

#### **400.01 Conference Lay Leader 2015-2016**

As Conference Lay Leader, it has been a blessing to represent you throughout the Conference. As your Conference Lay Leader, I have had the opportunity to bring the meditation during several church services, meetings and events, and I was honored to represent you throughout the Conference at the following events, celebrations, trainings and committees:

- Conference Board of Laity, Chair
  - Led Laity Convocation 2016
  - Led Laity Session 2016
- Program Council
  - Nurture Team
    - Financial Report
- Northern Illinois Conference Cross-Cultural/Cross-Racial Task Force
  - Subcommittee on Churches in Changing Neighborhoods or with Substantial Differences in Member Profile and Neighborhood Profile
- Annual Conference Committee
- Nominations Committee
  - Liaison to various boards and committees
- Association of Annual Conference Lay Leaders
  - Annual Meeting of AACLL, "Therefore Go-Disciples in Action" – Portland, Oregon
  - Nominations Committee for new officers
- Episcopacy Committee
  - Episcopal Evaluation
- First Timer's Orientation at Annual Conference 2015
- Ordination Service 2015
- Preached at various churches in English and Spanish
- Landscape Assessment Meetings
- Laity Sunday Meditation, Hinsdale Illinois
  - Meditation during two services and taught Sunday School class.
- Yearly Laity Address
- Invitation Letter to Annual Conference
- Letter to Conference regarding Memorial Service
- Historical Reports
- Hispanic Ministry Celebration, Elgin, Illinois
- Taught at Lay Academy, "Go Preach."
- Local Church
  - Administrative Council
  - Bilingual Liturgist
  - Spanish Adult Sunday School Teacher
  - Drama Ministry Actor
  - Preached in English and Spanish

By God's grace I will have completed eight years as your Conference Lay Leader, as of the June 2016 Annual Conference. My time in this role has been a blessing beyond what I ever imagined, and yet has challenged me as I never thought I would be challenged. I thank God for

allowing me to witness how He moves among His people, and to share in your joys, your sorrows, and your vision for the future. As I approach the end of my term as Conference Lay Leader, I thank God for the blessings and the challenges, for the diversity of our Conference, and for the commitment that I've witnessed to doing the work that God has called us to do through Jesus Christ our Lord. To God be the glory!

**Arnold Rivera**

Conference Lay Leader

#### **400.02 Program Council Historical Report**

In 2016 the Program Council supported our boards, agencies and groups by not only providing financial assistance but also by helping to connect them with other local, Conference and denominational groups who are working on similar issues. This has been a focus of our work these last four years and we are gratified that collaborative partnerships have been formed and thus our resources sustained and maximized. We have also assisted our ministry partners in the telling of their own stories of transformation so that we provide inspiration to others as they consider starting new ministries. We also tell these stories through the narrative budget we created in partnership with CCFA to provide evidence of the fruit that our Conference is producing and thereby build support for our missions and ministries. Finally, the Program Council continues to work with our ministry partners to provide evidence of fiscal accountability by working with them to generate audits or audit letters that ensure we are — together — acting as good stewards of the resources we have been entrusted with.

The Program Council has been eager to participate with other stakeholders in the Northern Illinois Conference to create a shared vision and align our resources with that vision. We are optimistic that the Landscape Survey process will result in a platform for us to begin this work.

We celebrate the dedicated work of Rev. Chris Pierson who has served among us as Director of Connectional Ministry for the past nine years. Rev. Pierson has connected with, resourced, and inspired so many of the individuals and groups who doing important ministry in and through the Northern Illinois Conference. He has also strengthened the United Methodist connection by linking our Conference with the global United Methodist Church through his work with our various boards and agencies. Chris will be returning the local church as he is appointed the Gary United Methodist Church in Wheaton. His compassion and energy will be truly missed.

We also celebrate the ministry of Rev. Michael Mann as he returns to the local church having accepted appointment to St. Andrews United Methodist Church in Carol Stream. Michael served as Associate Director for Witness and Advocacy and was passionate about doing exactly those things. He provided a strong witness to the good work that our Conference is doing through its many missions and ministries. Even more important, Michael proved to be a tireless advocate for those who live on the margins: the last, the least, and the lost.

The Northern Illinois Conference and the Program Council will miss these two disciples who led us so capably. It has been a pleasure to serve with Reverends Pierson and Mann in their staff roles. I am also so appreciative of the work that our executive team:

Nancy Duel, Vice Chair  
Rev. Carol Hill, secretary  
Mark Manzi, Chair of the Nurture work area  
Rev. Mary Zajac, Chair of the Outreach work area  
Rev. P. Devon Brown, Chair of the Advocacy work area.

And, I am grateful for all of those who serve on the Program Committee by office. May these continue to be bright and hopeful days for the Northern Illinois Conference.

#### **400.03 LANDSCAPE TASK FORCE Historic Report**

In early 2015 the Conference Council on Finance and Administration found themselves struggling with finances. The Northern Illinois Conference had proudly paid general church apportionments in full seven out of the previous 10 years. Like many United Methodist Annual Conferences, Northern Illinois was faced with some difficult decisions around commitment to general church apportionments and annual conference expenses. That month the Bishop joined with CCFA in writing an article about steps that would be taken in addressing this situation. Both made the commitment to analyze and realign spending:

- CCFA began by asking that every area reduce their spending by 7%.
- The cabinet increased efforts at intentional communication and feedback to local congregations on expectations and the impact of apportionments on our ministry.
- CCFA along with the Cabinet challenged every congregation to move beyond zero and find ways to give even if it wasn't at apportioned level.
- CCFA pledged to embark on a series of focus group sessions with local church financial leaders to better understand the financial stresses upon churches and the apportionment level that is sustainable.

In addition to the work of listening, realignment and communication, Bishop Sally Dyck, along with conference leadership purposed utilizing a tool that assesses the strength of middle judicatories known as Landscape. The Landscape Survey was designed by Reverend J. Russell Crabtree, an organizational analyst, strategist and consultant. Using an evidence-based approach to "organizational intelligence", Crabtree has helped leaders gain insight for their planning and future. The tool looks at the vitality and focus of the conference, measuring readiness for vision and change, while identifying priorities for the future. CCFA and the Bishop contracted with The Samaritan Center for Congregations consultant Susan Czolgosz and Holy Cow! Consulting to implement this process.

A sample of 600 laity and clergy from across the conference in both leadership roles and local church settings were invited to take the survey. There were 396 responses representing two-thirds of those invited to participate from across all districts. The response rate provided a valid/reliable statistical analysis.

The results were analyzed in late September 2015 and findings were presented to conference leadership on Saturday, October 10, 2015. We learned that both energy and satisfaction in the conference were low in comparison to the 30 middle judicatories in the database.

We learned that what matters most to our constituents is:

- That conference leadership develop a shared vision that unites us
- That we develop a spirit of involvement

- That conference leadership is effective in recognizing trends and encourages adaptation to those trends
- That the conference is successful helping churches develop increased vitality
- That conference meetings are designed to provide a good use of time and energy.

And finally, we learned the key aspirations for the annual conference to be:

1. Equip leaders with strategies to reach new members
2. Equip churches to be more effective in community outreach
3. Equip leaders to help members grow as disciples
4. Take leadership role in working with struggling churches
5. Develop discernment processes to rethink how to be vital churches
6. Cultivate high levels of trust within the conference.

90% of those who took the survey told us that to achieve these goals/aspirations will require substantial change, and they are ready to follow conference leaders in making change happen. Furthermore, they told us that their financial support of the conference will certainly be maintained with the potential for a small percentage increase. We also learned that we have done an excellent job in communicating and creating awareness about all that is going on within our conference.

In November 2015 these same results were reported to the annual conference members at a Special Session held at Rockford: Court Street on Saturday, November 7<sup>th</sup>. Following the Special Session, Bishop Dyck convened a Landscape Task Force to work on next steps in understanding the findings and implementing adaptive change. Convened by Bishop Dyck, members of the task force are: Chuck Andrews, Woody Bedell, Donna Darr, Brian Gilbert, Elizabeth Gracie, Rev. Rob A. Hamilton, Rev. Hannah L. Kardon, Rev. Dennis Langdon, Sue Layng, Mark Manzi, Rev. Young-Mee Park, Rev. Brian Roots, Rev. Thomas Yang, with staff support from: Lonnie Chafin, Rev. Arlene Christopherson and Rev. Christopher Pierson.

Between the November Special Session and the June 2016 Annual Conference the Landscape Task Force has met almost monthly for half-day and full time sessions first preparing for a Purpose Summit held on Saturday, February 20<sup>th</sup> and designing Listening Sessions held on six subsequent days across the conference with groups of clergy and laity. Then analyzing and collating materials gathered as well as devising next steps.

The Purpose Summit, focused on the 400 elected leaders in the conference, was attended by 230 lay and clergy leaders. The conversation included understandings of mission and vision as well as priorities for the conference in going forward. Information gathered at the Purpose Summit was distilled into four areas of focus and questions to guide the conversation in the Listening Sessions. These included:

**Structure:**

- Appointment process improvements
- Simplify conference organizational structure

- Create "connectional table" to better coordinate the work of the conference
- Structures/process for relationship building/connecting ministries and churches

**Budget:**

- Local church reconfigurations E.g. Mergers, clusters, closings, yoked, shared ministries
- Zero based budget/vision determines budget
- Tithing of apportionments
- Building assessment and strategy
- Transparency around conference finances

**Staff:**

- Prioritizing work/role of the DS (What do you need?)
- What program staff is needed to best resource the local church
  - E.g. Social justice, spiritual formation, evangelism, youth, unchurched, connecting churches
- Methods to bring training closer to the local church
  - E.g. Coaching, mentoring, train the trainers

**Program/Resources:**

- Clergy/Lay leadership Development and Training
- Spiritual formation development
- Best practices and success stories shared between churches
- Transparency/evaluation of our ministries

253 clergy attended the Listening Sessions held for clergy on three consecutive weekdays: February 22, 23 and 24 and 249 laity attended the Listening Sessions held for laity on three consecutive Sundays: February 21, 28 and March 6. Clergy Listening Sessions included a morning focus on clergy moral, as well as conversation focused on Structure, Budget, Staff and Program. Summaries of the information gathered during these sessions include:

**STRUCTURE: Appointment Process and Conference Organization**

Structure conversations focused on both the appointment process and conference organization. Themes included isolation, confusion and a desire for communication and connection. The structure and purpose of the conference is unclear or confusing. Local churches want more guidance for effective ministries and less drain of resource and time on a conference driven agenda.

Congregations feel isolated in the appointment process with clergy moving too often when all is going well and more support needed when clergy and churches have difficulties. Fostering trust between DS (Cabinet), SPRC and congregation is a high value. There is a strong desire for efficient and effective use of resources (finances and time) through alignment of structure, staff and program around purpose, mission and core values.

**BUDGET: Equipping thru Resources**

Vigorous discussion regarding conference budgeting elicited many helpful ideas. Clergy and laypeople all supported a few core changes which were suggested frequently. The highest

priority was that the Conference find ways to promote collaboration and resource-sharing between churches for good stewardship. Particularly, there was hope that the Conference would devote staff, committee, or consulting resources to help church's do building assessments and find new ways to consolidate and/or re-vitalize for mission.

There was strong interest in the possibility of a tithe-based apportionment for local churches. There was a common desire for detailed conference end of the year expense report, so transparency could allow conference constituents to weigh in on effective budget changes going forward. Finally there was hope that a clearer vision would lead to better prioritization in budgeting, and easier collaboration around mission, vision and core values. (There were not comments on the size of the conference budget.)

### **STAFF: Equipping thru Conference Staff and DS's**

Even as resources are stretched, the investment in professional staff is important to local churches and clergy who desire equipping and resourcing. Most frequently identified areas for focus were: evangelism and youth, social justice, and assistance in church administration. There is interest in networking around similar needs between churches as well as sharing resources and success stories, utilizing technology for some resourcing and bringing training closer to the local church in other instances.

There is a desire to have a better understanding of the role of District Superintendent with an emphasis on relationships between superintendent, clergy and local congregation. A redesign of church conferences to make them more meaningful and less administrative was also expressed.

### **PROGRAM: Equipping thru Mission, Vision and Core Values**

Focus by the conference on mission, vision and core values will help everyone align in mission, training and evaluation. Congregations and clergy celebrate the strengths and successes of local churches and seek a mechanism to tap into these success stories as churches resource one another (peer training). Bringing the training closer to the local church setting fosters participation and mirrors the unique needs of the local context – this may include greater use of technology. An emphasis on training the small membership church and redevelopment would be welcomed. Resourcing to address a culture of incivility and negativism is valued. More timely communication around conference events, programs and apportionment education would be helpful. More information from the conference on “who to ask” would enhance the relationship between local church and conference.

The Listening Sessions moved us far beyond budget alone and began to reshape the conference for the future. Analyzing the information gathered, the Landscape Task Force was able to offer a Mission-Vision-Core Values statement to guide our work of adaptive change.

### **Landscape Taskforce - Mission/Vision/Core Values Summary**

#### **THE MISSION OF OUR ANNUAL CONFERENCE**

“The purpose of the annual conference is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world by equipping its local churches for ministry and by providing a connection for ministry beyond the local church; all to the glory of God. (Par. 601)

#### **THE VISION OF OUR ANNUAL CONFERENCE**

*“Making and supporting vital Christians in vital congregations that engage with their communities and the world for peace, justice and mercy”.*

## **CORE VALUES**

*In responding together to God's call for our Annual Conference, we desire a culture that values:*

- Focus on mission
- Evaluation, accountability and support for growth
- Experimentation and risk-taking (with room for failure) for the purpose of learning
- Transparency
- Honesty and graciousness with each other
- Safe spaces for sharing
- Relationship-building
- Provision of resources/services closer to the local church
- Fostering and celebrating diversity (as a conference, in our community and in the world)

In addition two pieces of legislation were drafted and will be presented during the June 5-7, 2016 Annual Conference. One titled: Creation of Northern Illinois Ministry and Building Assessment Team seeks to equip local churches as they assess their ministry and property for the future. The second is titled: Commission a Conference Organization Task Force. This taskforce will work on brining a proposal to the 2017 Annual Conference for conference structures that would better serve our mission and vision.

The Landscape Task Force has also asked conference leaders to reflect on “what they heard in the Landscape work” and “what they will do differently because of these findings”. Reporting out on these reflections will take place throughout the annual conference session.

These are preliminary steps in the long process of adaptive change that will strengthen the Northern Illinois Conference to continue in the mission of “making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world by equipping its local churches for ministry and by providing a connection for ministry beyond the local church; all to the glory of God.”

Respectfully Submitted: Landscape Take Force

## **400.04 PROGRAM COUNCIL - NURTURE TEAM HISTORICAL REPORT**

The Nurture Ministry Team's focus is to assist churches, districts, and our annual conference in the areas of age-related ministries, youth ministries, laity ministries, evangelism, spiritual formation, and camping ministries. We also provide the connectional relationship for the Northern Illinois Conference and four area agencies: ChildServ, Rosecrance, Methodist Youth Service (MYSI), and United Voices for Children. Our priority is to empower and equip others. While personal growth is expected as a result of our programming efforts, the main thrust is to equip participants to go back to their local churches and share information and resources to enhance the ministry of the local church and/or district. A major goal of the Nurture Ministry Team the past two years has been to bring our training as close to the local church as possible.

In 2015, we provided two conference-wide training events that included key note speakers and follow-up workshops to help enhance the knowledge of attendees and then provide specific training that could be taken back to help local church ministry. We provided several training

events at the district level. One of our ministry teams, Spiritual Formation, took training to several local churches. In 2016, we hope to continue this focus and take more training to the district and local church levels thus allowing us to work with the specific concerns and needs of our local congregations.

#### Spiritual Formation

This ministry team hosted a conference-wide training event with Bishop Linda Lee as the keynote speaker and followed that keynote address with several specific training workshops. They held "Spiritual Practice" workshops on the Aurora and Northwest districts and took spiritual formation training to several Southern district churches. Communication of Spiritual Formation is a highlight of their work. They get the word out with a newsletter, regular emails and information tables at the Laity Convocation and Annual Conference.

#### Board of Laity

Laity Convocation: Bishop Sally Dyck was the keynote speaker reminding us of the Wesleyan Way and relating that to what we are and will be doing in Northern Illinois based upon the strategy themes of the Four Areas of Focus. The afternoon workshop provided practical detail on what local churches might do in these areas. The Laity Session at Annual Conference provided lay members a seminar on Youth and Young Adults: Myth and Reality.

#### Older Adult Ministry

This ministry has worked in conjunction with several other ministry teams, Anti Gambling and Safe Sanctuary, at district workshops on the DeKalb and Rockford districts. They have hosted one of these workshops at Wesley Willows allowing those in attendance to not only hear information on how to minister to older adults, but also to see one of the conference facilities that provides assisted living for older adults. Communication of older adult service is a focus of OAM (Older Adult Ministries). They get the word out with regular emails and information tables at the Laity Convocation and Annual Conference.

#### Evangelism

The Evangelism ministry team invited Dr. Lenard Sweet to the conference speaking on the theme of "Bridging Personal and Social Witness." The keynote address was followed by five workshops that expanded on this evangelism theme and drilled down on making evangelism work in the local church in 2015.

#### Youth Ministries

Our Youth Ministry Team offered several events to the youth, 6<sup>th</sup> grade thru senior in high school, this year. They hosted an event at Annual Conference to give our youth a better understanding of this important part of our conference. They also had a gathering "Come to the Lake Shore" at Wesley Woods. One of the most poignant gatherings for our conference youth was a trip to the Holocaust Museum in Skokie.

#### Nurture Team Members

Chair:	Mark Manzi
Board of Laity:	Arnold Rivera
Evangelism:	Robert Sathuri

Leadership Development:	Chris Pierson
Older Adult Council:	Pong Javier/ Jim Barry
Outdoor & Retreat Ministry:	Jeff Casey
Spiritual Formation:	Judy Pohlman
Young Adult Ministry	TBD
Youth Council:	Barbara Javore
UMW:	Dottie Pridy
UMM:	Steve Nailor
Agencies:	ChildServ
	MYSI
	Rosecrance
	United Voices for Children

The Nurture Ministry Team is excited about the many possibilities and opportunities to serve the people of the Northern Illinois Conference. We also hope that the churches of the NIC would call upon the Nurture Ministry Team as they find the need for assistance with the ministries described above. Information on the Nurture Ministry Team can be found on the conference website under the ministry heading.

Mark Manzi, Chair  
 Nurture Ministry Team of the  
 Program Council

#### **400.05 Program Council: Witness/Advocacy Ministry Team**

The Northern Illinois Annual Conference continues to take pride in its efforts to promote inclusiveness and justice. Towards those ends, the Witness and Advocacy work area of the NIC Program Council consists of commissions, committees, caucuses and task forces whose primary objectives include advocating around issues related to pursuing a more just and inclusive society. The specific groups within this work area are:

- Acts of Repentance
- Anti-Gambling Task Force
- Chicago Black Methodists for Church Renewal
- Commission on Religion and Race
- Commission on Status and Role of Women
- Fellowship of Asian Americans
- Hispanic/Latino Ministry Plan
- La Junta
- Native American Ministries
- Reconciling Ministries
- Restorative Justice Ministry
- Strengthening the Black Church for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

Despite decreasing financial resources, these ministries fulfill their missions through the tireless support of committed members. May the Lord continue to bless their efforts towards building God's reign on earth as it is in heaven?

Respectfully,

P. Devon Brown

#### **400.06 Commission on Archives and History**

##### **Membership**

*Members:* Rev. Dr. Charles Insun Yoon (Chair), Mrs. Marilyn Steenwyk (Secretary), Mrs. Linda Priest, Mr. Glenn Palmer, Rev. Keck Mowry. *Ex-officio members:* Rev. Dr. Richard Wang, Rev. Dr. Carol Noren, Rev. Dr. Dan Swinson (Conference Historian), Mrs. Bettie Lusk, Mr. Donald Lusk, and Dr. Jaeyeon Lucy Chung (Director of the United Library at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary).

##### **Meetings**

Since the last Annual Conference, the Commission had meetings at First UMC in Crystal Lake (October 17), First UMC in DeKalb (January 7), Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary in Evanston (Feb. 13), and First UMC in Palatine (April 23). The Commission discussed its display during the Annual Conference, the Commission's website, the NIC Archives update, the listing of closed & merged churches and disposition of records, the listing of persons who served the CAH & the Historical Society, Kendall College (Swedish heritage), hosting the Historical Convocation in July 2015, planning for the district lay leadership trainings. During the 176<sup>th</sup> session of the NIC Annual conference (2015) the Commission displayed boards on the Lexington Conference, Evangelical United Brethren Church heritage, and the Historical Convocation event.

On behalf of the NIC CAH the Rev. Dr. Richard Wang attended the centennial gathering of the Lake Ripley Institute Camp at Willerup Bible Camp, Cambridge, WI. (July 26-31). This campground was established by the Norwegian-Danish Conference, Methodist Episcopal Church with many churches in the Chicagoland area and the Willerup M.E. Church in Cambridge which is recognized by the General Commission as the Oldest Norwegian-Danish Methodist Church in the world. The Rev. Dr. Charles Yoon attended EUB Heritage Symposium hosted by GETS and North Central College on the campus of North Central College, Naperville, IL (March 16-18). The Rev. Dr. Dan Swinson attended the Historical Society of the UMC Annual Meeting hosted by the Northeastern Jurisdiction Commission on Archives and History at Whatcoat UMC in Dover, DE (May 23-26). Some of the Commission members are planning to attend the Northcentral Jurisdiction Commission on Archive and History Annual Meeting hosted by the Iowa Commission on Archives and History at the Iowa Wesleyan College, Mt. Pleasant, IA (July 11-14).

##### **NIC Archives Update**

As our conference has no full time archivist, the commission couldn't effectively respond and provide several historical inquiries for local churches, especially closed or merged churches. Dr. Carol Noren and Mrs. Marilyn Steenwyk have been working at the NIC archives as part-time volunteer archivists for those historical inquires at least once monthly. They also work for digitizing historical resources, especially for materials of the German speaking congregations if there are no inquiries. Dr. Jaeyeon Lucy Chung, Director of the United Library at GETS,

continues to be a helpful resource person for any historical inquiries and the commission's needs. This summer Dr. Carol Noren will attend a training event for conference archivists hosted and supported by General Commission on Archives and History in Madison, NJ (August 12-15). Rev. Keck Mowry continues to develop our commission's website ([www.umcnic.info](http://www.umcnic.info)) pursuing easy accessibility of various resources of the local churches, the Northern IL conference, and other Methodist heritages.

### **Hosting 2015 Historical Convocation**

The NIC Commission hosted the Eighth Historical Convocation from Monday, July 20 – Thursday, July 23, 2015 at GETS, Evanston, Illinois. This convocation was the joint meeting of the General Commission on Archives and History, The Historical Society of The UMC, the North Central Jurisdiction Commission on Archives and History, and the Commission on Archives and History of The Northern Illinois Conference. The theme of the convocation was *"Diversity: It's Complicated."* Under the leadership of the Rev. Dr. Dan Swinson, the Conference Historian, the commission members had worked diligently for this event for the past two years. Dr. Carol Noren prepared the resources for the several Methodist heritage sites in Chicagoland and led the day trip during the convocation.

### **District Training**

The Commission with help and support of the Committee on the Connectional Table led the workshops during the Lay Leadership Training events of the DeKalb District (January 23), the Elgin District (Jan. 30), and the Rockford District (Jan. 30). Rev. Dr. Dan Swinson and Rev. Paul Judd, a former member, led these workshops to introduce helpful resources for the local historians and the trustees and to inform how to maintain local historical records and items. While the Commission will continue to strive for better coverage and accessibility (e.g. digitization) of the NIC Archives and to advocate the importance of record-keeping through conference or district wide workshops or the Commission website, we urge all churches to observe the disciplinary requirement of retaining and regularly maintaining their own local church records of membership (including receptions, baptisms, marriages, funerals) and history with special care for the quarterly conference records. Each church in NIC is the custodian of its unique history as integral to our connection and church historians in each charge are vital to our ministry of memory.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Rev. Dr. Charles Insun Yoon  
Chair of the Commission on Archives and History

### **400.07 CHICAGO BLACK METHODISTS FOR CHURCH RENEWAL, INC. 2015 HISTORICAL REPORT**

The efforts of Chicago Black Methodists for Church Renewal, Inc., are guided by the following goals: To be related to the North Central Jurisdiction BMCR and National BMCR by seeking to expose latent and overt forms of racism in all institutions of the United States, assist all Black United Methodist Churches in the Northern Illinois Conference by developing and making available strategies, advocacy training and programmatic resources necessary to develop strong

Black congregations and to keep before the Annual Conference crucial issues facing our community in a pluralistic, diverse church and society.

We carry out these goals focusing on four programmatic areas: 1] Healthy Families, 2] Youth and Young Adults, 3] Vital Congregation Development and 4] Leadership Development.

The year, 2015, was a very exciting year for the organization as shown in the following highlights of programs and events.

- BMCR joined with the Northern IL Conference Annual Martin Luther King, Jr., event in January, at St. Mark UMC, and sponsored the reception. Rev. Johnson, of Ferguson MO, was guest speaker.
- We celebrated Black History Month during our February Membership meeting. The Rev. Dr. Calvin S. Morris, Civil Rights History Maker and Living Legend, was guest speaker.
- On March 29, 2015, Palm Sunday, we celebrated the Confirmation Recognition Celebration with more than 50 students from 10 churches with Bishop Sally Dyck as the speaker. We commended Rev. Adonna Reed for her vision and leadership of the Confirmation Service.
- We bid farewell to Rev. Dr. Michelle Taylor-Sanders at a fabulous celebration held at the Parkway Ballroom on Saturday, June 6. We expressed our appreciation for her strong support of BMCR and consistent leadership in our HIV/AIDS prevention endeavors for many years.
- The Fourth Annual Faith-Based Community Prayer Walks and Prayer Events were coordinated through our Healthy Families and Keeping Hope Alive HIV/AIDS Ministry (K.H.A.M.). Englewood-Rust, Hartzell Memorial and Grace Calvary participated on Saturday, June 20, promoting Annual National HIV Testing Day, June 27. We collaborated with 20<sup>th</sup> Ward Alderman, Willie Cochran, Walgreens, South Side Help Center, Southside HIV/AIDS Resource Providers, et al, and focused on getting people tested for HIV.
- We hosted a dinner at a gathering of the 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Heritage Convocation at St. Mark UMC, Wednesday, July 22, 7 p.m. Speaker: Rev. William B. McClain (author of "Black People in the Methodist Church, Whither Thou Goest?"). The Convocation theme was: "Diversity: It's Complicated." This event highlighted historical icons of our Church as well as engaged with persons attending from around the world (Russia, Hungary, South Africa, Mozambique, etc.).
- The 42<sup>nd</sup> Annual Pembroke Institute was held at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary (G-ETS), August 2-8. We were excited to welcome 18 new students and 3 returning students (13 males and 8 females). During the Friday Commitment Service, 4 students came forward to acknowledge their calls to ordained ministry: Jemmerio Davis (Greater Englewood Parish), Elijah Perry (St. Mark UMC), Darrius Dubose (FWA), and Jarrett Buchanan (St. Mark UMC). 11 students who acknowledge their calls to lay ministry, Courtney

Washington (Maple Park), Tyler Davis (Maple Park), Dominic Burton (New Gresham), Brandon McLin (FWA), Thomas Porter (Hartzell), Nannette Beckley (Southlawn), Naomi Beckley (Southlawn), Cheryl Henderson (Living Faith UMC), Caitlyn Berry (Sherman UMC), Frederick Hicks, and Marissa Malone (Wesley). The remaining 6 students came forward to reaffirm their faith commitment to Christ. Thank you to the Pembroke Institute Committee members and to Ms. Dana McClure Thomas, Dean and her team for their outstanding leadership.

- BMCR convened a Lay Leader Roundtable in August to discuss and identify the needs of the local churches that they represented. The goal was to help identify Chicago BMCR program opportunities for 2016 and beyond. A similar assessment was sent to BMCR Clergy.
- The 26<sup>th</sup> Annual Laity Awards Banquet was held on October 18; over 400 friends and family members attended and 44 awardees were honored. Bishop Sally Dyck and our President Deborah Dangerfield presented the awards. The Clergy and Lay Honoree for the “Rev Margaret Ann Williams Joy of Serving Award” were also honored at the banquet: Mr. Marc Dean - Laity and I as Clergy (both of us are products of the Rev. Maceo D. Pembroke Memorial Institute and Black Methodists for Church Renewal).
- The North Central Jurisdiction of Black Methodists for Church Renewal was held in Indianapolis, Indiana, October 22<sup>nd</sup> through 24<sup>th</sup>. Donald and Bettie Lusk, Rev. Dr. Addison Shields, Sylvia Jo Oglesby and President Deborah Dangerfield represented our organization. NCJ BMCR officially endorsed Deborah for President of National BMCR; the election to take place at the General Meeting in Baltimore March 2016.
- We held the first annual Care Givers event to honor those who provide support and care for church and family members who are ill and unable to care for themselves. Several of our local congregations were represented and participated in this event. Thank you to our program coordinator, Sylvia Jo Oglesby, for her vision for this endeavor.

As Chicago BMCR moves forward though its 47<sup>th</sup> year of existence, the challenges are daunting within the Church and the communities in which our African American Congregations serve. Poverty, violence, racism and dwindling resources continue to plague our society, yet we will remain faithful to our mission and purpose, speak truth to power louder than ever before and continue to exemplify the values poured into us by our forebears, those leaders who stood tall and forthright in their quest for and commitment to the achievement of equality. We will continue our efforts to advocate for the unique needs of our African American Congregations in the Northern Illinois Conference of the United Methodist Church because “Our Time Under God Is (still) NOW!”

*Rev. Dennis Oglesby, Jr. President*

*Mr. Walton Davis, Jr., Vice President*

*Mrs. Bettie Lusk, Secretary*

#### **400.08 Disciple Bible Outreach Ministries of Illinois, Inc.**

Submitted by Beth Fender, President, DBOM-IL

The purpose of Disciple Bible Outreach Ministries of Illinois (DBOM-IL) is to develop and strengthen DISCIPLE Bible study ministries in local churches and in outreach settings – especially prisons – which will transform lives, make disciples, and empower Christians for outreach ministry. The ministry officially began in 2013, when a statement of relationship was approved with both the Northern Illinois and Illinois Great Rivers Conferences at their respective Annual Conference sessions.

This year, DISCIPLE II was taught at FCI Pekin, and Disciple Fast Track was taught at Decatur Correctional Center. Efforts are still underway to begin studies at Stateville Correctional Center and Pinckneyville Correctional Center, and the DBOM-IL Board of Directors seeks to establish additional studies through groups of volunteers in the vicinity of prisons throughout Illinois. Studies for youth in juvenile detention facilities have also been discussed. Board members have conducted a prison ministry workshop, including both DISCIPLE Bible Study training and the certification training to serve as a DBOM volunteer, in Bolingbrook this year, and look forward to scheduling additional workshops in the future. DBOM board members are also available to speak in churches, both in worship and other contexts, to share the exciting things happening through DBOM-IL and to explain the many ways churches and individuals can support this ministry.

A brief story might serve to illustrate the transformation happening through DBOM-IL. During one session focused on Jesus eating with tax collectors and sinners, our Pekin study group was talking about people that might feel rejected, wondering who they could spend time with, helping to restore them to the fellowship. The guys mentioned that within a prison, one group of men is considered the worst-of-the-worst, unworthy of anyone spending time with them, and unable to be saved – sexual offenders, especially child molesters. The guys agreed that Jesus would have eaten with them and loved them too, so we are called to do the same. The group discussed the way some people rationalize their own offenses by saying that someone else is “worse.” They concluded that all have sinned, and all of our sins are against God; but if we repent and accept Christ, it doesn’t matter what our past contained.

Those wanting to learn more about Disciple Bible Outreach Ministries can go to the DBOM National website, <http://disciplebibleoutreach.org>. Further information about DBOM-IL is available by clicking on “Illinois” under the Affiliates tab.

Steve Nailor, Conf. Pres. NICUMM and VP of DBOM of Illinois, Inc.

Dotty Priddy, Conf. Pres. NICUMW

#### **400.09 NIC Board of Global Ministries**

##### **Historical Report for 2015**

As the connection between the General Board of Global Ministries and the annual conference the NIC Board of Global Ministries is charged with working with the district and local churches to promote and educate them about global mission and how they can be involved. In order to do that effectively, the members of the conference board need to be educated themselves and

have over the years of this quadrennium worked to learn about and connect with some of the projects and persons the conference is in mission with. 2015 was no exception.

In January we welcomed Linda Priest to share about the Midwest Mission Distribution Center (MMDC) in Chatham, Illinois. She told about her work as a volunteer and former board member at MMDC. Since we partner with MMDC for some of our mission collections at annual conference it was good to learn more about this agency that is at work very close to us.

In March, Ed Heyer, the DeKalb District Co-Mission Secretary, spoke to us about his Peacemakers Trip. At our May meeting we worked on all of the things around annual conference - the Rainbow Covenant Luncheon, mission item collection from the local churches (cleaning bucket items), and display tables.

In September we began discussion about the Rainbow Covenant Booklet that will be printed after the annual conference session in June 2016. We charged a task force of members to look at changes that would help in promoting and seeking support of Rainbow Covenant giving. We worked on the budget that was presented to the Outreach Team and the Program Council. We also heard from Hae Shin, a member of the board of directors of Sam Mool House, a district Rainbow Covenant mission project of the Elgin District.

In November we had two persons meeting with us, Julia Jones from the Northern Illinois Food Bank and Charissa Shawcross, the North Central Jurisdiction Mission Advocate. Julia shared an opportunity for churches and individuals to volunteer at the Northern Illinois Food Bank sites during Full on Faith Week in February 2016. The Board agreed to help share that mission opportunity. Charissa was glad to join us and see us in action as she visits various conferences in the North Central Jurisdiction.

Shirley Pulgar-Hughes and the district mission secretaries worked tirelessly to itinerate the missionaries that visited our conference in 2015. It was a big job well done as missionaries come to share their story with people in the local churches.

Several members of the board will finish their service to the board at the end of the quadrennium after the June 2016 annual conference as will staff person, Michael Mann. Their service has been invaluable and we thank them for giving of themselves and their time to missions. We wish Michael well as he returns to service as a pastor in a local church.

Anne Genter, Chair

#### **400.10 NIC Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministry (BHECM) Historical Report for 2015**

How do we connect with young adults who are turning away from the Church and the Christian faith in greater numbers? How do we ensure that our young people can receive an education that connects them to their God-given calling and learn about the world that God calls us all to help restore and redeem? These are a few of the questions that we continually ponder as your Conference Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministry.

Fortunately, God has provided amazing leaders to work with students at five university and college settings in Northern Illinois, and we also benefit from the ongoing United Methodist institutions of higher learning in our area: North Central College and Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary.

We particularly celebrate these top three highlights this year at each of our five campus ministries:

**A New and Inclusive Ministry at UIC** – (formerly Agape House) – University of Illinois Chicago: Rich Havard

We launched a new ministry at UIC in August 2015!

- We experienced quick growth (from 0 to 20 people). The emerging group is diverse in race/ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation. And many of them are coming to our community with little or no previous church experience.
- Our students served for 168 hours in the fall 2015 semester and gave out almost 1,000 meals directly to people experiencing homelessness.
- We started a small group that explored such topics as grace, spiritual practices, LGBTQ-inclusion, multi-ethnic/anti-racist ministry, justice, and more. This group set the ground work for 3 groups to launch in fall 2016.

**Korean American Campus Ministry (KACM)** – University of Chicago, Hyde Park: Rev. Mosung Eam

- A special highlight has been the development of small group ministry where students share lives including praying, reading the Bible and entertaining. There were nine groups in which each group consists of eight to twelve people and they met every week for the said goal.
- The Hyde Park Korean Arts and Language School has helped us to reach out to Korean communities. Through the school there were three student families who joined our ministry. The school served 36 children (including Americans) with 7 teachers and 2 volunteers in 2015.
- Finally, we developed a strong emphasis in spiritual formation. We intentionally emphasized reading the Bible on a regular basis and on prayer and on fasting, including numerous training events such as a prayer school, spiritual formation retreat, and spiritual reading classes.

**North Central College Chaplain** – Naperville: Rev. Eric Doolittle

- Graduating three seminary bound UM students - Tyler Ward, Matthew Wilke, and Nikki Young, each who received the top scholarship at their seminary.
- Sending service trips during our Spring, Summer, and Winter breaks to North Carolina, West Virginia, Kentucky, Florida, Texas, and Costa Rica with over 50 students and staff.
- Starting a new student organization for our growing population of Muslim students, including a new prayer space and support from the local Islamic Center.

**University Christian Ministry (UCM)** – Northwestern University, Evanston: Rev. Julie Windsor-Mitchell

- UCM has strengthened students' Christian identity in an interfaith world through an interfaith spring break trip to Turkey.

- UCM has taught elements of Christian scripture, identity, and practice through weekly small-group Bible study which has provided insight into the complexity of the Bible's historical context.
- UCM has built students' capacity for servant leadership in the name of Jesus Christ, by offering literally hundreds of different opportunities to lead worship services, Bible study, retreats, mission projects and fellowship activities.

**Wesley Foundation, Northern Illinois University, Dekalb: Rev. Rosa Lee**

- The Wesley Foundation at NIU is being connected to the community of NIU. The school community recognizes that we are an open/inclusive Christian community. Being visible to the community of NIU is the best of the best for me as a beginner campus minister.
- Wesley Foundation has re-established its Board now. While we are still discussing about our roles as we look forward to doing ministry together more, we feel we are working together as a Board for Wesley Foundation at NIU.
- We have more than 100 students every Sunday, coming for Hungry Huskies. While Students are gathering as a community for their free dinner, they are exposed/invited to the Christian faith. They listen to Christian music and they see the signs [God is Love] and [Food is free as God's love is free] while they are eating. I believe they are getting exposed and learning about God in a positive way. I believe it is not just a dinner but inclusive communion for all.

That's just a snapshot of all the amazing things that go on every week at your Campus Ministries. We look forward to what God will continue to do through the partnership of local churches and student ministries around our Conference over the next year. Our prayer is that in a time of limited resources, we will understand the unique and crucial role our student ministries play in our church life. Invite a Campus Minister to visit your church this year!

By the Grace of God and your generosity,

Rev. Jonathan Crail  
BHECM Chair

**400.11 Northern Illinois Justice For Our Neighbors**  
Historical Report 2015

Northern Illinois Justice For Our Neighbors (NIJFON), a faith driven ministry strives to live out its mission to provide a warm welcome to immigrants, asylum seekers and refugees in our congregations and communities providing free, high quality immigration legal services, education and advocacy, and to encourage cross cultural community building.

We are grateful for the ongoing support of Northern Illinois Conference which provided \$20,000 in 2015, as well as the continued support of so many local churches, and individuals. We are deeply grateful for the support of our Bishop Sally Dyck who named us to be the recipients of her annual Bishop's Appeal in 2015. We also receive support and financial resources through National Justice for Our Neighbors and in 2015 we also received grants

through the Ray Solem Foundation and National UMW. This continued and growing support enabled us to expand our ministry in 2015 in the following ways:

1. Clients: We continue to focus on how we might expand our services to the most vulnerable of immigrants. This year we served persons, seeking asylum, victims of violent crimes and domestic violence, etc. In response to the crises of unaccompanied children who crossed the border, we were able to assist some unaccompanied youth in the area with legal services. We were able to expand our services to women and children. We continued to assist those who have relief under DACA and were prepared to help those with DAPA should the President's executive order on immigration go into effect. We continued to see new clients while continuing to work on those complicated cases that may take years to resolve.

2. Volunteers: We could not do what we do without a dedicated group of volunteers. Other than the lawyer, our clinics are staffed by a volunteers that provide a warm welcome, offer refreshments, do intake, provide child care, translation services etc. At any one clinic there may be as many as 15-20 volunteers. As well, we have a dedicated board of directors who not only attend meetings, but do much of the administrative work that needs to be done. Volunteers are always welcome and local churches often offer to bring refreshments on a particular clinic day. To volunteer contact a local clinic or Susan Yanun at [susan.yanun@nijfon.org](mailto:susan.yanun@nijfon.org).

3. Clinics: Clinics were held in Aurora, Chicago and Rockford once a month for 11 months of the year. It is here that new clients are seen as well as current clients who need follow up. There are 6-10 clients seen at each clinic. It provides a chance for volunteers to interact with clients and to hear firsthand the stories and problems that immigrants encounter.

4. Program:

a. Staff and volunteers are always available for speaking engagements. They can talk about the work of JFON, help local churches in learning how they can provide a warm welcome to immigrants, or discuss immigration concerns.

b. In 2015 we were able to train UMW groups about immigration concerns and issues, and assist the conference in the training of local churches to respond to the President's executive order regarding DACA and DAPA.

c. In conjunction with Logan Square Neighborhood Association we developed a peer mentoring program for immigrant youth.

d. Advocacy around immigration issues was a continuing concern. We supported a variety of efforts and alerted our constituency to current immigration issues or changes.

5. Staff: In 2015 we were able to increase our legal staff to almost two full time lawyers. At the end of 2015 we hired a part time board development person (to begin in 2016) to research grants and to help us build our donor capacity.

We are deeply grateful for the ongoing support of the conference, individual churches and member individuals who have provided us with an ongoing core of support that has enabled us to grow as rapidly as we have in the past few years. We have felt truly blessed. For more information or to donate go to [www.nijfon.org](http://www.nijfon.org).

#### **400.12 CONFERENCE BOARD OF LAITY 2015-2016**

The Conference Board of Laity is chaired by the Conference Lay Leader. Within the past few years we have sought to expand representation from the Districts, and the Chicago Northwestern District was the first district to add a co-lay leader. Within just the past few months, the Aurora District and the DeKalb District also added co-lay leaders. As such, the six NIC districts are

represented by nine individuals, rather than only six. In addition to the District Lay Leaders, the Conference Board of Laity is comprised of several at-large members, the President of UMM, the President of UMW, the Director of Lay Servant Ministries, a clergy representative, and the Director of Connectional Ministries, for a total of twenty-one individuals. The Board has various responsibilities, including the planning and implementation of the Laity Session during Annual Conference every year.

The theme of the Laity Session of Annual Conference 2015 was “Replenish” and focused on replenishing the pews with millennials. The session began with a celebration of youth entitled “What Jesus Imagines in the World,” consisting of young people sharing their thoughts about this with the session. Their remarks, filled with depth and passion, gave everyone hope for the future. This presentation was followed by an open discussion facilitated by the two millennials who sit on the Board of Laity. They posed questions to the millennials attending the session, about why they believe millennials have left the church, and what they believe would bring them back. The discussion was eye-opening and also included input from long-time members who spoke about what is working in their churches. After these discussions, there was a Worship celebration with Holy Communion.

The Conference Board of Laity will have met six times by the time of Annual Conference 2016. After Annual Conference 2015, we planned and implemented activities for the year, which included:

- Promoting Laity Sunday 2015, with the theme of: “Disciples Called to Action - Creating Unity in Ministry.”
- Continued training for Local Lay Leaders/Lay Members to Annual Conference at several District Lay Leadership Training Events. The trainings were conducted by members of the Conference Board of Laity.
- Planned and implemented the 2016 Laity Convocation.
- By the date of Annual Conference 2016, will have planned and implemented the 2016 Laity Session at Annual Conference.

In continuing with the overall denominational theme of, “Who Is My Neighbor”, the 2016 Laity Convocation had the theme of, “Inside Out (Inner Strength for Greater Outreach)” and it was held at Sycamore UMC. The theme sought to encourage us to share the light of Christ with all who are hurting in the darkness of the world. Approximately 240 people attended the 2016 Laity Convocation.

The keynote speaker was Ray Buckley, interim Director of The Center for Native American Spirituality and Christian Study. He is also an author and illustrator of several books. His reflections invited us to awaken the sacred inside, in order to reach those on the outside. After the keynote presentation, four workshops were offered, led by laity and clergy in partnership:

- **“Feed the Spirit. Feed the Soul” (Spiritual Formation)** led by Judy Pohlman and Barb Miller;
- **“Feed the Body. Feed the Spirit (Hunger Relief)** led by Julia Jones and Betsie Swartz;
- **“H.E.L.P.”(Help.Educate.Love.Prepare. - Disaster Relief)** led by Rev. Christina Vosteen and John Kerastas; and
- **“There are No Strangers Here.” (Immigration and Refugees) This was a bilingual workshop, led in English and Spanish** by Rev. Paula Cripps-Vallejo and Brent Holman-Gomez.

The Laity Convocation also included a time of worship, Holy Communion and fellowship, along with display tables from various groups where persons were able to gather resources. After the event, outlines and resources from every workshop were made available on-line. Finally, the 2016 winner of the “Award for Most Attendees from a District at the Annual Laity Convocation” was the DeKalb District, for the second year in a row. The award was made to Rev. Young-Mee Park, District Superintendent of the DeKalb District.

As we enter into a new Quadrennium, there will be a transition in leadership because the Chair of this Board, along with several members, will be completing their terms. The Conference Board of Laity, however, will continue to encourage participation at the Conference level from all the Districts, and continue to put an emphasis on youth and young adult participation at all events, as we did with 2015 Laity Session focusing on Millennials.

Arnold Rivera  
Conference Lay Leader  
Chair - Conference Board of Laity

#### **400.13 2016 Conference Committee on Native American Ministries Historical Report**

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

We continue collaborating with **The Kateri Center** by supporting the educational and cultural programs of their elders, participating in the All Nations Prayer Circle, occasional worship services and leadership meetings, and providing resources for language events. We also supported the center in its transition of its leadership by being asked to be part of the interview team, in interviewing the candidates. The new director, Dee Logan, and our committee has worked together particularly in assisting with the Pow Wow held in May. This was a beautiful and meaningful day for all who attended.

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

This year there was a transition of CONAM leadership. We are most grateful and thankful for Adrienne’s leadership and welcome Gene Green as co-chair with Michelle.

With Gratitude,

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

#### **400.14 HISTORICAL REPORT - COUNCIL FOR OLDER ADULT MINISTRIES**

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

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

These will be accomplished by

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

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

#### OAM accomplished in the 2015 conference year (until 2016):

We brought Dr. William Randolph, the executive director of the Office of Aging and Older Adults, to Evanston IL in July 2015 to conduct workshop on OAM in conjunction with the National Association of Filipino American Ums Biennial Convocation. The workshop targeted and benefited NIC constituents as well as those visiting from other jurisdictions.

Coinciding with the Chicago NW District 2016 LEAD Training, the Korean UM Caucus invited OAM to assist in exploring possibilities of ministry to the growing population of older adults in the Korean community. The Council has offered assistance in seeking resources in the conference and the general church.

As part of the NIC Nurture Team, Council for OAM was a significant addition to resource attendees on the ministry at the 2016 Laity Convocation. Council members were on hand to engage the laity and clergy in a conversation regarding this conference ministry. Much of printed materials handed out were provided by the Office of the Aging in Nashville.

NIC OAM is currently in conversation with units or members in NIC to conduct workshops for their constituents: Rockford District; Chicago NW District UMW; Baker Memorial UMC; Grace Naperville UMC; and Neighborhood UMC. We have an ongoing collaboration to conduct workshops that benefit older adults with the Anti-Gambling Task Force, Safe Sanctuary Committee; Spiritual Formation Committee; and senior care institutions. Estelle Beaumont, a "snow bird" Council member, attended OAM events in the south while staying away from Illinois winter, and will share her experiences with the Illinois Council in Spring.

#### Budget

Much of the expenses and cost of materials in the past period were donated or at minimal cost to OAM. The OAM budget line for the past period was clearly under spent. For 2016, OAM is allocated \$4,000 of which \$1,500 is expected to be spent for the administration of the Golden Cross Sunday observance. We also plan to do more trainings in 2016. We also plan to avail in 2016 of national workshops scheduled by the Office of Aging in Nashville.

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

Council for Older Adult Ministries is charged to administer the GCS Offering received by the Conference Treasurer and to promote the Older Adult Recognition Sunday in NIC. More congregations participated in the GCS Offering in 2015, 20 churches total, than the previous year. Two scholars were named, each awarded scholarship from the offering.

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

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

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

### **400.15 BOARD OF PENSIONS**

#### General Statement

Your Conference Board of Pensions is responsible for the general supervision of all pension and benefit programs adopted by the Annual Conference for clergy members of the conference and for all employees of local churches, boards, and agencies of the Annual Conference. It recommends and reports to the Annual Conference such changes in the pension programs as may be proposed from time to time by the General Board of Pensions and Health Benefits of The United Methodist Church (“General Board”) or adopted or recommended by the General Conference. It also recommends and reports to the Annual Conferences changes in the health care and other benefit programs administered by the Conference Board of Pensions.

The Conference Board of Pensions 2016 operating budget is \$8,875,689.

#### Pensions

Clergy members with service years prior to January 1, 1982 (Pre-82) are provided with pensions administered by the General Board. This “defined benefit” pension is based on the service years to the Annual Conference (NIC) up to December 31, 1981.

In 1980, the General Conference voted to have a “defined contribution” plan for active clergy effective January 1, 1982. This program is called the Ministerial Pension Plan (MPP) and each salary paying unit pays the annual contribution on behalf of each clergy person. This contribution is based on the percent of compensation set by the Annual Conference and is deposited to each clergy person’s individual account at the General Board.

In 2004, General Conference voted to end the MPP as of December 31, 2006. No more additions to individual accounts were permitted after this date. The MPP was replaced with a new pension program – The Clergy Retirement Security Program (CRSP). This program began January 1, 2007. It consists of two core benefit programs: a defined benefit core, and a defined contribution core. CRSP payments are paid by each salary-paying unit on behalf of each clergy person. These payments include the defined contribution amount, the actuarial payment for the defined benefit amount, and a payment to the new reserve for estimated future unfunded retiree benefit liabilities. The future annual cost will fluctuate with market returns.

Another change involves PIP, the personal investment plan which allowed the clergy or lay employees to make additional investments for their retirement. The PIP program has been discontinued and replaced by UMPIP. This change will be transparent to the participant, as UMPIP will work in substantially the same way as the PIP. Contributions will be made to the participant's individual account. Individuals may still make additional voluntary before-tax contributions, subject to the maximum as determined by the IRS.

In 2012, General Conference voted to amend CRSP and MPP. The CRSP Defined Benefit component has been decreased from 1.25% of DAC per year of service to 1.00% of DAC per year of service effective January 1, 2014. Under the CRSP DC plan, the Annual Conference will contribute 2% of clergy plan compensation and, in addition, will match the amount of clergy contributions to the UMCPIP up to 1% of compensation. This change is effective January 1, 2014. Additionally, General Conference made quarter-time appointments ineligible for CRSP. The 2013 Northern Illinois Annual Conference voted to provide CRSP to at least half-time clergy.

MPP becomes a defined benefit (annuity) at retirement. Beginning January 1, 2014, exactly 65% of the account balance must be converted to an annuity. Clergy must roll over 35% to UMPIP, an IRA or take it as a cash distribution which is subject to taxes.

#### Medical Insurance

##### Historical Overview of Our Health Insurance Program

In January 2014, Healthflex (General Board's Plan) uses Blue Cross Blue Shield of Illinois as the Health Insurance provider PPO for actives, OptumRX (formerly Catamaran) for the pharmacy program, and United Behavioral Health for the Employee Assistance Program. In addition, the General Board has provided wrap around services to improve clergy health, ie Virgin Pulse, Center for Health, Blueprint for Wellness, etc. As a result of these programs, our claims have not exceeded our funding for the past two years. Furthermore, HealthFlex has issued NIC a performance dividend of \$1,275,780.

Based on the implementation of the Affordable Care Act and the ability for individuals to gain coverage on the public exchange, churches can elect to opt out of the GBOPHB/NIC mandated health programs (HealthFlex).

##### Health Care Coverage for Retired and Disabled Clergy

The Conference Board of Pensions engages OneExchange to aid retirees aged 65 and above in selection of suitable Medicare supplement coverage and to act as patient advocate when necessary.

##### Healthcare Special Grants

The Board makes available to the Cabinet funds for special grants for those congregations who are not able to provide 100% of the cost of medical insurance for their clergy. We will continue to work in cooperation with the Cabinet to assist local churches who are in financial need. We are also working with the Cabinet to reduce the number of local churches in jeopardy by defaulting or paying their benefits payments late.

### Investments

The NIC holds a restricted fund (“NIC-Post-Retirement Benefits Program”, p.199, *2008 NIC Conference Journal*, Resolution 700.04) on deposit at the General Board of Pensions and Health Benefits to be used for pension, health, disability, and other welfare benefit programs for NIC retired and disabled clergy families. The asset balance in this fund is detailed in a note to the audited financial statements.

### Programs for Retirees

Since 1986, this Board has sponsored programs for retired clergy and spouses within the geographic areas of the Annual Conference. On March 22, the board sponsored a 2016 retiring class workshop to assist the current retirees navigate retirement.

### James F. Stiles, III, Service Award

In 1989 the Board of Pensions established an annual service award in honor of its late chairperson, James F. Stiles, III. The Conference Board of Pensions has elected the Reverend Joseph Johnson as the recipient.

### Financial Report

Our financial report is made as part of the report of the Conference Treasurer and will also be part of the audit to be published in the Conference Journal.

### United Methodist Clergy Fund

I would like to thank the United Methodist Clergy Fund for their continuing support for the retirement benefit programs of NIC. The Clergy Fund donated \$1,300,000 in 2015. Without their assistance, it would be extremely difficult to maintain the high level of benefits we offer.

### Defined Benefit Liability and Potential Retiree Health Liability

The Board of Pensions has completed a funding plan for this liability and submitted to the General Board for approval.

### Closing Statement

We continue our work to provide our plan participants with the most beneficial and cost effective benefits available in the marketplace, and to avoid large fluctuations in costs to churches and other plan sponsors. The Board remains diligent in investigating alternative methods for the provision of benefits. We thank and praise God for mercy and grace and for the faithfulness of the people called United Methodist who continue to make care of their clergy and other servants of the church a priority. With the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, we will together continue in our ability to serve both active and retired clergy and laity of this Annual Conference.

Rev. Joseph A. Johnson, Chair

### **400.16 Commission on Religion and Race**

#### Historical Report 2016:

Over the past year, the Commission on Religion and Race of the Northern Illinois Conference has been involved in activities that are intended to promote the goal of the General Commission on Religion and Race as articulated in its vision statement: to advocate for "a fully inclusive

Church that is accountable for and proactive in addressing all forms of racial/ethnic oppression, and where all members strive, as disciples of Jesus Christ, to build God's beloved community."

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

A new focus has emerged from the recognition that the historical method of monitoring alone has not produced the transformation of the church into one that more closely resembles the changing context of the global church. GCORR and the NIC CORR are now striving to help resource congregations and church and conference leaders to increase intercultural competency, institutional equity, and vital conversations that will move us forward in our mission as a global church. In keeping with this goal, members of the Conference CORR team have continued as contributing members of a task-force comprised of representatives of various constituencies, governing and administrative bodies within the conference along with Bishop Dyck. The mission of the task-force is to develop a comprehensive plan for increasing our effectiveness in reaching a diverse population within our annual conference. There will be four areas of focus: churches and clergy experiencing new cross-racial/cross-cultural (CR/CC) appointments, ongoing CR/CC appointments, selected pilot churches located in a community that is different demographically than the majority of the local church, and the ordained ministry process - working with candidates in the process through the Board of Ordained Ministry and the District Committees on Ministry. The process began last year with "listening" sessions facilitated by our team members among clergy and laity who have experienced cross-cultural ministry.

In a year that has been marked by heightened racial tensions in our country and communities within the NIC, our CORR team has promoted the resources of the General Commission on Religion and Race to help congregations facilitate dialogue and educational programs in the areas of racial justice and reconciliation. We look forward to continuing to work towards the goal of moving the United Methodist Church, and the NIC in particular, into relationships that will reach more people, more diverse people, and younger people to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Respectfully submitted,  
Adonna Davis Reid, Chair

#### **400.17 Trustees, Conference Board of**

During 2015 the Conference Board of Trustees continued to carry out its fiduciary responsibilities as the Board of Directors of the Northern Illinois Conference. Officers elected in June 2015 were: Robert Burkhart, President; Romney Amariah, Vice President; Harry Nicol and Tim Biel as additional members of the Executive Committee. Vern White, Brian Smith, Timothy Biel, and Connie Augsburger were appointed to the Insurance Committee, with Vern White as chairperson. Additional Trustees are Tari Crema, Morris Harms, Gary Kaufman, Martha Rudy, and George Wentworth Jr. The Board met 9 times plus held 1 conference call.

Areas of Trustee responsibility include financial investments, property and liability insurance, maintenance and repair of properties, zoning issues, the lease or purchase of property and the sale or lease of property no longer used for Conference purposes. We care for 13 Conference-owned properties, plus properties under our responsibility as designated by action of the Annual Conference or Cabinet. (This does not include campgrounds, which are the responsibility of the Board of Outdoor and Retreat Ministries.) Bequests of property to the Conference are monitored and best use identified. Individual trustees take responsibility for annual inspection of each property, bringing repair/upgrade requests to the full Board and seeing that work is properly done.

Among decisions/actions taken during 2015:

- Held a half-day workshop on August 29 for church trustees, members of District Strategy Teams and District Boards on Church Location and Building. The major presentation was on Deferred Maintenance and Risk Management, with two breakout sessions on Shared Space and Energy Issues. 125 people attended; sessions were recorded and are available on-line.
- Expanded number of churches covered in our group property insurance plan from 314 in January to 338 at end of the year. All Conference-owned properties are in this group plan. Developed a plan for better monitoring of insurance premium non-payment.
- Began study of revision for parsonage standards.
- Received a \$182,643 bequest from the estate of the late Mary Ellen Groat; designated the funds to go toward the Hilltop Church mortgage.
- Discontinued leasing 3309 S. Michigan condo in Chicago; resumed using this property for Conference staff (Martin Lee, Director of Congregational Development/Redevelopment, is now the occupant.).
- Met with the Bishop and Cabinet to discuss topics of non-payment of property insurance premiums, greater assistance to local churches with building matters, guidelines for mortgages, and local church trustee training.
- Submitted an idea for expanding the role of District Committees on Church Location and Buildings to the General Council on Finance and Administration as a matter to include as a proposal to General Conference 2016.
- Counseled with Rust UMC in assisting it to sell its church building; worked with Hilltop UMC and Rockford District to seek ways to utilize space and generate income; continued to work with St. James UMC of Chicago in its ongoing effort to sell its property.

We continue to monitor and approve distribution of proceeds of several invested funds for the benefit of NIC programs. In 2015 the following allocations were made:

- Board of Outdoor and Retreat Ministries received \$49,270 from the Seager Fund.
- The Program Council received \$66,809 from the Campus Ministry Endowment.
- 11 church ministries from the Rockford and DeKalb Districts received a total of \$16,333 from the Keagy Fund.

Robert G. Burkhart, President of NIC Board of Trustees

## 400.18 United Methodist Men's Annual Report for 2015

President Steve Nailor

2015 was a great year for NICUMM, as they have reached out in mission and helped others to know and grow in Christ. The Northern Illinois Conference United Methodist men continue to develop Executive Committees in each District. The Conference is working on materials for our endowment fund with the foundation. This will generate more funding for mission work. Our Spiritual Congress, Upper Room Prayer Ministry and our mission efforts continue to be focal points for our men. By encouraging men to become involved and become leaders in our churches, we hope to equip men, who have a heart for ministry, to develop disciples for Jesus Christ. Grace Imathiu from Community UMC, Naperville, was our guest speaker at Spiritual Congress. Disciple Bible Outreach Ministries continues to be a focal point for both Illinois Great River Conference and our Northern Illinois Conference UMM. The Class Meetings were also introduced

District Activities are reaching men for Christ. Some of our 2014 highlights common in all districts are:

- Reviewed and continue the 2013-2017 plan of work for the Conference UMM
- Held the 55<sup>th</sup> Spiritual Congress at Williams Bay Wisconsin in September
- EMS/Legacy Builders & Charters, was a main emphasis to invite men to become involved in Men's work especially past due memberships
- Held District Advent and Lenten Services
- Meals for Millions / Society of St. Andrews, continues to a major Mission Program
- Prayer Ministry provided support to the Upper Room (Prayer Line \$1000 to the UMM Foundation)
- Scouting Ministries Programs
- District Presidents either established or updated their Constitution/By-Laws
- Reaching out to the younger Men

Chicago Northwestern District: President Leon Deloney

- Held 4 events to strengthen our UMM ministry
- Had 2 Worship services
- Continued work with community pantry

Chicago Southern District: President Dr. Donald Linder

- New District Officers elected and installed
- Continued Monday night bible study for the 27<sup>th</sup> year
- Focused on mission support for MFM, HIV-Aids and Hunger Relief
- Hosted Annual Awards Banquet recognizing Benjamin Davis, James Portis, Jessie Richards, and Dr. Lillie Child
- John Wesley Fellow Award was presented to Past President Lucious Moore
- Held the 26<sup>th</sup> Annual United Methodist Men's District Musical
- Community Outreach through Food Pantries, Clothing Closets

Aurora District: President George Groves

- Concentrated on Men's ministries to revitalize our churches
- Lenten Breakfast @ Faith UMC, Orland Park Missions was the emphasis

- Advent Breakfast @ Wheatland Salem
- Continued to establish our District Executive Committee
- *"No Man Left Behind"*, was our district focus this year
- Men's Ministry Specialist, we have two men working on their certificates
- George and Herb Johns taught Understanding Men's Ministry at the Aurora District Laity Training Academy. 6 District Churches attended

Elgin District: President, Brad Meador

- Supported several Mission projects and contributed \$3,862 to them
- Hosted Upper Room Prayer Line
- Continued to strengthen the Executive Team
- Mission Projects such as; Repair Projects
- Hosted MFM, 40K# of Potato drop
- Collected 1,380 bushels of vegetables for food pantry
- Developed Faith ministry thru bible studies
- Staffed prison ministries

De Kalb District: President, Scott Brooks (Also Conference Prayer Advocate)

- Elected new Executive Committee
- Strengthen Leadership through establishing new Charters & EMS Members
- Continues to promote training for the various Men's Units
- Distributed tons of Potatoes through Society of St. Andrews
- Continued to provide hunger relief through various pantries
- Participated in disaster relief efforts for Fairdale Tornado Victims
- Provided teams for 4 days at Camp Reunoldswood

Rockford District: President Bert Schweinler / Dave Holland

- Hosted 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Harmony for Hunger Concert and raised \$15,500 for local food pantries and Meals for Millions, this event has raised more than \$75,833 in the seven (7) concerts
- Continue to work on our EMS / Legacy / Charter Members
- Continue to support the Men's Spiritual Congress
- Reviewed our 2012-2016 Work Plan
- \$8,500 sent into Society of St. Andrews for the MFM Program

#### **400.19 United Methodist Women President's Report 2015**

Typical of years past, Mission u was the first event to celebrate. What a great way to begin the year, learning, sharing and uniting as women of faith!

UMWomen took action in the streets of Chicago to provide awareness related to human trafficking especially at such time as large sports events such as the Super Bowl. Jay Godfrey brought insight to this issue at our annual celebration last fall.

During the spring, districts met for training and celebration of things accomplished in 2014. This was the first year to use our new Mission Today forms allowing for ease of merging what we do with our purpose. How exciting to read what we are doing for children (filling school

bags to making buddy bags), for youth ( providing financial support for youth spending time in Africa or at our own church camps), and for women (serving meals, gathering coats and food, running thrift shops and supporting homeless shelters), and the list goes on and on. We heed the call from the national office to work on environmental justice, thinking globally but acting locally.

At annual conference, United Methodist Women delighted in the magic brought to light, emphasizing that we really do “magic” when we unite with other women to make things happen across our conference.

Summer brought our Mission u one day event to Oak Lawn UMC and was well attended by women. The studies brought “happiness” to all and information once again on the church and people with disabilities as well as the study of our Latin American neighbors. Children and youth attended as well as many first timers.

New to our calendar was the opportunity to host National Seminar held at UIC, right in our neighborhood. And we were good neighbors! We received accolades for our hospitality which wouldn't have happened if not for all those who helped at the airport, on trains and at the conference site. Thank you to all. We have received a beautiful crystal plaque from the National Office. Those who participated addressed current social issues of climate health, maternal and child health, mass incarceration and economic inequality. The UMW website provides basic information if you are wondering about these issues.

Fall has brought district meetings and election of officers for 2016. In support of these women, there is training in November for district officers. As we continue to commit to faith, hope and love in action, we affirm our purpose: to be a community of women who knows God and experiences freedom as whole persons through Jesus Christ; to develop a creative supportive fellowship; and to expand concepts of mission through participation in the global ministries of the church. As that community of women, we need to share our enthusiasm, tell our story and continue the legacy for generations to come. Be part of the legacy!

#### **400.20 2016 Cabinet Historical Report**

Submitted by Rev. Dr. Tracy S. Malone  
Dean of Cabinet

The Northern Illinois Conference Cabinet is made up of the Bishop, six District Superintendents, Assistant to the Bishop, Director of Connectional Ministries and the Director of Congregational Development and Redevelopment. The Cabinet is responsible for the oversight of the spiritual and temporal affairs of the Conference and being accountable for district and conference responsibilities. The Cabinet meets regularly throughout the year. There are three major seasons of the Cabinet's work: appointment making, annual clergy supervision interviews and Church Conferences.

In July of 2015, the Cabinet welcomed the Reverend Darneather Murph-Heath as the new Superintendent of the Elgin District following Rev. Oscar Carrasco who retired. The Cabinet

members continue to work collaboratively with each other and each member brings gifts, graces and skills to their respective roles and responsibilities.

As we began the 2015 - 2016 appointment year, the Cabinet spent time in retreat for renewal and self-care and for a time of visioning and the setting of priorities for our common work together. This time set apart made it possible for the Cabinet to do some strategic thinking about how to best resource pastors and local churches in their mission of engaging their communities and making Disciples of Jesus Christ.

Some of the highlights of the Cabinet's work this year included, but not limited to, the following: 1). Developing a Transitional Manual that equips and prepares clergy and churches who have experienced a pastoral change; 2). Attending the Landscape Purpose Summit and listening sessions to receive feedback on how the Cabinet might improve our resourcing and support of pastors and local churches; 3). Strengthening the transition workshop by adding a component that will equip clergy serving a church for the first-time. 4); Introducing the Rule of Christ training that equips Staff Parish Relations Committees in how to manage and resolve conflicts within the church; 5) Expanding the Cross-Racial/Cross-Cultural Learning event for pastors/churches in transition to include a segment on Culturally Competent Leadership which will equip all clergy and laity to serve in their ministry context. 6). Continuing to offer the Church Assessment Tool (CAT) as a resource providing local churches a way to do an in-depth read on the overall health and vitality of their church. And 7) Working in collaboration with the Board of Ordained Ministry to provide a list of continuing education opportunities for clergy to help build a greater capacity for leadership in these changing times. It is our hope to continue to provide relevant resources and trainings for lay and clergy to assist in creating a more effective ministry and witness.

Under the leadership of Bishop Dyck, the work of the Cabinet continues to be guided by the vision and question "Who Is My Neighbor? The Cabinet strives to be lead partners with clergy and local churches as we embrace the vision and goals of Harvest 2.0. which include: New Faith Communities, Healthy Discipleship, Vital Congregations and Community Engagement. This is our call! This is our commitment! This is our work!

#### **400.21 Communications**

The NIC Communications office continues to publish the monthly print Reporter with nearly 3,000 subscriptions. The paper received an "honorable mention" award of excellence at the 2016 United Methodist Association of Communicators annual meeting. The weekly eNews is sent to more than 2,600 email subscribers with an average open rate of 45%.

We also continue to expand our social media presence to share updates, resources, news and photos. The NIC Facebook page has reached over 1,300 followers. The Twitter account @umcnic has more than 1,800 followers and we've posted more than 2,400 tweets. We've also set up a new Instagram account (umcnic) to share photos and inspirational messages.

The goal is to continue to drive people to the conference's mobile-friendly website, [www.umcnic.org](http://www.umcnic.org). We made updates to the website in 2015 so charge conference forms can be uploaded and shared electronically with the district administrators. We are looking at ways to

improve the look of the website including making adjustments to the calendar and other features.

NIC communications also helped coordinate several other materials during the year including the 2015 Annual Conference Narrative Budget and the Conference-wide directory.

The Dir. of Communications Anne Marie Gerhardt also contributed several articles to United Methodist News Service and coordinated with local media for important coverage of conference events and news.

### **Media Resource Center**

The Media Resource Center has continued to provide resources to the churches of the Northern Illinois Conference. Sixty-three different churches borrowed more than 600 resources from the library. There are currently 145 active subscribing churches. There are more than 4000 resources in the collection. We have been able to add 104 new resources to the collection using the subscription payments.

## **400.22 Congregational Development and Redevelopment Team Historical Report 2015**

### **Introduction**

Since launching Harvest 2.0, we have focused our vision on Christ's commission to *go and make disciples*. The training of leaders and offering enabling tools to established congregations and emerging faith communities have been the vehicles we have employed to engage Christ's commission. We thank God for so many persons committed to this vision. With the leadership of Bishop Sally Dyck and the Cabinet and District Strategy Teams, we press ever onward with a two-pronged approach of congregational development and congregational redevelopment.

### **Congregational Development**

#### **District Strategy Teams**

District Strategy Teams provide the data that begin the process of selecting sites for planting new faith communities. In collaboration with District Strategy Team leaders, all of whom are members of the Conference Congregational Development and Redevelopment leadership team, we recommend sites to the Cabinet after visiting possible new ministry sites. In 2015, 7 sites were identified as having potential for possible projects.

#### **New Faith Community Planters**

We offer two venues for new faith community planters: *The Institute for Congregational Development (ICD)* and *The Conference [Hispanic/Latino] Academy for Faith Community Development*. Both programs provide two years of intensive training. The ICD Class, composed of 25 participants, completed their "incubator group" work in June of 2015. The Conference Academy Class of 2015 recognized 35 participants, mostly laypersons, who also completed their two-year training program in June 2015. Both groups were recognized at the 2015 Annual Conference. Of the Conference Academy graduates, we were blessed by having a family with two teens as part of the class. The whole family is involved in a new outreach to Hispanic families in the Blue Island community. New two-year training programs for ICD and the

*Conference Academy for Faith Community Development* began in September and October of 2015 respectively.

We celebrate that over 1,500 persons worship weekly in our New Faith Communities. On February 22, 2015, 146 people signed up and committed themselves as charter members of La Luz de Cristo UMC in Elgin, a new faith community that was planted 5 years ago. We also continued Edison Park UMC revitalization through planting a Filipino new faith community in Chicago that began in 2014.

## **Congregational Redevelopment**

### **Vital Leaders Leading Vital Churches**

The Institute for Congregational Development is not only for new faith community planters, but for all church leaders. The ICD class focuses on training and empowering high capacity leaders who can effectively engage the community, begin exciting new ministries, and raise the level of vitality in our congregations. The Conference Academy for Faith Community Development provides training to empower Hispanic Laity so that they may become more effective participants in the life and ministry of their current congregations. In February and April of 2015 the *Conference Academy* received training in the Lay Missioner Module II and III from the National Plan for Hispanic/Latino Ministries.

A new Korean incubator group was started in 2015 and met throughout the year. Incubator group members come together as a supportive community where people encourage one another, stretch one another, and hold one another accountable. Most people become leaders by being in community with other leaders. This method has helped persons discover their unrealized potential.

### **Healthy Discipleship**

We offer several options for healthy discipleship in the Congregational Redevelopment component of our work:

*"New Ministries"* was the title of an event presented to pastors of large churches to present new possible ways of doing ministry for the *"nones"* who might not participate in a traditional setting. More than 60 persons participated.

*"Vital Congregations: Discipleship Systems"* was held in November 2015, and church teams learned tools and ideas for reaching new people from Rev. Junius Dotson. More than 40 persons participated.

*"Church Community Organizing"* was open to everyone in December 2015, and church teams gained tools and ideas for getting to know their community and ways of extending the church walls out. More than 40 persons participated in this event.

*"Church Assessment Tool (CAT)"* is another resource offered to established congregations to assess their current vitality as well as engage in proven methodologies to strengthen their witness in the community.

## **Conclusion**

We rejoice that God is nudging lay and clergy across our annual conference to love our neighbors through vital churches and new faith communities. This Harvest 2.0 movement is empowering a new generation of leaders hungry to be engaged in the commission of *making disciples* for Christ. It is an honor to serve God and our neighbors through the Northern Illinois Conference!

Rev. Dr. Cecelia S. Harris

Chair, Conference Congregational Development and Redevelopment Team

Rev. J. Martin Lee

Director of Congregational Development and Redevelopment

## **400.23 OFFICE OF CONNECTIONAL MINISTRIES**

The Office of Connectional Ministries continues to work in cooperation with staff, elected clergy and lay leadership, the Bishop and Cabinet, and the Program Council to coordinate, focus, and guide the mission and ministry of The United Methodist Church Northern Illinois Conference.

The NIC Communications office, under Anne Marie Gerhardt, continues to publish the monthly print *Reporter* with nearly 3,000 subscriptions. The weekly eNews is sent to more than 2,500 email subscribers with an average open rate of 45%.

We also continue to expand our social media presence to share updates, resources, news and photos. The NIC Facebook page has reached over 1,300 followers (a 10% increase). The Twitter account has more than 1,800 (an increase of over 300 followers) and we've posted over 2,400 tweets (see separate report for additional information). We continue to increase the number of unique individuals and organizations that we reach each day. We have also streamlined and increased two-way communication and the ability to submit data and information electronically through our website.

Michael Mann, Associate Director of Mission and Advocacy who has led the expansion of key ministries will be appointed as Pastor of St. Andrew UMC: Carol Stream, IL effective July 1, 2016. "Plumblin'" an NIC conference-wide youth initiative, that helps to develop principled Christian leaders, in conjunction with the United Methodist Seminar Program in New York is ministry which addresses public issues from a faith perspective. This year we focused on the topic of "Millennium Development Goals." Plumblin' began after 9-11 and over the years approximately 375 diverse youth and leaders from across the conference have engaged deeply in this ministry.

JFON (Justice For Our Neighbors) has helped us continue to live out our gospel mandate to welcome immigrants. Numerous immigrants with various status issues have been welcomed with the radical hospitality of the people of The United Methodist Church and legislative advocacy efforts continue to address injustices within the immigration system. Our first JFON site will celebrate its 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary April 2016. Spanish as a Second Language is a new

initiative that hopes to reach congregations and individuals throughout our conference connection.

The Media Resource Center continues to provide high quality vetted materials to our membership and has increased its ability to resource congregations through training, visioning, consultation, and increased technology; including the development of DVD resources of conference and district events. One hundred and forty-five churches are active subscribers to the center, which boasts over 4,000 resources in various formats and also provides video projection units and screens to local congregations and our staff.

The NIC continues to chart a new course for future of our camping, outdoor, and retreat ministries under the leadership of Director Jeff Casey working with the Board and Board Chair, Jim Miller. Mr. Miller completes his tenure as Chair effective July 2016. Major renovations have taken place at both properties (Wesley Woods and Reynoldswood) to provide a higher level of service and hospitality.

In addition to working to strengthen existing ministries such as resourcing local training clergy and lay leaders, a five-day spiritual formation academy is scheduled for August 2016 and a pilot program has been initiated in several districts. Further, addressing key social issues such as Acts of Repentance toward indigenous people – through listening sessions, mass incarceration, community policing, cultural competency and race relations through conversations at various levels has been a part of our work. In addition, listening sessions were held in 2015 in order to strengthen Latino/Hispanic ministries in the Northern Illinois Conference and in October 2015 the NIC partnered with the National Hispanic Plan and Jorge Lockward of Global Praise as we celebrated Hispanic Ministries within the Northern Illinois Conference. A Standing Rule change will be submitted to restructure and create a new leadership team.

The NIC, through the office of Connectional Ministries held numerous training events including the annual Laity Convocation, Strengthening the Black Church for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (training congregations and seminary interns) Safe Sanctuary training and instituted new online training to better serve our churches. The annual Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration with Rev. Emanuel Cleaver II was held at St. Mark UMC Chicago. Congressman Cleaver marked our 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary for MLK celebrations. This year's event included an action related the FAIR COP's ordinance and police brutality.

A new Restorative Justice initiative and partnership with the General Board of Church and Society of The United Methodist Church and Healing Communities - a ministry of congregations to the incarcerated and their families) and a Permanent Committee on Restorative and Transformative Justice was established at the 2014 session of annual conference. Trainings and educational programs have reached over 3,000 persons through the Director of Connectional Ministries, Coordinator of Urban Strategy, and denominational consultants.

The following pages including historical reports and minutes of presentations and changes will highlight other changes that have taken place.

The continuing development of the Urban Strategy under Bob Biekman who serves as Coordinator of Urban Ministries for the conference continues to expand its efforts in the city of

Chicago to build the capacity of our local congregations in partnership with other faith-based and community-based organizations (e.g. Chicago Community Renewal Society) and government institutions. The urban strategy is an initiative launched under the leadership of Bishop Sally Dyck and engages our congregations in the areas of Literacy, Restorative Justice, Community Safety, and Food Security.

The staff continued to listen attentively and respond to God's voice as we contemplated our vocational life within and for the NIC and to hear the voices of its members, churches and communities that God might be glorified in our common ministry. The NIC Program Staff includes; Natarsha Gardner (Administrative Assistant for the Office of Connectional Ministries), Anne Marie Gerhardt (Director of Communications), Susan Gieseler (Director of Media Resources), Jeff Casey (Outdoor and Retreat Ministries Director), Michael Mann (Associate Director of Mission and Advocacy), and Chris Pierson (Director of Connectional Ministries).

The year 2016 also marks the end of my tenure as Director of Connectional Ministries as I am appointed to serve as Senior Pastor of Gary Church: Wheaton, IL. It has been my privilege to serve the Northern Illinois Conference and the amazing staff, clergy and lay leadership whose passion for ministry, while sometimes underappreciated, is nonetheless pleasing in God's sight.

Shalom!

#### **400.24 NIC United Methodist Foundation**

The Board of Directors of the United Methodist Foundation of the Northern Illinois Conference, Inc. welcomed five new members during the 2015 Annual meeting. They are: Sach Diwan of Holy Covenant UMC Chicago, George Gill of Barrington UMC Barrington, Mark Himel of Grace UMC Naperville, Marta Siaba-Rodriguez of Humboldt Park UMC Chicago, and Thomas Sumner of St. Marks UMC Chicago.

The board also said farewell to four members: Frank Appleby, Willie Frasier, Shelly Leonida, William Sultan, and Rev. Jennifer Wilson. We thank them for their service and outstanding contribution to this ministry.

The officers of the Board for the year 2015-16 are:

Chairperson- Linnea Kooistra of Harvard UMC

Vice Chair- Jeff Wallem of Christ UMC Rockford Recording Secretary- Chris Walters of Plainfield UMC Treasurer- Ergeline Calimlim of First UMC Chicago

Other members of the Executive committee are: George Gill of Barrington UMC, Denny Hackett of First UMC Morris, Art Muir of Northshore UMC Glencoe, Ed Page of St. Marks UMC Chicago, Rev Debbie Percell of Elgin, and John Vanderheyden of Roscoe UMC .

The staff members of the Foundation are:

Rev John D Peterson CFP®, CASL®, President Janet Boryk, Vice President of Planned Giving Carolyn J. Cook, Executive Assistant

Joann Turner, Bookkeeper

The Foundation maintains three investment funds designed for long term investments: Conservative Fund, Moderate Fund, and Aggressive Fund. Each of these options is broadly diversified with domestic and international equities, domestic and global bonds, Treasury Inflation Protected Securities, and Natural Resources.

The Foundation retains Envestnet as its investment consultant. The investment opportunities available through the Foundation offer churches and agencies of the conference professionally managed, well diversified accounts, which are invested according to the guidelines for socially responsible investing of the United Methodist Book of Discipline. The investment policies of the Foundation provide for a disciplined approach which can meet a variety of investment objectives.

The chart below summarizes the 2015 investment performance:

<b>United Methodist Foundation Portfolio</b>				
	Market Value	2015 Return	Since Inception Annual Return	Inception Date
Conservative	\$9,130,822.90	-2.91%	4.62%	Jun-08
Moderate	\$33,649,200.69	-4.48	3.67%	Jun-08
Aggressive	\$9,136,068.05	-5.50%	2.76%	Jun-08

The Foundation maintains a grant program. A total of \$22,010 was awarded to 22 ministries for 2016. They are:

**2016 UM Foundation Grantees**

**Antioch United Methodist Church**, Faith Community Nursing Program. This collaboration with two other community churches and Advocate Healthcare provides Christian health support for community residents.

**Blue Island Grace United Methodist Church**, Hispanic/Latino Ministry. The ministry of service and cultivation is a partnership with an elementary school and a family-focused nonprofit. The church seeks ways to be in ministry with its neighbors who are predominantly Latino. The ministry is developing from a summer youth program hosted by the church.

**Bolingbrook Friendship United Methodist Church**, Career Choices for High School Students. The program offers faith-based support and guidance for students as they prepare for career choices after high school. The ministry is a response to families who are primarily immigrant and resource-challenged in need of direction and assistance on how to guide their children to appropriate resources and information about career choices.

**Chicago Humboldt Park United Methodist Church**, Mujeres a Mujeres. The ministry works with Latinas and their families offering counseling, support and education to empower victims

of domestic violence and sexual abuse. The program relies on strong community partners among area nonprofits and the Chicago JFON Clinic located at the church.

**Chicago Irving Park United Methodist Church**, Intentional Families. The family-focused ministry will develop a series of faith experiences for community and church families that will draw them closer both as a nuclear family and as the family of God. Experiences will include prayer, study and service, including events such as Feed My Starving Children and what it means to be a global citizen.

**Chicago Southlawn United Methodist Church**, Pied Piper Program. In its second year, the program brings neighborhood youth together as a performing choir and band. Their weekly meetings also include time for life lessons equipping youth to thrive and succeed.

**Chicago South Shore United Methodist Church**, Safe Haven Bridge Program. This ministry will help create a bridge between the church's successful after school program and summer day camp with the worshipping life of the congregation. Since 2014 the church has been designated a Safe Haven for CPS students, and a number of children have started participating in other church programs. The Bridge program will cultivate and expand on this natural "bridge" into the life of the church.

**Chicago United Church of Rogers Park**, Teaching Garden. The gardening program will incorporate farm to table and environmental projects within existing UCRP youth programming. A labyrinth is planned which can be used by community members and adult ministries as well. The church proposes this "green" option for land adjoining the building from the demolition of the church parsonage.

**Elgin Cornerstone United Methodist Church**, Community Evening VBS Program. The program brings a vacation Bible school to rural Elgin, Burlington and Hampshire - communities that no longer offer the program. It plans to mobilize community volunteers to increase the reach and scope of the program.

**University Christian Ministry at Northwestern University**, Social Justice Outreach Initiative. The program offers monthly mission opportunities to NU students working in partnership with local congregations as they serve their community.

**Waterman United Methodist Church**, Fun Thursday. This after school program serves elementary children from the neighborhood using a VBS format.

**New Lenox United Methodist Church**, Hispanic Ministry with Sister Churches. A recent sister church relationship with Joliet UM churches at Ingalls Park and Trinity has the goal of strengthening ministries with Hispanic neighbors. The New Lenox congregation offers assistance with a local food pantry at Trinity and will again host on-site VBS with each partner. A planning team with representatives from each church is organizing Advent and Christmas activities, and they plan to expand the collaboration in 2016.

**Norway United Methodist Church**, After School Homework Help Center. Working with the Norway Improvement League, the after school program will offer homework assistance and wireless computer access for community youth. The program grows out of research which indicates many children are home alone after school, and though all children now have a Google Chromebook for school work, many lack internet access in their homes.

**Organizing Neighborhoods for Equality: Northside** (ONE Northside), Violence Prevention Coalition. The Violence Prevention Coalition continues to lead a state legislative campaign to ensure returning citizens (who are ex-offenders) are prepared upon re-entry into their communities. The group is focusing on the need for inmates to receive tutoring and their GED while in prison to prepare for successful reintegration into the community.

**Rockford Aldersgate United Methodist Church**, Toymakers of Aldersgate. This ministry gives small, handmade wooden cars/trucks to children in need. The church works with local social service agencies, the hospitals and fire and police departments for distribution. The church has had increased requests as it is now established within the network of agencies helping children, especially during crisis or difficult times.

**Roselle United Methodist Church**, Community Food Panty. The church offers food to residents without requiring income eligibility. They primarily serve working poor families who do not qualify for federal assistance programs yet need some assistance to keep families nourished.

**Elgin El Mesias United Methodist Church**, Master Classes for Worship Bands. Quarterly events are planned over the next two years to build an excellent music ministry. The programs will begin with the three groups of performers currently providing music for various church functions. Its focus is on authentic Latino rhythms, positive UM theology and group building for an excellent music ministry, especially in worship.

**Glen Ellyn St. Thomas United Methodist Church**, Ping Pong Tournament Outreach. The church proposes to host a ping pong tournament for local middle school and high school students. This would form a nucleus group for future youth ministry.

**Waukegan First United Methodist Church**, Guiding Light. Guiding Light is a ministry with adults who have developmental disabilities. The twice monthly gatherings will incorporate activities with singing prayer and worship.

**Wesley Foundation at Northern IL University**, Hungry Huskies. This program offers a free Sunday meal for students. Guest speakers focused on social justice issues will be featured during these gatherings.

**Westridge Community United Methodist Church**, Ministry Center for Immigrants and Refugees (MCIR). The program offers ongoing outreach to meet the materials needs of refugees and immigrants. It educates and organizes other churches and community groups to help welcome, settle and acclimate new families.

**Winthrop Harbor North Prairie United Methodist Church**, F.A.M.I.L.Y. This program reaches out to community families offering monthly family nights. A meal and activity or family-focused speaker will be part of the program.

In August the Foundation sponsored the annual stewardship conference at Barrington UMC featuring Dr. Michael Vilaro from Transforming Christian Ministries of Cincinnati, Ohio. More than 325 lay and clergy participated in this conference.

The annual audit of the Foundations accounts for 2014 was approved. The 2015 audit was prepared by Odell Hicks and Associates of Chicago. We expect it to be accepted by the Board in September 2016.

The Foundation continues its work of leading workshops, preaching, teaching, and providing consultation to churches, individuals, and agencies of the Northern Illinois Conference. The Foundation's mission is to multiply resources for ministry within the conference.

Rev. John D. Peterson CFP®, CASL®

#### **400.25 CLERGY FUND, UNITED METHODIST**

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

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

On December 31, 2014 the fund totaled \$25,946,740. Through the stewardship of its seven member Board of Directors, and the investment management team at Wespath, the fund totaled \$24,260,727 at the end of 2015. During 2015, it contributed \$1,200,000, as per out original 2015 budget, to the Northern Illinois Conference for the benefit of its retirees. An additional contribution of \$100,000 more than the board budgeted for the year, in response to increasing retiree health insurance costs. The Clergy Fund invests principle with our investment managers, Wespath, a division of the United Methodist General Board of Pensions and Health Benefits. Wespath complies with the Social Principles and investment policies of The United Methodist Church.

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

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

The Clergy Fund has made annual gifts of about \$1 million toward retiree health insurance and retiree benefits of the Conference for more than 20 years. A policy of using a percentage of the three-year rolling average of the year-end fund value, guides the Board's annual contribution to the Board of Pensions. The Board has suggested to the Board of Pensions that they budget a contribution of \$1,200,000 from the fund for 2016.

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

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

--James Loeppert, United Methodist Clergy Fund, President  
March 31, 2016

#### **400.26 2015 Historical Report of the Northern Illinois Conference's Credit Union-Land of Lincoln Credit Union**

The year 2015 marked the 75<sup>th</sup> year that the NIC has participated in making a credit union available. Due to a merger in 2014 the Northern Illinois Conference's official credit union became Land of Lincoln Credit Union. It is available to all United Methodists (laity, clergy, or employees) in the state of Illinois for a wide variety of financial services, including personal and auto loans, VISA credit cards at very reasonable rates, savings and money market accounts, checking accounts, IRAs, etc. Land of Lincoln CU offers online banking options, as well. A recent service addition is the ability to deposit checks right from your mobile device. (Check the website for easy instructions.)

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

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

#### **400.27 BETHANY METHODIST COMMUNITIES**

##### **NIC Historical Report: 2016**

##### **Mission and Heritage**

Celebrating 126 years of ministry with the elderly and other vulnerable adults, Bethany Methodist Communities (BMC) operates multiple health and residential sites and programs in the Chicago area. Its mission is to serve the physical, social and spiritual well-being of its neighbors in the larger community with medical, residential and ancillary services across the continuum-of-care.

BMC values its Judeo-Christian heritage, believing it is *Called To Care* for those within its Family and beyond. Congregational and community outreach complements on-site programming. All sites and programs exceed licensing and accreditation standards.

**Rainbow Covenant:** The **Good Samaritan Program** provides medical care, housing, social services and spiritual nurture for adults who are indigent, abused and neglected, with a particular ministry for needy seniors.

**Ministry With Congregations:** Bethany Methodist is blessed by its relationships with the NIC and local congregations. Clergy and members are invited to contact BMC with questions about

local resources; for referrals within their communities; to arrange for speakers on aging, caregiving and general health topics; and to plan mutual ministry projects.

## **Sites and services**

### **Bethany Retirement Community**

#### **4950 N. Ashland, Chicago**

The Community offers independent apartment living with twenty-four-hour nursing, security, social and spiritual activities, housekeeping, and transportation. Supportive Living Services are available for residents needing help with such daily functions as dressing, bathing and medication management, while those with cognitive challenges may participate in Savvy Circle, a day program encouraging maximum independence through meaningful activities and fellowship. Residents and their loved ones appreciate the immediate access to primary medical care and inpatient services from physicians and other clinicians at Methodist Hospital, which is located under the same roof.

### **Methodist Hospital of Chicago**

#### **5025 N. Paulina, Chicago**

Methodist Hospital, which consistently receives highly-ranked accreditation, offers comprehensive medical-surgical and intensive care, clinical oncology, adult mental health, hospice, and programs for persons with developmental disabilities. A state-of-the-art ambulatory center and Emergency Department provide outpatient and urgent care around-the-clock. Board-certified physicians, dentists and ophthalmologists maintain offices on-site for outpatient visits.

### **Chestnut Square Senior Living Community**

#### **2601 Chestnut, Glenview**

Located on the site of the former Glenview Naval Air Station - now The Glen - Chestnut Square offers active older adults gracious apartment living near shopping, a senior center, fine restaurants, and theaters. Social, health and spiritual programs are complemented by gourmet dining, cultural and educational events, and a library, gardens, fitness center, and transportation. In-apartment caregiver services are available if needed.

### **Partners In Home Healthcare**

#### **2601 Chestnut, Glenview**

This non-profit, licensed and Medicare-certified home health agency provides nurses, caregivers and companions to assist adults of all ages during periods of special need following surgery, falls or life-changes related to aging. Flexible scheduling complements BMC's high standards of quality and compassion.

Rev. Dr. Stephen A. Dahl

Chief Executive Officer

773-989-1354

## **400.28 ChildServ 2015-2016 Report**

Northern Illinois Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church

ChildServ's programs improved the lives of more than 2,800 vulnerable children and families in need of our comprehensive services and support throughout Cook, DuPage, Kane and Lake Counties.

In Fiscal Year 2016, ChildServ continues to prioritize the quality of our programs, including early intervention, adoption and foster care and counseling, and emphasize client-outcomes to determine our effectiveness.

We will maintain our commitment to early intervention programs as studies published by the Harvard Center for the Developing Child cite programs like our Parent Empowerment and Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters as the most effective ways to jumpstart a child's development and education. The White House Council of Economic Advisers also estimates that early learning initiatives provide benefits to society of approximately \$8.60 for every \$1 spent.

ChildServ remains dedicated to matching children who have experienced trauma with stable, welcoming families or group homes – and finding every child in our care permanent, nurturing living situations.

Our Armour Counseling Services provides nearly 400 clients, including military and veteran families, with the necessary support and therapy to ensure healing from trauma, personal growth and improved emotional, social and family function.

We celebrate lives being improved through our programs:

- Learning – 616 children were ready to succeed in kindergarten due to our early childhood programs.
- Health – 100% of the children in our early childhood homes are up-to-date on their immunizations.
- Stability – 80 children found permanent supportive homes through our Foster Care and Adoption programs.
- Independence – 39 young adults moved from homelessness to having safe apartments of their own. More than half achieved employment, and all found insurance and a medical doctor.
- Education – 100% of the youth in our group homes who were eligible received a high school diploma.
- Resilience – 90% of the teen moms in our foster care program were able to retain custody of their own child.

ChildServ is grateful for the support, advocacy and partnership in mission with the Northern Illinois Annual Conference and our United Methodist congregations.

May continue to build better lives and bring hope to our at-risk neighbors.

Dan Kotowski  
President and CEO

S. Kim Coffing  
Director of Advocacy & Church Relations

#### **400.29 United Voices for Children**

United Voices for Children has over 30 years of history and experience in the Northern Illinois Conference. Our Board and its leadership is one of the most trusted organizations affiliated with our Annual Conference. We have earned this trust by advocating for at risk children and youth who lack a voice, by nurturing, supporting and interpreting the work of the three Conference related child serving agencies and by inviting congregations to participate in the 5th Sunday Appeal.

In 2015 we touched the lives of children and families in almost every ZIP code through our relationships with these agencies and local churches.

Even amidst economic challenges and the decline of private donations, I am pleased to report that \$23,100 was disbursed to our agencies. UVC remains resilient and dedicated to the diverse missions of each agency and pray for increased contributions during the coming year.

Last year, we participated in several Urban Summits and were involved in the planning and participated in the Bishop's Children's Table event. UVC actively contributed to the "How are the Children" NIC campaign. We joined Bishop Sally Dyck, the child serving agencies and the Children's Table in educating and encouraging NIC members and Annual Conference Delegates to challenge Governor Rauner's FY2016 budget. After annual conference Lois Moreland-Dean, Interim UVC President and Nancy Grimm Hunter, Chairperson of the Children's Table delivered an oversized Episcopal letter signed by Annual Conference attendees to Governor Rauner's Chicago Office.

On June 15, 2015, we welcomed over 120 persons to our UVC Breakfast during Annual Conference. Our speaker, Laura Dean Friedrich, Director of Policy Community Renewal Society delivered an excellent and timely message on "Caring for Children in the Midst of the Illinois Budget Crisis,"

The 2015 Award recipients were:

**Bishop Jesse R. DeWitt Award** – *Alicia Tellez Vega, Wesley UMC of Cicero. Q-YES (Queer Youth Exploring Spirituality).* **Katherine B. Greene Award** – *Connie McCleary and First UMC of DeKalb. Summer Lunch and More Program (SLAM)* **Margaret Ann Williams Service Award** – *Carla R. Williams, Maple Park UMC of Chicago.*

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

**Aurora:** Gary Memorial UMC of Wheaton;

**Chicago- N:** First UMC of Evanston;

**Chicago-S:** First UMC of the Chicago Temple;

**DeKalb:** First UMC of Princeton;

**Elgin:** UMC of Libertyville;

**Rockford:** Christ UMC of Rockford.

In December we offered a Tribute to the family of the late Bishop Jesse R. DeWitt (1980-1988), a proponent of the working class, poor, vulnerable and voiceless in our society. He promoted uniting the voices and actions of NIC congregations with the four agencies (ChildServ, Marcy Newberry, MYSI, Rosecrance) and UVC. It is because of his support of both the mission of UVC

and the agencies that we established an Award in his name, given to those who exemplify his principles, vision and mission.

I am pleased that we are once again focused on Board Development. I believe continued Board Development with Education; strategic planning with realistic goals and routine self-evaluation will strengthen our ability to fulfill our mission. Operating as an active, involved board with fresh eyes and creative ideas will make a difference in the way we view ourselves and our relevancy.

We are a people of passion who want to make a difference in the lives of children, families and communities. Continued partnerships with local churches and supporting agency services will allow us to achieve our goal. We will continue to be good stewards of the monetary gifts entrusted to us and let our light shine before others as we lead the way.

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

#### **400.30 North Central College**

##### **A. Introductory Comments**

###### **a. Financial accountability**

During 2015, North Central College did not receive any funds from the Northern Illinois Conference Annual budget. Ninety-four students from Northern Illinois Conference churches received \$1,271,528 in institutional scholarships and grant aid. The Northern Illinois Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministry provided \$81,204 for ministerial support of the college chaplain, Rev. Eric Doolittle.

###### **b. Mission**

**North Central College is a community of learners dedicated to preparing students to be informed, involved, principled and productive citizens and leaders over their lifetime.** A comprehensive liberal arts college affiliated with the United Methodist Church, North Central fulfills its mission by recognizing the individual needs of students at different stages of life and from different ethnic, economic and religious backgrounds -- students who bring diverse expectations to the educational process -- with programs responsive to those needs (residential, outreach, full-time, part-time, undergraduate and master's level).

##### **B. Highlights in Ministry and Service**

###### **a. Spiritual growth**

Our student groups provided weekly worship at Focus with an average attendance of 91, as well as ongoing Bible study groups, and two retreats. The Catholic Student Association, United Methodist Student Organization, and Fellowship of Christian Athletes provide social and spiritual support for a variety of students. The annual MLK Week attracted over 800 participants to our annual breakfast, keynote address, and Gospel Extravaganza.

###### **b. Social holiness**

North Central College students completed over 26,000 hours of community service in 2015, including service trips to six states, and Costa Rica. We hosted Feed the Need, welcoming 4,000

volunteers to pack over 800,000 meals with Feed My Starving Children and we worked in partnership with local community programs.

**c. Justice and radical hospitality**

We welcomed nationally known leaders to speak and meet with our students including Carl Gladstone of Motown Mission, scholar and activist Dr. Cornell West, and Christian bands Jars of Clay and the Brilliance. We welcomed our Muslim neighbors by providing transportation to the local mosque, forming a new Muslim Student Association, and facilitating interfaith conversations including the Mosque Alert drama.

**d. Cultivating leadership**

North Central College sent three alumni to United Methodist seminaries in 2015. Our New Beginnings VBS Ministry Team led Vacation Bible School with seven different congregations. The United Methodist Student Organization continues to work with the Student Government Association to provide programming, retreats, and service opportunities for UM and many other students.

**e. Albright-Wesley Society**

The support of individuals and UM congregations to the Albright-Wesley Society (formerly the Center for Church Leadership) allowed students to grow through the Summer Ministry teams, attendance at the Imagine What's Next conference, and programming with UMSO.

**C. Relationship to the Conference**

**a. Affirmation**

North Central College affirms our long-standing affiliation with the Northern Illinois Conference of the United Methodist Church. We ask for your continued support through recommending your students to us and your financial support for scholarships, programs, and personnel.

**b. Continued cooperation**

We look to strengthen our cooperation with the people, congregations, and institutions of the Northern Illinois Conference as the only United Methodist affiliated college in the area. We are also pursuing a deeper relationship with Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary.

Dr. Troy D. Hammond  
President

**400.31 BOSTON UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY**

Dear Colleagues in the Northern Illinois Annual Conference:

Greetings in the Spirit of Jesus Christ!

**NEWS**

- **New faculty:** This year, Boston University School of Theology (STH) welcomed new faculty in ethics, psychology, theologies of spirituality, comparative theology, church renewal, Black church leadership, and mission studies. We welcomed: Nimi Wariboko (Walter G. Muelder Professor of Social Ethics); David Decosimo (Theology); Theodore Hickman-Maynard (Evangelism and Church Renewal); Andrea Hollingsworth (Theology); Barbod Salimi (Psychology and Peace Studies); and Daryl Ireland (Associate Director of the Center for Global Christianity and Mission).
- **Spiritual life:** STH continued to expand and deepen its spiritual life program, led by Charlene Zuill, Spiritual Life Coordinator and United Methodist elder. Bishop Susan

Hassinger, Claire Wolfeich, and many others also offer a rich selection of courses in spirituality and leadership.

- **Chaplaincy track:** STH added a chaplaincy track to the MDiv degree, preparing students for hospitals, prisons, and military settings.

**ENGAGING IN DIALOGUE:** STH spent much energy this year in hard conversations on violence, racism, and injustice, seeking to be honest and open to change, while honoring the dignity of all persons.

- *Power, Privilege and Prophetic Witness* is the STH theme for 2015-2017. We engaged the theme in classes, lectures, retreats, and workshops, seeking to stretch our capacities to do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with our God.
- **Examining the intersection of theology and race.** The opportunities this year included: a brilliant new documentary on North Korea; a dialogical viewing of *Selma*; dialogues on racism with Thandeka and Andrew Sung Park; a retreat on building race relations; circle worship; a student-led event *Missing Voices, Daunting Choices: The Erasure of Black Women in Black American Movements*; and events on interfaith understanding.

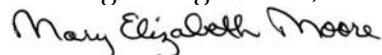
**CARING FOR THE CHURCH** through leadership and service.

- **Serving the United Methodist Church.** Students served local churches and church bodies as interns, staff, and volunteers. Faculty served with such bodies as: United Methodist Women, World Methodist Council, Ministry Study Commission, Women of Color Scholars and Mentors program, Pan Methodist Commission on Children in Poverty, and boards and agencies of the general church and annual conferences.
- **Empowering young Latino/a leaders.** Young leaders gathered with seasoned mentors to enhance their gifts and service as Christian leaders: Hispanic Youth Leadership Initiative (HYLA) and Raíces Latinas Leadership Institute
- **Facilitating dialogues on church renewal.** We launched a new initiative on Evangelism and Church Renewal.
- **Reflecting on worship.** We contributed to a special issue of *Worship Arts Magazine*, edited and written by STH faculty, alumni/ae, and students, and published by the Fellowship of United Methodists in Music and Worship Arts.

**CARING FOR THE WORLD**

- **Offering opportunities for engaged learning.** Opportunities included the Doctor of Ministry program in Transformational Leadership; an urban ministry course; travel seminars to India, the Arizona-Mexico border, Israel-Palestine, Mexico, and Turkey (Ephesus); work with leaders in Ferguson, MO; and a travel seminar for UMC clergywomen to Cuba, co-sponsored by GBHEM and STH.
- **Collaborating with the global church.** Collaborations included sponsorship of the *Dictionary of African Christian Biography*; events and art exhibits on local and global ecology; and dialogues with global church leaders.

As we at STH seek to be faithful and to partner with you in ministry, we give thanks for *your* witness. Thank you too for your continuing inspiration and contributions to our shared journey. Blessings and gratitude,



Mary Elizabeth Moore

Dean of Boston University School of Theology

#### 400.32 Candler School of Theology–2016 UMC Annual Conference Report

For more than 100 years, **Candler School of Theology** at Emory University has prepared *real* people to make a *real* difference in the *real* world.

One of 13 official seminaries of The United Methodist Church, Candler is also one of seven graduate professional schools of Emory University, a top-tier research institution offering extensive resources and a rich context for study. Our location in Atlanta provides a learning environment that reflects the highly diverse communities of the 21st century.

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

Our student body continues to reflect the diversity and breadth of the Christian faithful. 466 students are enrolled, with 48 percent women, 34 percent people of color (U.S.), and a median age of 29. Students represent 44 denominations, with 51 percent coming from the Methodist family. 82 percent of students are seeking a degree to prepare them as ministry professionals. Candler has a deep commitment to alleviating student debt and employs a multi-pronged approach to tackle this issue. In 2015-2016, we awarded nearly \$5.5 million in Candler scholarships, with 92 percent of MDiv students and 84 percent of all students receiving support. And our comprehensive financial literacy program teaches money management skills that serve our students now and will continue to serve them – and the churches they serve – well into the future.

At the end of the 2015-2016 academic year, Candler says goodbye and Godspeed to a handful of noted faculty as they retire: Barbara Day Miller, Luke Timothy Johnson, Steve Tipton, and Bishop Woodie White. Yet even as these legends take their leave after distinguished careers of scholarship and service, we look forward to welcoming a new crop of scholar-leaders who will join us in the coming months and grow with us in the coming years. We are especially pleased to welcome Bishop Larry Goodpaster, who will join the faculty as bishop-in-residence in the fall of 2016.

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

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

## 400.33 Drew University Theological School

### 2015 Report to the Annual Conference

#### **A Cohering Vision: Curriculum, Community, Co-Curricular Initiatives**

After much collaborative discussion, discernment, and evaluation of the current state of theological education, those of us who lead, teach, and support Drew Theological School have launched on an ambitious course. Nearly 150 years after our founding, we envision a future as bright as the best eras in our past. I am pleased to share with you here the concrete steps we have taken – and are taking – to bring this future to light.

First, our efforts have been attentive to the history of Drew, in particular its Methodist roots, its long commitment to the Church and its ministries, and draw from this wellspring for inspiration and direction. Also, we have honored our progress to achieve denominational, ethnic, gender, and racial diversity in our faculty and student body. This rich diversity has become both a hallmark of Drew and an expansion of our wellspring. Forces beyond our campus – notably, that the reasons for pursuing a theological education and expected outcomes are shifting dramatically – further press the need for us to align our vision and its supporting systems with our communal reality.

Given this imperative, we are focused on the three “C’s” of our cohering vision: redesigning our *curriculum*, strengthening our *community* of learning, and deepening training through revived *co-curricular* initiatives. These three aspects of a Drew Theological School education will work together to enable us to empower creative thought and courageous action to advance justice, peace, and love of God, neighbor, and the earth – as well as uniquely position us to lead evolving expressions of Christianity.

#### **Success so far through our *One and All Campaign***

As the 14<sup>th</sup> dean of Drew Theological School, I am deeply committed to continuing our long and distinguished legacy. To this end, our vision is innovative, forward-looking, and grounded in the practical needs of our students – we hope, too, that it is an inspiration to the various constituencies we serve. I fully subscribe to the inimitable words of Antonio Machado, that “we make the road by walking.” The road to this bright future we envision will be made by the dedication, determination, and generosity of those who love Drew and believe in its future.

Our vision is coming to light, in part, because of the generosity of our many alumni-donors and friends. Our *One and All* fundraising campaign has raised more than \$12 million to date for the Theological School and has seed-funded many of our burgeoning efforts.

Also, I encourage our alumni to embrace your power of influence to help grow philanthropic support for Drew Theological School. Many of our largest gifts have come from the influence of alumni, particularly pastors who serve in our church communities.

Yes, the needs ahead are many, yet our hope is high for a bright future for Drew Theological School. The road is made by walking. Let’s walk it together.

The Reverend Dr. Javier A. Viera  
Dean of the Theological School  
Professor of Pastoral Theology

#### **400.34 ILIFF SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY**

*Rev. Dr. Thomas V. Wolfe, President and Chief Executive Officer*

Greetings from the Iliff School of Theology in Denver, Colorado. We wish you blessings as together we continue the work of strengthening the Church and offering a compassionate presence to the World.

The Iliff School of Theology's commitment to the Wesleyan ethos of providing hopeful, intellectually alive, and spiritually grounded theological education for each and every student over the course of their lifetime continues. Iliff's identity is focused on educating leaders for three primary publics: the world, the church, and the academy. At Iliff, we refuse to choose between being a training home only for ministerial candidates, a center only for activists and scholar-activists, or a school only for academics. We believe all three are inseparable and enhance one another as we deliberately situate ourselves in the world and critically operate out of the world's complexities.

As such, we recognize that the world's religious landscape is changing and there is much at stake. Iliff recently completed its strategic plan, revised its curriculum, transformed its library, and initiated new relationships with other institutions. In collaboration with the people of Africa, we've started a discussion with Africa University (AU) to foster an educational alliance that will benefit Iliff and AU students. We've also begun work with Wiley College to strengthen the presence of minority students in seminaries.

Iliff's enrollment continues to be strong with 365 students joining us this academic year, 60% female and 40% male, 35% Methodist – all actively engaged in a host of ministry contexts. Their interest continues to be strong in Iliff's online and hybrid classes. A concerted move by Iliff to reduce student debt and grow the ability of students to lead financially sound, engaged communities continues with many MDIV students participating in the Spiritually-Integrated Financial Resiliency Program, funded by a \$250,000 grant from the Lilly Endowment.

Iliff's numerous events for area clergy and supporters remains part of our foundation. Via forums on social justice, food justice, the role of faith in politics, world events, and more, campus speakers included Rev. Gerald Durley, nationally-known civil rights leader and this year's Jameson Jones Preacher, Heather Jarvis, student debt reduction advocate, and more. Our efforts were duly noted by McCormick Theological Seminary's Center for Faith and Service when we were named as one of the nation's "Seminaries That Change the World" and our Master's of Theology Program was ranked seventh in the nation by OnlineColleges.net.

We continue to look forward with a courageous theological imagination. We are sincerely grateful for your support.

*www.iliff.edu*

*1-877-887-7822*

#### **400.35 Saint Paul School of Theology**

[www.spst.edu](http://www.spst.edu)

Saint Paul School of Theology is a seminary of the United Methodist Church that educates leaders to make disciples for Jesus Christ, renew the Church, and transform the world. We are one institution with two campuses, in Oklahoma and Kansas.

This past academic year, Saint Paul enrolled 199 students from 14 annual conferences and 6 countries on both campuses. The Course of Study School at Saint Paul served 222 students in four Midwest locations.

The Saint Paul Board of Trustees named Dr. Nancy Howell, Saint Paul Professor of Theology and Philosophy, as the Acting President this spring. Her term began March 2 as Rev. H. Sharon Howell retired. Dr. Nancy Howell brings multiple years of experience serving in administration.

Saint Paul and Kansas Wesleyan University signed a Memorandum of Understanding for a 3+3 theological studies undergraduate-graduate program. The agreement is thought to be the first of its kind to be established between a United Methodist-based university and a United Methodist seminary. Under this arrangement, Kansas Wesleyan students condense the four-year course of study for the Christian Ministry major into three years, followed by the completion of the three-year Master of Divinity degree at Saint Paul. The 3 +3 program with Kansas Wesleyan will begin Fall 2016. 3+3 collaborations with other undergraduate institutions are currently in discussion.

Dr. Young-Ho Chun is serving as the Director of Asian Studies for Saint Paul. He is currently recruiting the 4th Korean Doctor of Ministry track of students. The model of theological education designed for this highly successful and unique program is currently being considered by other global communities.

Saint Paul will offer two fully online courses starting fall 2016 and two in the spring semester of 2017. We will continue to offer popular hybrid courses as well as video link every course between our two locations.

Two new components in the MDiv program are practicums taught by ministry practitioners and off-campus spiritual formation retreats. Practicum offerings include such real-life skill areas as budgets and finance, funerals and ministry with children. Spiritual formation retreats deepen students' spirituality for a lifetime of ministry.

The Fellows program equips candidates called to full-time ministry with academic formation and real-life pastoral experience. The award covers tuition, books and fees for three years. Each Fellow will receive a pastoral mentor and a student appointment with a stipend to cover living expenses.

The Oklahoma Campus had its second recognition dinner celebrating eight years of seminary excellence in Oklahoma. The Celebrate Saint Paul dinner has become an annual event including the Bishop Robert E. Hayes, Jr. Leadership Award

The trustees, faculty, staff, and students of Saint Paul thank you for your interest, prayers and support.

## 400.36 Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington, D.C.

### **Called. Answered. Sent.**

Wesley Theological Seminary has been equipping and sending forth prophetic preachers, teachers, and leaders into diverse ministries throughout the church and around the world. Near and far, our alumni point to God's love even as they join the Spirit in making disciples and shaping healthy communities.

- With more than 410 master's-level students preparing for leadership in the church and the world, Wesley remains one of the largest and most diverse theological schools in North America.
- The Lewis Center for Church Leadership informs more than 17,000 pastors and lay leaders on trends and ideas through its e-newsletter. The center has influenced more than 5,600 church leaders through leadership assessments, sexual ethics trainings, and fundraising trainings.
- The new Institute for Community Engagement is forwarding Wesley's mission of raising prophetic leaders in the public square through classes, partnerships, conferences, and resources.

### **Wesley Students Are Answering God's Call**

Wesley provides **more than \$2 million dollars annually in scholarships** to our students thanks to the consistent support of alumni, congregations and friends of the seminary. The Ministerial Education Fund and conference partners help us equip a broad range of students to serve the church as pastors and leaders.

*Christian leadership must innovate for greater faithfulness and be able to engage the full diversity of people within our society even while holding true to the foundations of our faith and tradition.* The people named above – as well as so many more of our students – exemplify these aims. Read more about our students at [wesleyseminary.edu/stories](http://wesleyseminary.edu/stories).

### **Mourning the Loss of a Christian Leader**

The Rev. Clementa Pinckney was a Doctor of Ministry student at Wesley in the Leadership Excellence track. He was working on a research project on the combined role of pastor and statesman, when his life was taken along with eight others at Mother Emanuel AME Church in Charleston, S.C. **Rev. Pinckney exemplified the spiritually powerful and prophetic leadership that is at the core of our mission.**

To ensure Pinckney's legacy continues, Wesley has established scholarships in his name for Doctor of Ministry candidates seeking to empower their congregations, engage their communities, and influence public discourse. Additionally, **Wesley has developed a Doctor of Ministry track exploring the intersection between public life and church leadership.** This degree focus amplifies Wesley's mission and location and, we hope, will raise up leaders to continue Pinckney's legacy. <https://www.wesleyseminary.edu/doctorofministry/>

*Sent by Rev. Dr. Wm. D. Aldridge, Jr. | Associate Dean of Admissions, on behalf of Wesley Theological Seminary*

## **400.37 CCFA Report to Northern Illinois Conference**

### **Introduction**

At the November 2015 Special Session in Rockford a resolution directing the merger of the Chicago Southern and Chicago Northwestern into a single district was referred by the Bishop to the Conference Council on Finance. CCFA concluded that the number of districts is a decision of the annual conference. Therefore CCFA presents this data to inform the annual conference session for consideration on the number of districts the Annual Conference needs at this time. This report seeks to anticipate questions and to offer answers as the conference considers a proposal on the number of districts that may be presented by others

### **Authorities**

The Book of Discipline assigns to the Conference the power to define the number of districts, but to the Cabinet the authority to draw the lines of the districts. Judicial Council Decisions #398 asserts there should be a District Superintendent (DS) for every district. The Discipline requires CCFA to propose to the annual conference a budget for the expenses of all District Superintendent positions.

The Book of Discipline at paragraph 415.4 itemizes "The Specific Responsibilities of the Bishop" and includes:

"4. To form the districts after consultation with the district superintendents and after the number of the same has been determined by vote of the annual conference."

Judicial Council Decision 398 explains the interrelationship in plain language:

"Under (paragraph 415.4 of the 2016) Discipline the number of districts is determined by vote of the Annual Conference. The formation and structuring of the district is the responsibility of the bishop after consultation with the district superintendents. The appointment of district superintendents is the responsibility of the bishop. The historical background of the office of district superintendent as well as the provisions of the Discipline make it clear that the office of district superintendent is a keystone of the connectional system."

Judicial Council Decision 398 goes on to craft a *rule of parity*: "...it is the intent of the Discipline that the format for the Annual Conference structure shall be one superintendent for one district and that each district shall have clearly defined geographic boundaries." Further on in that decision, the Judicial Council concludes, "Therefore, when an Annual Conference votes on the number of districts it is also deciding the number of District Superintendents." So, only a vote to reduce the number of districts can result necessarily in a reduction in the number of District Superintendents.

The budget proposed by the Conference Council on Finance and Administration must include the recommended amount of provisions for support of the District Superintendents equal to the number of districts. At Discipline paragraph 613.1 it states CCFA "shall have authority and responsibility...(to) recommend to the annual conference for its action and determination budgets of anticipated income and proposed expenditures for all funds that provide for annual conference clergy support..." The term "clergy support" is defined in Discipline paragraph 614.1a as:

1. "Clergy Support Budgets - a) It shall be the duty of the (CCFA), unless otherwise provided, to estimate the total amount necessary to furnish a sufficient and equitable support for the district superintendents of the conference, including base

compensation, travel, staff, office, and housing. The (CCFA) shall report specific recommendations to the annual conference for conference action.”

The Annual Conference session must first determine the proper number of districts, a number the Bishop and Cabinet will use to draw geographic lines and the CCFA will use to propose a budget sufficient to support that same number of offices. The annual conference session then votes upon the budget proposed by CCFA.

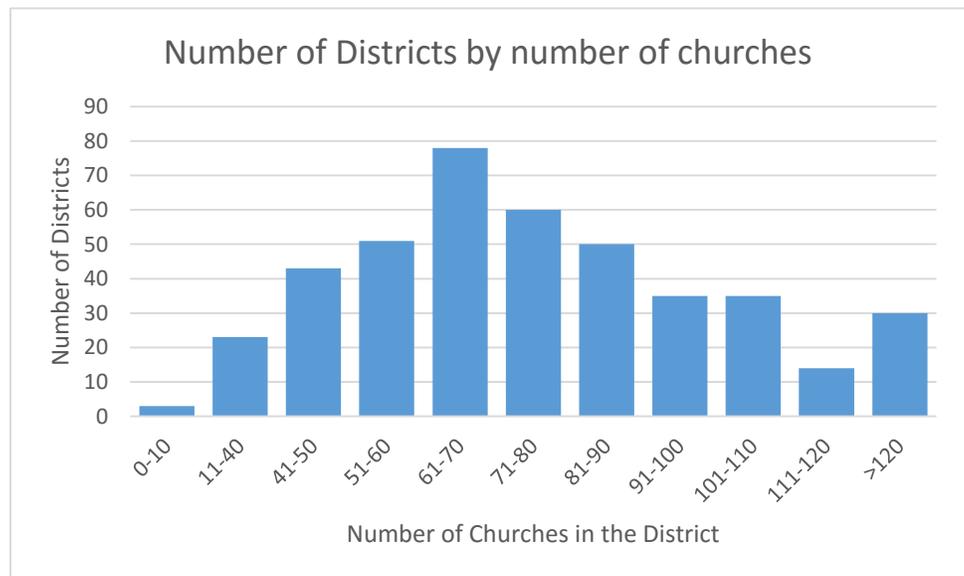
**Current Situation**

The Northern Illinois Conference currently has 6 districts, 6 District Superintendents, and 3 District Administrators. There are three district offices; Chicago Temple, Elgin First, and Rochelle.

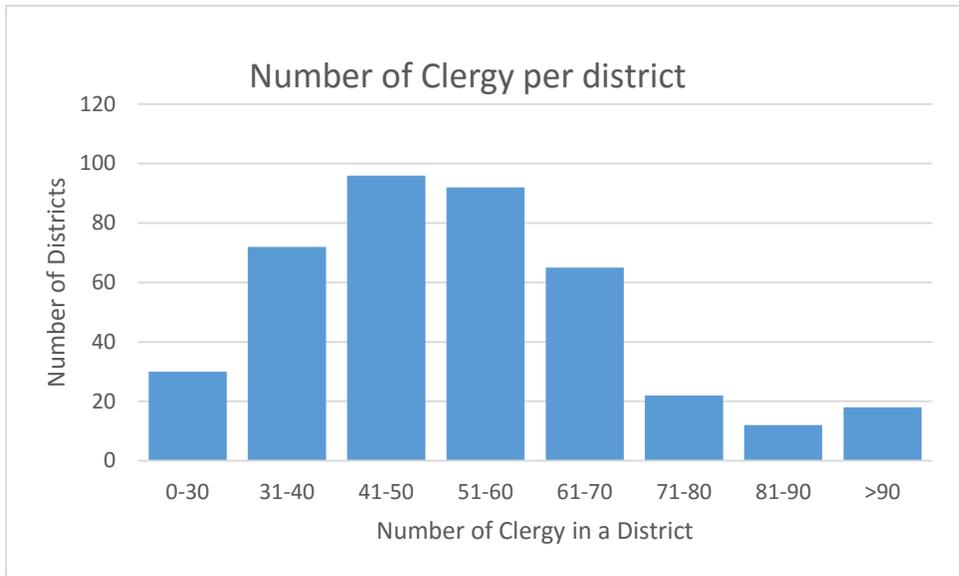
District	Number of Churches or NFC	Members	Average Attendance	Part-Time Pastor/Deacon	Full-Time Pastor/Deacon
Aurora	64	20,998	7,657	14/4	59/2
Chicago Northwestern	55	8,126	4,298	19/2	40/3
Chicago Southern	56	15,228	5,629	22/0	35/0
DeKalb	70	13,959	4,540	14/0	41/0
Elgin	67	17,205	6,250	15/1	52/1
Rockford	67	14,138	4,691	20/0	30/0

**The Typical District**

According to General Council of Finance and Administration data, at the end of 2014 (the most recent information available) there were 422 districts in the US Conferences (not counting missionary conferences).<sup>1</sup> The median size of a district is 72 churches, with an average attendance of 5,858 and membership of 15,028. This compares to the median for the Northern Illinois Conference of 66 churches per district, average attendance of 5,160 and membership of 14,683.



<sup>1</sup> General Council of Finance and Administration produced a report on church counts in districts as reported in the 2014 statistics tables. Mergers and contractions occurring in 2015 are not included in this total.



To learn the number of clergy under appointment in a particular district we drew data from the General Board of Pensions and Health Benefits. The typical district in the US conferences (not including missionary conferences or the Rio Texas conference) has 51 clergy persons enrolled in the

clergy pension benefit program. The median for Northern Illinois Conference Churches using the same population (of persons enrolled in the clergy pension program) is 56 clergy appointments per district.<sup>2</sup>

**Other Conferences**

In the US conferences, there were 527 districts in 1985 and 509 districts in 2003, a loss of 18 districts<sup>3</sup>. In 1992, the Northern Illinois was one of the conferences to contract, going from 7 districts to 6 when the Chicago Western District was dissolved and the churches absorbed by the Chicago Southern and Chicago Northern Districts.

Between 2003 and 2014 the number of districts in the US conferences contracted from 509 to 422, an 18% reduction. There seems to be three main reasons a conference would undertake a contraction:

1. A substantial number of these occurred in the 26 annual conferences that merged to become 11 annual conferences sometime between 1985 and 2014. Either at the time of the merger or soon after these newly formed conferences have reduced the number of districts. For example, the Missouri merger reduced districts from 16 to 12 and the four annual conferences who merged to become the Upper New York annual conference went from 17 to 12 districts.

**Indiana**

When Northern Indiana Conference merged with Southern Indiana Conference they grouped the 1,100 churches of the combined conference into 10 districts from the previous allocation of 18. A part-time Associate District Superintendent was added to each district staff to

<sup>2</sup> All full-time elders under appointment to a local church and full-time local pastors are counted in this result. Some but not all annual conferences will enroll half-time and/or three-quarter time appointments and sometimes a local church will enroll a Deacon serving a local church. Where an annual conference makes these part-time appointment eligible they are included in the total number of clergy assigned to a district. The Northern Illinois total includes half-time and greater Elders and Part-time Local Pastors.

<sup>3</sup> This information is drawn from “Reflections in the Number of Districts of an Annual Conference: A Study of Costs and Benefits” an internal report of the General Conference on Finance and Administration completed February 2010. To the extent possible we have updated the results to 2016 using a variety of sources, such as the General Minutes, the 2014 statistics reports, and GBOPHB reports.

complement the work of a District Superintendent and a District Administrator. The median number of churches in each district is 113 and the median number of clergy is 60.

### Illinois Great Rivers

Illinois Great Rivers Conference was actively closing churches and when they contracted to 880 churches they decided to reduce from 12 districts to 10. They had hoped to change the role of the DS within the connectional structure but the local churches continued their expectations for frequency of visits from the DS. They have a stated policy that no district should have more than 100 churches. The median district is 90 churches and 47 clergy persons. The relocations of district offices and parsonages nullified the savings they realized in personnel costs. The districts are served by 11 fulltime and 8 part time staff persons.

2. Starting in 2003 several conferences undertook large redistricting efforts that operationalized new models for accomplishing the assignments of districts and Superintending. Most of these significant reductions in district counts results from implementation of dramatic restructures of how a district functions. Conferences not involved in mergers and attempting new models in district level ministries include: Texas in 2006 (from 12 to 9), North Alabama in 2006 (from 12 to 9), Florida in 2005 (from 14 to 9), Oklahoma in 2015 (from 12 to 8), and Arkansas in 2006 (from 12 to 9). In addition to these conferences, a description of the results in additional conferences:

### West Ohio in 2003

West Ohio reduced from 14 districts to 8 districts for their 1150 (and decreasing) number of churches in 2003. Soon after the change it was determined that there were too many churches for each DS and churches complained about a lack of accessibility. Associate District Superintendents positions were created in 6 of the remaining 8 districts, thus eliminating any intended savings from the contraction. There is one District Administrator, Associate DS, and a DS for each district. The median district in West Ohio is 90 clergy persons and 122 local churches.

### North Carolina

The North Carolina Conference restructured the manner in which districts serve their 810 local churches when contracting from 12 to 8 districts. 12 District Superintendents and 12 District Administrators became 8 District Superintendents, 8 District Assistants, and 3 District Administrators. The change resulted in savings in the first year. The median district is 102 churches and 79 clergy persons.

### New York

Over ten years ago the New York Annual Conference reduced the number of District Superintendents and District Administrators from 8 to 6 to relate to about 600 local churches. The experience has led to a decision to create part-time Assisting Elder positions for each district to help with tasks such as presiding over Charge Conferences of stable churches. District Superintendents time is dedicated to crisis intervention and problem solving. The typical New York Conference district has 74 churches and 60 clergy persons.

### Iowa in 2007

Iowa's 830 (and decreasing) local churches are served by 8 District Superintendents and 8 District Administrators after a 2007 annual conference decision reduced the number of districts from 12. The Conference added a "Field Outreach Minister," a type of district program staffer, to each district, increasing from the 6 positions that existed prior to the change. The additional

staffing nullified any savings that would have been realized by the contraction. The average district is 98 churches and 55 clergy members.

3. There are 46 annual conference that have not been involved in a merger with another annual conference. Our best estimate is that 29 of these have never changed the number of districts in the conference. <sup>4</sup> 17 annual conferences have reduced by one (maybe two) districts since 1985. The Northern Illinois Annual Conference is one of this 17, having reduced by one district in 1992.

### **Costs of One Northern Illinois Conference District Superintendent**

District Superintendents all receive the same salary and pension contributions. Health insurance, travel, and parsonage costs vary by location and specific district superintendent. Expenses reported below represents an average for the current group of superintendents.

Salary	86,395
Health Insurance	16,128
Pension	17,279
Travel	10,549
Continuing Education	2,125
Telephone	1,200
Parsonage Costs	4,079
Sub-Total	<hr/> 137,755

It's difficult to speculate on the impact on district office costs. A reduction in the number of districts doesn't necessarily mean a reduction in office rental costs. The Rochelle location moved to a smaller office with a single space shared by both superintendents. A reduction in western superintendents is unlikely to result in less office costs if any office space is retained for the remaining superintendent and administrator. The Chicago Temple location has two office spaces dedicated to each superintendent. Because those spaces are inside the suite of offices it's not possible to surrender that space while retaining the other spaces in the suite. The Elgin office location might result in a cost reduction should there be fewer superintendents with offices there.

Each DS is issued a laptop computer which is replaced every 4 years or so, resulting in an annual cost of \$350 or so. Travel costs stated above includes an annual cost of providing a vehicle for DS travel. Likely the loss of a DS position would result in the sale of a district parsonage, the proceeds of which vary widely by the parsonage selected for sale. We are unable to accurately state the value of each district parsonage for the conference.

### **What Does a DS do?**

This will be a generalized view of a District Superintendent and not intended to be specific to any one Northern Illinois Conference DS but rather representative of how their time is typically spent on an overall basis. We interviewed four District Superintendents and asked one DS to quantify his time using a time management application that tracked hours dedicated to meetings and email volume by purpose.

Their specific responsibilities can be grouped in the following manner:

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<sup>4</sup> We draw this conclusion from a GCFA report on the number of districts written in 2007. We spot checked the number of districts in non-merging conferences from that date to the present to make this assertion.

1. Strategy and Development at both the District and the local church level. They understand the importance of their position to be relational and to spend as much time as possible getting to know the clergy and churches they are assigned. To a person they stated if they had more time in the day this is where they would spend additional energy. Much of this relational time is spent in developing church strategy, coaching and visioning. Presently this represents anywhere from 35% to 50% of their time. This requires being at charge conferences, meeting with clergy and various church committees, follow up on strategic plans or discussion, and always being on call to handle both administrative as well as personal issues
2. Closures, Mergers, Real Estate Challenges. Many are dealing with real estate discussions around potential mergers or closures. While this may not take much of their overall time it is intense because it requires careful discussion and evaluation of factors such and deeds and trust. This may represent 5% of their time, when a specific project presents itself.
3. Clergy management, support and supervision. Summer interviews are a particularly intensive undertaking. District Superintendents strive to maintain close relationships with clergy persons and aid in their effectiveness. Groups of three will discuss issues of concern when they arise. This requires between 10% and 15% of the DS time.
4. The selection and placement of clergy during the appointment process. Each appointment requires three meetings of at least an hour: Meet with SPRC on church needs; introduce appointment with pastor; and Introduce pastor and church at SPRC committee. The number of appointments changes year to year, it rarely exceeds 20 pastoral changes any specific year. Depending on the time of year a considerable amount of time will be spent in the appointment process – both at the Cabinet and Church level. When viewed from an annual perspective this takes about 15% to 20% of their time.
5. Conference and Cabinet meetings. Each DS is assigned as liaison to a conference entity such as a Conference Board of Pensions and Health Benefits, or Conference Program Council. The Cabinet will meet over multiple days twice a month or so. About 15% of the time the DS is present in either a Cabinet or Conference entity meeting, about 30 hours per month.
6. Administration of reports, records, compensation, and benefits at District and Local Church level. In managing the clergy in their district they spend time at both the local church level and at the district level dealing with compensation, benefits, and general data administration. This appears to take about 10% to 15% of their time depending on the season.
7. Program Facilitation. The DS is the primary staff person for the programmatic goals of the district. These can include district training events, district location committee meetings, and district program committee meetings. Candidates for Ordained Ministry are interviewed in district committee. There are 65 candidates in the Chicago Northwestern district and 25 or fewer in the other districts. It is believed these tasks require about 10% of the DS time.
8. Representatives in their gift areas i.e.: Urban strategies, City of Chicago, Korean Support, District Learning Sessions. It appears each DS has a particular area or talent which is shared with the other DS's. It may be ability to negotiate with cross cultural churches, or help plan and facilitate district initiatives such as Healthy Churches – Healthy Future, or

social justice engagement with the City of Chicago. This area can take anywhere from 5% to 15% of their time.

During the course of the year the DS will travel roughly 30,000 miles to meetings with churches or other entities. Assuming an average speed of 45 mph and an eight hour day they are spending 84 days, or about two and a half months in their cars.

The typical day will start at 6 am and go until around 7 pm, except at charge conference time and then the evening hours are extended. Most take Friday off for rest and renewal. To a person they do not feel they have enough time in the day to care for the responsibilities they have to the Conference, their pastors and the churches.

### **What do we want from a DS?**

Listening sessions and the recent Purpose Summit sought the insight of over 500 individuals in determining the future of the annual conference. As part of those conversations the desired role of the DS received a lot of attention. Here is a typical comment heard from participants:

“An ideal DS is personable and involved with churches in the district. He/she spends ‘face time’ and actually connects with the local church. He/she is not just there when there is a problem. He/she should not avoid conflict. An ideal DS would be trained in conflict management and/or counseling.”

When a comment is made in a meeting it’s hard to know how broadly that opinion is held. But terms and desires that were frequently mentioned in the 7 conversations with large groups and expressed in the survey results include: “DS should know the church beyond the contacts of the SPRC”, “DS only knows the church when there is a problem”, “DS could be a connector to resources and training available beyond the knowledge of the local church”, “DS should be present/listen”, and “clergy want to feel the DS has their back.” Further, the conversations highlighted the need for church mergers or redevelopment. Basically, people were looking for a way to configure the local church that would more likely lead to success and a viable future. By Discipline the DS plays a catalyzing role in setting a strategy and implementing the decision. While the process hasn’t settled on a single tactical answer the conversation centered on how the DS can be more familiar and more connected with local churches. Consistently the priorities for the Superintendents were: 1) relationship building with local churches; 2) strategy work with local churches and finding a future for the communities; and 3) deepen relationships for better appointment making.

The requests and challenges raised by the dialogues have been shared with the Cabinet. The Bishop has challenged the Cabinet to adopt new practices that reflect the desires expressed in the survey.

### **Conclusion**

The decision on the number of districts lies with the Conference. A change in the number of District Superintendents necessarily requires a change in the expectations of the DS. CCFA encourages a discussion of how DS time should be prioritized should there be fewer hours available to accomplish the tasks currently assigned to The Cabinet. We stand ready to implement any decision of the Conference.

#### **400.38 Conference Treasurer Historical Report**

CCFA and Conference leadership has come to accept the apportionment receipt level to be closer to \$6 million than the long term average of \$7 million. The local churches continue to experience financial stress and consequently churches with strong connectional spirit fall short of full apportionment payment.

The Red Door Fund created by an April 2013 Special Session of the annual conference has continued with no deficiencies and no delinquencies. Churches have made pre-payments on their mortgages and this year Red Door made an \$875,000 additional payment even while ending the year with a \$200,000 reserve fund.

The Property Insurance Program premiums approach \$3 million annually and the committee is researching how the larger size of the program may translate to better rates and services for the churches.

We have upgraded the server capacity for the conference and improved our IT infrastructure with redundancy and offsite back-up. Our database has improved and now we operate with a single database for all districts and conference uses. The conference has entered into service agreements with the UM Foundation, GCOSROW, the Chicago Temple, and other local churches to find the higher quality IT service without adding pressure to the apportionment budget.

#### Apportionment Formula

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

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

- 1. Senior & Associate Pastor Costs** (Basis for Support for Ordained Leadership Apportionment) The sum of these lines if multiplied by 16% to determine the local church apportionment in support of the "Support for Ordained Leadership" work of the annual conference.

Line 48: Senior Pastor base compensation (minus equitable compensation funds received from the Annual Conference)

Line 49: Associate Pastor base compensation

Line 50: Senior & Associate Pastor Housing Allowance (OR 25% of base compensation for parsonage appointments) + Senior & Associate Pastor's parsonage utilities and maintenance costs

Line 51: Accountable reimbursements

Line 52: Other cash allowances

- 2. Church Programs & Operational Costs** (Basis for Mission & Evangelism Apportionment). The sum of these lines is multiplied by 14% to establish the local church apportionment in support of the "Mission and Evangelism" work of the annual conference.

Line 53: Deacon's compensation & benefits

Line 55: Lay staff compensation & benefits (except custodial)

Line 56: Church Program costs  
Line 57: Church building utilities, custodial costs, property maintenance costs, property insurance costs, other operational costs (Portion of utility, custodial and property costs incurred by space-sharing is excluded; utility, custodial and property costs per average attendee above the 80<sup>th</sup> percentile are excluded)

**3. Total Church Expenditures<sup>5</sup>** (Basis for Strengthening the Connection Apportionment) the sum of all of the statistical lines itemized above and the lines specified below is multiplied by 1% to generate the apportionment of that particular local church to the "Strengthening the Connection" work of the annual conference.

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

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

Line 43a: Funds given directly to UMC related causes

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

Line 46: Clergy pension payments (CPP, CRSP)<sup>6</sup>

Line 47: Clergy health benefits payments

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

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

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

- a. The local church spending on cash compensation plus reimbursements and allowances for the Senior and Associate Pastor is compared to the spending of other local churches of like size. A linear regression of the data predicts a pastoral compensation level for each church given their average attendance. The amount above or below that prediction is called the "Pastoral Residual". For each local church their individual Pastoral Residual number is cubed and multiplied by .000000001. The resultant adds (or subtracts) from the apportionment requested from the local church as summed above. The basis for the Pastor Residual additional consideration is the most recent Senior & Associate Pastor compensation data available and the most recent year's average attendance at all weekly worship services.
- b. The basis for the Budget Size additional consideration is the most recent year's Senior & Associate Pastor Costs plus Church Programs & Operational Costs (Statistical Report Lines 48-57). For each local church the total is squared and multiplied by .00000005. this amount is added to the apportioned asking of the specific local church.

#### Exceptions

1. Each apportionment amount must be divisible by 12.

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<sup>5</sup> Two statistical report lines are excluded entirely from the Apportionment calculation:

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

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

<sup>6</sup> Line 46 was previously categorized under 1. Senior & Associate Pastor Costs

2. The apportionment for any year may not be more than 9% above the previous year and not less than 9% below the previous year.
3. The minimum apportionment shall be \$1,200.
4. Building costs per average attender that exceed the 80<sup>th</sup> percentile of the array of conference churches shall not be included in the calculations.
5. Up to 1% of the total apportioned can be reserved for the CCFA to respond to appeals from local churches. Appeals may only be extended by CCFA for data errors or hardship.

Audit

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

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

Grace and Peace,

Lonnie Chafin  
Conference Treasurer

<b>Church Name</b>	<b>Mission Sites &amp; New Church Start Funds</b>	<b>Health Insurance Grants</b>	<b>Write-off Unpaid Pension, Health, &amp; Property Insurance</b>	<b>Received from Closed Church Fund</b>	<b>Total Conference Support</b>
Addison: Good Samaritan			901		901
Arlington Heights: Incarnation		1,350			1,350
Ashton		2,700			2,700
Aurora: Bethany of Fox Valley		1,350			1,350
Aurora: Nueva Vida	12,000				12,000
Barrington: Salem		2,700			2,700
Belvidere Hispanic	6,000				6,000
Bensenville: First		4,050			4,050
Bethel Hispanic	12,000				12,000
Blue Island: Hispanic	10,000				10,000

Burlington			15,040		15,040
Chicago: Adalberto	8,100				8,100
Chicago: Amor de Dios	12,000				12,000
Chicago: Arabic Language NFC	22,008				22,008
Chicago: Ashburn Hispanic	6,000				6,000
Chicago: Berry Memorial		4,050			4,050
Chicago: Broadway		4,050			4,050
Chicago: Eastside			10,391		10,391
Chicago: Edison Park			11,057		11,057
Chicago: Elston Avenue	6,000	2,700			8,700
Chicago: Englewood			26,097		26,097
Chicago: Epworth	12,000	1,350	22,850		36,200
Chicago: Faith		4,050	13,819		17,869
Chicago: Gorham			1,224		1,224
Chicago: Grace of Logan Square	18,000	1,350	18,356		37,706
Chicago: Greenstone	4,000				4,000
Chicago: Humboldt Park	10,000	2,700			12,700
Chicago: Indo-Pak		4,050			4,050
Chicago: Ingleside-Whitfield			26,618		26,618
Chicago: Irving Park	4,250		18,361		22,611
Chicago: Irving Park Hispanic	12,000				12,000
Chicago: Kelly Woodlawn			10,060		10,060
Chicago: Lincoln	9,100				9,100
Chicago: Mandell	14,000		11,250		25,250
Chicago: Maple Park			30,220		30,220
Chicago: New Hope	12,000	4,050		13,689	29,739
Chicago: Olivet	12,000				12,000
Chicago: Resurrection			10,602		10,602
Chicago: Rust				13,105	13,105

Chicago: South Shore		4,050			4,050
Chicago: St. James				67,089	67,089
Chicago: Trinity		4,050			4,050
Chicago: Union Avenue	5,000				5,000
Chicago: United Church of Rogers Park		4,050	5,070		9,120
Chicago: University Park Feeding Ministry	2,000				2,000
Chicago: Urban Village West	12,000				12,000
Chicago: Westridge		2,700			2,700
Chicagoland: Journey Community UMC	12,000	4,050			16,050
Cicero: Wesley		4,050			4,050
Dolton: Faith			24,585		24,585
Durand		4,050			4,050
Elk Grove: Prince of Peace		2,700			2,700
Evergreen Park: First			1,300		1,300
Forreston/Leaf River		4,050			4,050
Franklin Park: First			9,100		9,100
Freeport: Faith		1,350			1,350
Freeport: First		4,050			4,050
Genoa: Faith		2,700	2,071		4,771
Glen Ellyn: St. Thomas			1,850		1,850
Glencoe: North Shore		4,050			4,050
Harvey: First Wesley Academy		2,700	8,842		11,542
Hillside Bellwood	6,000				6,000
Hinckley: First			1,904		1,904
Ingleside		4,050			4,050
Kingston	1,800				1,800
Lake Villa			2,052		2,052
Lockport: First		2,700			2,700
Lombard: Faith		4,050			4,050
Machesny Park: Hilltop	250,000	4,050			254,050
Malta		2,700	667		3,367
Maple Park: Grace		2,700	2,101		4,801
Marengo		4,050			4,050
McHenry: Mt. Hope		2,700			2,700

Melrose Park: Cosmopolitan			5,200		5,200
Melrose Park: Cosmopolitan Hispanic	12,000				12,000
Mount Hope		2,700			2,700
Mt. Prospect: Sam Mool	8,000				8,000
Naperville: Korean			25,200		25,200
Northbrook: Glenbrook Korean			33,398		33,398
Orangeville		2,700			2,700
Orland Park: First Korean			4,151		4,151
Ottawa: Epworth		4,050	17,655		21,705
Park Forest: Grace		2,700			2,700
Plainfield			3,708		3,708
Plainfield: Sharon			9,915		9,915
Prospect Heights: Central Korean			25,126		25,126
Red Oak/Wyanet		1,350	641		1,991
Rockford: Brooke Road		4,050			4,050
Rockford: Centennial	8,000				8,000
Rockford: Christ the Carpenter	10,000			11,000	21,000
Savanna: First		2,700			2,700
Schaumburg: Salem Korean			18,175		18,175
South Elgin: Community			849		849
Sugar Grove		1,350			1,350
Tampico		2,700			2,700
Waukegan: First			2,436		2,436
Waukegan: San Pablo	15,000		33,721	27,100	75,821
Wedron	3,000	4,050			7,050
West Dundee: First		4,050			4,050
Wheaton: Aldersgate		2,700	613		3,313
Winthrop Harbor		2,700			2,700
Winthrop Harbor: North Prairie		4,050			4,050
Zion: Memorial		1,350			1,350
<b>TOTAL Local Church Support</b>	<b>546,258</b>	<b>159,300</b>	<b>467,176</b>	<b>131,983</b>	<b>1,304,717</b>