

## HISTORICAL REPORTS

### **400.01 – Board of Laity**

The Board of Laity was saddened this year by the loss of three members of the Board - Kathy Dickerson, Elgin District Lay Leader, Gerald Hayes, member-at-large, Deji Sanyaolu, Aurora District Lay Leader. We honor them and are thankful for their service. Retiring from the Board were long-time members Greg Chapman, Aurora District Lay Leader and Donna Sagami, Northwest District Lay Leader. We thank them for their many years of service and will miss them.

Usually, The Board of Laity reports on numerous leadership training events taking place through-out the conference due to the activities of Board members. These would include district training events lead by District Lay Leaders, Lay Servants academies and Certified Lay Minister training lead by the Director of Lay Servant Ministries, and the training occurring in UMM and UMW through the leadership of the Presidents of both of those organizations. The number of training events was reduced this year due to the pandemic, but the effort to adapt to the challenges caused by the pandemic was evident. Lay Academies in several districts occurred virtually as did training for Certified Lay Ministers. UMM and UMW both held several traditional training events virtually with excellent results.

Over three hundred people attended this year’s virtual Laity Convocation. The focus of Laity Convocation was on the third strategic goal of our conference - To Increase the Number of Highly Vital Congregations. The morning was led by a message from interim Bishop John L. Hopkins and virtual reports on activities of the Discipleship Task Force and Anti-Racism Task Force. We then focused on highly vital congregations and three things that all highly vital congregations do. Those things are: Participate in Communal Prayer, Help People Grow in Faith, and Have Multiple Outreach Ministries. Rev. Sue Nilson Kibbey gave a presentation on “Communal Prayer,” Rev. Adam Hamilton on “Helping People Grow in Faith,” and Rev. Dr. F. Douglas Powe on “Outreach in a New Time.” Examples of these three things happening in local churches were presented by Rev. Mike Jones and Diane Klinefelter discussed communal prayer at Bethel UMC in Shannon, Il. Rev. Hannah Kardon and Drew Jones told of helping people grow in faith at Urban Village UMC, and four local churches told of their outreach ministries - Sterling:Wesley UMC, Rockford:Court Street UMC, Chicago:South Shore UMC, and Evanston:Emmanuel UMC.

Conference Co-Lay Leader Connie Augsberger represents the laity on the Conference Board of Trustees and the Episcopacy Committee along with chairing the Board of Laity.

Conference Co-Lay Leader Mark Manzi represents the laity on the Annual Conference Shepherding Team, the Annual Conference Committee, the Association of Annual Conference Lay Leaders, along with chairing the Board of Laity. He also is a member of the Anti-Racism Task Force's Champions Team.

Conference Co-Lay Leader Eugene Williams represents laity on the Board of Ordained Ministry, the Episcopacy Committee, the Nominations Committee, the Board of Church and Society, the United Methodist Foundation Board, and Chairs the CSD Committee of Ordained Ministry, Treasurer of the Conference UMM, along with chairing the Board of Laity.

Respectfully submitted: Connie Augsburger, Mark Manzi, Eugene Williams, Conference Co-Lay Leaders

### **400.02 - Discipleship Task Force**

This year we rolled out our Discipleship Web Page. Check it out at [umcnic.org/discipleship](http://umcnic.org/discipleship) or go to the Conference home page and click on our logo! You will find numerous resources! These resources, which were mostly developed this year, are available to delve into and incorporate with action in our churches. Working on the Discipleship Task Force are co-chairs Rev. Caleb Hong and Karen Bonnell, Deacon Sharon Rice, Pastor Seamus Enright, Rev. Devon Brown, Ellen Feliciano, and project manager Amania Drane.

Have a look at our Jumpstarting Youth Ministries videos. One pastor shared that when he was a youth, his pastor was simply present for him. That made all the difference. It was not fancy programs or big budgets that helped him. Click on that series for encouragement whether you are a clergy or lay youth leader, or just a member who wants to help youth. As a bonus, several resources for working with youth are outlined. Also, look for information about Building coNEXTions Youth Leader Symposium and see future plans in conjunction with that.

John Wesley thought having a method was a good idea. As a result, The United Methodist Church is still around! Intentional Discipleship Systems provide structure and method. They lead to effective churches and reaching others with good news. Our outline and list of trainers plus the websites listed are great places to start. Included in resources is the recording of Digging Deeper in Intentional Discipleship with Scott Sloane & Ken Hughes from Discipleship Ministries. The See All the People website can be accessed from our Discipleship web page as well.

The NIC Prayer Network ([umcnic.org/prayernetwork](http://umcnic.org/prayernetwork)) is an online presence where we systemically pray for all NIC churches and clergy plus church leaders and NIC Advance projects. There is a monthly devotion as well. The NIC Prayer Team meets monthly. You can request an agenda through [DiscipleshipTF@umcnic.org](mailto:DiscipleshipTF@umcnic.org). You may even request a Zoom link to join us!

You will find your church is enriched by taking advantage of our resources. But they can help you only if you put them to work! [umcnic.org/discipleship](http://umcnic.org/discipleship). Have a look. Then start using them.

### **400.03 - 2021 Program Ministries**

The Program Ministries of the Northern Illinois Conference includes committees, boards, agencies and task forces within the conference. There are approximately 50 such groups. These groups live out the vision of the Northern Illinois Conference in “Making and supporting vital Christians in vital congregations that engage with their communities and the world for peace, justice and mercy.” At the conference level we strive to do what the local church cannot do alone.

The work of these ministries is greatly dependent on the energy and creativity of volunteer lay and clergy. While we have administrative and communication staff who give support to the important work of these groups, Northern Illinois does not have dedicated program staff.

The work of the program areas is linked to the Annual Conference Shepherding Team through three representatives covering the areas of Age Level Ministries represented by Meg Park, Church Development and Revitalization represented by Laura Wilson Underwood, and Justice and Mercy Ministries represented by Mary Rawlinson.

Under the guidance of the area representatives, ministries are invited to submit a budget request along with an annual report of the work they have done in the previous year. These budget requests are reviewed and funds are allocated with review and affirmation from the Annual Conference Shepherding Team.

While many plans were put on hold during the 2020-2021 year due to the pandemic many of our program areas learned to use online platforms for continued work. Of note, the Conference Committee on Global Ministries took on the major task of reworking the second mile giving program in the annual conference now known as Mission Links: Living the Beatitudes.

The Board of Laity produced a successful Laity Convocation online which exceeded all expectations for attendance and the District Lay Servant Academies made the transition to Zoom courses. Groups have witnessed an increase in attendance and participation as programming is offered via the internet. We celebrate the ingenuity of our volunteers as they have found new ways to continue the mission.

With these successes also came great challenge. In the spring of 2020, all camping plans for the remainder of 2020 were put on hold. Camp staff were laid off but several continued to graciously volunteer in looking after and maintaining the camp facilities during the shutdown. This spring there are scaled back plans for reopening the camps with great caution being taken to keep camp users safe. The financial burden of this season on the camp budget and our faithful camp staff will take significant time to resolve.

Our volunteer lay and clergy, dedicated to their areas of mission and ministry, have done an amazing job of continuing to connect the local church to resources, training and opportunities they would not otherwise be able to access on their own.

Thank you to all those who have been so faithful in a difficult time,  
Reverend Arlene W. Christopherson

## **400.04 – Anti-Racism Task Force Historic Report**

April 30, 2021

Following the introduction of our three strategic goals as presented by the Annual Conference Shepherding Team, the Anti-Racism Task Force (ARTF) was established in the summer of 2019. This task force currently consists of members; Nadia Kanhai (Co-Chair), Rev. Jarrod Severing (Co-Chair), Rev. Matthew Krings, Rev. Violet Johnicker, Yvette Harris-Black, Rev. Jeremiah Lee, Rev. Luther Mason, and Rev. Jeremiah Thompson. Amania Drane is our project coordinator. However, we must lift names of those who have shared some time with us on this task force. Rev. Irene Taylor, Rev. Chan Choi, and Randy Livingston also contributed along this important process.

The task force decided to focus on three areas of awareness, education, and action. We wanted to impact the youth in our conference, our strong adult laity, and our clergy. Justice Generation is engaging the youth through virtual learning experiences and special guest speakers. This summer they will embark on a virtual justice camp which has caught the eyes of other Annual Conferences across many Jurisdictions. Engaging our adult laity has been through the learning path found on our website, social media engagement, training events like C-ROAR, and the growth of our ARTF Champion Team. This team meets regularly and consists of both laity and clergy. They gather for training, education, and encouragement to take back to their local church and community. We are currently planning training sessions created by members of our Task Force and Champion Team to release to the conference this fall.

Our goal to reach the clergy in our AC began with a congregational and clergy self-assessment and transitioned into the Clergy Peer Reflection and Engagement Series (CPRES). This was a multi-session educational and covenantal time for clergy to share in brave spaces. The pilot program finished in 2020 with a full roll out in the fall of 2021 coming. We also introduced the Ephesus Project which focuses on church exchanges, and different take on the standard pulpit exchange. A full program will be released in the fall.

During last year's Annual Conference, we drafted and celebrated the passing of legislation to require Anti-Racism training for all clergy once every quadrennium. We are currently in conversation with BOOM, our ethnic caucuses, and other conferences regarding the multiple training opportunities that will be offered.

The ARTF has been incredibly busy planning, implementing, and evaluating many projects and initiatives this past year and look forward to following God's guidance in the coming year.

Submitted by: Pastor Jarrod Severing, Journey of Hope,  
ARTF Clergy Co-Chair

## **400.05 – Conference Commission on Religion and Race Historical Report to Annual Conference**

June 2021

The stresses of a pandemic, national racial justice protests, and extreme political and social polarization has lent urgency to the task of confronting racism. Much of the effort of the Conference Commission on Religion and Race (CCORR) leadership has been directed in support of the Northern Illinois Conference (NIC) goal, adopted in the Annual Conference of June 2019, “to live out the conviction that racism is incompatible with Christian teaching”. To that end we underwent training in a workshop on “Introduction to Systemic Racism” offered by CROAR (Chicago Regional Organizing for Anti-racism).

Nadia Kanhai, Co-chair of CCORR, assumed a second role as Co-chair of the NIC Anti-Racism Task Force (ARTF), and helped to lead the development of initiatives in pursuit of this mandate. In this role, she initiated quarterly meetings of GCORR with key leaders from CCORR, ARTF and the Cabinet. Lennox Iton, Co-chair of CCORR, developed an anti-racism training program that was piloted in a suburban local church with an overwhelmingly white membership. It consisted of eight sessions of virtual meetings during which the film “The Long Shadow” was viewed and discussed; concepts of systemic racism, intrinsic bias, white fragility, and principles of anti-racism were discussed; and the participants developed a vision of racial justice and equity for the congregation. He is currently engaged with the Anti-racism Curriculum and Training Committee of the ARTF Champion Team in developing a training program for laity to be deployed throughout the NIC later this year.

For the second year, CCORR has assumed primary responsibility for the annual Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration Event in the NIC. The responsibility was shared with Black Methodists for Church Renewal (BMCR). This year, due to the restrictions on gathering necessitated by the pandemic, we were forced to make the event a virtual one. This prevented the fellowship of associating and eating together that is a usual hallmark of the event. The program was held on January 31<sup>st</sup> instead of January 17<sup>th</sup> so that it served to honor Dr. King’s birthday as well as Black History Month. The theme of the program was “Where Are We On the Arc Of The Moral Universe (Bending Towards Justice)?”, and the keynote address was given by Rev. Dr. Stacey Cole Wilson, Executive Minister of Justice and Service in the Baltimore-Washington Conference of The United Methodist Church. The rest of the program featured prayers, music, and a complementary presentation on gender queer acceptance.

Over the past year, CCORR worked with the ARTF and BMCR to advance anti-racism clergy training legislation. This year CCORR plans to bolster its efforts in support of pastors and congregations in the NIC that are involved in Cross-Cultural/Cross-Racial appointments. Recognizing this, the CCORR co-chairs have attended the 2021 Cross-Cultural/Cross-Racial Ministry Spring Training Conference organized by the Center for Leadership Development North Texas Conference. The plan is to facilitate regular gatherings of clergy and Staff/Parish Relations Committee Chairs in each District once in-person gatherings can safely be organized in the aftermath of the pandemic.

## **400.06 - 2020-2021 Conference Committee on Native American Ministries Historical Report**

During the pandemic we were able to provide virtual support for our Native American Ministry of Presence on the north side of Chicago. Bill Buchholtz continues to coordinate this ministry. He provided ministry through his music both virtually with the Kateri Center, the American Indian Center, the Indian Health Service by being a board member and for funeral services of those who died.

We collaborated with the NIC Racism task force, the Justice Generation and Rev. Chebon Kernell, Director of the Native American Comprehensive plan where we provided leadership for an educational event regarding the Use of Native American imagery for Mascots. The movie watched was entitled, More than a Word, which gave evidence of how harmful the use of Native American names are to Native people. The event was open for youth, young adults and adults for the annual conference via Zoom and was well attended.

The members of CONAM have spoken at and celebrated with churches observing Native American Ministries Sunday, provided pastoral care with Native Americans, and offered learning opportunities about Native culture within the local churches. This year we were also consulted with the use of Prairie for our district names. Our belief is that on the surface it would seem that using Prairie and Lake is an innocent concept that does celebrate our land and water. The complication is that it also corresponds to the time when settlers and/or to the colonial time period, especially as depicted in movies or books about “settling on the prairies was very positive” however there were harmful results that happened to the Native indigenous people who lived in Illinois. This land was so valuable that all Native people were killed or forcibly removed from the prairie and lakes they loved. If the districts are renamed to Prairie then at every meeting in a district or at annual conference we need to remember the history of the people who lived on the land that we call Northern Illinois Conference. This would be a continuation of our acts of repentance. One part of the acts of repentance was when a church closed is to give back the land to the tribe whose land the church sits upon. Maybe this might happen in our conference.

Let us remember the words from Black Hawk (Mahkate:wi-mesi-ke:hke:hk-wa)-Sauk Nation, when he said, “We thank the Great Spirit for all the benefits He has conferred upon us. For myself, I never take a drink of water from a spring without being mindful of His goodness.” Let us remember the Great Spirit’s goodness of the beautiful prairie and water that gives us sustenance and all the Native Nations that lived and still live in Northern Illinois.

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

## **400.07 - The Northern Illinois Conference Status and Role of Women Historical Report 2020**

The General Commission on the Status and Role of Women, one of 13 general agencies of The United Methodist Church, advocates for full participation of women in the total life of the church. We are helping the church



recognize every person, clergy and lay, women and men as full and equal parts of God’s human family. We believe that a fully engaged and empowered membership is vital to The United Methodist Church’s mission to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Women have gained a stronger voice and greater roles of leadership and responsibility in the mission, work, and leadership in The United Methodist Church since GCSRW was formed in 1972. Our work is far from finished. Many U.S. congregations still refuse to accept a woman pastor. Women are underrepresented as clergy, superintendents, and bishops. Women are twice as likely as men to be targets of sexual harassment and misconduct in the church.

This is a case I kept you informed of for two years. The #MeToo Case ends with surrendered credentials June 11, 2020. A former interfaith leader who faced multiple accusations of sexual misconduct and abuse is no longer United Methodist Clergy. Rev. Donald Heckman, who goes by “Bud,” withdrew from West Ohio Conference membership June 10, 2020. He surrendered his credentials as ordained elder. Sexual harassment, misconduct, and abuse brought by four women, one was his former wife Laura Heckman, she is relieved that he is no longer a “Rev”. But regrets it has taken this long. He was a pastor for more than 20 years in the West Ohio Conference.

Clergy, church leaders, and anyone working in ministry, have power over the people they serve. This inherent power is often referred to as a sacred trust. People look to those in ministerial roles to nurture and guide them, making themselves spiritually and emotionally vulnerable, because they believe God has given their leaders authority. The Bible says that clergy and lay ministers have been “entrusted with the mysteries God has revealed” and “those who have been given a trust must prove faithful” (1 Corinthians 4:1-2 NIV). In other words, where there is power there is also responsibility to do no harm; the betrayal of sacred trust occurs when professional boundaries are violated, potentially turning God-given power into a weapon of abuse (UM Sexual Ethics, 2019).

On May 10, 2020 we attended the Mother’s Day Breast Cancer walk, this was my 20th year walking for BC, more than 250 registered; it was virtual. August 6, 19, 23, 2020 Conference UMW Mission u’s theme was Finding Peace in an Anxious World. It was also a virtual event. October 8-10, 2020 was the GCSRW Women Leadership Summit. The theme of this even was “I am Her.” More than 300 registered and we were there. November 3, 2020 we all helped to elect our first woman Vice President of the United States -Vice President Kamala Harris what a day of rejoicing for all women.

We will continue to raise awareness preventing sexual misconduct making the church a safe place for everyone to worship.

Dr. Irma Clark, Chair, NIC Status and Role of Women

## **400.08 - Chicago Black Methodists For Church Renewal, Inc., of Northern Illinois Historical Report – 2020**

Chicago BMCR began the year with great enthusiasm and expectation. Little did we know that our projected plans would be interrupted by the onslaught of a mighty world-wide pandemic. Although 2020 became difficult and challenging, we, like nursery-rhyme's Jack, became nimble and quick in jumping over COVID-19 hurdles and barriers. BMCR was able to maintain its identity and heritage through collaborative relationships that brought together groups and people to respond to various ministry challenges impacting our churches and communities. By God's grace, BMCR was able to carry out its role as a mission-driven force dedicated to helping congregations continue to be effective and fruitful in mission and ministry. Regardless to the coronavirus invasion, many church ministries became explosive in responding to the needs of their communities. They rose above and beyond their normal practices because their communities required their greater response. We were privileged to witness the mighty move of God in the dedicated volunteers and their commitment to serve. It was a blessing to be a resource and share with them in their ministries.

### Highlights of 2020 Programs and Events

#### January-March – Pre-COVID Shutdown

- Participation in Freedom UMC MLK event honoring Marybelle Trimble and panel with her, June Porter and Sylvia Jo Oglesby on their experiences during the MLK-led civil rights movement
- Joined with Northern IL Conference in implementing annual MLK celebration
- Hartzell Memorial UMC Black History program
- Englewood-Rust UMC Homecoming Worship Celebration
- Resurrection UMC Black History Program
- Pembroke Institute/Black Teens Matter Presidents' Holiday Hooke-Up at Wesley UMC. Author, Minister Jonathan Banks conducted a seminar for 12 youth from five (5) churches, and 12 adults, on God's Way to Win @ School & Life," based on his book - RAISE YOUR GPA (God Point Average)
- Peer Plus Education & Training Advocates Black History Month Community Engagement Conversation on cultural diversity in oncology with the U.S. Food & Drug Administration
- St. Mark UMC Committee on Religion and Race annual event on HBCUs documentary highlighting history of lunch counter sit-ins
- Provided HIV Testers for Lutheran School of Theology Black History Health Fair
- South Shore UMC Black History Worship Service Paying Tribute to member, Rev. Dr. Calvin S. Morris, Civil Rights Icon on MLK Team
- Sacred Ground Ministry collaboration for Black Teens Matter Hirsch High School Teen Town Hall, Black History program
- Legacy of Faith and BMCR 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary DVDs provided to Hartzell, Gorham, Resurrection, St. Mark and South Shore churches for their Black History Month programs
- First Quarter Chicago BMCR General Membership Meeting hosted by Greenstone UMC
- National BMCR 53<sup>rd</sup> General Meeting in Kansas City MO



Post-COVID Shutdown

- Six (6) local churches identified to participate in SBC21 Congregational Development training, in partnership with Northern IL Conference
- Purchased ZOOM meeting platform to enable use of technology to communicate and meet with our constituents.
- Collaborated with Northern IL Conference and Global Ministries to secure a \$10,000 grant for COVID-19 support for Black congregations that continued to provide food for underserved communities and families. Eight (8) congregations and eight (8) small businesses received financial support. Check presentations were recorded by video and are available through BMCR.
- Partnered and collaborated with the NIC Anti-Racism Task Force to address systemic racism and violence toward African Americans.
- Responded to Bishop’s request to confer on appropriate response to the George Floyd murder and uprising.
- Responded, with several of our churches, and participated in protests throughout the City of Chicago and justice-seeking forums, in partnership with the Community Renewal Society
- Because BMCR’s annual Laity Awards Celebration could not be held, local churches were invited to identify a member for recognition because they have made a difference during the pandemic. Persons identified by 14 churches were honored with an Igniting Spirit Trophy, BMCR Bible engraved with their name and a Certificate of Appreciation. Each church determined how and when presentations would be made.
- BMCR Healthy Families/Keeping Hope Alive HIV/AIDS Ministry (KHAM) continued relationships with McCormick Seminary, South Side Help Center (Trophy received), AIDS Health Care Foundation, Making A Daily Effort (MADE) – HIV testing provider, UBtheCure, UIC Social Work, et al.
- Pembroke Institute’s Black Teens Matter carried out two (2) virtual events presenting Tori Franklin, Champion Women’s Sports fame, product of Sherman UMC, and Julian Davis Reid, Creative Artist, Pembroke Institute alum, son of Rev. Adonna Davis Reid
- The 52<sup>nd</sup> BMCR Annual Meeting and Founders’ Day Celebration, held virtually, resulted in election of new president, Darryl D. Harris of Gorham UMC. Recognition was accorded several retiring officers with Honorary Founders’ Legacy Life Memberships, in appreciation for their faithful dedicated service and leadership – Rev. Dennis M. Oglesby, Jr., served five (5) years as President and Deborah Dangerfield has served in numerous roles.
- We mourn the loss of the following former leaders and members and will remember their presence among us: Connie Williams, Joe Lee Bankhead, Rev. Sirchester Jackson, Honorable Judge Sandra Jones, Darrell Bacon, Lillian Andrews and Lucious Smith. Many other families have lost loved ones during this period and we share prayerful support to each one.
- We are deeply affected by the passing of numerous leaders in Civil Rights and the United Methodist Church and are committed to honor their legacies and contributions to and in our ministry together locally, nationally and globally.

Closing Thoughts to Share

Many issues, currently and forthcoming, are and will directly impact Blacks in the United Methodist Church. We praise God for our continued presence and the opportunity to faithfully serve Him, His Church and His people. In the words of the great hymn of the Church, “We are not divided, all one body we, one in hope and doctrine, one in charity. Onward, Christian soldiers, marching as to war, with the cross of Jesus going on before.”

~ Our Time Under God Is NOW! ~

**400.09 – Office of Connectional Ministry**

The 2020-2021 conference year took some surprising turns since the last DCM report written in March of 2020. In those early days of the pandemic, we thought life would return to normal by summer, then by fall, then by the beginning of the new year. Now as I write this report in April of 2021, we pray that we will be able to meet safely again for annual conference and General Conference in summer and fall of 2022.

In early 2020 our biggest concerns were for the work of General Conference, the assignment of a new bishop and the uncertainty in the United Methodist Church. These were important issues but not as important as the preservation of life, the care for our global family and the 3 million deaths that have occurred since last spring. Families have been devastated by loss. Children are orphaned. Our medical system has been stretched to the limit. Then the spotlight on systemic racism and unfolding events throughout the year rightfully pulled our attention from our internal differences to the pervasive issues of race in our country. The sanctity of life, the value of all humankind, the care for one another with respect, no matter ethnicity or belief, pulled us out of our internal struggles and differences and into a place where we are called to give witness to Christ love and peace.

The work of the Director of Connectional Ministries is to integrate the vision of the conference into the work of all areas, supporting our programming and connecting our conference administrative team and our ministries with one another. In doing this we link our conference to the work of the wider church. The role of Director of Connectional Ministries is a half-time position supported by administrative services and our communications staff. While staff have been working remotely throughout the year, their output has maintained high standards as we call on everyone to learn new ways of functioning.

This year was one of pivoting. In March 2020 we consolidated district support staff. With that move connectional ministries staff took on a broader role in supporting the work of the districts. District Administrative Assistants and DCM staff are growing in their work as a team.

In March we launched the bi-weekly district enews designed and produced by our Communications Specialist Diane Strzelecki. Little did we realize that this new communication tool would have such a timely purpose in keeping local churches and leadership informed as we moved through the stages of the pandemic. Later in the year Diane worked closely with the Conference Board of Global Ministries on their new advance special program: Mission Links.

By April we began offering Thursday Trainings on ZOOM on a regular basis. This pivot quickly gave lay and clergy leaders resources, tools and a forum for learning. Topics included: How do you worship on Zoom? Exploring the theological and practical implications of on-line communion. Addressing issues of white supremacy and racism. These trainings grew out of the needs identified in our local churches. Eventually more formal resources were produced, but early in the pandemic our communications staff filled a void. Bishop Dyck also began to offer Monday Morning Messages to the conference in this time of crisis. Both the planning and execution of Zoom trainings and bishops' videos were managed by Director of Communications, Anne Marie Gerhardt.

As we began to offer on-line learning, our events coordinator Laura Lopez adapted her tools and skills to fit the needs. In 2020 she managed registrations for 40 events, with a total of 6,079 persons registered for conference, district, program areas and agencies. Laura led us into virtual meetings and helped us pivot into a new look for annual conference.

Hard decisions were made about our conference camps as safety became a priority and all programming was cancelled. Staff were laid off and our camps are in a difficult financial position. Jeff Casey, while unemployed, gave amazing leadership to the decisions needed to maintain the property, accommodate individual camp users and plan for some level of camping in 2021.

Then came the big decision – how to meet for an annual conference. Nothing about this proposal was routine and so we all learned, explored options, networked and rethought until we pulled together the November 2020 Virtual Annual Conference Session. Again, this work required a tremendous amount of time and adaptation from our events and communications staff. Evaluations for the session gave it high marks and the work of the connectio-  
nally ministry's office shined through.

In the summer we applied for and received a special grant from the General Commission on Global Ministries to help support the hardest hit communities of color during the COVID crisis. \$15,000 was used to give support to feeding ministries, medical missions, food pantries and emergency assistant for those who were in need.

Through all of this the “normal” work of the office of DCM continued. Staffing the Board of Laity, Nominations, Annual Conference Sessions Committee, Conference Board of Global Ministries, sitting on the Conference Council on Finance and Administration, as well as support for the Annual Conference Shepherding Team and the Strategic Goals of the annual conference.

The adventure continues as we move into the 2021 conference year. We will be virtual again for our clergy and annual conference sessions this year. Even as the face further challenges, the work of the conference continues to evolve and connect.

Thank you to all the wonderful lay and clergy volunteers and our talented staff for keeping our mission alive through this unprecedented season.

In Service, Rev. Arlene W. Christopherson

### **400.10 - 2021 Vital Congregations Task Force**

The Vital Congregations Task Force has launched a pilot program with 14 churches across the conference with representation in every district. Over the next two years congregations are working with leadership from Epicenter, led by Paul Nixon, in assessment, planning and implementation toward vital ministries.

The goal of this pilot program is that each church works with their coach-consultant(s) to create a ministry development plan with actionable steps, a plan that is within their reach to garner church consensus. The plan will focus on their assets and values, as well as the needs and values of their community, to discern a clear way forward for their church. The plan will focus on building community relationships and partnerships for more effective and synergistic ministry. The plan will take seriously the post-Christendom and post-COVID context.

The strategic team has also perfected their tool for measuring the vitality of churches based on spiritual, financial, worship and missional factors. The analysis of church vitality will be rolled out to congregations along with tools and support to move the church to a more vital ministry throughout 2021.

Meanwhile, coaching options and trainings opportunities are underway in partnership with the Office of Congregational Development.

Members of the Vital Congregations Task Force are: Mike Jones, Brittany Isaac, Dennis Langdon, Robert Butler, Eddie Eddy, Bob Pritchard, Cerna Rand, Tina Shelton and Tedd Steele

### **400.11 - United Methodist Women Historical Report 2020**

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

The Purpose is the official mission statement of United Methodist Women. It has four mission foci that relate to the mission initiatives and priorities of United Methodist Women.

- To be a community of women
- To know God
- To develop a creative and supportive fellowship
- To expand concepts of mission

During the COVID-19 pandemic year of 2020, United Methodist Women embodied the Purpose by continuing mission, advocacy, and service for women, children, and youth.

The conference leadership team and Spiritual Growth Coordinator created a “Stay in Touch” weekly devotional to promote unity and encourage prayer during the shelter-in-place directive. Many women focused on building more vital Bible study groups linking district participation and diverse communities of faith.

Across Northern Illinois Conference, women sewed face masks for their local communities and beyond. They created free pick-up stations outside of churches and delivered to nursing homes, women’s shelters, UMCOR, and Midwest Mission Distribution Center drop-off locations. Some joined an ecumenical group to make over 600 masks for a Conference-affiliated child-serving agency. Those who didn’t sew purchased masks and grocery bags to help various food pantries.

Despite the pandemic shutdowns and churches closing, women shared stories, exchanged ideas, and applied innovative fundraising concepts to annual events (flower sales, salad fiestas, dinners, and silent teas) in a safe way. Northern Illinois Conference reached 80% of the 2020 Pledge to Mission.

We extended grace to each other as many sought to learn the technical aspects of conducting virtual meetings. In August, the Conference and Dean hosted Mission u. Our Spiritual Growth Study, appropriately named “Finding Peace in an Anxious World,” was led by Rev. Young-Mee Park. The fall brought annual district meetings, exciting speakers, the election of officers, and leadership training. Our Annual Meeting was on October 24; the theme was “Listen: With Fresh Ears and Eyes.” Rev. Danira Parra, from the Illinois Great Rivers Conference, was the speaker, and music was provided by the VOYE Ensemble (previously the Marcy Newberry Children’s Choir).

Although the pandemic physically separated us, we didn’t allow it to prohibit our expression of faith, hope, and love in action through mission, advocacy, and service.

To God Be the Glory,  
Lois Moreland-Dean, President, United Methodist Women, NIC

**400.12 – Historic Report – Program Ministries  
(Council for Older Adult Ministries)**

Because of the pandemic, the OAM Council refrained from in-person meetings and engagements. The Council, however, was making its presence and objectives known to constituents by email and the Internet. The OAM Facebook Page was active all the time as source of information and references. At the close of 2020, the Council connected with the Discipleship Ministries in Nashville for assistance in a proposal to hold webinars in the conference on ministries to older adults during the pandemic. The discussion on the proposal convinced the DM to assume and to lead the project for the denomination with a 3-month series of webinars, January-March, on the subject. Our Council contributed the participation of Rebecca Fraley of DeKalb District as a panelist in one of the series.

**400.13 – NIC Board of Global Ministries Historical Report 2020**

The Itineration and Missionary Support team reports that at this time all missionaries scheduled to itinerate in 2021 will do so virtually. This will be their only opportunity to itinerate for the next 3 years, so we need to make it the best we possibly can. Beginning in April, we will encourage and equip supporting churches and missionaries to connect in smaller virtual meetings following their Global Ministries hosted #stillinmission episodes. Rath-

er than traveling to the U.S. and making rounds to supporting churches for several months, missionaries will make time available to meet with individual churches for a period of 3 months following their #stillinmission episode.

We are glad to report that CCFA added resources to the budget to support COVID19 response in the Central Conferences and assist Global Health's Intervention and Crisis Support for Those Affected by COVID-19.

We are in discussions with Bishop Hopkins, the General Board of Global Ministries' Global Health Unit, and Burundi and Nigeria medical health boards concerning opportunities to establish relationships and support medical mission projects in those countries.

We coordinated with the Midwest Mission Distribution Center (MMDC) last October to send trailers across the conference. NIC churches donated an amazing 5,020 pounds of Personal Dignity Kit items and nearly \$1,000 for the November Virtual Annual Conference Fill the Truck Mission Challenge! We thank MMDC, collection-site churches, volunteers, and everyone who contributed to the 2020 Mission Challenge. We are working with MMDC to organize a similar effort during the weeks before the July 2021 Virtual Annual Conference.

Each year, the church with the highest per-capita contributions receives the John Wesley Award, which this year goes to Hanover, with a per-capita contribution of 47%. The church with the highest total amount of financial support receives the Phillip Otterbein Award, which goes to Libertyville, with a \$22,000 contribution. We had 152 churches with 100% apportionment giving and 54 Rainbow Covenant churches.

We introduced the new version of our conference mission giving in April 2021 for the new quadrennium. Historically, the mission book has been called the Rainbow Covenant Book. After 10 months of work we were able to present Mission Links, Living the Beatitudes. Each mission site and missionary is given an icon/s indicating how they link back and are responding to Christ's message in the Beatitudes. Churches must still be faithful and honor 100% of apportionment giving to be recognized as a Mission Covenant Church like a Rainbow Covenant Church in years prior. We are so grateful for staff member, Diane Strzelecki, who did the design and heavy lifting to make this book happen.

We said good-bye to our faithful chairman, Rev. Christina Meyer. She is a deaconess who teaches Special Education in the Rockford Public Schools. Christina joined the committee in 2016 and was chairman from 2018-2020. We miss her leadership and wish her well on her next adventures.

We say hello to new member, Reverend Amos Oladipo, who is an elder currently serving at First United Methodist Church of Oak Lawn since July 2020 and Grace United Protestant Church, Park Forest since 2017. Reverend Oladipo is currently a member of Chicago Southern District Committee on Ordained Ministry, member of Conference Champion Team on Anti-Racism, and member of Committee for Worship for 2021 Annual Conference.

We give thanks as always for Rev. Arlene Christopherson who provides us with much support. She is our champion for the work.



**400.14 - The Northern Illinois Conference Task Force HIV/AIDS Historical Report 2020**

Our Task Force mission and ministry is to inspire, educate, advocate, and provide spiritual support to those infected and affected by HIV/AIDS in our congregation and surrounding community.

2020 World AIDS Day Theme: “Ending the HIV/AIDS Epidemic” Resilience and Impact. World Aids Day is a day to unite in the fight to end the HIV epidemic, support people living with HIV and honor those who have lost their life.

2020 Theme focus on the Global commitment to deliver quality, people-centered HIV prevention and treatment service for Impact. The theme also speaks to strengthening the capacity and resilience of communities and health systems to address HIV prevention services in the midst of the global pandemic. Covid-19 has created major new challenges, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Service and its partners remain committed to accelerating efforts to END the HIV EPIDEMIC.

Know Your Legal Rights–If you are HIV Positive, you only have to tell: Your sexual partners and your needle-sharing partners. You do not have to tell: Your employer or co-workers, your landlord or neighbors, your family or friends, your roommate or teacher. It’s your business who you tell!!! Discrimination against people with HIV is against the LAW! You can’t be fired, denied a job, kicked out of your apartment, denied medical treatment, or kicked out of school because you have HIV. The Law Can Protect You! [www.aidslegal.com](http://www.aidslegal.com)

We as a Task Force continue to share information and keep the local church, district, and the conference aware of the National Awareness Days of HIV/AIDS. We also celebrated World AIDS day December 1,2020 at McCormack Theological Seminary and virtually the World Day of Prayer March, 2020. HIV has not gone away; we must continue to work together to help combat this disease.

Matthew 7: 12, Therefore, you should treat people in the same way that you want people to treat you; this is the law and the Prophets.

Irma Clark, Chair, NIC HIV/AIDS Task Force

**400.15 – NIC Council on Finance and Administration Historical Report**

Our world has changed significantly in the year since our last historical report was submitted, and our conference and churches have faced many challenges, including financial challenges and uncertainty. In April 2020, as the financial concerns for our local churches and our conference began to grow, CCFA and our Treasurer moved quickly to secure a PPP loan from our bank, Wintrust, through the CARES Act for \$1.009 million dollars. This funding helped us to continue to cover payroll, benefits and utility expenses during the stay at home orders. CCFA also implemented a spending plan which reduced the expected apportionment income from our budgeted amount of \$4,387,105 to \$3,572,290 for 2020. The primary reduction in expenses has come from reduced travel and programming costs that were unable to take place in person due to the current pandemic and related

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restrictions on gatherings. With our PPP loan, the 2020 spending plan, and the continued support of our local churches, we were able to continue to meet all of the financial obligations of the conference. In 2020, we received conference apportionments of \$4,240,022 and general church apportionments of \$437,548, which results in total apportionments received of \$4,677,571. Our total conference expenses were \$3,741,006, and the conference was able to pay an additional \$749,624 in General Church apportionments (above what churches designated specifically toward general church apportionments). As a result, we were able to pay a total of \$1,187,173 in general church apportionments, which is 81.5% of the total amount billed. We are thankful for the faithfulness of our local churches during this difficult and uncertain time.

With the pandemic continuing in 2021 and the government approving a second round of PPP funding, our Treasurer was able to obtain a second PPP loan for the conference from Wintrust for \$1.8 million. We will again use these funds to pay for salaries and benefits. CCFA will continue to monitor the conference's finances to ensure that we meet our financial obligations.

In the early part of the pandemic, we also sought to support our local churches through online training. Our Treasurer hosted webinars to assist churches with online giving options as well as applying for PPP loans, which were posted online to assist those who could not attend. Based on the information obtained from our local churches, 91 churches received over \$3.126 million in PPP loans through the CARES Act. We greatly appreciate the value our UMC connection played in assisting churches in obtaining loans. Local churches who were able to obtain loans shared various resources with other local churches, including information on the loan process as well as information on lenders who were accepting applications from churches. It was great to see the strength and value of our UMC connection in such a difficult and stressful time!

Our 2019 financial audit was completed in June 2020, with only a slight delay due to the pandemic. The audit showed significant improvement in credit card receipt tracking as a result of additional controls that were implemented in late 2019, and our auditors reported that our credit card controls were up to standard.

Despite the difficult financial times, all the churches with loans through The Red Door Fund have continued to make payments as planned.

CCFA would like to thank our Accounting Director, Athena Staveris, for her 21 years of service to the Northern Illinois Conference. Athena retired in October, and our new Accounting Director, Brady Goetz has been in place for approximately 6 months now. Brady had previously worked for the NIC over 20 years ago, and we are excited to have him aboard!

Respectfully Submitted,

CCFA Executive Team: Stephanie Uhl, President; Rev. Tammy Scott, Vice-President; Rev. Cynthia Zolk, Secretary; Rev. Scott Christy; Lonnie Chafin, Treasurer/Director of Administrative Services

**400.16 - United Methodist Foundation of the Northern Illinois Conference, Inc. – Spring 2021**

The Foundation was organized in 1949 and functions as an independent 501(c)(3) public charity with the mission of “multiplying resources for ministry in the Name of Jesus Christ” by “encouraging lifelong generosity with God’s abundance.” The Foundation carries out its mission by partnering with many individuals, churches, and organizations to provide several services:

- Investment Management
- Endowment Genesis and Growth
- Trustee & Custodial Services
- Planned Giving Programs
- Donor Consultation
- Stewardship Development
- Financial Best Practices
- Ministry Grants & Scholarships

According to the Foundation’s bylaws, “All corporate powers shall be exercised by, or under authority of, and the business and affairs of the Foundation shall be managed by, the Board of Directors.” Directors serve three three-year terms. The current Board of Directors with full voice and vote are the following 17 individuals:

Brad Colby, First UMC of La Grange, La Grange  
 Rev. Kimberly Lewis-Davis, Chaplain  
 Sach Diwan, Holy Covenant UMC, Chicago  
 Rev. Jane Eesley, Christ UMC, Rockford  
 David Foster, Irving Park UMC, Chicago  
 Gill George, Barrington UMC, Barrington  
 George Groves, Community UMC, Naperville  
 Debbie Gruetzmacher, Faith UMC of Orland Park  
 Denny Hackett, First UMC of Morris, Morris  
 Rev. Violet Johnicker, Brooke Road UMC, Rockford  
 Lynette Rice, Grace UMC, Lake Bluff  
 Marta Rodriguez, Humboldt Park UMC, Chicago  
 Jim Stoddard, Sycamore UMC, Sycamore  
 Tom Sumner, St. Mark UMC, Chicago  
 Larry Thomas, Sycamore UMC, Sycamore  
 Arnie Uhlig, First UMC of Palatine, Palatine  
 Gene Williams, South Shore UMC, Chicago

According to the bylaws, there are three ex officio Board members (voice but not vote): the Foundation’s president, the resident bishop, and the conference treasurer.

The officers of the Foundation are:

Board Chair, George Gill  
 Vice Chair & Secretary, David Foster  
 Treasurer, Sach Diwan  
 President, Rev. Chris Walters

The full-time staff members of the Foundation are Rev. Chris Walters, President, and Carolyn J. Cook, Executive Assistant.

The Foundation offers three funds for long-term investment: Conservative, Moderate, and Aggressive (and three corresponding funds that divest from the largest public companies that own fossil fuel reserves). All portfolios are broadly diversified among major asset classes and all sectors of the economy but in different proportions to reflect each fund’s objectives. The Foundation retains SouthCol Advisors, LLC as its investment consultant. The investment opportunities available through the Foundation offer churches and UMC-related organizations professionally managed, well-diversified accounts, invested according to the guidelines for socially responsible investing outlined in The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church. In addition to screening out objectionable companies, the Foundation also screens in companies that rate more highly than their peers in the areas of Environmental, Social, and Governance, always optimizing asset allocation and performance.

The investment policies of the Foundation provide for a disciplined approach and to meet a variety of investment objectives. Net of all fees, the returns of the three fund models are (up to the most recent reportable month, as of this historical report, March 31, 2020):

As of 3/31/2021	1 <sup>st</sup> Qtr 2021	Last 1 Year <sup>†</sup>	Last 3 Years <sup>†</sup>	Last 5 Years <sup>†</sup>	Last 10 Years <sup>†</sup>
Aggressive Fund	4.03%	47.75%	13.20%	13.41%	8.32%
Agg. Ex-Carbon benchmark*	3.78%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	4.98%	49.90%	12.57%	12.80%	8.90%
Moderate Fund	2.37%	32.00%	10.56%	10.24%	6.60%
Mod. Ex-Carbon benchmark*	2.30%	28.70%	n/a	n/a	n/a
	3.05%	33.95%	10.30%	10.01%	7.42%
Conservative Fund	0.68%	17.14%	7.23%	6.61%	5.16%
Con. Ex-Carbon benchmark*	0.66%	15.14%	n/a	n/a	n/a
	0.89%	18.41%	7.50%	6.93%	5.72%

<sup>†</sup>The rates of return in these columns are annualized. Net fees.

As of March 31, 2020, the Foundation had approximately \$89 million under management through nearly 700 accounts, owned by 118 local churches and several agencies and organizations. More than 200 of the accounts benefit several dozens of annuitants, trust income beneficiaries, and the charitable interests of donor advised funds.

Since 1999 the Foundation has provided several grants each year, totaling more than \$1,000,000.

The Foundation continues to participate in Dollars for Scholars (DFS), operated by the United Methodist Higher Education Foundation. DFS matches support from a student’s church, UMHEF, participating United Methodist-related schools, and participating Conference Foundations. By participating in this scholarship program, the Foundation completes the matching of some local church scholarships to magnify \$1000 into \$4000.

The Foundation also continues to participate in the Excellence in Clergy Leadership Scholarship, operated by the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry. If an applicant receives matches from all five partners, they can receive \$12,500; the Foundation pledges to match up to five recipients for \$2500 each.

In the fall of 2020, the Foundation hosted a series of virtual workshops on stewardship and church vitality for 47 churches and 178 people with renowned pastor, teacher, and author, Michael Piazza. Rev. Piazza’s consulting firm, Agile Church Consulting, also provided guidance to participating churches in the first quarter of 2021 for the development of their stewardship plans.

In May 2020, the Foundation invited Methodists to donate directly to the three area food banks that serve northern Illinois to meet the Foundation’s match of \$75,000. More than 200 people donated \$82,000. With the buying power of the food banks that commonly stretch \$1 dollar into \$8, the generosity of Methodists purchased approximately \$1.25 million worth of food to help people in need, especially during the severe economic dislocation caused by the pandemic.

Nearly 200 people gathered in Downers Grove to celebrate the Foundation’s 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary in October 2019. During dinner three former Foundation presidents encouraged attendees with words of wisdom about living generous lives. After dinner we heard the compelling witness of Phyllis Tholin and Sisbro (a covenant group that has pledged 2% of their income to causes decided collectively by the group every year since the 1970s!) and the inspiring stories of seven organizations to whom the Foundation granted \$10,000 each.

In August 2019, 38 clergy participated in EY’s “Early Career Financial Planning” workshop at Wespath in Glenview, sponsored by the Foundation.

Sincerely,  
 Rev. Chris Walters  
 President

**400.17 - 2020 Historical Report of the Northern Illinois Conference’s Credit Union-Land of Lincoln Credit Union**

The year 2020 marked over 80 years that the NIC has participated in making a credit union available. Through 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

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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, CDs, IRAs, etc. Land of Lincoln CU offers online banking options, as well. Its accounts are insured by the NCUA (National Credit Union Administration). The frequently requested ability to deposit checks using cell phones is also available.

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

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

Methodist related credit unions date back to John Wesley's involvement in the 1700s. They provide a service-oriented cooperative financial resource to people in a wide range of economic circumstances.

### **400.18 - NIC Committee on Lay Servant Ministries 2020 Historical Report**

2020 was a year like no other that most of us have experienced and it was a challenge for Lay Servant Ministries also.

The "shut down" for the pandemic began right at the time that most of the districts were conducting their Spring Lay Academies. Initially the directors and deans thought they could complete the academies by using caution but soon found that to be impossible, so all were stopped or cancelled. Like most everyone else, laity leadership thought the cancellations for Covid-19 would be infrequent and short-lived, but we soon accepted that not to be the case.

The Conference Committee on Lay Servant Ministries continued their regular meetings although now via ZOOM. We'd used ZOOM in the past when facing winter weather issues but now all meetings were virtual. The districts began to explore how to conduct academies in new ways. In-person sessions had been the foundation of the academies, not just to have the most effective training sessions but to develop and nurture the fellowship of the laity. We faced the challenge of remote learning just as our schools were beginning to experience.

The challenge of virtual classes is so much more than simply moving to a ZOOM meeting. Classes need to be interactive and address the multiple learning styles of all participants. Our districts had been discussing the possibility of virtual offerings prior to the pandemic as we recognized the aging of our laity and the time demands on everyone, but we never expected to be thrown into this INSTANTLY! However, just as our congregations began being creative in conducting worship our district committees began being creative and flexible in designing virtual academies.

Each district has experimented with virtual events. By-the-end of the year nearly all districts had conducted at least one lay academy course virtually



and some multiple. We've learned that we've been given an opportunity to serve our laity in a new way! Our laity have responded to the courses with appreciation for the efforts and gratitude for the elimination of commuting in some cases. We are continuing to plan for virtual academies going into 2021 and expanding our offerings. We have realized the benefit of virtual offerings across district boundaries greater than ever before. We've experimented with flexible time offerings as we know that time on ZOOM must be limited to rather short intervals for optimum effectiveness. We expect to offer virtual classes going forward even when we are able to return to in-person classes due to the geographic and time flexibilities. Our study leaders have acquired vast new competencies in managing virtual classes and the learning continues.

One of the primary functions of the Conference Committee on Lay Servant Ministries is to manage the laity certification process. This has continued through 2020 with the certification of 11 Certified Lay Ministers and the re-certification of 2 Certified Lay Ministers. These CLMs continue their ministries of leading congregations, care ministries, prayer ministries, youth ministries and education ministries. We will be continuing this process in 2021. We also will be working to certify Lay Missioners as Certified Lay Ministers as the Spanish language curriculum becomes available.

Northern Illinois Conference, know that Lay Servant Ministries may be wearing masks and washing our hands, but we're still in ministry within our local congregations, in our communities and across the Conference.

Blessings and safety to each of you!

Submitted by Peggy Hansen, Conference Director of Lay Servant Ministries

### **400.19 - Northern Illinois Conference Chapter of PAUMCS (Professional Administrators of The United Methodist Connectional Structure)**

#### National PAUMCS

The Professional Administrators of The United Methodist Connectional Structure (PAUMCS, <https://paumcs.org>) is a national United Methodist organization that focuses on the unique ministry of those who work in a United Methodist church office, be it in the local church, district, conference, episcopal or general agency. The mission of the Professional Administrators of the United Methodist Connectional Structure is to provide administrative professionals a supportive base for unity and fellowship and to promote individual growth, professional development, continuing education, and spiritual enrichment. PAUMCS members provide essential administrative support that brings organization and continuity to their ministry. United Methodist church administrators are the critical support throughout the denomination and are the vital link for the connection.

Under the authority & guidance of the General Council of Finance and Administration (GCFA), PAUMCS provides outstanding advanced professional training and enrichment for United Methodist church administrators through the PAUMCS Certification Institute and National PAUMCS Annual Conferences (§807.19 UM Discipline 2016).

There are currently 14 National PAUMCS members from the NIC PAUMCS, eight of which have completed the Certification program, and three of which have completed the Advanced Certification program.

The National PAUMCS was able to reschedule their COVID-cancelled 2020 Annual Conference to a virtual platform in 2021. Twenty-six NIC PAUMCS members attended the 3-day Virtual 2021 PAUMCS Annual Conference, “Keeping our Eyes Focused on Christ” on April 15-17.

#### Northern Illinois Conference Chapter of PAUMCS

The membership of the Northern Illinois Conference Chapter of PAUMCS (NIC PAUMCS) consists of all secretaries, administrative assistants and staff, paid and unpaid, who serve in a Northern Illinois Conference church, district, conference, episcopal or general agency. The program and budget are administered by the NIC PAUMCS Steering Team, who are chapter members. There are no chapter dues; programs are provided through event registration fees and donations.

Because of COVID and leadership changes due to NI Conference Office downsizing, the NIC PAUMCS was not able to offer Fall 2020 and Spring 2021 workshops of our own. Thanks to our Minnesota PAUMCS Chapter colleagues, we were invited to join their 2020 Fall Workshop via zoom, “Being Vital” on Oct 26, where nineteen NIC Chapter members participated. The Minnesota PAUMCS Chapter has also invited us to participate in their 2021 Spring Retreat, “Feed Your Spirit,” on May 21-22.

Energized and encouraged by these National & chapter virtual events, the NIC PAUMCS Steering Team has added to its numbers, and has begun to meet to resume organized workshops and events of our own for the coming year.

Respectfully submitted,

Debbie Rogers drogers@umcnic.org, NIC PAUMCS Steering Team

### **400.20 - General Board of Higher Education and Ministry Report for Year 2020**

1001 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue South, Nashville, TN 3721

The General Board of Higher Education and Ministry (GBHEM) announced its blueprint for the future, “Our Road Reimagined,” in 2020. The plan details the realignment of GBHEM’s culture and organizational structure to allow the agency to further its mission in a more effective, innovative and sustainable way. The creation of the plan was the result of a months-long process to survey and remodel the agency to set a course that is more collaborative, diverse and equitable at all levels.

While our approach is transforming, GBHEM’s mission is not. We remain committed to helping United Methodist lay and clergy leaders discover, claim and flourish in God’s call on their lives.

Over the last quadrennium, the world, The United Methodist Church and our constituents’ needs have changed considerably. To address those shifting

needs, we are adapting culturally, strategically and operationally to successfully carry out our important mission and ministry well into the future. We are developing an innovation mindset we know will be important moving forward.

- Last fall, GBHEM began carefully redesigning our organization to transition to a more cross-functional culture with three primary areas of focus: Constituent Relations and Services; Product Innovation and Implementation; and Administrative Relations and Services. This structure is allowing us to be more effective, agile and sustainable.
- Further, these changes are aligning our Ordained Ministry and Higher Education teams strategically, creating more intentional collaborations, and building greater connections between the Church's pastoral and academic ministries.
- The agency's realignment also includes initiatives to reinvigorate our commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, and further strengthen our global focus. Our new structure opens the door for fresh opportunities, collaborations and partnerships and becoming more entrepreneurial and creative in our approach.

GBHEM looks confidently to the future. We are taking bold steps to remain good stewards and evolve in service to Christian leaders in a significant way throughout the Church, the Academy and the world.

Regardless of the shifts and changes we are all experiencing, the same spirit of service and leadership that first inspired John Wesley lives on in each of us. We have been called in new and transformative ways. GBHEM is excited to share more with you in the months ahead. We invite you to connect and collaborate.

Submitted by: Rev. Greg Bergquist, General Secretary

### **400.21 - Africa University**

Thank you, Northern Illinois United Methodists, for helping to prepare young leaders to be "an aroma that brings life" to a world that is crying out for justice, compassion, healing, and wholeness (2 Corinthians 2:14-16). Through your prayers and gifts, you participate in disciple-making by example through the students, faculty, staff, and alumni of Africa University.

Africa University values the investment of 50 percent of the asking to the Africa University Fund apportionment in 2020. By generously increasing giving by 22 percent in an especially challenging year, Northern Illinois United Methodist congregations are a source of encouragement and strength.

The multilayered impact of COVID-19, including a global public health crisis, has brought about profound and lasting adjustments in how we live, work, serve and connect. For Africa University, these include:

- A shift to online-only teaching and learning from late March through December 2020. As the only university in Zimbabwe accredited to offer online degrees, Africa University had the infrastructure and expertise to transition smoothly and break new ground with competency-based student assessment tools.

- Excellent student retention and modest enrollment growth, with 99 percent of the student embracing online learning. More than 3,000 students enrolled for the 2020-2021 academic year—a 16 percent increase over the previous year—with 2,395 studying full-time. Fifty-seven percent of full-time students were female, and 24 percent were international.
- Innovation, outreach, and service through:
  - o The development and distribution of masks and hand sanitizer liquid that are now certified for commercial production.
  - o The launch, via a web application, of farm to household delivery of fresh produce, meat, poultry, and milk products by the Africa University Dream Farm Trust.
  - o Two student-led initiatives—Feed a Family and Ben Hill UMC Women’s Residence Girl Child Support Program—provided medical care, food, and school fees assistance to vulnerable families in the wider community.
- The successful completion of two new buildings—the Highland Park UMC-funded student union facility and a dormitory for female students. A new solar farm powers the Highland Park women’s dormitory.

Africa University’s online campus is here to stay, thanks to infrastructure upgrades and the lesson learned in 2020. Africa University is currently ranked number one in Zimbabwe and 39<sup>th</sup> among the top 200 universities in Africa, having moved up 59 spots in 2020.

New programs and partnerships, blended learning options, and innovation are key strategies for Africa University as it seeks to grow its future reach and impact.

Africa University is counting on the North Illinois Conference as a steadfast partner in ministry. Growing their investment in the Africa University Fund to 100 percent is a goal well-worth attaining as Northern Illinois United Methodists strive to lead new people into an abundant life in Christ.

In journeying alongside Africa University in ministry, the Northern Illinois Conference is the church in the world—seeding hope and sharing the love of Christ. Thank you and to God be the glory.

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

### **400.22 – Candler School of Theology – 2021**

Since our founding in 1914, Candler School of Theology at Emory University has educated more than 10,000 students, shaping thoughtful, principled, and courageous leaders dedicated to transforming the world in the name of Jesus Christ. We continued our work even through this most difficult year, with the coronavirus continuing its march around the world, a reckoning for racial injustice rolling across our nation, and a toxic, divisive political atmosphere challenging our civic life. Perhaps there has been no better year than this to underscore the importance of faithful and creative leaders for the church’s ministries throughout the world – the type of leaders we form at Candler.

Though our mission remains unchanged, the pandemic has necessitated many changes in how we undertake that mission: We have shifted classes online, redesigned syllabi to support optimal online learning, developed new ways to worship and experience community together in the virtual sphere, and discerned which new habits and modalities have promise for enriching our work even after the pandemic ends. Through these efforts, we and our students have gained deep experience in being flexible, adaptable, and creative as we respond to the demands of ever-changing context – experience that not only serves us well now, but will continue to serve us and our ministries far into the future.

Candler is one of 13 official seminaries of The United Methodist Church, yet true to the Methodist tradition of ecumenical openness, we enthusiastically welcome students from 44 denominations, with 46% of MDiv students coming from the Wesleyan tradition. Our student body reflects the diversity and breadth of the Christian faithful, with an enrollment of 483 from 12 countries and 37 states, 44 percent persons of color (U.S.), and a median age of 27 among MDivs. This diversity is a rich blessings, and this year we created a new staff position of assistant director of student life for diversity, equity and inclusion to foster understanding and ensure we are responsive to the needs of our diverse student body.

We offer six single degrees (MDiv, MTS, MRL, MRPTL, THM, DMin) and ten dual degrees. Our Doctor of Ministry degree is 90 percent online, so students can remain in their places of ministry while completing their degrees. Our new Chaplaincy concentration is now among our most popular, and our Teaching Parish program enables students to serves as student pastors in local churches throughout the southeast, learning firsthand about shepherding a congregation; this year, there were 36 participants.

Alleviating student debt through generous financial aid remains among our top priorities. In 2019-2020, we awarded nearly \$6.6 million in financial aid, with 100% of MDiv and 98% of all students receiving support. All MDiv students who are certified candidates for ordained ministry in the UMC receive full-tuition scholarships, and all MDiv, MTS, and master of religious leadership students who are enrolled part-time or more receive a scholarship covering at least 50% of tuition for the length of their program.

We invite you to visit us online at [candler.emory.edu](http://candler.emory.edu).

-Jan Love, Mary Lee Hardin Willard Dean and Professor of Christianity and World Politics, Candler School of Theology, Emory University

### **400.23 - Duke University Divinity School**

Edgardo Colón-Emeric, the Irene and William McCutchen Associate Professor of Reconciliation and Theology, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Director of the Center for Reconciliation will become Dean of Duke Divinity School (DDS) July 1, 2021. Dean Gregory L. Jones will leave DDS to become president of Belmont University.

DDS announced a new hybrid version of its Master of Divinity (M.Div.) program that will give students the opportunity to earn the M.Div. degree without relocating to Durham, N.C. The hybrid learning curriculum combines remote coursework with week-long residential intensives. The first cohort will begin coursework in fall 2021.

DDS welcomed the largest incoming class in school history with 257 new students from 35 different states and seven countries. Our Master of Arts in Christian Practice (28 students) and Doctor of Ministry (52 students) programs received record enrollments. The Master of Theology (13 students), Master of Theological Studies (34 students), and Doctor of Theology (6 students) had strong enrollment. Our new Certificate in Theology and Health Care will enroll 6 students. Across all degree programs, 31 percent of the incoming class identified as a race/ethnicity other than white. Black students made up 21 percent of all students, Asian students, 5 percent; and American Indian students, 2 percent. The M.Div. degree program gained 113 new students.

2020 also witnessed an expansion of DDS's partnerships, including the Kern Family Foundation partnership with the Office of Wesleyan Engagement to provide accelerated pathways for undergraduate students to pursue the M.Div. degree at Duke which welcomed its first cohort of students from Martin Methodist College. The Americas Initiative, a fellowship of organizations, scholars and practitioners convened by the Center for Reconciliation, is working on peacebuilding among Latin American and Latinx communities, particularly those of Indigenous and African descent. The five-year Black Pastoral Leadership Collaboration is working to harness the research and experiential wisdom of Black pastoral leaders nationally through a leadership school and practical theology archiving project.

DDS hired eight new faculty members in 2020. Peter Casarella is a Professor of Theology. Sarah Barton is an Assistant Professor of Occupational Therapy and Theological Ethics who has a joint faculty appointment as assistant professor of occupational therapy at Duke University Medical Center. Quinton Dixie is Associate Research Professor of Church History and Black Church Studies. Zebulon Highben is Associate Professor of the Practice of Church Music at Duke Divinity School and Director of Chapel Music at Duke University Chapel. Alma Tinoco Ruiz is a Lecturer in Homiletics and Evangelism and Director of the Hispanic House of Studies and is a provisional elder in The United Methodist Church. Janet Martin Soskice is the William K. Warren Distinguished Research Professor of Catholic Theology. Norbert Wilson is Professor of Food, Economics, and Community and he is an ordained vocational deacon in the Episcopal Church USA. Wylin D. Wilson is an Assistant Professor of Theological Ethics.

L. Gregory Jones,  
Dean of the Divinity School



## **400.24 - 2020 Drew University Theological School**

Melanie Johnson-DeBaufre, Interim Dean

As with most other schools in the northeast of the U.S., Drew University evacuated its campus in early spring 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Drew Theological School faculty and staff adapted to this challenge with resilience, compassion, and creativity. The Theological School faculty put their courses all online, led development workshops for faculty across the university, and, in order to accommodate our many international admits who would not be able to enter the United States for fall 2020, designed an asynchronous Master of Divinity program. As a result of this work, the Theological School welcomed 147 new students, its largest entering class in a decade, with an enrollment of 380 for the current academic year. Our chapel team has also led the way in creating online worship experiences that connect the Drew community now across the globe. All degree programs at the Theological School include interdisciplinary courses that demand out-of-the-box thinking, apprenticeship training that addresses real-world issues, and modes of learning that promote adaptability and innovation. Our MDiv and MATM degrees include a required gateway year, vocational pathways, and experiential learning that develops and deepens adaptive leadership skills. The curriculum features a team-designed and taught interdisciplinary sequence of core courses reflecting the integration of the theological disciplines and practices characteristic of the life of faith. The faculty have also articulated shared values that are infused across the teaching and learning at Drew: a commitment to anti-racism; gender and sexual-identity equality; eco-sustainability and environmental justice; and interfaith understanding and cooperation. Drew cultivates pastors, preachers, deacons, activists, teachers, and thought leaders who go all over the world to take their place as the next generation of faith leaders and change agents.

## **400.25 - Saint Paul School of Theology**

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

This past year, we have all faced new challenges amid these unsettled times. Saint Paul School of Theology began the 2020-2021 academic year offering students an online option for all courses. With many students choosing to attend class solely online, our Student Council created a monthly “Chat & Chew” where students, faculty, and staff come together to eat lunch and talk about life, seminary, and ministry. In addition, Rev. Rod Newman, our Oklahoma Campus Chapel Coordinator, crafts a weekly Community Prayer to provide encouragement and faithfulness as the school seeks to provide spiritual formation in new ways.

In February, Saint Paul held the 2021 Slater-Willson Lecture online featuring Rev. Dr. Miguel A. De La Torre. His lecture, “Why Do They Come?” explored the political, economic, and social causes of our current immigration crisis. Before the lecture, Rev. Dr. De La Torre participated in a student-led forum, entering a conversation centering around the practical aspects of ministry

and immigration. Later in April, Saint Paul Evangelical Society, led by Dr. Hal Knight, hosted a lecture given by Dr. Sammy G. Alfaro, Associate Professor of Theology at Grand Canyon University and Pastor of Iglesia Nuevo Dia (New Day Church), on the “Pastoral Strategies for Ministering Among Latinx Immigrant Communities.” And for the first time, on May 22, Saint Paul held a virtual commencement celebration with videos, cap and gown photos, online congratulatory messages from friends and family, and a commencement address by Rev. Chebon Kernell. The class of 2021 had 22 graduates, including 16 Master of Divinity and 1 Doctor of Ministry graduates. Due to the pandemic, for safety concerns, Saint Paul has postponed our 60th Anniversary Celebration. However, we have rescheduled the event for Friday, October 22 and look forward to coming together as a community for a safe, in-person gathering.

Through a Board initiative related to diversity and inclusion, Saint Paul created a working group on Native American theology and ministries comprised of Native theologians and church leaders. Their efforts are focused on how the church and academy can work together toward healing generational trauma related to the spread of Christianity and the genocide of Indigenous North Americans.

Saint Paul School of Theology is blessed to be your partner in ministry and help those seeking more to answer the call. We are a seminary that offers online and on-campus classes with a flexible schedule to help our students manage pastoral leadership demands in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. We are grateful for your support of our students and our seminary. May we continue to live into the call of Jesus Christ to be faithful witnesses for healing in these unsettled times and for generations to come.

President Neil Blair, Saint Paul trustees, faculty, staff, alumni, and students thank you for your prayers and support.  
spst.edu

### **400.26 – Conference Treasurer Historical Report**

2020 was the most stressful financial year for the annual conference imaginable. The pandemic prevented many local churches from worshipping in person from April until the end of the year. Important and invigorating conference ministries were suspended. The financial shocks to local churches followed the 2019 Special Session which significantly altered the attachment of members and local churches to the denomination and by extension to the annual conference.

The Conference Council on Finance and Administration quickly modified the budget to assume \$1 million less in apportionment receipts for conference ministries in anticipation of financial stress by local churches. The modifications included adding \$75,000 in grants to aid health ministries in the central conferences to respond to challenges of the global pandemic. We are thankful to the General Board of Global Ministries to assist in managing the programmatic investments.

Clergy and local churches showed remarkable resiliency to adapt to the challenges of worshipping God without doing so in person. Churches went

to online worship and improved their broadcasts regularly as the year progressed. Churches also reduced expenses because the pandemic limitations imposed upon them. Despite widespread unemployment for most of the year, pledged giving to local churches reduced by only around 7% in the median conference local church. According to statistics reports, church income from all sources declined by 11% to 12% for the median local church.

The Federal government created a “Paycheck Protection Program” which provided direct subsidies to local churches to continue payroll while the rules prevented them to meet in person. Almost half of the local churches participated in the program and secured over \$6 million in grants through the program. The annual conference secured a grant of \$1 million. Undoubtedly these grants from the federal government were instrumental in viability of many of the churches that applied. It is worth noting that the system awarding grants was more difficult for people of color.

The camps were closed by state government edict. The lack of revenue caused considerable stress on the camping program, leading to the furloughing of camp staff until 2021 when pandemic restrictions were lifted.

Apportionment income for the year for all funds equaled \$4,677,571. We are so grateful that the result was only about \$200,000 less than 2019. We believe the result indicates the value of the connection for supporting local churches through the stresses of the pandemic. The conference did not use reserve funds to meet operating expenses even with the losses in the stock market and the reduction in income. Conference Council on Finance and Administration thanks the cabinet, program staff, and Annual Conference Shepherding Team for willingly adapting plans to the fiscal realities.

The Red Door Fund created by an April 2013 Special Session of the annual conference has continued with no deficiencies and no delinquencies. The original agreement with Wintrust was for 7 years. By mutual agreement, in 2019 we negotiated a 10-year extension to the arrangement. The new arrangement eliminated interest rate risk to the program. We continue to reduce the loan owed to Wintrust more quickly than scheduled.

The property insurance program, because of reduced claims, ended the year with significant revenue to meet all costs. Revenue for the clergy benefits programs increased in 2020, relative to 2019. Actuarial adjustments made by Wespath caused the need to make an additional payment to the pre-82 defined benefit liability. We again made the payment from the reserve for pension and health benefits. The Book of Discipline requires full payment of the liability by 2021. While we have met this goal, we are obligated to make additional payments when market results disappoint relative to expectations and when Wespath changes the assumptions used in calculating the liability.

Audit

Again, the Northern Illinois Conference received an unqualified approval of our annual audit. The complete audit is part of this report.

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

Church	Conference Support	Health & Pension Write-Offs	Health Grants	Property Insurance Write-Offs	Closed Church Fund	Total:
Addison: Good Samaritan (3001)			1,600			1,600
Aurora: Nueva Vida (3005)	12,000					12,000
Bartlett: Good Shepherd (3010)			3,200			3,200
Belvidere: Iglesias Cristiana Emerge (4006)	18,000					18,000
Bensenville: First (3012)			1,600			1,600
Blue Island: La Gracia de Dios NFC (2003)	12,000					12,000
Bolingbrook: Crossroads of Faith (3013)			1,600			1,600
Brookfield: Brookfield/Compassion (2004)			4,800			4,800
Chicago: Adalberto Memorial (1005)	2,400					2,400
Chicago: Amor de Dios (2005)	12,000					12,000
Chicago: Berry Memorial (1007)			1,600			1,600
Chicago: Big Shoulders (1009)		31,566				31,566

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Church	Confer- ence Support	Health & Pension Write-Offs	Health Grants	Property Insurance Write-Offs	Closed Church Fund	Total:
Chicago: Broadway (1010)	1,500					1,500
Chicago: Chicago Lawn (2006)	6,000					6,000
Chicago: East Side (2008)				3,076		3,076
Chicago: Edison Park (1012)			3,200			3,200
Chicago: El Redentor del Calvario/The Redeemer of Calvary (1013)		4,800			4,800	
Chicago: Englewood- Rust (2009)	12,000	11,780	1,600	7,760		33,140
Chicago: First Vietnamese (1016)	2,000					2,000
Chicago: Freedom (2012)	1,000			3,878		4,878
Chicago: Gorham (2013)		36,764				36,764
Chicago: Grace of Logan Square (1017)	12,000		1,600		27,000	40,600
Chicago: Grace-Calvary (2014)				6,231		6,231
Chicago: Granville (1018)	1,200					1,200
Chicago: Greenstone (2015)	4,000					4,000
Chicago: Hartzell Memorial (2016)		24,883		5,649		30,532

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Church	Confer- ence Support	Health & Pension Write-Offs	Health Grants	Property Insurance Write-Offs	Closed Church Fund	Total:
Chicago: Humboldt Park (1019)	9,000		4,800			13,800
Chicago: Indo Pak (1020)	6,000					6,000
Chicago: Ingleside- Whitfield (2018)		31,925	1,600	3,023		36,548
Chicago: Kelly Woodlawn (2019)			1,600			1,600
Chicago: Lincoln (2020)	5,000			4,490		9,490
Chicago: Mandell (1021)	9,000			1,745		10,745
Chicago: Morgan Park (2022)			1,600			1,600
Chicago: Olivet (1022)	9,667			3,045		12,712
Chicago: Parish of the Holy Covenant (1023)	3,000		3,200			6,200
Chicago: Ravenswood Fellowship (1024)			1,600			1,600
Chicago: South Shore (2025)			1,600			1,600
Chicago: St. Mark (2027)			1,600			1,600
Chicago: Union Avenue (2029)	8,000					8,000
Chicago: United Church of Rogers Park (1026)	7,020	25,798	1,600	3,500		37,918



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Church	Confer- ence Support	Health & Pension Write-Offs	Health Grants	Property Insurance Write-Offs	Closed Church Fund	Total:
Chicago: Urban Village Edgewater (1027)			1,600			1,600
Crete (2035)	2,000		1,600			3,600
Dakota Rock Grove (4015)			1,600			1,600
Des Plaines: First (1031)		4,555	4,800			9,355
Dolton: Faith (2036)	3,000					3,000
Downers Grove: Faith (2037)			1,600			1,600
Dundee: First (3062)			3,200			3,200
Durand (4018)			3,200			3,200
Elgin: El Mesias (9038)	6,000					6,000
Elgin: Journey of Hope (3020)			3,200			3,200
Elk Grove: Prince of Peace (3022)			1,600			1,600
Elmhurst: Christ (3023)	5,000		4,800			9,800
Elmhurst: Faith Evangelical (3024)			3,200			3,200
Elmwood Park (9009)					(366,829)	(366,829)
Erie (5017)			1,600			1,600
Evanston: Emmanuel (1033)			1,600			1,600
Evanston: Hemenway (1035)			3,200			3,200

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Church	Confer- ence Support	Health & Pension Write-Offs	Health Grants	Property Insurance Write-Offs	Closed Church Fund	Total:
Evanston: Sherman (1036)			1,600			1,600
Flossmoor: South Suburban Korean (2040)			1,600			1,600
Forreston: First UMC (4021)			3,200			3,200
Franklin Grove (5020)			1,400			1,400
Freeport: First (4023)			1,600			1,600
Glencoe: North Shore (1038)			1,600			1,600
Harvey: Trans- formation Community (2043)	1,000	43,953		20,000		64,953
Highland Park: Galilee (1041)			3,200			3,200
Itasca: The Center (3031)	35,000					35,000
Joliet: Trinity (3036)	2,000			4,357		6,357
Joliet: Cristo Es El Camino NFC (3032)	6,000					6,000
Joliet: Hope (3034)		5,425	4,000			9,425
Joliet: Ingalls Park (3035)			1,600			1,600
Kaneville (5024)			1,600			1,600
Kirkland: First (4036)			1,600			1,600
Lake Bluff: Grace (1042)		1,545				1,545
Lake Villa (3037)			3,200			3,200
Lanark (4037)			1,600			1,600

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Church	Confer- ence Support	Health & Pension Write-Offs	Health Grants	Property Insurance Write-Offs	Closed Church Fund	Total:
Lansing: First (2048)	2,000		1,600			3,600
Leland (5027)			1,600			1,600
Lena (4039)	500		1,600			2,100
Lighthouse (5044)				3,582		3,582
Lindenhurst (9041)					(562,655)	(562,655)
Lisle: Faith (2050)	10,000					10,000
Lockport: First (2051)	10,000		3,200			13,200
Lombard: Faith (3038)			1,600			1,600
Maywood: Neighborhood (1044)			1,600			1,600
Melrose Park: Cosmopolitan (1045)	5,500	42,581		8,507		56,587
Melrose Park: Red Door NFC (1046)	24,000					24,000
Mount Carroll (4045)			3,200			3,200
Mount Hope (3041)			1,600			1,600
Mount Morris: Disciples (5041)			1,600			1,600
Mount Prospect: Sam Mool Korean (1048)	8,000		1,600			9,600
Mundelein: Vision Church (1050)		11,010				11,010
Naperville: Korean (3045)		43,892				43,892
Northbrook: Glenbrook Korean (9011)					22,580	22,580

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Church	Confer- ence Support	Health & Pension Write-Offs	Health Grants	Property Insurance Write-Offs	Closed Church Fund	Total:
Northbrook: North Northfield (1051)			4,800			4,800
Oak Lawn: First (2055)		7,680				7,680
Oak Park: St. John's (1055)	3,000		4,800			7,800
Olympia Fields (2056)			1,600			1,600
Ottawa: Epworth (5045)			1,600			1,600
Park Forest: Grace United Protestant (2060)	4,000		3,200			7,200
Pecatonica (4049)			1,600			1,600
Polo: Faith (5051)			1,600			1,600
Prospect Heights: Central Korean (1058)			3,200			3,200
River Forest (1059)	6,000		1,600			7,600
Rochelle (5056)	5,000		3,200			8,200
Rock Falls (5057)	27,000		1,600			28,600
Rockford: Aldersgate (4052)		6,637				6,637
Rockford: Beth Eden (4053)			3,200			3,200
Rockford: Brooke Road (4054)			1,600			1,600
Rockford: Christ the Car- penter (4056)	10,000					10,000
Rockton (4060)			1,600			1,600

Church	Confer- ence Support	Health & Pension Write-Offs	Health Grants	Property Insurance Write-Offs	Closed Church Fund	Total:
Savanna: First (4062)			3,200			3,200
Seneca: First (5059)			1,600			1,600
Tinley Park (2064)			1,600			1,600
University Park: Pilgrimage Protestant (9029)					(191,339)	(191,339)
Villa Park: Calvary (3059)	833	667				1,500
Waukegan: San Pablo (1003)	6,000					6,000
Wilmette: Trinity (1066)			1,600			1,600
<b>Totals</b>	<b>334, 620</b>	<b>330,660</b>	<b>171, 800</b>	<b>78,843</b>	<b>(1,071, 244)</b>	<b>(155,321)</b>

**400.27 - Historic Report - Annual Conference Shepherding Team 2021**

Prior to the Coronavirus pandemic, the Annual Conference Shepherding Team (ACST), which was formed in fall 2017, was poised to give leadership through a year that already promised to be challenging. With a general conference on the horizon, the imminent retirement of Bishop Dyck, and the unfolding work toward the strategic goals, the ACST had the opportunity to promote the vision and provide stability to the annual conference.

The pandemic delayed the general conference, upended the routine rotation of bishops and introduced a new set of challenges. Since the submission of the last historic report on April 1, 2020, the ACST has been able to remain faithful to its commitment to build community by transitioning from in-person meetings to a Zoom platform. The strategic goals of making disciples, working against racism and creating vital congregations remain the core focus for the ACST. Despite the challenges of the pandemic, much has been accomplished, and the leadership of the conference celebrates the strides being made by the Task Forces and those who have dedicated countless hours to the efforts. Reports on the progress toward the strategic goals are found elsewhere in the 2021 historic reports.

We are grateful for the early guidance of consultant Helen Chang, member at Urban Village UMC, who served as our organizational consultant during the first two years of this work. Helen concluded her service with us in the summer of 2020. Amania Drane continues to offer excellent leadership as the project manager for the Anti-Racism and Discipleship goals and Rev. Arlene Christopherson offers staff support to the work of vital congregations.

The ACST continues to provide a common table where information and concerns can be addressed across administrative and programmatic lines. To further align the work of the Task Force with the District Shepherding Teams and local churches, a Steering Committee was formed in summer 2020 with the mission of eliminating barriers and measuring progress toward the three strategic goals. In November 2020, the ACST convened a meeting of the Task Forces and the District Shepherding Teams at which the DSTs were able to brainstorm about pursuing the strategic goals in their own contexts.

Through 2020 and into 2021, the ACST has collaborated with the Conference Council on Finance and Administration (CCFA) and Program Ministries in aligning the budget to enhance conference goals. The ACST received periodic updates and information concerning conference and local church finances, and joins in celebrating the wise and prudent financial management of the CCFA.

In fall 2020, the ACST formed an organizational task force to address the realignment of program areas in the conference. This work has resulted in a resolution to the 2021 session seeking to update the standing rules around program areas. Members of this task force include Mark Manzi, Deborah Dangerfield, Arnold Rivera, Mary Rawlinson, Meg Park, Laura Underwood, Nancy Pendergrass and Arlene Christopherson.

The ACST also served as a foundation for the orientation of our interim bishop, Bishop John Hopkins, as he began his assignment with us in January 2021. Bishop Hopkins brings new insight and vision to the work of this common table and is a welcome partner. Our work is enhanced with the partnership of the Cabinet, Director of Connectional Ministries, Director of Congregational Development, Director of Communications and conference communications staff.

Our prayer is that this unprecedented year of adversity has seasoned us for the opportunities that lay ahead. With God's grace our mission continues.

In Christ Service,  
Elizabeth Gracie and Rev. Myron McCoy, Co-Chairs, ACST



Members of the Annual Conference Shepherding Team

Bonnell, Karen S.	DeKalb dST/Discipleship Representative
Brace, Jeff	Rockford dST
Chong, Hannah Hwa-Young	Board of Ordained Ministry Representative
Dangerfield, Deborah	Annual Conference Committee Chair
Gracie, Elizabeth	Co-Chair, Annual Conference Shepherding Team
Harris-Black, Yvette	Black Methodists for Church Renewal Representative
Lacey, Chester	Chicago Northwestern District dST
Lill, Bonnie	Elgin District dST
Manzi, Mark	Lay Leader Representative
McCoy, Myron	Co-Chair, Annual Conference Shepherding Team
Park-Landis, Meg	Age Level Ministries
Pendergrass, Nancy	Nominations Committee
Rawlinson, Mary	Justice and Mercy Ministries
Reyes, Luis F.	Aurora District dST
Rudy, Martha	Chair, Board of Trustees
Samson, Ayla	Chair, Asian American Fellowship
Scott, Tammy	Conference Committee on Financial and Administration Representative
Severing, Jarrod A.	Anti-Racism Task Force Representative
Underwood Wilson, Laura	Development and Revitalization