

# VOLUME 1 REPORTS

## West Michigan Annual Conference OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Forty-second Session  
Calvin College  
Grand Rapids, Michigan  
June 3-6, 2010

*Bishop Jonathan D. Keaton, Presiding Bishop*  
*William W. Chu, Annual Conference Secretary*

**OFFICIAL RECORD**  
**VOLUME 47**                      **NUMBER 3-A**



WEST MICHIGAN CONFERENCE  
 Creating New Spaces For New Faces

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## **REPORT OF THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE PROGRAM COMMITTEE re: 2009 Legislative Item #4 “Location of Annual Conference”**

This report is in response to the following petition approved by the 2009 West Michigan Annual Conference:

The Conference Program Committee, in consultation with the Bishop, shall explore and prayerfully consider moving the location of the West Michigan Annual Conference back to Albion College as soon as possible.

In August 2009, the Annual Conference Program Committee began a process of consideration by arranging a visit to the Albion campus. As noted below, this visit took place on October 8, 2009. Rev. Terry Euper, Clergy Assistant to the Bishop, representing the Bishop's office on the Program Committee, was present for the campus visit and at subsequent Program Committee meetings where the Albion College site was evaluated.

We begin this report with a statement of the purpose and values behind the planning of Annual Conference sessions, which we see as principles behind our work as a committee.

### **Annual Conference Program Committee Purpose and Value Statement**

The Annual Conference Program Committee must consider the purpose of the sessions of West Michigan Annual Conference as it strives to provide a fruitful, effective and spiritually meaningful gathering for conference members. To be sure, the purpose of Annual Conference differs from one member to another; however, on the whole, the Program Committee has come to consensus on the following when it comes to selecting a meeting site for the Annual Conference gathering:

One purpose of Annual Conference is to conduct the yearly business of the church, including acting on legislation, fixing pastoral appointments, setting program priorities and establishing budget. A second purpose of Annual Conference is to equip the churches through teaching and workshops, to “make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.” A third purpose of Annual Conference is to provide a sacred space for its members to come together for the nurturing of their spirits through excellent worship, the deepening of relationships, the hearing of diverse points of view, and immersion into a more global connection. Reflecting upon these purposes aided the Program Committee in its discernment process.

In addition, the Program Committee brought to bear core values in evaluating a facility and location of Annual Conference: accessibility, comfort, price, convenience, social justice and our United Methodist Connection.

### **Exploration and prayerful consideration**

On October 8, 2009, thirteen persons representing the West Michigan Conference visited Albion College: Bill Chu, Terry Euper, Benton Heisler, Bill Johnson, Tim Miller, Valerie Mossman-Celestin, Frank Lyman, Dianne Doten Morrison, Lois Moseley, Ward Pierce, Mark Thompson, Dave Wiltse and Laura Witkowski.

Todd Tekiele, Albion's Director of Dining and Hospitality Services, and Patricia Miller, Associate Director, graciously received the group. An extensive guided tour of the campus was provided. In addition, Rev. Jeremy Williams and administrative assistant Carol Maynard led us through the facilities of Albion First United Methodist Church. At noon we were lunch guests of Albion College. Over the course of the on-site visit the following observations were made:

- Wireless Internet access is available in main buildings throughout the entire campus with a user-ID and password. Dormitory rooms are all equipped with wired access, but users would need to bring a cable.
- Albion College has an historic United Methodist Connection.
- Campus Security is readily available and helpful. Campus Security does not carry handguns.
- Office space for the Conference staff and the Bishop is small, difficult to access and limited. In some cases these facilities are not air-conditioned.
- One projection screen is available for our use in Goodrich Chapel. One more would be needed.

- Accessibility is limited all over campus but significantly so at Goodrich Chapel and Albion First UMC. There is only one restroom in Goodrich with a stall that is adequate for wheelchair access, and it is located in the basement. Goodrich Chapel and Albion First UMC share a single small service elevator. This elevator is not adequate for those with special mobility needs, and there is room for only one wheelchair at a time.
- Two of the on-campus lodging facilities have common public bathrooms (Seaton/Wesley), and two facilities are equipped with suite-style bathrooms (Mitchell Towers / Whitehouse). There is only one totally accessible room in each dormitory.
- Dining services are adequate for the regular meals. Space for special meals is available at Bellemont, Kellogg, and the Science Atrium. There is no catering or serving staff in place for these special meals. Ms. Miller expressed a concern regarding the Annual Conference schedule and timing. There would be a charge for staff overtime if meals were more than 20 minutes beyond their scheduled starting time. Albion's Dining and Hospitality Services employs union workers.
- Baldwin Hall, the main dining facility, has only one elevator, and it accommodates only one wheelchair at a time.
- Off-campus housing and dining options are limited in the greater Albion community.
- Tennant Hall at Albion First UMC is available for the Ministry Fair. It is air-conditioned and is close to Goodrich Chapel.
- There is a secure choral practice room in the basement of Goodrich Chapel that could be used for the Cokesbury store.
- Goodrich Chapel and the Dow Athletic Center are large enough for plenary sessions. However, the Dow Athletic Center is neither air conditioned nor acoustically adequate. Both Goodrich Chapel and Dow Athletic Center have a limited number of restrooms.
- Holding simultaneous clergy and laity sessions would pose a challenge given the size of the available Albion facilities.
- Options for childcare facilities are available.
- Goodrich Chapel could serve as the primary location for worship. There are some other useable locations for the smaller late evening services.
- In response to a question posed by the Program Committee, Albion's Hospitality team expressed that the city of Albion and the college would welcome our return. They recognized the challenges of holding a gathering of our kind in their facilities.
- Albion's campus is typically available during the first two weeks of June.

On November 3, 2009, a tech team was dispatched to Albion to assess technology. This team saw no insurmountable issues for technology with regard to the use of Goodrich Chapel for plenary and worship. Addressing technology at Albion could involve some additional expense.

There is concern regarding the logistical support that Albion has available to serve a gathering of our size. Ms. Miller would be the primary line of support from 9 to 5 and there would be "a person with keys" on call afterhours. Audio-visual and office equipment support was not discussed. There would be an extra cost for a sound technician on weekdays after 3:30 pm and during all weekend hours of the conference session.

A comparison between basic costs of holding Annual Conference at Albion College and Calvin College in 2010 was reviewed by the committee. The cost comparison follows this report.

### **Conclusion**

Based on this exploration and with prayerful consideration, the Annual Conference Program Committee does not consider Albion College to be a feasible location to hold Annual Conference at this time.

*Annual Conference Program Committee  
Bill Johnson, Chair  
Bill Chu, Conference Secretary*

**ADDENDUM : COST COMPARISONS – Calvin and Albion:**

<b>Calvin 2010</b>	<b>Albion 2010</b>
Package, arriving Wednesday	Arriving Wednesday
4 nights' lodging (double occupancy)	\$ 96.00
11 meals (Thu bkfst thru Sun lunch)	\$ 86.00
Facilities fee	\$ 10.00 (College Services)
Program fee (\$60.00)	\$ 60.00
Registrar (\$4.00)	<u>\$ 30.00</u> (Registration)
<b>\$261.00</b>	<b>\$282.00</b>
Single occupancy	Single occupancy
<b>\$287.00</b>	<b>\$310.00</b>
Package, arriving Thursday	Arriving Thursday
3 nights' lodging (double occupancy)	\$ 72.00
10 meals (Thu lunch thru Sun lunch)	\$ 79.50
Facilities fee	\$ 10.00 (College Services)
Program fee (\$60.00)	\$ 60.00
Registrar (\$4.00)	<u>\$ 30.00</u> (Registration)
<b>\$241.00</b>	<b>\$251.50</b>
Single occupancy	Single occupancy
<b>\$261.00</b>	<b>\$272.00</b>
Individual meals	Individual meals
Breakfast \$6.50	\$6.50
Lunch \$9.25	\$8.25
Dinner \$10.50	\$9.00
Child under 6 free	Child under 3 free
Child 6-12 half-price	Child 4-8 half-price
Catered	
Breakfast \$7.50	\$9.00
Lunch \$12.25	\$15.00
Dinner \$17.50	\$18.00

**CONFERENCE COUNCIL ON MINISTRIES**

The Conference Council on Ministries (CCOM) experienced a unique 12 months in 2009. There had been three years of transitions in the position of Director of Connectional Ministries (DCM). There had been concentrated efforts of leadership geared toward a possible merger with the Detroit Conference and then the necessity to regain direction and momentum after deciding not to merge. During the same period, the US economy went through the greatest collapse since the depression of the 1930's.

2009 became a season of healing of relationships, stability in leadership, renewed focus upon the unique calling God had placed upon the CCOM and the prioritized alignment of limited financial resources. The results of the extensive visioning process the CCOM participated in were captured in the following statement:

We, the West Michigan Conference, are a living connection of disciples of Jesus Christ transforming the world!

Living out our vision, we:

1. Intentionally engage in world changing ministries;
2. Create, nurture and revitalize Christ-centered "churches";

3. Empower visionary leaders;
4. Claim God's vision of mercy, justice, and inclusiveness for the church and for the world;
5. Bridge the church and the world through networking, resourcing, partnering, and listening.

The CCOM has continued to clarify and prioritize its goals as well as create opportunities for dialogue concerning how to most strategically align the resources it does possess for the most effective efforts of "equipping and connecting local congregations for ministry beyond the local church" (§1601, *The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church – 2008*).

The financial challenge required the CCOM to reduce its planned 2009 expenditures by 15%, which translated into \$204,000. The vast majority of these reductions were absorbed by the Board of Christian Camping, the Board of Global Ministries, the Racial Ethnic Local Church Committee, the Communications Commission, and the Conference Council on Ministries staff budget.

The year also saw significant transition in the staffing configuration of the Conference Center. David Wiltse retired as Graphics Director after more than 30 years of service to the conference in many capacities. The part-time Ministry Consultant position, held by Jana Lynn Almeida, was discontinued and the responsibilities for Ministry Consultant leadership provided to the area of Youth Ministry and Young Adults was shifted to the remaining Ministry Consultant, Naomi García. Ann Buck transferred to the Treasurer's Office and Pam Stewart was welcomed into the position of Camping Registrar. Melissa Wunderly, Board of Ordained Ministry Administrative Assistant, moved to another state and these responsibilities are now cared for by the Lansing District Administrative Assistant, Sus'ann Busley.

A new position required by *The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church – 2008* is the Director of Communications. A search was conducted and Mark Doyal began this part-time position in June, 2009. He has worked to reconfigure various communications components that had been spread throughout the CCOM staff. It has included expanding the role of Website Administrator for Jim Searls, website reporter, Kay DeMoss, and the recruitment of a volunteer communications student intern, Nate Blunt.

Near the end of 2009 R.J. Walters was selected as the editor for the Michigan Area Edition of the United Methodist Reporter. This publication is a joint effort of the West Michigan and Detroit conferences that will begin distribution in early 2010.

The limited availability of Ministry Consultants to work directly with local congregations led to the development by the DCM and the Cabinet of District Leadership Pools. This is a model of lay and clergy persons with unique skills available to assist in local congregations on a variety of areas of expertise. Some initial formation took place in 2009 with greater development anticipated in 2010.

The Annual Conference Program Committee has initiated a longer range view to the conference themes by directing its attention to the four foci of the quadrennium: Creating New Places for New People and the Transformation of Existing Congregations; Developing Principled Christian Leaders; Being in Ministry with the Poor; and Addressing Global Health Issues.

The CCOM has been blessed by the many passionate and dedicated members of the council and the committed leadership of their respective boards and agencies. We express special words of gratitude to Naomi García upon the completion of her 20<sup>th</sup> year of service as a Ministry Consultant in the West Michigan Conference, and to Lynn Pier-Fitzgerald as she completes a five-year tenure as chair of the CCOM.

It has been my pleasure to serve with all these fine persons in this my first year as DCM.

Rev. Benton R. Heisler, Conference Director of Connectional Ministries

## WORLD SERVICE AND CONFERENCE BENEVOLENCES

### Summary of 2010 Budget

[As Voted By The 2009 Conference Council on Ministries]

	2008	2009	2010
	Budget	Budget	Budget
<b>C. WORLD SERVICE &amp; CONFERENCE BENEVOLENCES</b>			
1. World Service	\$989,190	\$989,258	\$968,945
2. Conference Benevolences			
Archives & History Commission	(moved)	(moved)	(moved)
Christian Unity Commission	\$450	\$450	\$500
Religion and Race Commission	7,850	7,850	5,000
COSROW	1,200	1,271	1,000
Christian Camping Board	205,382	213,312	145,000
Church and Society Board	10,000	10,070	5,000
Discipleship Board	17,000	17,000	10,000
Global Ministries Board	385,000	385,000	315,000
Racial/Ethnic Local Church	118,000	118,070	95,000
Higher Ed. & Campus Ministry	366,550	366,550	310,000
Communications Commission	103,000	97,850	50,000
Conf. Council on Ministries	638,150	633,332	520,000
Lay Ministries	4,200	3,800	3,000
Conference Personnel Committee	1,050	1,200	1,000
Evangelism	7,800	7,200	5,000
United Methodist Men	900	900	1,000
Hunger	1,950	2,000	1,500
Prison Ministry	7,500	7,500	5,000
Indian Workers' Conference	4,500	4,500	3,500
Disability Concerns Committee	1,350	1,395	1,000
Congregational Transformation	8,418	7,000	5,000
Conference Emerging Ministries	9,750	9,750	0
Total Conference Benevolences	\$1,900,000	\$1,896,000	\$1,482,500
3. WS/CB Contingency Fund	\$32,830	\$0	\$169,500
Total Conf. Ben. and WS/CB Contingency	\$1,932,830	\$1,896,000	\$1,652,000
Total World Service & Conf. Benevolences	\$2,922,020	\$2,885,258	\$2,620,945
<b>TOTAL ANNUAL CONFERENCE BUDGET</b>	<b>\$6,558,913</b>	<b>\$6,694,890</b>	<b>\$6,209,076</b>

**2010 LINE ITEM BUDGETS**  
**[As approved by Conference Council on Ministries]**

		<b>2010 BUDGET</b>
<b>COMMISSION ON CHRISTIAN UNITY AND INTERRELIGIOUS CONCERNS – 3020</b>		
4903000	Distrib Rev-WS and Conf Benevolences	\$ 500
	Total Receipts	\$ 500
5081139	Program – Training	\$ 500
	Total Disbursements	\$ 500
<b>COMMISSION ON RELIGION AND RACE – 3495</b>		
4903000	Distrib Rev-WS and Conf Benevolences	\$ 5,000
	Total Receipts	\$ 5,000
5050000	Program Disbursements	\$ 2,000
5080000	Scholarships	\$ 400
5120000	Program-Leadership Training	\$ 1,000
5290310	Dues-NCJ CORR	\$ 700
5620000	Admin and Meetings	\$ 400
5740000	Promotions	\$ 500
	Total Disbursements	\$ 5,000
	Surplus	
<b>COMMISSION ON STATUS AND ROLE OF WOMEN – 3050</b>		
4903000	Distrib Rev-WS and Conf Benevolences	\$ 1,000
	Total Receipts	\$ 1,000
5050000	Program Disbursements	
5380000	Printing	
5620000	Admin and Meetings	
	Total Disbursements	\$ 1,000
<b>BOARD OF CHRISTIAN CAMPING – 3200</b>		
4903000	Distrib Rev-WS & Conf Benevolences	\$ 145,000
	TOTAL RECEIPTS	\$ 145,000
	DISBURSEMENTS	
5200000	Payroll-Salaried Employees	\$ 137,000
5620000	Admin and Meetings	\$ 500
5740000	Promotions	\$ 7,500
	TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS	\$ 145,000
<b>BOARD OF CHURCH AND SOCIETY – 3030</b>		
4903000	Distrib Rev-WS and Conf Benevolences	\$ 5,000
	Total Receipts	\$ 5,000
5050000	Program Disbursements	\$ 2,000
5360000	Postage and Shipping	\$ 50
5380000	Printing	\$ 250
5620000	Admin and Meetings	\$ 500

6105809	Distrib Exp-Peace w/Justice	\$	2,000
6107328	Distrib Exp-GR Dist Peace Cntr	\$	100
6107604	Distrib Exp-Lans Dist Shalom Cntr	\$	100
	Total Disbursements	\$	<u>5,000</u>

**BOARD OF DISCIPLESHIP – 3070**

4903000	Distrib Rev-WS and Conf Benevolences	\$	10,000
	Total Receipts	\$	10,000
6103071	Distrib Exp-Childrens Council	\$	1,250
6103073	Distrib Exp-Youth Council	\$	5,000
6103075	Distrib Exp-Older Adult	\$	750
6103077	Distrib Exp-Single Adult	\$	750
6103078	Distrib Exp-Young Adult	\$	2,000
6105224	Distrib Exp-Wor/Music/Arts	\$	250
	Total Disbursements	\$	<u>10,000</u>
	Surplus		

**BOARD OF GLOBAL MINISTRIES – 3400**

4903000	Distrib Rev-WS and Conf Benevolences	\$	315,000
	Total Receipts	\$	315,000
6107200	Block Grant - Heartland District	\$	25,000
6107300	Block Grant - Grand Rapids District	\$	161,000
6107400	Block Grant 0 Grand Traverse District	\$	34,000
6107500	Block Grant - Kalamazoo District	\$	18,500
6107600	Block Grant - Lansing District	\$	53,000
5133306	Town & Country	\$	1,000
5033309	UMVIM-NCJ	\$	500
5033313	Urban	\$	1,000
5033315	Volunteers in Mission	\$	3,500
5033402	Six Lanes Book	\$	1,000
5033406	Fund Development and Market Training	\$	2,000
5081139	Mission Training	\$	1,000
5120000	District Ministry Development	\$	2,000
5360000	Postage and shipping	\$	1,000
5380000	Printing	\$	200
5620000	Admin & Meetings	\$	1,000
5913000	Missionary Personnel	\$	500
5913400	CBGM Secretary	\$	500
5913406	School of Missions	\$	2,500
6107325	Mission School of the North	\$	500
5913407	Haiti Task Force	\$	3,800
5913408	Missions Promotion	\$	1,000
5800000	Miscellaneous	\$	500
	Total Disbursements	\$	<u>315,000</u>

**RACIAL ETHNIC LOCAL CHURCH COMMITTEE – 3490**

4903000	Distrib Rev-WS and Conf Benevolences	\$	95,000
	Total Receipts	\$	95,000
5030308	Grants-Washington Hgts UMC	\$	6,750
5033211	Grants-Kewadin Indian UMC	\$	9,135
5033213	Grants-Northport UMC	\$	3,724
5080000	Scholarships	\$	1,000

5120000	Program-Leadership Training	\$	521
5620000	Admin and Meetings	\$	500
5740000	Promotions	\$	500
6107306	Salem Bradley Indian Missions	\$	4,050
6107315	Distrib Exp-Salem Bradley Sr Meals	\$	13,500
6107320	Distrib Exp-LaNueva Esperanza	\$	10,000
6107323	Distrib Exp-GR Vietnamese UMC	\$	9,900
	Distrib Exp-Plainfiled	\$	3,420
6108100	Distrib Exp-Church of All Nations	\$	13,500
6108110	Distrib Exp-Lansing Faith	\$	13,500
503	NOW/Matching grants	\$	5,000
	Total Disbursements	\$	95,000

**BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND CAMPUS MINISTRY - 3600**

4903000	Distrib Rev-WS and Conf Benevolences	\$	310,000
	Total Receipts	\$	310,000
5043610	Grants-Albion College	\$	4,000
5043620	Grants-Adrian College	\$	4,000
5620000	Admin and Meetings	\$	1,380
6106026	Distrib Exp-GVUMSF/GR Youth	\$	27,540
6106200	Distrib Exp-WF Capital Fund	\$	5,000
6106208	Distrib Exp-WF CMU (1)	\$	67,020
6106212	Distrib Exp-WF MSU (1)	\$	67,020
6106216	Distrib Exp-WF WMU (1)	\$	67,020
6106222	Distrib Exp-WF FSU (1)	\$	67,020
	Total Disbursements	\$	310,000

**COMMISSION ON COMMUNICATIONS – 3040**

4903000	Distrib Rev-WS and Conf Benevolences	\$	50,000
	Total Receipts	\$	50,000
	UM News Reporter	\$	30,000
5050513	Leadership Development	\$	2,000
6105204	Distrib Rev-MARC	\$	4,500
5053001	Rethink Church	\$	2,000
5053010	Centerpiece	\$	2,885
5270000	Continuing Education	\$	1,200
5410000	Equipment Replacement	\$	900
5420000	Equipment Repair and Maintenance	\$	450
5620000	Admin and Meetings	\$	315
5820000	Web Site Administration	\$	3,500
5850000	Internet Services	\$	2,250
	Total Disbursements	\$	50,000

**CONFERENCE COUNCIL ON MINISTRIES – 3100**

4526010	Personnel Support	\$	350
4903000	Distrib Rev-WS and Conf Benevolences	\$	520,000
4905805	Distrib Rev-Youth Ministry Staff	\$	45,000
	Total Receipts	\$	565,350
5051135	New Pastors Orientation	\$	750
5200000	Payroll-Salaried Employees	\$	262,707
5210000	Payroll-Hourly Employees	\$	37,100

5213100	Casual Help	\$	500
5202100	Adjunct Staff	\$	51,294
5223101	Pension Contr-CCOM Staff	\$	19,660
5223102	Pension Contr-CCOM Support Staff	\$	7,649
5240000	FICA/Medicare Taxes	\$	17,091
5241000	Worker's Comp Insurance	\$	644
5260000	Health Insurance	\$	66,160
5270000	Continuing Education	\$	5,000
5280000	Resource Materials	\$	2,700
5340000	Telephone	\$	350
5350000	Mobile Phone	\$	3,350
5360000	Postage and Shipping	\$	1,000
5380000	Printing	\$	1,000
5400000	Office Supplies	\$	4,500
5420000	Equipment Repair and Maintenance	\$	500
5410000	Equipment Replacement	\$	2,500
5580000	Credit Card Fees	\$	100
5620000	Admin and Meetings	\$	2,000
5633110	Travel-Mileage, Conf Dir	\$	6,000
5633120	Travel-Mileage, Min Consult1	\$	11,000
5633150	Travel-Mileage, Min Consult4	\$	5,000
5643110	Travel-O/T Mileage, Conf Dir	\$	2,000
5643120	Travel-O/T Mileage Min Consult1	\$	1,500
5643150	Travel-O/T Mileage Min Consult4	\$	1,500
5800000	Miscellaneous	\$	660
5810000	Computer Services	\$	3,000
5830500	Computer Equipment	\$	3,250
5840000	Software Purchase and Support	\$	250
5850000	Internet Services	\$	400
610	Distrib Exp-Michigan Area Resource Center	\$	22,235
6105204	Distrib Rev-Conf Properties	\$	20,000
	Contingency	\$	2,000
	Total Disbursements	\$	<u>565,350</u>

**BOARD OF LAITY – 3460**

4903000	Distrib Rev-WS and Conf Benevolences	\$	3,000
	Total Receipts	\$	<u>3,000</u>

5050000	Program Disbursements		
5280000	Resource Materials		
5290000	Membership Dues		
5620000	Admin and Meetings		
5640000	Travel-O/T mileage		
	Total Disbursements	\$	<u>3,000</u>

**CONFERENCE PERSONNEL COMMITTEE - 3470**

4903000	Distrib Rev-WS and Conf Benevolences	\$	1,000
	Total Receipts	\$	<u>1,000</u>

5620000	Admin and Meetings	\$	1,000
	Total Disbursements	\$	<u>1,000</u>

**BOARD OF EVANGELISM - 3080**

4903000	Distrib Rev-WS and Conf Benevolences	\$ 5,000
	Total Receipts	<u>\$ 5,000</u>
5050000	Program Disbursements (Bechtle presentation)	
5080000	Scholarships (grants to churches)	
5620000	Admin and Meetings	
	Total Disbursements	<u><u>\$ 5,000</u></u>

**UNITED METHODIST MEN - 3085**

4903000	Distrib Rev-WS and Conf Benevolences	\$ 1,000
	Total Receipts	<u>\$ 1,000</u>
5050000	Program Disbursements	\$ 300
5081139	Program - Training	\$ 400
5280000	Resource Materials	\$ 50
5360000	Postage and Shipping	\$ 100
5380000	Printing	\$ 100
5620000	Admin & Meetings	\$ 50
	Total Disbursements	<u><u>\$ 1,000</u></u>

**HUNGER COMMITTEE - 3440**

4903000	Distrib Rev-WS and Conf Benevolences	\$ 1,500
	Total Receipts	<u>\$ 1,500</u>
5050000	Program Disbursements	\$ 700
5120000	Program-Leadership Training	\$ 400
5620000	Admin and Meetings	\$ 400
	Total Disbursements	<u><u>\$ 1,500</u></u>

**PRISON MINISTRY COMMITTEE - 3480**

4903000	Distrib Rev-WS and Conf Benevolences	\$ 5,000
	Total Receipts	<u>\$ 5,000</u>
5050000	Program Disbursements - Camp New Day	\$ 1,500
	Program Disbursements - New & existing ministries	\$ 1,700
5360000	Postage & Shipping	\$ 100
5620000	Admin and Meetings	\$ 850
5740000	Promotions	\$ 250
	Continuing Education	\$ 600
	Total Disbursements	<u><u>\$ 5,000</u></u>

**INDIAN WORKERS CONFERENCE BUDGET - 3450**

4903000	Distrib Rev-WS and Conf Benevolences	\$ 3,500
	Total Receipts	<u>\$ 3,500</u>
5050000	Program Disbursements	
5080000	Scholarships	
5620000	Admin and Meetings	
	Total Disbursements	<u><u>\$ 3,500</u></u>

**DISABILITY CONCERNS COMMITTEE - 3032**

4903000	Distrib Rev-WS and Conf Benevolences	\$ 1,000
	Total Receipts	\$ 1,000
5030000	Grants-Churches	\$ 500
5050000	Program Disbursements	\$ 200
5620000	Admin and Meetings	\$ 300
	Total Disbursements	\$ 1,000

**CONGREGATIONAL TRANSFORMATION - 3520**

4903000	Distrib Rev-WS and Conf Benevolences	\$ 5,000
	Total Receipts	\$ 5,000
5051000	Program Materials and Supplies	\$ 4,000
5050000	Program Disbursements	\$ 1,000
	Total Disbursements	\$ 5,000

**CONFERENCE EMERGING MINISTRIES - 3500**

4570000	Interest Income	
4903000	Distrib Rev-WS and Conf Benevolences	\$ -
	Total Receipts	
5030000	Grants-Churches	
	Total Disbursements	\$ -

**AMOUNT NEEDED FROM CONFERENCE BENEVOLENCES**

		\$ 1,482,500
<b>4903000</b>	<b>WS/CB Contingency Fund</b>	\$ 169,500
	Total Disbursements	\$ 4,300

**CONFERENCE COUNCIL ON MINISTRIES TOTAL BUDGET**

\$ 1,532,150

**ARCHIVES AND HISTORY COMMISSION**

We had a fairly routine year in 2009, with several meetings taking place. Major events were:

- Our Archivist, Jennifer Thomas, left the end of June for a new position as first-ever Archivist for the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in Cleveland, OH. She had been with us about 9 years and we were sorry to lose her.
- Due to limited finances in our conference and budget cuts at Albion College, it was decided to hire an administrative assistant to handle routine archival needs for us. An agreement was signed with Albion College for Stephanie Frederick to work part time (10 hours a week) for us at a cost of \$8,000 per year.
- A display was set up at Annual Conference in June, portraying the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Methodism in Michigan; and preliminary information on the 2010 North Central Jurisdiction Convocation of Archives & History at Adrian College.
- I attended the 2009 North Central Jurisdiction Convocation of Archives & History at MacMurray College, Jacksonville, IL, in July. The theme was "Commemorating 200 Years of Lincoln."
- All A&H Conference Chairs throughout the United States were invited to attend the General Commission of Archives & History at Drew University, in September. The chair of the Detroit Conference A&H, Diana Miller, and I both attended this event. In addition to the sessions, we had training specifically for our positions. We had the opportunity to attend church at John Street UMC in New York City, which was special. It is the oldest United Methodist church in the United States.

- Lois Baumer joined us as a new member this year. Officers are: Ken Gackler, Vice Chair; Dan Yakes, Secretary; Stephanie Frederick, Asst. Secretary; and Rev. David Litchfield, Treasurer. Others on the committee are Rev. David Crawford and Webb Scrivnor.
- Many of us on the commission are also involved with the Michigan Area Historical Society, and attended several of their meetings this year.
- Along with the Detroit Conference of Archives & History, we will be hosting the North Central Jurisdiction Convocation of Archives & History at Adrian College from July 5-8, 2010. The theme is: "The Methodist Anti-Slavery Connection and 200 Years of Methodism in Michigan." We will also be celebrating the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Adrian College, and the 175<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Albion College. Highlights of the convocation will include Bishop Keaton being present on opening night, and Dr. Bill Quick is scheduled to be a keynote speaker. We are excited to be hosting this special event, but know it will involve time and money.
- My eight-year term on the Archives & History Commission will end as of June 2010. It has opened me up to many exciting travels and interesting events. I wish to thank all those who have helped me with this "ministry of memory." Special acknowledgment needs to go to the late Rev. Ron Fassett, my mentor and friend.

Merna Francis, Chair

### BOARD OF CHRISTIAN CAMPING

Our camps are now doing better ministry, for more people, with less money than ever. We are passionately engaged every day in making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

How can you help? Recruit campers from your community and local church, and help them get to camp. Please work to provide scholarships, and give your repeated personal encouragement.

Our mission is to provide Christian Camping built on God's Word, rooted in Christ, nurtured by the Spirit to all God's children. The Board of Christian Camping is responsible for oversight of our five conference camps (Albright, Crystal Springs, Lake Michigan, Lakeview, and Wesley Woods) and for our relationship with our affiliate camp, Lake Louise.

#### Money

Camping is a ministry that changes thousands of lives every year, at the cost to the conference equivalent to the budget of a small church – down to \$145,000 in 2010. The continued success of camping is possible because of the work of our excellent directors, their staffs, and hundreds of volunteers, all responding to God's call to serve.

- Decreases in your Ministry Share giving have resulted in several years of budget cuts, affecting our ability to publicize, and pushing more costs onto the individual camps. Camps receive their support through camper fees, so the cost comes back to you in the end.
- Our camper fees remain significantly lower than for most other Christian camps. We have held the line against fee increases for this year, because we want to offer an experience of God's presence to as many children and youth as we can.
- Thanks to a conference motion, in 2009 we moved the expense of property insurance out of our budget and into the Conference Trustees.
- As soon as we complete a long-range planning process, we will organize a capital campaign to support many of the physical needs at our camps. Public meetings held in 2009 raised a vision of a significant endowment for scholarships, so that we can make camp even more affordable for many more young people.
- Another major concern is that four of our camp directors are only paid for half-time work, though they work very hard throughout the year, continually developing their camps. We are concerned that this is an injustice that takes advantage of their great sense of calling to this ministry.

#### Stories you ought to know.

West Michigan Conference camps have stayed far ahead of the national curve in attendance in 2009, thanks to new and innovative programming. In a year when average camp attendance across the nation shrank by 10%, several of our camps grew significantly, touching more lives than they have for many years.

- The greatest increase in the number of campers happened at **Lakeview Camp** ([www.lakeviewcamp.org](http://www.lakeviewcamp.org)), under the leadership of Mike Symons, with over 6000 vehicle nights at the camp in 2009, representing over 20,000 person-nights. Lakeview welcomes family camps, specializes in RV camping, and is adding cabins to extend their season a little further. The development of a weekly chapel service, and other special offerings of music and social occasions, combined with a strong publicity program continue a great turnaround at Lakeview, though we have not yet broken even financially.
- Jim Taylor retired as director of **Albright Camp** ([www.albrightcamp.org](http://www.albrightcamp.org)) in Fall, 2009. Now Mike Symons is splitting his time to direct Albright Camp, and working on some renovations and redevelopment of both facilities and programming, while keeping some of the specialty camps that make Albright important for ministry, including Special People and Camp New Day. The work of updating the facility has been helped along by some significant gifts.
- Under the leadership of director Jeff Parsons, **Crystal Springs** posted a five percent increase in the number of campers (over 2500 camper-nights), continuing a trend of several years. Crystal Springs offers a variety of creative short-week camps for children and youth.
- **Wesley Woods** ([www.wesleywoodscamp.com](http://www.wesleywoodscamp.com)) is engaged in a capital campaign to provide a large enough dining room and chapel to meet the needs of their many campers. Under director Ken Brown, Wesley Woods has been consistently our largest traditional youth camping site.
- **Lake Michigan Camp** ([www.lakemichigancamp.org](http://www.lakemichigancamp.org)) under Harvey Weaver continues to develop new camp programs and to upgrade facilities, while **Lake Louise** ([www.lakelouisecommunity.org](http://www.lakelouisecommunity.org)) under Vaughn Maatman has begun a significant capital campaign and a series of significant building replacements.

Please don't hesitate to contact any of these camps to find out more, and to offer help. Your church group can go and help with work at the camp, or book a retreat for the whole church.

Jeremy Williams, Chair

## BOARD OF CHURCH AND SOCIETY

The Conference Board of Church and Society has continued in its initiatives to raise awareness about issues of justice and peace in our conference and in the wider church. We have submitted petitions related to justice and peace to Annual Conference and hosted educational speakers at our Annual Conference Church and Society dinner. As well, we have recognized leaders in justice and peace with our Peace Sermon of the Year Award (Rev. Dale Hotelling, Muskegon Crestwood UMC) and our Peacemaker of the Year Award (Penny Zago, Director of the Shalom Center).

We continue to work with our counterparts in the Detroit Annual Conference on *the Keep Making Peace in Arenas of Violence* conference, and we assist in funding this event. As well, we continue to explore areas in which we can work collaboratively with the Detroit Annual Conference.

We continue to hold as a priority the support of our peace centers by providing them with funding and by supporting their work through the efforts of our Peace With Justice Coordinator. As well, we have provided grant support to Justice For Our Neighbors and other justice and peace initiatives in our conference. We also continue to try to find ways to better equip local churches for peace and justice work and build collaborative relationships with other boards and agencies in our conference and in the wider church.

As we go forward, we are focusing on a number of initiatives, including bringing together evangelism, personal piety, with missions of mercy and justice in a holistic approach to the Gospel. This effort, which we are calling "A Whole Gospel for a Whole People" will focus on work for justice and peace as a form of evangelism and as a vehicle for spiritual formation.

Kennetha J. Bigham-Tsai, Chair

## COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

Although it was a fairly quiet year in communications, we still managed to continue to strive for improved communications at all levels of the conference.

General Conference 2008 required that all annual conferences have a Director of Communications. To that end, the Personnel Committee and the Commission hired Mark Doyal as the new part time Director. Mark is a member of East Lansing University UMC. He brings an extensive background in public relations and marketing to the conference. He continues to consult with several other clients in both the public and private sectors.

Jim Searls and Mark Doyal attended the July meetings of the Brick River database management systems users group in Exeter, NH. These meetings presented valuable insights in the operation and planning of the West Michigan Conference's database and website. An outgrowth of this meeting was the decision to update the conference website to operate on a new technology platform (ASP.NET-MVC). The "flip" also allowed us to gain a new front page and the ability to re-organize the content. Jim Searls and Kay DeMoss have been hired to manage the content of the site. Both are working part-time; Kay handles the front page and Jim will manage the remainder of the site. He will also assist in training sessions of database management. Check out the new site. The address is the same: [www.westmichiganconference.org](http://www.westmichiganconference.org). If your agency or board has not been contacted by Jim Searls or Mark Doyal about your section of the website, please contact one of them.

The other major action the commission took in October was to vote to stop the support of the *Michigan Christian Advocate* as of the end of 2009. (Detroit Communications Commission also stopped funding.) This difficult decision will allow West Michigan to join with Detroit Conference in a joint publication supported by the United Methodist Reporter (UMR) out of Dallas, TX. UMR will provide national news and print four to six pages of Michigan Area news. The target date for first publication is February 2010. The new editor for this publication is R.J. Walters. It should also be noted that the *Advocate* will continue to be published with new editor Tom Ferguson replacing Ann Whiting who retired in June and has moved back to her home state of Massachusetts where she is enjoying being "grandma."

Finally, I cannot let another opportunity go by without publically, and on the record, thanking Dave Wiltse for his many years of service to the West Michigan Annual Conference. Although his job description said "Graphics Director," much of what Dave did for the conference would be very difficult to fit into that category. His friendly and open attitude made him an invaluable member of the staff but his efforts beyond *graphics* may be what will be missed most. Dave retired at the end of July 2009. We may find another artist to do graphics but we will never find another person to "be like Dave." Thanks, Dave!

Jim Searls, Chair

## COMMITTEE ON DISABILITY CONCERNS

We continue to provide information and advocacy for persons with disabilities. On occasion we have consulted with local congregations and are willing to make site visits. Our practice of offering \$50 Disability Grants continued in 2009 with 10 churches receiving such grants. We also granted two scholarships of \$35 each for persons with special needs to attend camp.

The 2009 Disability Grants were given to the following churches:

Wolf Lake – Ramp into parsonage	Hinchman – Large print hymnals
Muskegon Lakeside – Large print Bible	Oronoko – Large print hymnals
Big Rapids First – Sign language class	Traverse City Christ – Hearing assistance
Jackson Brookside – Pew cuts	Six Lakes New Life – Accessible restrooms
Paw Paw – Signs (indoor and outdoor)	St. Louis – Hearing assistance

We partnered with Harbor Springs UMC in presenting "All of God's People." That one day workshop helped 45 participants understand ministry with persons with mental illnesses.

We thank all of you who have opened up ministry by changing buildings and attitudes and challenge you to keep at it.

Curtis E. Jensen, Chair

## BOARD OF DISCIPLESHIP

The Board of Discipleship of the West Michigan Annual Conference continues to hold up the goal of leading and assisting congregations and individuals to make disciples for Jesus Christ. Christian discipleship continues through various ministries including education, small groups, single adults, older adults, family/marriage/parenting, camping and many age-related ministries. Our goal is to create cohesive, focused ministries that help our districts and churches to make disciples and build the Kingdom of God.

This past year we have continued to administer grants that have assisted our churches to provide ministry in various work areas. The most recent Family Life Grant for example was given to the Ludington UMC for a Marriage Maintenance Workshop. This grant provided for advertising costs, child care and class materials. The Board of Discipleship encourages conference and district groups, as well as local congregations, to apply for grants from this fund to assist them in supporting ministries that will benefit families.

Christian Education grants are also given to local churches in support of new educational ministries. A church can apply for a Christian Education grant for any new Christian Education ministry. Whenever a church takes a Christian Education offering it sends in 50% of the offering to the Conference Treasurer's Office and the local church keeps 50%. The monies sent to the conference provide for the local church grants.

The changing Michigan economy continues to make it difficult for individuals to attend camp. To address this problem the Board of Discipleship has provided funds to new first-time campers within our conference. The Board of Discipleship believes that Christian Camping is a life-changing event for our young people and this avenue of support is helping to provide this experience for those who may otherwise not be able to attend.

Over the past several years there have been significant changes in the makeup and work of the Board of Discipleship. These changes in leadership were circumstantial and certainly not the fault of anyone; however, they have left the board, in my best estimation, somewhat rudderless as a complete team. Individual chairs have worked hard and with passion to care for their areas of responsibility as indicated above, but an overall vision and plan for the board has yet to be well defined. We are therefore focusing in the coming year on creating this vision and direction, trusting that God's Spirit will lead and direct our efforts.

William Haggard, Chair

## CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES

Serving under the Board of Discipleship, I am excited to be appointed as the new coordinator for Children's Ministries. Throughout the churches of the West Michigan Conference, there are hundreds of vital ministries taking place for children and their families, all of which are seeking to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

During 2009 I have had the privilege of visiting three churches to provide support and encouragement to those involved in leading Children's Ministry. Looking ahead to the coming year, there are three areas which we will be focusing on: firstly, I am excited to be in the process of recruiting a team of people to help represent Children's Ministry within the West Michigan Conference; secondly, plans are underway for an exciting Children's Ministry workshop to be offered at Cornerstone Church in Caledonia as part of the Bishop's Day for Evangelism on March 13<sup>th</sup>; and thirdly, we are working on establishing a Children's Ministry presence on the West Michigan Conference website. This will not only serve as a resource tool for all those involved in leading Children's Ministry but will also assist those parents and grandparents who are looking for a church home for their children. Join me in praying for our children – that together, our churches will be a place of safety, love and learning about Jesus Christ, where we will truly 'let the children come.'

Glenys Nellist, Conference Coordinator of Children's Ministries

## THE FELLOWSHIP OF UNITED METHODISTS IN MUSIC AND WORSHIP ARTS, WEST MICHIGAN CHAPTER

The West Michigan Chapter of The Fellowship held two workshops in 2009.

The first was at University UMC, Lansing, and featured three clinicians. The theme for the weekend was Multi-Cultural Worship. Safiyah Fosua, Director of Invitational Preaching with the General Board of Discipleship Worship Division, taught a preaching workshop. Jorge Lockward worked with his class, teaching how to learn and present music from around the world. Jessica Marie Smith taught sacred dance. All three led attendees in two worship services

In the fall our workshop featured three ways worship leaders could enhance their worship. Steve Place from Cornerstone Church UMC taught through examples and talk, how to develop and prepare drama for worship. Jennie Browne explored unique worship styles using, as examples, Taizé and Jazz worship services presented at Grand Rapids First. Jane Wright focused on Inter-generational blended and engaging worship styles. Included were ways to develop your own worship from pre-existing resources. She brought examples used at her church, Kalamazoo Westwood UMC.

Joseph R. Jennings, President

### **CONFERENCE COUNCIL ON YOUTH MINISTRIES**

The Conference Council on Youth Ministries (CCOYM) kept busy in 2009 with a number of meetings and events. Quarterly meetings were held in Mt. Pleasant, Alba, Grand Rapids and East Lansing. We hosted the annual Confirmands' Rally at Albion College in March, and in April we held our second annual "Spring Splash" event at the Boyne Mountain Resort. Several new members for district youth councils were recruited at this event. The success of the Love Links fundraiser for the Youth Service Fund (YSF) continued at Annual Conference, and we returned to Wesley Woods for our annual Youth Assembly camp where district and conference council members completed and were certified as Lay Speakers. Our youth continue to grow in their faith and as leaders.

Unfortunately the CCOYM has experienced much transition and some decline in recent years. Twenty summers ago we could count on the Youth Assembly camp to average at least 160 people (youth and adults). Ten years ago that number had declined to roughly eighty people. This past summer we struggled to meet 50. The organization has experienced massive turnover among the adult ranks, both on a district level and with the conference leadership in the past few years. This past November we were informed that our dedicated Ministry Consultant position (held by Jana Lynn Almeida) was being eliminated, with her legislated responsibilities to be transitioned to the last remaining Ministry Consultant, Naomi García.

As conference coordinators, we are very concerned by the situation, and we are hopeful and encouraged by the support that we have received as we begin the process of determining where to lead this organization in the coming years. We appreciate the input of the "unofficial" CCOM youth ministry task force and are excited by the opportunity that working with Naomi provides. We believe that her talents will be helpful as we work towards discerning the purpose of the CCOYM in the twenty-first century and determine the action steps that need to be taken to realize that vision. The potential for spiritual and leadership development for our conference youth and their leaders is great and we hope that you will encourage the youth and adults of your local congregations to get involved in this process.

John Holland and Joy Mills, Conference Youth Coordinators

### **EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS COMMITTEE**

Again this year we have been fortunate that we have not had any major disasters in West Michigan. This year was a year of training as we have trained 25 persons in Disaster Response. We now have a total of 38 persons trained in West Michigan in Disaster Response. We also have a trainer in West Michigan who will go to any area to train persons in Disaster Response. We also have local churches that are becoming churches who will respond to local disasters. This is a Connecting Neighbors program that is sponsored by UMCOR. This program is located on the West Michigan website under Local Church Guide. It is a program designed to help a local church to be an effective participant in local disasters as well being effective in a disaster that involves the local church such as a fire or flood or tornado. This committee would like to see every local church be a Connecting Neighbors church. We have been working to get the trailer completed and thanks to people who donated items for the trailer. We are still looking for a vehicle to pull the trailer as this is essential in a disaster. We are looking forward to the coming year to have more persons trained in Emergency Response and to having more churches become a part of Connecting Neighbors.

Don E. Tippin, Disaster Response Coordinator and Emergency Preparedness Committee Chair

### **COMMISSION ON EQUITABLE COMPENSATION**

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

In 2009 a total of 21 charges, representing 28 churches received \$175,795 in direct financial assistance from the Commission on Equitable Compensation for support of pastoral compensation. Grants ranged from as little as \$1,358 to as much as \$33,872, with an average grant of \$7,650 per charge. Of the \$175,795 in total grants, an estimated \$111,571 or 63.5% of the total went to Racial/Ethnic/Missional churches that will likely remain on Equitable Compensation beyond the five-year conference guideline.

On the whole for 2009 the Commission was under budget, though Ministry Share shortfalls will likely leave us in deficit. (The final Ministry Share Income report was pending at the time of this report.) While the commission was able to remain within its budget for 2009 by working closely with the Cabinet, the budget was tighter this year due to increased requests and emerging needs. However, given the current economic climate in our state, we celebrate having been able to meet the needs of churches while remaining within our budget.

Beginning in 2009 the Commission was more intentional about paying attention to the rate of payment of Ministry Shares from congregations receiving Equitable Compensation support. Though we are awaiting a final report at this time, the initial reports were disappointing. Several churches receiving support had paid less than 10% of their Ministry Shares at the end of the third quarter, and several were behind by two or more months. Though we understand that the same economic conditions that create the need for Equitable Compensation support are often behind the failure to pay Ministry Shares in full, the Commission has endeavored to make clear to churches that full payment of Ministry Shares is expected since that is the means by which Equitable Compensation is made possible. It is likely that the Commission will propose adding a statement regarding the expectation of full payment of Ministry Shares to the conference guidelines in 2010, and will likely include permissive language that, in consultation with the D.S. and/or Cabinet, would allow for the reduction or elimination of Equitable Compensation grants to churches/charges that are not meeting their conference obligations.

On that note, the Commission extends our thanks to those many churches that are faithful in fully paying their Ministry Shares, thus making our continued work of Equitable Compensation possible as we seek to support local churches in making disciples for Jesus Christ.

## EQUITABLE COMPENSATION 2009 SUMMARY

CHURCH/CHARGE	ACCOUNT	ITEM	AMOUNT	TOTAL
<b>ALBION DISTRICT:</b>				
Washington Heights	1110-5051101	Salary	3,660.00	3,660.00
Three Rivers First	1110-5051101	Salary	7,000.00	7,000.00
Galesburg 1/1-6/30	1110-5051101	Salary	378.00	378.00
Hillside 7/1-12/31	1110-5051101	Salary	1,358.00	1,358.00
Nineth St 7/1-12/31	1110-5051101	Salary	1,550.00	1,550.00
Constantine	1110-5051101	Salary	5,000.00	5,000.00
Quincy	1110-5051101	Salary	4,500.00	4,500.00
<b>DISTRICT TOTAL</b>				<b>\$23,446.00</b>
<b>CENTRAL DISTRICT:</b>				
Chippewa Indian Mission	1110-5051101	Salary	7,000.00	7,000.00
<b>DISTRICT TOTAL</b>				<b>\$7,000.00</b>
<b>GRAND RAPIDS DISTRICT:</b>				
Church of All Nations (Adjusted in July)	1110-5051101	Salary	3,000.00	3,000.00
La Nueva Esperanza	1110-5051101	Salary	15,000.00	15,000.00
Salem/Bradley Indian Mission	1110-5051101	Salary	10,000.00	10,000.00
GR Vietnamese	1110-5051101	Salary	17,000.00	17,000.00
Crestwood 1/1-4/30 & 7/1-12/31	1110-5051101	Salary	7,680.00	7,680.00
<b>DISTRICT TOTAL</b>				<b>\$52,680.00</b>
<b>GRAND TRAVERSE DISTRICT:</b>				
Baldwin Covenant Community	1110-5051101	Salary	15,000.00	15,000.00
TC Christ	1110-5051101	Salary	1,333.00	1,333.00
Kewadin Indian Mission	1110-5051101	Salary	33,872.00	33,872.00
Greensky Hill	1110-5051101	Salary	2,700.00	2,700.00
Pine River Parish	1110-5051101	Salary	3,500.00	3,500.00
WERK _ Williamsburg	1110-5051101	Salary	8,000.00	8,000.00
Traverse Bay 1/1 - 7/31	1110-5051101	Salary	1,750.00	1,750.00
Harrietta UMC 1/1 - 7/31	1110-5051101	Salary	1,575.00	1,575.00
Mesick UMC 1/1-7/31	1110-5051101	Salary	1,050.00	1,050.00
<b>DISTRICT TOTAL</b>				<b>\$68,780.00</b>
<b>KALAMAZOO DISTRICT:</b>				
Galien	1110-5051101	Salary	1,782.00	1,782.00
Olive Branch	1110-5051101	Salary	1,782.00	1,782.00
Cassopolis 7/1-12/31	1110-5051101	Salary	3,660.00	3,660.00
<b>DISTRICT TOTAL</b>				<b>\$7,224.00</b>
<b>LANSING DISTRICT:</b>				
Dimondale 1/1-6/30	1110-5051101	Salary	4,000.00	4,000.00
Country Chapel	1110-5051101	Salary	9,091.00	9,091.00
Grovenburg 1/1 - 6/30	1110-5051101	Salary	5,092.00	5,092.00
<b>DISTRICT TOTAL</b>				<b>\$18,183.00</b>
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>				<b>\$177,313.00</b>

David F. Hills, Chair

## BOARD OF EVANGELISM

The Board of Evangelism is working with Professor Leicester R. Longden, Ph.D. Assoc. Professor of Evangelism & Discipleship at the University of Dubuque Theological Seminary in developing a comprehensive evangelism strategy for the West Michigan Conference.

Edward Ross, Chair

## COUNCIL ON FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

The *BOOK OF DISCIPLINE* mandates the Council on Finance and Administration the responsibility to be the steward of the financial and administrative affairs of the conference. That responsibility includes the annual audit of the conference finances, and the audited financial report is published in Volume 2 of the Conference Journal.

*Thank You, West Michigan!*

The Council appreciates the fine efforts of our churches in paying their Ministry Shares which represent our financial commitment to the shared mission and ministry of the West Michigan Conference and The United Methodist Church, locally and globally in the midst of the financial challenges facing our churches due to the rising unemployment in the State and the turbulent economy in general. Actual receipts represented 91.6% of the conference budget, compared to last year's 92.6%. Two hundred sixty churches representing 62.7% of all our churches paid 100% or more, and 17 of these churches contributed more than 100% of their Ministry Shares. These figures show a downtrend from last year's 300 churches and 50 churches, respectively.

The Council is grateful for the financial stewardship of our conference agencies in reducing expenses which enabled the Conference to fulfill **100% of all general church apportionments** leaving a contingency reserve of \$174,000. This action by the CFA reflects and models the commitment of our churches to support our shared mission and ministries as a connectional denomination. The West Michigan Conference is committed to support the mission and ministry of The United Methodist Church world wide to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world!

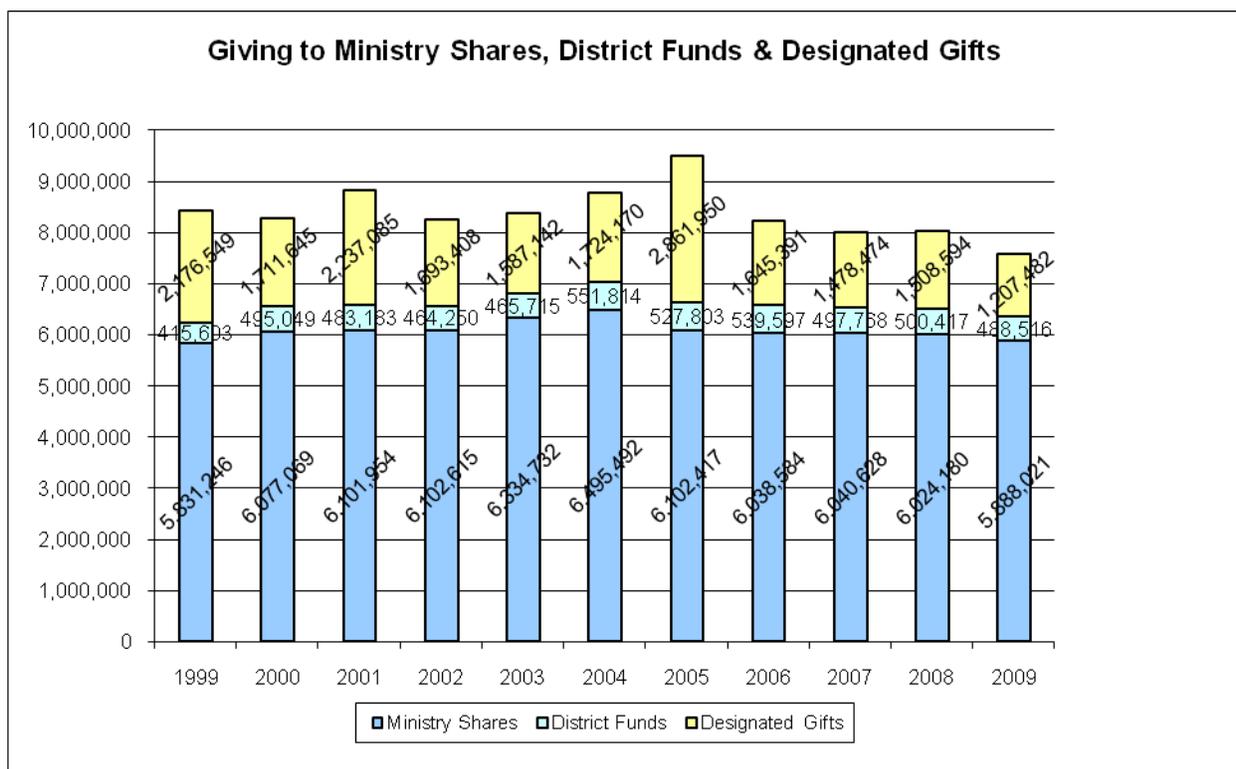
We continue with the conference budgeting process by involving all responsible conference agencies. The process includes opportunities for direct discussions between CFA representatives and agencies about budget concerns.

### Summary of Giving By District

The Grand Rapids District led the conference in percentage giving to ministry shares followed by Albion District. Below are the charts showing the 2008 financial giving (percentages are compared to conference and district budget):

<b>MINISTRY SHARES &amp; DISTRICT MINISTRIES FUNDS GIVING</b>		<u>12/31/07</u>	<u>12/31/08</u>	<u>12/31/09</u>
	Ministry Shares & District Funds			
CONFERENCE	Paid	\$6,538,396	\$6,524,597	\$6,376,538
	% Paid	89.3%	85.8%	84.2%
	Special Giving	\$1,478,474	\$1,508,595	\$1,207,482
ALBION	Remittances Year To Date	\$846,016	\$892,651	\$918,820
	% Paid	84.0%	86.2%	89.1%
	Special Giving	\$175,924	\$177,478	\$154,186
HEARTLAND	Remittances Year To Date	\$701,797	\$721,112	\$709,706
	% Paid	86.4%	85.6%	81.6%
	Special Giving	\$166,158	\$168,013	\$154,321

GRAND	Remittances Year To Date	\$1,654,996	\$1,706,839	\$1,729,108
RAPIDS	% Paid	89.9%	89.3%	89.9%
	Special Giving	\$416,211	\$494,002	\$337,898
GRAND	Remittances Year To Date	\$901,502	\$843,740	\$817,045
TRAVERSE	% Paid	92.3%	82.2%	82.3%
	Special Giving	\$188,037	\$183,846	\$154,785
KALAMAZOO	Remittances Year To Date	\$1,154,893	\$1,154,453	\$1,065,505
	% Paid	87.4%	84.0%	78.5%
	Special Giving	\$306,737	\$292,956	\$237,917
LANSING	Remittances Year To Date	\$1,279,192	\$1,205,802	\$1,136,354
	% Paid	93.7%	85.3%	81.2%
	Special Giving	\$225,407	\$192,300	\$168,375
SPECIAL GIVING		<u>12/31/07</u>	<u>12/31/08</u>	<u>12/31/09</u>
1.	Camp Endowment Campaign	\$676	\$1,112	\$574
2.	Christian Education Sunday Offering	6,918	5,879	4,938
3.	Racial Ethnic Local Church Sunday Offering	7,751	5,091	6,288
4.	Human Relations Day Offering	14,116	17,088	14,861
5.	Rural Life Sunday	7,902	5,990	6,112
6.	Peace With Justice Sunday	11,454	15,290	12,205
7.	Camp Sunday	10,472	8,759	7,307
8.	Native American Ministry Sunday	17,159	17,065	16,672
9.	Golden Cross Sunday Offering	9,142	8,158	7,054
10.	United Methodist Student Day Offering	11,106	9,158	9,713
11.	World Communion Offering	22,528	19,143	19,031
12.	One Great Hour of Sharing	99,357	79,581	81,130
13.	Africa University Endowment Fund	2,106	1,289	2,894
14.	World Missionary Support	212,625	197,157	181,772
15.	World Mission Projects	95,700	98,072	83,952
16.	United Methodist Children's Fund	1,354	719	176
17.	National Missions	75,589	66,491	69,137
19.	Appalachia Service Project	1,227	0	140
20.	U.M.C.O.R.	606,115	580,504	453,073
21.	Ethnic Ministries	47,206	27,023	27,483
22.	Conference Ministries	204,685	321,515	193,217
23.	Other Benevolences	<u>13,286</u>	<u>23,511</u>	<u>9,753</u>
	TOTAL SPECIAL GIVING	\$1,478,474	\$1,508,595	\$1,207,482
	TOTAL GIVING	\$8,016,870	\$8,033,192	\$7,584,020

**History of Giving:**

<u>Year</u>	<u>Ministry Shares</u>	<u>District Funds</u>	<u>Designated Gifts</u>	<u>Total Giving</u>	<u>% Min Shares Budget Paid</u>
1999	5,831,246	415,603	2,127,102	8,373,951	93.0%
2000	6,077,069	495,049	1,695,898	8,268,016	93.0%
2001	6,101,954	483,183	2,229,571	8,814,708	89.8%
2002	6,102,615	464,250	1,686,198	8,253,063	87.5%
2003	6,334,732	465,715	1,585,979	8,386,426	87.2%
2004	6,495,492	551,814	1,724,170	8,771,476	85.1%
2005	6,102,417	527,803	2,861,950	9,492,170	89.5%
2006	6,038,584	539,597	1,645,391	8,223,572	93.4%
2007	6,040,628	497,768	1,478,474	8,016,870	92.6%
2008	6,024,180	500,417	1,508,594	8,033,191	91.9%
2009	5,888,021	488,516	1,207,482	7,584,019	87.9%

On behalf of the council members, we acknowledge with great appreciation the support of the cabinet and the faithfulness of our churches. We also take this opportunity to express appreciation for the commitment of Council members: Sue Cobb (Vice Pres.), Charles Frayer, Diane Gordon (Secretary), Patti Harpole, Nolan Hudson, Joe Huston, Dave Lundquist, Susan MacGregor, David Morris, Rex Schad, Patrick Tiedt, Tom Vogeler, Patty Watson, Youth Reps Kaleb Batten and Erika Jenks, Jerry DeVine (Cabinet Rep), Wayne Barrett, Terry Euper and Bishop Jonathan Keaton. Thanks be to God, from whom all blessings flow!

Dale Kimball, President, Council on Finance and Administration  
Pros Tumonong, Conference Treasurer

## BOARD OF GLOBAL MINISTRIES

I write this report late, my procrastination taking me into the third week of January. Haiti has been hit hard by a massive earthquake and the world is responding. The United Methodist Church is there...and was there. Leaders from the General Board of Global Ministries lost their lives and others were injured while staying in Port-au-Prince checking on United Methodist mission programs. The Body broken...and given life. Our local churches are responding with dollars from very tight Michigan budgets. They are seeking ways to go as soon as possible to VIM projects of restoration. They are putting together Health and Cleaning Buckets, and sending emergency kits. We are best, it seems, in the face of emergency, thanks be to God!

It is the normal, the everyday work of the church in mission that struggles right now. The Ministry Shares for 2009 were such that we had to work our way through two mid-year budget cuts, shared across Conference Council on Ministries boards and agencies. The Conference Board of Global Ministries (CBGM) essentially decided that programs to heighten missions awareness and to challenge new district ministries would have to be sidelined so that we were able to keep the budget promises made to six districts which in turn fund 37 local church and community ministries throughout our conference. We remain grateful for the work of the districts and the ministries that are living, moving, and having their being in the midst of the greatest of need.

The funding difficulties do not get any easier. We look to our 2010 budget and note with deep sorrow that for the first time the Conference Board of Global Ministries will not be funding Health and Welfare Ministries with which we have had long term relationships. Clark Community, Methodist Children's Home Society, and Bronson Hospital will not be funded by CBGM in 2010. It is our commitment, though, to work with them to push the Golden Cross offering in our local churches. The elimination of these ministries from conference funding indicates the commitment of the Board of Global Ministries to continue the strength of funding through District Block Grants and through the encouragement of mission education and new mission development.

I remind you of the core truth the West Michigan Board of Global Ministries utilizes in our conversations, planning and funding.

"You are a missionary ...

- sent by Christ and empowered by the Holy Spirit
- serving in response to human need
- strengthened through connection to others
- seeking personal and communal health and wholeness
- shaping disciples and being shepherds for the transformation of the world."

In closing, I again express appreciation for the many sub-groups of the board involved in mission at all corners, from Volunteers-in-Mission, to Urban and Town & Country focus groups, to the Detroit-West Michigan Haiti Task Force, to our Mission Personnel team and more. The Body, broken and distributed, continues to offer sustenance to fractured areas of the conference, while reaching out in Christ's name to all the world.

Barry T. Petrucci, Chair

## CLARK RETIREMENT COMMUNITY

Clark Retirement Community begins its 104th year of operation, continuing to live out its mission of "creating a community of dignity, compassion and respect centered on the lives of older adults and those who care for them." Beginning as a residence for retired Methodist ministers and their spouses, donated by Melvin and Emily Clark, today Clark is a community of 452 residents, 372 on our Franklin Street campus and 80 on our Clark on Keller Lake campus. Clark offers a full continuum of care, which includes independent living, assisted living, short-term rehabilitation, dementia care and skilled nursing.

Clark promises each resident the same high level of care regardless of longevity or ability to pay once personal financial resources have been depleted. Our Benevolent Care Fund serves the purpose of making up the difference between care cost and resources from personal and governmental support, and is dependent upon gifts and bequests for funding. During our fiscal year ending April 30, 2009, 67 residents depended upon benevolent care at the cost of \$1,180,723.

During FY2009, Clark completed the renovation of the Main Dining Room on its Franklin Street campus and the dining rooms of Oxford Manor and Windsor Manor at Clark on Keller Lake. These projects were funded primarily by contributions from resident donors, foundations and a few churches. The rehabilitation services area was expanded by one household, as these services are becoming a growing source of revenue and resident recruitment. *Clark at Home*, Clark's home and community-based services, continues to expand, now accredited and Medicare certified. *Samara Woods*, Clark's proposed new 104-unit residential facility on the Clark on Keller Lake property, began marketing efforts in hopes to begin construction in 2011.

Expanded services in dementia care continue to distinguish Clark as a leader in this field of specialized care. An area of the Franklin campus was redesigned for residences for those with early stage dementia, complemented with new program offerings. Clark is the first care community in the United States to receive accreditation for its dementia care specialty program.

Clark's budget for 2009 totaled \$19.2 million. Contributions to its Benevolent Care Fund and special projects totaled \$812,000.

Glenn Lowe, Clark Foundation Director  
Robert J. Perl, Executive Director

### **CONFERENCE SECRETARIES OF GLOBAL MINISTRIES**

West Michigan churches hosted four missionaries in 2009: Gordon Graner (Bolivia), John and Suzanne Funk (Bolivia) and Helen Sheperd (Mongolia).

The 2009 Annual Conference Board of Global Ministries speaker was Chris Heckert from the General Board of Global Ministries who talked about emerging opportunities in mission enabled by growing worldwide communication technologies. He used examples of missionaries communicating with sponsoring churches through e-mail, blogs and websites, which makes telling the story more immediate and personal.

Andrew Highland, church and community worker assigned to Looking Glass Community Ministries, moved from Michigan. Susan Reed, Church and Community worker serving at Justice for our Neighbors in Grand Rapids and Holland, left that post when her baby was born early in 2009. Currently personnel of the General Board serve neither position.

Phil Beal, retired missionary living in Holland, MI, died June 30, 2009. He and his wife, Kathy, served in Singapore and Korea. Beth Ferrell, the Missionary in Residence for the North Central Jurisdiction, was a guest at School of Mission held in July at Albion College. Health issues forced General Secretary Ed Paup to resign on September 1<sup>st</sup>. The General Board of Global Ministries closed their job search in November and will announce the new General Secretary early in 2010.

I was appointed late in the year 2009 as your new Conference Secretary of Global Ministries. I look forward to serving the West Michigan Conference in this new capacity. I also look forward to this new emphasis in my own ministry. The General Board of Global Ministries is going through a period of restructure; I will be updated on those changes in March.

The West Michigan Conference has a strong reputation throughout the denomination as being a very strong one for missions. It is with great humility that I take on this position and it is with great appreciation that I follow Kay and Lynn DeMoss as they have continued to offer their wisdom and guidance.

Jon L. Pohl, Conference Secretary of Global Ministries

### **CONFERENCE COMMITTEE ON MISSION PERSONNEL (CCMP)**

The Committee on Mission Personnel acts on behalf of the Missionary Personnel Office of the General Board of Global Ministries and exists to:

- 1) Respond to persons inquiring about missionary service;
- 2) Meet with inquirers who may wish more information about service;
- 3) Formally interview those who apply to be missionaries;
- 4) Make recommendations to the General Board regarding interviewees.

During 2009 the committee responded to e-mails and phone calls from pastors and laity seeking information, but had no formal interviews to conduct.

Contrary to the impression held by some, the General Board does indeed send out missionaries. The moratorium on sending missionaries that was prompted by an earlier financial crunch has been lifted and

missionaries are being recruited, trained and sent out once again. In this quadrennium, the General Board is committed to raising \$600,000 in order to send out missionaries.

Candidates for missionary service are required to have a Bachelor's degree, although under certain circumstances exceptions may be made. It helps if a candidate has a professional degree, certification or special skill (in health care, community development, teaching, agriculture, etc.) needed on the field. It is also a good thing if the candidate speaks a language in addition to English.

Application forms and information about missionary service may be found on the board website which is [www.gb-gm-umc.org](http://www.gb-gm-umc.org).

Lynn A. DeMoss, Chair

### **METHODIST CHILDREN'S HOME SOCIETY**

Methodist Children's Home Society has been providing care for Michigan's children since 1917. Annually, Methodist Children's Home Society provides assistance to hundreds of children and families through its core programs.

The residential treatment program provides intensive treatment for 70 boys ages 6-17. Staff works to provide each child with counseling and assistance in overcoming the effects of physical, emotional and sexual abuse. "Children's Village", as it is known, served 119 children and families during 2009.

Licensed foster care is furnished for children, birth through age 17, who have been temporarily removed from their homes. A loving, caring environment is provided by foster parents in a family atmosphere for infants and older children who are waiting for a chance to return home or to be adopted. This past year, Methodist Children's Home Society foster homes cared for 113 young people. During 2009, foster care staff responded to 314 inquiries related to foster care.

Every attempt is made to reunite children in our care with their birth families. Because this is not always an option, we identify adoptive families and place children into loving, permanent homes. Methodist Children's Home Society adoption workers placed 42 children during 2009 and responded to 49 inquiries about adoption.

In 1992, Methodist Children's Home Society developed BookPartners, an after-school mentoring program in Jackson. Children receive individual attention from volunteer mentors who develop an individualized approach to reading that is centered on the interests of the child. The success of this program led to the establishment of additional programs in 2004. The additional programs are located in Shaftsbury and Howard City. Volunteers worked with 25 students in our Jackson program, 10 students in Shaftsbury and 4 in Howard City last year. Methodist Children's Home Society is continuing to expand the number of mentoring programs.

The Board of Directors and staff are proud of the agency's long tradition of caring for children in need and we value our connection to both the West Michigan and Detroit Conferences of The United Methodist Church through which we carry out our ministry based on Christ's words in Matthew 19:14:

"But Jesus said, Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them;  
for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven."

Neil Wester, President

M. Beth Tarquinio, MSSA, LMSW, Executive Director

### **SCHOOL OF CHRISTIAN MISSION**

The West Michigan Conference School of Christian Mission is a cooperative event sponsored by the Conference United Methodist Women and the Conference Board of Global Ministries.

A four-day School was held July 21-24, and Drive-In-Day was held July 25, 2009, at Albion College.

The spiritual growth study was "Food and Faith" led by Rev. Daniel Hofmann. The geographic study was "The Beauty and Courage of Sudan" led by Diane Allarding, Rev. Dr. Joseph Perez and Joanne Perez. The social action issue was "Giving Our Hearts Away: Native American Survival" led by Rev. Michelle Lacock. Rev. Dr. Jana Lynn Almeida was the Youth Leader, and Mary Margaret Willbanks led the Kids' School.

As a special feature one evening, Beth Ferrell, Mission Interpreter in Residence for the North Central Jurisdiction, told us stories of her 16 years in Mozambique and in Sierra Leone establishing health centers and community-based health projects. It was an inspiring talk.

Our mission project was to collect non-perishable food items for a local food bank. Twenty-three bags weighing a total of 189 pounds were delivered to the Community Cupboard of Albion Interfaith Ministries.

John Williams, Dean 2008-2010

### **UNITED METHODIST COMMUNITY HOUSE**

While individuals are being forced to do less with less, United Methodist Community House (UMCH) is challenged to do more with less. We are seeing more children needing quality childcare; more youth struggling to succeed in school; more teens who are walking the line between a life of promise or despair; more women caught in the vicious cycle of prostitution and substance abuse; more families seeking a different future for their children; and more seniors who can't possibly do any less with less.

Many of the families we serve are in dire situations not by choices they have made, but merely by the circumstances of birth. Most families are truly trying to do their best with limited abilities and resources. UMCH served over 1,200 participants in 2009 and the ethnic breakdown consisted of 14% Caucasian, 76% African American, 7% Hispanic and 3% other. Approximately 90% of individuals served fall into an income level below the federal poverty guidelines. Currently, UMCH is experiencing a waiting list for many services.

In December, 2008, United Methodist Community House was informed that the playground equipment that was installed in 1992 no longer met licensing standards and therefore was not safe for the children in our Child Development Center to play on. The safety of the children we serve is our top priority. Therefore, in February 2009 the playground equipment was removed. A ribbon cutting event was held in August to celebrate the rebuilding of this playground equipment (required by NAEYC Accreditation).

For Summer Camp 2009, United Methodist Community House was selected to be this community's main camp operator and had access to a 120-acre woodland, full-service day camp. Camp Optimist provided such amenities as a pool and pool house, basketball court, baseball diamond, full-service lodge, amphitheatre and nature trails. For over 50 years, UMCH has offered a Summer Camp experience for the youth from the inner city neighborhood, that otherwise may not have had such opportunities. With the use of Camp Optimist, the agency's youth participants had the opportunity to experience a traditional summer day camp environment.

Unfortunately, as stated by the Governor's Executive Order, an array of Department of Human Services (DHS) funded programs had an elimination, reduction or percentage cuts for the 08/09 fourth quarter. For UMCH, this includes family formation grants, Before and After School Programs, Marriage Initiatives and Fatherhood Initiatives. Once the Governor's action took effect June 30, 2009 (prior to the fiscal year fourth quarter), UMCH Center for Family Development witnessed a reduction of our evidenced-based programming by up to 50%.

On a positive note, UMCH has the opportunity to continue Family Development services and programs through the Michigan Prisoner Re-Entry Initiative, which will begin in 2010 and provide Family Support Services to inmates who are being released.

The Senior Development Department has extended its hours of operation. We now have a morning session from 9:30 to 11:30 AM and an afternoon session from 12:00 to 3:00 PM. We have been able to partner with even more organizations to enhance our existing program activities and services. Because of the particular health issues and concerns of our seniors, we are focusing on health education and have established several new partnerships to bring increased health education information to our program participants.

In December 2009, the UMCH Board of Directors announced that Ms. Sharon Killebrew Boyce resigned from her position as the agency's Executive Director.

UMCH continues to meet the needs of the community it serves by filling gaps in services while maintaining current programming. In 2010, we look forward to the opportunity to continue to be a "Lifeline for a Lifetime" in our community.

Sandy Sefton, Board of Directors President

### **UNITED METHODIST METROPOLITAN MINISTRY OF GRAND RAPIDS**

Metro Ministry's mission (March 2006) is *to inspire and equip United Methodists to serve Christ in transforming the greater Grand Rapids area.*

In 2009 Metro continued its ongoing and effective partnership with the Grand Rapids District Office. The Urban Ministries Task Force continues to work closely with Grand Rapids urban churches facing

challenges that include burdensome building repair/maintenance, declining or impoverished membership and inadequate buildings.

On February 4, 2009, St. Paul's UMC hosted a gathering led by the Rev. Dr. Eugene Blair, of the Detroit Conference, for area United Methodists interested in an African-American new church start in Grand Rapids. Since that time the task force has decided to put this initiative on the "back burner" because of urgent challenges for existing urban Grand Rapids churches.

GR First UMC hosted a "Clusters Gathering" exploring Dr. Robert Linthicum's model for cooperative churches on February 7, 2009. We identified some weaknesses in the model for Grand Rapids, so found a great alternative in United Methodist-based "Communities of Shalom." This led to a "Shalom Workshop" on April 15, 2009, at Trinity UMC conducted by national Shalom trainer, Dr. J.P. Duncan.

As a result of interest generated at the April workshop, by early October 2009, four Grand Rapids area Shalom groups had submitted applications to Drew University and were approved as official Communities of Shalom. The Initial Consultation and Training are set to begin in February 2010 and be completed by mid June 2010.

The Second Annual GR Metro Worship Service was held on Sunday, May 17, 2009, at Wyoming Park UMC. Because of diminishing attendance, we are planning an alternative all-day "ReThink Event" in August 2010.

Metro coordinated a citywide electronics recycling drive on June 20, 2009, as part of its Interfaith Sustainability Group. In partnership with CompRenew, we recycled almost 14,000 pounds of electronic waste, none of which was sent to landfill.

In 2009 Metro Ministry launched two new funds as sources of grants to be used to transform urban communities: "The Greater Grand Rapids Urban Ministry Fund" and "The Ron Fassett Fund for Justice." The Urban Ministry Fund consists of proceeds from the sale of the former GR Oakdale UMC parsonage and church building. This fund is restricted, by United Methodist *Discipline*, to use within the greater Grand Rapids area. However, The Fassett Fund, established in honor of former Metro Director and justice advocate, the late Rev. Ron Fassett, may be used anywhere in the West Michigan Conference.

Metro Forum continues to be a fellowship opportunity for GR area United Methodist pastors to share a catered lunch around one table with a local civic, church or business leader.

Susan J. Hansen, Executive Director

### **VOLUNTEER IN MISSION (VIM)**

The Communities of Faith of the West Michigan Conference reported 35 teams, comprised of 490 people who worked at domestic sites in the continental U.S. In addition, another 10 teams were sent to international sites and comprised 62 people. We appreciate that volunteers in mission also work in their local communities by providing service and support to their local communities with work in extended care facilities, food pantries, Habitat for Humanity Affiliates and other outreach opportunities. We appreciate the relationship and communication we have with the North Central Jurisdiction to connect interested parties with teams from other conferences. There is increased movement toward individuals becoming Individual Volunteers, taking positions of leadership at mission opportunities for up to two years.

In 2010 we will be reorganizing the Volunteer in Mission task force to incorporate at least one interested person from each VIM team sent in 2009.

David L. Morton, Volunteer in Mission Coordinator

### **BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND CAMPUS MINISTRY**

The Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministry provided support and monitoring to five campus ministries and two chaplaincy programs in 2009. Their reports with details of mission outreach trips, campus activities, recruitment and the strengthening of governing boards as well as the outreach to surrounding congregation are listed below. In April of 2010, the board will continue the evaluation process with site visits to Central Michigan University Wesley Foundation, Kalamazoo Area Wesley Foundation, Michigan State University Wesley Foundation, Ferris State University Wesley House and Grand Valley State University Wesley House now open on the south edge of the GVSU Allendale campus.

Anne Soles, Chair

**ADRIAN COLLEGE**

An independently administered survey found that over 250 students participate in the Adrian College Chaplaincy. This is no surprise. There are ten different spiritual life groups on campus and weekly chapel services. There are also special educational programs, studies, opportunities to serve, and campus-wide emphases sponsored by the Chaplain's Office. Our staff includes one chaplain, a part-time minister of music, and eleven student ministers. Chaplain Chris Momany teaches as a member of the philosophy/religion department and publishes in both academic and popular church journals.

The Adrian College Chaplaincy is grounded in an indigenous theology – a theology that gave rise to our college 150 years ago. Our founder, Rev. Asa Mahan, believed in the sacred dignity of every person. He often described this dignity as “intrinsic worth.” Such conviction drove Adrian College’s fight against slavery in the years before the Civil War. This living conviction drives our current witness against “human trafficking” or modern-day slavery.

Today there are 27 million people held as property throughout the world. This abuse exists in our nation and in our state, too. The Adrian College Chaplaincy, along with faculty colleagues and, especially, students intends to end slavery in all its forms. Among many initiatives, we invite the church’s mobilization to pass pending anti-trafficking legislation in the Michigan Senate. It seems absurd to need new laws against owning people, but this legislation would define various expressions of “trafficking,” clarify penalties for those convicted of the crime, and address issues of restitution for survivors. House Bills 5575, 5576, 5577, 5578, and 5579 have multi-partisan support but must make it to the governor’s desk. Please join us by contacting your senator, and urge support of these bills. They may be found online at [www.legislature.mi.gov](http://www.legislature.mi.gov).

The love of Jesus compels us to act for human dignity.

Each year Adrian College provides more than \$800,000 in grants/scholarships to United Methodist students. For more information, contact Dr. Chris Momany, Adrian College Chaplain, at 517-265-5161, ext. 4211. To tour the campus and meet with an admissions representative, call 800-877-2246 or 517-265-5161.

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

**ALBION COLLEGE**

In 2009, Albion College nurtured disciples of Jesus Christ in a number of ways. Most importantly, Albion College offered the grace of God through a unique educational ministry.

Funds from the West Michigan Conference supported a vital spiritual life program at Albion College. In Christian life, weekly student-led Christian worship, along with strong connections with the area congregations, offered the campus many ways to be fed. Bible studies, service, leadership development, and innovative educational programs also helped nurture the Christian body on campus. Wesley Fellowship (student organization) continued to be a strong home for nurturing United Methodist faith development.

In 2009, disciples were made through leadership development:

- Nurturing Christian unity and leadership continued to be a central focus of spiritual life. Perhaps the best example was with the Christian living-learning program entering its seventh year of communion and leadership development. Students from diverse Christian backgrounds (including United Methodist) chose once again to live together, to learn about the depth and breadth of the Christian body.
- Albion had a vital ministry with students from under-represented backgrounds, and the Office of the Chaplain has continued to be a prominent campus leader for diversity efforts.
- Albion’s spiritual life leadership team continued to further integrate issues of faith and spirituality into the ethos of the College, and included strong leadership from United Methodist students.
- Twenty students participated in the interfaith pre-ministry interest group, including graduates who entered seminary, mission, and ministry teaching positions.

In 2009, disciples were made through one-to-one pastoral care and spiritual mentoring. The College Chaplain worked with those who had suffered tragedy, loss, and abuse (including leading a bereavement support group), and provided spiritual mentoring and discernment for individuals and groups seeking calling.

In the fall of 2009, Dr. Donna Randall entered her third year as Albion College's President. While adjusting to new economic realities, Dr. Randall and Albion College have continued to implement a bold and visionary strategic plan. Albion College has continued to position itself among the very best in liberal arts colleges.

Albion College remains a celebration of shared mission. WMC and local churches have been blessed by this unique educational ministry. Most importantly, God has been glorified in this work.

On behalf of Albion College, I invite members of the West Michigan Conference to visit. In particular, I invite United Methodist youth to consider Albion College for their choice of college, and to get involved in spiritual life once they get here. Albion College is a great place to develop as a whole self, and thus as a leader of the future.

Please be in touch and let me know how we may continue to expand our mutual mission.

The Reverend Daniel J. McQuown, Chaplain

### **THE WESLEY FOUNDATION at CENTRAL MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY (CMU)**

**Summary of ministry for the year.** Wesley@CMU's mission is to create Christian community for CMU students. We do this through weekly Christ-centered worship and study for Christians, monthly service and off-campus fun events, Spring Break work trips, and special events. Weekly movies and meals provide an avenue for non-Christians to come in contact with our community. A new Sunday morning "RETHINK" service, and an advertising campaign which acknowledged common complaints about the church by the unchurched, has provided many contacts with non-Christians and nominal Christians.

**Number and profile of the students, staff, and other campus members participating.** In 2009, 32 different members of the campus community regularly participated in Wesley activities. Of these, 11 moved on after Spring, and 6 joined us in the Fall. 17 of these were involved in discipleship activities; 2 served on our staff. All but one of the regular participants were undergraduate students; 66% were female (compared with 55% of undergraduates); 1 (3%) was a minority student (compared with 8% of undergraduates).

**Awards / recognitions.** The director served as chair and then secretary of the Campus Religious Leaders' Association.

**List of outreach beyond campus.** Wesley@CMU is specifically focused at creating a Christian community on campus, but one of the things our community does is serve off-campus. In 2009, we worked with residents of Quilali, Nicaragua, during Spring Break and held monthly "Random Acts of Kindness" days where we picked up trash, raked leaves, etc. around the community.

**Brief summary of cooperative activities with local churches.** Wesley@CMU has a positive relationship with Mt Pleasant First UMC. Many of our students participate in worship and music leadership. Members of local churches serve on the Wesley Board and often prepare dinners for students on Sunday evenings.

**Training received by staff.** Director Dr. Charles Farnum's primary areas of study this year were postmodern theologies and the unchurched youth culture. He attended an IVCF week-long seminar on campus Christianity and contemporary culture, and provided training for the student staff.

**Other pertinent information the Annual Conference needs to be aware of.** Having achieved (relative) financial stability, Wesley@CMU seeks to grow closer in size to the Kalamazoo and MSU Wesleys, each of which have substantial individual donor support and a strong student staff. We are working towards on-site housing to house 5 student leaders each year. The Wesleys of West Michigan continue to be our greatest evangelistic field, with literally tens of thousands of new freshmen each year across our state. Every year, we lose our most experienced leaders and 20-25% of our membership to graduation. Every year, we offer the Gospel to people at a pivotal point, as they decide what they are going to do with their adult lives. We covet your support – spiritual, emotional, and physical.

Charles Farnum, Director

## **FERRIS STATE WESLEY HOUSE (FSU)**

### **Summary of Ministry:**

Two thousand nine has been an exciting year to be in campus ministry here at Ferris State University.

During Spring Break sixteen of us traveled to South Carolina where we worked with the United Methodist Relief Center to rehabilitate homes. Among other things we stripped one roof to its plywood sheathing, repaired rotted sections, and resingled it from front to back. We painted, dug post holes, installed porch railing, and scraped ceilings. We not only grew closer together but learned more about what it means to be the hands and feet of Christ in the world. One of these homeowners, a senior who'd raised her children as a single mother, inspired our students by giving thanks for everything despite her desperate circumstances. Before leaving students built a small cross to leave in her garden. Students took the lead in planning this mission trip, as well as leading Bible studies in the evening. These are your students. This is your United Methodist campus ministry.

This fall has seen some changes in our programming.- Our rental property is now a residential discipleship program, a place for students to experience grace within Christian Community. These students also commit themselves to a weekly formation group exploring questions like, "How is God moving in my life today? What is blocking my awareness of his presence? Where is God leading me? How do I love him? How do I truly love others?" The hours we spend together are sweet. But they so do much more. There is rarely a time I see them when they have not invited someone into their home, Wesley students or no. Two of them freely offered their time to babysit for one of our single mothers. One of our residents describes it this way:

One of my favorite parts about the Wesley House this semester was the Resident's Bible Study. It was a very personal time with the four residents and Vaughn. I felt a tremendous growth towards each other and towards our Heavenly Father.

This is the beautiful gift of Christian community, becoming Christ for one another.

In the meanwhile we've continued our staple home cooked meal – always a favorite – and Bible study. This year we've been exploring the theme "Surviving the Rapids", or the practical ways we live out our faith here in Big Rapids. This Spring we will be taking questions directly from the students. How awesome is that! We've already received thought-provoking questions that address the every day in's and out's of their faith life on campus.

We are also preparing for our mission trip to McCurdy School in New Mexico. Students selected this United Methodist ministry and are working together with me to prepare for a wonderful week of service and mission!

This coming Saturday I am invited to provide the benediction at commissioning service for the Ferris State R.O.T.C. program.

### **Numerical Profile:**

Students: About 25

Faculty: 2

Staff: 1

### **Awards or Recognitions:**

- Registered Student Organization.
- The director was selected to teach a course in the North Michigan Annual Conference School of Ministry. Topic: Spiritual Formation.

### **Ministry Beyond the Campus:**

- Worked with the United Methodist Relief Center to rehabilitate two homes in South Carolina.
- Picked up trash on two miles of US131 twice during the year.
- Caroled at a local nursing home.
- Walked with CROP.

### **Ministry in Connection with the Local Church:**

- As Wesley Foundation director, I have preached at various local churches.
- The students volunteered on a Friday night to help Grant Center United Methodist with their annual hunter's supper in November.

- This January we will begin working with Third Avenue United Methodist as a work team for their weekly community luncheon.
- This past November we led worship at First United Methodist of Big Rapids.
- Several of our students are involved in local congregations as well.
- Our state-wide retreat last year and this year will connect us to conference ministries such as GRASP, SECOM, and the United Methodist Community House.

#### **Training Received by Staff:**

I am continuing my D.Min. in the field of spiritual formation. This coming January I will be taking a class on spiritual direction from Susan Muto, co-founder of the Epiphany Association in Pittsburgh.

Vaughn W. Thurston-Cox, Director

#### **WESLEY FELLOWSHIP AT GRAND VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY (GVSU)**

**Summary of the year.** The Wesley Fellowship at GVSU was in our third year of full time ministry in 2009. Our mission as a group is celebrating diversity, uniqueness, and God. The Fellowship is ready to be a witness of love, acceptance, compassion, and grace at this university. Wesley Fellowship meets on Sundays from 5-7:30 pm at the Wesley House on the Allendale campus for food, fellowship, and fun. We follow our dinner with Bible study, devotions, or discussion time. Heather has various office hours throughout the week at the Wesley House and drinks a lot of coffee with students on campus. Students look forward to this safe environment to talk about faith and what is going on in their lives. Our new programming space, Wesley House, is located just off campus on Luce Street. We began gatherings here in January 2009. We now have a student dinner on Wednesdays, Community Garden of GVSU planning meetings, and our Sunday gatherings there. 2009 programming highlights included: Statewide campus ministry retreat at Michigan State University, fall retreat with the Western Wesley on the "Five Love Languages," a book study on "The Five Love Languages of Singles," painting and decorating the Wesley House. We wanted the House to reflect a "homey" feel. We also enjoyed a Thanksgiving dinner provided by our Board of Trustees, which included Wesley alumni, the current Fellowship and friends and board members.

**Profile of students and staff.** Our 2009 numbers included 15 involved throughout the Sunday meetings. There were 5 students taking on leadership responsibilities including hospitality, planning retreats, attending board meetings, creating events, and participating in district meetings. There were also additional students who were in one-on-one conversation with our director, attended events, or were on the e-mail list. We have seen many new faces and been in contact with lots of new people. We had 2 students graduate in 2009, but 4 new students in the fall. We currently are working with two staff members who are on our Board of Trustees and our student Advisor. We are also in conversations with the director and assistant director of the LGBT Resource Center, office of Student Life and other campus ministers on the campus. We are working on developing more relationships with the faculty and staff on campus.

**Awards and Recognitions.** We are recognized as a religious student organization on campus.

**Outreach beyond campus.** We took a spring break mission trip to New Orleans with Western Michigan Wesley Foundation in March. This event brought us closer to the destruction of Hurricane Katrina over three years later. We worked with Habitat for Humanity and stayed in a United Methodist church in St. Charles. It was an eye opening experience and brought our groups closer to each other. We have a better understanding of our faith and the faith of the people of New Orleans.

A few of the Wesley students have been involved with children and teen ministry at Plainfield UMC and Trinity UMC respectively. Both programs are after school mentoring and teaching programs.

We are lucky to have Grand Valley's Community Garden right beside the Wesley House. We are working on collaboration between the Wesley Fellowship and the Garden people. This garden is in its second year of providing many organic vegetables and flowers. Some of the vegetables will be used in Campus Dining. This connection with the sustainability initiatives at GVSU is an important partnership.

Our graduates are involved in outreach in their communities. They are in important ministry fields like education, nursing, business, and engineering. We value all the ways we can be sharing God's love with each other.

**Summary of cooperative activities with local churches.** One of our supporting congregations provides a meal at each Sunday gathering. The sponsoring churches this year have included: GR: Faith UMC, White Pines UMC, and Grand Rapids: First UMC. We are also privileged to have many Wesley Board members and their families bring dinner as well. We have enjoyed the presence of the White Pines youth groups again this year. We also welcomed the Junior High youth group from Grand Rapids First UMC for a picture scavenger hunt around campus. The teen program of Grand Rapids: Trinity's Community Ministries came to visit for dinner and games in the fall 2009. Our new collaboration is with the new church start, the Valley Church in Allendale. We also are proud that Marne, Georgetown, Faith, and Wesley Park, and Wyoming Park United Methodist churches are represented on our Board of Trustees.

**Training received by staff.** The director, Heather Holt, is working on her Master's degree in Social Work at GVSU. She is also a member of Allies and Advocates at GVSU, which provides yearly trainings. The Fellowship will be working on student leadership training in 2010.

Over the next year the Wesley Fellowship is looking forward to sharing with more students about social justice, God in the midst of life, unconditional love, and grace.

Thank you for your support of campus ministries.

Heather Grubaugh Holt, Director

### **WESLEY FOUNDATION OF KALAMAZOO**

Serving Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo College, Kalamazoo Valley Community College

"Widening the Welcome" – What do these words really mean?

At the Wesley Foundation, we have been exploring, talking, praying, discerning, initiating, engaging, and implementing what "Widening the Welcome" means in the context of our current ministry.

What began as a capital campaign to turn our 46-year-old building into a fully accessible, environmentally friendly space to better meet ministry needs has turned into a series of opportunities: to explore Christ's model of invitation; to talk about, pray over, and actively discern the concept of radical hospitality; to initiate new relationships both on and off campus; and to engage others in our vital ministry, located in the center of campus.

Widening the Welcome has included opening the building for use by over twenty groups, allowing for diverse ministry to campus. Currently, both the Swords into Plowshares Peace Center and the Military and Veteran Student Association occupy office space in the Wesley Foundation. Wesley has also worked with international student groups, the LGBTQ resource center, and, in an ecumenical campus ministry relationship, with the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America and United Campus Ministries.

Widening the Welcome includes a culture of radical hospitality – one of extreme welcome – where all students can explore a call to ordained ministry, serve in ministry and missions, develop as servant leaders, come to faith, grow in faith, and realize who they are in God. The Wesley Foundation of Kalamazoo sent three students to Exploration and one to the Reconciling Ministries Convocation. A recent graduate of Wesley is in mission in Nicaragua; while at home, we have welcomed two new members to The United Methodist Church through profession of faith and launched a new Covenant Leadership group.

Widening the Welcome includes building new relationships within the Kalamazoo area. The Wesley Foundation of Kalamazoo connects with local churches by leading worship within their congregations, through pulpit supply and music provided by the Wesley Foundation Praise Band. Students serve local congregations through the Wesley Workers program, in which church members are assisted by current students with yard work, housework, and other help. Additionally, the Wesley Foundation of Kalamazoo is the only campus ministry currently reaching out to the growing population of military students.

Widening the Welcome is a not only a capital campaign, but also a challenge and a calling for the Wesley Foundation of Kalamazoo.

Lisa Batten, Director

### **WESLEY FOUNDATION at MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY (MSU)**

Over the past year, Wesley Foundation at Michigan State University has been working to meet the spiritual needs of students in different ways. The year started off by hosting the different campus ministries from around Michigan for the annual State Retreat. Forty-three students from around Michigan gathered for small groups, fellowship, worship, and three community service projects. Everyone had a

great time. New students joined the ministry for our Sunday night program and Wednesday night program as well as the weekly Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday gatherings that take place. The students continued to reach out to the community and country in different ways. This year MSU Wesley traveled to Houston, Texas, for an alternative spring break mission trip. The trip provided opportunities for students to repair a home on Galveston Island while another group worked alongside the homeless in Houston. Students also worked with MSU Hillel to do community service work at Haven House, a shelter for women and children. Students were active with projects at the Lansing Rescue Mission, MSU Into the Streets, Relay for Life, as well as Cass Community Social Services. This year we held a baccalaureate service for our graduating seniors. The service was well received and a nice way to say farewell for now to our graduating seniors. Our staff received PRQ training from the MSU Counseling Center. The program is a national program that trains faculty and staff members that interact with students how to respond to a suicide attempt. We also started a more concerted effort to reach out to students at Lansing Community College with a good group of students coming from LCC weekly and participating in the program.

After an eight month process, the board of directors adopted a new strategic plan that details plans for the future for the Wesley Foundation at Michigan State University. New officers were elected with a new emphasis on the program and ministry that is provided to students. The board sponsored a Mystery Dinner Fundraiser that helped Wesley to pay a heating bill. The board also took out a loan to put on a new roof over the classrooms and entryway after a leak caused extensive damage in two classrooms and an office. We are grateful for the continued support of the West Michigan Annual Conference. We are gearing up for another exciting year and look forward to what is next!

Timothy Tuthill, Campus Minister

### JOHN WESLEY ASSOCIATION

*The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church (2008)* is the governing authority for the John Wesley Association. ¶ 323 states in part, "Each annual conference may organize a Fellowship of Local Pastors and Associate Members." In the West Michigan Annual Conference, this fellowship is called "The John Wesley Association." The Association has been in existence since at least 1971 (long before it was authorized by General Conference), when a constitution and bylaws were enacted. An informal association existed even before that time. In any case, the group has long served as a source of encouragement and inspiration for Local Pastors and Associate Members.

The John Wesley Association considers any persons involved in pastoral ministry, but not a part of an Order, to be a part of the membership. This includes Local Pastors, Associate Members, Student Local Pastors, Provisional Elders, DSA's and persons who have completed licensing school but are not appointed or assigned.

The year 2009 saw much change in the Association. For years, President Jeff Reese, Vice-President Dale Hotelling and Secretary/Treasurer George Lawton served as the leadership team. Under their guidance, the organization grew in effectiveness. The John Wesley Association developed a culture of optimism, cooperation and positivity that focused on the abilities of its members to be the most effective pastors and disciples of Christ that they could possibly be. Many thanks and prayers of gratitude are offered for a job well done.

At the 2009 Annual Conference the mantle was passed to a whole new slate of leaders. Mike Riegler became president, Jim Breithaupt was named vice-president and Nancy Patera was elected secretary/treasurer. President Riegler performed his first duties at the Annual Conference, participating in the opening worship service on Wednesday evening and giving a short address to the Clergy Session. At the Clergy Session a motion was made and passed requesting that the Chair of the Board of Ordained Ministry, The Chairs of the order of Elders and the Order of Deacons, and the President of the John Wesley Association organize a meeting between the Bishop and his Cabinet and the clergy of the West Michigan Annual Conference to discuss the process of appointment-making and the flexible housing policy. This meeting was held on November 30, 2009.

The membership of the John Wesley Association were most gratified and humbled as the ordained clergy and lay members of the Annual Conference passed legislation seeking to grant Licensed Local Pastors who have (in part) completed the Course of Study to vote on General Conference Clergy Delegates. This vote was passed by one of the largest margins in the entire denomination. We are blessed.

In October of 2009 a JWA meeting was held at Edmore Faith UMC. Informational discussions were held concerning the appointment-making process and the flexible housing policy. Additionally, a seminar "Presenting Effective Worship Drama with No Experience, No Money and No Obvious Talent" was presented. Vice-President Jim Breithaupt played an integral role in these presentations.

Just a few days later, Jim Breithaupt passed away unexpectedly. Jim was a devout Christian disciple, dedicated to Jesus, his calling to the pastorate and to his wife and family. Jim was an excellent example of all that is best in not only the Licensed Local Pastor, but in the professional ministry in general. He will be always loved, remembered and missed.

Further meetings and events are planned as we move into 2010. The John Wesley Association looks to the future with great enthusiasm and dedication to helping each other be the pastors that God wants us to be. We look forward to serving the bishop, the Order of Elders, the Order of Deacons, the West Michigan Annual Conference and its membership, and all of God's people in our collective efforts to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Mike Riegler, President

### **LAKE LOUISE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY, CAMP and RETREAT CENTER**

Located on 2400 acres of conservation forest and a crystal-clear lake, Lake Louise is camping and retreat ministry affiliated with both West Michigan and Detroit conferences. Lake Louise is ably served by a 15-member Board of Trustees, including four West Michigan Annual Conference appointees:

Rev. John Ross Thompson, immediate Past-President (2001)  
Jeff Parsons (2003)  
Rev. Deborah Johnson, Vice President (2005)  
Inge Whittemore (2008)

In July 2009 we celebrated 75 years of ministry in this place with a variety of events including a reception, a boat parade, an art festival, a dinner attended by 250 Lake Louise supporters and alums, all concluding with a packed worship at our firebowl on the lake. Our anniversary also saw the publication of the second edition of Spring-Fed Waters: The Story of a Lake in Northern Michigan, by Ted Halsted. Copies may be obtained by calling 231-549-2728.

Lake Louise's financial situation is solid, but tight. After careful study, the Trustees chose not to lease forest lands for natural gas exploration. Lake Louise has applied to the Forest Legacy Program, a federal and state program that purchases conservation easements on private property. If chosen, Lake Louise's environmental resources will be protected for generations into the future, and the financial support will help us grow the ministry.

Lake Louise's Strategic Plan, designed to grow and extend our ministry in the next five-to-seven years, is complete. In June of 2009, the Trustees approved a capital campaign to raise 1.1 million dollars over the next three years to address staffing, programmatic and infrastructure needs. Early success in that campaign will lead to the addition of a Program Development Specialist, and the construction of a small lodge for 24 people in 2010 to begin the replacement of aging cabins and bathhouses. As a first step in that strategic plan, a partial renovation of the retreat center was completed in 2009, allowing us to broaden our ministry to more groups and to better utilize our facilities.

In spite of the economic downturn, the number of campers at Lake Louise increased by 3.5% in 2009. Five hundred sixty-nine campers were served by 138 volunteer deans and counselors. Faithful volunteers continue to be central to the vibrancy and growth of our ministry, and we are grateful. Work camps and mission groups also increased in 2009, as more UMC volunteers arrived to undertake a variety of projects at the camp. The numbers of retreat groups and number of retreaters also increased in 2009.

We are mission driven and all of our efforts have one goal: to equip persons of faith and extend the kingdom of God by "Creating an environment that nurtures Christian growth and Christ-like Community" (our mission statement). We invite all members of the West Michigan Conference to pay us a visit, to bring or join us for a retreat, to send their children to our camps, and to volunteer as a counselor or work camp volunteer. We are glad to be partnering with you in this ministry.

David Gladstone, President, Board of Trustees

## BOARD OF LAY MINISTRIES

We welcomed Pastor Donna Keyte as a new member-at-large on our board. She's currently serving at Almena UMC in the Kalamazoo District.

Our Annual Conference teacher, Rev. Dan Dick from the General Board of Discipleship in Nashville, TN, asked if he could meet with the laity of West Michigan and we heartily agreed. With his book, "Vital Signs: A Pathway To Congregational Wholeness," as our base, Rev. Dick shared with us how we're important in the role of our local churches and suggested things we can do to improve our churches and ministries. It was a great interactive discussion for our Laity Session. Many people expressed appreciation for his presentation.

On November 7, 2009, we had Lay Leadership Day with Detroit Annual Conference at Lansing Faith UMC. One hundred-fifty of us, laity and clergy, enjoyed the day. Mrs. Sandy Jackson, Director of Connectional Laity Development from the General Board of Discipleship, was our keynote speaker on "Local Church Lay Leaders: Accountable and Responsible." She presented many practical suggestions and also showed the connectedness of the UMC. Bishop Jonathan D. Keaton shared a devotional message, then sang while accompanying himself on the piano. Ralph Czerepinski discussed a survey of Detroit Annual Conference on "What Pastors are Looking for When Selecting Lay Leaders." After lunch Rev. Karin Orr, Barbara Parker and Jan Rhoads shared a helpful "Glimpse of a Fruitful Pastor-Lay Leader Partnership." Then we met in small groups of both laity and clergy to discuss what we'd heard and what was effective in our local churches. The group moderators gave a brief summary and everyone felt it was a very beneficial day and hoped we would do it again. It was a good way to meet new friends from Detroit Annual Conference.

God has blessed us with many opportunities to learn and share His Word with others.

Laurie Dahlman, Conference Lay Leader

## MICHIGAN AREA COMMITTEE ON THE EPISCOPACY

Having its charge and purpose given from *THE BOOK OF DISCIPLINE*, the Episcopacy Committee found itself busy during the 2009 year.

This chairperson would like to thank the many people who spent hours working toward a goal of improving the efficacy of United Methodism in Michigan. Your efforts are not lost on this individual. The results of your efforts improve the likelihood of Michigan United Methodism bringing individuals to Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

The Episcopacy Committee worked on its regular duties of assisting the Bishop, and the Clergy Assistant to the Bishop this year. Also discussed were the issues generated from the Annual Conferences. Giving the opportunity for regular feedback from areas of our state provides useful information for discussion and dissemination of information to local churches and clergy and laity across the state.

As Episcopal leader, Bishop Keaton keeps a varied and extremely busy schedule. Our thanks go to him for working so diligently on our behalf. It should be said as well that many thanks go to Mrs. Beverly Keaton for the support of her husband and her overall support of the work of the United Methodist denomination. With this support comes sacrifice on behalf of both of these special people and as such deserves our thanks.

We look forward to another busy year. Should you have any questions or concerns, please let your Episcopacy Committee know.

Gary A. Sarut, Chair

## MICHIGAN AREA INDIAN WORKERS' CONFERENCE

### MT PLEASANT-CHIPPEWA INDIAN UMC

OCTOBER 10, 2009

#### Welcome / Call to Order / Devotion (9:45 am):

Pastor Owen welcomed everyone to Mt Pleasant and gave opening prayer. He read message from Luke 18:1-8. We as Christian people are to remain faithful and continually pray; prayer is important, must be constant, and it works. People watch to see how we handle difficult situations and we must set the standard.

#### Roll Call:

Pastor Tom John (Kewadin/Northport); Phyllis John (Kewadin); Val Maidens (Northport); Charlene John (Northport); Amy Alberts (Oscoda); Dwight and Anna Bixler (Bradley); Judy Johnson (Greensky Hills); Norm and Leslie Pigeon (Salem); Owen White Pigeon (Mt Pleasant); Cynthia Floyd (Mt Pleasant); Carmen Misner (Detroit Conference); Fred Elmore (Camp Kinawind); Terry Lint (Blanchard, MI).

**IWC Minutes (April 18, 2009):** Val Maidens presented the minutes. Chair Tom asked for any corrections:

Judy Johnson – Greensky Hill report (pg 3): Change “The Shaft” to “The Shack” (Bible Study).

Carmen Misner – NACOS/Lay Speaking Course (pg 5): Delete Terry Miller’s name (Tim Miller is teaching the COS classes).

Carmen Misner made a motion to accept the April Minutes as amended; Dwight Bixler seconded the motion. Motion carried.

**IWC Treasurer’s Report (Apr-Sept 2009):** Judy Johnson presented the IWC Treasurer’s report (attached). Judy stated Account 3450 should be spent down before December 31, 2009. After subtracting October’s IWC meeting expenses, she will use the balance to purchase library materials – Native American study books, copy paper, etc. She asked if the churches have a copy of Dorothy Reuter’s book. Carmen Misner stated this book could be purchased from Adrian College. Judy stated it was a personal privilege to acknowledge Dorothy Reuter at the Annual Conference in June. Chairman Tom suggested the balance could be spent on IWC promotional items – brochures, pens, buttons, etc.

Anna Bixler made a motion to allow Judy Johnson to spend down Account 3450 before year end 2009. Amy Alberts seconded the motion. It was stated that Pastor Tom John and Judy Johnson will both decide what promotional items or office supplies will be purchased from this account. Motion carried.

Judy Johnson read a thank you letter dated June 17, 2009, from Rev Sandra VandenBrink on behalf of the PaWaTing MaGedWin Kikaajik’s Elders Program for Senior Meals. She requested \$1000 to help with expenses at the April 2009 IWC meeting (letter attached).

Dwight Bixler made a motion to accept the Treasurer’s report as presented. Phyllis John seconded the motion. Motion carried.

#### Church Reports:

❖ **Kewadin:** Phyllis John reporting.

Some church members are having difficulty making the 9:00 am worship service and membership has declined. The Penny Roll Potluck continues 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of the month. These monies are collected to support one Guatemalan girl thru the International Medical Assistance (IMA) program. Church is up to date on monthly expenses and WMC apportionments. Parsonage is having some serious problems. Had to drill for a new well. The parsonage was the 5<sup>th</sup> house on Indian Road with the same problem. Serious issues with septic system – drainage fields flooded, broken pipe to tank, had to pump out tank on two separate occasions. Pastor Tom will need to purchase a permit for new septic tank. He is checking with the Grand Traverse District Office for funding to help with expenses that occurred on the drain field/septic tank issues. Two church members passed on the last few months – Albert Anderson and Melvin Wilson. Val mentioned an article written by an Elk Rapids community member who had the pleasure of meeting Albert Anderson (article attached). Tom Hill from the East Jordan-Petoskey-Kewadin areas also passed away. Phyllis asked for prayers for the families.

❖ **Greensky Hill:** Judy Johnson reporting.

Sunday worship service at 9:00 am with coffee and fellowship afterwards. 5 pm service continues with Sam McClellan, Mary and Marshall Collins and Tom John on alternating Sundays. The afternoon services will start at 3:00 pm with 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday in December and continue until Spring. Women's Drum Group had performances in Manton, Cheboygan, and at a baptism in Petoskey for Pastor Tim's grandson. The Men's Group had a Hobo Dinner. The August Camp Meeting with Ruby John and the Blue Grass Band performing and Dominic singing had great Christian singing, music and services. Bible study continues on Mondays with Pastor Tim teaching Emotionally Healthy Spirituality study. Our fundraisers this past year included: Craft and Appraiser Show (made \$300 on the Appraiser event); Golf Outing, Scoop Dinner in May; MARSP dinner in June and luncheon in August; Wild Game Dinner for Lake Louise in June; Harvest Dinner in September – served 472 people, 75 workers and 40 people donated food (made \$4,000). Outreach Ministries: rented Odawa Hotel Conference Center for Sunday service in July, August and September. The hall rental was expensive; received a \$285 grant from Tribe, thought it would be \$1,000. Church members continue to visit Grandvue Nursing Home for singing and fellowship; raised \$237 for "Nothing but Nets"; raised \$450 for "Water for Africa".

❖ **Salem:** Norm and Leslie Pigeon reporting.

Pastor Sandra sends her regrets for not making the IWC meeting – family obligation. Pastor Sandra trained as Volunteers in Missions leader and can now lead VIM groups. Memorial Day celebration held at Bradley Indian Cemetery with a Pancake Breakfast at Bradley church. Tribe starting Veteran's Honor Guard – attended along with local VFW. New Tuesday night Bible Study with Bradley and Salem church members held at Salem. Senior Meals cook-out and end of year celebration held at Luella Collins Center – Senior Meals program took summer break and resumed again in September. Some struggling at Plainfield location; searched for new location this summer; couldn't find adequate space – will keep searching for next year. Youth Group (5-10 youths) held Spaghetti Summer fundraiser in June to raise funds for youth camp. Warrior Leadership Summit at Lake of the Ozarks, MO – June 27-July 2 – 6 people from Salem attended. Youth attended Rain Song Concert at 4 Fires Ministry in Grand Rapids. On August 2<sup>nd</sup>, group from Salem attended the Sandy Patty Concert at Sandy Pines Campground. In August, Pastor Sandra attended 3-day Willow Creek Community Church Evangelism conference in Holland, MI. Calico country gospel group performed during worship at Salem and Bradley. Plan to make this a yearly event – draws a nice crowd. August 16<sup>th</sup> – 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday Party, Hymn Sing and Communion celebration at the home of Gladys Church. Gladys lives with her daughter and has daily nursing care; her alertness varies. Phoebe Hall's great-grandson, Alex Hall, was baptized. His 18 year old mother, Sarah, passed away last December. Uncle Kevin providing foster care. Family needs prayers. Church members had baby shower for Kevin and Alex. In August, Youth Group held Garage Sale to raise funds for school clothes and supplies. September 1<sup>st</sup> – Youth Group went on Back to School shopping trip. September – Mary Pigeon Vanderwood created a Dream Catcher for the Grand Rapids District Superintendent to be used as an illustration at all Grand Rapids District charge conferences in a discussion about "dreams" for the future of our churches. September 30<sup>th</sup> – Youth Group cleaned & decorated the church in preparation for Revival. October 2-4 – Revival at Salem. Friday night's speaker was Mike Peters with 4 Fires Ministry; Saturday and Sunday was Mary and Marshall Collins. Purchased lawn mower. Wind storm uprooted 2 "old friends" in front of church; trees were planted by church founding families.

❖ **Bradley:** Dwight and Anna Bixler reporting.

Enjoying our new Fellowship Hall; having breakfast every 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday and still going strong. The Breakfast will end in November and resume again in the spring (Dwight and Anna will be leaving for Florida). The seamless gutters have been installed and top soil was put down for a flower bed around the church. Sunday worship concert with Calico, a great county gospel group – drew in a nice crowd – followed with a Potluck Brunch. Joe Sprague continues to entertain us with his stories at Sunday worship. Allen would like to start a Native language class. Pastor Sandy doing well; membership the same – no young people. Gun Lake Casino in the works and hoping this will bring in the younger people. Replacement of rails and stairs on hold due to lack of funds; will request additional funds from IWC to complete this project. Plan to set up a "loose change" donation jar to help with small expenses. Dwight and Anna requested prayers for daughter who recently married. Their son said the Lord's Prayer in Native tongue; many non-Native guests at wedding expressed their appreciation for the Native tongue prayer.

❖ **Mt. Pleasant:** Cynthia Floyd reporting.

Meeting monthly financial obligations. On behalf of church membership, Cynthia thanked IWC for the fund request to purchase a new refrigerator with see-thru door. Fall Revival Meeting set for November 26-29. Speaker will be Sam McClellan. Special "vessel" used to help pay for revival and camp meeting expenses. It is a money jar that is filled with loose change and the children love to put their offerings into the jar. Pastor Owen mentioned the members painted and cleaned up the tabernacle and did yard work around church grounds. Bible Study every Tuesday evening; currently reading through the Bible; each member reads a chapter.

❖ **Oscoda:** Amy Alberts reporting.

In October, Amy and Carmen gave a Power Point presentation to CONAM at the Port Huron District UMC Women's meeting. The presentation gave an overview of the 3 Native American churches in the Detroit Conference. Amy shared the presentation with Judy and Val. Thank you to Carmen Misner for giving Oscoda report at IWC's April meeting. Served a Memorial Day Celebration luncheon at the church, excellent crowd. In July, we set up a booth at the Pow-Wow with items promoting our church – pens, buttons, brochures, hand made baskets. Amy put out business cards made by a youth who earned a school grade for designing and printing the cards – Native American theme. Also set out a collection jar for donations for Youth Camp – collected \$100. Received 37 signatures for mailing list – people interested in receiving information about upcoming events. The experience was very enlightening and received positive responses from visitors. Bev Green led the Vacation Bible School – 6 youths and 4 adults supported. The youth studied men and women in the Bible, tie-dyed T-shirts and made dream catchers. Two youth attended Camp Kinawind this past summer. Pastor Brie was ordained at Annual Conference. Members made a ribbon sash and presented to Pastor Brie to wear at Conference. She had a baby girl on Monday, October 5<sup>th</sup> – Michelle Jennifer. Members had baby shower for her. She is now on maternity leave. Charge Conference on October 18<sup>th</sup> with DS Louise Ott; Amy and Amanda Nahgahgwon renewed as Lay Speakers. In September, parsonage was demolished; lot cleared; it covers 1 acre and plans are to use it for Summer Camp meetings. Monthly apportionments are current. Mission Jubilee raised \$715 to be divided between 2 Missions. IWC Delegates for 2010: John Henry – Zeba; Devin Chisholm (?) – Saganing.

❖ **Northport:** Val Maidens reporting.

June – Central UMC Mission group led by Pastor Bob Grigeriet came to our camp grounds to help with the spring clean up and prepare grounds for our annual summer camp meeting in August. Church members provided lunch for 20-25 people.

July – Youth Mission group from Suamico UMC near Green Bay, WI, spent two days at our campgrounds painting tabernacle, ceiling, bathrooms, and dining hall. There were 15-20 teenagers and Val's brother and his wife grilled lunch for them on their last day.

August – 4 day summer camp meeting on August 6-9 with Speaker Charlie Nahwegahbo; Sam McClellan, Jack Squires, Mary and Marshall Collins led the Song services.

November – Fall Revival scheduled for November 12, 13, 14; no speaker as yet.

Monthly apportionments and expenses are current. Onominee Cemetery perpetual care continues. Val's brother, Tom, has been very instrumental in keeping the cemetery cleared of overgrowth. Found several gravesites of Civil War veterans. One veteran served in the 1<sup>st</sup> Michigan Sharpshooters Company K. This was an all-American Indian unit. This unit was featured in an article in the local Traverse City Record-Eagle newspaper back in February. Val hopes to complete a church brochure with a section on the history of the cemetery. Pastor Tom mentioned 5-6 "very old friends" had been cut down to make room for a parking lot. These trees were planted by founding fathers of the church 100+ years ago. Even though the trees were rotted and dead, it is like losing old friends, as Norm Pigeon stated in his church report.

❖ **Zeba/Saganing:** Delegates not present.

Pastor John Henry lost his wife on August 31<sup>st</sup>. Pastor Tom asked that Pastor Henry and his family be remembered in our prayers. Val Maidens will send sympathy cards from IWC and Kewadin and Northport Indian Missions.

❖ **West Michigan Conference:** Representative not present.

Judy Johnson and Pastor Tom stated Bill Dobbs is the liaison between IWC and WMC cabinet. Benton Heisler is the RELC funding chairperson – grant applications are sent to his office. Benton hopes to form a more centralized unit where all funding requests are sent (RELC, District Missions, conference-level). One request would cover all funding needs instead of 3 separate agencies.

❖ **Fred Moore/Amy Alberts – Camp Kinawind:** Fred invited by Amy to IWC meeting to explain the curriculum of Camp Kinawind. Camp Kinawind is located north of Grayling. It is hoped that a camp program could be designed for Native American youths. Fred has been Camp Kinawind Director for 9 years; his wife works as camp volunteer. Amy asked Fred if a one-week summer camp program could be developed; the time frame would be 2<sup>nd</sup> week in August. Fred is very interested and open to ideas. He mentioned the focus should be on bridging the gap between Native Americans and non-Native Americans. The new program would need a Dean and Program Director to set up a curriculum. One week camp registration fee is \$330. Each church will poll their membership and bring to the April 2010 meeting names of youth interested in attending Camp Kinawind. Judy Johnson thought her husband would be interested in the Camp Dean position. Each church would support 1/3 of the fee and monies from WMC or IWC scholarships may help with the rest. The ages/grade levels: 8-13 years; 3<sup>rd</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> grades. IWC representatives gave their verbal support for a Native American camp for the children in August 2011; 3<sup>rd</sup> week in August. Pastor Tom suggested a mini camp for August 2010 – 3 days in August (8, 9, 10, 11); arrive Sunday at 5 pm and finish Wednesday at 5 pm. Fred will start the paperwork process after his mission trip return in December.

❖ **Carmen Misner – Detroit Conference / Local Pastor and Lay Speaking School Coordinator.**

- Bishop Day Task Course. Workshop theme: New Places for New Faces. Benton Heisler/WMC or Detroit Conference Representative will lead course. Dates (?)
- REThink Church Leadership Formation Program: Detroit Annual Conference launching a new 2010 program that will connect leaders (clergy and lay) with the natural resources of the Detroit Annual Conference and UMC. The program information will be web-based and will include people resources, workshops, book recommendations, on-line information and links and any resource your church board or agency would like to promote.
- Native American Comprehensive Plan. CONAM Training Conference in Nashville, TN, November 6-8, 2009.
- Listening Post – Workshop on Evangelism.
- Bylaws – CONAM for Committees; IWC – Norm has been working on and gave IWC representatives copies.
- NA Course in Peoria, IL (Day Spring Church) – Dates ?
- Lay Speaking Course of Study – June 2010 in Peshawbetown – will be discussed at the Jurisdictional meeting.

❖ **2010 Camp Meeting Dates:**

Greensky Hill – no dates

Kewadin – July 14-18, 2010

Zeba – August 2-7, 2010

Northport – August 5-8, 2010

Mt Pleasant – August 29-September 6, 2010

❖ **2010 Revival Meeting dates:**

Northport – Easter Revival Mar 18-21 2010; Fall Revival November 11-14, 2010

Kewadin – Easter Revival Mar 25-28, 2010; Fall Revival November 18-21, 2010

Mt Pleasant – Easter Revival Apr 1-4, 2010; Fall Revival November 25-28, 2010

New IWC officers need to be elected at the April 2010 meeting: Chairperson; Vice Chairperson; Secretary; Treasurer; Youth Representative; Detroit Conference Representative.

IWC 2010 Meeting Dates: April 16 and 17, 2010 at Northport; October 8 and 9, 2010 at Kewadin.

Thomas John, Chair / Valerie Maidens, Secretary

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

2009 was a positive year for the Michigan Area Loan Fund in spite of pressures from the weak economy, the regulatory climate, and struggles for congregational finances. The Loan Fund operations continued steady and met the challenges of both investor and borrower relationships.

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

Rev. Denny Buwalda continues to serve as Loan Officer. Rev. Buwalda handles all loan inquiries as well as providing the linkage between the several parties involved in processing church loans.

Office operations are directed by Marian Coles and Kay Yoder from the Grand Rapids office. Ms. Coles handles correspondence and operational management while Ms. Yoder is staff accountant.

Investors were rewarded during 2009 with a rate of return that was attractive in comparison to many similar investment options. Investors currently earn 3.5% on their investment accounts. Larger accounts (\$100,000 or more) earn 3.75%. This fund, The Missions and Church Extension Trust Fund, offers both investment opportunity for congregations and individuals within the state of Michigan and a loan source for the 920 congregations of The United Methodist Church in Michigan. Mortgage loans are available with a variety of amortization schedules and a current rate of 5.99%. Promissory notes are also available for smaller funding needs at a rate of 6.25%. The Fund is registered with the Securities Bureau of the State of Michigan and is managed by its Resident Agent. As of December 2009 the loan portfolio included 35 loans and mortgages with a total value of \$6,457,930.

A complete audit of the Fund is available upon request from the administrative office, PO Box 6247, Grand Rapids, MI 49516.

The future of the Fund looks strong in spite of weakened loan demand. The financial strength of the Fund should be secure as the net corpus of Fund assets continues to grow and allows the Fund to serve the needs of Michigan United Methodist congregations. The board continues to look for ways to expand our fund base beyond ten million dollars so we may be competitive in the broader loan market.

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

Rev. Kenneth McCaw, President, Board of Trustees  
Rev. Dr. Wayne Barrett, Resident Agent

**MICHIGAN AREA SCHOOL FOR PASTORAL MINISTRY**

The 2009 Michigan Area School for Pastoral Ministry convened the third week in August, at the Lansing Sheraton Hotel. Our theme was, "Taking it to the Next Level: Preaching, Teaching and Growing Disciples."

This year's MASPM featured Dr. John Ed Mathison, and Dr. Lillian Daniels. For 36 years Rev. Mathison served as senior minister of Frazer Memorial United Methodist Church in Montgomery. Rev. Daniels is the Senior Minister of First Congregational Church, UCC, in Glen Ellyn, Illinois, and the co-host for Chicago's "30 Good Minutes" television program.

The school began with a refreshing and humorous look at the power of testimony in the local church with Dr. Daniels. She is the author of the book [\*Tell It Like It Is: Reclaiming the Practice of Testimony\*](#), which is the story about how God moves in the local church when people speak about God's presence to one another. She encouraged the clergy present to include a testimony time in worship services, and to teach parishioners what a testimony is. She emphasized the importance of explaining to church members how personal stories of how God moves in their lives can be encouraging and how to keep testimony time focused and God-centered.

Our preacher, John Ed Mathison shared practical experience and wisdom from his decades of pastoring, as well as many leadership principles that can apply to any size church. Mathison says that the purpose of the ministry is to train pastors and lay persons to be leaders who impact the world for Jesus Christ and the Kingdom of God. Throughout the conference he provided many useful resources and humorous ideas. He also shared that the Michigan Area School for Pastoral Ministry was very organized, informative and had a lot to offer.

In addition to practical workshop options, there were many opportunities for personal renewal time. The overall attendance was about 130. Clergy parents were encouraged to enroll their children in a VBS-style endeavor. The event included field trips and outings. The positive response was great and we are still working to make improvements. The School of Pastoral Ministry is the only event designed specifically for the care and nurture of persons in pastoral ministry in the Michigan Area.

Bishop Jonathan Keaton led an open dialogue in which all clergy were invited to ask questions. His presence was a great support and much appreciated. He offered sincere and heartfelt encouragement in a season of economic challenge.

Our 2010 theme is “Change on the Horizon: Catching Up With What God Is Doing.”

Our speaker and preacher will be renowned author Phyllis Tickle and the Rev. Dr. Maxie Dunnam. Dr. Tickle is the founding editor of the Religion Department of PUBLISHERS WEEKLY. She is known for her inspirational wisdom and wit. Her latest works examine how Christianity is changing, what is emerging and how the church can respond in a way that makes a meaningful impact. Dr. Dunnam is an evangelist, leader, and pioneer in small-group ministries. Dr. Dunnam has served as the chancellor at Asbury Theological Seminary in Kentucky, as well as the seminary president. Before becoming the world editor of the Upper Room Fellowship he organized and pastored three United Methodist churches. He also created the Upper Room [Cursillo](#) that later became the [Walk to Emmaus](#).

One special feature of 2010 will be the change of venue. The 2010 Michigan Area School for Pastoral Ministry will convene Tuesday August 17<sup>th</sup> through Thursday August 19<sup>th</sup> at the Kellogg Center in East Lansing on the campus of Michigan State University. The Kellogg Center is a state-of-the-art conference center with the ascetics of a retreat site and the amenities of a hotel. The benefits of this new site include a walking trail, screened porches, babbling brook and outdoor patios for meetings and gatherings. We plan to make use of this space, set in nature, for meaningful devotion and fellowship opportunities.

Faith E. Green Timmons, Dean of the School Senate

### **MICHIGAN AREA UNITED METHODIST HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

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

The Area Historical Society met twice in 2009 and scheduled two meetings for 2010 at the Okemos Community Church, April 22 and October 28, 2010.

The vacant office of Vice-President was filled by Webb Scrivnor as chosen by the West Michigan Commission on Archives and History, per our “Working Assumptions.”

In March, Secretary Jennie Thomas, resigned due to a job re-location. Her replacement at Albion, Stephanie Frederick, assumed Jennie’s position and duties.

At our March meeting we developed our initial, “Working Assumptions,” as a supplement to our constitution and bylaws. This document is a readily revisable listing of the intention and procedures of the board as understood and agreed upon by the current board. It is guiding and influential, not binding, for our proceeding.

With board support, project coordinator Sherry Parker of Brighton, halted the work on our proposed Detroit Annual Conference history book due to a lack of authors. We discussed future work in October and also a broadening of our understanding of the charge, “*To compile, edit, publish, and distribute histories....*”

We are cooperating and supporting the Detroit Conference Commission on Archives and History on creating and hosting the North Central Jurisdiction Convocation of Archives and History, July 5-8, 2010.

We will begin work on developing membership and procedures in 2010 and hope to have presentations on the 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the work of Methodism in Michigan at both sessions of the Detroit and the West Michigan conferences.

Rev. John G. Park, Board President

### **MICHIGAN CHRISTIAN ADVOCATE**

The *Michigan Christian Advocate* enters the 2010 year without funding from the Detroit and West Michigan conferences. During this year the *Advocate* will begin working on finding additional funding sources that will allow the publication to continue to tell the story of Michigan's United Methodists. Grant applications are being, and have been, submitted to a number of foundations. Gifts from a number of Michigan United Methodist churches have been received and continue to be given, and for that we are grateful for each and every one. The *Advocate*, for more than 137 years, has told the story of the 900 churches in the Michigan Area. We are proud to have become the "face of United Methodism" across the state and remain committed to serving this constituency for many years to come. The very dedicated board of directors and staff at the *Advocate* prayerfully continue to work on improving the value of the publication through features and stories that provide an insight into what each congregation and the conference staff are doing to spread God's Word. Financially the *Michigan Christian Advocate* is struggling; spiritually we are stronger than ever in our resolve to continue publishing throughout the year and for years to come. With eleven issues (July/August combined) published during the year, the *Advocate* takes a look at programs, missions and ministries that have an impact on all of us. Features dealing with Wesley Foundations, camping, ministry, faith and more make the *Advocate* a "must read" for our subscribers. The board and staff are working on the introduction of a new and improved website which should appear sometime in 2010. This website will allow subscribers to read the *Advocate* online without the need to download pages. This and a number of new departments on the website will give United Methodists across the state an opportunity to link to news and information 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The *Advocate* would also like to thank its loyal readers for all their comments regarding our continuing efforts to improve and fund this very vital part of Michigan's United Methodist ministry.

Tom Ferguson, Editor/Publisher

### **NEW CHURCH ESTABLISHMENT AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

Our Council of Bishops and our general agencies set four priorities for The United Methodist Church this quadrennium, and one of those four is new church development. Our bishops realize that the most effective way to reach unchurched people in our culture is through new churches. New churches are more able to address and connect with the culture, which is constantly changing. Existing churches can learn from our new churches and can also join in and give support to our new churches, so the establishment of new churches is a win for everyone.

Our committee and our Director of New Church Development, Barb Flory, work hard at planting new churches and giving continuing support and guidance to our new churches. Our newest church plant is Valley Church in Allendale in the Grand Rapids District. They are on a faster track than some of our past church plants, beginning preview worship services within 5 months of a pastor being in place, and the numbers of persons involved in worship and in service to the community are very encouraging!

We are considering some possibilities for new church plants for the future, but funding is holding us back from being able to do what we would like to do in 2010. Given the current reality of the economy in our nation and in this state, many of our churches, both new and existing, are struggling. Our new church pastors are faithful and hard-working, but the bishop and cabinet have needed to link some of our new churches with existing churches, and these new partnerships are allowing these new churches to continue.

In looking to the future of new churches in our Annual Conference, a team of people from the committee spent time this fall in strategic planning, and we will be researching new models of planting new congregations, including the multi-site model of linking with an existing congregation, as well as possible alternatives to ordained pastors for leading each new congregation.

We encourage everyone in the conference to pray for our new churches often. We also hope that you will all seek ways to reach out and encourage a new church that is in your district. We are connected, and we are all in this together.

For more information on each of these new churches, we have included a list of their website addresses. We pray that you will check them out from time to time and keep track of their progress. They are a growing arm of The United Methodist Church in the West Michigan Conference. The web sites of new churches are:

[www.crosswindcc.org](http://www.crosswindcc.org)

[www.valleychurchallendale.org](http://www.valleychurchallendale.org)

[www.gatherchurch.org](http://www.gatherchurch.org)

[www.whitepinesumc.org](http://www.whitepinesumc.org)

[www.Golifefspring.org](http://www.Golifefspring.org)

[www.windwardchurch.org](http://www.windwardchurch.org)

[www.Outlandchurch.org](http://www.Outlandchurch.org)

Kathy Brown, Chair

## BOARD OF ORDAINED MINISTRY

The Board of Ordained Ministry (BOM) is the instrument that The United Methodist Church uses to affirm God's calling to ordained ministry and meet the standards and qualifications necessary for this calling and the life of service as God's servants within West Michigan Annual Conference.

Yet, the work of the Board of Ordained Ministry includes more than entry into the covenant relationship, as the board is responsible to care for, support and guide clergy throughout their years of service to Christ's church. Much of that work is done through the following sub-committees:

**Conference Relations Committee** responds to the changing circumstances in the lives of ordained elders, deacons, associate members and local pastors. They track all changes in clergy status, recommending leave of absences, transition or family leaves, incapacity/medical circumstances and retirements. This past year, under the guidance of John Boley, the committee has clarified the process for handling recognition of denominational credentials and appointments within the West Michigan Conference.

**Support Committee**, under the direction of Bob Lynch, continues to explore ways to be more supportive of the clergy and their families. Life happens to all of us: the unexpected death of a spouse, parent or child; health issues that can occur at any time; the risk of 'burn out' becomes reality; family issues impact ministry. In all these arenas the board seeks to find ways to be supportive. We also seek your input as to how the board might initiate and provide helpful programs and be present in crisis situations.

**Registrar Committee**. Under the capable leadership of our registrars, Dwayne Bagley (Elder candidate registrar), Mona Joslyn (Provisional member registrar), Greg Martin (Local Pastor and Associate Member registrar), and Wade Pansa (Candidacy registrar), the board maintains contact with all pastoral candidates, local pastors, and district committees on ministry. It is under their direction that all candidates for ministry on the deacon and elder track, at both the commissioning and elder level, are asked to submit written materials, evaluations, professional examples of their ministry and be a part of our twice-yearly interview process, as the board looks at their 'readiness for' and 'effectiveness in' ordained ministry. The board is most grateful for their excellence in leading this most important facet of our work together.

**Finance Committee**. Utilizing the skills of Barbara Brechting and David Hills, the board maintains their budgets (both board funds and MEF monies) to help underwrite the cost of seminary education through grants and loans; underwrite costs of Licensing School and Course of Study classes for our local pastors; provide for counseling / medical costs (not covered by clergy insurance) incurred by clergy families; offer funds for both continuing education and spiritual direction; provide support toward ethnic intern opportunities, etc. We thank all those churches and individuals of the West Michigan Conference who faithfully pay their Ministry Shares and thus help fund future clergy, and support present clergy, of the conference.

**Enlistment and Mentoring Committee**. Rick Blunt, as chair of Enlistment, is the contact person for those students who indicate an interest in servant ministry. Initial contact, offering board support and direction, is made with all those who respond to the bishop's call at the Ordination service. Enlistment persons visit our senior high camps, offering opportunities for conversation about God's call to ministry. Seminary visits are made to offer encouragement and guidance to our present students. This year, through our Enlistment Team (and under the guidance of Dr. Chris Momany) the board underwrote the

costs of 10 persons from the Michigan Area who attended the EXPLORATION, 2009 event ... open to young adults who are exploring a call to ministry.

Under the capable leadership of Mike McDonald, Jane Ellen Johnson and Daniel Hoffman, 5 Candidacy Mentor training sessions were held around the conference. 127 pastors were trained as Candidacy Mentors. The District Committees on Ordained Ministry may now assign them (in consultation with the district superintendent) to mentor candidates for ministry until they begin serving as commissioned provisional members or local pastors. Additional training sessions will be held in the spring of 2010.

In addition, under the guidance of Devon Herrell and Mary Ivanov, the board continues to sponsor regular meetings of each class of commissioned provisional members as they move toward ordained ministry. These groups meet regularly throughout the year to support one another and share their experiences in ministry. The board appreciates and affirms the dedication and time commitment of our clergy mentors who make these experiences possible.

In addition, the board works with both Julie Dix, chair of the Order of Deacons, and Bill Beachy, chair of the Order of Elders, in looking at ways we can work together to facilitate ministry in the conference. We are presently engaged in exploring an instrument for "Clergy Effectiveness," and how it might be used in the provisional ministry process and in conjunction with the Cabinet.

The board has been assisted in their work this past year by Sus'ann Busley, our new administrative assistant. Working out of the Lansing District Office (where Sus'ann is also administrative assistant to the Lansing District Superintendent), she has been most helpful in learning BOM process, responding to requests for information and materials, keeping our BOM website updated, and facilitating board communications. We are most appreciative of her work!

Our board again covets your prayers as we seek to do our work in building God's Kingdom through servant ministry. Thank you.

Lynn E. Grimes, Chair

## ORDER OF DEACONS

*The deacon embodies the interrelationship between worship in the gathered community and service to God in the world. (The Book of Discipline – 2008, ¶305)*

*Deacons represent to the Church its calling as servant in the world. By struggling in Christ's name with the myriad needs of societies and persons, deacons exemplify the interdependence of worship and service in the Church's life. ("Baptism, Eucharist, and Ministry," Faith and Order Document, World Council of Churches, 1982)*

The West Michigan Order of Deacons is growing and deepening. Our congregations are producing ever more persons who perceive and follow God's call to service through this unique expression of ordained ministry.

Deacons serve West Michigan in congregations, hospitals, retirement communities and mental health facilities. Our ministries are based in the worship life of the congregation, where we co-lead worship, preach, conduct weddings and funerals and lift up, pray for and work toward the healing of the church and the world. And whether we are deployed outside the congregation or serving within, our calling, our task and our joy is to support others as they discover and grow their own ministries of love, reconciliation and justice.

In 2009, West Michigan deacons:

- **Covenanted to pray for the world.** A number of deacons within the order are praying regularly for the healing of the world. We created a blog called Deacons Living Prayer to share with one other our experiences of this deep and meditative kind of prayer, and to remain accountable to our practice.
- **Began dialogue about identifying, creating and developing ministries and appointments.** Identifying current and potential areas and circumstances which call for the ministry of the deacon is a growing edge for the whole denomination. Gifted, called, equipped, enthusiastic deacons are ready and seeking to be deployed in virtually every area of service. We plan to initiate and sustain innovative, well-informed, ongoing conversations with Detroit Conference deacons, bishop, cabinet, elders and others to create strong and vital partnerships in deploying and appointing deacons where they most desire and are ultimately called to be.

We continue to remain open to and thankful for the Spirit's movement in us as individuals, in the order and in the church. Our ministry is joyful, hopeful and fruitful, and we are grateful.

Julie Dix, Chair, Order of Deacons

#### ORDER OF ELDERS

***<sup>4</sup> Such confidence as this is ours through Christ before God. <sup>5</sup> Not that we are competent in ourselves to claim anything for ourselves, but our competence comes from God. <sup>6</sup> He has made us competent as ministers of a new covenant—not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life. 2 Corinthians 3:4-6 (NIV)***

As clergy we are committed to fulfill our call to make disciples for Jesus Christ in the West Michigan Conference and around the world. As such, the Order of Elders seeks to nourish “a bond of unity and common commitment to the mission and ministry of The United Methodist Church and the annual conference” (2000 Book of Discipline Section III, Paragraph 312-2). With varying gifts and graces, unique to each one of us, we affirm our covenant as sisters and brothers in Christ as we fulfill our ministry as Local Pastors, Deacons and Elders.

This commitment continues to be evident in the following priorities:

- On the evening prior to the opening of the 2009 Annual Conference, a pre-conference worship experience, designed by Rev. Julie Dix, took place in the chapel of Calvin College.
- An updated “***Tending the Holy***” which is a listing of spiritual directors in the Michigan Area has been completed and is available on the conference website.
- In service to the larger Church, The Order of Elders chair supports the Conference Board of Ordained Ministry and its executive committee, as spiritual director and process consultant. Our desire is to discover and live out the wisdom and insight of God and God's presence as we carry out the ministry of the board for the annual conference.
- The respective chairs of the John Wesley Association, Order of Deacons, Order of Elders and the chair of the Board of Ordained Ministry from the West Michigan Annual Conference were charged with organizing and developing a gathering of clergy for the sole purpose of continuing conversation with regard to our conference's Flexible Housing Policy. That event took place at Trinity United Methodist Church in Lansing, Michigan, on November 30, 2009. Participants included the bishop; cabinet; chairs of Orders, Board of Ordained Ministry, John Wesley Association; and the Conference Director of Connectional Ministries. The event was facilitated by Rev. John Ellinger. The desired outcome from the meeting was to provide a forum in which individual and corporate concerns could be expressed with regard to the Flexible Housing Policy.
- Other priorities for the Order of Elders chair include the following: Continued meetings with the Bishop and Michigan Area chairs in 2010; continued service to the West Michigan Board of Ordained Ministry and its executive committee; further research for ways in which pastoral effectiveness can be standardized and measured throughout our conference.

May we be of one heart and mind as we reach out to those persons who are physically and spiritually under-resourced in our communities, our conference and throughout the world.

William M. Beachy, Ph.D., Chair, Order of Elders

#### ENLISTMENT AND MENTORING COMMITTEE

The Committee on Mentoring helps make disciples for Jesus Christ by ensuring that pastoral candidates receive mentoring that will help them become effective pastors.

During 2009, the board held five Candidacy Mentor training sessions and trained 127 pastors. Sessions were held in Cadillac, Lansing, Grand Rapids, Mt. Pleasant and Battle Creek. Board members Daniel Hofman, Jane Ellen Johnson and Mike McDonald conducted the training. Additional training sessions will be held in the spring of 2010. Candidacy Mentors are assigned by the district committees on ordained ministry, in consultation with the district superintendents, to mentor candidates for ministry until they begin serving as commissioned provisional members or local pastors.

The board continues to sponsor regular meetings of each class of commissioned provisional members as they move toward ordained ministry. These groups meet regularly throughout the year to support one another and share their experiences in ministry. We appreciate and affirm the dedication and time

commitment each provisional member and the clergy mentors make to be a part of these experiences. Board members Devon Herrell and Mary Ivanov are responsible for organizing these groups each year.

The board also works in consultation with the district superintendents to ensure that each commissioned provisional member has a clergy mentor assigned.

Mike McDonald, Co-Chair, Enlistment and Mentoring Committee

### **CANDLER SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY**

Guided by our mission *to educate faithful and creative leaders for the church's ministries in the world*, **Candler School of Theology** continues to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ by developing leaders called by God to serve in Christian ministry. Our distinctive commitment to both *inspiring minds* and *empowering ministry* enables us to develop uniquely well-rounded leaders who are challenged academically, encouraged spiritually, and immersed in Christian service from the first day they arrive on campus.

As one of the 13 official seminaries of The United Methodist Church, Candler is grounded in the Christian faith and shaped by the Wesleyan tradition of evangelical piety, ecumenical openness, and social concern. As one of nine graduate professional schools of Emory University, Candler provides a rich context for learning and formation supported by the extensive resources of a top-tier research university. As a school located in the major metropolitan area of Atlanta, Georgia, Candler offers students a learning laboratory that reflects the highly diverse communities of our 21st century world. There is no better place for preparation that addresses our major denominational priorities: developing leaders, starting and growing churches, ministry with the poor, and improving global health.

To ensure that our students are prepared for leadership in an increasingly global context, Candler has placed a new emphasis on internationalizing the curriculum. In 2009, we established the Office of International Initiatives, led by Dr. David Jenkins, and received several grants related to international engagement. Through one of these, Candler partnered with International Relief and Development, Inc. to send seven student interns to Mozambique, Indonesia, and the Republic of Georgia in the summer of 2009. Other grants are assisting Candler in initiating a national conversation on best practices for internationalizing theological education. In spring semester of 2010, Dr. Wesley de Souza, Arthur J. Moore associate professor in the practice of evangelism, team-taught a distance education class in real time with a professor and students at a seminary in Sao Paulo, Brazil, the first collaboration of its kind at Candler. The March 2010 visit of Roman Catholic Cardinal Walter Kasper, president of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, ushered in a yearlong special emphasis on internationalization at Candler.

A hallmark of the Candler MDiv experience, the Contextual Education program continues to shape our students' pastoral identities by interweaving service at ministry sites and churches with academic reflection in the classroom. In any given week, Candler deploys more than 250 ConEd students throughout the region to minister to people in congregations, hospitals, and social service agencies. Last year, Candler's ConEd students provided 1/3 of the service hours responsible for Emory University winning the U.S. government's Presidential Award for General Community Service, the highest federal award a college or university can receive for its commitment to community engagement.

Candler's Teaching Parish Program, directed by Dr. Alice Rogers, continues to expand into more conferences in the Southeastern Jurisdiction, providing United Methodist students with the opportunity to serve churches throughout their seminary education, earn academic credit for pastoral experience, and complete their MDiv degree in three years. Through the Course of Study regional school at Candler and our five extension schools in the Southeast, we oversaw the educational process of 918 people this past year.

Candler has faced the recent economic challenges with bold initiatives to advance our mission. Although our operating budget essentially will remain flat next year, we are increasing our investment in financial aid each year. Candler's total financial aid commitment in 2009-10 was \$4.7 million. Eighty-six percent of eligible students received Candler-based financial aid, with the average award covering 76 percent of tuition. More than \$2.6 million was provided to 191 United Methodist students. We also established Candler Advantage, a program designed to pay rising third-year MDiv students for summer internships in congregations so they can concentrate fully on honing their pastoral skills. In March, we hosted our second annual Leadership Candler event, an all-expenses-paid discernment experience that draws together top prospective MDiv students to explore the richness of life and study at Candler. Last year,

75 percent of the participants in Leadership Candler joined us as students in the fall. Finally, Candler has raised more than half of our \$60 million capital campaign goal.

During 2009-10, Candler celebrates the 25th anniversary of the Sherman Scholarship Fund. Established by Frank and Helen Sherman of Jacksonville, Florida, the Sherman program has provided financial assistance to 868 students preparing for pastoral ministry in United Methodist churches.

Candler's student body continues to attract younger and more diverse people. Our enrollment stands at 499, with 391 seeking the Master of Divinity, 62 the Master of Theological Studies, 25 the Master of Theology, 14 the Doctor of Theology, and 7 enrolled as Special, Non-Degree students. The total student population is 23% US ethnic minority, 11% international, and 50% women. More than 50 denominations are represented, with 52% of MDiv students being United Methodist. The median age of our entering class of MDiv students is 26, with 57% of total enrollment under thirty.

Our faculty members continually demonstrate their dedication to the church through preaching and teaching engagements, scholarship, and service in local parishes as leaders in their congregations. This year we welcome two new faculty: Dr. Greg Ellison, assistant professor of pastoral care and counseling, who joined us in fall 2009, and a fellow United Methodist, the Rev. Dr. Arun Jones, who joins us in fall 2010 as the Hankey Chair in World Evangelism. Candler also has produced *A Thrill of Hope*, a church resource DVD for Advent that offers a fresh take on the Christmas story, uniting art, scripture, and commentary by members of Candler's faculty. Watch a preview on our website, [www.candler.emory.edu](http://www.candler.emory.edu).

Candler draws considerable strength and inspiration from its vital 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 undergird this essential ministry in the life of our denomination.

Jan Love, Dean and Professor of Christianity and World Politics

### **GAMMON THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY**

Gammon Theological Seminary was established in 1883, first as a department of Religion and Philosophy at Clark University in Atlanta, Georgia, by The Methodist Episcopal Church with the assistance of the Freedmen's Aid Society. The school was granted a charter and the name was officially changed to its present form on March 24, 1888. The Rev. Wilbur Patterson Thirkield served as the first president.

Gammon Theological Seminary is one of thirteen accredited theological institutions of The United Methodist Church. Gammon is the only historical predominantly African American theological school related to The United Methodist Church. Dr. Walter H. McKelvey is the President of Gammon Theological Seminary.

Gammon is the United Methodist component of the consortium of theological schools, known across the world as The Interdenominational Theological Center located in Atlanta, Georgia. The seminary is a multi-racial, multi-cultural and co-educational graduate school of theology. We offer a broad curriculum in the scholar-minister tradition and also offer a holistic educational experience that continues to stress scholarship and service.

Students prepare for administration and leadership, counseling, teaching and preaching and a range of other spiritual and secular roles, with a blend of scholarship in the classroom and practical experience in the community.

The interdisciplinary curriculum integrates theological studies with preparation for the ministry, merging theory with practice to equip the student for scholarship in the academy, service in the parish, and leadership in the community.

Degree programs offered are Master of Divinity; Master of Arts in Christian Education; Master of Arts in Church Music; Doctor of Ministry; Doctor of Ministry with a Specialty in Pastoral Counseling; and Doctor of Theology in Pastoral Counseling. Dual degrees in Christian Education and Master of Divinity, and Church Music and Master of Divinity, and our range of innovative special programs provide research and learning opportunities for students and faculty, while serving society as a whole. Some of the programs are:

- (1) The Institute of Church Administration and Management (ICAM) supplement theological education with leadership training and administrative skills development, addressing topics such as entrepreneurial concepts, time management, organizational development, and policy formulation.

- (2) Black Women in Church and Society Program establishes networks among African American church women locally and nationwide through an institute, a research and resource center and seminars.
- (3) The Religious Heritage of the African World initiative conducts research and advocacy activities, gathers data, and examines issues related to the religious heritage of people of African descent around the globe.
- (4) Faith and The City is one module of a collaborative relationship among local seminaries that addresses civic and community interest by engaging the public theologians, local church leadership and their congregations in active pursuit of a spirit of mutual community and shared responsibility with its specific emphases on environmental justice and wholistic health.
- (5) The Womanist Scholars Program recognizes and promotes the scholarly activities of academicians who Black Women, religion and spirituality. This program enables womanist scholars to pursue a research project of their own design. Scholars are engaged in teaching, lectureships, and consultation on issues affecting Black women and religion and Black women and spirituality. This program invites two Black female scholars annually to be in residence, teach a course in the scholar's research area and develop publishable contributions to womanist works.
- (6) The Youth Hope Builders Academy seeks to provide high school youth an opportunity to explore their present and future lives theologically and discover ways in which their lives can contribute to a hope bearing church and society. During the program an intensive four week summer residential academy is held. A second component of the Academy is year-round forums, including the Annual Youth and Family Convocation, for young people and their families, and church and community leaders focus on current issues of youth and resources for problem solving.
- (7) The Urban Theological Institute is an exciting initiative designed to address the need to develop effective religious and public leaders for urban transformation. The vision is to become a major partner with local churches, neighborhood, faith-based organizations in the war against urban blight.
- (8) The Student, Local Church and Agency Internship Program functions with an opportunity for partnerships with organizations, local churches, social action and advocacy agencies, which helps prepare students and fosters a vision of excellence in ministry in general, and pastoral ministry in particular. This program seeks to accomplish its nurturing and mentoring goals through the development and utilization of strategic partners.
- (9) The Conference on Ministry, which is held during the Spring of each year is an opportunity for persons who feel they have been called to ministry to come and visit our campus and explore their call to ministry as they visit classrooms, engage students who are currently matriculating at the seminary and dialogue with the Financial Aid/Scholarship officers as well as the President of the seminary. This three-day program stimulates and helps prospective students to clarify their call to ministry and also helps them to consider the seminary that will best help them to achieve their goals for preparing for ministry.
- (10) The Thirkield-Jones Lecture Series was established by alumni, family and friends for Bishop Wilbur P. Thirkield and Bishop Robert E. Jones. Each person had an individual lectureship; "Thirkield's Lectureship was on Preaching and Social Services, and Interracial Goodwill." Jones' family, alumni and friends established the "Alumni Lectureship". The two lectureships were combined in 1947. The Thirkield-Jones Lecture Series is held annually during Gammon's Founders' Day celebration in October.

Gammon is known as "**The School of the Prophets**" and has trained many bishops, district superintendents, annual conference staff executives, general agency administrators, college presidents, preachers, teachers, Christian educators, pastoral counselors, military, hospital, and children's home chaplains, Wesley Foundation directors, campus ministers, ministers of music, church administrators, religious journalists and authors, biblical scholars, and social activists the last 127 years. Our graduates hold the promise of hundred of local church ministries around the world in Africa, Asia, and India and our gifts and graces will continue to honor our historic mission and embrace its promising future. To learn more about Gammon, please visit our website at [www.gammonseminary.org](http://www.gammonseminary.org).

Dr. Walter H. McKelvey, President  
Madelyn C. Greene, Alumni & Student Affairs Director

### GARRETT-EVANGELICAL THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Another year has passed and **Garrett-Evangelical continues to strengthen its programs with and for the larger church.** Now in our 157th year, we continue our commitment to preparing highly regarded spiritual leaders – bold leaders – for the church, the academy and the world.

We welcomed another **large first-year class in the fall of 2009**, an extraordinary and diverse group of students. We were honored to have renowned theologian Dr. Jürgen Moltmann give the address at our opening convocation. Our Enrollment Office continues to strengthen its outreach. We are pleased to announce that the Rev. Rebecca Eberhart will be joining the staff at Garrett-Evangelical in June 2010 as Assistant Vice President for Enrollment Management.

The school's administration has given considerable attention to the economic challenges of the past year with a particular eye on the financial needs of our students. We not only held our tuition costs flat but also provided an additional \$500 grant to all full-time students who were not already on full scholarship. We are involved in significant planning to emerge from this economic downturn with even greater vitality and focus in our programs.

Our Board of Trustees has voted to break ground for significant renovations of Loder and Lesemann halls beginning in May 2010. This will provide for a new student center (including cafeteria, bookstore, lounges and coffee shop), over thirty sleeping rooms each with a private bath, new seminar rooms and office space for the library staff and the Stead Center for Ethics and Values. Plans are to finish these projects by the fall of 2011.

We are listening carefully to students, faculty, alums, pastors, lay and clergy conference leaders, and persons outside the church to discover how we might better accomplish our core purpose: **"To know God in Christ and, through preparing spiritual leaders, to help others know God in Christ."** As a result of this ongoing discourse, we are moving forward with a number of exciting initiatives, including the following:

- In November 2009 a **symposium on ministry** in The United Methodist Church was held with Bishop Al Gwinn, Bishop Grant Hagiya, Rev. Mary Ann Moman and Dr. Robin Lovin, joining members of the Garrett-Evangelical faculty in presentations and dialogue. In February 2010 a remarkable conference on Ethical Leadership, the Church and the Global Economy was held on campus, and in April we welcomed to campus another gathering of Deacons in The United Methodist Church. At that time we also celebrated the remarkable teaching ministry of Dr. Margaret Ann Crain at the seminary. Video presentations and written materials from these events, along with other materials, are available on the seminary's website.
- The **MDiv Plus** program officially begins in the fall of 2010, the only one of its kind in the country. It provides executive education for our graduates for the initial three years after graduation and works closely with annual conferences during preparation for ordination. We value our partnership with Northwestern University's Kellogg School of Management and with the Samaritan Centers in this initiative. Together, we will offer a joint Certification in Church Leadership and training for clergy coaches.
- **Distance learning and intensive courses** to be offered beginning fall of 2010 will allow students to do up to one-third of their academic work in a "hybrid format" (simulcast, webcast, some campus intensive times). These can be found on the seminary's website.
- A revised **Doctor of Ministry** program, under the direction of Dr. Mark Teasdale, will begin in the fall of 2010.
- Our efforts to build **stronger bonds with The United Methodist Church** are being led by Rev. James Haun. Jim works with the **MDiv Plus** initiative and also directs the **Course of Study** for Licensed Local Pastors, including schools taught in English, Spanish and Hmong.
- The **Center for the Church and the Black Experience welcomed Dr. R. Drew Smith as Director.** In September 2010 we will be celebrating the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of CBE with several activities, including **an address by alumnus Dr. James Cone at our fall convocation on September 15.**
- We continue to provide **initiatives to better serve Hispanic students and churches through the work of our Hispanic Council.** We seek to provide more financial aid, enhance the Hispanic Course of Study (Escuela del Curso de Estudio), add more Spanish content to the seminary website and develop a plan for additional Hispanic faculty and courses in Spanish.

- **We are increasing the number of full-tuition scholarships** for persons preparing to be pastors and teachers and expanding opportunities for lay education and continuing studies for pastors through online and extension education. We are pleased to announce the new Eliza Garrett Scholarship. See the seminary's website for further details.

Garrett-Evangelical serves over **550 students** in degree-related courses, certificate programs and our summer Course of Study School. We encourage you to visit our website, [www.garrett.edu](http://www.garrett.edu), and, if at all possible, to visit us on campus. We are proud to serve The United Methodist Church, and we ask for your continuing prayers and support as we pursue our mission and our renewed vision. Thank you.

Philip A. Amerson, President

## METHODIST THEOLOGICAL SCHOOL IN OHIO

Greetings from Methodist Theological School in Ohio, where five students from the West Michigan Conference worked toward Master of Divinity degrees in the 2009-10 school year.

**50th Anniversary:** In 2010, MTSO celebrates 50 years of preparing leaders for the church and the world. In five decades, our school has sent more than 3,000 men and women into vocations of ministry and service. A celebration has been planned for Sept. 24 and 25.

**Students:** The school enrolled 230 students from 22 denominations in master's-level courses in the fall semester of 2009. An additional 23 students are pursuing Doctor of Ministry degrees. Three-fifths of all master's level students are United Methodists; the second most common denomination on campus is United Church of Christ, with 8 percent of students. Half of our students are under 40 years old. Students come from 24 states and Korea; 10 percent hail from Michigan.

**Scholarships:** One-fifth of the students at Methodist Theological School earned full-tuition scholarships for the 2009-2010 school year. The average non-load aid award in 2009-2010 was \$7,200. More than 90 percent received some form of financial aid through work-study, loans or scholarships.

**Faculty:** Dr. Randy Litchfield was named interim academic dean for a two-year term, replacing Dr. John Kampen, who assumed new duties as professor of New Testament studies. MTSO President Jay Rundell said Dr. Litchfield "is uniquely gifted to lead our academic program at this time. He is quickly emerging as an important voice in how the next generation of leaders will teach and learn."

**Events:** MTSO welcomed students, faculty, alumni and the broader community to a number of special events. The theme for October's Schooler Institute on Preaching was "Fireworks from the Pulpit: Prophetic Preaching for Secular Holidays." The Rev. Dr. Dale Andrews, the Martin Luther King Jr. professor of homiletics and pastoral theology at the Boston University School of Theology, offered three presentations, with responses by Dr. Yvonne Zimmerman, assistant professor of Christian ethics at MTSO. In March, the Williams Institute presented Dr. Ed Wimberly, provost at the Interdenominational Theological Center in Atlanta, who spoke on the theme "The Pursuit of Happiness: Practical Theology in the Wesleyan Spirit." "Small but Significant: Missional Renewal of the Small-Membership Church" was the theme of March's Mission and Evangelism Institute, led by Dr. Anthony Pappas, executive minister of the American Baptist Churches of Massachusetts, and Dr. Robin Knowles Wallace, professor of worship and music at MTSO.

Danny Russell, Director of Advancement

## UNITED THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

"Spirit led, Renewing the Church For the Mission of Jesus Christ in the World!"

**How can seminary education help to renew the Church?** By blending theological, biblical study with mentoring, classroom learning, spiritual growth and practice! This is what we do at United, and it is making a difference!

United Theological Seminary is committed to the purpose of renewing the Church for the mission of Jesus Christ in the world! We invite your prayers and participation in this renewal and this purpose! The seminary has been serving Christ and the Church for 139 years, but our offerings are designed to meet the needs of today's followers of Jesus and Church leaders:

- A recently revised 78-hour Master of Divinity curriculum!
- A growing number of online and blended courses!
- New Doctor of Ministry degree focus groups and mentors!
- Deep learning opportunities for clergy and laity!

- Emphases in Church Renewal, African American Ministry Studies, Pastoral Care and Liturgical Ministries!
- Appreciative theological reflection on the central doctrines and beliefs of the Bible and the Christian faith!
- Spiritual formation in a variety of cultural contexts, including local and international communities!
- A technologically advanced, fully accessible, state-of-the art campus!
- A youthful, diverse, widely published faculty committed to the Christian faith!
- Friendly and helpful staff and students!
- A United Methodist matching scholarship program!

Enrollment at United is growing steadily and **we invite you to call, visit or sign up for a class** that meets your needs! For more information, contact [admissions@united.edu](mailto:admissions@united.edu) or visit our web site [www.united.edu](http://www.united.edu).

Thank you for your prayers, partnership and service in the ministry of Jesus Christ!

Wendy J. Deichmann Edwards, President

## BOARD OF PENSION AND HEALTH BENEFITS

### CLERGY RETIREMENT SECURITY PLAN (CRSP)

The new clergy pension program called the Clergy Retirement Security Plan (CRSP) took effect on January 1, 2007. The CRSP is a combination of a defined benefit plan and a defined contribution plan. The defined contribution portion is 3% of the clergy's plan compensation (cash salary plus housing). In this new pension plan, the "overfunded" or credit balance in our pre-82 defined benefit account in the General Board of Pension became available to the Conference to the extent of the Defined Benefit contribution due from the conference in the amount of \$1,830,895 for 2009. The amount of the defined benefit contribution to the new pension plan (CRSP) paid by the churches will be redirected to fund the retiree health care. Thus, the churches' Ministry Shares for retiree health care will not have to be increased.

### CENTRAL CONFERENCE PENSION PROJECT SUPPORT

The 2005 Annual Conference directed that "a portion of the Cokesbury contribution to the West Michigan Annual Conference shall be donated to the Central Conference Pension Project which was created to support the pension needs of retired clergy in developing countries. By the end of 2009, the board has contributed the total of \$39,404.13 of the moneys received from Cokesbury since 2005.

### COMPREHENSIVE PROTECTION PLAN (CPP)

The Comprehensive Protection Plan (CPP) provides additional benefits for active and retired pastors in the form of group life and long-term disability insurance. The long-term disability insurance takes effect upon approval by the GBOPHB when the clergy participant is not able to perform ministerial duties due to disabling medical reasons for at least six months.

Payments to Annuitants and Beneficiaries Report: There were 581 participants who received benefits and total payments to annuitants were \$6,865,835 including Disability payments of \$193,212. A detailed report showing payments to individual beneficiaries is available upon request at the Conference Treasurer's Office.

### MINISTER'S RESERVE PENSION FUND (MRPF/Pre 82)

The MRPF is the Pension plan covering the years 1948-1981. As a **defined benefit** plan we annually recommend a **2% increase** in the Past Service Rate (PSR). The PSR in 2009 was **\$697**. The General Board of Pension reported that for 2009 actuarial study, our pre-82 Ministerial Reserve Pension Fund is funded at 169% and showed a credit balance (over-funded) of \$22,538,637 based on the PSR of \$683 and the surviving spouse benefit of 85%.

These actuarial figures were based on 2007 actual asset values projected to 2009. Then, the market crashed in 2008!

(Fortunately, market has regained life since then. The extraordinary circumstances and the actions taken by the General Board in response to the market debacle are covered in this historical report. We will certainly report next year.)

#### **POST-RETIREMENT MEDICAL BENEFITS LIABILITY FUNDING**

Our Health Care Reserve Fund at year-end 2009 was \$15,526,979. (If needed, a portion of this amount may be used to contribute to any unfunded liability in pension funds as the General Board will determine.) In 2009 no swap from other conferences was undertaken because of the forecasted market decline. Actuarial study is in progress to gain sound basis to determine the funding needed for retiree health care. The last actuarial study by Watkins Ross and Co. showed unfunded liability was \$13,291,363 as of December 31, 2007. Our long-term funding strategy may be impacted by the possible changes in US federal health care programs.

#### **HEALTH CARE PLANS**

##### **Health Care for Clergy and Lay on Active Status**

The active health care plan provides medical, prescription drugs, dental and vision benefits for active pastors and their dependents, as well as eligible retirees and spouses under age 65. The premium for active clergy is shared by the pastor and the local church while the premium for retirees is paid by the Conference. Active clergy and lay participants contribute to the cost of their health care on a sliding scale of 5-15% of the composite per capita rate based on their salary bracket. These rates are published annually.

##### **Self-Funded Medical Benefits for Clergy and Lay on Active Status**

In our effort to continue to provide a high level of benefits at a time when industry and other conferences are cutting back, the board secured concurrence of the annual conference to implement a Self-Funded Medical Plan for clergy and Lay who are under age 65 effective October 1, 2009. Benefits remained unchanged with the exception of medical coverage for auto-related injuries in order to protect the plan from potentially excessive claims. At this writing claim data are inadequate to provide an intelligent report on the status of the Plan. To effectively administer the Health Care Plan, the board hired Ronald Stoll as a consultant after having resigned from the board. Lou Grettenberger replaced Ron as a board member and chair of the Health Care Committee.

##### **Medical Benevolence**

The board has established a medical benevolence fund to assist both active and retired health care participants who are in financial distress brought about by medical needs. An application form is available upon request from the Conference Treasurer's Office.

##### **Health Care for Clergy and Lay on Retired Status**

Retired clergy and lay who are eligible under Medicare (age 65 and older) and those on Medicare qualified disability status are placed in the Retiree Plan. The Retiree Health Plan provides coverage for medical, prescription drugs, dental and vision benefits. Medicare has primary coverage under Parts A and B (physician and hospitalization), and our Plan provides supplemental coverage equivalent to Medicare Part G. Retirees pay a minimum of 10% of actual premium plus 5% for every year that is short of the 20 years service to the church.

**Medicare D Implementation:** Integration of our prescription drugs benefit with the newly approved prescription drug coverage under Medicare Part D of the Medicare Modernization Act of 2003 was approved by Annual Conference in 2005. In implementing Medicare D, the government used private insurance companies and drug providers to sell certain plans. Our plan will be with the United American Insurance Company starting January 1, 2006. The Medicare D prescription drug plan adopted in the retiree plan does not have the infamous donut hole. Our financial results show savings in prescription drugs of approximately \$250,000 annually since 2005.

**Financial Report of the Health Care Programs for the year ended December 31, 2009****HEALTH CARE FUND**

## WEST MICHIGAN CONFERENCE

**Twelve Months Period Ending December 31**

(Unaudited)

## Income:

	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>
Interest Income	9,750	29,826
Premiums collected-Churches & Conference	2,982,039	2,906,224
Premiums collected-Active Participants	315,007	335,252
Conference ministry shares receipts	88,230	83,747
Contributions-Non Participating Churches	123,330	104,612
Premiums collected-Retirees	253,991	411,248
Redirected from CRSP DB	1,560,971	1,345,532
Other Income	16,726	625

Total Receipts	5,350,044	5,217,066
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## Disbursements:

Medical Premiums-Actives BCBSM <sup>(1)</sup>	3,313,086	2,056,922
Medical (Gap) Plan Reimbursements-Actives <sup>(1)</sup>	246,483	1,177,754
Dental Benefits-Actives	250,812	287,977
Vision Benefits-Actives	41,785	48,096
Third Party Administrator-Actives	39,974	42,163
Medical Premiums-Retirees	604,789	667,566
Third Party Administrator-Retirees	27,650	26,437
Prescription Drugs-Retirees	347,552	418,003
Dental- Retirees	131,333	165,508
Vision-Retirees	2,246	2,361
Wellness Program	0	7,078
Administrative Office Expenses	103,000	103,000
Legal Fees	1,525	1,446
Actuarial Study Fees	1,584	6,500
Postage & Shipping	3,765	7,316
Financial Services	0	0
Third Party Administrator-FSA	7,294	7,819
Counseling supplement	10,866	8,078
Medical Benevolence Grants	0	1,600
Travel	934	1,386
Administration and Meetings	621	1,950
Total Disbursements	5,135,300	5,038,959

Excess Revenue over Expenses	214,745	178,107
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Investment Gains/(Losses)	(1,878,006)	1,128,404
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Received from Pre-82 Surplus Swap	7,144,180	0
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Beginning Balance, January 1	8,739,549	14,220,468
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Ending Balance, December 31	14,220,468	15,526,979
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(1) Starting October 1, 2009 the Self-Funded Medical Plan took effect; the BCBSM contract was terminated and claims were paid from the Gap account.

We gratefully acknowledge the leadership and dedication of the board members: Molly Turner (Vice Chair), Sue Graybill (Secretary), Peggy Boltz, David Dekker, Carole Lyman, Robert Richards, David Selleck, Anthony Shumaker, Lou Grettenberger, and Chantel Thom. Representatives from the Cabinet and the general board were Laurie Haller and Bill Neuert. We also recognize the support of the Conference Treasurer's Office staff, John Kosten, Kara Conn and Ann Buck, and our third-party service provider Professional Benefits Services in the stewardship of the Plan. As always, we thank God for the support of our churches in providing for the health care and pension needs of our clergy and lay employees and the opportunity to serve.

Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits  
Michael Anthes, Chair  
Pros Tumonong, Treasurer and Benefits Officer

### **CONFERENCE PERSONNEL COMMITTEE**

The annual conference is blessed to have competent, passionate staff members. Special thanks to Dave Wiltse and Jana Lynn Almeida who left our staff during 2009 – Dave on August 15, 2009, and Jana Lynn on December 31, 2009. We welcomed two Conference staff members during the year – Benton Heisler as Director of Connectional Ministries on January 1, 2009, and Mark Doyle as part-time Director of Communications on August 1, 2009. Please note that the Director of Communications is a newly-added position required by the General Conference. We are pleased that Naomi García remains on our staff as a consultant and celebrate her 20 years of ministry in the West Michigan Annual Conference.

This year our committee worked focused on:

- improving lines of accountability and meaningful evaluation.
- reviewing our Personnel Policy and recommended changes to our grievance procedures as seen in our petition to Annual Conference 2010.
- redistributing staff resources, which required changes in our conference staff design, including a reduction of one half-time consultant and realignment of staff responsibilities.

Funding constraints have made our job more difficult this year, but we have a strong, committed staff which continues to work effectively to support the mission of our annual conference and local congregations. Thank you to our staff and my fellow Personnel Committee members for all you do.

Karen Grettenberger, Chair

### **COMMITTEE ON PRISON MINISTRY AND RESTORATIVE JUSTICE CONCERNS**

The year 2009 has been a time to reevaluate the function of our committee and to set specific goals. We will focus on the following areas:

- families of the incarcerated
- prisoners in reentry to society
- Keryx ministry (similar to an Emmaus Walk but for inmates)
- county jail ministry
- restorative justice (victims' rights and mediation before incarceration)
- Camp New Day

Because of the state budget cuts, there are many prisoners being released back into the communities. Our committee's priority is to prepare local congregations to welcome these released inmates and their families.

We will be compiling resource materials and will make leadership training available this coming year for congregations. Support for these released inmates is essential for their success and emotional and physical health and for the success of a healthy society in which they will now reside.

In the summer of 1999 the Prison Ministry Committee established a new ministry called Camp New Day. Camp New Day meets at Camp Albright near Reed City. It is a camp for teen and elementary children who have one or both parents incarcerated. To operate this program, campers need scholarships and transportation.

Through the generosity of United Methodist churches in Michigan, scholarships and transportation were provided, and all campers were given a new handmade blanket, a new pillow and case and a Bible when they checked in. In 2009, churches were able to send 28 campers and 18 staff for the Teen Camp and 41 campers and 18 staff for the Elementary Camp.

Camp New Day is in need of stable funding. The Steering Committee of Camp New Day, chaired by Nancy Bitterling, will be identifying these funding sources in 2010. Our committee finds this camping experience to be very worthwhile and makes a difference in the lives of these children.

Grants given in 2009:

- Next Step program in Grand Rapids
- Center for the Incarcerated in Grand Rapids
- Center for Transformation in Kalamazoo Co.
- Camp New Day

Molly Tate, Chair

### COMMISSION ON THE STATUS AND ROLE OF WOMEN

During 2009, COSROW helped with several important tasks on behalf of the Conference. To begin, the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women provided an excellent training event in March in the Chicago area, which the chair attended. New ideas and the clarification tasks provided some great learnings. At the 2009 session of Annual Conference, COSROW participated in monitoring the conference – a task assigned by *Discipline* to both CORR and COSROW.

In December 2008, Bishop Keaton called together chairs/representatives from several groups from both the Detroit and West Michigan conferences to look over and revise the procedures in regard to clergy families, clergy issues and how various groups can empower and enable situations in the life of the individuals and families during both difficult and challenging times. That work continued into 2009 but is presently bogged down as we await the appointing of an advocate on the West Michigan side.

Partnering with the Commission of Race and Religion, we helped to provide monitoring at the Annual Conference Session in June 2009. We will share in that “ministry of monitoring” again this year.

As a result of legislation at the 2009 Annual Conference, a Flexible Housing Task Force was established. The COSROW chair served on that Task Force from July 2009 through January 2010. Their work/recommendations will come to the 2010 session for approval.

We continue to look forward to a new, bright year of living out the work and purpose of COSROW “to challenge The United Methodist Church, to a continuing commitment to the full and equal responsibility and participation of women in the total life and mission of the Church, sharing fully in the power and in the policy-making at all levels of the Church’s life” – we are seeking how to do that best in our West Michigan Conference.

Judy Coffey, Chair

### TRUSTEES, WEST MICHIGAN CONFERENCE

Your Conference Board of Trustees is organized and functions according to the *2008 Book of Discipline*, ¶2512. The Board of Trustees of the West Michigan Conference is incorporated in the state of Michigan. God continues to provide the means and the leaders in the West Michigan Conference who have been generous with their time and talent by serving on the board.

The year 2009 was an exceptional year for the stewardship ministry of the board over conference and church properties. Here we report and celebrate with you the significant milestones in 2009:

1. The board and other agencies diligently cared for conference property and equipment with original value of \$4.7 million and \$2.6 million net of depreciation. Conference property included five camp sites, three parsonages (in Lansing, Kalamazoo and Grand Rapids), the Conference Center and the bishop’s residence in DeWitt Township jointly owned with the Detroit Conference.

2. Property Insurance in the conference entered a new era. The board has been concerned about the rising cost of property and casualty insurance and the burden this places on the budgets of our local churches, camps and the conference. After studying the matter for several years and believing that every dollar saved is another dollar for ministry, the board brought a petition and secured Annual Conference concurrence to implement a Master Group Insurance Program that gives responsibility to the board to designate a single insurance company for all churches and conference property, with the local church trustees keeping the responsibility to determine adequacy of coverage. The set-up leverages the buying power of the whole conference for the benefit of all churches. This new conference policy took effect on August 1, 2009, and the board-designated insurance company was Church Mutual Insurance Company. The first year of implementation resulted in an aggregate 15% savings in Multi-Peril insurance premium of churches and the conference and a 17% savings in workers compensation insurance in the amounts of \$212,000 and \$23,000 respectively. Additionally, a 19% safety dividend for the 2006 premiums generated \$187,000 for all churches participating. Half of the safety dividend was distributed to 305 churches and other affiliated United Methodist ministries in December 2009 in the amount of \$93,000. The other half will be distributed within the 12 months.
3. The sale of the Oakdale church property at 1005 Evergreen SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49507, was finalized on June 30, 2009. Because of the real estate market meltdown, the sale was carried on a land contract in the amount of \$260,000 with \$60,000 down payment and the remainder to be paid with 6% interest and final payment after 70 months. The proceeds of sale would go to the Grand Rapids Urban Ministry according to *The Book of Discipline*.

Board members have served faithfully in carrying out our mission on behalf of the West Michigan Annual Conference. Two new members joined the Conference Trustees this year: Judy Leach and Cliff Radtke. Continuing members were Gayle Berntsen (secretary), Kip Brunson (President), Paulette Cheyne, Madeleine Mathieu (treasurer), John McLaughlin, Jody Pratt, James A Richie, Jack Tingle (Vice President), Charles R VanLente, Tamara Williams (Cabinet representative), and our Conference Treasurer Pros Tumonong. The board wishes to recognize the faithful service of Ted Carlson who served the board for eight years and was the immediate past president.

Kip Brunson, President  
Pros Tumonong, Conference Treasurer

### UMCOR/HUNGER COMMITTEE

A petition to the 2009 Annual Conference which would have eliminated the Conference UMCOR/Hunger Committee was withdrawn and the committee is taking on new life.

It is our intent to bring a proposal to the 2010 Annual Conference to constitute a new committee with a different organizational structure and renewed focus. The committee will be lean and composed of people who are passionate about UMCOR and hunger-related issues and are willing to work on a committee whose purpose will be to:

Advance the historic support and involvement of the West Michigan Conference and its churches in response to hunger and disasters both foreign and domestic.

We will accomplish this purpose by:

- 1) Carrying out our work in the name and spirit of Jesus Christ.
- 2) Supporting the work of the Michigan Area Haiti Task Force as it relates to UMCOR and hunger issues.
- 3) Focusing on the work of the United Methodist Committee on Relief and other hunger ministries of The United Methodist Church in areas in addition to Haiti.
- 4) Telling the stories of hunger and disaster-related ministries.
- 5) Stimulating giving by local churches to Advance Specials related to hunger and UMCOR ministries.
- 6) Encouraging and resourcing local churches in their own hunger ministries.
- 7) Championing the importance of both relief and development.

UMCOR/Hunger information available on the conference website is being strengthened with a new tag line, "Be on F.I.R.E. for UMCOR." The acronym stands for Feed-Involve-Rebuild-Equip, emphasizing that the United Methodist Committee on Relief is about development as well as disaster response.

We look forward to the challenges ahead and see no reason why West Michigan will not continue its leadership role in support of UMCOR (Lane 4) Advance Specials.

Kay and Lynn DeMoss, Conference UMCOR/Hunger Coordinators

### **UNITED METHODIST FOUNDATION OF MICHIGAN**

2009 was a good year for the Foundation. More churches were served and new programmatic initiatives were launched to serve even more. Our investment products were expanded with enhanced access and reporting for all client churches. Stewardship seminars and consultations were offered across the state of Michigan with strong participation and positive reviews.

2009 was a roller coaster year for the Foundation's investments. January and February experienced nearly unprecedented declines in the investment markets, continuing the negative experience of late 2008. In March, however, the markets stabilized and recovered strength leading to a strong year of investment performance. Over all investment returns were the highest in a decade. Both equity and fixed income pools exceeded their benchmarks by considerable margins.

The Foundation made good on its pledge to have office presence in each annual conference with the opening of an office in Brighton in May of 2009. David Bell, Vice-President for Stewardship, staffs the Brighton office. The decision of the conferences not to merge necessitated this move but we are delighted to deploy Foundation staff across the entire Michigan Area of The United Methodist Church.

In a time when many congregations are struggling financially, the Foundation reached out to provide additional guidance, training, and on-site leadership for our churches. In addition, special efforts were initiated to assist campus ministries with their unique funding challenges.

New charitable trusts and life-income gifts were established benefitting a wide variety of congregations and causes. Our Donor Advised Fund service continues to find enthusiastic support enabling donors to make significant gifts to support their interests over longer periods of time.

The Foundation continues to provide all administrative services for the Michigan Area Loan Fund of The United Methodist Church. This relationship has proven to be mutually beneficial as our staff has been able to achieve economies in operations while expanding the services of the Loan Fund to the churches of Michigan.

The Foundation enjoys an outstanding board of directors, laity and clergy, who provide strong guidance and encouragement for the staff. The strategic vision of the board is powerful and optimistic. We are fortunate to have the skills and commitment of an outstanding board of volunteer leaders to establish policies and guidance for the Foundation's professional staff. For 2010 the Foundation's officers are:

Chairperson: Charles Veenstra

Vice-Chair: Terry Groesser

Secretary: Deb Marcus

Treasurer: Joy Barrett

The Foundation is grateful for the support of the annual conferences and the client congregations that enable our ministry.

Wayne C. Barrett, President and Executive Director  
Geraldine Wright, Chair

### **UNITED METHODIST WOMEN**

As women in The United Methodist Church, we have a distinct purpose. That purpose is to know God as free persons through Jesus Christ and to develop a creative, supportive fellowship within our congregations.

We are supportive of The United Methodist Church and the global ministries of the church through the mission work that we do both in the United States and in other countries.

Our focus is on helping women, children and youth to lead a more productive life. There are many ways to do this of course and each district is unique in the ways it seeks to fulfill the purpose. It may be supporting safe houses, working in soup kitchens, supplying food pantries, making prayer shawls and a myriad of other projects. By ourselves we can do some good, but together we can do a lot of good.

This past year we saw a decrease in our pledge money from the districts and of course that had a tremendous impact on the work that could be done. Not only does it affect world mission projects, but it impacts those mission projects done right here in the U.S. We are looking for new ways to support mission and especially United Methodist Community House in Grand Rapids. West Michigan Conference United Methodist Women own the building, try to help maintain it and pay the insurance. We are faced with the need for a new \$50,000 roof for the building. This year we patched the roof but that is only temporary. We pray that district pledges will not be cut again and maybe even bounce back.

This past year has been a learning and eye-opening experience for me as a new president. I have been fortunate to have patient and loving support of many, many people. For that I am thankful and we will keep on keeping on as only United Methodist Women can.

Ruth Whaley, President

## WEST MICHIGAN CONFERENCE UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

### TREASURER'S REPORT

CONFERENCE PLEDGE TO MISSION 2009		\$244,062.00
MISSION GIVING 2008		
Pledge to Mission	\$173,332.58	
Special Mission Recognition	8,250.00	
Gift to Mission	6,440.99	
Gift in Memory	5,722.50	
World Thank Offering	<u>16,907.15</u>	
TOTAL MISSION GIVING		\$210,653.22
MISSION GIVING PLUS 2009		
Call to Prayer and Self-Denial	\$ 8,691.70	
Supplementary Gifts	157.25	
World Missions	1,165.22	
National Missions	2,803.39	
UMCOR	<u>7,431.18</u>	
TOTAL MISSION PLUS GIVING		<u>\$45,448.74</u>
TOTAL REMITTANCE TO WOMEN'S DIVISION		\$256,101.96
ADMINISTRATIVE & MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT		\$96,401.01**

\*\* Money retained by Conference for Conference Expenses

Linda Luce, UMW Treasurer

## WEST MICHIGAN CONFERENCE SECRETARY

My duties informally began at West Michigan Annual Conference 2009, where I assisted and shadowed Conference Secretary, Laura Witkowski. I took the opportunity to observe Secretary Witkowski and her staff throughout the authoring of the 2009 West Michigan Conference Journal. I am very pleased to have Don Hiler and other Conference Secretary staff returning for duty this year.

Beginning in July 2009, I joined the Annual Conference Program Committee and have been attending their meetings. I played a key role in the authoring of the Albion Task Force Report. I am blessed to be working with distinguished past secretary Bill Johnson as our chair of Annual Conference Program Committee. Both he and Laura Witkowski continue to be vital resources as I find my way into this position.

In addition to my service as WMAC Secretary, I also serve as pastor to the Watervliet and Coloma United Methodist churches, as husband to Rev. Dr. Julie Greyerbiehl, and as father to Ethan (7 yrs) and Tsipporah (3 yrs) Chu.

William W. Chu, West Michigan Conference Secretary

## AFRICA UNIVERSITY THRIVING IN ZIMBABWE

Africa University has many stories to tell – to the nations of Africa, and the world.

During Zimbabwe's economic and political struggles of recent years, United Methodist-related Africa University continued to educate leaders for all of Africa. For a time in 2009, it was the only institution of higher education in Zimbabwe open for classes. We celebrated our 3,000<sup>th</sup> graduate with the 2009 graduating class.

In the 2009-2010 academic year, our 1,100 students represented 28 African countries. We have a substantial waiting list of students eager to attend on campus or through our emerging distance-learning curriculum.

For all of this, we thank God for the prayers and support of United Methodists. In 2009, annual conferences contributed more than \$2 million to the apportioned Africa University Fund. That represents 86 percent of the \$2.5 million goal set by the 2008 General Conference.

United Methodists' support for Africa University creates opportunities for Africans to help Africans. Our graduates are living out the United Methodist vision for the Four Areas of Focus:

**Leadership:** The Rev. Tolbert Thomas Jallah Jr. is a prime example. A graduate of AU's Institute of Peace, Leadership and Governance, the former advisor to Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf is now Secretary General of the Fellowship of Christian Councils of Churches in West Africa.

**Global Health:** Bigi Ruhigita, a nurse from the Democratic Republic of Congo, earned her master's degree in public health at AU. She returned to Congo to work in a 50-bed clinic she and her siblings founded in honor of their father.

**Ministry with the Poor:** Isaiah Njimbu, a 2006 graduate, returned to Lubumbashi, DRC, to find many children orphaned because their parents died of AIDS. In response, Njimbu started the Child Action Initiative, a nongovernment organization. Today, this ministry still thrives.

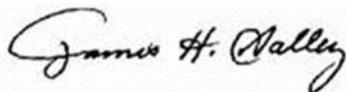
**Church Growth:** The Rev. Daniel Mhone was instrumental in establishing 28 local churches in the newly established Malawi (Africa) Missionary Conference. He credits Africa University for increasing his capacity as a pastor.

In December 2009, we joyfully celebrated the inauguration of Bishop David Kekumba Yemba and professor Fanuel Tagwira as the university's third chancellor and vice chancellor.

Democratic Republic of Congo President Joseph Kabila praised the university's dedication to Africa at our annual seminar commemorating former United Nations Secretary General Dag Hammarskjöld.

Every annual conference is vital to the success of the dream that has become Africa University. Your support educates leaders in theology, agriculture, social sciences, health sciences, and peace and justice.

Grace and peace,



Jim Salley  
Associate Vice-Chancellor for Institutional Advancement  
Africa University

**REPORT RE: 2009 LEGISLATIVE ITEM # 6**  
**“Adults Who Are Registered Child Sex Offenders In The Life Of The Church”**

Regarding the following 2009 West Michigan Annual Conference Legislation motion:

Item #6

SUBJECT: Adults who are Registered Child Sex Offenders in the Life of the Church

MOTION: The West MI Conference Abuse Prevention Team or designates shall design a plan for situations in which an adult convicted and/or registered as a child sexual offender is involved or seeks involvement in the conference, its activities or facilities. This plan shall be developed for consideration at the 2010 Annual Conference.

Submitted by Jim Van Treese, Holton UMC, GR District  
Joleen Golden, Breckenridge, Central District  
Naomi Garcia, Conference Ministry Consultant

An Adult Sex Offenders in the Church Task Force of the West Michigan Conference Abuse Prevention Committee has met during the last year to develop guidelines of the 2004 General Conference Resolution #355 “Church Participation by a Registered Child Sex Offender” for consideration at the 2010 Annual Conference. The committee requests an extension of one year to continue its work on this document.

Joyce Gackler, Chairperson, Abuse Prevention Committee  
Jim Van Treese, Chairperson, Adult Sex Offenders in the Church Task Force