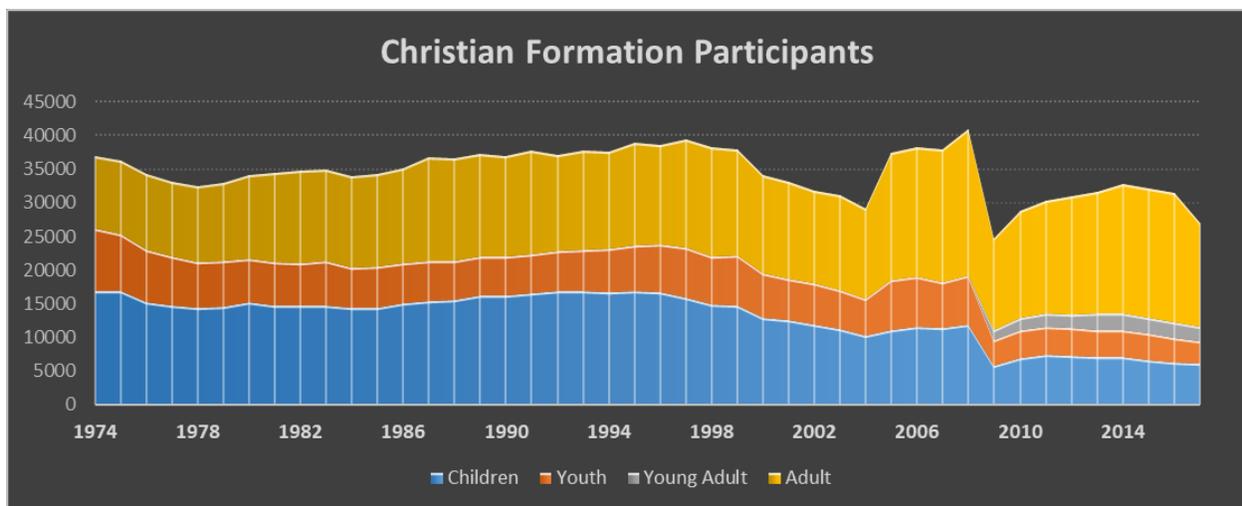
Membership has been on a straight-line decline during the whole time – although as I reported last year, this decline is almost entirely among those who would identify as “White”, with other ethnic groups steady or growing. Worship attendance shows a steady decline for the past 20 years. So ... how to account for this?



¹In the graphs, membership is on the right axis, all other metrics are on the left axis

- Transfers are a positive influence. In only one of the last 44 years have we transferred out more people than we received.
- Professions of Faith (including restorations) have declined steadily for the past 20 years, from a peak of almost 4,000 in 1992 to just 1,246 last year.
- Baptisms, likewise, have declined from a peak of over 2,600 in 1982 to 613 last year. More on this shortly.
- It is commonly thought that we are an aging church – and this may well be correct (although we do not collect statistics to show this), but the numbers of deaths recorded has remained within a pretty narrow range throughout this period.
- The number of persons removed each year from our membership rolls through withdrawal, charge conference action, or simply membership audits, has actually reduced during this period.

Taken together, though, we can see that for the past 20 years or so, although numbers removed from the membership roll have declined, we have simply not been replacing these people.



Much of what we have looked at thus far is in the form of trailing indicators – we know that membership has declined because we have not been bringing in sufficient new members.

Of more interest would be leading indicators – those that might tell us what to expect in the next 20 years. One item that could be of interest would be an age profile of the conference – but this is one set of statistics that we do not gather. Nonetheless, we have some proxies for this in the form of Christian Formation groups and, as mentioned earlier, baptisms.

The number of children reported in Christian Formation groups has fallen by almost two-thirds (from almost 17,000 to just over 6,000) which, taken with the sharp decline in the number of baptisms may be an indication of lean times ahead.

SO, WHAT ABOUT YOU? CHECK OUT WWW.UMDATA.ORG

How does your church fit into this picture? There's now an easy way for you to explore past statistics. Check out the UMC's new online directory and statistics site and let me know what aspects of *your* statistics you'd like to examine further.

MISSIONINSITE

Don't forget that the Annual Conference has a subscription to the "MissionInsite" demographics tool. That means that it is available to all churches without charge, which makes it very straightforward to generate a report of your local area by radius, zip code or some other area that you draw yourself! Check it out on the conference web site

– you might be surprised what you find.

IN CONCLUSION

I look forward to working further with local churches to explore trends and relate them to broader demographic information. You may have questions about changes in your local church statistics, or about comparisons with similar-sized churches across the conference, or you might just be curious about some other trend which you have observed. I would welcome your calls or emails to discuss these topics further.

Finally, my thanks to Diane Knudsen in the conference office for assistance in gathering the statistics, to Cindy Buna, Mervet Mitri and Robyn Peterson for their persistence in encouraging churches to submit their statistics and to Bishop Carcaño and the Cabinet for their invaluable insights and advice throughout the year.

Don't forget, you can always find resources to help with your statistical analysis on the conference web site:

<http://www.cnumc.org/statistics>

I look forward to seeing many of you at the upcoming Annual Conference Session.

Respectfully

submitted, Adrian

Pell

Conference Statistician

Email:

statistics@calnevumc.org

Phone: (530) 863-0254

MORE FACTS ABOUT OUR

304

(out of 354) existed in
1974

70

had *higher* worship
attendance in 2017

than in 1974

52

had no baptisms in
the past five years

41

had *more* children in
groups in 2017 than
in 1974

48

had no professions of
faith in the past three
years

Report of the Conference Board of Trustees

Number on agency: 8 Number present when voting: 6

Voting For: 6 ; Voting Against 0; Abstaining: 0

Adopted: 2/24/18; Number of meetings: 3

The Conference Board of Trustees holds title to and maintains five district parsonages, one episcopal residence and the United Methodist Center. The Board holds in trust the parsonage of the former Hamilton UMC of San Francisco and the property of the former Orangevale UMC property, presently occupied by the Cho-Un Korean UMC.

During the calendar year 2017, all five district parsonages were rented, and two were managed by professional property managers. Most of the net rental income of the parsonages is used to fund housing allowances for the five district superintendents. A property manager was also used to care for the former Hamilton UMC parsonage.

The 2017 Annual Conference Session approved legislation to sell the former Bayview district parsonage in Richmond. The property was sold in November 2017.

Improvements continued to be made to the new UM Center. Phase II of the United Methodist Center improvements continued with new tables, chairs and credenzas for the largest meeting room, glass double doors into the courtyard and interior signage.

Management of the Sacramento parsonage was taken over from the property manager. Improvements were made throughout the home before it was rented to a new tenant in early 2018. The property will continue to be managed internally by staff and the board.

The episcopal residence continues to be rented out with the net proceeds applied to the bishop's housing allowance.

The Board also has reviewed financial statements as presented by the Conference Treasurer and has approved planned maintenance and repair items on the aforementioned properties.

The Board has fulfilled its responsibilities as defined in the Book of Discipline.

Respectfully Submitted By: Harold Caudle, President

CONFERENCE BOARD OF PENSIONS

Number on Agency: 12 Number present when voting: 12

Number voting for: 12 Number voting against: 0

Date adopted: June 1, 2018

Number of meetings held: 3

Gary Grundman, Chair

1. The Board is the agent for the United Methodist Church and the California-Nevada Annual Conference in a significant economic ministry: adequate benefits for retired United Methodist clergy, their dependents and their survivors. Due to inflation and added responsibility for years of service, each succeeding year demands a larger dollar figure to carry out this responsibility. After evaluation of the many factors involved, the Board annually determines the cost of an adequate pension and benefit program for the following year, and administers the program.

Paul Extrum-Fernandez, is employed as the Board's Executive Officer and Conference Benefits Officer (CBO); also employed by the Board of Pensions are Brian Grimmer, Assistant Conference Benefits Officer, and Andrea Winchester, Office Manager. Together, they serve by working with Wespeth, the Conference Health Plan providers, the Cabinet, the Endowment Board, the Board of Ordained Ministry, and individual constituents within the Annual Conference. They also administer pension reserve funds and make regular detailed reports to the Conference Board of Pensions.

2. During 2018, California-Nevada clergy participated fully in the Clergy Retirement Security Program, (CRSP), and the Comprehensive Protection Plan (CPP) of the United Methodist Church. Because local congregations make pension contributions for clergy through a direct billing system, all plan participation is administered by the Conference Board of Pensions. During 2018, staff continued to promote the tremendous importance to pastors and lay workers of the denomination's Personal Investment Plan (UMPIP), and continued to assist pastors with payroll matters and compliance testing on the current 403(b) 'elective deferral' limits.

3. The Board of Pensions also administers the Conference health care plans for active clergy and lay workers. Since 2013, the Conference has offered two health plans for active workers; a Kaiser HMO plan and a Blue Shield PPO plan. Over 500 clergy and their dependents were enrolled in our health insurance programs. During 2018, Board of Pensions staff continued to counsel and assist constituents in the use of these managed care programs. The Board continues to monitor the health care programs and costs closely.

4. The Board of Pensions also administers four different Health Care Programs for approximately 330 retired clergy, spouses and surviving dependents. The 'Health Care Support Fund', established to assist retirees in need of help with payment of these Minimum Premiums, continued to be administered by Board staff.

5. Since 1944, the Board of Pensions has administered the Death Benefit Program and/or the Death 5. Benefit-Plus Program, providing term life insurance coverage for as many as 700 Conference constituents each year, both clergy and lay employees. By General Conference action, these formerly separate programs were made part of the 'Comprehensive Protection Plan' (CPP, for clergy) and the 'Basic Protection Plan' (BPP, for lay employees). During 2018, the Board of Pensions continued to work directly with the beneficiaries and survivors of those covered by these benefits, as well as administer the current coverage for the full-time lay employees of the Annual conference.

6. The Board of Pensions remains grateful for the Conference Claimants Endowment Board (CCEB), which continued its strong work in support of retired clergy benefits, and related services for retired clergy and surviving dependents. The Board recognizes the tremendous value of the \$1.6 Million annual gift from the Endowment Board, which now provides 100% of the Annual Conference-related funding for the Retiree health care plans. During 2018, Conference Claimants health insurance premium subsidies totaled approximately \$1.2 million; \$400,000 of the Endowment Board gift was directed to pre-1982 pension liability payments. The Board of Pensions encourages all persons to become acquainted with the programs of the Endowment Board, and to support that Board in their work to help fund the Conference retiree benefit programs.

7. The Board carries out its work with the help of the following standing committees, which also meet regularly during the year:

- A. The Executive Committee
- B. The Investment Committee
- C. The Health & Hospitalization Committee
- D. The Joint Committee on Medical Leave
- E. The Personnel Committee

8. The Board of Pensions operates in accordance with the requirements of the 2016 Discipline, Paragraph 1508.9. Authorization has been given to deposit funds with the Conference Treasurer, the Conference Claimants Endowment Board, Wespath (the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits), and a local financial institution used for daily transactions, presently the Bank of the West. The Treasurers related to the Annual Conference are bonded.

2019 Comprehensive Benefits Funding Plan

INTRODUCTION

The 2012 *Book of Discipline* 1506.6 requires that each annual conference develop, adopt and implement a formal comprehensive funding plan for funding all its benefit obligations. The funding plan shall be submitted annually to Wespath Benefits and Investments (Wespath) for review and be received annually by the annual conference, following the receipt and inclusion of a favorable written opinion from Wespath. This document is only a summary of the information contained in the actual signed

funding plan and does not contain all the information required for a comprehensive view of the conference's benefit obligations. You may request the full contents of the 2019 comprehensive benefit funding plan from the Board of Pensions at 1337 Howe Avenue, Suite 200, Sacramento, CA 95825.

CLERGY RETIREMENT SECURITY PROGRAM (CRSP)

Defined Benefit (DB) and Defined Contribution (DC)

Program overview:

The Clergy Retirement Security Program (CRSP) is an Internal Revenue Code section 403(b) retirement program providing lifetime income and account flexibility designed for those who serve as clergy of The United Methodist Church. The program is designed to provide participants with one portion of their overall retirement benefits. CRSP replaced the Ministerial Pension Plan (MPP) effective January 1, 2007, which had previously replaced the Pre-82 Plan for service rendered prior to January 1, 1982.

CRSP consists of both a defined benefit (DB) plan, which provides a monthly benefit at retirement based upon years of credited service to The United Methodist Church, and a defined contribution (DC) plan, which provides a retirement account balance established and funded by the annual conferences.

Current funding plan information:

The Clergy Retirement Security Program (CRSP DB) annuities total liability as of January 1, 2017, is \$(1,588,243,217), while total plan assets are \$1,700,835,563, resulting in a current plan funded ratio of 107%. The California-Nevada Conference portion of the liability is 1.4560% and the 2019 contribution is \$1,430,123. The conference anticipates that the amount will be funded by Direct Billing. Additionally, General Conference 2012 approved a change to CRSP that provides each annual conference the discretion to determine whether to cover three-quarter and/or half-time clergy. The California-Nevada

Conference has elected to cover clergy serving 50%+ under CRSP effective January 1, 2019.

Effective January 1, 2014, the CRSP DC plan was reduced from a 3% to a 2% of plan compensation non-matching contribution. Clergy can earn up to an additional 1% CRSP DC contribution by contributing at least 1% of their plan compensation to UMPIP; therefore, if a participant contributes at least 1% of plan compensation to UMPIP, the individual will receive a contribution of 3% to CRSP DC. The 2019 CRSP DC contribution is anticipated to be \$516,000 and will be funded by Direct Billing.

MINISTERIAL PENSION PLAN (MPP)

Plan overview:

Supplement Three to the Clergy Retirement Security Program (CRSP), also known as the Ministerial Pension Plan (MPP), provides clergy with a pension benefit for their years of ministry with The United Methodist Church from 1982 through 2006. MPP is an Internal Revenue Code section 403(b) retirement plan. MPP requires that exactly 65% of the account balance must be annuitized when the funds are to

be distributed. The remainder may be rolled over to UMPIP, another qualified plan or an IRA, or it may be paid in a lump sum.

Current funding plan information:

The Ministerial Pension Plan (MPP) annuities' total liability as of January 1, 2017 is \$(3,532,916,942), while total plan assets are \$3,701,460,997, resulting in a current plan funded ratio of 105%. The required contribution for 2019 is \$0. The California-Nevada Conference's percentage of the total liability is 1.6988%. Future MPP annuitants have a total account balance of \$3,689,292,322 and the California-Nevada Conference's portion of that balance is \$58,842,860 or 1.59% of the total.

PRE-82 PLAN

Plan overview:

Supplement One to the Clergy Retirement Security Program (CRSP), also known as the Pre-82 Plan, provides clergy with a pension benefit for their years of ministry with The United Methodist Church prior to 1982. The Pre-82 Plan was replaced by MPP effective January 1, 1982. If a clergyperson retires within the Conference (and does not terminate), the minimum benefit payable is based on two factors:

- 1) Years of service with pension credit-approved by each conference on the recommendation of the Conference Board of Pensions (CBOP) in accordance with plan provisions and *The Book of Discipline*.
- 2) The conference pension rate (past service rate) - the dollar amount chosen by the conference as the amount payable for each approved year of service with pension credit (may change from year to year).

The number of years of service with pension credit is multiplied by the pension rate, and the product is the minimum annual benefit payable to those clergy eligible for Pre-82 Plan benefits. In certain situations, the benefit received from the Pre-82 plan may vary based on the applicability of what is referred to as Defined Benefit Service Money (DBSM), which is the defined contribution feature of the Pre-82 Plan. At the time that a participant retires, the DBSM account is converted to a life based benefit and, at that point, the clergy's benefit is the greater of the PSR or DBSM benefit. If the conference increases the PSR, the clergy's benefit is recalculated; but the DBSM-based benefit does not change.

Current funding plan information:

The 2019 PSR recommended to the California-Nevada Conference will be \$887, representing a 3% increase from the 2018 rate. The conference expects future annual increases to be approximately 1.00%.

The contingent annuitant percentage is recommended to remain at the 75% level. The rationale for these changes is our goal to achieve a 1.2% ratio between the CAC and the PSR.

ACTIVE HEALTH BENEFIT PROGRAM

Program Overview

The California-Nevada Conference offers the following active health benefit to its active eligible participants: Health Insurance.

Current funding plan information:

The total cost of the program for 2019 is anticipated to be \$3,577,523 and will be funded by Direct Billing. It is anticipated that increases for future years will average 9.00%.

The rationale for these changes is increases in premium costs.

Additional Plan Sponsor Funded Coverage

The California-Nevada Conference has elected to provide health benefits coverage to the following groups during periods where-without plan sponsor--funded premiums--the participants would not be provided coverage or benefits (all figures as of 12/31/2017):

1. Clergy or Lay on Disability (Including Pending Disability): 7 participants at an estimated cost of \$648,669. The projected annual cost as of 12/31/2019 for additional plan sponsor funded coverage is \$134,032.

POST-RETIREMENT MEDICAL BENEFIT PROGRAM (PRM)

Program Overview:

The California-Nevada Conference currently offers Insurance for Post-Retirement Medical coverage.

Current funding plan information:

The plan sponsor's intention for 2019 is to retain its current plan program. PRM benefits provided are from a \$1,200,000 grant from an external funding agency.

COMPREHENSIVE PROTECTION PLAN (CPP)

Plan Overview:

The Comprehensive Protection Plan (CPP) provides death, long-term disability and other welfare benefits for eligible clergy of The United Methodist Church and their families. It is an Internal Revenue Code 414(e) "church plan" funded by plan sponsor insurance premiums. Generally, clergy are eligible to participate in CPP if they satisfy the eligibility requirements, including full-time appointment with plan compensation of at least 25% of the Denominational Average Compensation (DAC). Plan sponsors may elect to cover participants with three-quarter time appointments and/or to continue to cover clergy who, due to certain leaves or appointments, are not otherwise eligible to continue coverage.

The CPP adoption agreement executed by the California-Nevada Conference contains its elections to cover three-quarter time and fulltime participants.

Current funding plan information:

For 2019, the California-Nevada Conference has an expected required contribution to the Comprehensive Protection Plan of \$540,000, which is funded by direct billing local congregations. The anticipated average increase in future years is expected to be 3.00% per year due to increases in clergy compensation.

UNITED METHODIST PERSONAL INVESTMENT PLAN (UMPIP) FOR LAY AND CLERGY

Plan Overview:

The United Methodist Personal Investment Plan (UMPIP) is an Internal Revenue Code section 403(b) defined contribution retirement savings plan for clergy and lay employees of The United Methodist Church and affiliated organizations. Participants may make before-tax, Roth and/or after-tax contributions through payroll deductions. Participant contributions, various optional plan sponsor contributions and investment earnings comprise the individual's retirement account balance.

Current funding plan information:

Conference office lay employees working an average of 20 hours per week or more are eligible for a plan sponsor-funded pension contribution of 12% of salary. Lay employees are required to make contributions toward their retirement through payroll deductions to the UMPIP. The estimated contribution in 2019 is \$60,471 and will be funded via: BOP CC RESERVE ACCOUNT. *The above estimate is only for staff of the Conference Board of Pensions. Total UMPIP employer contributions including additional conference staff are estimated to be around \$145,481.*

OTHER DEFINED CONTRIBUTION (DC) OBLIGATIONS

Plan Overview:

The California-Nevada Conference currently offers the following DC benefit(s): Moving Costs for retirees. The estimated contribution for 2019 is \$110,000 with the funding sources to be: Annual Conference Tithe. The anticipated average increase in future years is expected to be 1.00% per year based on estimates from the conference treasurer.

Plan Overview:

The California-Nevada Conference currently offers the following DC benefit(s): LTD for Lay Staff. The estimated contribution for 2019 is \$7,959 with the funding sources to be: D B P DEPOSIT ACCOUNT. The anticipated average increase in future years is expected to be 2.00% per year due to inflation.

Plan Overview:

The California-Nevada Conference currently offers the following DC benefit(s): UM Life for Lay. The estimated contribution for 2019 is \$3,570 with the funding sources to be: BOP CC RESERVE ACCOUNT. The anticipated average increase in future years is expected to be 1.00% per year due to inflation.

CONCLUSION

The 2019 Comprehensive Benefit Funding Plan and this summary document incorporates, to the best of our understanding, the California-Nevada's obligations and funding requirements of the benefits provided to the clergy and laity of the California-Nevada Conference.

Conference Committee for the Episcopacy

Number on agency: 10 Number present when voting: 6

Number voting for: 6 Number voting against: 0 Number abstaining: 0

Date adopted: May 2018

Number of meetings held: 2

According to The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church (§ 637, Page 637 2016 BOD), the committee shall meet at least annually. It shall be convened by the bishop and shall elect a chairperson, a vice-chair person, and a secretary. The bishop and/or chairperson are authorized to call additional meetings when desired.

During the Fall 2017 meeting, the new officers were elected. We discussed our role and responsibilities as members of this confidential committee. The current committee members are as follows:

Lisa A. Brown (clergy-chairperson)
Oscar Ochoa (layperson-vice chair)
Kris Marshall (clergy-secretary)
JB Brayfindley (lay person)
Micheal Pope (conference lay leader)
Dawn Blundell (clergy)
Vathanak Heang (clergy)
Ofa Uepi (clergy)
Emily Allen (Western Jurisdiction lay person)
Jeffery Kuan (Western Jurisdiction clergy)

One of the committee’s responsibility is to engage in annual consultation and appraisal of the balance of the bishop’s relationship and responsibilities to the area and annual conferences, the jurisdiction, general Church boards and agencies, (¶637 3.a)...

In January 2018, the committee members completed the required Episcopal Evaluation for the Western Jurisdiction. The results of the evaluation were discussed at our March meeting, providing goals and objectives for the coming year.

Bishop Carcaño brought an awareness for the need to have an Episcopal Residence Committee (¶638 BOD) composed of the following persons: chairperson or designate of the conference committee on episcopacy, president or designate of the conference council on finance and administration, and the president or designate of the conference board of trustees. To meet this requirement, we are moving forward to make sure this happens in the coming year. Currently, our Bishop is not living in the episcopal residence. She chose a housing allowance for her current residence.

The members of the Episcopacy Committee support our Bishop and her husband, Thomas during this time of living a part. We are mindful of supporting the Cabinet as an extension of the Episcopacy office. Help us by keeping our temporal spiritual leaders and their families in constant prayer.

Submitted By: Lisa A. Brown , Chairperson

Equitable Compensation Commission

The Equitable Compensation Commission in 2017 worked to effectuate adequate and equitable compensation for each clergy position and provide minimum compensation support in instances of established need. Compensation assistance disbursed in calendar year 2017 was as follows:

Church Total 2017

Bay District:

San Francisco Geneva 10,000

Central Valley District:

Hughson 6,500

Linden 14,000

Merced Campus Ministry 8,600

Porterville Grand Avenue 4,000

Sanger 1,250

El Camino Real District:

San Jose La Trinidad 15,000

Marina/Forest Hill 7,000

Santa Clara Valley Faith	7,500
Vietnamese Peace UMC	12,500

Great Northern District:

Colusa/Yuba City	17,500
Colfax/Placer Hills/Dutch Flat	4,000
Knights Landing/Meridian	19,960
Sierra Pines	3,000
Ukiah	9,000

Los Rios District:

Rohnert Park	8,000
Sacramento Hope	10,000
Martinez	9,000

2017 Total: Annual Conference \$166,810

Respectfully Submitted by Janette Saavedra, Chair Equitable Compensation Commission

Retired Clergy Association Annual Report 2017-2018

Adopted by Executive Committee March 14, 2018, and by Board vote through e-mail

The Retired Clergy Association, a Conference affiliate organization, represents and serves more than 600 retired clergy and their spouses. Founded in 1992, the Retired Clergy Association (RCA) maintains communication, offers care, and provides programs for these who have served among us. We also interact with the boards and agencies of the Annual Conference on their behalf.

Our Executive Committee and Board each meet 3 times during the year; our annual meeting for the membership is held at the Annual Conference luncheon, where we elect officers and adopt budget for the coming year. Various committees also meet during the annual cycle. Our goal is to provide programs spread across the Conference year for a diversity of opportunities to connect and to serve our members. So, here’s a chronological narrative of the past year:

In September we offered our first ever New Retirees luncheon, held at the Conference Center. Our goal was to see how the first few months of retirement were going and offer resources and ideas if needed. We paid for lunch and mileage. This gathering was met with appreciation by the many who attended and it will be offered again September 17, 2018.

The Pastoral Response Team (PRT) met for their annual overnight enrichment retreat, also in September. This program, now in its second full year of operation, follows a Stephen Ministry model, offering someone to come alongside any of our members for a time, during periods of life involving

grief, illness, or other challenging circumstance. Dr. Tom Smith led us on systems theory last September; Rev. Debra Brady is scheduled to work with us on the Enneagram for our gathering in September of 2018. Meals, lodging, and mileage are covered.

In November a team of retired clergy and spouses worked in the New Orleans area, rehabilitating houses from hurricane and flood damage. This was our 12th year there, and we had the homeowner back in her home by the time we left. We work as a VIM team, and it is a wonderful way to spend time with cherished colleagues, making the world better at the same time. We cover our own plane fare, but a grant from the Endowment Board makes this a very affordable mission trip, which happens also to be in a fascinating area of the country.

December finds most of our various cluster groups having a Christmas gathering (in addition to other periodic potlucks and meetings across the year). It's an especially busy time of the year for our Executive Officer, Nancy Daley, as she usually attends all of these gatherings.

January each year brings the Interdenominational Clergy and Spouse Retreat, usually held at San Damiano Center in Danville. We provide a grant to help with program expenses, and we distribute publicity, but the retreat has its own board for planning and operations. The speaker this year addressed international political policy and what the church's role could be.

February of this year we explored another new conversation, inviting surviving spouses from across our Conference to come for lunch and to share with a small group of us. Our concern was that they may be an especially invisible and underserved group within our membership—and unfortunately, we found that to be largely true. The conversations were helpful, and the plan is to do this again in the coming program year, going out to some areas more distant from the Conference Center and thus making the conversations more accessible. Again, we covered the cost of lunch and mileage to make it possible.

April brings our second annual VIM trip scheduled within the Conference, rebuilding houses destroyed by wildfire in Lake County. Again, this is a very reasonable mission opportunity, with dorm rooms and meals provided for \$150.00 for the week, and nearby motel rooms available at reduced cost. RV sites and hook-ups are also provided for those needing them. (Our first UMVIM mission trip within the Conference was last year in Weed, again rebuilding houses lost to wildfire destruction.)

Our annual retreat for retired clergy and spouses we call Spring Fling, and it is held in April of each year, usually a week or two after Easter. More than 100 of our membership show up for this 24-hour event, featuring a guest speaker, a guest musician to lead our singing, and a memorial service for those who have died in the past year. The costs are reasonable, because of a grant from the Endowment Board, and first time attendees actually get to come at half price! Last year we learned about Pope Francis, this year we learn about Islam, and next year we learn from Biblical scholar Pamela Eisenbaum. The event moved this year from Christ the King to San Damiano retreat center.

Our biggest event of the year is the luncheon for retired clergy and spouses at Annual Conference. Last year in Burlingame there were a record 165 present, and we expect even more to show up this year in Modesto, which may be more geographically accessible. At this gathering we elect officers, set budget,

and present scholarships to those attending seminary or the Course of Study. The cost of the meal is subsidized, and new retirees attend as our guests, again thanks to a generous grant from the CCEB.

Our most expensive event of the year is turning out to be Annual Conference, not only for the luncheon, but for the cost of the per diem provided to retired clergy and spouses so they can attend. Requests have grown from \$11,000 in 2013, to \$34,000 budgeted for this year. Our bishop is pleased that we have such a good showing of retired clergy at Annual Conference, but we had to ask for an increase in our funding from the Conference Claimants Endowment Board last year, and probably will need to do so again.

Speaking of funding, we almost doubled our membership donations this year, through offering new, tiered giving levels, and some cute Wesleyan categories of giving. Total membership giving was \$6,940 during our 2016-2017 giving cycle. Already through January of 2018 the giving total comes to \$13,576.10, with at least 3 lifetime memberships. Higher giving levels offer reductions on the cost of the Annual Conference luncheon and the Spring Fling, with larger discounts for higher levels of giving. It's fun to see the success of the new approach.

A new program idea we hope to fund is for a team of "Parish Visitors" who will do some travel within the Annual Conference, to see that every retired clergy and spouse, or surviving spouse, gets a personal visit, either at home or as part of a cluster gathering. These will be volunteer positions, but lodging, meals and mileage will be covered.

Working with the Board of Pensions and the Conference Claimants Endowment Board, the Retired Clergy Association continues to seek new and creative ways to increase its support of and communication with retirees and surviving spouses. The association continues to work with the Conference leadership to determine the ministries in which retirees might participate, such as volunteering as mentors or coaches with active clergy when asked.

The RCA is grateful for the work of our Executive Officer, Nancy Daley. Nancy fills many roles in her ministry, including serving as the editor of our newsletter, "Days of Grace." We noted last year that her office is now in the complex occupied by the Board of Pensions on Howe Avenue in Sacramento. We are grateful for this good space and the easier cooperation and communication it facilitates.

The RCA is very appreciative for the ongoing support of Cory Parish and the Conference Claimants Endowment Board, as well as Paul Extrum-Fernandez and the Conference Board of Pensions.

Respectfully submitted,

Marty Murdock
President

BOSTON UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

Dear Colleagues in Ministry:

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

BREAKING NEWS:

- **Students:** Our entering students were the most diverse in our history, creating remarkable opportunities for in-depth exchange and fruitful collaboration.
- **Faculty:** We welcomed three amazing faculty this year: **Rebecca Copeland** in Theology (focus on environmental theology); **Theodore Hickman-Maynard** in Black Church Studies; and **Cornell William Brooks** as Visiting Professor of Social Ethics, Law, and Justice Movements. Thanks to loyal alums, we also endowed the Harrell Beck Professorship in Hebrew Scripture and installed Kathe Darr as the first Beck Professor.
- **Congregations:** The Lilly Endowment awarded the Center for Practical Theology \$1.5 million to create an innovation hub, which will foster creative vocational reflection in congregations, and a sharing of the congregations' wisdom.
- **Doctor of Ministry:** The DMin in Transformational Leadership is soaring with lively student cohorts that are broadly ecumenical, culturally diverse, and global. The model includes intensives, online courses, and faculty mentoring.
- **Scholarships:** We continue our offer of free tuition to UMC registered candidates for ordained ministry, and we continue to build student scholarships and housing as a central campaign priority. New scholarships include the Dale Andrews Scholarship in Practical Theology and Race, Korean Student scholarship, and the Bishop John H. Adams and Dr. Dolly D. Adams Scholarship for candidates for ordained ministry in the AME, AMEZ, and CME churches.
- **Arts Initiatives:** Recent exhibits and events include "Symbols and Art of China, Korea, and Japan" and "Bridging Divided Communities through the Arts"

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

- **Congregational courses:** Courses in congregations with church leaders and students learning together.
- **Religion and Conflict Transformation Clinic:** Internships and workshops that foster justice and reconciliation.
- **Travel seminars:** Courses engaging local communities on Arizona-Mexican border, Israel and Palestine, India, spiritual life centers, and Serbia and Croatia (with focus on interreligious dialogue).
- **Ecumenical partnerships:** Continuing close work with UMC, AME and other Wesleyan denominations, while launching robust Communities of Learning with the Episcopal Church and United Church of Christ.
- **Partnership with Hebrew College:** Joint courses and public events, plus co-sponsoring *The Journal of Interreligious Studies*. The focus is on enriching theological education with interreligious learning and leadership opportunities.

TAKING ACTION GLOBALLY AND LOCALLY:

- **Campus action:** Work to improve accessibility and sustainability. BUSTH is the first certified Green School in BU, and is active in the Green Seminary Initiative. It has also been named as one of the “Seminaries that Change the World.”
- **Internships in global service and peacemaking:** Student-initiated internships for service with communities across the world, and for just peacemaking projects with international organizations.

COMMITMENT TO JUSTICE: Celebrating differences while joining in action.

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

OTHER NOTABLE NEWS:

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

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

Blessings and gratitude,



Mary Elizabeth Moore, Dean

Candler School of Theology—2018 UMC Annual Conference Report

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

—Jan Love

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

GBHEM GENERAL AGENCY REPORT – 2018 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

GBHEM launched a new mission and vision in August 2017. The updated mission and vision simplify GBHEM's role as the primary leadership development agency for The United Methodist Church.

Mission: Build capacity for United Methodist lay and clergy leaders to discover, claim and flourish in Christ's calling in their lives, by creating connections and providing resources to aid in recruitment, education, professional development and spiritual formation. **Vision:** Generations of thriving, diverse and compassionate Christian leaders for The United Methodist Church and the world.

OUR WORK THROUGHOUT 2017 AND 2018

The **Office of Discernment and Enlistment** at GBHEM hosted **Exploration**, a biennial event for young adults ages 18-26 to hear, discern, and respond to God's call to ordained ministry as a United Methodist deacon or elder. More than 350 attended the event in Portland, Oregon in November 2017.

The **Young Clergy Initiative (YCI)** funded **34 innovative projects** across the church in 2017 to attract young people to ordained ministry. Since its inception, more than 100 projects have been funded through YCI.

GBHEM works with the **Commission on Central Conference Theological Education (CCTE)** to distribute grants for the theological education of pastoral leaders in the Central Conferences. In 2017, the CCTE awarded **67 grants totaling more than \$1 million** to the seven Central Conferences of The United Methodist Church.

The **Publishing Ministry**, established to engage, nurture, and advocate for the intellectual life of The United Methodist Church, released **13 books in 2017**, reaching more than 10,000 people.

In 2017, GBHEM's Office of **Loans and Scholarships** awarded **2,000+ students with \$4.1 million** in scholarships and **350 students with \$1.4 million in low-interest loans**. More than **\$1.6 million was awarded to 200 recipients of the Excellence in Clergy Leadership Scholarship**, which helps United Methodist clergy avoid excessive educational loan debt, minimize financial stress and build financial acumen.

To aid pastors in their ministry journey, GBHEM's **Candidacy Office** introduced **EM360**. A formation guide to help pastors and congregations meet mission and ministry goals, EM360 is a tool to help clergy leaders **identify and gauge pastoral effectiveness**. In 2017, **1,438 candidates enrolled in UMCARES** to seek certified candidacy for licensed or ordained ministry. A total of 589 **candidates were certified**.

The Black College Fund distributed more than \$9.68 million in 2017 to the Historically Black Colleges and Universities related to The United Methodist Church for faculty development, infrastructure maintenance, academic programs and scholarships.

Clergy Lifelong Learning led African-American, United Methodist pastors who lead predominantly white churches in **cross-cultural diversity training** in South Korea in 2017. Continuing education and coaching opportunities are available through the innovative, multilingual platform, UMC Cyber Campus.

In 2017, **Schools, Colleges, and Universities** established the **Siri S. Gadbois Fund** in partnership with the National Association of Schools & Colleges of The United Methodist Church (NASCUMC) for mentoring among institution leaders (kickoff in 2018). The **Cutting-Edge Curriculum Award** was created to recognize 10 exceptional faculty members who are building effective and innovative academic courses (winners announced at the end of 2018 spring semester).

In partnership with Discipleship Ministries, GBHEM provides e-readers to theological schools in remote areas of Africa and Asia, offering access to the latest textbooks and references books. The **E-Reader Project** distributed **667 e-readers in 2017** and nearly **2,500 devices to 22 theological seminaries** since the program inception in 2013.

In 2017, GBHEM and the Association of United Methodist Theological Schools (AUMTS) hosted two **academic theological colloquies**. Initiated in service to the intellectual life of the church, the colloquies are intended to be a resource for the church. The first colloquy (March 2017) focused on **human sexuality and church unity**, the second (November 2017) reflected on the practice of **Missio Dei**. Both events produced a study guide and book.