

#### **400.01 Board of Laity**

The purpose of the Board of Laity is to prepare and encourage all people in a life of Christian discipleship. To that end, we will work

- To provide support and direction for the ministry of the Laity on the Local, District and Conference levels
- To promote the observation of Laity Sunday
- To be a Connection between the Conference, District, and Local Church
- To focus on Building Relationship with District and Local Church Leaders
- To provide for the Training of Local Church Leaders, Local Church Lay Leaders, and Lay Members of the Annual Conference
- To develop and Promote Stewardship of Time, Talent, and Possessions

The new quadrennium brought new leadership to the Board of Laity and for the first time that leadership was in the form of three Co-Conference Lay Leaders. Our focus at the outset was to become acquainted with our tasks and with each other and to build relationship for the job ahead of us. This was not only a theme for Board members at board meetings, but for all members as we went out to our districts and churches and worked to build relationship and connection with laity and clergy as we understood this to be a vital need for the conference from the Landscape Survey data.

The work of the Board of Laity this year focused on promoting Laity Sunday through a variety of communication vehicles and efforts. As we worked on Laity Sunday, we were also focusing our attention on Laity Convocation 2017. We again took note of data from the Landscape Survey and created Laity Convocation with the needs and desires of laity found in that data. This year's Laity Convocation was very different from previous events. The training was half a day and focused on two things that could be immediately used at local churches. The sessions were led by members of our conference. Bishop Dyck led an hour long interactive Bible study and then all participants learned techniques for active listening (ARE WE LISTENING?) The Spiritual Discipline of Active Listening) in ten small groups providing a learning environment that allowed for much discussion, interaction, and questions.

Throughout the year, we will challenge ourselves to make training for local church leader positions more easily available on line through the Board of Laity webpage on the conference website. District Lay Leaders will be working to bring training needed by local church members closer to local churches and to make that training more specific to the needs of that church. The Landscape Survey data has helped conference leaders recognize the need for changes in the way we, as a conference, have worked in the past. Because the Board of Laity wants to provide a connection between the conference, district, and local church, we will concentrate on being a liaison between groups bringing new ideas to members in the pews of our local churches.

Jessie Cunningham, Elisa Gatz, Mark Manzi  
Co-Conference Lay Leaders

#### **400.02 2016 Historical Report for the Northern Illinois Conference Board of Trustees**

During 2016 the Northern Illinois Conference Board of Trustees continued to carry out its responsibilities as the Board of Directors of the Northern Illinois Conference. Officers elected in June of 2016 were Harry Nicol, President, and Martha Rudy, Vice- President. Connie Augsburger and Timothy Biel Sr. served as additional members of the executive committee. Vern White, Connie Augsburger and Tim Biel serve on the Insurance Committee with Vern White designated as chair. The conference secretary, Deborah Tinsley Taylor, is the designated secretary of the Board of Trustees with Margaret Lundahl serving as her assistant to record minutes of the meetings of the Board of Trustees.

Other members of the Board of Trustees are Robert Burkhart, Walton Davis, Jr., Gary Kaufman, Jon Stewart, George Wentworth, Jr., and Alvin Vidad. During 2016 the Board met eight times.

The NIC cabinet representative on the Board of Trustees is Martin Lee, the Director of Congregational Development/Redevelopment. The conference treasurer, Lonnie Chafin regularly attends the meetings of the Trustees.

Areas of responsibility for the Board of Trustees include investment and management of conference owned financial assets, lease and purchase of property and the sale, lease or management of property no longer used for conference purposes.

There were 16 conference owned properties as of December 31, 2016 which includes housing for the Bishop, the Assistant to the Bishop, the Director of Congregational Development/Redevelopment, and the 6 District Superintendents. In addition, the conference owns the building used by the Northwestern campus ministry program, the property in Mundelein used by the Vision Church UMC, the camps at Wesley Woods and Reynoldswood, the Hilltop property in Machesney Park, vacant land in Shorewood, and the property formerly used by the UM church in Westmont.

In addition the conference leases property used by the conference staff in Chicago, Elgin and Rochelle as well as for the archives in Evanston and for the Hyde Park campus ministry in Chicago.

The Board of Trustees assigns one of its members as the liaison for each of the conference owned properties. This liaison is to inspect each property annually and provide a report on this inspection to the board.

The Board of Trustees is to receive bequests of assets to the conference and identify best use for these gifts. During 2016 a bequest of \$35,502.51 was received to benefit United Voices for Children. This is invested at the United Methodist Foundation.

Key items for the Trustees during 2016 included:

1. The sale of the property of St James UMC in the Hyde Park neighborhood of Chicago.
2. A new conference chancellor, Rick Gottfried, was retained.
3. By action of the annual conference in June of 2016 the conference provided insurance program for property and liability will be mandatory for local churches beginning in January 2017.

4. The Board of Trustees presented new guidelines for parsonages for local churches which were adopted at the June 2016 annual conference.
5. Active negotiations related to the sale of Hilltop in Machesney Park have been ongoing with an offer received in late 2016. The sale was completed in early 2017.
6. A major change in the operation of our conference provided insurance program for property and liability occurred was determined in 2016 to take effect on January 1, 2017. A Conference Director of Ministry Protection, Dwayne Jackson, has been employed. A new program has been implemented under the leadership of the NICUMC Insurance Association. The members of the board of this association are Vern White, Connie Augsburg, and Tim Biel, Sr. from the Board of Trustees along with Sheryl Anderson, Jeffery Ludwig and Larry Stephens. This program went in effect on January 1, 2017.

Current challenges facing the Board of Trustees include:

1. assisting local churches with risk management related to property and finances and
2. keeping up with local church property coming to the annual conference due to church closures and mergers.

The Board continues to monitor and approve distributions of proceeds of several invested funds that benefit NIC programs. During 2016 these distributions were made:

1. \$49,694.67 from the DORM Endowment to the Board of Outdoor and Retreat Ministries,
2. \$2,994.10 from the DORM Sailing Fund to the Board of Outdoor and Retreat Ministries, and
3. \$30,750.00 from the Keagy Fund to ministries in the Rockford and DeKalb Districts.

Respectfully submitted by Harry Nicol, President, NIC Board of Trustees

#### **400.03 NIC Council on Finance and Administration Historical Report**

Its a new quadrennium and our Northern Illinois Annual Conference's Council on Finance and Administration is facing the challenges of administrative ministry with old and new faces alike. At their August 13<sup>th</sup> meeting, the council elected Rev. Rob Hamilton of Rochelle UMC as President. Stephanie Uhl, laity from United Church of Hyde Park as Vice-President and Rev. Luis F. Reyes of First UMC of Lombard as Secretary.

In the coming quadrennium, our CCFA is focused on accomplishing these four goals in addition to the work required by *Discipline* and our Standing Rules:

- Return to 100% General Church Apportionment Payment by 2020
- Assess & Audit Administrative Staffing
- Investigate an apportionment formula that fits today
- Find new ways to support Local Churches through new relationships

In pursuit of these goals CCFA is experimenting with a novel way to organize its work. Instead of distributing its work into different sub-committees, each task that is in pursuit of CCFA's goals stands on its own and members elect to work on the tasks that best fits member's gifts and graces. This form of organization around tasks verses sub-committees easily allows for people with passions for tasks who are not members of the council to aid in the completion of the tasks and bring the work before the whole CCFA for action.

The tasks CCFA will be working on this year in pursuit of their goals for the quadrennium are:

- Audit of Administrative Staffing
- Bidding for a Financial Audit
- Annual Review of Treasurer/ Director of Administrative Services
- Create, provide, and promote Apportionment Interpretation materials and resources.
- Regular Review of Financial Statements
- Forecast Future Conference Apportionment Income
- Update Conference Investment Policy
- Review Annual Conference Legislation
- Support Local Church Stewardship Efforts
- Explore Experimental Local Church Supportive Services
- Prepare Narrative Budget
- Create and Promote a Resource Directory
- Investigate a New Apportionment Formula
- Oversee Apportionment Appeals Process
- Local Church Interventions

This year CCFA has established an Auditor Replacement Policy to replace the conference financial auditing firm in the calendar year following regular General Conference sessions. (i.e; 2017, 2021, 2025, 2028, etc.) This allows for newly elected leadership to determine the best course of action regarding financial audits and for the sufficient time to bid and engage a new audit firm after new leadership is elected. This year CCFA also created an internal formula for paying our General Church Apportionments after we learned of the need to boost reserves (to \$1.28 million from \$850k). The formula is as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} & \text{Apportionment Collections} \\ & \quad - \text{Conference Spending} \\ & \quad - \text{Reserve Holding} \\ & = \text{Amount Available for General Church Apportionments} \end{aligned}$$

*From the amount available for General Church Apportionments:  
we will pay 90% of our World Service obligation and the remaining amount will be used to pay the other apportioned funds at an equal percentage - up to all apportioned funds being paid at 100%.*

We ended 2016 having received \$6,066,296 in apportionments from Northern Illinois Churches. Thanks to your generosity and careful stewardship of conference expenses we are able to pay 90% of our apportionment to the World Service Fund and 70% to the other apportioned general church funds. To reach 100% general church apportionment faithfulness another \$358,824 from churches was needed.

CCFA is aware of the struggles of the local church and denomination and is working to meet those struggles within its scope. At the time of writing, CCFA has granted \$196,234.00 in apportionment relief to 14 appellant churches for the 2017 calendar year. In addition to reminding people of the available General Church apportionment resources and we are working on our own localized apportionment interpretation materials. CCFA is preparing

options for how to handle dissension and protests over judicial council decisions and the outcome of the Way Forward Commission that face our denomination.

One of the larger challenges CCFA has faced this year and continues to struggle with is how to provide systemic relief to churches through our apportionment formula. We've researched income-based formulas ranging from 10-12% of church income. We've also run calculations that reduce the percentages of our current formula's rate on clergy costs from 16% to 14% to match the rate on other expenses and even take the formula and adjust it to 12% on all expenses. These approaches to apportionments all begin to point the same direction that we're looking at structuring our Annual Conference around \$5-5.3 million dollars of apportionment receipts versus the current \$6 million, which is down from the long-time average of \$7 million. At a specially called conference call, CCFA has put forth a recommendation to the conference to reduce the percentage apportioned on clergy compensation from 16% to 14% thereby providing relief to most of our churches to help the local church be in greater ministry in their neighborhoods.

While these changes bring good news for the local church, CCFA still struggles to accommodate reductions to our income when it is below \$6million. CCFA desires input on how to align these resources to best support our mission as an Annual Conference. This is the conversation CCFA pushed for in 2014, continue to seek through the Landscape process and charge Conference Leadership to address in 2018. CCFA is confident that without making these changes and reductions intentionally, they will happen naturally as our churches continue to struggle. CCFA does not find this later approach to be faithful. CCFA wants to help local churches be in mission in their community while supporting the Annual Conference in its uniquely connectional ministry. CCFA believe that these questions and pursuing them is some of the most pressing and urgent work facing the Annual Conference today.

CCFA continues to be grateful for the support of local churches in carrying our vital ministry across Northern Illinois and seeks to be the best stewards possible of our resources.

Respectfully Submitted,  
*CCFA Executive Team*

Rev. Robert A. Hamilton, President; Stephanie Uhl, Vice-President; Rev. Luis F. Reyes, Secretary; Lonnie Chafin, Treasurer/Director of Administrative Services

#### **400.04 Conference Treasurer Historical Report**

Apportionments in 2016 were comparable to 2015 at \$6,066,296. The Conference spent \$184,000 less than budget on programs and ministries. This permitted payment of general church apportionments above our anticipated ability; we accomplished 90% for World Service and 63% on all other funds. General Church apportionments represent 30% of apportionment receipts from local churches.

The Red Door Fund created by an April 2013 Special Session of the annual conference has continued with no deficiencies and no delinquencies. Churches have made pre-payments on their mortgages and this year Red Door made a \$200,000 additional payment even while ending the year with a \$200,000 reserve fund.

The Property Insurance Program premiums approach \$3 million annually and with agreement of the Conference Trustees, the committee overseeing the program has been revamped with the addition of three talented insurance professionals to provide guidance to the program. We changed to a non-commissioned premium and used half of the savings to hire a full-time Risk Manager to increase service to local churches. Our program is exploring ways to increase services to local churches.

Two closed church buildings were sold in 2016, restoring the Church Redevelopment Fund (aka "Closed Church Fund") to solvency. With Cabinet support there has been a strategic decision to treat the resources of the fund more like a designated endowment, when only a share of the balance is deployed each year in new congregation development activities.

### Apportionment Formula

Every local church shall provide the basis for their apportionment calculation with their Statistical Report, due annually by February 20<sup>th</sup>. The statistical report data is summarized into three categories of local church expenditures defined below. For each category, a data set of five years is compiled. The highest and lowest of the five years are discarded and the apportionment calculation rates are applied to the average of the three median years. When the most recent year is the lowest of the five (reflecting a trend of recent budget constriction), the apportionment calculation rates are applied to the average of the three lowest years.

### **Apportionment Basis: Statistical Report Categories**

- 1. Senior & Associate Pastor Costs** (Basis for Support for Ordained Leadership Apportionment) The sum of these lines if multiplied by 14% to determine the local church apportionment in support of the "Support for Ordained Leadership" work of the annual conference.
  - Line 48: Senior Pastor base compensation (minus equitable compensation funds received from the Annual Conference)
  - Line 49: Associate Pastor base compensation
  - Line 50: Senior & Associate Pastor Housing Allowance (OR 25% of base compensation for parsonage appointments) + Senior & Associate Pastor's parsonage utilities and maintenance costs
  - Line 51: Accountable reimbursements
  - Line 52: Other cash allowances
- 2. Church Programs & Operational Costs** (Basis for Mission & Evangelism Apportionment). The sum of these lines is multiplied by 14% to establish the local church apportionment in support of the "Mission and Evangelism" work of the annual conference.
  - Line 53: Deacon's compensation & benefits
  - Line 55: Lay staff compensation & benefits (except custodial)
  - Line 56: Church Program costs
  - Line 57: Church building utilities, custodial costs, property maintenance costs, property insurance costs, other operational costs (Portion of utility, custodial and property costs incurred by space-sharing is excluded; utility, custodial and property costs per average attender above the 80<sup>th</sup> percentile are excluded)

3. **Total Church Expenditures**<sup>1</sup> (Basis for Strengthening the Connection Apportionment) the sum of all of the statistical lines itemized above and the lines specified below is multiplied by 1% to generate the apportionment of that particular local church to the “Strengthening the Connection” work of the annual conference.

Line 35-42: Total funds sent through the Conference Office for second-mile, designated giving (Rainbow Covenant projects, missionary support, UMCOR disaster relief, Conference & District projects and Special Sunday Offerings)

Line 43b: Community Outreach funds (costs of the local church in ministry and of service to the community)

Line 43a: Funds given directly to UMC related causes

Line 44: Funds given directly to non-UMC related causes

Line 46: Clergy pension payments (CPP, CRSP)<sup>2</sup>

Line 47: Clergy health benefits payments

Line 48-57: Senior & Associate Pastor Costs + Church Programs & Operational Costs

#### 4. **Additional Considerations**

The apportionment calculations based on the above categories are adjusted with two additional considerations called “According to Means” functions. These two functions provide fine tuning to the apportionment amount based upon a local church's access to resources from within the congregation.

- a. The local church spending on cash compensation plus reimbursements and allowances for the Senior and Associate Pastor is compared to the spending of other local churches of like size. A linear regression of the data predicts a pastoral compensation level for each church given their average attendance. The amount above or below that prediction is called the “Pastoral Residual”. For each local church their individual Pastoral Residual number, capped at the absolute number of 50,000, is cubed and multiplied by .000000001. The resultant adds (or subtracts) from the apportionment requested from the local church as summed above. The basis for the Pastor Residual additional consideration is the most recent Senior & Associate Pastor compensation data available and the most recent year’s average attendance at all weekly worship services.
- b. The basis for the Budget Size additional consideration is the most recent year’s Senior & Associate Pastor Costs plus Church Programs & Operational Costs (Statistical Report Lines 48-57), excluding \$60,000 and capped at \$900,000. For each local church the total is squared and multiplied by .00000004. This amount is added to the apportioned asking of the specific local church.

#### Exceptions

1. Each apportionment amount must be divisible by 12.
2. The apportionment for any year may not be more than 9% above the previous year and not less than 9% below the previous year.
3. The minimum apportionment shall be \$1,200.

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<sup>1</sup> Two statistical report lines are excluded entirely from the Apportionment calculation:

Line 58: Total paid on mortgage or loan principal and interest

Line 59: Total paid for capital expenditures, major renovations, and building improvements

<sup>2</sup> Line 46 was previously categorized under 1. Senior & Associate Pastor Costs

4. Building costs per average attender that exceed the 80<sup>th</sup> percentile of the array of conference churches shall not be included in the calculations.
5. Up to 1% of the total apportioned can be reserved for the CCFA to respond to appeals from local churches. Appeals may only be extended by CCFA for data errors or hardship.

### Audit

Again, the Northern Illinois Conference received an unqualified approval of our annual audit. The complete audit is part of this report. No management letter was written because no significant deficiencies were identified.

We are blessed with a talented and church-loving Treasurer's staff. I am thankful for the opportunity of serving as Conference Treasurer and apologize broadly to all who are still waiting on a return phone call.

Grace and Peace,

Lonnie Chafin  
Conference Treasurer

### **400.05 2017 Cabinet Historical Report**

Submitted by  
Rev. Young-Mee Park  
Dean of Cabinet

The Northern Illinois Conference Cabinet consists of the Bishop, six District Superintendents, Director of Connectional Ministries/ Assistant to the Bishop, and the Director of Congregational Development and Redevelopment. We began the new conference year with much joy and anticipation as Bishop Sally Dyck was reassigned to our conference. We sent the newly elected Bishop, Rev. Dr. Tracy Smith Malone, to serve in East Ohio Conference, and welcomed Rev. Jacques Conway to serve as Chicago Southern District Superintendent. Rev. Dr. Chris Pierson returning to local church ministry, the Director of Connectional Ministries position was combined with that of the Assistant to Bishop. As individual members, as well as as a team, it was, and continues to be, a time to practice adaptive leadership and engage in a meaningful process of change.

Not only for us, the Northern Illinois Conference, but also for the general church, this year has been a time for adaptive and transformative journey. On November 6-8, 2016, the Council of Bishops hosted the Extended Cabinet Summit. We were among the approximately 750 extended cabinet leaders from U.S. conferences gathered in Jackson, FL, to start the new quadrennium focused on the mission of cultivating vital congregations to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. We returned from the Summit not only with a renewed and redefined focus, but also with a simple and yet difficult question: how best can we redirect or realign the resources and energy of our Conference to fulfill our mission?

One of the most important resources we have is people -- clergy and laity alike. And, one of the most distinctive responsibilities of the Cabinet is deployment. We work as a team on bringing pastors and congregations together through appointment making. It is a discerning work done with much prayer and conversation. Especially this year, we started to use StrengthsFinder for consultation with clergy, and demographic and lifestyle information from MissionInsite to better understand the communities we serve. We want our appointment making to be based on prayer and spiritual discernment on the one hand and on the objective and balanced data analysis on the other.

The Cabinet work area also includes resourcing, equipping, and providing oversight and direction for the work of the annual conference, districts, and local churches. This year, we continued to improve Transition Workshop offered to all clergy and congregations receiving a new appointment. Intercultural Competency Training is now an integral part of the Transition Workshop, thus equipping our congregations and pastors to relate and work effectively across racial, ethnic, cultural, and personal differences, not only tolerating, but also embracing, celebrating, and leveraging them. We strive to make our church conferences an opportunity for deep and meaningful conversations, as well as for visioning, goal setting, and strategic planning. Each district offers different training programs that reflect and honor their unique context and needs. Pushing the "Mobile District Superintendents" and "Mobile Cabinet" model, we hold our meetings and events at different districts and churches. We want to be as close as we can be to our pastors, churches, and communities. We are determined to do whatever we can to support and strengthen the ministries of our churches.

What a challenging and exciting time to be a church! "Vital Christians, Vital Congregations, Changing Communities" -- This is our calling and this is our commitment. And we are all in this together! Thanks be to God!

#### **400.06 Office of Connectional Ministries**

In September, 2016 I wrote a "Did You Know" article for the Northern Illinois Conference Reporter titled "Change". The theme of the reflection was based on a line in a song by David Bowie "*Ch-ch-ch-ch-Changes (Turn and face the strange) Turn and face the strain.*" This has become a mantra in the Office of Connectional Ministries during the 2016-2017 annual conference year.

As of July 1, 2016 the role of Director of Connectional Ministries became a ½ time position combined with the position of Assistant to the Bishop. The role of Associate Director was not filled, thus decreasing the conference staff by two full-time positions. This alignment has a twofold purpose, giving time to redesign staff in light of the Landscape process findings from 2016 and easing financial demands. There has been significant adjustment in the work of support for churches and conference committees with this transition. I am grateful for everyone's flexibility and understanding. Simultaneous to this reduction the two remaining program staff were relocated to the

conference office in Chicago, creating a climate of creativity and engagement with all staff in one setting.

During the summer of 2016, in partnership with the Program Council, we undertook the work of assessing the use and needs of our churches for media services. We determined that we would be better stewards of our resources and continue to provide high quality media support to congregations by becoming partners with the United Media Resource Center located in the Illinois Great Rivers Conference under the leadership of Jill Stone. With the help of Susan Gieseler (who retired as Director Of Media Resources in June 2016) this transition officially took place on January 1 and we have already exceeded usage levels for the first quarter of the year.

In October, we initiated a new quadrennial training for our conference leadership, reviewing the new mission, vision and values introduced at annual conference (2016) as an outgrowth of the Landscape assessment as well as offering training to support and enhance their work.

Continuing the mantra of “change” we listened to the concerns of local churches and redesigned the background check process. Management of background checks has now moved into the hands of the local church with direct access to on-line training from “Safe Gatherings” and low cost background checks with “Trusted Employees”. I am grateful to the chair of Safe Sanctuaries, Linda Lowery who worked to shepherd this process. Out of this work it became clear that a new team of Safe Sanctuary trainers is also needed. We have partnered with “Christians Engaging in Faith Formation” (CEF) to build this new team.

As I write this historic report (at the end of March) in the past 9 months there have been 35 training events in the conference managed by support staff, engaging 1444 persons. This does not include on-going events or those held on a smaller scale in regional or local settings. We are a heavily programed conference. Now our challenge is to understand how this programing can align with our mission and carry out our priorities so congregations can be equipped for the work of making disciples and engaging their communities and the world.

To more clearly define the work of equipping local churches a survey was designed with the help of “The Alford Group” for local church input. With a nearly 50% response rate the interpretation of this survey and its implications for the future will be completed this spring.

As part of our journey of “change” this office has also been heavily involved in resourcing the work of the Organizational Task Force through research, meeting planning and consultation. The plan, designed by the task force, if approved by the

annual conference, it will create a connectedness to the various aspects of our conference life that can help align our mission and action.

In partnership with the National Hispanic Plan, much effort is being given to the development of our Hispanic/Latino Ministry Team. As we move into a time of increased concern for refugees and the undocumented, these efforts have taken on urgency for the work of congregations, our Hispanic Latino communities and the ministry of Justice for Our Neighbors (JFON). In addition, with guidance and financial support from the General Council on Religion and Race, we have continued training and a pilot project on cultural competencies.

Over the past 16 months we have also experienced change in our support staff. With five staff moving to new jobs or retiring, we have worked in partnership with the Offices of Congregational Development and Administrative Services, on a plan to combine portions of these five positions into two supporting roles. Early this year we welcomed an Administrative Assistant/Event Planner, Laura Lopez and Administrative Assistant/Communications Specialist, Megan Casey into our employ. Shared by three directors these two support staff will have heavy responsibility for “on-the-ground” day-to-day work of the offices of Congregational Development and Redevelopment, Communications and Connectional Ministries.

Anne Marie Gerhardt continues to faithfully serve as our Director of Communications and will be overseeing the development of a new conference website this coming summer. We continue to be a presence in the lives of our churches and communities through Outdoor and Retreat Ministries. Under the leadership of the ORM board and our Camp Director, Jeff Casey, the camps are close to becoming economically self-sufficient. We are a presence on five campuses across the northern part of the state and celebrate the ministries of our campus ministers: Rev. Eric Doolittle, Rev. Mosung Eam, Rich Harvard, Rev. Rosa Lee and Rev. Julie Windsor-Mitchell. Rev. Robert Biekman is leading focused ministry for the many challenges and needs in the urban context as part-time Urban Strategist. This year we also celebrate the commissioning of two additional missionaries called out from our conference into the mission field. Reverend Kyung-Ah Woo and Reverend Jin Yang Kim will become GBGM missionaries as of July 1.

As we learn to live into our mission and priorities with a smaller staff and concentrated resources, the mantra continues to be: “*Ch-ch-ch-ch-Changes (Turn and face the strange) Turn and face the strain.*” May God guide us into a fruitful and blessed future.

In anticipation,  
Reverend Arlene W. Christopherson, Assistant to the Bishop/ DCM

#### **400.07 Historical Report for 2016 for NIC Board of Global Ministries**

The year, 2016, was a year of change for the Board of Global Ministries. There were several missionaries to itinerate in churches in the conference. Shirley Pulgar-Hughes, the conference mission secretary, and her district counterparts worked together to find churches to host the missionaries assigned to visit our conference. It is always a joy when a church has the opportunity to have a missionary visit to share their mission work and people get excited and want to be involved.

Work was completed on the draft of the new Rainbow Covenant book to be voted on at annual conference. Revisions were made to the number of bands included as well as a contest for children to design a cover around the theme, "We Are One!" The cover was voted on at the Rainbow Covenant Luncheon at the annual conference session. The final book is available on the conference website and each church received a printed copy as well. A special thank you goes to Michael Mann and the task force who helped make this big project a reality.

After annual conference the new quadrennium brought new leadership to the Board. There is no longer a staff person charged with meeting and working with the Board on regular basis. A new chair and secretary were chosen to work with the conference mission secretary, Shirley Pulgar-Hughes, who is continuing. Jan Stone-Paris is the new chair of the Board and Mary Ann Burson is the new secretary. Thanks to all those who are leaving the Board after having completed their service, including Anne Genther, Chair, Marlene Stratton, Secretary, and Michael Mann, staff.

As changes come we must remember what the Board of Global Ministries is charged with doing and why we do what we do. The United Methodist Church is at work all around the world making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world and we are about sharing God's gifts with others. Let us do it well.

Anne Genther, Out-going Chair

Jan Stone-Paris, In-coming Chair

#### **400.08 Historical Report 2017: Commission on Religion and Race**

Over the past year, the Commission on Religion and Race of the Northern Illinois Conference has been involved in activities that are intended to promote the goal of the General Commission on Religion and Race as articulated in its vision statement: to advocate for "a fully inclusive Church that is accountable for and proactive in addressing all forms of racial/ethnic oppression, and where all members strive, as disciples of Jesus Christ, to build God's beloved community."

One of our primary responsibilities has been to monitor Annual Conference. Our monitoring reports spaced throughout the conference encouraged attendees to be open to the diversity represented among us at the conference and in our communities. We focus on the diversity represented in the annual conference proceedings and offer "wellness" reports that share the view that a more inclusive Church and Annual Conference are "healthier."

A new focus has emerged from the recognition that the historical method of monitoring alone has not produced the transformation of the church into one that more closely resembles the changing context of the global church. GCORR and the NIC CORR are now striving to help resource congregations and church and conference leaders to increase intercultural competency, institutional equity, and vital conversations that will move us forward in our mission as a global church. In keeping with this goal, members of the Conference CORR team have continued as contributing members of the Multi-Cultural task force comprised of representatives of various constituencies, governing and administrative bodies within the conference along with Bishop Dyck. The mission of the task force is to develop a comprehensive plan for increasing our effectiveness in reaching a diverse population within our annual conference.

We have also been involved in helping to facilitate the cause of racial/ethnic equity as participants on the task force established to determine a proposal for the re-organization of our Annual Conference. This included efforts to ensure that the diversity of voices and perspectives in the NIC were heard as conversations were held in consideration of the proposal. In another year that has been marked by heightened racial tensions in our country and communities within the NIC, our CORR team has promoted the resources of the General Commission on Religion and Race to help congregations facilitate dialogue and educational programs in the areas of racial justice and reconciliation. We look forward to continuing to work towards the goal of moving The United Methodist Church, and the NIC in particular, into relationships that will reach more people, more diverse people, and younger people to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Respectfully submitted,  
Adonna Davis Reid, Chair

#### **400.09 2017 Conference Committee on Native American Ministries Historical Report**

We support our **Native American Ministry of Presence** on the north side of Chicago. Bill Buchholtz continues to coordinate this ministry. He works with many Native organizations and Chicago schools as a musician and mentor to children and youth. He is also present at powwows in the Midwest, dedications, worship services, special events and memorial services.

We continue collaborating with **The Kateri Center** by supporting the educational and cultural programs of their elders, participating in the All Nations Prayer Circle, occasional worship services and leadership meetings, and providing resources for language events. We also supported the center in its transition of its leadership by being asked to be part of the interview team, in interviewing the candidates. The new director is Josie Dykas. Gene Green and Bill Buchholtz have been in regular attendance at the meeting.

**The members of CONAM** have spoken at and celebrated with churches observing Native American Ministries Sunday, attended powwows, participated in worship; provided pastoral care with Native Americans, and provided learning opportunities about Native culture.

Michelle Oberwise Lacock helped to plan and participated in the Native American Discipleship training that was held in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The event was sponsored and hosted by Rev. Anita Phillips, Director of the Native American Comprehensive Plan. 100 people attended from many annual conferences to learn how to do outreach to Native Americans.

This year we hosted Dr. Casey Church, Elder from the Pokagon Band of the Potawatomi and Director of Wiconi International who spoke at Gary UMC in Wheaton Illinois, on *“Living into the Acts of Repentance”*. Later in the afternoon he spoke at Kateri Center. Both events were well attended.

With Gratitude,

Rev. Dr. Michelle Oberwise Lacock, and Gene Green Co-Chairs  
Committee on Native American Ministries

#### **400.10 Historical Report – NIC Council for Older Adult Ministries**

*“Do not cast me off in time of old age; do not forsake me when my strength is spent.” (Psalm 71:9)*

MISSION: The Council for Older Adult Ministries (OAM) serves to enrich the lives of older adults in the Northern Illinois Conference through ministries (education, training, and service). These will be accomplished by

- a. Equipping local church ministries with training and resources;
- b. Provide leadership, motivation and support; and
- c. Present opportunities for life enrichment and spiritual nourishment and growth.

Older adults are the fastest growing population in the church. In response, while there is still time, the church needs to explore their potential and ensure their full participation in the church. Accordingly, their contributions to the church and society, past and present, will be recognized and celebrated. *“Gray hair is a crown of glory; it is found on the path of righteousness.” (Proverbs 16:31)*

OAM accomplished in the 2016 conference year (until 2017):

OAM was prominently present at the June 2016 annual conference sessions in St. Charles with a display table of relevant resource materials.

In September 2016, the NIC OAM participated in the BoomerStock Event sponsored by the Discipleship Ministries. Pong Javier, Rosa Lee, and Jim Barry represented NIC in this national launching of the Boomer ministry in Nashville. BoomerStock is named after WoodStock which generation is now an emphasis of the Office of the Aging and Older Adults. Experts in the field of seniors came to be resource persons in this training event.

Following BoomerStock, Pong and Rosa had the opportunity of conducting separate workshops on Boomer ministry in the DeKalb District, the last at the district LEAD training in Dixon IL. OAM participated in the 2017 Laity Convocation in Barrington IL and the 2017 Chicago Southern District LEAD training in Flossmoor IL highlighting the emerging ministry to the Boomers.

Most of printed materials that were handed out were provided by the Office of the Aging in Nashville without cost on NIC.

For the first time, OAM will offer a luncheon event at annual conference. The Rev. Dr. William Randolph, Director of the Office of Aging and OAM will be the guest speaker.

#### Budget

Much of the expenses and cost of materials in the past period were donated or at minimal cost to OAM. The Office of Aging picked up most of the tab for our attendance in Nashville event. The OAM budget line for the past period was clearly underspent. For 2017, OAM has been allocated \$3,500 most of which will be spent for the administration of the Golden Cross Sunday observance and the expansion of Boomer ministry in the conference. We plan to do more workshops around the conference in the Fall. We also plan to work with Rev. Dr. William Randolph to lead the formation of a regional mini-BoomerStock to benefit more local churches.

#### Golden Cross Sunday and Older Adult Recognition Sunday:

Council for Older Adult Ministries is charged to administer the GCS Offering received by the Conference Treasurer and to promote the Older Adult Recognition Sunday in NIC. A deserving employee of a NIC-related senior care institution may be a recipient of GCS Offering fund. The employee/recipient must be pursuing a study to further expertise in caring for seniors. Seventeen congregations participated in the GCS Offering in 2016 giving a total of \$1,500, compared to 20 churches in 2015. One student will be awarded scholarship money from the 2016 offering.

#### Facebook Page Reaches Church Leaders on Regular Basis

The NIC OAM Facebook Page ([www.facebook.com/nicolderadultministries](http://www.facebook.com/nicolderadultministries)) keeps the ministry and possibilities alive. It provides on daily basis ideas from other local congregations, experts in the field, and the Office of Aging and Older Adult Ministries.

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AQUILINO (PONG) JAVIER and JAMES BARRY, OAM co-chairs

#### **400.11 United Methodist Women President's Report 2016-2017**

Typical of years past, Mission u was the first event to celebrate. Women gathered at Camp Reynoldswood to study, celebrate and be in mission. This year pillows were given to the camp. What a great way to begin the year: learning, sharing and uniting as women of faith!

UMWomen took action in the streets of Chicago once again to provide awareness related to human trafficking especially at such time as large sports events such as the Super Bowl. Cold and wind couldn't replace the warm hearts of those women and men who attended. We also financially supported a transitional house that is used by women who have broken away from this "human slavery."

During the spring, districts met for training and celebration of things accomplished in 2016. Although we "**think globally,**" we "**act locally.**" Women are acting on behalf of children (filling

school bags and making buddy bags), for youth (providing financial support for youth spending time beyond their communities or at our own church camps), and for women (serving meals, gathering coats and food, running thrift shops and supporting homeless shelters), and the list goes on and on. We heed the call from the national office to work on environmental justice, maternal and child health, mass incarceration, and economic inequality. Although these are huge issues, whenever and wherever we can do something, we do.

UMW continued to partner with UMM in the promotion of DBOM. We continued to endeavor as we seek to gain entry into facilities in Northern Illinois whether in adult prisons or centers for youth. We continued to partner with Illinois Great Rivers Conference.

Leadership development continued to be important to our organization. Support for women was provided at the district and conference levels. A number of women also had an opportunity to attend events sponsored by our national office. Some went to Leadership Development Days. Others went to Voices where women for whom English is not their first language gather and share. Leaving a Legacy was also attended as we near our 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary; our vision is to provide funding that will take us through the next 150 years.

Summer took our Mission u one day event to LaGrange UMC and was well attended by women (Caucasian, Korean and Hispanic), children and youth. Then, we went to camp (Camp Reynoldswood) for the weekend school. We were blessed with beautiful weather. The studies were not easy ones! Yet we, as our foremothers, know how important it is to face the tough issues whether it is climate justice, racial justice, or human sexuality.

Fall brought our districts and conference together for election of officers for 2017 and celebration of what was accomplished in 2016. As we continued to commit to faith, hope and love in action, we affirmed our purpose: to be a community of women who knows God and experiences freedom as whole persons through Jesus Christ; to develop a creative supportive fellowship; and to expand concepts of mission through participation in the global ministries of the church.

#### **400.12 2016 Historical Report of the Northern Illinois Conference's Credit Union-Land of Lincoln Credit Union**

The year 2015 marked the 76<sup>th</sup> year that the NIC has participated in making a credit union available. Due to a merger in 2014 the Northern Illinois Conference's official credit union became Land of Lincoln Credit Union. It is available to all United Methodists (laity, clergy, or employees) in the state of Illinois for a wide variety of financial services, including personal and auto loans, VISA credit cards at very reasonable rates, savings and money market accounts, checking accounts, IRAs, etc. Land of Lincoln CU offers online banking options, as well. A recent service addition is the ability to deposit checks right from your mobile device. (Check the website for easy instructions.)

The contact number is 309-827-8636 at the Bloomington branch or toll free at 844-222-7788. The website is [www.llcu.org](http://www.llcu.org). The address of the new office of the Bloomington branch is 115 Susan Dr., Unit 1, Normal IL 61761.

Though based in Decatur, Land of Lincoln also participates in Shared Banking with credit unions throughout Illinois, which means that your account in Land of Lincoln can be handled by visiting any other credit union near you that participates in Shared Banking.

#### **400.13 Clergy Fund, United Methodist**

The United Methodist Clergy Fund is an independent, Illinois, not-for-profit, corporation. It is organized to "procure, invest, and manage money and property, the income from which shall go toward the support of superannuated ministers, and the widows and dependent children of deceased members." The fund is related to the Northern Illinois Conference of the United Methodist Church because its bylaws limit its contributions to this conference.

Founded on October 27, 1885, it was one of the first funds established to provide income for retired pastors and their dependents. In fact, it was one of the first funds in the United States to provide such assistance, and was a forerunner to the concept of pension funds. In existence for 130 years, The Clergy Fund intends to continue providing significant levels of support for retirees of the Northern Illinois Conference.

On December 31, 2015 the fund totaled \$24,260,727. Through the stewardship of its seven member Board of Directors, and the investment management team at Wespath, the fund totaled \$25,258,517.34 at the end of 2016. During 2016, it contributed \$1,200,000, as per its original 2016 budget, to the Northern Illinois Conference for the benefit of its retirees. An additional contribution of \$100,000 more than the board budgeted for the year, was made in response to increasing retiree health insurance costs. This brings the total 2016 contribution to \$1,300,000. The Clergy Fund invests principle with our investment managers, Wespath, a division of the United Methodist General Board of Pensions and Health Benefits. Wespath complies with the Social Principles and investment policies of The United Methodist Church.

The contribution significantly funds the health benefits that the retirees receive from the conference. Because of this contribution, the Northern Illinois Conference, is able to be one of the few conferences, if not the only conference, to continue providing health benefits to its retirees.

The Clergy Fund Board of Directors is comprised of five lay members and two clergy members. These persons are nominated and elected by the current board of directors. They serve for terms of four years. Five retired honorary Directors, the Chair of the Conference Board of Pensions, and the Conference Treasurer and the Conference Benefits Manager are regularly invited to attend the quarterly meetings of the Board.

The Clergy Fund has made annual gifts of about \$1 million toward retiree health insurance and retiree benefits of the Conference for more than 20 years. A policy of using a percentage of the three-year rolling average of the year-end fund value, guides the Board's annual contribution to the Board of Pensions. The Board has suggested to the Board of Pensions that they budget a contribution of \$1,200,000 from the fund for 2017.

The amount of this gift each year is not shown separately in the Conference budget. Rather, it is netted against health insurance costs in the Board of Pensions budget. Without this contribution, the Conference's annual revenue budget of nearly \$6.7 million would have to be increased by approximately 19%.

The Fund is a 501(c)(3) registered charitable organization, and welcomes contributions and bequests. The Conference office or I can provide information as to the process of making a contribution to the Fund and joining in our mission.

The Board of Directors during 2016 included: Jim Loeppert, Steve Nailor, Kristina Gaughan, Ed Andersen, Rev. Jamie Geiger, John Abe, and Rev. Ouk-Yean Kim Jueng. Rev. Tom Harmon serves as treasurer.

--James Loeppert, United Methodist Clergy Fund, President

March 31, 2017

#### **400.14 ChildServ Historical Report**

Since 1894, ChildServ has built better lives for more than 135,000 children and families who are at risk. Our community-based programs, including early childhood education, foster care and adoption and residential group homes for teens, help 2,800 children and families each year to reach their potential in Cook, DuPage, Kane and Lake counties. This past year has been one of tremendous client accomplishment, exciting new partnerships and bold innovative initiatives as we continue our mission to make a positive impact in the lives of our clients and in the communities in which we serve.

#### Building Better Lives

ChildServ's early childhood education programs promote early learning and brain development, as well as improve school readiness in kids ages 0-5 by empowering parents to become their child's first teacher. We use nationally-recognized, evidence-based curricula to help children to reach development milestones, ensuring that they are ready to succeed in school. In 2016, 674 kids were on-track for kindergarten.

Last year, 460 children who had been abused, neglected or experienced trauma found safe, supportive homes through our foster care programs. Our 219 dedicated foster parents provided stability, fostering a love of learning and growth, and our case managers advocated for the children at home, school and in court.

Finally, ChildServ operates three residential group homes in DuPage County for teens ages 12 - 19 who have experienced trauma. The youth receive clinical care, life skills training, such as budgeting, financial literacy and time management, and the encouragement to complete high school. We are proud to report that for the second year in a row, every teen in our group homes who was eligible to graduate high school, graduated on time.

## Exploring New Partnerships

This past summer, ChildServ developed a partnership with Chapin Coffee, a socially-conscious, Chicago-based coffee company, to build better lives for children in Chicago and abroad through our A Better Life Coffee Collection. For each bag sold, 10% of the proceeds support the children and families in our care and a meal is delivered to a malnourished child in Guatemala. The collection features three roasts, including *A Better Morning*, which is both USDA Organic and Fair Trade-certified, and are available for purchase on our website, [www.childserv.org](http://www.childserv.org).

ChildServ's faith partners have always been integral in helping us to build better lives for children at risk. In 2016, 22 United Methodist churches provided 1,150 kids with clothing, diapers and toys, ensuring that they experienced the joy and goodwill of Christmas. We were also grateful for the support of the Northern Illinois Conference's Annual Conference's Program Committee who awarded us a grant to record trauma-informed trainings for local churches.

We are also excited about our growing collaboration with Ann and Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago, recently honored at our Legacy Banquet for the numerous ways that they improve the lives of our clients. In addition to hosting holiday parties for the youth in our group homes, Lurie's provides car seats to the young families in our early childhood learning programs and, through their Center for Childhood Resilience, has developed a trauma-informed curriculum to help faith communities interact with children at risk.

## Developing Future Leaders

In the fall of 2016, ChildServ contracted with the State of Illinois and the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services to help dually-involved youth – those in Illinois' juvenile justice and child welfare systems – to build better lives through placement in safe, nurturing homes. The young adults receive support services, including clinical, educational and family support, as they strive to achieve their potential and lead in their personal, family and professional lives.

In January, we declared 2017 the "Year of Future Leaders", challenging our community, corporate and faith partners to invest in the promise and well-being of children and ensure that they will achieve their potential. Our "Year of Future Leaders" includes 12 monthly campaigns to engage the public in unique and exciting ways to support children who are at risk. Our first campaign, "My Resolution" featured short social media videos from board members, community leaders, elected officials and staff posting pledging to help kids reach their potential in 2017. It was a huge success, reaching 84,253 people across the state of Illinois.

ChildServ's success is directly connected to the support, referrals, and advocacy on behalf of at-risk children, youth and their families by members of the Northern Illinois United Methodist Church. Thank you for your abiding witness as justice seekers and peace makers for our clients.

For more information about ChildServ or learn how you can get involved in helping children at risk to build better lives, visit [www.childserv.org](http://www.childserv.org) or contact our Director of Faith and Community Relations Kim Coffing at (773) 239-8710 or [kcoffing@childserv.org](mailto:kcoffing@childserv.org).

#### **400.15 United Voices for Children**

In 2016 United Voices for Children (UVC) met regularly to focus on our purpose, mission and unique role within the Northern Illinois Conference (NIC) structure. Much of our year involved routine self-evaluation to develop a realistic and “innovative” two year plan of action. We were pleased to welcome four new Board members: Catherine Inserra, Christine Hides, Jacki Bogolia and Walton Davis, Jr. at our March meeting.

In May, the Board began crafting our new Strategic Plan (2016-2018) as part of our refreshed model for advancement.

On June 6, 2016, we welcomed over 125 persons to our UVC Breakfast during Annual Conference. Marva Andrews was honored with a small token of appreciation for her efforts in facilitating UVC business at the conference office.

The 2016 Award recipients were:

**Bishop Jesse R. DeWitt Award** – Rev. Chris Pierson, Northern Illinois Conference, Director of Connectional Ministries. **Katherine B. Greene Award** – *Beth Palmer, Epworth UMC Chicago, Inspired Youth Tutoring Program & Inspired Youth Singers.* **Margaret Ann Williams Service Award** – Darryl Wertheim, Faith UMC Orland Park. Youth Sports Program

Certificates of Appreciation for the 5th Sunday Appeal were awarded to:

Aurora: First UMC of Downers Grove;  
Chicago- N: Resurrection UMC;  
Chicago-S: First UMC of the Chicago Temple;  
DeKalb: First UMC of Mendota;  
Elgin: UMC of Libertyville;  
Rockford: Christ UMC of Rockford.

To help us prioritize our goals, an invitation was extended to Bishop Sally Dyck to attend our July meeting to explore ways of approaching the ministry needs of children and families.

In an endeavor to keep ministry possibilities alive and communicate with local congregations, we successfully designed and launched our new website ([www.unitedvoicesforchildren.org](http://www.unitedvoicesforchildren.org)), written Blogs and established a Facebook community. Each of these accomplishments energized the board and gives us hope for relevant mission, advocacy and ministry.

I am proud to complete our two year commitment of support and partnership with the NIC Bishop’s Children’s Table, and look forward to developing our collaborative relationships with the NIC Urban Strategy and Lurie Children’s Hospital of Chicago.

I give special thanks for congregations who participated in the 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday Appeal, despite the economic challenges many of them face. Their commitment to UVC and its mission permits us to report a \$32, 000 disbursements between the three agencies. We remain dedicated to the diverse missions of each agency and pray for increased contributions during the coming year. We were fortunate to be recipients of a bequest through the United Methodist Foundation. This unexpected gift serves as an affirmation of our purpose and reputation.

Finally, United Voices for Children will continue to engage churches, groups and individuals who desire to speak and act on behalf of children, youth and families in need. We are passionate about making a difference in the lives of children and pray for a church where Jesus' vision of love, justice and peace is fully realized.

To God Be the Glory!

Lois Moreland-Dean, President  
United Voices for Children Board of Directors

#### **400.16 Africa University Report - 2017 Northern Illinois Annual Conference**

Africa University ended 2016 poised to celebrate its Silver Jubilee and eager to embrace new opportunities for transformative ministry over the next 25 years.

**The university community acknowledges, with heartfelt gratitude, the faithfulness and generosity of the Northern Illinois Conference in helping Africa University to realize its mission. We thank the congregations of the Northern Illinois Conference for investing 70 percent of the asking to the Africa University Fund (AUF) apportionment in 2016.**

Through Africa University, United Methodist congregations help young people to discover and sharpen their gifts for leadership. Students are equipped and they respond to the call to transform the world. Thanks to your generosity, the disciple-making mission of the global United Methodist Church is alive in the contributions of the university's 7,000+ graduates. More than 90 percent of these graduates are still in Africa, serving communities in 32 countries. Currently, more than two dozen Africa University graduates are missionaries in Africa, Latin America, Asia and Europe, under the auspices of the General Board of Global Ministries.

Great things are on the horizon for Africa University in the next quarter century. Your Africa University is continuing to evolve and serve by:

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

As part of the observance of the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary, we invite the individual members, congregations and districts of the Northern Illinois Conference to take time out in 2017 to celebrate their journey with Africa University. After all, Africa University draws its mandate, energy and capacity to transform from The United Methodist Church. Regardless of the challenges that arise, Northern Illinois United Methodists have been steadfast in their support for Africa University. United Methodists sustain this ministry together – praying, loving and sharing our blessings – and there is no other way that we could do it!

Please encourage your congregation to invest 100 percent of its asking to the AUF and other general church funds. Engage in a season of daily prayer for Africa University. Join Africa University's honorary alumni association. Consider hosting a special "AU@25" event or an Africa University Sunday in your local church or area. Use your event to increase awareness of Africa University's ministry and invite attendees to each give \$25 each in honor of the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Let these celebrations affirm and re-energize the longstanding partnership between the Northern Illinois Conference and Africa University.

Thank you for your unwavering response to the call to faith, hope, and renewal in the world. We pray that blessings continue to abound for all who lead and serve in the Northern Illinois Conference.

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#### **400.17 Candler School of Theology-2017 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, over 10,000 students have graduated from Candler.

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

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

Our student body continues to reflect the diversity and breadth of the Christian faithful. 475 students are enrolled, with 51 percent women, 34 percent people of color (U.S.), and a median age of 30. Students represent 39 denominations, with half coming from the Methodist family. 83 percent of students are seeking a degree to prepare them as ministry professionals. Candler has a deep commitment to alleviating student debt and employs a multi-pronged approach to tackle this issue. In 2016-2017, we awarded nearly \$5.75 million in Candler scholarships, with 95 percent of MDiv students receiving aid and the average scholarship covering 73 percent of tuition.

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

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

Jan Love  
Dean and Professor of Christianity and World Politics  
Candler School of Theology

#### **400.18 Boston University School of Theology**

Dear Colleagues:

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

#### **BREAKING NEWS:**

- **Congregations:** We welcomed Jonathan Calvillo as a new faculty member in sociology of religion, leading us toward better understanding of congregations and faith identity. See also our website of congregational resources: <http://www.bu.edu/cpt/current-projects-2/congregational-research-and-development/>.
- **Doctor of Ministry:** The DMin program in Transformational Leadership is soaring with deeply committed student cohorts who are widely ecumenical, culturally diverse, and increasingly global. The blended model includes intensives, online courses, and close work with faculty mentors.
- **Scholarships:** We multiplied funding for student scholarships and housing, including the Vincent Machozi Scholarship for African students who seek to cultivate ministries of compassion, justice, & peace in their homelands.

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

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

- **Congregational courses:** Courses in congregations with church leaders and students learning together.
- **Religion and Conflict Transformation Clinic:** Internships, workshops, and projects that foster justice and reconciliation.
- **Ecumenical partnerships:** Continuing close work with UMC, AME and other Wesleyan denominations, while building strong programs with the Episcopal Church and United Church of Christ.
- **Partnership with Hebrew College:** Joint courses and public events, plus co-sponsoring *The Journal of Interreligious Studies*. The focus is on enriching theological education and developing religious leaders who are faithful and wise.

**TAKING ACTION GLOBALLY AND LOCALLY:**

- **Campus action:** Work with Boston University to improve accessibility and sustainability: to provide full access for all persons (a work in progress) and to live sustainably with the planet.
- **Internships in global service and peacemaking:** Student-initiated internships for service with communities across the world, and for just peacemaking projects with international organizations.

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

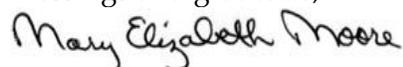
- **Standing with Standing Rock:** Several BUSTH students and alums joined indigenous peoples at the Oceti Sakowin Camp in North Dakota to protest the pipeline on sacred Sioux land.

**OTHER NOTABLE HEADLINES:**

- Our own **Associate Dean Pamela Lightsey** was featured in Boston University's 2016 Annual Report for her pursuit of justice, empowerment, and change.
- Students of all theological and social orientations are asking and then acting: "What can I do to make this world better?" "How can I witness to my Christian faith?"

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

Blessings and gratitude,



Mary Elizabeth Moore, Dean

#### **400.19 Rockford Urban Ministries**

For over 55 years, Rockford Urban Ministries has been raising social justice issues and initiating ministries in Rockford. The Conference started the program in 1962, now run by 17 area United Methodist Churches that bring resources and the Holy Spirit to the city. We have been blessed with 5 non-UMC congregations that assist.

Mr. Stanley Campbell celebrated 30 years as Executive Director. Of course he used this as a way of fundraising for all the projects. Campbell lifts up “the work of RUM, as we are affectionately known, and the UM Congregations in Rockford. From Work Camps Program to JustGoods fair trade, and especially giving voice to peace and justice, the Conference’s annual support has gone a long way in allowing RUM to answer God’s call to do ministry. It’s great work. Thank you!”

Conference's support of \$15,000 is multiplied 20 times and is the foundation for RUM's work with JustGoods, Work Camp, and advocacy. Churches participate more in the urban life of the community. This is even more important in the coming years because of the change in federal administration.

RUM expanded Work Camps, hiring Rev. Danice Loveridge (formerly at Poplar Grove UMC) as program manager. She directed 14 large volunteer teams from across the country, upgraded its programs and policies and made new connections. Work Camp receives volunteer groups as well from NIC and UMC VIM, assigns work, provides tools and materials, and shares prayers and devotions with the many youth and adult supervisors. Congregations stay for up to a week doing meaningful work, any time of the year. BREAKING NEWS: Jeff Brace will lead the Work Camps this summer!

Area non-profits find projects for our volunteers. RUM gets support from local churches who know the need and hosts the largest Volunteers In Mission (VIM) work site in Northern IL which does home repairs.

RUM addresses social justice issues: supports immigration and the work of JFON (Justice For Our Neighbor); opposes increased State gambling; educates for world and community peace; and provides programming for church and community on how God calls us to Holy boldness. RUM also establishes new programs and assists existing ministries, i.e., prison release and community development.

JustGoods, the beautiful fair trade store, is now in its eighth year. By selling items from mission and fair trade co-operatives from around the world, it graces the corner of 7thStreet & First Avenue, in the heart of Rockford’s Shalom Zone. This ministry was started by RUM, our office is in the basement of the rehabbed building. RUM installed solar panels next to the wind generator on the roof which supplies electricity. This was funded through community donations to encourage more “clean energy” and to save money.

The RUM Gallery/meeting room is used by the community and UMC churches. It hosts meetings for up to 50 people. Please visit Mondays through Saturdays, 10 – 4:30. Call RUM at 815-964-7111 to schedule a mission “Walk the Neighborhood.”

#### **400.20 ORGRANZATIONAL TASK FORCE Historical Report - 2017**

Growing out of the Landscape Survey in 2015, a resolution was brought to the 2016 Northern Illinois Annual Conference directing the formation of an Organizational Task Force (Resolution 700.01). The purpose of the task force is stated in the resolution: “to create a

proposal for an alternative organizational structure, which would be presented for adoption at the 2017 annual conference.

The restructure would include, but would not be limited to:

- An organizational structure that can
  - Plan strategically,
  - Align resources and mission,
  - Create an intersection between administrative, program and superintending functions,
  - Streamline the work of the conference committees,
  - Respond with flexibility,
  - Be accountable to conference membership and
  - Act with coordinated efficiency.
- Such a structure would enhance the focus on purpose, mission and core values, while providing a forum for communication and coordination.

The task force was called together by chairperson, Liz Gracie, on Saturday, September 17, 2016, at Naperville: Grace UMC for its organizational meeting. The full task force met on a monthly basis at sites across the conference and in small teams between full task force meetings to accomplish their work.

Task Force members included: Chuck Andrews, Brenda Asare, Mary Bohall, Elizabeth Bowes, Lonnie Chafin, Arlene Christopherson, Scott Christy, Bishop Sally Dyck, Elisa Gatz, Brian Gilbert, Liz Gracie, Carol Hill, Brittany Isaac, Sejoon Jang, Hannah Kardon, Terry McDorman, Katherine Paisley, Young-Mee Park, James Preston, Cerna Rand, Adonna Reid, Luis Reyes, Stephanie Uhl, Laura Wilson, Thomas Yang and Mary Zajac.

The work began with a review of our current structure in the Northern Illinois Conference and an introduction to the structures utilized in other conferences with like demographics that have undergone an organizational change in recent years.

In the late fall, at a meeting at Naperville: Wesley UMC, the taskforce divided into four teams under the leadership of: Chuck Anderson, Brenda Asare, Brittany Isaac and Mary Zajac. The teams utilized what they had learned and each devised a plan for the conference that would be unique to our needs and context.

In early January, 2017 teams presented their models at a full day meeting held at Rochelle UMC. The models were ranked and desirable features were identified in each of the models. Following this meeting a unified design was crafted by the team leaders. In February, the full taskforce met at Sycamore UMC and made revisions to the design.

Three listening sessions were held in early March for feedback on the preliminary design. Each session was attended by a mix of clergy and laity with a total of 66 laity and 49 clergy offering feedback on the model. The listening sessions were held at: Downers Grove: First UMC, Dixon: First UMC and Morgan Park UMC.

On March 18, the taskforce met for the full day at Steward UMC to finalize the design. When a question arose regarding the role of the ethnic caucuses in the proposed structure, their executive committees were invited to a listening session at Lombard: First UMC on March 29.

A final resolution on organizational structure will be submitted to the annual conference for approval at the June, 2017 session.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Liz Gracie, Task Force Chair