



Historical Reports

2022 Annual Conference

June 2-4, 2022

Grand Traverse Resort

Acme, Michigan



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AFRICA UNIVERSITY FUND

You are the light of the world. A city on top of a hill can't be hidden. – Matthew 5:14 (CEB)

This year, The United Methodist Church marks 30 years of vibrant, transformative mission and ministry through Africa University. Thank you, Michigan Conference, for your faithfulness and generosity in bringing the dream of Africa University to life.

From the first conversations in 1984 to formal approval at the General Conference in 1988, the planting of Africa University required vision, faith, and bold action in the face of predictions that it could never succeed. Africa University's Holy Spirit-inspired vision found advocates and friends in Michigan, across the denomination, and beyond. The "Dream is Alive" was the rallying cry in March 1992 as the first lectures, delivered to 40 students from six African countries, took place in renovated farm buildings.

Africa University's journey from day one to the present is a shared story of being salt and light. It is a uniting, United Methodist dream come true. Africa University is a Michigan Conference story—of restoring hope, equipping, and sending forth young leaders to shape an abundant life for themselves and for the communities they serve.

Africa University is grateful to the Michigan Conference for investing 77.7 percent of the asking to the Africa University Fund (AUF) in 2021. Thank you!

The theme of the 2022 Michigan Annual Conference gathering, "**Mourning to Dancing**" resonates deeply with the Africa University family. The students, faculty and staff grappled with the sudden death of Africa University Vice Chancellor, Dr. Munashe Furusa, in January 2021. National lockdowns restricted travel and damaged livelihoods. Unable to be on campus, the students, faculty, and staff faced inconsistent and, in some instances, costly access to essentials such as food, medicine, electricity and the internet. Together, they grieved, pivoted, supported and encouraged each other, and persevered.

Against the backdrop of a global pandemic and catastrophic climate events, Africa University harnessed new opportunities for missional engagement in 2021. The 2021 operational highlights include:

- **Effective online-only teaching, learning and student assessment:** About 99 percent of students participated in online learning. Enrollment held steady at 3,060 students and more than 500 graduates from 24 African countries were awarded degrees in July 2021.
- **The installation of AU's fifth Chancellor:** Bishop Gaspar João Domingos of the Western Angola Episcopal Area was elected Chancellor following the death of Bishop John K. Yambasu of Sierra Leone.
- **Research and community service:**
 - AU researchers received US\$2 million in funding for regional initiatives to eradicate malaria, tuberculosis, and other communicable diseases.
 - AU's students and graduates led, and showed their love of neighbor, with initiatives to feed hungry families, care for the environment, and improve the quality of life of legally blind parents and their children.
 - AU received the 2021 Jairos Jiri Humanitarian Award from the Government of Zimbabwe in recognition of its pandemic impact mitigation efforts.

In celebrating its 30th anniversary, Africa University is honoring the past and looking to the future, while remaining true to its mission as the cornerstone ministry for United Methodist-related leadership development in Africa.

Thank you, Michigan United Methodists, for letting your light shine for young women and men who would otherwise be left on the sidelines. "A city on top of a hill can't be hidden" ...similarly, AU's current students and its more than 10,000 graduates to date are a metaphor made real. Continue to walk alongside them, Michigan Conference, as they hone their abilities, live fully into their God-given purpose, and join in the work of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

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

AFRICAN-AMERICAN MINISTRIES, COMMITTEE ON

The Committee on African American Ministries (COAAM) is composed of representatives from African American laity, African American seminary students, the United Methodist Black Clergy of Michigan (UMBCM), the Black Clergy Women of Michigan (BCWM), Black Methodists for Church Renewal (BMCR), Urban Youth Alliance (UYA), Anti-Bias/Anti-Racism Task Working Group, Lay Servant-Lay Speaker-Certified Lay Minister Organization, and Training and Equipping African Americans for Ministry (TEAM).

In keeping with our 2022 Annual Conference theme of "Mourning to Dancing," we mourned the loss of parishioners and clergy who made their transitions last year. We mourned the loss of time and fellowship due to COVID restrictions. And finally, we mourn the myriad of challenges we had to face to get to a stable and "normal" way of life. We are grateful that the Lord showed us how to make a way out of no way.

However, we celebrate the following:

- COAAM provided
 - Stimulus grants to 16 African American churches
 - 25 tablets/cases to the youth attending the Urban Youth Camp
 - Technology grants to 10 churches and 11 clergy
 - Safe and Secure Welcoming Environment Grants to 9 churches
 - Individual grants for two laity
 - One emergency grant to a church in crisis
 - One special church grant in collaboration with two other conference agencies
- COAAM also developed its website and identified a technology specialist to manage and maintain an up-to-date website. We plan to debut it in March 2022.
- Several COAAM members reconnected with other UMC organizations, such as Strengthening the Black Church for the 21st Century, BMCR, and Convocation for Pastors of Black Churches.
- The United Methodist Black Clergy of Michigan provided
 - Three guest speakers for clergy training.
 - Monthly meetings for fellowship, discussions, and collaborations.
 - Registration for a Black Clergy Retreat in May 2022 that will include worship, training, discussions, fellowship, quiet time.
- Rev. Beatrice Alghali, Rev. Anthony Ballah, and Rev. Audrey Mangum graduated from seminary and are working full-time at local churches.
- Rev. Audrey Mangum became a provisional elder.
- The Urban Youth Alliance hosted the Urban Youth Camp for 18 African American campers. They studied the bible, learned financial responsibilities, worshipped, and had a great time.
- The Anti-Bias/Anti-Racism Working Group collaborated to create a strategy for helping Michigan Conference local churches to learn about and receive minority clergy.
- Increased numbers of minority laity earned certification as Certified Lay Ministers in the Michigan Conference between 2018-2021. There are currently ten Black CLMs across Michigan. Additionally, there is one Hispanic CLM and one Korean CLM.

In Greater Detroit District, the LSM training is virtual. Laptops were purchased, equipped, and were made available for loan to registered laity with technical support from the Lay Servant Ministries Training Leadership to ensure equity in access to training for the laity.

COAAM's three significant accomplishments for 2021 were:

- Providing much-needed financial support to African American/African clergy, laity, and churches.
- Assisting the Urban Youth Alliance in providing African American/African church and community youth with an educational, spiritual, and memorable experience in camp.
- Increasing the number of minorities who have become Certified Lay Ministers in the Michigan Conference.

COAAM looks for to reaching new heights in 2022.

Jan J. Brown, Clergy Co-Chair
Simmie Proctor, Laity Co-Chair

BAY SHORE EVANGELICAL CAMP OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

DBA: Bay Shore Camp and Family Ministries

“The mission of the Bay Shore Camp and Family Ministries is to provide an invitation for all people to experience Jesus Christ and to nurture them in their relationship with Him.”

Celebration

In spite of the continuing impact of COVID-19 and following the guidance provided by the American Camping Association and the State of Michigan, our dedicated staff and volunteers made a way for more than 900 children and youth to attend Bay Shore Summer Camp onsite events in 2021. While attendance remains lower than pre-COVID levels, countless people continued to attend all of our events, without incidence of COVID through the end of the camp and retreat seasons.

In 2021, we launched our travelling day camp ministry, Bay Shore’s “Day Camp on the Road.” “Day Camp on the Road” takes the foundations of VBS and combines them with the best parts of camp ministry to help kids grow and develop into individuals with a heart for Jesus. And, it helps local churches connect with their community in a new way. We served 224 day campers at six United Methodist Churches across the Michigan Conference.

Bay Shore Camp was blessed with an estate gift in 2021 that included 107 acres, a 20-acre lake and a complex of buildings, just 20 minutes from our main location. This gift will allow for the expansion of our ministry into a dedicated Day Camp ministry in 2022.

In keeping with our vision of “no child left behind,” no child was turned away from camp for inability to pay. In fact, individuals and organizations donated more than \$100,000 to help kids go to camp. We are thankful for the countless people who support this ministry with their financial gifts. Aside from those who support our Campership Fund, we give thanks for those who gave in excess of \$130,000 to support our general operating budget. These generous gifts allowed us to navigate the continued financial wilderness created by COVID-19. We are especially thankful for an endowment that sustains the ministry as well. Bay Shore now has an operating budget of \$1.3 M, 12 year-round staff, two campuses and hundreds of faithful volunteers.

History and 2021 Recap

An Evangelical United Brethren Camp at the time of the 1968 merger, Bay Shore established its own 501c3 non-profit when The United Methodist Church decided to close the camp and agreed to transfer it to some faithful constituents. Bay Shore continues as an affiliate ministry of The United Methodist Church by representation on the Bay Shore Board from UMC appointed clergy and laity.

In 2021, Bay Shore offered 18 summer child and youth camp events over a course of eight weeks. Weeks of camp include athletic camps, arts camps, traditional camps and day camps. While summer camp attendance was still down from pre-COVID levels, those families who still wanted a camp experience for their children took advantage of our events designed to provide COVID health and safety protocols. Our weeks of traveling day camps finally launched, serving 224 campers, partnering with 6 churches across the conference. It’s clear there’s a future in this collaborative programming with the church.

Family (Assembly) Camp, now in its 110th consecutive year, continues to be well attended. In spite of COVID-19, over 500 people participated in some portion of the week’s events. Inspiring speakers for the adults, engaging programs for the kids and youth and a wide range of recreational activities, draw people of all ages to this multigenerational event. In 2021, for safety’s sake, we moved our large worship services outdoors under a tent. This was the best attended Family Camp event since 2017.

Bay Shore serves a wide array of year-round guests. Many attend our programmed retreats including men’s retreats, women’s retreats, youth retreats, quilt retreats and craft retreats. And others attend events as guests of others who use our facilities to program their own retreats. Our newest retreat facility, the Amby Lodge, a 13 room, 33 bed lodge with semi-private rooms, is our most popular. Rooms are comfortable, typical of a nice hotel and the lodge has a beautiful great room with kitchen for guest use. Most weekend dates for this lodge are already committed on an ongoing basis, and we are beginning to grow our week-day events now.

The most important events that Bay Shore offers are free! Twice a year, June and October, Bay Shore offers “Free Family Fun Days.” Families are invited to attend. Camping is free. All the recreational activities are free. The June event includes all of our popular camp activities including swimming, mini-golf, inflatables, ziplining, lasertag, arrowtag, paintball, archery and barrel train rides. The October event includes popular Fall activities like hayrides and pumpkin painting. Weather dependent, 200-600 people attend these

events. COVID-19 did not seem to impact our attendance at these events, with families welcoming the opportunity for some sense of normalcy.

In December, Bay Shore stages a drive through Living Nativity that has served hundreds of guests annually. This event is also free, offered as a gift to the community. We've found that this "drive-through" event especially serves the elderly and families with very young children and is an engaging way to relive the Christmas story or to teach to children for the very first time. More than 300 people attended this event. It was especially fun to have many live animals including sheep with the "shepherds," various animals at the "stable," and camels with the "wise men."

What's Next?

It remains to be seen how COVID-19 will reshape camp ministry. We're certain that camp ministry will be impacted. In the coming months and years, Bay Shore plans to roll out new ways to support the local church and the family. Partnering with the local church, traveling day camps will continue to be rolled out to up to 12-16 locations in 2022. Partnering with schools and community, an outdoor education program is being developed. Meeting the changing needs of families is a priority. The new campus will boast a new Day Camp facility, with even more kids and family programming planned for the future. The main campus will continue to host overnight camps, our historic Family Camp and new family camping opportunities. The mission remains the same:

"The mission of the Bay Shore Camp and Family Ministries is to provide an invitation for all people to experience Jesus Christ and to nurture them in their relationship with Him."

Jeff Parsons, Executive Director



After taking a summer away from camp in 2020, Camp was back in action on the shores of Lake Michigamme this last summer. We safely and successfully held 8 weeks of youth camps and two adult retreats. Reaching out to the schools in the community brought many new young faces to camp. Our largest camp of the summer had 50 campers 2nd - 10th grade. We were turning campers away during check-in day due to not having enough adults to facilitate more campers. One of the many highlights from that week was during our closing night dance. One of our youngest campers asked our spiritual leader for the week to tell him more stories about God. Jeremy gladly shared stories with the young boy. As time went on others gathered around the picnic table to hear. Jeremy asked the boy if he knew any stories about God, to which the boy replied "Only the ones I've heard here at camp." Jeremy went up to the chapel to get a box of camp Bibles and brought them down to the table they were gathered at. He wrote a message to the boy inside the front cover. As the night went on Jeremy continued to tell stories and hand out Bibles. After a long year of what-ifs and uncertainties due to the world we live in it was great to be reminded of why we hold camp. To provide a safe space for any child and family that wants to have the summer camp experience to come and to share the teachings our faith is based in. We had more campers last summer than we did in 2019, looking forward to a summer of even more campers in 2022.

I'm excited to be moving into the 2022 season and continue building relationships with volunteers passionate about helping youth grow in their relationship with Christ. Camp Michigamme will be celebrating a summer of 100 years of ministry. We are excited to welcome back some youth camps under new names and expand upon our adult retreat options. Summer Games Camp has a mix of new and old leadership at the helm and will be rejoining the line of up of camps offered as G3: God, Grace, & Games. Adult retreats we are adding this summer are Book Club, Crafting, & Young Adult (18-40). We will continue to offer Quilting and Scrapbook camp that have been tried and true retreats of community. We will also be breaking ground on a new shower house in the center of camp. So many fun exciting changes coming to a camp that stays true to its core mission of an open table.

Kelsie Coccia Camp Director

CLARK RETIREMENT COMMUNITIES

As part of the Grand Rapids community for the past 116 years, Clark has been serving seniors and their families with an unwavering focus on our mission of ***“creating communities of dignity, compassion and respect centered on the lives of older adults and those who care for them.”*** Since our humble beginnings in a house on Sherman Street, Clark has become a premier Life Plan Community in Grand Rapids. Today we are called home by 370 residents on two campuses who are served by 240 dedicated employees. Our residential offerings are in independent, assisted living, memory care, and skilled nursing. We are proud to say that we have active, vibrant, and wonderful communities to serve seniors with an unsurpassed, positive culture and environment.

Throughout our history, we have made strategic decisions allowing us to fulfill and expand our mission while ensuring the long-term stability and growth of the organization. Clark’s Board of Directors, with significant support from the Executive Leadership Team, conducted a comprehensive process to identify an affiliate organization aligned with our mission and focused on strategic growth. The Clark Board unanimously agreed to affiliate with **BHI Senior Living in Indianapolis, Indiana**. The effective date was February 1, 2022.

BHI is a faith-based, non-profit organization with a mission that will align seamlessly with Clark’s. Clark will maintain its brand and identity as a subsidiary of BHI. Brian Pangle will continue as the President of Clark and all Michigan-based operations. The Clark Foundation will continue to operate independently to fulfill its Clark Promise for current and future residents.

Also, the covenant relationship with The United Methodist Church is the cornerstone of our faith-based legacy and will remain intact. Bishop David Bard is in full support of the affiliation and looks forward to continuing the relationship for years to come.

This affiliation will result in the following strategic goals:

- Maintaining the Clark name, brand, and legacy
- Continuing the 116-year covenant relationship with the Michigan Conference of the United Methodist Church
- Deepen financial strength to ensure services and facilities for future generations
- Strengthen and deliver high-level, quality, compassionate care
- Extend services to more seniors in Michigan

Residential Communities

Clark at Franklin

Our legacy campus, Clark at Franklin, was founded in 1906 through a generous donation by Melvin and Emily Clark. Although the challenges of COVID-19 have had an intense impact, we are still a thriving, ecumenical community that welcomes people with open arms, warm smiles and provides a fun-loving, engaging, and caring environment. Our goal is to inspire meaningful living, with activities and care focused on the mind, body, and spirit of our residents. Living options include independent town homes and apartments, assisted living, specialized dementia care, and skilled nursing.

Clark at Keller Lake

Situated on a 40-acre campus, Clark at Keller Lake is located on beautiful natural environment with groomed nature trails winding around the lake. It is conveniently located near shopping and dining establishments. Our independent living option includes spacious 23 town homes clustered around Keller Lake. There are two assisted living manors each located on the edge of the lake with large decks overlooking the water. They provide a caring, nurturing and activity filled environment with specialized services for residents with dementia. Our new building project includes 52 upscale independent living apartments in a unique town square model overlooking Keller Lake. This exciting property welcomed our first residents in October 2021.

Montessori for Aging & Dementia

Clark has integrated a Montessori program for adults with dementia that is the first of its kind in the United States. People with memory loss often live a life of emptiness with little or no purpose. The Montessori Program offers an exciting, evidence-based approach for setting a revolutionary new standard of excellence in dementia care by providing purpose and creating independence.

Collaborations for Home and Community-Based Services

Atrio Home Care is a collaborative effort of 3 home health care providers, Clark, Holland Home and Resthaven. Atrio was formed to provide a new level of compassionate, skilled, and quality home care

services including a comprehensive range of personal, private duty services as well as skilled home care services.

Emmanuel Hospice is partnership of four local faith-based senior services organizations, including Clark, that provide dignified end-of-life support to patients and their loved ones. The mission of Emmanuel Hospice is to put the patient's wishes first and asks the question, "*How do you want to LIVE?*"

TANDEM365 represents an innovative concept aimed at helping older adults navigate the complexities of healthcare while enabling them to remain in their homes. Through customized care coordinated by a team of health care professionals, participants in TANDEM365 have access to the best services and support available with a single point of contact.

Clark Foundation

Philanthropy is a major component of life at Clark giving us the ability to provide services, programs, and projects beyond the scope of operational activities. The Clark Foundation was founded in 1995 in response to the benevolent care needs of residents. Through the generous gifts of donors, financial support is provided to those residents who, through no fault of their own, have depleted their financial resources. This is the Clark Promise – residents have the peace of mind knowing Clark will always be their home. Other areas of gifting include the Montessori program for Aging and Dementia, Music Therapy, Equine Therapy, life enrichment activities, employee education opportunities as well as support to capital projects and initiatives.

Clark is currently engaged in a \$6 million capital campaign called **Celebrating Clark**. This campaign will provide resources in the following areas: \$3 million to the Keller Lake expansion project, \$2 million to Benevolent Care and \$1 million to Life Enrichment. A \$300,000 renovation project to the Chapel on the Franklin campus is currently underway with an active campaign to support this endeavor. This chapel is at the center of life for residents with many services and spiritual events held throughout the week.

At Clark, we are truly living our mission through person-centered care. Our employee giving program, Clark Colleagues, is a testament to our staff's commitment and belief in the work we do every day. We see an exciting future ahead for fulfilling the needs and desires of the seniors of our community. Our vision and strategic plan are designed to keep Clark vibrant, competitive, and financially healthy.

Brian A. Pangle, President

CONFERENCE LEADERSHIP COUNCIL and DIRECTOR OF CONNECTIONAL MINISTRIES

In November 2020, the Bishop's Strategic Planning Task Force – a group convened by Bishop Bard in 2018, at the request of the Conference Leadership Council (CLC) and the Council on Finance and Administration (CF&A), to address the challenges facing United Methodism in Michigan – submitted its full report to the CLC. The CLC voted to affirm the report as a "Living Document" and as a set of "Strategic Directions." The report was shared with conference and district staff and conference agency leaders.

The report identifies the following missional and connectional challenges facing the Conference.

Missional Challenges:

- Long-term impact of the coronavirus pandemic
- Struggle to dismantle systemic racism
- Declining religious participation, growth of "no religious affiliation"

Connectional Challenges:

- Outdated organizational models
- Michigan Conference's financial situation
- Denominational restructuring and split

Based on these challenges, the report offered four strategic directions:

1. Sharing God's Love with Others: Renewed Passion for Personal Faith Formation & Sharing
2. Building the Beloved Community: Intentional Equity and the Dismantling of Systemic Racism
3. Development of Leaders: Equipped to Lead the Conference in its New Priorities
4. Financial Sustainability: Through the Redirection of Financial Resources

Throughout 2021, the following major developments occurred that were inspired or aligned with the strategic directions:

The 2021 Annual Conference affirmed legislation that added an “Inclusivity Statement,” that committed full inclusion of LBTGQIA+ people in the life of the Michigan Conference, and to the conference’s Plan of Organization.

The Conference Anti-Bias Anti-Racism (ABAR) Working Group proposed legislation to the 2021 Annual Conference for the creation of a conference-wide ABAR Training and the creation of a Cross Racial/Cross Cultural Appointment Support Process. The legislation was approved overwhelmingly and the ABAR Working Group, support by Brittney Stephan, is poised to launch both the training and support process in the summer of 2022.

The CLC submitted legislation to the 2021 Annual Conference to create a District Working Group to study the strategic report’s recommendation to reduce the number of districts from nine to seven. The legislation was approved, and the group was formed. Its members included: Bishop Bard, Jennie Browne, Kristen Coristine, Don Emmert, Sarah Gillette, John Hice, Eric Lynch, Paul Perez, and Sung Yu. It submitted its recommendations to the CLC in January 2022. The CLC affirmed the recommendations and submitted legislation to the 2022 Annual Conference that would reduce the number districts from nine to seven.

The CLC formed a Staff Restructuring Sub-committee, comprised of Bishop Bard, Paul Perez (DCM), Brad Bartelmay (Chair of CF&A), and Ellen Zienert (Chair of HR Committee), to study the strategic report’s staffing restructuring recommendations. The group offered its report to the CLC in September 2021. The CLC affirmed the recommendations to continue the Episcopal Office, Finance & Administration, and Communication staffing and to restructure the Connectional Ministries and Congregational Vibrancy Staff. Connectional Ministries changes included eliminating the Associate Director of Mission and Ministry position (formerly held by Paul Perez) and Disaster Ministries Coordinator position (formerly held by Nancy Money) and add a part-time Mission & Justice Coordinator position (now held by Alice Townley). Congregational Vibrancy changes included the elimination of the Associate Director of Congregational Vibrancy position (held by Gary Step).

The Connectional Ministries and Congregational Vibrancy Teams contracted consultants with Ministry Incubators to redesign conference-wide leadership development offerings with a focus on content, cohorts, coaching, and competencies. The work, led by Dirk Elliott, Paul Perez, and Laura Witkowski, began in November 2021 and continues into 2022. The teams are working on a common definition of leadership development, shared core competencies, and systems for creating, calendaring, and evaluating offerings. Staff also continued their on-going leadership development work with a renewed focus on content, cohorts, coaching, and competencies. Kathy Pittenger and Christy Miller White launched cohort groups for children and youth ministry leaders. Lisa Batten, Naomi García, Laura Witkowski, and Sonya Luna collaborated on scaling up the Seed to Harvest Ministry Incubation Program. Naomi García, Brittney Stephan, and Sonya Luna worked to increase intercultural competency of conference trained coaches and resiliency catalysts and recruit people of color to serve as coaches and catalysts.

The Council on Finance and Administration formed a Ministry Shares Task Force to explore possible changes to the Ministry Shares formula and ways to increase giving. Its members included Brad Bartelmay, Cameron DeLong, Scott Harmon, Jim LeBaron, Paul Perez, Darryl Totty, and Andy Wayne. After reviewing formulas from across the North Central Jurisdiction and other conferences, the task force determined there were no substantive changes that could be made to the current formula that would substantially simplify the formula, adjust for systemic inequalities, or increase giving.

The CLC, CF&A, and Board of Trustees voted to create a UM-related nonprofit – Michigan Disaster Response & Recovery – to continue the Disaster Case Management work provided by the conference to local communities across the state. The decision was spurred by a successful Disaster Case Management Program, funded entirely by a State of Michigan contract from a FEMA Grant, in the Great Lakes Bay Region and a pending, at the time of this writing, multimillion dollar contract for Disaster Case Management in Metro-Detroit.

While denominational uncertainty continues, the Michigan Conference continues to chart a course forward for a just, compassionate, and inclusive United Methodist witness in Michigan that provides space for United Methodists across the theological spectrum.

We are grateful to provide leadership during this important and formative time in the life of the Michigan Conference.

Paul Perez, Director of Connectional Ministries
Darryl Totty, Chair, Conference Leadership Council

2022 MICHIGAN CONFERENCE BUDGET

	2021 - Michigan Budget	2022 - Michigan Budget
<u>A) Clergy Support Budget</u>		
1) District Superintendents	\$ 2,140,803	\$ 2,040,803
2) Episcopal Fund	\$ 626,855	\$ 541,790
3) Ministerial Education Fund	\$ 488,952	\$ 617,921
4) Episcopal Residence Committee	\$ 7,500	\$ 7,500
5) Equitable Compensation Committee	\$ 150,000	\$ 150,000
6) Clergy Advocacy	\$ -	\$ -
7) Abuse Prevention Team	\$ -	\$ -
8) Clergy Moving Expense Fund	\$ 300,000	\$ 300,000
Sub-total Clergy Support Budget	\$ 3,714,110	\$ 3,658,014
Provision for Unpaid Ministry Shares	\$ 614,316	\$ 579,065
Total Clergy Support Budget	\$ 4,328,426	\$ 4,237,079
<u>B) Administration Budget</u>		
1) Council on Finance & Administration	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000
2) Treasurer's Office	\$ 577,700	\$ 577,700
3) Jurisdictional Conference	\$ 36,723	\$ 36,723
4) General Conference Delegation	\$ 8,000	\$ 8,000
5) General Church Administration	\$ 192,253	\$ 217,238
6) Area Administration	\$ 316,703	\$ 519,640
7) Operations	\$ 302,783	\$ 302,783
8) Conference Secretary	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000
9) Conference Statistician	\$ -	\$ -
10) Conference Trustees	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000
11) Committee on Archives & History	\$ 40,000	\$ 40,000
12) Committee on Human Resources	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000
13) Legal Fees	\$ 55,000	\$ 55,000
14) Contingency Funds	\$ -	\$ -
Sub-total Administration Budget	\$ 1,538,162	\$ 1,766,084
Provision for Unpaid Ministry Shares	\$ 256,364	\$ 295,018
Total Administration Budget	\$ 1,794,526	\$ 2,061,102
<u>C) Conference Benevolences Budget</u>		
<i>1) Agencies Relating to Christ-Centered Mission and Ministry</i>		
a) Commission on Annual Conference Session	\$ 100,000	\$ 100,000
b) Commission on Communications	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000
c) Committee on Journal	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000
d) Board of Justice	\$ 10,500	\$ 10,500
e) Board of Global Ministries	\$ 147,000	\$ 87,000
f) Engage Program Promotion	\$ -	\$ -

	2021 - Michigan Budget	2022 - Michigan Budget
<i>2) Agencies Relating to Bold and Effective Leaders</i>		
a) Conference Leadership Council	\$ 5,000	\$ 105,000
b) Board of Ordained Ministry	\$ 59,900	\$ 59,900
c) Committee on Nominations	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000
d) Committee on the Episcopacy	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000
e) Protection Policy	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000
f) Clergy Excellence Program Funds	\$ 10,000	\$0
<i>3) Agencies Relating to Vibrant Congregations</i>		
a) United Methodist Men	\$ -	\$ -
b) United Methodist Women	\$ -	\$ -
c) Board of Laity	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000
d) Board of Young People's Ministry	\$ 254,000	\$ 314,000
e) Board of Congregational Life	\$ 373,000	\$ 373,000
f) Committee on Hispanic/Latino Ministry	\$ 25,300	\$ 25,300
g) Committee on Asian-American Ministry	\$ 30,900	\$ 30,900
h) Committee on Native American Ministry	\$ 80,500	\$ 80,500
i) Committee on African-American Ministry	\$ 44,200	\$ 44,200
j) Racial & Ethnic Local Churches	\$ -	\$ -
4) Administrative Expenses/Compensation	\$ 2,645,627	\$ 1,792,457
5) World Service Fund	\$ 1,561,138	\$ 1,829,502
6) Pathways Funding	\$ -	\$ -
7) MI Area Camping	\$ 100,000	\$ -
8) Contingency Funds	\$ -	\$ -
9) Assets Released from Restrictions	\$ -	\$ -
Sub-total Conference Benevolences Budget	\$ 5,467,065	\$ 4,872,259
Provision for Unpaid Ministry Shares	\$ 743,986	\$ 579,573
Total Conference Benevolences Budget	\$ 6,211,051	\$ 5,451,832
D) Other Apportioned Causes		
1) Black College Fund	\$ 225,959	\$ 246,483
2) Africa University Fund	\$ 50,800	\$ 55,162
3) Interdenominational Fund	\$ 6,759	\$ 48,326
Sub-total Other Apportioned Causes	\$ 283,518	\$ 349,971
Provision for Unpaid Ministry Shares	\$ -	\$ -
Total Other Apportioned Causes	\$ 283,518	\$ 349,971
Total Conference Common Budget	\$ 12,617,521	\$ 12,099,984
E) Benefits Ministry Shares Budget		
1) Pension/Welfare Payments to Wespath	\$ 3,020,000	\$ 3,020,000
2) Benefits Office	\$ 700,000	\$ 700,000
Total Benefits Ministry Shares Budget	\$ 3,720,000	\$ 3,720,000

BOARD OF CONGREGATIONAL LIFE

The Board of Congregational Life supports local churches in the ministry of discipleship through leadership, information, promotion, and assistance. The board's role is to cast and communicate vision, to set benchmarks and to evaluate. Specifically, the mission of the Board of Congregational Life is to: a) Lead and assist the local churches of the annual conference in their efforts to communicate and celebrate the redeeming love of God as revealed in Jesus Christ and to invite persons into discipleship through this love; b) Inform the conference and its agencies of the needs and opportunities of small membership churches; c) Interpret and advocate for the unity of the Christian church, while encouraging dialog and cooperation with persons of other religions, starting at the local church level; d) Promote and interpret ethnic local church concerns to the annual conference; e) Collaborate with the director of congregational vibrancy in overseeing any staff and processes related to the development of vital congregations and new church development.

The Board of Congregational Life's divisions (Congregational Vibrancy, Small Membership Church, Christian Unity and Interreligious Relations) met quarterly. In 2020 board members focused on supporting local churches through the pandemic and prioritizing spending in light of reduced conference monetary resources.

Anthony Hood, Chair

DIVISION ON CHRISTIAN UNITY & INTERRELIGIOUS RELATIONSHIPS

For the Division of Christian Unity & Interreligious Relationships 2021 was not a year of mourning but was a year of struggle. As with many groups of the United Methodist Church we struggled to get together. In 2020 the Division was restructured under the recommendation of the Council of Bishops. For the majority of 2021 this new structure was unable to work as planned. Everyone is zoomed out and tired of trying to schedule events with the uncertainty of the pandemic and it is much more difficult to meet other faith leaders in your community under the current circumstances. Though some events had to be postponed or cancelled others were able to happen with limited attendance, mask protocols, and online broadcast.

There were multiple occasions that made us want to dance in 2021.

- Some were literal including hosting or participating in two separate multicultural concerts. Live music has proven to be a way to bring people together regardless of race, religion, politics, or socio economic status.
- Many of our congregations are working ecumenically in their communities to assist with health, food, and other basic needs. 2021 has emphasized that no one church acting alone can fill everyone's needs.
- Several members of our conference as well as other United Methodist from around the United States have joined a weekly call at 3:00pm each Friday on zoom at our invitation. Multiple Christian denominations and nine other world religions join in prayer from eleven countries and most states to pray for one another and the world. This weekly worldwide event has been going on since the pandemic began and was founded by Imam Arif Huskic of Hamtramck, Michigan. Bishop David Bard issued Imam Huskic an "Ambassador of Interreligious Relations" award in the summer of 2021.

The type of work done in 2021 is important and will have a long lasting effect bringing all of God's people together and will help us as Christians to live as a reconciled community of faith.

Rodney Gasaway, Convener

DIVISION OF CONGREGATIONAL VIBRANCY

CONGREGATIONAL VIBRANCY TEAM

Dirk Elliott, Director of Congregational Vibrancy

We have a gifted team that specializes in all aspects of vibrancy. The Congregational Vibrancy team works to help all churches in the Michigan Conference become vibrant, life-giving churches. The Congregational Vibrancy Team works with the Board of Congregational Life. The Board consists of various divisions to do the work: The Division of Congregational Vibrancy, Division of Small Membership Church, the Division of Christian Unity and Interreligious Relationships, and the New Start Team and the Reach Resources Team.

The Congregational Vibrancy Team consists of five capable leaders working to bring vibrancy to the churches, laity, and clergy of the Michigan Conference. Dirk Elliott serves as the Director of Congregational Vibrancy and oversees the work of new churches and church revitalization, as well as Leadership Development. Naomi García is Associate Director of Congregational Vibrancy and focuses her work on "change, systems, conflict...4 good." Laura Witkowski serves as Associate Director of Lay Leadership Development and specializes in strengthening the laity around the conference. Christy Miller White is the Coordinator of Youth Ministry Initiatives by resourcing youth ministry leaders. Jodi Fuller serves the conference as the Executive Assistant, providing needed support to the members of the Vibrancy Team.

The New Start Team's vision is "to inspire, equip, and invest in innovative ministries to reach new people." While we kept our focus on that vision, the approach to starting new churches has needed to pivot. This year the New Start Team has assisted churches in adopting additional campuses and is working with two churches adding a digital campus to support their physical campus. A digital campus involves more than streaming the Sunday worship service but includes a fully functioning campus of worship, faith formation, and mission outreach opportunities. The New Start Team also assists churches starting new ministries called Fresh Expressions. Fresh Expressions are ministries targeted to reach people who will not usually attend a church service in a church building.

Most churches continue to have a large number of people who continue to worship virtually through platforms such as Facebook Live, YouTube, Zoom, and other social media platforms. The Congregational Vibrancy Team provides webinars, workshops, and consults with churches to help them make this needed shift to online worship.

After eight years of hosting the annual Reach Summit, the Reach Resources Team has decided to take a year off to assess the future direction of this ministry. Realizing that all things live a life-cycle, they are discerning whether it is time to sunset Reach Resources or envision a new direction.

We celebrate the great work of Gary Step as he led the conference in revitalizing work. Gary developed the Local Church Assessment (LCA) process used across the US in many conferences. He brought the Church Unique process to the Michigan Conference. Church Unique takes some of the VCI processes and personalizes them for the local church. Church Unique changes the focus from prescriptions formulated by a consultant team and instead is more collaborative, working with the church to develop the direction for the prescriptions. Gary also introduced the Simplified Accountability Structure (SAS), a single-board governance process, to the Michigan Conference. Gary is leaving conference staff effective July 1, 2022.

Naomi García, Associate Director of Congregational Vibrancy Coaching Initiative

Coaching Initiatives in Michigan embrace partnerships with persons experiencing and anticipating a ministry transition. Transition coaching is gifted to recipients at no charge to them. Every request for a coach, meeting the MiC coaching initiative criteria, from laity, pastors and staff has been filled.

Through a satellite relationship with Coaching4TodaysLeaders/Coaching4Clergy, the MiC has trained 'highly qualified coaches' who meet education standards of the International Coaching Federation (ICF). Training includes coaching for resilience, intercultural competence, various organizational roles, transitions, life circumstances and more through consistent compliance with the ICF Code of Ethics.

2019 through 2021 forty-nine (49) learner coaches enrolled in coach training. Twenty-four (24) have completed the required 128 hours of coach training. Five (5) MiC coaches live outside Michigan. Three (3) coaches already trained and engaged in their own coaching practice joined the MiC coaching faculty.

MiC coaches have delivered more than 900 hours of coaching to 120 individuals and uncounted groups. Benefactors of MiC coaching included those experiencing ministry transition, leading organizational strategic planning, sprouting beyond-the-norm creative ministries, working on raising their AntiBias/AntiRacism competence, addressing conflict well with the assistance of our Congregational Resilience catalysts (mediation) faculty and meeting their own identified desire for the assistance of a coach.

Together we're creating a sustainable MiConference coaching culture that is informative, transformative, developmental and action-driven. The MiConference is well on its way to celebrating a successful launch of our coaching initiatives by 2022.

Laura Witkowski, Associate Director of Lay Leadership Development

As everyone continues to navigate the pandemic, its longevity has taken a toll on all of us. There is no denying the grief of it all. Our kids struggled with a combination of online and in-person school. We have not been able to say goodbye to loved ones in the ways we need. Inequality continues and has been even heightened as vaccines were rolled out. No matter what decision our churches made, in-person, online, hybrid, there was always someone unsatisfied. The need for everyday video conferencing continued as a way to keep us connected and that has certainly been a blessing. Because the work of the church continues. Sharing the love of Jesus continues. Thankfully, by the grace of God, moments of dancing were plenty!

In collaboration with colleagues, Lisa Batten, Naomi García and Sonya Luna we launched Seed to Harvest in 2021. Our team is walking alongside a group of young adults as they bring their 'seed of an idea' and grow it into a ministry. This involves meeting as a cohort and two larger multiday events as they spend 18 months starting something new – all while they work in full time jobs outside of the church, and/or working in multiple jobs or serving a church as pastor. Ideas that may not fit the traditional mold of church are

becoming ways to reach those historically marginalized by the Church. The next cohort is about to launch with teams from local churches working through their ideas for ministry!

Despite the continuing pandemic and not always being able to be in-person, work with individual congregations and ministries has been a blessing. These topics are wide and varied, as is the call and work of laypersons in the church. It is my joy to be able to help:

- congregations name their values and vision,
- understand and use their Spiritual Gifts,
- build relationships among staff teams,
- have more compassion for themselves and others through Enneagram work,
- use the Enneagram while coaching,
- know what it means to 'Dare to Lead' through the work of Brené Brown,
- get clarity on the role of a local church lay leader,
- prepare laity for Annual Conference and,
- navigate the complexities of General Conference.

Our Lay Servant Ministries program continues to be a way the Michigan Conference equips our laity. The Conference Committee on Lay Servant Ministries, which includes District Directors of Lay Servant Ministries, continues to share best practices with each other while districts continue to offer courses online. The Lay Servant Ministries webpage offers all you need to know about the program and current classes offered. I invite you to check out the webpage at <https://michiganumc.org/laity/lay-servant>.

The Board of Laity has been incredibly active and effective this past year. I invite you to read through the report of their work from the Conference Lay Leader, Annette Erbes. Additional to that report is the dialogue initiated between the Appointive Cabinet and a task force of the Board of Laity. These conversations have been fruitful, and we are grateful to have this line of communication open as we seek to find best practices of collaborations between pastors and lay persons.

The first Laity Network Group in 2021 was a meaningful way to connect with others while learning and building leadership skills. Again, the topics varied and included three larger events with outside speakers who shared about Laity & Spirituality, Getting Out of the Box and Rest & Renewal. Laypersons have full and active lives and so when they were not able to attend, the sessions were recorded to view later. Overall, the network group received positive responses in another tough year.

The laity in Michigan continue to adapt and pivot as we learn new ways of being the church. I can't wait to see what 2022 brings! It is a privilege to do this work in Jesus' name and I am grateful to be in ministry with our incredible laity in the Michigan Conference of The United Methodist Church.

Christy Miller White, Coordinator of Youth Ministry Initiatives

After a year of almost completely online ministry, most youth ministry has shifted to hybrid ministry which encompasses both online and in-person ministry opportunities. We also recognize that youth and families are busier than ever and seeking ways to incorporate faith into their everyday lives. Offering Family Faith Formation programming has been a key piece to successful youth ministry in our current age. To that end Christian Education professionals created "Summer of Kindness" for the families of children and youth. This curriculum was the collaborative effort of the Great Plains, Rio Texas, and Michigan conferences including Rev. Kathy Pittenger and myself. "Summer of Kindness" provides six lessons to use throughout the summer providing Bible story videos along with activities and service opportunities to get families talking about faith and putting it in action in the world around them.

To stay connected during our virtual Annual Conference in 2021 we were able to celebrate and gather youth delegates online for our first ever Annual Conference Virtual Pizza Party. Games and prayer were interspersed with pizza eating and fellowship, from the safety of everyone's own homes.

The challenges of youth ministry have not been any easier in this second year of pandemic life. Youth Leaders across the Michigan Conference are invited to gather online for the Youth Leader's Collective once a month. Each meeting allows for space as we mourn the ways ministry is incredibly challenging and celebrate what is working in our churches.

In addition to the monthly meetings, Youth Leaders have had access to REACH Network groups and a new Youth Leader Faith Formation Cohort in 2022. These sessions provide training and teaching opportunities from leaders across the nation in our connectional system in addition to highlighting some of the latest research and educational practices in Christian Education.

A new youth leadership opportunity is being launched in Fall 2022. These online learning sessions provide training from Michigan Conference leadership for youth to learn more about themselves, the world around them, and the skills they need to lead. These sessions are being recorded throughout 2021 and 2022 and will be available to all churches and families in the Michigan Conference to assist in raising up leaders in our community.

Our vision is to continue to create intentional space for youth and amplify the voices of our young people. Highlighting the concerns and passions of our youth and giving them opportunities to lead helps us create a more well-rounded and healthy church for the future as we make disciples of Jesus Christ and transform our world.

DISTRICT LEADERSHIP TEAMS

CENTRAL BAY DISTRICT

It was the best of times. It was the worst of times. 2021 we are glad you are over. It was a year of the vaccine and the year of variants. Our churches were not immune to the disease or the politics around masks. But through ALL of it, Jesus was there. We saw Jesus working; in our compassion, in the way we loved and cared for each other, in the healing. We saw Jesus in our sorrow and mourning.

We are thankful that our churches carried Jesus forward. Online presence became a “thing” and our churches figured out what that meant for them. Facebook, Zoom and YouTube became common words.

Our district office said goodbye to the actual office and became completely virtual. For the times in person meetings are needed, we just meet at one of our local churches.

We missed the connection to all our people, so we threw a great big carnival party instead of a stuffy meeting for district conference. We had over 275 of our closest friends come out to enjoy the food trucks, face painting, carnival games, dunk tank and petting zoo. It was such a great day!

We also awarded the first annual Central Bay District Excellence in Leadership Award to Jennifer Lane for all her hard work and dedication in leading our district youth. As we look to the future, we want to honor the hard-working laity of our district and are excited for the second annual award!

Our district continues to aid churches with grants for new ministry and technology updates.

As always, it is our honor and privilege to be the Central Bay District. May Jesus continue to lead us forward.

Roger Yerion, District Leadership Team Chair

EAST WINDS DISTRICT

This year has created challenging and rewarding work for both our clergy and laity. Twenty months of COVID-19 reports, quarantine, struggles over wearing masks, social distancing, and vaccination policies; balancing the need to gather with the need to care for one another's health; caring for people in extreme need and working for justice in the face of it all. Last year, we marveled at the innovation of pastors, lay leadership, and members gifted in technology. This year, we marveled at their perseverance to continue to do what needs to be done to be the church, no matter what the circumstances are.

Twenty months, and our ministry in the East Winds District is strong; overall, our churches are healthier than we thought that they could be. In one Profile of the Church form after another we see a similar pattern: “Our numbers are still down in-church, but we have many more who still connect over livestream worship. Our giving is nearly as good as it was before the pandemic (some even say it's better). We are finding ways not only to worship, but to have Sunday School classes, book studies, and VBS. We are feeding more, caring more, loving more than we ever did before. We are not just in our church building, we are in our parking lots, in the city parks, and we are in the community.

The Missions in Flint have functioned well after last year's consolidation within the umbrella of the Asbury Community Development Corporation. The Blue Water Ministry Center and Free Store have grappled with decreased volunteer help and leadership and keeping the ministry to the community going. Our Finance Team has issued many grants to churches to assist in the purchase of high-tech equipment and the training it takes to use it. Our ministry is strong, and it is relevant.

The East Winds District Laity Team offered a district training at Flint Calvary UMC entitled, “Be the Bridge” based on the book by Latasha Morrison, which was offered both in-person and ZOOM. The workshop was led by Pastors Greg Timmons and Jeremy Peters. The focus of the workshop was understanding the origins of racial division.

Our 2019 and 2020 mission trips to Puerto Rico taught us that the work that goes into organizing, training, and leading our groups for mission work projects poses an unreasonably large task for one or even two volunteers. To that end, we have hired Rev. Carol Blair Bouse to serve parttime as our Applied Missions Coordinator and continue to serve as pastor of Flint Hope United Methodist Church. In her new role, she will be working with our mission zones as well as helping to coordinate both adult and youth district-sponsored mission trips and a Puerto Rico mission trip in 2023.

The pandemic has changed us, and we continue to be redefined. Yet, we also continue to be Christ’s church: resilient, faithful, and committed to the mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Leadership in the East Winds District and our 90 churches have shown the face of determination. Together, we have weathered fierce storms and pressed on, keeping our eyes on Jesus while we have cared for all God’s children, advocated for justice, worked for peace, and proclaimed the Good News of salvation.

John Hice, District Superintendent
Curtis Clarke, District Leadership Team Chair, 2021
Carol Kandell, East Winds District Leadership Team Chairperson, 2022
Bonnie Potter and Cynthia Rossman, District Co-Lay Leaders

GREATER DETROIT DISTRICT

“You have turned my mourning into dancing; you have taken off my sackcloth and clothed me with joy”
Psalm 30:11

If you’ve ever seen a funeral procession in New Orleans, then you understand mourning turned into dancing. Beginning with a somber and slow musical march of family, friends, and a brass band from the funeral home, the procession winds its way to the cemetery. After the deceased has been entombed or the hearse leaves the procession, the band breaks out in joyful renditions of music: most recognized is “When the Saints Go Marching In”. As the mourners, “cut the body loose”, they dance and celebrate.

In many ways the year 2021 can be characterized as this somber walk to slow dirge-like music: the pandemic was still with us, we continued fighting the same battles both politically and theologically, and we realized how exhausted we were from it all. As a district we mourned the loss of members who passed away from COVID, grieved the closing of some churches, and cleaned up many churches from summer flooding. However, as more people were being vaccinated, you could almost hear the trumpeter playing those first few notes of “When the Saints Go Marching In” and we began in small ways to dance.

2021 saw churches opening their doors for a return to in-person worship. Even with COVID safety measures in place, being together again was a welcome sign that we had “turned the corner”. As spring turned into summer, churches continued to dance with in-person VBS, small group gatherings, and mission outreach events. Our District Leadership Team gathered for an outdoor picnic to welcome the new clergy who arrived during COVID. The Laity Commission of the district supported the MI Annual Conference by assuring laity registered and filled all equalization positions for the district. The Lay Leader and Associate Lay Leader participated in attending virtual charges conferences in 2021 at the invitation of the District Superintendent. More congregations in the Greater Detroit District paid ministry shares than in recent memory, Laity and clergy successfully gathered for our second virtual district conference hosted by Farmington: Nardin Park UMC, and no congregation from the Greater Detroit District disaffiliated or separated from the Michigan Conference or The United Methodist Church as our congregations are committed to wait until General Conference determines what is next for The United Methodist Church. Our diverse and international district is committed to live out the meaning of connection even in these divisive times. Our Director of Justice and Mission Engagement, Audrey Mangum, completed her Master of Divinity degree, became a provisional member of conference, was appointed to Detroit: Conant Avenue UMC, and was succeeded by Rev. Beth Titus. We wish Audrey a fruitful pastoral ministry and thank her for her faithful service.

A huge thanks to our lead choreographer, Rev. Dr. Charles Boayue, who keeps us moving and grooving, Ms. Dwanda Ashford the Executive Assistant to the District Superintendent, Mr. Victor Raybaud our District Treasurer, Rev. Beth Titus Director of Justice and Mission Engagement, the United Methodist Union of Greater Detroit for its leadership and financial support, and to our clergy and laity who seek love and grace

as they faithfully lead. Finally, a note of thanks to our Greater Detroit District Leadership Team, led by Rev. Alicea L. Williams, Deacon, for their dedication to leading our great district. We are excited for the coming year and pray for God's guidance and grace as we continue to dance!

Alicea L. Williams, District Leadership Chair
Charles Boayue, Jr, District Superintendent

GREATER SOUTHWEST DISTRICT

Despite the invitation offered by those coordinating the thematic emphasis of this year's 2022 Annual Conference, there truly was not much mourning or dancing happening in the Greater Southwest District in 2021. Our experience was more like marking time. There were moments that felt like we were in a passenger terminal waiting for a train that never arrived because it had derailed somewhere down the line. Instead of lamenting that, we tried to learn to live with it as individuals and congregations throughout the Greater Southwest District sought to remain faithful in the midst of unanswered questions. Chief among these was the cry of "How long, o Lord?", raised as congregational leaders tried to follow annual conference guidelines and respond to pressures to get back to "normal" when concerns for the most vulnerable and our shared calling to do no harm caused many to wonder whether any kind of reopening of our churches could feel anything like the "normal" for which people longed. The persistent reality of COVID-19 and the realization that there was likely to be more Corona time ahead of us than there was behind us cast a long shadow over district plans to return to "normal" as well. Instead of any return to the status quo, our leadership embraced an imperative lifted in the book of Revelation to "hold fast and strengthen the things that remain."

In Greater Southwest Michigan that took the form of a refocus on the guiding principle our Leadership Team had established at the formation of the new district in 2019. Namely, that the Greater Southwest District exists for the local church. With that principle as a guide, we emphasized equipping and sustaining congregations through dispersing District Ministry Shares. While holding the "dowry" granted to under-resourced districts by the annual conference at the time of the creation of the new Michigan Annual Conference in reserve, we made significant grants to sustain levels of pastoral compensation, fund emerging ministry in local churches through "Fresh Expressions" grants, underwrite costs of bringing worship online and continue our district's shared ministry beyond the local church through awards to the Kalamazoo Wesley Foundation and Wesley Woods United Methodist Camp. We also continued our district focus on development of pastoral leadership for the future by funding the cost of Candidacy Summit for those exploring licensed and ordained ministry and through the establishment of a new Seminary Intern Program.

So, even though the continuing challenges of this past year created circumstances where many still don't feel much like dancing, we continue to wait upon the Lord trusting that our strength will rise as we wait. And while there are moments when that may feel merely like marking time, in times like these such faithfulness rises to the level of action. We trust that these steps may yet bring us to a place where we join the Lord of the Dance as possibilities for ministries that we have yet to envision emerge on the other side of Corona time.

Dwayne Bagley, District Superintendent

HERITAGE DISTRICT

Do you remember the beginning of 2021 in the Heritage District? Yes, COVID-19 vaccines were just being rolled out and we all thought our time of mourning would soon be replaced with dancing! The Delta and Omicron variants had other plans – or maybe they wanted us to remember that our early 2021 dancing was simply loosening us up so we could remain flexible and fruitful the remainder of the year! Oh, what a year it was!

After forgiving 50% of our district ministry shares in 2020, we danced when our churches rebounded by generously giving 97% of our budgeted district ministry shares in 2021. Our finance team spent many sessions on Zoom consolidating our investments with the United Methodist Foundation of Michigan and understanding our budget. This allowed us to discover ways to reduce our 2022 ministry share request by 10% and by leveraging our available financial resources at the Foundation increase our budgeted investments back into the district. On top of this, we were able to end the year with a budget surplus, which is being immediately invested back into our people for training opportunities and free Lay Servant Ministries classes for all Heritage District members in 2022.

Our leadership team could have mourned the anticipated reluctance of many to send youth on a mission trip. Instead, we danced by providing grants to 10 churches as they explored new ways to safely engage youth in ministry including Lent subscription boxes, virtual VBS, youth faith boxes, youth soul care kits, and purchasing technology the youth could use to help stream their worship services. Additionally, we gave grants to 20 churches to expand their dance card into new areas including a sewing ministry, food bank distributions, youth mission trips, outdoor tent for worship, and a multitude of technology requests.

Our District Superintendent recognized that one of our major population centers, Jackson, could use some renewed energy. Leveraging both conference and designated district funding, a two-year New Start initiative was identified, approved and fully funded. It is now just getting on the dance floor as it is staffed and will work to identify new approaches to ministry in the area.

A virtual visioning session was held with invited participants gathering ideas around what is working (where are people already dancing), what new things (dances) would they like to see, and opportunities to improve how we connect (dance) with others across the district.

Our virtual district conference was held focusing on the theme of “Here I Am Lord.” Rev. Dr. Jennifer Browne prepared us for 2022 by sharing “that even though, like Eli, we may be disappointed that the world has changed, we can recognize that God will provide us with the people and resources required to do new things.” So no, let us not forget 2021 Heritage District. Let us leverage our expanded dance card as we respond affirmatively to God’s call in 2022 by living out Samuel’s response “Here I Am Lord!”

LuAnn Rourke, District Superintendent
John Seppanen, District Lay Leader
Brad Luck, District Leadership Team Chair

MID-MICHIGAN DISTRICT

The 2022 Annual Conference theme is “Mourning to Dancing.” And so, it invites the question: What would you “mourn” and what would you “dance” about in 2021?

Once again, this year has been a disjointed one for coordinated district-level activity. The infection levels of the COVID-19 pandemic along with weariness by some in our local churches around following safety protocols placed a significant limitation for district-level events. The district leadership continued to feel that it was most important to be a link between the challenges the local churches and leaders were facing and the resources the conference staff team and Bishop Bard were offering. While we mourn the absence of in-person gatherings, we chose not to add additional layers of expectation to our clergy and local churches. As we entered 2022, the District Leadership Team and Board of Missions held a joint visioning day and are in the process of surveying clergy and laity to more clearly identify what would be most beneficial for resourcing them and their local churches.

Our adaptations in 2021 were very similar to those in our 2020 report:

- The district provided multiple grants to local churches for new initiatives in congregational vibrancy and evangelism (more details below).
- We suspended most clergy or laity gatherings, apart from the individual interaction of our District Superintendent with clergy and local churches.
- The District Committee on Lay Servant Ministries was able to offer one Basic Course that was a hybrid of both in-person and some joining online.
- The district conference was integrated into local church charge conferences out of safety concerns.
- Charge conferences were streamlined for the benefit of local churches so that they could focus any gatherings on their own worship and spiritual growth opportunities. The vast majority of these were held virtually again this year.
- District communications served mostly as a conduit to bolster important messages of the conference and bishop to provide stability, hope and resources during this challenging time.
- The District Board of Church Location and Building worked with the conference trustees to care for and sell one closed church and parsonage: Lansing: First UMC
- The District Committee on Ordained Ministry continued to interview candidates for ministry and support local pastors in their callings.

The work of the Mid-Michigan District Board of Missions, in collaboration with the Mid-Michigan District Leadership Team impacted Michigan United Methodists, our local churches, and/or local communities in 2021 primarily through the distribution of over \$38,000 in grants. Highlights of those grants are:

1. Matching funds to create a new on-line campus to reach those who are referred to as “Nones,” young people with no religious affiliation. The grant assisted with the purchase of high quality equipment and the resourcing of a new position of Producer/Tech Team Leader. This church has a county-wide impact and audience.
2. Training for a church’s volunteer base to be able to effectively use upgraded sound equipment for the launch of a new contemporary worship service focused heavily at connecting with college age young adults, university musicians and young families.
3. Temporary pastoral package support for a church/charge in a place of transition in order to bring stability and time to rebound.
4. Matching funds for the launch of an innovative new community outreach prayer and worship venue and experience seeking to interact with the community around an urban center church.

The vision moving forward is to resource and equip our Mid-Michigan District local church and their leaders as they create the places and spaces where God’s hospitality can thrive in their communities.

Suzanne Goodwin, Leadership Team Chair
Nona Spackman, District Lay Leader
Jerome DeVine, District Superintendent

MIDWEST DISTRICT

The Midwest District has been discerning how best to respond to the mission and ministry needs of our faith communities as we continue to deal with COVID and begin to plant the seeds for new projects as we redefine and redesign the meaning of church in the 21st century.

There are several programs which are supported through Ministry Shares giving. These include Mission for Area People, North End and South End Community Ministries and Justice for Our Neighbors and the Pa Wa Ting Native American Elders program. District Mission Grants have also been provided for churches to start a new mission or expand an existing one. Newer projects include a community garden which is becoming a new worship space and gathering place for those involved, support for campus ministry as students face the challenges of socialization affected by the pandemic, and the expansion of a food pantry. The District Leadership Team is also seeking ways we can continue to shape and define what it means to be the church following the pandemic.

The Midwest District lay leaders have been inspired by each other throughout the past year. We have met via Zoom each quarter and shared the current state of our churches, our dreams and our concerns. We have listened to and encouraged each other in order to bring our best selves before our congregations in these uncertain times. We will continue to meet throughout 2022 and will work to create strong, spirit filled connections within our churches.

The District Leadership Team is focused on how to best support our district churches in a pandemic and post-pandemic world. This includes re-examining our vision and mission for the churches and communities we serve.

For our churches, this means dealing with the realities and need of hybrid worship models that engage both in-person and online viewership and equipping and resourcing our churches to engage both. It also includes re-imagining and developing the spirit of replanting our churches where disconnection has happened with our congregations and communities due to the pandemic and apathy it has exposed. For our communities, this means engaging in local needs that connects our district churches to tangible community needs. This includes connecting into local schools and assisting with the challenges of hunger, literacy, and other basic human needs.

Our District Leadership Team’s focus in 2022 is to develop clergy clusters and collaboration days for clergy to come together and share common struggles, dream, and develop collaborative action plans to address these needs of both the churches in our district and communities we serve.

Margie Crawford, District Superintendent
Deb Hodges, District Lay Leader
Alejandro Fernandez, District Leadership Team Chair

NORTHERN SKIES DISTRICT

God's world is gorgeous and wild in the Northern Skies District. As the pandemic wore on through 2021, we who call the Northern Skies District home took advantage of opportunities for nourishment in the beautiful landscape that surrounds us. The wonder of God's creation called us out of our mourning and into dancing. We were healed, strengthened, and inspired.

Staying connected was a challenge that was met with creativity and resilience. Although collectively we mourned the need to cancel many in-person events and traditional gatherings, churches found new ways to worship together, support one another, and share God's good news in inspiring ways. Other events were able to safely continue. Our renewed thankfulness for these gathering opportunities was cause for dancing as together we learned some new steps.

Lay Servant classes offered remotely were well attended and received.

Camp Michigamme held a successful in-person summer season. Clergy and Laity of the district alike gathered for Michigamme Day where the new Agape WigWam, a two-story multi-use building, was consecrated at last. There was dancing!

The Northern Skies District UMW gathered for their annual meeting in Menominee in October, welcoming the Rev. Beth Galbreath, Biblical storyteller, who taught a dance of faith, hope, and love. Northern Skies District UMW units were inspired to seek renewal through prayer.

District Conference was held in person in November. We welcomed Dr. Sherry Parker to share with us about The United Methodist Foundation. She taught us dance steps of empowerment and future strength.

Mohawk-Ahmeek UMC was designated as the Mission of the Year in 2021. With the support of other congregations throughout the Northern Skies District, many needed structural updates were made. When we all dance together, we accomplish good things.

We dance on, confident in the love of Christ that we receive and reflect outwardly to our communities, our Michigan Conference, and the world.

Kristine Hintz, District Leadership Team Chair

NORTHERN WATERS DISTRICT

2021 has been a slow return to a *new post-COVID normal*. In January we held our first "virtual" District Conference, with votes for district officers and district budget being emailed in ahead of time. Lay Servant Classes started their second year in the online format, which works well given our district's geography. In general, this format has led to more people being able to access the training and to attend the classes in which they are most interested. We are delighted to see growth in this ministry as a result.

The way we work and use office space has also shifted. Executive Assistant Jill Haney works in a hybrid model from her home and a new district office space located at Cadillac UMC. District Superintendent Jodie Flessner works almost exclusively from her home office, occasionally utilizing space in churches around the district and visiting the district office.

We also moved into a hybrid virtual / in-person format for the fall's church conferences. Almost all of the one-to-one meetings with pastors and the District Superintendent's meetings with SPRCs / Leadership Teams were held online via ZOOM. In pre-COVID years, church conferences were an afternoon event with ten to twelve churches gathering in six "HUBS." In 2021 there were twelve gatherings of about half the number of churches in the same size venue to allow for social distancing. Online options were always available. Although there were a few bumps along the way, people pulled together and figured it out as they have been doing throughout the pandemic. Moving to this model not only helped us to adapt to the current health concerns, but also allows us to better use of our resources of time and money. The Northern Waters District has continued working to improve access to technology where possible while adapting the above practices with churches located in "technological deserts." The District Leadership Team continues to support New Mission and Ministry grants to local church, including grants for technological upgrades. We also offered to reimburse all churches for a one-year ZOOM license. "Church Broadcasting Schools" were offered across the conference by the Conference Communication Team, including two held in this area, to give hands on training to local churches as they continued to improve their online presence.

In the spring the District Superintendent and District Lay Leader held eight ZOOM gatherings, specifically to have conversations with local church lay leadership and to answer questions on any concerns they might have. While COVID has been stressful and painful for every church and pastor, as District Superintendent and Lay Leader we continue to be amazed at the strength, creativity, and resilience of the Northern Waters Churches as they continue to provide a witness for the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

It is with great joy that we welcome Beth Pelkey of Ossineke UMC as our new District Lay Leader in 2022. And it is with overwhelming gratitude that we thank Denny Olin for a decade of faithful service as District Lay Leader. His finger on the pulse of the district, his ability to answer a multitude of questions, and his listening ear, will be missed by all.

Jodie Flessner, District Superintendent
Denny Olin, District Lay Leader

COMMISSION ON EQUITABLE COMPENSATION

We dance because we were able to give grants to churches so they could continue their ministry in their communities and beyond with appropriate pastoral leadership and to be part of the story of how life-changing ministry happens in the hearts and lives of people across the Michigan Conference.

We mourn that more churches are having to request grants due to reduced income related to COVID 19.

Some highlights of the work of the CEC over this year of ministry are:

- Guidelines and clarifications were posted to the online Grant Request form before 2022 applications were processed.
- Grant requests for 2022 were considered and acted upon by the CEC in November of 2021 and mid-year grants for 2021 were approved. A total of 15 churches received grants for a total of \$72,504.54 in 2021.
- The CEC proposed a 2 % increase to each category of base salaries for 2022 which was approved and will be recommending a 5.9 % increase to each category of base salaries for 2023.

Margaret "Peggy" Paige, Chair

COUNCIL ON FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

The Council on Finance and Administration (CFA) continues to work diligently on managing the finances of the Conference. Last year proved to be challenging, yet there were also many accomplishments. We celebrate and dance in joy now that we now have a fully staffed finance team and the several completed projects; however, we acknowledge and mourn the continuing financial difficulties faced by many of our local churches as well as the Michigan Conference.

In the last year, we added Angela Anger as the new Chief Financial Officer for the Conference. "Angie" has an undergraduate degree in accounting from Michigan State University as well as an MBA from Cornerstone University. She comes to us with a wealth of experience in the private sector in accounting and financial services as well as experience in leading a staff. We are excited about the talents she brings to our conference.

Ministry Shares payments continued to decline in 2021. Of the apportioned \$12,575,420 in Ministry Shares, the amount paid was \$9,342,478 or 74.3%. This is a decrease of \$817,452 from 2020. We worked to offset the shortfall through controlled spending, transformation of the government-funded Payroll Protection Program (PPP) loan into a grant, and use of Conference reserve funds. We expect this trend of declining Ministry Share remittances to continue and therefore the 2022 budget was reduced compared to 2021. We anticipate additional reductions in 2023 and beyond.

To offset the contraction of the Ministry Share remittances the CFA is establishing a Capital Fund for Ministry Innovation. The 2021 Annual Conference approved establishing a capital fund with the conference's share of the proceeds derived from closed churches. The goal is to establish a fund, the principal of which will remain intact, while the proceeds are used to fund the conference budget particularly in area of ministry innovation. It will take time for this capital fund to grow where it can significantly impact the budget but by committing to preserving the capital generated by church closures the conference is taking an important step to ensure its long-term viability.

Despite financial difficulties, the CFA continues to focus on improving of our finance policies and practices. The last two years we have examined best practices for formulating Ministry Shares to be as equitable as

possible. We have concluded that the current expenditure-based formula is the most equitable at the current time. We now are shifting our focus to improving Ministry Share remittances from all churches.

We must acknowledge that there are local churches who consistently underperform in Ministry Shares remittances. Also, there are clergy who say they want their churches to pay their full Ministry Shares but the churches they serve exhibit patterns of underpayment over extended periods of time. These actions are inconsistent with *The Book of Discipline*. Paragraph 812 of the *Discipline* states that the payment of the World Service Apportionment is the first benevolent responsibility of the church. Paragraph 340.2.c(2)(e) of the *Discipline* charges elders and licensed pastors with leading their congregations in the full and faithful payment of all apportioned funds. While we do not currently have a recommendation regarding this underperformance, we do recognize that this needs to be addressed to promote accountability among the churches and clergy of the conference. Addressing this will be a key task of CFA going forward.

The Treasury and Benefits staff also accomplished many tasks, including forgiveness of the PPP loan, revision of Treasury and Benefits reporting, weekly meetings with the Chair of the Board of Trustees, and reconciliation of all bank accounts. In addition to the day-to-day workload of the offices, the staff has managed the processes around local church closings and disaffiliations and secured and installed a new phone system, all while dealing with the uncertainties raised by the pandemic.

Two of Treasury's major accomplishments for 2021 were:

- Completion of the 2020 fiscal year audit.
- The transition of the Statistics & Information system from Ezra to Brick River

Angela Anger, Chief Financial Officer

BOARD OF GLOBAL MINISTRIES (BGM)

The Michigan Conference Board of Global Ministries strives to express the UMC mission of *Making Disciples of Jesus Christ for the Transformation of the World*. As liaison to the UMC General Board of Global Ministries, we are energized, also, to realize that board's mission of *Connecting the Church in Mission*. Through actively interpreting, creating, supporting and coordinating programs that engage our conference and local churches, we are in "ministry with" people and in places around the world.

This last year has brought us to:

Mourning

- Loss of time spent in each other's company, growing relationships.
- Loss of mission trips and that impact.
- Loss of the enjoyment and connection at church mission events.

Dancing!

- Growth of new, creative ways to do mission and care for each other.
- Technology – increased expertise in connections through online services, Zoom, phone, social media.
- Resilience of young people continuing to serve.
- Involvement with emerging ministries.
- Hope and great expectation in knowing God is faithful and sufficient.
- Super Board!

Challenge

- Meet financial needs of our ministry areas.

Celebration

- First MI VIM team to travel in two years – Puerto Rico, March 2020 and Puerto Rico, January 2022.
- Individual churches for mission work in becoming EngageMI congregations.

Impact

- Financial aid to Haiti UMC ministries through a fire and earthquake.
- Incredible Michigan work of Disaster Relief and God's Country Cooperative Parish.

Major accomplishments

- Rebuilding/refocusing our future as the Board of Global Ministries.
- Progress in our EngageMI giving program revamp.
- Ministry areas continuing to be focused, creative and productive.

To God be the Glory!

Brenda DuPree, Chair

CONFERENCE SECRETARY OF GLOBAL MINISTRIES

The Conference Board of Global Ministries ended 2021 with hope and dancing. After a year without a Conference Secretary, I assumed the role in December, following the dedicated leadership of Jacqueline (Jackie) K. Euper. Though only a few weeks have passed between the start of the position and this report, the board and I have already begun dreaming about how to deepen relationships between our conference and those carrying out the work of God's justice and mercy in our state, country, and world.

Much of that relationship-building will build off the successes of the past year. While we mourn the inability to welcome itinerating missionaries in-person in the midst of the pandemic, we celebrate a successful pivot to online visits. Zoom group presentations and discussions with missionaries have filled us with hope and dreams of expanding our online storytelling work.

Likewise, our conference's strong relationship with other Conference Secretaries of Global Ministries in the North Central Jurisdiction and with the General Board of Global Ministries has been a source of community and new ideas in a time of transition and change. In the next year, we hope to use those models of connection to rebuild and strengthen our own Michigan networks of mission advocates and district secretaries.

The work of connection and mission looks much different than a few years ago. But we enter into a new season with hope, new ideas, and a renewed enthusiasm. We thank our churches for their continued support of mercy, justice, and mission and invite them to keep dancing with us into this new season – even as we learn a few new “steps.”

Audra Hudson, CSGM

LIBERIA MINISTRY PARTNERSHIP

The Liberia Ministry Partnership Team has worked to build and maintain relationships with our United Methodist siblings in Liberia. The most significant activity of 2021 involved the adoption and signing of a Covenant Partnership between The Liberia Annual Conference and the Michigan Area Conference of The United Methodist Church. This covenant partnership was affirmed during the 2021 Annual Conference and then signed by Bishop Bard and Rev. Paul Perez. As a Conference we are committed to continued support the Judith Craig Children's Village. Last year at Annual Conference we collected and sent \$25,915 to the orphanage to support them. We have also committed to continuing to support Liberians by giving scholarships, clean water, and resources to develop sustainable agriculture. This year our Liberia Ministry Partnership Team submitted some legislation challenging every local church to raise \$300 which would provide a scholarship for one child to attend school for a whole year in Liberia. We hope to raise money to provide 800 scholarship years that will help put at least 100 students all the way through High School. We hope every local church will help us celebrate this partnership with Liberia by striving to raise \$300.

Jon Reynolds, Chair

MICHIGAN HAITI COVENANT PARTNERSHIP

Challenges continue in Haiti

Major concerns continue to hamper our mission partnership in Haiti. The DO NOT TRAVEL TO HAITI declaration by the United States Department of State, the assassination of the Haitian President Jovenel Moise in July, a major earthquake (7.2) in August in the southwest peninsula especially in Jeremie and Les Cayes, UMCOR reluctance to approve any new Advance Projects in Haiti, and the continuing national economic/debt crisis disrupts most mission work in the Eglise Methodiste d'Haiti (EMH).

In 2021 major concerns with large gangs are intimidating and controlling several regions throughout Haiti. One experience drew international attention with the kidnapping of 17 members of a team from the Midwest which took several months to successfully settle with the safe return of all members of the team. (A ransom of \$1,000,000 per person was demanded) With the assassination of President Moise the ability of teams to safely serve in Haiti has been further compromised.

Due to such personal risks most teams throughout the state and across The United Methodist Church have decided to refrain from traveling to Haiti for nearly two years. In addition, UMVIM teams are not eligible to be insured for mission trips to Haiti.

The magnitude 7.2 earthquake in August severely damaged several EMH churches and guest houses in western Haiti. Emergency food and supplies were contributed by many partners from around the country. (Also from The Methodist Church of Great Britain and the United Church of Canada.) Many supported Food for the Poor, Samaritans Purse, as well as the relief efforts of the EMH coordinated by David Draeger (Indiana Conference) who is a full-time volunteer at the Petionville headquarters of the Methodist Church of Haiti.

Les Cayes, Jeremie, and Leon circuits received the most damage. Estimates for repairs run to the hundreds of thousands of US dollars. Engineer Derly Charles has assessed several of the repair projects needed to be completed before return to regular worship and VIM teams safety.

Groups like HAPI, Haiti School Project, and Jeremie Rising continue to work remotely with local lay partners in several areas of Haiti. Because of restricted travel noted above and the COVID-19 pandemic many thousands of dollars have been UNAVAILABLE for partners to share in in-person mission with the people of Haiti. We have discovered that UMCOR and the General Board of Global Ministry are unable to process new applications for Advance Special Projects for all purposes in Haiti. We have understood that this is due to various concerns regarding the future of the church to be decided at the next General Conference. The Michigan Haiti Covenant Partnership looks forward to breakthroughs towards peace and normalcy in Haiti and a return to in person ministry with our partners in Haiti and through the Eglise Methodiste d'Haiti.

Karl L. Zeigler, Chair

MI CONFERENCE EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS / DISASTER RESPONSE

Leadership Report

Pastor Bob Miller Chairman and I, typically plan on two face to face meetings with our District Disaster Response Coordinators (DDRC) and four on-line meetings focusing on training and presentations about Early Response Team (ERT) training, Connecting Neighbors and Ministry of Caring sessions with local churches.

COVID-19 (C-19) mandates continue to have major negative impact on our plans and processes for training sessions to build disaster response capacity. Zoom meetings have become common place and 10 zoom meetings a week is now normal. Unfortunately, UMCOR has only recently piloted virtual ERT training as an acceptable means of expanding our capacity to train able and willing people in any of our outreach ministries.

On January 14th and 15th I participated in the Virtual ERT training through my connections with the West OH-IO Conference and I have received my new ERT badge. The process and content were exactly what I have been advocating for over the last three years. UMCOR is starting to catch up in virtual training techniques. Over the past two years, UMCOR/GBGM ban on all training consultant travel. We were advised on 9 February 2022 the that ban is finally being lifted.

Going into 2022 we have 52 ERTs and two Team Leaders certified to do early response to disasters. Four years of capacity building has been totally trashed. I am hopeful that we can at least have two of our five previously trained but not certified trainers to get re-trained and certified this year and start capacity building again.

District Disaster Recovery Coordinators

We continue to work with the District Superintendents to fill our open positions. DS John Kasper is supporting the development of a Tittabawasee Watershed Disaster Response Team that would support Gladwin, Midland and Saginaw counties. Given the estimated 4 to 6 years for the dams to be repaired and upgraded on the Tittabawasee River watershed, there is ample reason to prepare for ongoing disaster response for flooding. One of the positions we need to fill soon is the Central Bay District Disaster Response Coordinator. We currently have favorable conceptual response from Coleman Faith, Midland 1st and Freeland UMC.

I plan to host our quarterly DDRC meetings for the year with Bob Miller.

Current District Disaster Response Positions:

- Greater Detroit – Cheryl Tipton & Detroit Area Disaster Case Manager
- Heritage District - Bob Ankrapp
- Northern Skies - East Randy Hildebrandt
- Northern Waters - Dave Stockford
- Greater Southwest - David Morton
- East Winds - Eric Miller
- Central Bay – Open – Nancy Money Acting
- Midwest - Dan O'Malley Acting



The Mid-Michigan Dam Failure Long Term Disaster Recovery Group has made great progress in helping survivors of the May 2020 flooding and dam failures recover via Disaster Case Management (DCM). Five counties: Gladwin, Midland, Saginaw, Arenac and Iosco are being served through our DCM program for rebuilding home and unmet needs referrals to local agencies. Saginaw County has fully recovered and disbanded their Long-Term Recovery Group.

MSP-DHS received a FEMA Grant for adding up to 19 people to our Disaster Case Management Program for up to two years. This was a first for MI. Our team, Mi-DRR, bid on and received a Provider Agency status to the State of MI, to employ additional people to support the recovery across Arenac, Gladwin, Iosco, Midland and Saginaw counties. We now employ 15 full and part-time people conducting DCM and repair and rebuild activist. We see the bulk of this work ending in the summer for Gladwin and Midland counties. Arenac and Iosco will continue into the fall as the Long-Term Recovery Groups never really formed. Mi-DRR applied for and received an UMCOR Direct Assistance grant so that homeowners affected by the flood can reach their recovery goals. This is and “inspiring great team.”

The Mi-DRR acting as a process consultant, supports the development of 7 LTRGs across Macomb, Oakland, Washtenaw and Wayne counties “so that” the homeowner recovery plan process begins through Disaster Case Management. We are responding to the unmet needs in this “Unseen” disaster in the Detroit Area from the 25-26 June unusually heavy rains which caused sewer backups in more than 102,800 homes. We are going to bid on and hopefully receive the project award for hiring and managing up to 125 people to provide Disaster Case Management and Recovery Services for up to two years.

The Disaster Case Management Program grant potential drove the decision to create a “Non-profit Organization” Mi-DRR, under the sponsorship of the MI-UMC. Our disaster case manager work has grown beyond the capacity of the Conference to manage and administer. A separate nonprofit organization would provide the necessary and focused governance and management required to both continue and scale up disaster case management work across the State.

Our work has also grown to the place where it has a strong likelihood of receiving sustainable funding from non-United Methodist sources. This is the opportune moment to pursue the creation of a nonprofit organization.

It would also assist in establishing a clear outward facing organizational identity for the work. There is currently considerable confusion among community leaders about whether the work is being provided by UMCOR, the Michigan Conference, or a nonprofit organization.

2021 Goals in Review

- **Goal 1:** Support the Central Bay Disaster Case Management Team with process consulting – Goal Met
- **Goal 2:** Develop Chart and provide training for FEMA Grant to MSP-DHS for the DCMP program for Central Bay Flood Recovery program – Goal Met
- **Goal 3:** Reactivate the District Disaster Response Coordinators team and develop Central Bay Disaster Response team. A. DDRC Team is re-activated. B. Central Bay DR team is in development.

2022 Goals

- **Goal 1:** Continued support of the Central Bay DCMP through the balance of the year with process consulting
- **Goal 2:** Continue the development of Mi-DRR Organization to become 501c3 as a Board of Directors member and process consulting
- **Goal 3:** Continue the re-activation of the DDRC and provide avenues to rebuild the ERT capacity through “Virtual Training” with UMCOR training consultants.

Dan O'Malley, Conference Disaster Relief Coordinator
Robert Miller, EP/DR Committee Chair

VOLUNTEERS IN MISSION

As the 2021 Michigan Volunteer in Mission report is being written we are in year two of COVID challenges and resulting reduction in mission journeys both domestic and international. Yet Michigan Conference has continued mission work this past year with encouraging results. The Michigan UMC Volunteer in Mission program serves domestic and international ministries endorsed by UMC partner churches and non-governmental agencies in cooperation with a local host. Volunteers work as teams or individuals to provide construction work and support requested by mission hosts while building relationships.

Missions teams should have a trained VIM leader, register with North Central Jurisdiction and provide insurance for all participants. New** as of January 1, 2022 is an insurance clause stating those individuals over 75 years of age must carry their own COVID insurance. All other coverage is available until age 80.

Michigan offers two domestic mission sites: Newberry Michigan /GCCP, Randy Hildibrandt Direct (rural poverty) and Cass Community (inner city Detroit) Sue Pethoud Director. Both sites are open to teams from around the US and request calendaring in advance of team participation.

Two domestic sites are no longer functioning: GAP (West Branch) and Motown Mission (Detroit). If faith communities are looking to organize / open a site for potential teams please contact Jody Pratt MI VIM Director for assistance.

2021 Teams that registered and acquired VIM insurance:

- Eight teams to GCCP /Newberry Mi
- Three team to Rio Bravo Mexico
- One Peru Health Care site Visit
- One Peru Health Care Team (Oct 2021 - team members from six states)
- Three Disaster Relief teams - registered with NCJ as Mission journeys
- One Team to Guatemala (** Note this group generally does two trips per year)

Jody Pratt VIM Team Trainer held one class in Fall 2021 with three adults and is available to train as needed. Michigan VIM offers a \$150 scholarship and reimbursement for VIM insurance for first time Michigan Conference mission participants. Teams must have completed a VIM leader training and apply thru the scholarship process with MI VIM Coordinator. Information is also on the conference web or by contacting Jody Pratt MI VIM, prattgji09@gmail.com.

Donations to the MI VIM First Time International Missioner Scholarship Fund can be made to: Line 4413, ATT Rick Pittenger, Michigan Conference office.

Building relationships as we hear, experience and live out our mission journey is the call Christ placed in our lives. Blessings on your life as you consider a mission journey. Check the North Central Jurisdiction site listing the opportunities available around the world or the Michigan Conference Mission site.

Special note:

At the January 2022 GBGM Michigan Board Meeting action was taken to expand financial support for Michigan teams meeting the criteria to receive \$150 scholarship funds for first time mission teams. The Board also voted to pay the insurance for first time participants.

Jody A. Pratt, Michigan Conference UMVIM Coordinator

ENGAGE MI

EngageMi is the mission engagement program for the Michigan Conference. EngageMi challenges Michigan Conference congregations to comprehensive missional learning, giving, and action with the goal of encouraging congregations to shift from transactional “ministry to” models to relational “ministry with” vulnerable people and communities. The EngageMi program consists of three focus areas: Learn, Give, Act. Congregations who meet the requirements in all three areas will be recognized as “EngageMi Congregations.” You can find more information about the program online at www.michiganumc.org/engage-mi.

2020 ENGAGEMII CONGREGATIONS

Central Bay District – Coleman Faith, Mayville, Shepherd, Pigeon First, Wagarville, Watrousville, West Branch: First

East Winds District – Gaines, Grand Blanc, Flint: Court Street, Flushing, Lennon, Lexington, Sandusky: First, South Mundy, Port Huron: First, West Deerfield

Greater Detroit District – Birmingham: First, Dearborn: Good Shepherd, Grosse Pointe, Howarth, Livonia: St. Matthew, Troy Big Beaver, Utica, West Bloomfield, Wyandotte

Greater Southwest District – Gobles, Kalamazoo: Westwood, Portage Chapel Hill, Scotts

Heritage District – Monroe: St Paul, Northville

Mid-Michigan – Bancroft, Holt, Laingsburg, Nashville: Peace, Owosso: First

Midwest District – Freemont, Lowell: First, Rockford, Turk Lake

Northern Skies – Engadine, Gladstone: Memorial, Gwinn, Hancock: First, Iron Mountain Trinity, Munising

Northern Waters District – Frankfort, Grawn, Old Mission Peninsula

2021 ENGAGEMENT! CONGREGATIONS

All the following churches submitted reports. Congregations that completed all the three focus areas are EngageMI! Congregations and are identified by *.

Central Bay District – Coleman Faith*, Mayville*, Owendale*, Pigeon First*, St. Charles*, Shepherd*, Watrousville*, West Branch First*

East Winds District – Fenton, Flushing, Fostoria*, Gaines*, Genesee*, Grand Blanc First*, Grand Blanc Phoenix*, Lexington*, Mt. Morris*

Greater Detroit District – Birmingham: First*, Dearborn: Good Shepherd*, Detroit Metropolitan, Grosse Pointe*, Harper Woods Redeemer, Howarth*, Livonia: St. Matthew*, Pontiac Grace and Peace, Troy Big Beaver*, Utica*, Waterford Trinity*, West Bloomfield*, Wyandotte First*

Greater Southwest District – Battle Creek Chapel Hill*, Centreville*, Colon, Coldwater, Gobles*, Gull Lake, Kalamazoo: Westwood*, Nottawa, Union City, Scotts*

Heritage District – Carleton*, Hillsdale*, Howell, Lincoln Community, Milford*, Monroe: St Paul*, North Lake*, Northville*, Saline First*, Walled Lake*

Mid-Michigan – Bancroft*, Delta Mills*, Holt*, Laingsburg*, Lansing Grace, Owosso: First*, Shaftsbury*

Midwest District – Georgetown*, Grandville*, Lowell: First*, Rockford*, White Cloud

Northern Skies – Amasa*, Crystal Falls*, Engadine*, Escanaba First, Gladstone: Memorial*, Hancock: First*, Iron Mountain Trinity*, Ishpeming*, Munising*

Northern Waters District – Frankfort*, Grawn*, Lake City*

Regardless of being closed to in-person worship much of the year, congregations found new creative and intentional means of remaining connected and caring for each other and their communities. All the churches told God-filled stories of ministry. Many of the stories told of an unexpected and amazing increase in giving due to the needs created by the continuing pandemic. Buildings may have been closed to many of the normal congregational activities, but the United Methodists in Michigan are still doing God's work, locally and globally. All to the Glory of God!

Laurie Kaufman de la Garza, EngageMI Coordinator

GOD'S COUNTRY COOPERATIVE PARISH

God's Country Cooperative Parish (GCCP) finds the conference theme of 'Mourning to Dancing' very appropriate. This year we mourn that the COVID pandemic limited our work inside homes with only those who were vaccinated. We also mourn that we only had one Mission Intern as we could not recruit more interested persons. It was more difficult to recruit than usual as we were not able to get on college campuses. We also mourn the additional challenges due to 'growing pains' and the increased logistics this brought, with only one intern.

GCCP also danced in 2021. As mentioned above we had 'growing pains', which are a good thing to have. These 'growing pains' that cause us to 'dance' include hosting more Volunteer in Mission teams than ever. This did not mean that we had the most participants, but we did have the most teams! This allowed us to work outside some residents' homes and community buildings as well as inside some. In 2020 we were only able to work on the outside of homes. The more homes and buildings we work on the more people who are able to experience God's love.

We also 'danced' when we were able to host teams in the Dunlap Ministry Center, including taking showers there! There are new windows in the building, helping keep it a more comfortable temperature. A major cause of 'dancing' is that we are well on the way to having heat and a kitchen in the Ministry Center. These are being funded by the donation of the kitchen and a one-to-one matching grant by former pastor and director of GCCP Virginia Bell. We are extremely thankful to Virginia and all the donors who have made this possible. We also 'dance' that the Conference Board of Global Ministries provided new funding this year for a part time ministry assistant! This help is very valuable as we share God's love in our communities.

Three major accomplishments for GCCP this year include progress on the Dunlap Ministry Center, specifically with windows and showers and the funding for a kitchen and heat. We were also able to do more skilled work than we have been able to do, such as plumbing and window installation, as people with those skills volunteered with us. This is in addition to the roof work, painting and ramps we were able to provide to people. Finally, the number of teams being the largest we have had is an accomplishment. Teams came from churches in Michigan and beyond.

We cannot thank you enough for your part in sharing God's love throughout God's Country Cooperative Parish. Every dollar donated, every item donated, every hour spent working the area (including the team who helped looked for a lost child!) means a lot to the people of our communities where employment is often low paid and seasonal, and we are hours away from 'advanced' medical care.

Feel free to contact us if you would like more information or to be a part of GCCP!

Jackie Roe, Director, God's Country Cooperative Parish

TOWN AND COUNTRY MINISTRIES

The Michigan Town and Country Ministries has had a rough start getting established since the two conferences merged. The main focus of Town and Country is small and rural churches and to help support them in their ministry and mission. There are two main ways in which Town and Country supports these churches:

- 1) Through annual scholarships for pastors working in or studying to specialize in rural church ministry. We provide \$1,000.00 scholarships for elders and \$500.00 for local pastors to help with educational expenses.
- 2) Through an annual Circuit Rider Retreat. We have not had the retreat the last two years due to the COVID 19 restrictions. However, we have booked the retreat for November 7, 8, & 9, 2022 at the West Branch Quality Inn. We bring in speakers to share events and things happening at the national level and to provide resources for small and rural churches. Our funding comes primarily from the Rural Life Sunday special offering. We ask for your support in this special offering that will take place on Sunday September 11, 2022.

The majority of all our Michigan churches are either small in membership, or in a rural community, so Town and Country Ministries is for you.

Carol Freeland, Chair

HIGHER EDUCATION AND CAMPUS MINISTRY, Division of – see under Board of Young People's Ministries, p. 59 –

COMMITTEE ON HISPANIC / LATINO MINISTRIES

In 2021, the Committee on Hispanic/Latino Ministries focused on three areas: Ministry with Youth and Young adults, Ministry with Children, and Leadership Development. Here is a summary of what was done in each of these areas.

Ministry with Youth and Young Adults

The Hispanic Youth Leadership Academy (HYLA) in Michigan was held online in 2021. HYLA took place via Zoom from June 23-26, 2021. There was a leadership team that consisted of Nick Berlanga, Sonya Luna, Ivan Martinez, and Mayela Rodriguez. A total of seven students participated in HYLA. Two students were members of a United Methodist Church, and five students were from the wider community. One student participated from outside of Michigan. The students enjoyed the ice-breaker exercises prepared by Mayela Rodriguez and presentations done by community leaders.

In 2021, we partnered with the College Assistant Migrant Program (CAMP) at Western Michigan University. We took students to the campus for a tour and a presentation about the program. Six students attended the tour.

In 2021, we held a Latinx't Series on Zoom around the theme of Addressing Racism. We had five sessions. The sessions were about art and activism, the work of the Anti-Racism and Anti-Bias Task Force, community schools, immigration, and the community work of Mexiquenses of Michigan.

We also supported the efforts of the Hispanic Center of West Michigan and their Latinx Youth Conference that is held every year for eight graders to learn about college preparation. We gave a grant for conference.

Ministry with Children

In 2021, we supported ministry with children at local churches. We support the children's summer program at Centro Familiar Cristiano UMC in Melvindale through a grant. We also gave a grant to the Summer Cooking Program at Ferndale UMC.

Leadership Development

In 2021, lay leaders from Centro Familiar Cristiano UMC and La Nueva Esperanza UMC participated in the new National Plan for Hispanic/Latino Ministries' online training program. Lay leaders participated in the Encuentro 1 and Encuentro 2 training programs.

In 2021, the Conference Committee on Hispanic/Latino Ministries was invited to meet with the Appointed Cabinet and the Director of Connectional Ministries. During our meeting we talked about four areas: Succession of Pastors for Latinx/Spanish Language Churches, Hispanic/Latinx Pastors Appointed to Cross Racial/Cross Cultural Congregations, Challenges for Pastoral Candidates to Become Ordained Clergy/Local Pastors, and the Development of Hispanic/Latinx Ministries. We were grateful to talk to the Cabinet about these challenges and that the Cabinet has agreed to partner with us to address these challenges.

In conclusion, we would like to celebrate the accomplishments in these three areas and the impact that these programs, churches, and ministries continue to have on the Latinx Community in Michigan and beyond.

Rey Mondragon, Committee Chair
Sonya Luna, Coordinator of Latinx Ministries

CONFERENCE HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE

The Human Resources (HR) Committee remains focused on working to support the Michigan Conference through HR policy development and interpretation; and advising and facilitating appropriate HR practices. We work to develop and offer the structure for successful employment practices throughout the conference.

As we consider the 2021-2022 conference year, we were challenged to assist the conference in the continuing COVID pandemic. We were pleased that the combination of remote and on-site work arrangements continue to be an effective way to complete the conference's work while maintaining as safe a work environment as possible. We celebrate the fact that we could meet via Zoom four times to review policy issues and provide interpretations and guidance on conference HR policies. We also celebrate the expansion of employee holidays to include Juneteenth beginning in 2022 as an employee holiday. We continue to monitor HR conference policies for those that need to be added and updated. We have assisted conference staff in filling vacancies through serving on interview teams, writing job descriptions, and offering advice on employment status (contractor, salaried and hourly status, etc.)

With the arrival of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, the committee wrote a return-to-work policy to establish protocols for returning to work during or following the pandemic. We also continue to receive reports on the status of virtual and in-person work options.

Our three major accomplishments were:

1. Advising conference staff on the development of new job descriptions for four positions.
2. Adding Juneteenth to the roster of conference employee holidays.
3. Advising conference staff on performance related issues.

We strive to keep conference HR policies and practices in line with state and federal laws and regulations. Committee members have also advised other agencies and churches associated with the conference on Human Resources practices from time to time.

Ellen Zienert, Chair

BOARD OF JUSTICE

The Board of Justice (BoJ) is comprised of four Divisions: the Division of Church and Society, the Division on Religion and Race, the Division on the Status and Role of Women, and the Division on Disability Concerns (see their Division reports below).

The Rev. George Covintree is the chairperson of the Board of Justice. The Rev. Dale Milford (Religion and Race) and Patricia Bostic (Status and Role of Women) are the co-chairs. The Rev. Alice Townley, Conference Mission and Justice Coordinator, is the board's staff liaison. The Rev. Christie Miller-White serves as staff liaison for the Division on Disability Concerns. Over this past year the board has been working to strengthen and empower each of the four divisions. Each division now has a chairperson/convener. Each is in the process of broadening their membership and holding regular meetings.

- Division of Church and Society: The Rev. Albert Rush, Chairperson
- Division on Religion and Race: Ernestine Campbell and the Rev. Dale Milford, Co-Conveners
- Division on the Status and Role of Women: Patricia Bostic, Chairperson
- Division on Disability Concerns: the Rev. Michelle King, Chairperson

Two of our division chairs serve on the Bishop's Anti-Bias Anti-Racist Working Group, Ernestine Campbell (Religion and Race) and the Rev. Albert Rush (Church and Society).

After two years, we have pretty much mastered the art of the Zoom board meeting! We do look toward the day when we can meet face to face. May it be soon, Lord, may it be soon.

This past year the Board of Justice distributed \$16,000.00 in grants to six programs across the state. These funds were made available through the participation of our churches in the Peace with Justice Special Offering, the Reginald Becker Memorial Hunger Fund, and the Brubaker-Thompson Peace Fund.

The six programs funded in 2021 were: Laingsburg UMC for its Money4Meals program; the UM Community House, Grand Rapids for its Child Development Center; Kalamazoo First UMC and its Helping Our Neighbor phone ministry program; the Poor People's Campaign board development, Lansing, Detroit, and Benton Harbor; Detroit Central UMC and its Racial Profiling Across 8 Mile campaign; and Garden City First UMC and its Graceful Journey Community Church ministry and outreach to those differently able.

Each year the Board of Justice is able to give grants like these to churches and community ministries across our state because of the contributions you make when you and your church support Peace with Justice Sunday (one of six churchwide Special Sundays) with an offering. Fifty percent of your Peace with Justice Special offering stays here in our annual conference and is distributed as grants through the BoJ. We can only support these ministries with the funds collected through this special offering. So, please. Celebrate Peace with Justice Sunday this year (Sunday, June 12, 2022) and let your congregations know it's many local connections.

And in closing, a point of personal privilege, I would like to say a word of thanks to Lisa Batten. Lisa served as our staff liaison these past several years and was reassigned at the end of last year to serve as the Young Adult Initiative Coordinator for the conference. Her support and encouragement for the development of a strong board with working divisions, her compassion and concern for social justice and equity, her presence and listening ear have been greatly appreciated and treasured. Thank you, Lisa, and stay in touch!

I would also like to lift up George Jonte-Crane who died this past Fall. George was the Peace with Justice coordinator for the Conference, a position he honored with skill, grace, and humor. He will be missed. Well done, thou good and faithful servant.

George Covintree, Chair

DIVISION ON RELIGION AND RACE

The Division of Religion and Race (DORR) has the responsibility to provide resources through collaboration and training to enable the work of the local church ministry area of Religion and Race, with particular emphasis placed on pastors and congregations involving in cross racial/cross cultural ministry.

The Division of Religion and Race has submitted a formal request to consult with the Board of Ordained Ministry and the cabinet to ensure racial/ethnic inclusion and equality in the recruitment, credentialing, and itineracy processes of the Annual Conference. ¶ 643 of the 2016 *Book of Discipline* states:

The Executive committee of the Board of Ordained Ministry and cabinet shall meet at least once per year in joint sessions with the commission on Religion and Race to create and address long-term plans for identifying, and developing clergy leaders who will serve the growing racial and ethnic populations of the church.

The DORR has elected a new Co-Convener, Rev. Dale Milford to the committee. To complement and enhance our work, Co-Convener Tina (Ernestine) Campbell serves on the Bishop's ABAR (Anti Bias/Anti Racism) committee. This committee seeks to equip the Michigan Conference to lead in a way that recognizes the desire to live as a Beloved Community and is informed by our Methodist history in the abolitionist movement.

The committee on DORR has completed its meeting dates for the Conference year and does meet regularly while extending invitations to other conference agencies seeking to integrate concepts of intercultural competency and explore the agenda of The United Methodist Church.

Tina (Ernestine) Campbell, Co-Chair
Dale Milford, Co-Chair

DIVISION ON STATUS AND ROLE OF WOMEN (COSROW)

"MOURNING TO DANCING" – "I AM HER"

2021 found Michigan COSROW raising awareness of the effect of the pandemic on women's roles and status.

We face the loss of jobs, the challenge of childcare and school at home.

We celebrate how women's leadership is good for everyone. We advocate for full participation of women at all levels.

We seek to address inequities against women, to endeavor to ensure inclusiveness for women and the issues concerning women.

Our team discussed how the Church can support and play a part.

The Michigan team was excited to have an article in MIconnect in 2021, on the effect of the pandemic.

The team has connected to national COSROW, and will work on a panel discussion or Lunch and Learn with a national officer.

The national office has offered a series of zoom meetings to discuss compensation of clergy women. I had the honor of attending. The information was very surprising, there is much work to be done.

Patricia Bostic, Chair

DIVISION ON DISABILITY CONCERNS

The Division on Disability Concerns started meeting again in March 2021. We read the book *The Disabled God* by Nancy Eisland and discussed it as a way to get to know each other and learn more about disability theology. At first Rev. Lisa Batten was connecting with us as the conference staff liaison, and Rev. Christy Miller-White stepped into that role over the summer. Rev. Michelle King was elected as the chair of the division. The official members of this committee are Rev. Michelle King, Rev. Ameer Paparella, Greg Hicok, and Norma Hood. Several other people have been attending meetings and engaging with the work of this committee as well, including Sarah Powless, Carmen Burke, and Jenn Woytkiw.

Our work has centered around learning about different things people throughout the conference are doing around disability ministry, talking about the accessibility audit and badge program that congregations can participate in, and making plans for resources that we would like to provide the conference, particularly to help congregations celebrate Disability Awareness Sunday in October.

Michelle King, Chair

BOARD OF LAITY

The Board of Laity (BOL) strives to build awareness of the role of the laity in ministry; provide support and direction for the ministry of the laity at all levels of the church; provide training for lay members to annual conference; and provide organization and support for the development of local church lay leadership. We seek to equip and develop bold and effective lay leadership across the Michigan Conference.

As this year's Michigan Annual Conference theme, "Mourning to Dancing" indicates, the year 2021 was a year that, while presenting many challenges in ministry, also offered opportunities to be the church in new ways. As the Board of Laity, along with other conference agencies, we have certainly missed the opportunity to meet and be in fellowship together in person both at our BOL meetings, but also within our district events, local churches, and ministry areas. We understand the challenge ministry has presented to laity during these last few years in times of isolation, personal loss, illness, and separation. We look forward to and are grateful for shared moments to gather in person to praise God for God's faithfulness and continued blessings.

With God's grace and constant presence, the Board of Laity continued its work in 2021 in new ways together. We have much to celebrate! We are grateful for the ministries of three faithful District Lay Leaders who have served with grace and a passion for making disciples for Jesus Christ. Nona Spackman (Mid-Michigan District), John Preston (Northern Skies District), and Denny Olin (Northern Waters District) have served the laity and local churches of their districts and the conference as faithful disciples. We trust God has new ministry opportunities ahead where they may continue to share the love of Christ in exciting new ways. We then welcome new District Lay Leaders transitioning into these roles with grace and a commitment to serve: Beth Pelkey (Northern Waters District) and Richard Gregg (Northern Skies District). We look forward soon to welcoming a new District Lay Leader to the Mid-Michigan District. We are thankful to God for the continued ministry of lay leadership across our conference who bring gifts, experience, wisdom, and enthusiasm to empower laity in ministry.

As God is indeed faithful in all circumstances, the Board of Laity was able to continue doing ministry in new ways and with new learnings in 2021. As a board, we have begun the journey of intercultural awareness by completing the Intercultural Development Inventory and under the guidance of Brittney Stephan, Associate Director for Multi-Cultural Vibrancy, have set personal and agency goals for increasing our cultural awareness and understanding. As we learn and grow as individuals and as leaders, we pray we are better equipped to Share God's Love with all and Build the Beloved Community.

Another celebration for the Board of Laity in 2021 was the establishment of BOL Resource & Training Grants. As we recognize the many challenges currently faced by congregations, the BOL sought to offer financial support to encourage lay leadership in local congregations to bring about new ministry possibilities in outreach to their communities. Eight local churches/ministry areas were the recipients of 2021 BOL Resource & Training Grants to provide support and plant seeds for fruitfulness in ministry: Davison UMC, Kalamazoo First UMC, Ortonville UMC, Dearborn First UMC, United Methodist Church of Ludington, Motown Mission, Marquette Hope UMC, and Gwinn UMC. From the purchase of a digital curriculum platform for youth and young adults to Stephen Ministry training to resources for a Reconciling Justice team, the BOL celebrates these and other opportunities to equip laity as they share God's love with their local communities and make disciples for Jesus Christ.

Another way the Board of Laity seeks to equip and develop bold and effective lay leadership is through the creation of the laity orientations and laity event as part of annual conference. The laity orientations are online sessions led by the Board of Laity and held virtually prior to annual conference to prepare and provide laity with the tools needed to serve as effective, informed lay members to annual conference. Then during annual conference, the laity event is offered as time devoted specifically to the ministry of the laity. The 2021 laity event offered a keynote address by guest speaker Derrick Scott III, a lay person from the Florida Conference, who passionately reminded and challenged laity to hear and answer their own calls to live out the great commission. (Note: We will be blessed by Derrick Scott III joining us in person this year at the 2022 Michigan Annual Conference as he shares stories of resiliency with our laity.)

As we all know, the times of 2021 have included moments of mourning, but with God's faithfulness, presented moments of dancing in praise at new opportunities in ministry for sharing God's love. The Board of Laity is humbled by, grateful for, and inspired by the many laity in the Michigan Conference who praise God in all circumstances and live out their call to make disciples. It is our purpose as the Board of Laity to provide the awareness, support, training, encouragement, and resources to empower these bold and effective lay leaders.

Annette Erbes, Conference Lay Leader

LAKE LOUISE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY, CAMP and RETREAT CENTER

VISION

A sanctuary empowering personal growth, faith, and knowledge within community.

Mission

We offer an environment and provide leadership for opportunities promoting healthy relationships, personal wholeness and spiritual well-being.

Ministry

To nurture faith and equip Christian children, youth, families, adults and community leaders to live and work from a place of wholeness, and in so doing, they shall be bearers of promise and hope as they transform the world.

Core Values

- ❖ Sacred space and time
- ❖ Diversity and Inclusiveness
- ❖ Community and Hospitality
- ❖ Knowledge and Understanding
- ❖ Spiritual Growth and Renewal
- ❖ Our Heritage and our Future

Lake Louise came into being in 1934 through the generosity of the Horner family of Eaton Rapids as a gift “to all the Methodists of Michigan.” The Horners had acquired a large tract of cut-over timberland after the logging era of Michigan was over. As the Great Depression descended upon the country, the Horners approached their pastor, Rev. Stanley Niles, with the idea of giving 5,500 acres away. The idea of a church youth camp began to take shape. Through the action of a group of visionary people, the plan culminated in the creation of the Lake Louise Christian Community, encompassing a youth camp and creating cottage sites around the lake upon which clergy families could build a place of their own. The Lake Louise Christian Community would hold the land in trust for the two Michigan conferences. Christian camping began at Lake Louise in 1935 and until 2020’s COVID-19 pandemic remained uninterrupted. In 2021 we restarted our camping program and remain committed to offering a place for camp and retreat ministries to occur for generations to come. Approximately half of the original gift was sold to the State of Michigan in 1935 to provide for the development of the site. LLCC still holds title to 2,400 acres of the original gift. The land is managed under the Conservation Forestry Act and the Forest Legacy Conservation Easement, providing for the sustainable harvesting of timber and ensuring the undeveloped character of the land and the lake.

Lake Louise continues as an affiliate ministry of The United Methodist Church by representation on the Lake Louise Board of Trustees from United Methodist clergy and laity. Lake Louise is governed by a 16-member Board of Trustees. By Lake Louise bylaws, trustees generally serve three (3) three-year terms, for a total of nine (9) years.

Lake Louise was thrilled to restart our camping program in 2021. We operated at 50% capacity and saw great success. We began welcoming many of our retreat groups back in the fall of 2021 and are excited to continue to be a place for groups to come and enjoy a place away in the woods and close to God. Check out our website at <https://lakelouisecommunity.org/camps/considering-camp/> to see all the camps scheduled for 2022. And check back often to see what we are planning for the future!

We are overjoyed to have clergy, laity, and youth from the Michigan Conference of The United Methodist Church, regional Protestant and Catholic Parishes and the local community returning to Lake Louise for various retreats. We will once again host groups from around the state to help with our Boyne Country Service Projects. Boyne Country Service Project is a week-long work mission experience for youth and adults. Groups stay at Lake Louise and work each day with community service agencies.

Lake Louise continues to pursue a scheduled program of facility improvements supported by major gifts from donors, and with help from our volunteers. Lake Louise is proud of its heritage as a gift given to all the Methodists of Michigan. We remain an asset to churches, clergy, ministry professionals, and community groups seeking a place of rest and renewal in a beautiful natural setting. We invite all members of the Michigan Conference to pay us a visit, to join us for a retreat, to send their children to our camps, and to volunteer as a counselor or work camp volunteer. We are blessed to be partnering with you in this ministry.

Lake Louise ~ a four season destination for your next retreat or gathering!

Neil H. Haney, Executive Director

MICHIGAN AREA COMMITTEE ON THE EPISCOPACY

The work of the Michigan Area Committee on the Episcopacy is defined by the *Book of Discipline* and is comprised of 10 laypersons and 10 clergy. This year the committee met four times via Zoom. The committee seeks to be a support group for Bishop Bard, much as a Staff Parish Relations Committee is for pastors in the local church.

If we identify something to mourn, it’s the continued presence of COVID-19 and the impact on local congregations. If we are to dance, it is the continued worship of God. The committee seeks to share the joys and concerns of the Michigan Area. We are blessed by Bishop Bard’s spiritual leadership and for helping to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. In addition, the Bishop has responsibilities in Minnesota. Another responsibility of the committee is assisting the bishop in the upkeep of the episcopal residence.

We also are grateful for the Clergy Assistant to the Bishop, and the support of Deana Nelson as Executive Administrative Assistant to the Bishop.

John Wharton, Chair

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

The Michigan Area Loan Fund, operating since 1969, is a ministry related to the United Methodist Foundation of Michigan. The loan fund experienced steady growth in investor accounts during the 2021 year and a related increase in total assets to over \$24 million. Loan activities slowed during this same period, which is reflective of the overall cautious environment and pandemic challenges churches are navigating. The fund is positioned to serve and provide loans to churches in the Michigan conference as well as organizations in Michigan that share historic common bonds in the Wesleyan tradition.

Loan activity is expected to increase as churches review their plans for updating and renovating facilities and equipment. Loans are also available for technology upgrades or new ministries launches. The Loan Fund is one resource among a continuum of Foundation resources designed to help churches develop critical capital campaign strategies, successful stewardship campaigns, or sustainable, value-aligned investments. All of these services, including loan borrowing and investing, are services to assist congregations in achieving their ministry goals.

Karen Thompson, Sr. Director of Loan Services, is eager to learn about your ministry plans and to discuss the ways in which loans and promissory notes can be a part of your church's effective financial stewardship. If you have a "What if?" question or are curious to know more about the Loan Fund, please contact Karen at karen@umfmichigan.org or 888-451-1929. You can also learn more about investment offerings, loans, and financial services by visiting our website: www.umfmichigan.org.

David S. Bell, President and Resident Agent
Karen Thompson, Sr. Director of Loan Services



The 2022 Annual Conference theme of "Mourning to Dancing" is certainly applicable to the MAUMC organization and all we faced during the last 12 months.

We "mourned" the sale of the Lakeview Family Campground in March of 2021 and the Crystal Springs Campground and Retreat Center in June of 2021. The closure and final sale of any former camp location is a traumatic experience, and the impact it has on those who visited and cherished these sites over the years, along with all their memories, is not lost on our board or organization. We strive every day to help people make new memories and experiences at our remaining camp locations.

We "danced" for the blessings the funds from the camp sales will bring to our remaining camps in the years ahead. Our Master Planning process identified key improvements at each site including new bathhouses at Lake Michigan Camp and Retreat, new recreation areas, bathrooms and building upgrades at Wesley Woods Camp and Retreat Center and building heating and cooling upgrades at Lake Huron Retreat Center. The sale of Crystal Springs gestured towards justice in returning the land to its original owners, the Pokagon Band of Potawatomi.

We "mourned" the delay experienced in getting started on some of the much-needed maintenance and capital improvement projects at all our locations. The inability to secure contractors and materials caused heartaches and frustration on getting projects started and completed on time and on budget.

We "danced" for those projects which we were able to get completed to improve the experiences all those who attend our camps. These include upgrades to the bath house at Wesley Woods, the completion of a "Pastor's Cabin" at Lake Michigan, and the renovation of the camp store at Lake Huron.

We "mourned" the impact COVID-19 continued to have on our camping and retreat activities throughout the year. The arrival of the new variants, vaccination criteria, masking guidelines and ever-changing local rules and restrictions caused uncertainty in those wanting to send their children to summer camps or wanting to attend a retreat or meeting session. Our numbers were lower than expected and dealing with cancellations and changes became the norm.

We “danced” for all those who did attend a camp or retreat session in 2021 as we provided safe COVID-19 protocols and meaningful program offerings. There were over 400 summer campers involved in 11 different program-based events, coming from 92 Michigan United Methodist churches. We were also able to hand out over \$4,000 in scholarships and \$6,000 in incentive discounts to help families cover the cost of attending camp. Our traditional based camping show increased utilization with many returning for their week of “family camp” while others came to enjoy the beauty of our camp locations. Beyond the statistics, the need for getting outdoors in God’s creation and being together with others in community was found to be greater than ever. We are blessed with the mission to create transformative camping and retreat experiences which help develop disciples of Jesus Christ.

We are enhancing our 2022 summer camp program offering to make coming to camp even more attractive with an exciting theme of “Called by Name.” We will also be continuing our partnership with the Detroit Urban Camp by co-hosting their event again in 2022 while working with the volunteers on a new Camp New Day program at Wesley Woods and a retreat program for health care workers called “Healing for Healers” at Lake Huron.

We “mourned” the challenges of finding and retaining staff personnel and volunteers to work at our sites and during our camps. COVID-19 and the ever-changing labor environment forced us to be creative in hiring staff and leaning heavily on those volunteers who were willing to help.

We “danced” for the efforts of all those who volunteered and joined us in making the camping experience memorable and joyful for our campers. In our summer camp programs alone, we were blessed with 106 volunteers from 13 United Methodist churches. Their hours of dedication and patience were greatly appreciated by our staff and our campers. In 2022 we are partnering with the Michigan Conference’s “Summer Mission Intern” program to provide eight interns to help with our overnight camps and 10 interns for our day camps in local settings, all who will be supervised and mentored by an “Emerging Leader Associate” who will be trained to provide guidance, comfort, and support.

As you can see, Michigan United Methodists of all ages have found rest, renewal and inspiration from time well spent at Lake Huron Retreat Center, Lake Michigan Camp and Retreat, Wesley Woods Camp and Retreat Center, and trip and partner programs. They have often invited friends and neighbors to accompany them, learned more about our faith, and joined in the journey at a local church. Our strategic plan is to continue to bring camp and retreat experiences to local communities throughout Michigan by leading day camps along with partnerships and programs which might not always be held at one of our sites. Our vision is for people needing or wanting a camp or retreat experience to be able to find one which fits their needs and provide this in a safe and inclusive environment.

In looking back, our three major accomplishments for 2021 were as follows:

1. Beginning the work on our strategic plan towards a missionally sustainable ministry including the establishment of funds from the sale of camps to greatly enhance and upgrade Lake Huron Retreat Center, Lake Michigan Camp and Retreat, and Wesley Woods Camp and Retreat Center, utilizing a detailed master plan for each site.
2. Holding a safe, enjoyable, and meaningful summer camp season (after a year off in 2020) with safe COVID-19 protocols and enthusiastic campers and volunteers.
3. Re-building trust with the Michigan Conference, its churches and leaders, by establishing fiscally sound operations, a clear mission and direction, helpful communications, and relationship tending.

We are excited about 2022 and the future. Camp and retreat experiences are needed now, more than ever. We are positioned to provide quality, safe, transformative experiences to Michigan United Methodists and hosts of others now and in the years to come. We thank God for guiding us on the journey.

David Berkey, Executive Director
Stuart Smith, Chair

MICHIGAN AREA UNITED METHODIST CHURCH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Michigan Area United Methodist Church Historical Society (MAUMCHS) has been incorporated since 1958. The name was changed from Michigan Methodist Historical Society in 1975.

The Society has as their purpose the following:

“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; and promote, support, and nurture the conference archives.”

“Other purposes may include organizing area-wide celebrations of historical events and convocations which may involve participation beyond the board of directors; digitization and distribution of historical materials; awarding certificates of recognition to local churches that are celebrating important milestones, awarding distinguished service awards to individuals and groups within Michigan; recognizing and promoting United Methodist historic sites in the state; helping conference, district, and local church historians and archivists through workshops and information sharing; and such other activities as are consistent with the by-laws of the Historical Society of The United Methodist Church.”

The officers are Diana Spitnale Miller - President, Sharon Scott - Secretary, and Della Wilder - Treasurer. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the officers are following other agency protocol and staying in place until the end of 2022.

Board Meetings were held in 2021 on March 4 and on November 4 by ZOOM. Both times the Conference Commission on Archives and History met with us. We share a number of members and were repeating business items.

The “Roots and Branches” Historical Convocation was held Saturday, April 17, 2021, by Zoom. The theme was *“Learning from Past Separations – The Methodist Protestant Church.”* Speakers included: Rev. Melanie Young who keynoted the theme, Rev. Joyce Vanderlip who spoke about *“The Story of Anna Howard Shaw: First Woman Ordained by the Methodist Protestant Church,”* and retired archivist William McNitt who spoke about *“The Identifiable Methodist Protestant Church still in Michigan.”*

For several years we have been presenting certificates to churches, recognizing longevity for 100, 125, 150, 175, or 200 years. Since we were unable to give out certificates officially in 2020, in 2021 we had a combination of known and discovered 2019, 2020, and 2021 who had reached these 25-year increments. At our convocation we recognized 14 churches with those increments including two who have existed for 200 years in 2021 – Birmingham: First and Mt. Clemens: First. We also had special celebration requests from 8 churches. There were also a few others during the year that were not in our database. We are continuing to work on our list of churches and their years of beginning. Our lists of certificates given are published on our website. <https://michiganumchhistoricalsociety.wordpress.com/>

We are not holding the Roots and Branches Convocation Saturday this year but hope to continue it in 2023. Our group welcomes historians of churches, those interested in church history and preserving it, clergy and lay, to join the Society. Membership includes receiving news about the Society activities and free registration to our sponsored events.

President Diana Miller was able to attend the Historical Society of the United Methodist Church Annual Convocation on October 30, 2021, by ZOOM. Rev. Dr. Cynthia Horn Burkert spoke about the Historic Landmark Old Otterbein Church 250th Anniversary. Rev. Robert Amundsen spoke about the 100-year history of Red Bird Mission.

Diana Spitnale Miller, President

MICHIGAN COMMUNICATIONS

Amidst the backdrop of a global pandemic, world unrest, and denominational uncertainty, Michigan Conference Communications experienced and managed one of the most challenging years in conference history. The team of Kristen Gillette, Kay DeMoss, Valerie Mossman-Celestin, Laura Witkowski, Kathy Pittenger, and Mark Doyal produced more communications than any other time in the conference's history. Working with a solid team of vendors, stringers, and volunteers, the team produced an unprecedented number of electronic, printed, streamed, and videotaped messages of support, education, and critical information.

The most significant challenge communications faced during the year was keeping a conference connected during a pandemic where meeting in person was challenging, if nearly impossible. Clergy care events like “Come to the Well,” a live 3-hour clergy care event led by Bishop Bard, to ecumenical mission events like “Welcoming our Afghan Neighbors,” communications lifted and celebrated the resilience of our local churches who continued ways to “be the church” online and in person.

The work of Conference Communications reached every single Michigan United Methodist local church community across Michigan and even around the world. Training, information, and communications offered on-demand 365/24/7 had the ability to impact every local church. Each week conference communications reached tens of thousands of persons and in more than 50 countries worldwide.

Here are three examples of Communication Ministry accomplishments in 2021:

In June, the team produced a three-day, 37-hour live Annual Conference. The event was comprised of more than 300 video elements. With the contributions of over 200 staff and volunteers, we succeeded in providing teaching, preaching worship, and legislative work of the conference over three days. Based on the success of the Michigan Annual Conference, the NCJ Council of Bishops asked Michigan to pull off a 12-hour/2-day jurisdictional meeting in less than 6-weeks. The event broadcast to 9 conferences from Lansing MI was also successful in meeting the objectives of all involved. We are pleased not a single case of COVID resulted from the production of these 2 events.

During the summer of 2021, Communications launched CBS – Church Broadcast School. This sold-out 10-city/10 event tour brought hands-on training on virtual worship to almost 80 local United Methodist churches. Members and pastors learned improved video, audio, social media interface, content development, and online streaming techniques. Following the event, a CBS Facebook Group was created to keep the cohort engaged.

Two online campaigns in 2021 connected nearly 20,000 persons with local United Methodist churches during Advent and Lent. "Spend Easter at our House" and "Spend Christmas at our House" were successful social media campaigns on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Google. Over 800,000 persons saw the campaign and clicked through to connect with worship services at local United Methodist churches.

Michigan Conference Communications Ministry continues to serve the conference and local churches by providing pathways of communication and connection across the state. We feel blessed by this ministry.

Mark A. Doyal, Director of Communications

MICHIGAN CONFERENCE TRUSTEES, BOARD OF

The conference Board of Trustees ("BoT") is blessed with a consolidated group comprised of six clergy and six laity trustees. We have benefited from a seamless combination new and existing, very helpful contributing members.

Our board continues to meet on a quarterly basis, though the virtual format diminishes the effectiveness we experienced previously. The issues are significant, revolving around conference assets, BSA settlement, disaffiliation and the financial stress on our local churches as evidenced by reduced Ministry Share contributions.

Additionally, the held-properties (from closed churches) and their attendant oversight responsibilities presented a substantial challenge to the board. This has been exacerbated by the COVID influence on diminished attendance throughout our local churches.

Shown below is a high-level summary of activities and focus:

- **Work review:**
 - Vice chair George Lewis continues the oversight for all conference owned offices and parsonages. We are developing a more comprehensive checklist for monitoring these properties with scheduled inspections. He is working with the CLC re changes to our district office structure in this 'virtual' world.
 - 7 properties were sold (to date) in past year:
 - Freeport UMC
 - Kent City Chapel Hill (church, other parcels remain for sale)
 - Lansing First (church)
 - Lansing First (parsonage sold separately)
 - Litchfield UMC
 - Muskegon Unity UMC
 - Saginaw State Street UMC (church property, parking lot parcel under contract)
 - 7 properties currently listed for sale – a challenging environment for commercial real estate and church properties in particular has arisen from the 'COVID world'. We know more properties will be added to this inventory due to the economic pressures on the local churches. Efforts are being made to find solutions other than closure which will help with the dispensation process.

- We are aware of 5 more anticipated closings by AC, coupled with the 4 closings at 2021 year-end and a total of 12 since our last AC. The attendant workload is substantial regardless of the size of local church closure.
- The developed collaboration with cabinet representative DS John Hice of a definitive itemization of roles for conference and district involvement re closed properties is still being absorbed by the districts.
- Working with DCM Paul Perez on conference archive storage options pertaining to physical locations continues. We are collaborating on a digitalization process (hopefully greatly) reducing our space needs. The concern has grown due to both increased materials from closed churches and limitations of the current facilities.
- Conducted the annual 'Risk Management' review with Church Mutual Insurance in a full board meeting. There were no material claim-issues raised and the relationship is solid.
- The Dowry legislation in 2019 established a minimum \$250,000 in missional funds per district. Each district is required to, and has, submitted a report detailing the application of funds. These reports will be included in the AC Journal and various highlight articles will be reflected in upcoming MIconnect issues.
- The theme of our AC this year is "Mourning to Dancing"; the work of the trustees tends to be sobering and, hence, the mourning aspects are always before us:
 - **Mourning** the accelerating closures and the attendant grief each congregation experiences as they come to realize their beloved church is dying. Large congregation or small, the pain is real.
 - **Celebrating** the addition of Pastor Larry Embury as a 'shepherding' resource to work with the closing congregations. Also that many of our closed church properties are being purchased by other congregations maintaining the locations as worship and ministry centers in the communities.
- **Summary of closed churches (known at this report date) requiring AC affirmative action to formally close with motions in accordance with paragraph 2549 of the 2016 Book of Discipline submitted by Rev. Jerry DeVine. The affirming petitions were distributed to the voting members and returned after adjournment.**
 - Kent City UMC – May 31, 2021
 - Grand Rapids Genesis UMC – November 29, 2021
 - Freeport UMC – July 1, 2021
 - Monroe Calvary UMC – November 30, 2021
 - Lansing First UMC – December 31, 2021
 - Minden City UMC – January 1, 2022
 - Lulu UMC – April 1, 2022
- **There was one church completing the Withdrawal Agreement terms and will submit appropriate funds in accordance with paragraph 2553 of the 2016 Book of Discipline; individual motion to close and withdraw to be presented by Rev. Jerry DeVine. The affirming petition will be distributed to the voting members and returned after adjournment.**
 - Twin Lakes UMC – June 30, 2021

James LeBaron, Chair

BOARD OF ORDAINED MINISTRY

The year of the Michigan Conference Board of Ordained Ministry (BOM) was, I imagine, very much like all of our years. COVID grew old in a hurry and we were forced to adapt. If adaptation is a high skill and value for leaders in the church, then the BOM has done extraordinarily well. I am proud to lead this amazing group of clergy and laity who take on the not-so-simple mission of professional credentialing the best clergy leaders for a time such as this.

And, in the category of amazing, in the midst of pandemic and denominational, um, "uncertainty", 25 persons have been approved by the board for Associate, Provisional and Full Membership in the Michigan Conference as Deacons and Elders in March and November of 2021. This is just a piece of the ministry of credentialing that goes on in the BOM. We work with the Cabinet on transfers from other conferences, and other denominations. We work, too with our wonderful partners on the District Committees on Ministry, shepherding candidates and supporting local pastors.

Membership on the Board of Ordained Ministry is in four-year terms, with a two-term run being common and a three-term run being possible with the approval of the Bishop. In 2021-22, we celebrated the ministry of, and said farewell to Chris Lane who was with us for just a short time on the BOM and as chair of the Order of Elders. In his time with us, Chris organized our worship life during our interview retreats and regular meetings. Because life and ministry happen, requiring us to move on, lay member Jay Zylstra left the board with our thanks. Retired clergy member JD Landis, having served twice on the board, finally became too busy in retirement to continue with us! We give thanks for him and know that his retirement is filled with many other ministries. Finally, in great sadness, we joined the chorus of folks across the conference and beyond celebrating the too-short life of Rev. Barbara Lewis-Lakin. Barbara came on the board with expertise that aided us tremendously in interpreting candidate psychological assessments for BOM discernment. Her passing leaves space in our ministry of discernment and in the collegial work of the board.

Even as there has been foreseen and unforeseen movement of persons from the board, there have also been additions to the board in the last year. We welcome Lay member Jean Mackey, Clergy Member Latha Ravi serving as Psych Consultant to the board, and we welcomed Tim Zeigler back after a one-year hiatus. We welcome, too, Cathi Huvaere as the new chair of the Order of Elders. Part of the excitement of the BOM is experiencing the gifts brought by each new member.

The Board of Ordained Ministry continues to be about working with individuals who feel the call of God in their lives, to discern whether that call is, indeed, within The United Methodist Church at this particular time. We understand that this is a sacred trust given to us by the Michigan Conference through Bishop David A. Bard. The work we are about would not be possible without our intentional bathing of that work in prayer and deep trust in the work of the Holy Spirit. On behalf of the BOM, I thank you for the trust you place in us.

Barry Petrucci, Chair

ORDER OF DEACONS

Deacons are ordained to word, service, compassion and justice and are charged with connecting the Church and the world. We all do it differently. Some are Christian educators, some musicians, and some concentrate their time in the area of pastoral care while others lead in service in the world through non-profits, social work arenas or other service careers. Some of us work within the Church and others work beyond the Church in the community. We typically gather in February and again at Annual Conference to share our stories and best practices in our areas of expertise though that has not happened during this pandemic.

As we continue to seek those called to the Order of Deacon, look for: an increased presence throughout Michigan as deacons serve in geographical groups within the community, deacons visiting other congregations (when asked) to assist with Communion, preach and provide an example of the way they answer the call to ordained ministry, and a newly designed Michigan deacon website so that others can see what we do. Deacons continue to offer themselves as servant leaders within the Church and beyond in the name of Christ.

Sue Pethoud, Chair

ORDER OF ELDERS

I was invited to join the Board of Ordained Ministry in the late summer of 2021, as the new chair of the Order of Elders. I accepted the invitation in the midst of the pandemic and planning my retirement (July 2022). As a new member of the board, I certainly have a lot to learn. I am humbled by the faithful commitment of our colleagues on the board, the leadership of Barry Petrucci, and the zeal of the candidates who come before us.

Since I am so new to this role, I am listening and praying more than I am planning and doing. With a heart for all who serve our churches, I am entrusted to care especially for the active and retired elders of our conference, and I am deeply concerned. The financial burdens of our congregations, the unknown future of church unity, the stress of a pandemic, and conflicting views of both CDC guidelines and Biblical interpretation have stretched many to the point of exhaustion. In our pews, and in our parsonages, we see increased levels of anxiety, disillusion, and depression. Pastoral leadership is always a challenge, but leading well from a deficit of one's own physical and spiritual energy is nearly impossible.

I want my fellow elders to know that my heart aches for you. Whether you are continuing in appointed ministry, are retired, or moving into retirement – I pray for your wellbeing of body, mind, and spirit. I pray that you will rest, and play, and laugh, and sing. I pray that you will be gentle with yourself, and find moments of goodness in every day. I pray you will walk confidently on troubled waters, knowing you do not walk alone. May you know, in the depth of your heart, in the very core of who you are, that you are love, redeemed, sustained, and held by our almighty God.

One last note: I am very eager to listen to any suggestions, complaints, hopes, dreams, and ideas you want to offer me. I hope to create opportunities and practices that enable us to celebrate the call of ministry, address its challenges, and be encouraged in our common work. May you be filled each day with God's shalom.

Cathi Huvaere, Chair

BOARD OF PENSION AND HEALTH BENEFITS (CBOPHB)

I. MICHIGAN CONFERENCE BENEFITS

The Michigan Conference is blessed in its ability to provide a strong and valuable ministry of caring through its benefits programs.

Benefits Ministry Shares (BMS)

Benefits Ministry Shares are billed monthly to every local church to fund current conference retirement and welfare plan liabilities as well as all ministries through the Conference Board of Pension & Health Benefits/Benefits Office. The amount of the Benefits Ministry Shares is calculated using a fixed percentage of each church's clergy compensation. The percentage is determined on an annual basis and adjusted to reflect appointments of half time or less, retiree appointments, or District Superintendent Assignments. The Monthly BMS amount will be based on a flat rate for a local church with no appointment or assignment.

Health Care

The CBOPHB reaffirms its commitment to providing a comprehensive, sustainable group health care plan for actives and retirees while constantly assessing the financial realities required by all. Health insurance expenses are billed monthly.

II. PRIOR YEAR BENEFITS-RELATED BALANCES

Billings generated by the CBOPHB are directly associated with current liabilities for clergy/employee benefits or deferred compensation. Any payments not reimbursed to the CBOPHB by the local church or other agencies, by default, are absorbed by the CBOPHB and ultimately the annual conference for the expenses incurred. Therefore, permanent records of outstanding balances for retirement plan contributions, welfare plan premiums and health care expenses are kept on file by the CBOPHB with the intention to recover the balances in the future.

Historically, BMS receipts have been remitted from 97%-99% annually. 2022 was a subpar year with the rate of receipt in 2022 at 94.75% and an outstanding unpaid balance totaling approximately \$187,000.

The following list includes the balances on record as of February 28, 2022 for both BMS and health insurance premiums. Payments subsequently remitted in 2022 may not be reflected in the totals below but may be confirmed with the Benefits Office.

If left unaddressed, these balances must become part of a local church's financial plan when a local church considers building expansion, merger, separation, or closure. Please contact the Conference Benefits Office for further details, to confirm outstanding balances, or to discuss payment options for prior year amounts.

Outstanding Prior Year Benefits-Related Balances					
Conf. No.	Church	Benefits Ministry Shares	Health Insurance	Total	% of total balances
Northern Skies District					
31001	Algonquin	625	0	625	
31002	Amasa: Grace	639	0	639	
31005	Calumet	141	0	141	
31007	Crystal Falls: Christ	9,930	1,581	11,511	
31012	Ewen	342	0	342	
31013	Faithorn	65	0	65	

31019	Hancock: First	654	0	654	
31021	Houghton: Grace	596	0	596	
31022	Hulbert: Tahquamenon	100	0	100	
31025	Ironwood: Welsey	104	0	104	
31030	Manistique: First	244	0	244	
31038	Newberry	322	0	322	
31045	Republic	565	0	565	
31046	Rockland: St Paul	372	0	372	
31047	Sault St Marie: Central	504	0	504	
31049	Saint Ignace	563	0	563	
31052	Wakefield	158	0	158	
	Total Northern Skies District	15,923	1,581	17,505	1.09%
Northern Waters District					
32002	Alba	597	0	597	
32005	Arcadia	200	0	200	
32006	Ashton	1,050	0	1,050	
32008	Baldwin: Covenant Cmnty	123	0	123	
32010	Bear Lake	2,962	4,242	7,204	
32012	Boyne City	3,211	19,508	22,719	
32017	Central Lake	1,584	0	1,584	
32015	Cadillac	951	0	951	
32019	Charlevoix: Greensky Hill	12,747	13,302	26,049	
32020	Chase: Barton	246	0	246	
32029	Free Soil-Fountain	1,365	0	1,365	
32030	Gaylord: First	813	0	813	
32036	Hersey	330		330	
32039	Houghton Lake	0	4,375	4,375	
32040	Indian River	2,601	6,470	9,071	
32041	Kalkaska	583	0	583	
32044	Kewadin: Indian Mission	2,725	0	2,725	
32045	Kingsley	1,491	2,547	4,038	
32046	Lake Ann	8,810	0	8,810	
32054	Manistee	1,259	0	1,259	
32055	Manton	2,864	0	2,864	
32058	Mesick	2,018	10,539	12,557	
32062	Norwood	960	0	960	
32064	Onaway	608	0	608	
32068	Roscommon: Good Shepherd	612	0	612	
32070	Sears	1,938	0	1,938	
32072	Spratt	350	0	350	
32073	Traverse Bay	1,165	0	1,165	
	Total Northern Waters District	54,163	60,982	115,145	7.15%

Central Bay District					
33004	Auburn	1,292	0	1,292	
33009	Birch Run	4,846	0	4,846	
33010	Blanchard-Pine River	4,066	0	4,066	
33011	Burt	125	0	125	
33013	Caseville	1,104	0	1,104	
33018	Coomer	183	0	183	
33021	Elkton	2,431	0	2,431	
33024	Farwell	1,100	0	1,100	
33021	Elkton	2,431	0	2,431	
33027	Garfield	160	0	160	
33031	Hale: First	96	0	96	
33033	Harrisville	145	0	145	
33047	Millington	1,950	0	1,950	
33049	Mt. Pleasant: Chippewa Indian	360	0	360	
33050	Mt. Pleasant: Countryside	2,531	0	2,531	
33052	Mt. Pleasant: Trinity	2,531	0	2,531	
33054	Oscoda	1,124	0	1,124	
33060	Pinnebog	2,920	0	2,920	
33066	Saginaw: Ames	2,108	0	2,108	
33067	Saginaw: First	1,700	0	1,700	
33069	Saginaw: New Heart	490	6,300	6,790	
33076	Standish: Community	11,260	0	11,260	
33083	Weidman	0	2,570	2,570	
33086	Wilber	551	0	551	
33088	Wisner	2,321	0	2,321	
	Total Central Bay District	47,825	8,870	56,695	3.52%
Midwest District					
34004	Barryton: Faith	920	0	920	
34007	Big Rapids: First	1,987	0	1,987	
34009	Bowne Center	154	0	154	
34010	Bradley: Indian Mission	8,216	0	8,216	
34012	Byron Center	3,313	0	3,313	
34013	Caledonia	6,423	0	6,423	
34015	Cedar Springs	2,450	0	2,450	
34017	Coopersville	1,736	0	1,736	
34020	Dorr: Crosswind Cmnty	667	0	667	
34033	Grand Rapids: La Nueva Esperanza	4,110	61,934	66,044	
34037	Grand Rapids: South	498	0	498	
34043	Hart	606	0	606	
34049	Ionia: Zion	1,063	0	1,063	
34054	Lowell: First	2,607	0	2,607	

34055	Lowell: Vergennes	0	3,702	3,702	
34057	Marne	2,939	0	2,939	
34064	Muskegon: Crestwood	1,460	2,510	3,970	
34067	Newaygo	12,559	3,125	15,683	
34071	Parmelee	110	0	110	
34072	Pentwater: Centenary	286	0	286	
34074	Ravenna	3,765	0	3,765	
34077	Salem: Indian Mission	14,195	3,135	17,330	
34079	Shelby	6,935	37,565	44,500	
34085	Twin Lake	4,085	0	4,085	
34088	Wayland	1,043	0	1,043	
	Total Midwest District	82,125	111,971	194,096	12.05%
Mid-Michigan District					
35006	Bath	3,247	0	3,247	
35008	Breckenridge	1,640	0	1,640	
35010	Carland	2,838	0	2,838	
35015	Corunna	20,899	0	20,899	
35017	Delta Mills	93	0	93	
35022	Eaton Rapids: First	2,684	0	2,684	
35023	Elsie	1,125	0	1,125	
35025	Fowlerville: First	1,342	0	1,342	
35026	Fowlerville: Trinity	1,244	0	1,244	
35029	Gresham	185	1,256	1,441	
35032	Hastings: First	4,875	0	4,875	
35055	Millville	4,477	0	4,477	
35060	Nashville: Peace	72	0	72	
35068	Pittsburg	8,120	0	8,120	
35073	Robbins	466	0	466	
35075	Shepardsville	605	0	605	
35080	Sunfield	723	0	723	
35081	Vernon	7,192	0	7,192	
	Total Mid-Michigan District	61,827	1,256	63,083	3.92%
East Winds District					
36008	Buel	1,842	0	1,842	
36009	Burton: Christ	12,297	0	12,297	
36010	Byron: First	294	0	294	
36022	Dryden	486	0	486	
36027	Flint: Asbury	13,170	0	13,170	
36029	Flint: Bristol	2,681	0	2,681	
36031	Flint: Charity	33,003	0	33,003	
36033	Flint: Faith	36,705	0	36,705	
36034	Flint: Hope	1,843	0	1,843	

36045	Holly: Calvary	885	0	885	
36046	Holly: Mt Bethel	378	0	378	
36047	Imlay City	2,936		2,936	
36054	Leonard	1,381	0	1,381	
36055	Lexington	656	0	656	
36056	Linden	625	0	625	
36060	Melvin	650	0	650	
36063	Montrose	3,476	0	3,476	
36064	Mt. Morris: First	0	42,421	42,421	
36067	Omard	462	0	462	
36072	Port Hope	1,575	0	1,575	
36075	Port Huron: Washington Ave	4,241	0	4,241	
36078	Richmond: First	6,342	0	6,342	
36080	Saint Clair: First	3,090	0	3,090	
36085	Snover: Heritage	513	0	513	
36087	Swartz Creek	988	0	988	
36089	Thomas	546	0	546	
36094	West Vienna	518	0	518	
36096	Yale	1,480	0	1,480	
	Total East Winds District	133,062	42,421	175,483	10.89%
	Greater Southwest District				
37006	Bangor: Simpson	2,833	16,073	18,906	
37007	Battel Creek: Baseline	975	0	975	
37010	Battle Creek: Christ	244	22,032	22,276	
37012	Battle Creek: First	2,868	1,003	3,871	
37016	Battle Creek: Washington Hts	1,500	0	1,500	
37019	Berrien Springs	771	0	771	
37021	Bridgman: Faith	945	0	945	
37022	Bronson: First	485	0	485	
37026	Burr Oak	475	0	475	
37032	Coloma	594	0	594	
37034	Constantine	500	0	500	
37037	Dowling: Country Chapel	5,204		5,204	
37039	Fennville	0	10,050	10,050	
37041	Galesburg	130	0	130	
37044	Ganges	104	0	104	
37054	Kalamazoo: Northwest	419	0	419	
37055	Kalamazoo: Sunnyside	9,425	0	9,425	
37056	Kalamazoo: Westwood	2,697	0	2,697	
37058	Lacota	449	0	449	
37059	Lawrence	5,624	0	5,624	
37061	Marcellus	305	0	305	

37062	Marcellus: Wakelee	260	0	260	
37063	Martin	1,788	16,833	18,621	
37065	Monterey Center	3,815	0	3,815	
37069	Niles: Portage Prairie	7,000	0	7,000	
37073	Oshtemo: Lifespring	7,709	15,179	22,888	
37077	Paw Paw	4,892	39,506	44,397	
37080	Pokagon	3,321	0	3,321	
37086	Scottdale	192	0	192	
37091	South Haven: First	613	0	613	
37093	Saint Joseph: First	0	7,357	7,357	
37096	Three Oaks	113	0	113	
37098	Three Rivers: First	1,159	0	1,159	
37100	Townline	54	0	54	
37101	Union City	0	31,566	31,566	
37102	Vicksburg	1,447	0	1,447	
	Total Greater Southwest District	68,908	159,599	228,506	14.18%
Heritage District					
38001	Adrian: First	1,450	0	1,450	
38004	Ann Arbor: Calvary	1,536	0	1,536	
38006	Ann Arbor: Korean	97,397	0	97,397	
38010	Blissfield: Emmanuel	306	0	306	
38014	Calhoun County: Homer	97	0	97	
38015	Camden	49	0	49	
38024	Deerfield	4,763	0	4,763	
38029	Erie	5,415	0	5,415	
38030	Frontier	1,200	0	1,200	
38034	Hartland	950	0	950	
38039	Hudson: First	950		950	
38044	Jackson: Trinity	5,681	0	5,681	
38047	Jonesville	274	0	274	
38052	London	1,344	0	1,344	
38053	Lulu	2,862	0	2,862	
38066	Morenci	14,128	3,176	17,304	
38067	Napoleon	274	0	274	
38076	Pinckney: Arise	8,000	0	8,000	
38077	Pleasant Lake	517	0	517	
38083	Salem Grove	460	525	985	
38090	Springville	1,155	0	1,155	
38096	Wellsville	1,640	0	1,640	
38097	Weston	777	0	777	
38102	Ypsilanti: St. Matthew's	275	0	275	
	Total Heritage District	151,501	3,701	153,752	9.54%
Greater Detroit District					
39010	Detroit: Calvary	38,833	0	38,833	
39011	Detroit: Cass Community	45,862	0	45,862	

39012	Detroit: Central	2,208	0	2,208	
39013	Detroit: Centro Familiar Cristiano	14,728	36,844	51,572	
39014	Detroit: Conant Avenue	18,423	0	18,423	
39015	Detroit: Ford Memorial	4,534	0	4,534	
39017	Detroit: Mt. Hope	33,603	0	33,603	
39018	Detroit: Peoples	37,388	45,556	82,944	
39019	Detroit: Resurrection	17,528	0	17,528	
39021	Detroit: Second Grace	4,667	0	4,667	
39022	Detroit: St. Paul	30,991	20,380	51,371	
39023	Detroit: St. Timothy	16,724	10,557	27,281	
39030	Ferndale: First	970	9,970	10,940	
39034	Garden City	4,276	0	4,276	
39036	Harper Woods: Redeemer	565	0	565	
39038	Howarth	0	6,650	6,650	
39043	Madison Heights	3,742	0	3,742	
39045	Madison Hts: Vietnamese Ministry	3,611	0	3,611	
39051	Pontiac: Grace & Peace Community	1,935	17,439	19,374	
39052	Pontiac: St. John	1,400	0	1,400	
39053	Redford: Aldersgate	2,341	2,023	4,364	
39054	Redford: New Beginnings	7,245	0	7,245	
39061	Southfield: Hope	10,360	0	10,360	
39062	Sterling Heights: First	585	0	585	
39070	Washington	716	0	716	
39072	Waterford: Four Towns	15,777	0	15,777	
39073	Waterford: Trinity	0	3,251	3,251	
39076	Westland: St. James	33,158	0	33,158	
	Total Greater Detroit District	352,170	152,670	504,841	31.34%
	Closed Churches				
	Melvindale: New Hope	2,557	12,501	15,058	
34050	Kent City: Chapel Hill	0	9,975	9,975	
36033	Flint: Faith	36,705	0	36,705	
36075	Port Huron: Washington Avenue	4,241	0	4,241	
	Whitmore Lake: Wesley	6,467	0	6,467	
	Shelby Twp: New Hope	2,949	0	2,949	
33070	Saginaw: State Street	2,773	4,325	7,098	
38051	Litchfield	751	3,940	4,691	
38061	Monroe: Calvary	3,448	0	3,448	
38085	Samaria: Grace	8,594	0	8,594	
39047	Mt. Vernon	951	0	951	
34032	Grand Rapids: Genesis	0	350	350	
	Total Closed Churches	69,436	31,092	100,528	6.24%
	CONFERENCE TOTALS	1,036,940	574,143	1,611,084	

III. STEPS TO RETIREMENT

The following information should be examined by anyone contemplating retirement within the next ten years.

1. Review the 2016 Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church, ¶357, pertaining to retirement.
2. Attend a pre-retirement seminar within 10 years of retirement.
3. Confirm your service record with Wespath Benefits & Investments to assure that it is accurate. This is especially important with respect to pre-1982 service and the post-2006 Clergy Retirement Security Program (CRSP) Plans since these benefits are calculated based upon years of service. Often it takes significant time to correct a special situation or service record error.
4. Confirm your Social Security record to be certain that all payments have been properly credited. The Social Security Administration is not required to correct errors over 3 years old.
5. Notify in writing the following persons by January 1 for the following year's July retirement season:
 - A. Resident Bishop
 - B. Your District Superintendent
 - C. Rev. Donald Emmert, Director of Conference Benefits & HR
 - D. Rev. Mark Erbes, Chairperson of Committee on Conference Relations of the Board of Ordained Ministry (BOM)
6. Once your intention to retire is confirmed in writing by the Office of the Bishop, the Benefits Office notifies Wespath Benefits & Investments and materials are sent directly to the participant from Wespath detailing retirement plan payment options. A pension projection is available anytime through the Wespath at 800-851-2201 or www.wespath.org (Benefits Access).
7. Review and update all beneficiary designations on your Retirement and Welfare Accounts at Wespath Benefits & Investments.
8. **Health Insurance**
 - A. Review the conference eligibility and cost sharing requirements for health care coverage in retirement. It is the subscriber's responsibility to understand the specific rules relating to eligibility for coverage in retirement prior to the subscriber's retirement date.
 - B. If you are retiring at age 65 or older, you are eligible for Medicare. You (and your spouse if Medicare eligible) must enroll in Medicare Part A and Part B effective the date of your retirement to qualify for the Conference Retiree Group Coverage. If you opted out of Social Security, you must arrange to purchase Medicare Benefits in order to be eligible for coverage under the Conference Retiree Group Coverage. Send photocopies of Medicare cards for you and your spouse to the Conference Benefits Office as soon as they become available. This is essential in order to coordinate health care coverage and avoid lengthy delays and/or denials of medical claims.
 - C. If you are retiring earlier than age 65, you (and your spouse) must enroll in Medicare Part A and Part B when reaching age 65 in order to continue health coverage through the conference. Send photocopies of Medicare cards for you and your spouse to the Conference Benefits Office as soon as they become available. This is essential in order to coordinate health care coverage and avoid lengthy delays and/or denials of medical claims.

IV. CONFERENCE HEALTH CARE POLICIES

Introduction: This section describes the provisions and requirements of the Michigan Conference group health care plans. All available benefits are at all times subject to and may be limited, denied, or terminated based on applicable underwriting provisions, contract terms, eligibility rules, and premium payment requirements. All required submissions, underwriting, and payments must be remitted in a timely manner.

It is the subscriber's responsibility to understand the specific rules relating to eligibility for coverage both while active and in retirement. Questions may be directed to the Conference Benefits Office or submitted in writing to the Conference Board of Pension & Health Benefits. Do not rely on verbal responses to questions raised in informational meetings or provided by representatives other than the Board of Pension & Health Benefits.

ACTIVE GROUP HEALTH CARE PLAN

Enrollment/Effective Date of Coverage: Health Care eligibility begins the first day of a new appointment/hire, change in appointment/employment status, or a life-qualifying event (i.e. loss of other health coverage), provided all required submissions, underwriting, and payments have been remitted in a timely manner. All available benefits are at all times subject to and may be limited, denied, or terminated based on applicable underwriting provisions, contract terms, eligibility rules, and premium payment requirements. It is the responsibility of the subscriber to submit enrollment forms within the required timeframe. ***If the enrollment process is not completed within 30 days of eligibility, the subscriber must wait until the next open enrollment period.***

Eligible Subscribers: Active Plan eligible classes include the following:

(Full-time for health coverage eligibility is defined as regularly working at least 30 hours per week)

1. Full-time Clergy (Ordained Clergy and Local Pastors) under Episcopal appointment with the Michigan Conference as the responsible agency for providing benefits.
2. Full-time Lay Employees of the Michigan Conference and its approved, related agencies.
3. Full-time Lay Employees of a local church (including District Superintendent Assignments) until the employee turns age 65 provided the local church lay employee policy offers health care to all eligible full-time lay employees. All conference eligibility requirements must be observed. The local church is the responsible agency for all lay employee health insurance premiums. Premium-sharing schedules may be determined by local church employee policies, but must meet employee affordability requirements as defined by the Affordable Care Act (ACA).
4. Clergy and Conference/Related Agency Lay Employees on Medical Leave receiving disability benefits, provided the subscriber was enrolled in the Michigan Conference Group Active Health Care Plan at the time they were granted Medical leave.
 - a. The subscriber must enroll in Medicare Part A and Part B at the date of first eligibility.
 - b. The subscriber is responsible for submitting a copy of the subscriber's Medicare card to the Conference Benefits Office at the time of Medicare enrollment to assure the proper coordination of benefits.
5. Dependents of deceased Clergy and Conference/Related Agency Lay Employee subscribers provided the dependents were enrolled in the group active health care plan at the time of the subscriber's death.
 - a. Dependents of a retired subscriber will continue health coverage under the same eligibility and funding provisions as the subscriber.
 - b. A surviving spouse that remarries will continue to receive the health care benefit. However, the new spouse is not eligible for coverage.
6. Enrolled dependents of deceased Local Church employee subscribers as allowable by the health care plan if continued coverage is a provision of the local church employee policy, and if the local church maintains responsibility for the health insurance premiums.

Eligible Dependents:

1. Spouse.
2. Children and Legal Dependents under age 26.
3. Qualifying Adult Children with disabilities. (Per insurance regulations, Adult Children with disabilities may not continue on the conference plan after the subscriber is deceased.)

Changes in Eligibility: All changes in appointment, employee, or family status that affect eligibility in health coverage must be submitted within 30 days of the date the change occurs, otherwise loss, lapses, or gaps in coverage may occur. Subscribers are responsible for providing family status changes (including marriages, births, adoptions, legal guardianships) in writing to the Conference Benefits Office. A delay in notification could mean a delay or denial of coverage until the next open enrollment period.

Working Aged 65: Active Clergy under eligible Michigan Conference Appointment and Conference Lay Employees in Conference/Related Agency employment retain eligibility status in the conference active group health care plan.

1. The conference active group plan continues to be the subscriber's primary coverage.
2. Subscribers and dependents must enroll in Medicare Part A at the time they turn age 65, but are not required to enroll in Medicare Part B until the effective date of the subscriber's retirement.
3. The subscriber is responsible for submitting a copy of the subscriber/dependent Medicare card to the Conference Benefits Officer at the time of Medicare enrollment to assure the proper coordination of benefits.

Funding of Active Health Care Policies:

1. Active Clergy and Conference/Related Agency Employees: Health insurance premiums are shared by the salary-paying unit (Michigan Conference, Conference Related Agency, or Local Church) and the subscriber according to the contribution schedule as established by the Conference Board of Pension & Health Benefits action.
2. Disabled Clergy and Conference/Related Agency Employees: Health insurance premiums are paid by the Michigan Conference to the extent established by CBOPHB action.
3. Dependents of deceased Clergy and Conference/Related Agency Lay Employee subscribers: Health insurance premiums are paid by the Michigan Conference to the extent established by CBOPHB action.

Termination:

1. A subscriber may voluntarily terminate a subscriber's health insurance policy by submitting a request in writing to the Conference Benefits Office.
2. Health insurance policies are terminated the date of a subscriber's termination from an eligible Clergy Appointment or Conference/Related Agency employment.
 - a. Coverage for terminated employees cannot be extended since COBRA coverage is not offered through the Michigan Conference.
 - b. Under special provisions of the CBOPHB, a policy will be extended for up to one year for a clergyperson appointed to an eligible leave of absence status. Eligible leaves of absence include Medical Leave and Sabbatical Leave only.
3. Health Insurance policies for a local church employee are terminated effective:
 - a. The termination date of local church employment. Coverage cannot be extended since COBRA coverage is not offered through the Michigan Conference.
 - b. The first of the month in which the subscriber turns age 65.
4. Health Insurance policies will be terminated for non-payment of premiums according to the following schedule:
 - a. Policy may be terminated at six months in arrears.
 - b. In a delinquency situation involving a clergyperson appointed to a local church, a repayment plan must be submitted to and approved by the Executive Committee of The Board of Pension & Health Benefits to extend coverage past the six month period.
 - c. A terminated policy may be reinstated within 30 days of termination if the outstanding balance has been remitted in full.

Waiver of Coverage:

1. ***Mandatory Enrollment:*** The active group health care plan is generally a mandatory plan for all eligible appointed clergy. Appointed clergy may waive coverage if they have alternate health care coverage given any of the following situations:
 - a. Spouse's plan
 - b. Military plan
 - c. Former employer plan
 - d. Medicaid plan
2. Enrollment of eligible dependents is optional as determined by the subscriber.
3. Eligible Clergy and Conference/Related Agency Lay Employees that waive conference health care coverage must have a Waiver of Coverage form on file in the Michigan Conference Benefits Office.
4. Persons waiving coverage have opportunity to enroll themselves and eligible dependents in the conference health care plan annually during open enrollment or at the time of a life-qualifying event.

RETIREE GROUP HEALTH CARE PLAN***Introduction:***

This section describes the provisions and requirements of the Michigan Conference retiree group health care plan. All available benefits are at all times subject to and may be limited, denied, or terminated based on applicable underwriting provisions, contract terms, eligibility rules, and premium payment requirements. All required submissions, underwriting, and payments must be remitted in a timely manner. ***It is the subscriber's responsibility to understand the specific rules relating to eligibility for coverage in retirement prior to the subscriber's retirement date. Questions may be directed to the Conference Benefits Office or submitted in writing to the Board of Pension & Health Benefits. Do not rely on verbal responses to questions raised in informational meetings or provided by representatives other than the Board of Pension & Health Benefits.***

It is crucial that clergy who have served appointments during their career in Extension Ministries or another Annual Conference are knowledgeable regarding years of service credit, coverage, and cost sharing in order to effectively plan for retirement.

Eligibility and Cost Sharing:

1. Grand-parented populations have been established for clergy members/conference employees of the former Detroit and West Michigan Conferences for all current retirees and all active participants who are eligible to retire by January 1, 2024. "Eligible to Retire" refers to the definitions as defined by the 2016 Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church.
2. Grand-parented populations will follow the provisions of their respective former conference that were in place December 31, 2018 in determining post-retirement eligibility and cost sharing. Individuals may contact the Conference Benefits Office to confirm eligibility and specific cost sharing at the time of retirement.
3. Post-retirement health care eligibility and cost sharing for participants not included in either grand-parented population are determined per the health care policy as established by the CBOPHB.

Termination:

1. A subscriber may terminate their health insurance policy during retirement at any time. However, the termination is non-revocable and a subscriber cannot re-enroll at a future date.
2. The health insurance policy of a retired ordained minister whose clergy membership is terminated with the Michigan Conference for any reason will be terminated the effective date of the termination of the subscriber's clergy membership.
3. Health insurance policies will be terminated for non-payment of premiums according to the following schedule:
Policy may be terminated at six months in arrears.
 - a. A terminated policy may be reinstated within 30 days of termination if the outstanding balance has been remitted in full.
 - b. Since termination of a retiree policy is permanent following the 30 day window for reinstatement, subscribers in a delinquency situation are strongly encouraged to initiate communication with the Executive Committee of The Board of Pension & Health Benefits to negotiate a realistic repayment schedule prior to the date of termination.

The Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits (CBOPHB) is authorized by the Michigan Annual Conference to negotiate, compromise, submit to arbitration, or retain legal counsel regarding any claims for benefits that may arise under the Michigan Conference Benefits Plans. This includes the current Michigan Conference Group Health Care Plan, the Michigan Conference Lay Employee Retirement and Welfare plans, the United Methodist Clergy Retirement and Welfare Plans, as well as other plans instituted in the future. The CBOPHB will be considered the final appeal and have final authority to decide any issue in the event of a dispute or disagreement by a participant.

Presented by The Michigan Conference Board of Pension & Health Benefits
Rev. Dr. Steven J. Buck, President
Rev. Donald J. Emmert, Director of Conference Benefits & HR

PROTECTION POLICY IMPLEMENTATION TEAM
(aka MICHIGAN CONFERENCE PROTECTION POLICY TEAM (MiC PPT))

The Michigan Conference Protection Policy Team in 2021 has kept our focus on the goal of assisting every United Methodist Church in the development and implementation of a Protection Policy to protect their children, youth and vulnerable adults. This year we have adjusted to meeting by Zoom, but we miss the loss of physical connection in our face-to-face meetings. On the other hand, our members do a happy dance sitting at home instead of the long drive to and from the Conference Center North four times a year.

We celebrate those churches who have used the information on the Protection Policy link on the Conference website. We celebrate the Conference voting to accept the amendment of the UMC Protection Policy to include a section on social media safety practices.

The committee members who received inquiries from laity and clergy about developing their local church policy, how to train their church volunteers and how to become authorized to serve at district and conference events were directed to the conference website, resources page, Protection Policy.

Following is a list of three accomplishments:

- Encouragement and financial support for individuals seeking training and/or authorization, information and a link on the conference web site to Safe Gatherings.
- Increased membership of the MiC PPT to include two clergy and representatives from most districts.
- Contact with the district superintendents to offer our support and hear their suggestion for how to connect with churches who do not yet have a protection policy.

MiC PPT members: Beth Pelkey, Chris Grimes, Dan Colthorp, Phyllis Hart, Marguerite Zawislak, Mike Darby, Ruth Sutton, and Judy Herriff. Conference appointments; Kathy Pittenger and Christy White.

Judy Herriff, Facilitator



Increasing everyone's ability to succeed in a diverse community.

Think for a moment about a challenge you weren't sure you could overcome. Maybe what comes to mind is something like public speaking or a difficult project. Perhaps it's something more profound, like a health crisis or losing a job. Either way, we bet you can remember that groundless feeling when you realized what was ahead of you, and the sense of resolve you felt as you tackled the situation head-on.

And while you might not feel grateful for the challenge itself, you probably wouldn't trade the lessons you learned or the strength you gained for anything.

Maybe, like us, the challenge that came to mind was a cold March day in 2020 when you realized life was about to look different than you ever imagined.

When the shelter in place order began and we closed the doors to our facility, we weren't sure what to expect. But we never lost sight of what was most important: being there for our clients.

With faith and hope, we adapted. And with your support, we provided remote services to children, families, youth, and seniors throughout the entire closure.

We provided emergency supplies and virtual support to our child development center member families. We hosted virtual after-school activities and academic assistance to students in the Grand Rapids Public Schools 21st Century program. And we made sure our older adult clients had meal delivery, wellness visits, safe transportation, and more.

We learned that with our partners – all of you – we can be innovative and nimble. We can turn challenge into opportunity. We can envision a future that is better than the "normal" we left behind – and together, we can bring that future to life.

You do the same thing for UMCH clients. You support this place where they can learn how strong and capable they are. Where they can surprise themselves with their ability to overcome challenges. And where they gain the skills and opportunities they need to truly thrive.

Today, UMCH continues to work toward providing programs and services at full capacity, as safely as we can. We've limited childcare and older adult group programs to allow for social distancing, and after school youth programs are a mix of virtual and in-person. We're continuing to do as much as we can to provide remote support for those who can't be physically with us.

We're excited to get back to full capacity, but we have no plans to get back to "normal." This year is all about growth and transformation at UMCH. We're introducing new pilot initiatives in our child development center like family engagement and drop-in care, we've launched a new Fresh Market, and we're building new partnerships to expand our health and wellness support for older adults.

There is a lot to look forward to – and believe us when we say we're just getting started.

Thank you for being our partners in transformation.

Eric J. Williams, Chief Executive Officer
Carla Moore, Chief Operations Officer

UNITED METHODIST FOUNDATION OF MICHIGAN

Since 1926 the United Methodist Foundation of Michigan has been coming alongside congregations to help them live into their purpose. 2021 was no exception! Despite the continuation and challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, we sought to provide innovative resources and traditional services to enrich the mission of the Church.

We recognize that building the financial strength of local churches is of paramount importance. This ministry has been and continues to be at the very core of our ministry. We partner with an increasing number of account holders to provide value-aligned investment counsel. In fact, our assets under management have grown by more than 2.5 times over the past decade – now exceeding \$155,000,000. In addition, the permanent funds which are comprised of trusts, legacy gifts, and other designated contributions have proliferated to an all-time high of \$11,500,000.

This past year was a strong year for investment performance. UMF Collective Funds of Michigan LLC persuasively outperformed its respective benchmarks. The Balanced Fund, our most popular, value-aligned investment choice, gained nearly 15% in 2021. The Stock Fund (+22.12%) and the Bond Fund (+0.87%) rounded out a year of solid advancement. One of our goals is to partner with local churches by offering unparalleled ESG investments which strictly adhere to Wesleyan social principles.

We were excited to provide several dozen first time grants to smaller congregations. These virtual technology grants supported online worship efforts and totaled nearly \$24,000. This past year was another banner year for our seminary scholarships. By providing over \$100,000 in scholarships, we helped a diverse community of future and current pastors avoid debt and meet their educational goals. Without our generous support as a matching partner, some students would not be able to pursue their academic goals. As Beatrice Alghali commented, "You change lives. Your support has a long-term impact on me and the people whom I will be serving."

One of our most innovative partnerships last year was a joint venture with Bishop David Bard, the Appointive Cabinet, and Dakotas Wesleyan University. We sponsored a highly intensive learning cohort, *Stewarding the Church in the 21st Century*. Taught by DWU faculty, this academically and practically rigorous course strengthens the ability of pastors to lead mission-focused, financially healthy, congregationally engaged churches. Moreover, participants are halfway toward receiving an MBA upon completion of this course.

We also expanded resources last year by offering more leadership coaching and by increasing our online learning cohorts. The *Generous Church Leadership Course* is designed to help pastors and church leaders think about stewardship and generosity ministry from a holistic perspective. In addition, we introduced a new resource, *Saving Grace: A Guide to Financial Well-Being*. This six-session, Wesleyan rooted class mentors participants in the creation of a faith-based personal spending plan.

We remain poised to grow our services in 2022. We will be expanding our online worship resources to include offering invitations, generosity-based litanies, and stewardship-themed sermon outlines. These online resources will complement our very popular lectionary-based offertory prayers. Furthermore, we will expand our robust capacity to award grants and scholarships by tipping the \$500,000 mark in 2022. We also will introduce a generosity audit for local churches. This service will focus on adopting best practices for local church financial stewardship and may include a comprehensive consultation with Horizons Stewardship and their Next Level Generosity platform. Finally, we have entered the developmental stages of piloting the Foundation's *Financial Well-Being Initiative for Pastors* which will include as its centerpiece a low-interest student loan repayment plan. Visit our website regularly to learn more about these and other opportunities. www.UMFMichigan.org

David S. Bell, President and Executive Director

UNITED METHODIST RETIREMENT COMMUNITIES and UMRC FOUNDATION

Introduction:

United Methodist Retirement Communities (UMRC) has been a leader in caring for older adults since its faithful founding in 1906. The **UMRC Foundation** was established in 1998 as the 501 (c)(3) fundraising arm supporting Benevolent Care for residents who have outlived their savings, as well as growth opportunities for the organization. UMRC Foundation's mission is to promote the wellness, dignity, and independence of seniors by supporting the residents, team members, and communities UMRC serves.

On March 1, 2019 UMRC affiliated, under shared governance and leadership, with Porter Hills Presbyterian Village, Inc., a faith-based senior living organization based in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Together, **UMRC & Porter Hills** represents the second largest nonprofit senior living organization in Michigan. As one organization, UMRC & Porter Hills delivers unparalleled, innovative, and compassionate care and services for older adults across lower Michigan. With a tradition of exceptional quality and a commitment to cutting-edge care, our faith-based organization and affiliates combine to serve more than 8,000 older adults annually, from 24 locations and service lines, across 22 counties in Michigan's lower peninsula. These include market rate and affordable independent and assisted living options, skilled nursing care and rehabilitation, specialized dementia and Alzheimer's care, cognitive behavioral therapy, physical and occupational therapy, home health care, Programs of All-inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE), as well as partnerships in care navigation and hospice services. ***In embracing our Christian mission and guiding beliefs, UMRC & Porter Hills is welcoming of ALL, and we reaffirm our commitment to caring for the needs of a growing population of older adults.***

"Mourning to Dancing"

What were the challenges your agency faced?

Like so many others, the continuing COVID-19 pandemic has created a host of challenges for organizations providing care, housing, and services for older adults. One of those challenges has been the recruitment and retention of direct care workers. To address these challenges, UMRC & Porter Hills has surveyed our team members and listened to their feedback. Task forces are underway to boost recruiting and retention efforts, including improved onboarding, department training, minimum wages, and career path opportunities.

What were its celebrations? In spite of these challenges, UMRC & Porter Hills and the UMRC & Porter Hills Foundation had much to celebrate. In January 2021, we were able to offer the first COVID-19 vaccines to our residents and team members. As we began to be able to spend more time in person, our residents enjoyed music concerts (both in-person and live-streamed), thanks to generous donors and partnerships with Creative Washtenaw and Shoreline Music Society. A grant from Aroha Philanthropies allowed us to provide a variety of arts classes for the older adults we serve, including drawing, pottery, and fused glass. Our 1,250 dedicated, compassionate team members across the organization were honored once again with the Best and Brightest Company to Work For® in both Metro Detroit and West Michigan. This award validates and honors the tireless efforts of each of our team members across the state as they provide exceptional care and services for older adults. The UMRC & Porter Hills Foundation was also able to host in-person celebrations, using appropriate COVID-19 safety precautions, to thank our generous donors. In July, we held our much-loved annual Garden Party, showcasing our beautiful new Kresge Center Courtyard on our Chelsea Retirement Community grounds. In November, we celebrated "Fifty Plus One" years of Porter Hills, which opened in 1970.

How did the work of your agency impact Michigan United Methodists, our local churches, and/or local communities across Michigan or around the world?

Together, UMRC & Porter Hills serves over 8,000 older adults across Michigan annually. Only about one third of them live at our most well-known **residential** campuses in Chelsea, Grand Rapids, and Dexter. Over 500 older adults of limited means make their homes in our eight **affordable living** communities in Grand Rapids, Chelsea, and Detroit. The remaining 68% are served through our home-and community-based programs. Over 1,100 low-income, nursing home-eligible older adults are able to live safely and independently in their own homes thanks to the care and services we provide through our five **PACE** (Program of All-inclusive Care for the Elderly) sites located in Muskegon, Holland, Jackson, Lansing, and Ypsilanti. UMRC & Porter Hills also serves over 4,300 adults through **home-based care** programs, including certified, specialized home care; in-home hospice care; and individualized wrap around services and health management.

The UMRC & Porter Hills Foundation adopted a single statewide **Benevolent Care** policy for qualified residents across the organization to ensure they always have a loving home, even if they outlive their

savings. The Benevolent Care Fund is at the very heart of our Christian founders' vision and is the most faithful piece of the work we do to care for older adults.

To care for the needs of such a broad population of older adults requires a compassionate and dedicated team of experienced professionals. UMRC & Porter Hills employs 1,250 team members statewide. The UMRC & Porter Hills Foundation helps support our hard-working staff through the **Team Member Support Services** fund. Thanks to generous gifts from our donors, this fund includes competitive **Scholarship** opportunities to help team members pursue their career goals and, ultimately, provide enhanced care for older adults. This fund also offers **Emergency Aid**, providing limited assistance in times of crisis for our family of team members. These programs launched at UMRC in 2014 and, last year, were adopted for our team members at Porter Hills as well.

UMRC & Porter Hills and the UMRC & Porter Hills Foundation are committed to the communities it serves through a variety of projects and initiatives. Recently, these have included Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) training; dementia care training for care partners, community members, and first responders who provide care for those living with dementia; and partnerships with other organizations who serve the needs of older adults, to name a few.

In addition, President and CEO Steve Fetyko serves as Board Chair for the United Methodist Association whose faith-based, nonprofit members provide care for children, youth and family, and older adult ministries nationwide.

What were your agency's three major accomplishments in 2021?

During the past year, UMRC & Porter Hills has officially merged as one organization and, as of July 1, 2021, the UMRC Foundation and Porter Hills Foundation followed suit, creating one foundation – the UMRC & Porter Hills Foundation – to do the important work of caring for older adults. Our foundations originated to support the operations of UMRC and Porter Hills. Since the operating entity has come together as one, it is important for the foundation to mirror that as well, with a focus on mission and vision, all while keeping donor intent at the very center. As one foundation, our impact on senior living, benevolent care, and aging in general, is stronger.

At a time when burnout and turnover of healthcare workers is at a critical level in our country, UMRC & Porter Hills has taken important steps to acknowledge and thank our team members. In November the UMRC & Porter Hills Board approved the launch of a \$5.2 million **Commitment Bonus** program to support retention efforts of the organization's workforce; in particular caregivers and those who provide direct support services. Our dedicated team members have gone above and beyond the call of duty, risking their own health and well-being to care for our residents, participants, and each other. Their sacrifices have been remarkable, and our entire community has benefited from their talents, commitment, and thoughtfulness.

Our **Home Health Care** program also received final state and federal approval this spring to extend its home-based service across Michigan. Home Health began at Porter Hills in 1995 and has one of the highest satisfaction ratings in West Michigan.

We are grateful for our faith-based history which continues to guide the future of UMRC & Porter Hills. Thank you for your prayers and support in helping us provide loving communities, care, and services for older adults. We look forward to meeting with churches and affiliate groups over the coming year, whether via Zoom or in person when it is safe to do so, to share the good work you are helping us accomplish on behalf of older adults and their families.

Thank you for your commitment to our mission of service to older adults.

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UNITED METHODIST UNION OF GREATER DETROIT
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It has been quite a year at the United Methodist Union. A year filled with surprises and what I used to tell my parishioners at Orchard UMC "were opportunities for growth!" COVID-19 pandemic infection numbers in the Detroit Metropolitan area continue to escalate. People seem to be on edge, civility is almost a

forgotten virtue and the basic cost of living continues to rise. Can we say inflation, supply disruption and racism, where will it end?

Driving into the Union office, I was serenaded by Bob Dylan on the radio who reminded me that “The Times They Are A Changing.” In the 60’s I knew exactly what that song meant, but now, I am not quite as sure. There are so many movements and questions right outside my office window and so few absolute answers ... even for the clergy or General Conference delegates. Yet, we are called to walk as Christians even where we cannot see, and trust that God continues to be at work in us ... and through us, especially at the Union, which, some days, is a tall order. But we are the people of faith!

Life certainly has changed. The Union office at Metropolitan UMC in 2022 will continue to be open only on Tuesday and Wednesday. Hopefully, delivery issues with the U.S. Post Office have been resolved. They dramatically impacted our ability to process loan payments, apportionments and reconcile other financial issues. The gracious understanding of our district churches was appreciated. Churches are still encouraged to contact Connie Perrine at her home: 248-827-7110 or Rev. Carol Johns on her cell phone: 248-417-9673.

Now on to our ministries.

New Church Development

The Union continues to work closely with the Office of Congregational Vibrancy and other groups to provide grants for new church starts.

- The French Ministry New Church Start continues to meet on Sunday afternoon at Embury UMC in Birmingham. On June 30, 2021, the Union brought to a close its three years of salary support for Rev. Gertrude Mukalay Mwadi and her husband, Rev. John Kabala Llunga Ngoie. The French Ministry Team, Congregational Vibrancy and the Greater Detroit District are working together to develop a sustainability plan for this congregation. It is a long term policy of the United Methodist Union that new church development projects are funded for a maximum of three years.

Support Through Loans

Another facet of our ministry involves making loans to churches and other United Methodist church ministries.

- In the late Fall UMC of Madison Heights discovered that they needed to replace two furnaces that heated their sanctuary. Fortunately, they qualified for an equipment credit, the congregation raised additional dollars and the Union extended a loan of \$5,796. A wonderful contractor had them back worshipping in their sanctuary by Christmas Sunday.
- Utilizing technology to connect with members and visitors during the difficult days of COVID-19 has been a saving grace for many United Methodist churches. Conant Avenue UMC needed to upgrade its video and sound system for live streaming at a cost of \$12,000. This church already has a roof loan of \$46,715.14. The Union agreed to combine the two loans together. In 2020 Conant Avenue UMC and Mt. Hope UMC merged. The Mt. Hope church building is up for sale. The proceeds from the sale will be used to pay the technology loan.
- One of the things that the United Methodist Union does best is work with congregations about their specific issues. Twenty years ago, after a fire, Scott Memorial UMC built a new church facility. The Union extended a loan of \$280,000. For ten years this congregation has faithfully met this obligation. Unfortunately, the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic has had a dramatic effect on their tithes and offerings. At the request of Scott Memorial UMC, the Union has adjusted their loan to interest only for a period of two years.
- A positive action that some UM churches have taken in 2021 is the opportunity to upgrade their facilities. Newburg UMC for years had wanted to replace the windows in their sanctuary. The cost of this project was \$75,200. The church utilized funds from their endowment fund, a capital campaign, and a loan from the Union. At the request of Newburg UMC, the Union combined a sewer loan with the new window loan at the previous interest rate.
- This summer a number of UM churches in the Detroit Metro area experienced flooding in their basements. Chery Tipton, Case Manager chairperson, Disaster Response Ministry of the Greater Detroit District contacted the Union about the issues at Resurrection UMC. This congregation had four feet of water in their basement. Like many 1950’s buildings, this basement is composed of a large fellowship hall, stage, kitchen, furnace, hot water heater and storage space. The Union agreed to help them replace their furnace, hot water heater and several glass block windows at a cost of \$24,000. In a different approach, the Union extended a lien grant of \$12,000 that would be repaid only if the

Resurrection UMC building was sold, merged, or closed. The Union also loaned Resurrection UMC \$12,000 at a discount rate of 4%.

- The Union has worked very closely with Ford Memorial UMC regarding facility issues. In April, this congregation retired their small building loan of \$32,715.99. They still have a large loan of \$83,187.60 from a renovation in 2016. In June they discovered a tear in their flat roof membrane and significant water leaked into the church building. The Union loaned them \$11,450 to replace the roof and all the interior damage. These two loans were combined. Also, with assistance from the Union, They made additional repairs to the church building.
- Early in 2021, Farmington First UMC paid off their renovation loan with the Union. Unfortunately, in September they discovered that 15 HVAC (furnace and AC systems) had failed and would have to be replaced. The Union extended to them a loan of \$180,000.

Grants for Ministry

Even in the midst of COVID-19, the Union works hard to respond to emergency needs and reinvests its resources in churches and special projects. Our support makes a difference in the ministries that actually happen in the Greater Detroit Districts.

- A grant was extended to Utica UMC to provide a virtual summer program for children and youth. This program utilized interns to support their online activities and volunteers to deliver materials and food.
- The Union has a long history of investing in ministry to the immigrant community. Since 2012, we have extended an annual grant of \$5,000 to Dearborn First UMC as part of their ministry as a JFON Clinic (Justice for Our Neighbors) that serves the Downriver and Detroit area. The Union has extended a three-year grant of \$5,000 per year for a total of \$15,000.
- The Union extended a grant to Urban Methodist Youth Camp for a one week on-site camp experience at Michindoh Christian Camp in Southern Michigan. All campers and staff were vaccinated. The use of a non-UMC camp was precipitated by the sale of Judson Collins.
- For several years the Union has worked diligently with Mount Vernon UMC, a lovely small church in Washington Township, to resolve some historic issues. This church became part of the Greater Detroit District in the realignment that occurred with the creation of the Michigan Annual Conference. The Union provided emergency funding grants for legal assistance and operational expenses. All costs to the Union were repaid at the sale of the church building to St. Irene of Chrysoulantou Greek Orthodox Christians. Mount Vernon UMC merged with Washington UMC.

Young Leaders Initiative Foundry House

The Union's relationship with the Young Leaders Initiative began in 2005 when Rev. Carl Gladstone and Rev. Jeff Nelson approached the Union about creating a new mission endeavor. It would have a two-fold purpose: develop young leaders and initiate an urban work mission program in Detroit that eventually became Motown Mission. The Union provided several three-year grants to support this ministry.

In late 2013 Young Leaders Initiative purchased Foundry House from Central Detroit Christian Community Development Corporation for a dollar. The Union gave Motown Mission a grant of \$10,000 and a loan of \$100,000 towards the renovation of the Foundry House. Through the years, they have housed young adult US-2 Missionaries working in Detroit and other young adult leaders. One area of concern has always been the roof. In December of 2020, the Union approved an additional loan of \$74,366.40 for carpentry and a new roof. Unfortunately, the constraints of COVID-19 altered the timeline of the work, the costs of the materials and availability of contractors. Shortly after work began on the carpentry, during a three-day period of heavy rain, water poured into the interior of the house. The current residents had to be evacuated and are no longer able to reside there. The Board of Motown Mission has decided that they no longer desire to be in the housing business. They voted to give the Union the deed to the Foundry House in lieu of foreclosure. The present contractor will finish the carpentry and roof. Then the Union will consider its options, including the sale of the property.

Looking Forward

The work of the Union continues all year long, even in the midst of a resurgence of the COVID-19 pandemic, as we grapple with issues and challenges that local churches face. Presently we are working on building issues related to the merger of Mt. Hope and Conant Avenue UMCs, investigating a new furnace with Detroit St. Paul UMC, and working with the Michigan Annual Conference Board of Trustees. I would not want to close without expressing my appreciation for those leaving our Board: Sam Dallas, Michael Fischer, Rev. Dr. Willie F. Smith and Alice Tucker. We are fortunate to have an outstanding Board of Trustees, wonderful professional consultants and a competent, gracious staff in Connie Perrine and Audrey Mangum. Audrey graduated from Methodist Theological Seminary in Ohio with a Master of Divinity Degree in May.

She is now the pastor of Conant Avenue UMC in Detroit. We are so proud of Audrey's achievement and miss her as part of our staff.

The work of the Union plays an important role in the life of the Greater Detroit District. It is my privilege to be the Executive Director and share in the ministry that God has entrusted to us. Unfortunately, we have not been able to meet in person this year, but we will continue to seek to be connected. Thank you for your participation as we seek to be a blessing in the name of Jesus.

Carol J. Johns, Executive Director



As 2021 began with a new COVID vaccine roll-out, the Michigan Conference UMW were very hopeful that we could resume normal events by mid-year, once again gathering in-person as a community of women. However, the pandemic continued to create challenges and we had to make choices to keep each other safe. So, Zoom continued to be a blessing for us during the year.

Our units continued to engage in mission locally, sewing face masks, packing free lunches and weekend backpacks, serving funeral dinners, making pasties and many other activities. Although fundraising was challenging in 2021, we achieved 90% of our pledge to UMW, sending in over \$207,000 for Mission Giving to support the national and international ministries of UMW.

Mission went virtual with two events. In July, Rev. Dale Milford and Sharon Appling led us in our study *Pushout: The Criminalization of Black Girls in Schools*, where we learned of systemic biases within the education system that degrades and marginalizes black girls, pushes them out of schools and leaves them at risk of incarceration. In August, Rev. Kennetha Bigham-Tsai led us in our study *Bearing Witness in the Kin-dom*, where we learned to live into the will of God, living as radical disciples, for a more just world. The study from 2020 – Finding Peace in an Anxious World led by Rev. Dr. Devon Herrell – is still available on the Michigan Conference UMW website for individual or group study. These transformative educational opportunities are a cornerstone for United Methodist Women and our gift to the church.

The National UMW staff offered a Matinee Racial Justice Series of movies in the summer. We had the opportunity to view 5 documentary films together and then discuss them in small groups. FaithTalks, the UMW podcast, continued throughout 2021 with twice monthly programs on a variety of topics including: creating a sustainable lifestyle, the impact of giving, preventing gun violence and faith in the midst of uncertainty.

In the fall four of our District Annual Meetings were able to be held in person and five chose to be virtual. Our Conference Annual Celebration was also virtual with over 100 attendees. Our keynote speaker was Emily Jones, UMW Executive for Racial Justice. We also welcomed Eric Williams from United Methodist Community House in Grand Rapids, the UMW National Mission Institution located in our Conference, to share with us all their news and plans for a new facility. The event was truly a celebration and enjoyed by all attendees.

We faced challenges in 2021 but also celebrated several accomplishments. Now, we look forward with hope to 2022. Our Charter for Racial Justice Committee announced at the end of 2021 mini grants available to local units in 2022 to pursue racial justice activities. Our National Leadership is close to announcing details of a re-branding to refresh our organization to propel us into our next 150 years. And finally, in May 2022, we will join in person or virtually with our UMW sisters from around the world in Orlando at Assembly 2022. As a Community of Women together we will DANCE and continue putting our faith, hope and love into action for women, children and youth around the world.

Julia Paradine-Rice, President

YOUNG PEOPLE'S MINISTRIES, BOARD OF

Our 2022 Annual Conference theme is “Mourning to Dancing.” What would you “mourn” and what would you “dance” about in 2021? Or, what were the challenges your agency faced? What were its celebrations?

The Board of Young People's Ministries continues to mourn the loss of connection and community due to the COVID-19 pandemic. As a board, we noticed that we had less requests for funding this year than in years past, and we mourn the loss of opportunities for faith development. We continue to mourn the fact that young people are not always fully integrated in the life of their church, and often their voices are silenced or pushed to the margins. We mourn that this silencing often pushes young people out of the church. We have faced challenges as a board, as we've sought to bring aboard more young people, but the constraints of our current organization do not resonate with how youth and young adults operate. We also faced the challenges of budget cuts, as we had to think creatively about how we work to fund ministries that are important to the faith development of young people across our Conference.

And, yet, we have still been able to dance. We dance because we have a fairly healthy budget that allows us to support a number of ministries. We dance because we have become a new home for ministries like the Mission Intern Program, and we have helped create new ministries, like Seed to Harvest. We dance because, despite the challenges we may face, this Conference is a leader and example for Young People's Ministries. We dance, with hopeful feet, that we continue to see young people not just as the future of the church, but also as the present. We dance, with hopeful feet, that more young people can feel inspired to join in the ministries we offer, or start new ministries. We dance, with hopeful feet, because the Spirit of God is still playing music for us to dance to. The creativity of God has not stopped flowing in the Michigan Conference. And so, we continue to dance, with hope, toward the future to which God is leading us.

How did the work of your agency impact Michigan United Methodists, our local churches, and/or local communities across Michigan or around the world?

Through our work of funding, we helped to spark new ministries, like the Seed into Harvest incubation ministry. We helped to close out the pilot class with Ministry Incubators, while investing in the first class under the new Seed to Harvest program. This ministry connects Young Adults with entrepreneurial ministry ideas to a team that can help them take their idea from a seed to a bountiful harvest. We hope that this encourages young people in our Conference to be brave enough to try new ways of sowing God's love in this world.

We also helped to fund the Growing Young REACH network group's time with Jake Mulder and Yulee Lee, believing that it was important the clergy and laity within the REACH group hear both of their voices. The time spent with Jake and Yulee were engaging and inspiring. It is our hope that through this REACH group churches and local church leaders feel better equipped to face the challenge of growing the church.

Through our Division of Higher Education and Campus Ministry, we continued to work with Wesley Foundation groups, which foster faith in college students. Colleges continue to be places where Young Adults are concentrated the most, and so continued support of the Wesley Foundations is vital and important for the Church.

Our board impacts local churches, the denomination, and the world, because investing in Young People's Ministries, from youth to young adult, means that we are investing in the present and the future of the church. We get to work with young people to make sure their hopes, visions, and dreams are being heard. The ministries we support foster their faith, creativity, and desires for the future. We are a board of dreamers, that looks at the realities of the present and thinks of ways we can move the Church to the future. We dedicate ourselves to uplifting and empowering the voices of young people across the Conference, and that cannot help but have an impact.

What were your agency's three major accomplishments in 2021?

One of our major accomplishments in 2021 was ending our year with a balanced budget. We are very careful to work within our means, trying our best not to overspend but also spending all that we have. We think of our budget in terms of opportunity, rather than constraint.

Which leads into our next accomplishment, and that is we don't say “no” to people who come to us with requests. We try our best to fund how we can, giving a little even if it doesn't match their full request, and we also point those who come to us in the direction of other sources they can draw from. We support the requests that come to us in a variety of ways, making sure that those who do come to us feel like we are an ally, rather than an obstacle.

Finally, we are proud that we are a board that regularly meets, not only to discuss funding requests, but also dream of what we can do in the future. How can we, as a board, support Young People better? How can we connect with Young People? How do we foster our connections with Young People? How do we act as an ally within the system for Young People in our Conference? Though we are a funding board, we also try to think beyond that, so we can also be an advocacy board, a creativity board, and an educational board.

Elizabeth Hurd, Chair

DIVISION OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND CAMPUS MINISTRY

Good morning and thank you, Michigan Conference, for supporting the vital, creative, and faithful work of Michigan United Methodist campus ministry in 2021!

The Division of Higher Education and Campus Ministry (DHECM) is part of the Michigan Conference structure under the Board of Young People's Ministries. Our members are Rev. Lisa Batten, Rev. Katie Fahey, Dr. Sarah Hercula, Rev. Mary Ivanov, Rick Miller, Rev. Brian Steele, Jenna Walker, and Jennifer Wheeler. During the year, we said good-bye and thank you to Blair Hunt for her many years of effective service and deeply personal history in campus ministry in Michigan.

These are our current social media outlets in addition to the individual campus ministries:

- Follow Michigan UM campus ministry on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/umconcampus/>
- #withWesleyMIUMC campaign: <https://www.withwesleyiumc.org/>
- Loans and Scholarships: <https://www.gbhem.org/loans-and-scholarships>
- Michigan Conference website: <https://michiganumc.org/resources/wesley-foundation/>

In The United Methodist Church, campus ministries are **extension ministries of the Church** and are among its most significant disciple-making communities.

¶ 120. The Mission—The mission of the Church is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. Local churches and **extension ministries of the Church** provide the most significant arenas through which disciple-making occurs (*The Book of Discipline 2016*, Part IV, The Ministry of All Christians; **emphasis added**).

The Michigan Conference Division of Higher Education and Campus Ministry (DHECM) advocates for campus ministry throughout the Michigan Conference connectional structure to secure primary financial resources and to provide accountability and evaluation for our UM campus ministries. We help our intentional UM campus faith communities make bold and effective young adult leaders and disciples for the Church and the world by promoting the healthy spiritual and social development of young adults on campus.

The DHECM supports and has a relationship with the following eight Michigan United Methodist campus ministries. Their individual reports are also in this volume of the Conference Journal.

- Central Michigan University (Wesley@CMU)
- Ferris State University (Big Rapids Wesley House)
- Grand Valley State University (Wesley Fellowship)
- Michigan State University (Wesley at Michigan State University)
- Motor City Wesley (Wayne State University)
- Northern Michigan University
- Wesley Foundation at the University of Michigan
- Western Michigan University (Wesley of Kalamazoo)

Adrian College and Albion College are our two Michigan UM-related schools.

Local churches report information about their college and university students as part of the annual Church Conference process. The DHECM receives those reports and creates a database that is used by our Michigan Directors/Campus Pastors for their outreach ministries. We want our students to know that The United Methodist Church supports and encourages them to follow God's leading in this next stage of life. We do so by preparing and equipping campus spiritual communities. Thank you for participating in this process. **As of the date of this report, 74 churches have shared 334 students attending 83 different schools or military service.**

We encourage all congregations and especially congregations with college and university students to celebrate United Methodist Student Day (<https://www.resourceumc.org/en/churchwide/umcgiving/special-sundays/united-methodist-student-day-sunday-pastor-and-leader-kit>).

The Francis Asbury Award is an annual recognition chosen by the DHECM. From the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry (GBHEM), "the award recognizes individuals who have made a significant

contribution to fostering the church's ministries in higher education at the local, district, or annual conference level of the church. The award is named for Bishop Asbury and is based on his admonition to the people called Methodist to erect a school in the vicinity of every church."

Rev. Deb Johnson was the recipient of the 2021 Francis Asbury award. Her campus ministry history was documented wonderfully in Glenn M. Wagner's Michigan Conference Communications article dated September 21, 2021, "There's Campus Ministry in Her DNA" (<https://michiganumc.org/theres-campus-ministry-in-her-dna/>).

We celebrated another example of the long-term positive effect of campus ministry in a recent graduate of Ferris State Wesley House, Neil Haney, becoming the Executive Director at Lake Louise.

We continued transitioning our site assessment process due to COVID-19. At the end of 2021 and beginning of 2022, we had focused conversations with two of our Directors/Campus Pastors at each meeting. This gave us more personal insights about the ministries. We were able to see and hear and feel both their passion and discouragement at the challenging conditions in which they do campus ministry. Through these focused conversations and using the written reports of the Directors/Campus Pastors as the opening devotions for our meetings, we celebrated their faithful service.

As a Division, we committed to raising \$5,000 in addition to the Ministry Shares we receive through the Conference budget. Individual donors and the golf outing fundraiser at Annual Conference in prior years affirmed a broad vision for supporting United Methodist campus ministries throughout Michigan.

We were grateful to the Council on Finance and Administration for allowing us to pilot a fundraising platform called Subsplash to support our efforts to raise these funds beyond the Conference budget. Subsplash is a partner with the General Council on Finance and Administration. According to the GCFA website, "GCFA seeks to build relationships with vendors and businesses outside of the connection in an effort to provide vetted and approved services to our annual conferences and churches." We will report to CFA in April 2022 on the progress of this project.

In addition to grant amounts to each ministry, we reimbursed our ministries for their payroll processing costs. This practice started in 2019 when they became fully responsible for the administration of their payroll systems. We also reimbursed our Directors for their professional memberships in organizations such as the United Methodist Campus Ministry Association (UMCMA) and the National Association of College and University Chaplains (NACUC). We also started to develop a viable list of Conference-trained auditors for our ministries.

For 2021, we added a line item in our budget for Latinx mini-grants. From a report for our Michigan Conference developed by Rev. April Gutierrez, we learned that the median age of Latinx individuals in the Michigan Conference is 24 years old, making campus ministry the perfect place in which to develop a relationship with this group of individuals.

On the national level of United Methodist campus ministry, we were a financially supporting Conference for the two-part event "Shifting Demographics in Higher Ed," held in April and May. This event represented the first coordinated effort to examine the approaching demographic cliff – beginning around 2025 – of college-aged students and students in college overall.

Campus ministry in Michigan is vibrant and active and present in grace-filled ways to support persons coming of age and those persons serving them on campuses.

Thank you, Michigan Conference, for supporting the disciples and leaders who grow up in communities of faith among the most concentrated population of young adults in our culture.

Jeff Williams, DHECM Chair

THE WESLEY FOUNDATION at CENTRAL MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY (CMU)

The Wesley Foundation at Central Michigan University (Wesley at CMU) is a historic, United Methodist campus ministry in Mount Pleasant, Michigan. At Wesley at CMU, we value openness and authenticity and commit ourselves to building God's beloved community on earth. Our hope is for all people to know themselves as God's beloved and to go be God's love in the world.

This work of building beloved community has been particularly necessary this year. The COVID-19 pandemic has challenged young people's mental health, interrupted their education, discernment, and plans for the future, and radically changed how they gather in community. This mourning has, of course, come alongside their ongoing lament for issues of racial injustice, LGBTQ+ exclusion, and climate crisis in our church and world.

Like last year, Wesley at CMU has pivoted and mourned with them. Though we rejoice in the return to in-person programming, we have been intentional in using those gatherings to hold space for the heaviness and uncertainty of this time. This fall, we dedicated four weeks of worship to a series on “Holy Emotions” – the big, challenging feelings of anger, lament, doubt, and fear. We discussed the presence of these emotions in the stories of our spiritual ancestors and affirmed God’s capacity to hold these feelings and be with us amidst them. Likewise, Wesley at CMU has offered several retreats in the last year where students could rest, gather in community, and process the uncertainty of our time. Recently, we hosted a bread-baking retreat to discuss rest, gratitude, and the work of communal transformation using the metaphor of bread. In this season of mourning, we’ve recognized how precious and necessary it is to build community where students feel loved, supported, and encouraged to grow – even when it feels like the world is at a standstill.

Yet, alongside this mourning and processing, we have found ways to celebrate the gift of life and dance. We’ve created spaces for connection in worship and small groups, we’ve offered fellowship and sustenance with weekly community meals, and we’ve partnered with other Wesley Foundations and student organizations across CMU’s campus to widen our invitation to God’s way of love. This year, we celebrated the holidays with CMU’s International Student Organization, showcased student art and talent with an Open Mic Night, and travelled to Hayesville, NC for a week of mercy and justice work with Ferris State Wesley House. Our programming and partnerships have filled our community with music, art, laughter, and new friendships across cultures and faith traditions – and for each of those blessings, we rejoice!

We know that, for Wesley at CMU to reflect the beloved community God intends, we must hold space for both tears and laughter – just as God does for us. As we continue to navigate this challenging season, we move forward with the intention to build community that loves young adults in the fullness of who they are and the hope that they will love the whole of God’s creation in turn. We give thanks for your ongoing prayers and support as we strive to build God’s beloved community – that is a community that mourns and dances together – at CMU.

Audra Hudson, Pastor and Director

WESLEY HOUSE AT FERRIS STATE UNIVERSITY (FSU)

It’s not going back to normal. As much as we longed for a return to “normal” campus ministry – to large gatherings, in person, and unmasked – that just wasn’t in the cards for 2021 as the pandemic raged around us. But what did not flicker, falter, or fade was the hope the FSU Wesley students have for the future, the love they have for each other, and their deep commitment to loving God and serving others. So while everything was topsy turvy, unstable, unpredictable, and showed no signs of going back to normal, we began asking, “What would it mean to go forward to better?”

For us, this was a year of trying new things and meeting new people, and realizing that we don’t have to do everything ourselves. We were asked to sit on the University’s Diversity and Inclusion board, which put us in contact with other “do good” organizations on campus. We partnered with sororities for a feminine hygiene drive, hosted game nights with the Board Game Alliance, and cleaned up parks with our friends in the Outdoor Club. We realized that so many students on our campus were feeling lonely and disconnected, so we made it our ministry goal to help people find ways to connect and live into the passions God has placed on their heart. In addition to meeting social and emotional needs, we also expanded our capacity to meet physical needs as our food pantry, in its sixth year of serving the students of Ferris State, has expanded to hygiene and household products, too.

We are out here loving God, loving our neighbors, and we can’t wait to see where this ministry is headed in 2022. But we know that we could not have the opportunities we have without the countless people who have helped this ministry stay afloat, even through these strange seasons. We love and give thanks for our 15 covenant partner churches, who have continued to support and pray for these young people. We rejoice in our strong connections to both the Northern Waters and Midwest districts and long to be seeing them in person again. We cherish our time spent on zoom calls, in parks and on lawns, and in recorded worship services, still getting the opportunity to share about what the gifts shared with us are doing in the lives of young adults through the ministry of the Wesley House. Our ministry looks different than it did even two years ago, but it is still witnessing to the life-changing power of the Holy Spirit to show up with us and within us. We give thanks daily for the faithful people and churches who pray over, believe in, cheer for, and invest deeply in the gifts, talents, faith, and futures of young adults. We are forging the path by continuing to walk forward instead of looking back, come with us.

We can’t wait to see what God will do next!

Kim Bos, Campus Pastor and Program Director

UNITED CAMPUS CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP WEST MICHIGAN

(formerly Wesley Fellowship at GVSU)

Every year has its ups and downs, its mourning and dancing, and 2021 was no exception.

As we began 2021, all three campuses we serve (Grand Valley State University, Grand Rapids Community College, and Kendall College of Art and Design) remained virtual only. Because all their classes were online, students had a high level of “zoom fatigue”. Recognizing this we shifted our method of engagement with students. We checked in individually with our students by phone calls and emails. Our online presence focused on offering support and encouragement. Our Bible study was a weekly series of YouTube videos for students to watch whenever they were able.

For Lent we mailed hand-written cards and small devotional items to every student for whom we had a physical address. We also sent the book, “40 Days with Howard Thurman” to interested students and offered online times for discussion.

We continued to offer a free anti racism book to interested students.

In December we were able to provide finals snack bags to students on all campuses. Local congregations provided the snacks. Rising COVID numbers precluded us distributing the snack bags in person, but we were able to work with the library staff at GVSU and GRCC to have the bags made available to students.

All three campuses returned to some level of in person learning in the fall of 2021. However, life on campus was changed. Many students continued to be online only. About 60% of GRCC students remained virtual only. Across campuses, if they were on campus, students went to class and then went home. There was very little on campus socializing. Student Affairs administrators on all three campuses spoke with us about their concerns surrounding widespread decreased student engagement.

In August we held a service of blessing with our partner denominations on all three campuses. We continued to provide a mixture of in person and online opportunities for study and fellowship.

The Listening Post was able to resume weekly at GRCC. We held drop-in connection times for one-on-one conversations on all three campuses.

During Advent we sent all the students for whom we had a physical address a card and a devotional booklet. We recorded and posted an Advent worship service on YouTube.

In April during finals, we hosted Gingerbread cookies/houses making events at GRCC and Kendall. Finals Snack bags happened again thanks to our congregational partners. We were able to distribute the bags in person this semester.

Participation in interfaith work continues to be important. We collaborated with our Jewish and Muslim colleagues at GVSU for greater interfaith access and opportunities. At GRCC we continued to work with the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion to plan interfaith learning opportunities for students.

We remain the only LGBTQ affirming and supporting campus ministry on each of our campuses.

We also continued our progress in becoming a multi campus, multi denominational campus ministry, United Campus Christian Fellowship. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America joined with the Presbyterian Church USA and the United Methodist Church as our founding denominational supporters. As a result, Pastor Kate Van Valkenburg joined UCCF as a halftime campus minister. The former halftime Wesley director, Nancy Janisch was able to become a full time UCCF employee. A governing board for UCCF was created and a Constitution and Bylaws were written and adopted. We are a State of Michigan non-profit and have filed for federal 501 (c)(3) status. We were able to work with a class of Kendall College of Art and Design students who created our new logo.

While the pandemic and its ongoing social, emotional, and economic impacts continues to require practical adjustments to ministry, our calling to be with students, to offer safe places to explore their faith, and to be trustworthy companions during their college careers is more crucial than ever. We appreciate the steadfast support of the Michigan Conference and its congregations and individuals.

Nancy Janisch, Director

WESLEY FOUNDATION OF KALAMAZOO

This year has been full of new growth and challenges. Things were not back up to “full swing” as we have learned to live with COVID, and we have certainly been able to do both some structural work with the ministry and also be creative regarding how we connect with college aged young adults in Kalamazoo.

Mourning into Dancing

The one thing we would lift up to mourn and grieve is the loss of human presence and connection. In campus ministry that is vital. It has been hard to figure out how to be virtual, how to be safe spaced, etc. We join the rest of the country and world in mourning “what could have been,” all while knowing our safety was paramount and we had a call and responsibility as Christ followers, and Methodists to “do no harm.” With that said, we have much to celebrate. We continue to partner with local community and campus organizations to meet ongoing needs of the students and community. We held once monthly worship gatherings with 100+ masked people ready to praise God and simply be together, we had weekly small group, we had retreats, grew our community garden. These all might seem like basic programming, but they weren’t even possible in 2020. Wesley of Kalamazoo was a spiritual home for young adults- even if it was over Zoom or FaceTime.

Three Highlights

The Village – This year we launched a twice weekly after school arts program that exposes 3rd-8th grade students from Tree of Life school on the northside of Kalamazoo to all sorts of different art expressions tied to WMU’s campus. Each week the students are led by a WMU music student in a lesson, or a local arts organization in poetry, an art student in chalk murals, etc. It’s been a life giving intergenerational ministry.

WILC – Our Wesley Intentional Living Community- during the pandemic, many Intentional Living communities had to break apart. Today we can celebrate the 9 young adults spanning in age, race, country of origin, that have agreed to “do life together.” Led by our incredible United Methodist Global Mission Fellow Cenaya Ward Johns, they are the stewards of our community garden, have prioritized each other’s safety during the pandemic, and have been an example on campus for a Christ-like witness of living and loving one another.

The Pursuit Gathering – This is our once monthly worship experience. It’s hard to relaunch weekly worship in a campus setting after such a big break, so we decided to take a step back, both for safety and to launch a vibrant community. Rev. Jeremy Simpson led once monthly worship, open to any in our community wanting vibrant contemporary worship and progressive theology. Paired with our weekly small groups, we have seen our community grow as a result of this worship expression.

Jess Davenport and Jeremy Simpson, Co-Pastors

WESLEY at MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY (MSU)

“Mourning to Dancing” is an interesting theme when applied to the work we’ve been doing at the Wesley Foundation at MSU. The COVID-19 health crisis hit MSU hard, and even though they launched in person last semester, they had to shut down the campus at the beginning of this semester. However, the students remained enthusiastically engaged with the activities of Wesley, and we managed to see some growth in numbers even during the shutdown. Love and support have carried us through our isolation and uncertainty, and we celebrate all that God has done during this time.

We’ve accomplished quite a bit in 2021. First, we had an extremely successful in person launch at MSU, specifically at the resource fair where we had a record number of students sign up for the Wesley email list. Second, we managed to fight for funding enough that we were able to post positive numbers at the beginning of 2022. Finally, the restructuring and broad reidentification of Wesley at MSU has continued to pay off as we’ve had several non-Methodist students make Wesley their home ministry groups, and others attending our non-ministry events.

As this year was in essence a complete relaunch of the Wesley Foundation after COVID, the extent to which we have impacted the wider Methodist denomination is still developing, however we’re confident that our ministry will continue to advocate for Methodist values at Michigan State University.

James Magee, Director / Campus Minister

MOTOR CITY WESLEY

Motor City Wesley mourned and danced alongside students and young adults in 2021 as we wound our way through campus ministry in continued pandemic times. At the beginning of the year, we provided weekly Sunday “Evenings” video devotionals focused on faith, justice and equity. Because of our #40DaysOfEvenings in Lent, we actually saw record numbers of participants compared to previous years, even though we were remote. Through the Spring we continued to conspire remotely on \$100 student projects designed to bring about God’s goodness in the lives of our neighbors and communities. But we missed being together in person very much. By Fall, campuses had re-opened and we wanted to celebrate. With food truck partners we gave away over 1,000 tacos to students while getting to know them and the

ways they wanted to heal the world. The resilience of students in the face of the pandemic, school shootings and more was an amazing example of dancing despite mourning.

In just one example of Motor City Wesley amplifying student resilience for the benefit of the whole church, we launched a new resource in 2021 to support local churches with young adult groups. Our “Motor City Meetups” were weekly bible discussion guides available for download and use by our on-campus small groups and any gathering of young adults connected with our local churches. We look forward to creating more of these resources for the edification of all.

Motor City Wesley now celebrates our 13th year of reclaiming and rebuilding United Methodist campus ministry for Metro Detroit campuses and churches. We celebrate \$28,000 worth of impact in the world from student-designed mission and discipleship projects. And we take great joy in the 2000 students and friends who have made all this possible.

To celebrate with us, know more about these amazing students, and to become a partner of Motor City Wesley please visit motorcitywesley.org.

Carl Gladstone, Director

NORTHERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY WESLEY (aka NMU Wesley)

Greetings from the shores of Lake Superior! NMU Wesley has had another interesting year in 2021 as we continued to navigate the pandemic. At the start of 2021, we lost all new student contacts as many students choose not to return in person or at all as a student due to the stressful and less than ideal learning environment that COVID had imposed. Mental health concerns were at an all-time high as students struggled to find their way through some of the darkest days of COVID. We, however, did our best to stay nimble with our offerings for the campus ministry community as we shifted back and forth between online and in-person as was safe.

Because Northern Michigan University eliminated spring break in 2021, we skipped our annual spring break service trip and opted for a day of volunteering at Fortune Lake Lutheran Camp in early May. We also were able to celebrate all our recent graduates through a small reunion of alumni and graduating seniors. However, this was a moment of mourning as well as the NMU Wesley community had naturally dwindled due to graduation and COVID impacts to community growth. We were facing the 2021-2022 academic year with a very small returning crew of students and no real end to COVID which has restricted safe natural community growth. Thankfully, the increase in vaccinations throughout the summer helped us kick off the fall 2021 semester in great shape. There was an immediate response from the students that they were interested in coming together and finding community. We have had a surge in participation, and exciting new partnerships with fellow ministry leaders has led to a plethora of meaningful offerings each week for students to engage in.

Some of our regular events are Sunday night dinners and devotions which provide the time and space for delicious fellowship and meaningful conversations. RealTalk on Thursdays are all about checking in and connecting our faith to scripture alongside a tasty meal. Time with Bob allows students the opportunity to learn from Bob Goff as we hold story time followed by discussion on topic of the day. No BS Bible Study is a unique Bible study that is meant to remove limits and allow for radical and renegade ways of approaching the Bible and its passages. Scones with Marna are another opportunity to talk about life and faith and enjoy fresh scones.

Three highlights from 2021 that cause us to dance are: Our student leader, Val Gage, began Theology on Tap where we gather at a local brewery to discuss various topics and theology. The space is one that welcomes all and allows for profound discussions to be had, growing our connections to each other and our faith. We have also begun collaborating consistently with the Lutheran Campus Ministry at Northern Michigan University and with the Episcopal Diocese of the UP. And we recently went on a restorative winter retreat for young adults across the UP creating new connections with fellow young adults and young adult leaders.

One of the ways in which NMU Wesley has impacted the NMU student body and surrounding community is through our support of all people. We have become a haven for LGBTQIA students seeking refuge to be who they are and live out their faith as Christians. We also hosted the CROP Walk again this fall alongside the Presbyterians, using CommonGrounds as our central hub to offer hospitality before and after. CommonGrounds coffee house is our extension ministry in partnership with the Lutheran Campus Ministry where we offer a space to hang out, study, and relax with free coffee, free wi-fi, free snacks and occasionally free pups to love on.

This spring we are looking forward to serving over our spring break through the Appalachia Service Project in Jonesville, VA. We will spend five days' work on making two homes warmer, safer, drier while also learning about what life is like in the Appalachian Mountains region.

NMU Wesley's motto is Love Everyone and we seek to embody this through intentional expansive community that allows young adults to explore and live out their faith in everyday actions and words. We are grateful for the support of DHECM, Marquette Hope, and individual donors that allow NMU Wesley to thrive.

If you have a young adult who is considering attending NMU or is already attending NMU, we would love to get connected with them and welcome them to the NMU Wesley community. Reach out to Erica Thomas, NMU Wesley Campus Ministry Director at wesley@mqthope.com or 805-710-4752 or head to www.mqthope.com/NMUWesley

Erica Thomas, Campus Ministry Director

WESLEY FOUNDATION AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Greetings to you from your Wesley Foundation at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor! As for all of us, 2021 has been a challenging year of ministry in a time of ongoing pandemic. It has continued to be a time of constant pivoting and redesigning ministry for in-person, hybrid, and online presence as COVID-19 protocols require. We mourn the ability to be more fully with one another in-person. This time has taught us, though, the vital importance of community and our connection with one another in whatever ways we can.

In all the challenges of the year, we continue to seek to be a spiritual home by providing a welcoming and nurturing environment on the university campus and in the digital world. Through worship, fellowship, study, and service we seek to build an open and diverse Christian community.

Our weekly programs include worship, Bible studies, small group studies, and virtual or socially distanced service opportunities and fellowship. We celebrate that we have the technology and facilities available to us to meet the needs of students in our community as well as those engaging from a distance. Indeed, the world is our parish!

We continue to forge partnerships with area local churches to help meet the growing needs of our community. Through student interns, service projects, collaborative study opportunities, worship experiences, and social justice efforts, our students and local church leaders have had the opportunity to learn from one another and to combine our resources for effective ministry.

We are focused on ways to help students discern God's call in their life. We seek to help students to better understand their gifts and graces and how to implement them in faithful ways in their communities. Through service learning, reflection, internships, and mission events, the students in our community can better discern who they are designed to be and what God is calling them to do.

Our students have planned virtual mission and service opportunities and exploring ways to become active volunteers in our community. We have worked with Clean Water for the World, Detroit Hives, Motown Mission, and other agencies to help care for our community and world. While we were unable to have an in-person spring break service trip in 2021, we held a virtual 5K Run/Walk for Water Justice to raise funds for water justice efforts in our community, state, and world. We have also partnered with the Maize & Blue Cupboard on campus to help combat food insecurity and university housing to provide care packages for students having to isolate in quarantine housing.

I am excited to see the many ways that God is working in the lives of these young people and look forward to seeing them help proclaim the nearness of the realm of God. Let us continue to lift them up in prayer, and strive to work together to support them as they seek out their calling in life and faith. We thank you for your prayerful support!

Tim Kobler, Director/Chaplain

THEOLOGICAL SCHOOLS

**BOSTON UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY** – Boston, Massachusetts – www.bu.edu/sth/

I am profoundly grateful for your partnership, prayers, and support in these challenging times. A year like 2021 makes BUSTH's historic and ongoing commitments to peace, justice, prophetic witness, and compassionate hospitality – particularly in the work of cultivating transformational leaders – even more relevant. We remain hopeful and vigilant in our continued partnership with you.

What is STH's celebrating from 2021?

- **Return to Campus:** BUSTH celebrates a return to campus and in-person teaching and work this past Fall 2021. We are thankful for BU's COVID-19 precautions and regular testing that help ensure the safety of students, faculty, and administrators.
- **New Associate Dean:** In September we celebrated the appointment of Cristian De La Rosa as Associate Dean for Students and Community Life.
- **Faculty Achievements:** Prof. Shelly Rambo leads the Lilly-funded project on "Trauma-Responsive Congregations," and two faculty members – Profs. Dana Robert and Wesley Wildman – were each honored with festschrifts. Prof. Jonathan Calvillo's book *The Saints of Santa Ana* received the HTI Book Award, and Prof. Choi Hee An published *A Postcolonial Leadership*. BUSTH is conducting two faculty searches with anticipation of welcoming new faculty in fall 2022.

What are some current challenges STH is facing?

- While our Fall 2021 entering class was among the most diverse (with 108 new students enrolling in September), visa challenges notably reduced our international student population.

How did STH impact Michigan United Methodists and/or Michigan local churches and communities or around the world?

- BUSTH is proud of our alumni serving as pastors and officers of the Michigan Annual Conference. There are over 85 Michigan STH alumni and at least twelve current STH alumni who are pastoring in the Michigan area (with at least four others now retired), among whom include Rev. Joy Barrett (STH '83) who serves as the conference secretary and Rev. George Covintree (STH '89) who serves as the justice chairperson.
- BUSTH offers online workshops and groups for professional and spiritual enrichment of religious leaders through our Online Lifelong Learning Programs. Recent workshops include "Practices of Grief in a Time of Pandemic" and "The Spirituality of Howard Thurman." We encourage you to learn about and participate in our upcoming workshops. To learn more please visit bu.edu/sth/oll.

What were STH's three major accomplishments in 2021?

- **Launch of a New Online Degree:** BUSTH's first fully online master's degree – the Master of Religion and Public Leadership (MARPL) – is currently enrolling students for its first cohort in fall 2022. The program seeks students who wish to be prepared for leadership roles that creatively engage the challenges of public life.
- **Peale Foundation Grant:** Prof. Steven Sandage and his research team were awarded a \$2.19 million, five-year grant by the Norman Vincent Peale Foundation for a project that fosters a network of communities for relational care and support to spiritual leaders and therapists to offer resources to reduce trauma risk and vocational burnout and foster flourishing.
- **CGCM Endowment:** Upon its 20th anniversary, the Center for Global Christianity and Mission raised funds to secure its endowment.
- **Scholarships:** Development has raised new funding for student scholarships and academic programs, including the **Sacred Worth Scholarship Fund**, the **Dean Thurman & Bishop Easterling Fellowship Fund**, and the **Affirmation and Empowerment Fund sponsored by the STH Class of 2021**. We continue to offer free tuition to UMC-registered candidates for ordained ministry, as well as leadership fellowships supporting students in ethnic, gender, and sexuality studies.

Thank you for your prayers and continued partnership!

G. Sujin Pak, Dean



EMORY

CANDLER
SCHOOL OF
THEOLOGY**CANDLER SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY** – Atlanta, Georgia – www.candler.emory.edu

Since 1914, Candler School of Theology at Emory University has lived into our mission, educating faithful and creative leaders for the church's ministries throughout the world. This year, as we leaned into this critical work and continued to adapt to a world changed by the coronavirus pandemic, we imagined new possibilities for students who are called by God to pursue serious theological study and preparation for ministry. For some, opening avenues to graduate theological education requires moving financial obstacles, and for others, geography or family responsibilities may be the barriers. Candler is committed to assisting students in removing these barriers and opening new pathways to ministry.

An official seminary of The United Methodist Church, Candler holds true to the Methodist value of ecumenical openness, enthusiastically welcoming students from 43 denominations, with 45% of MDiv students coming from the Wesleyan tradition. Our student body reflects the diversity and breadth of the Christian faithful, with an enrollment of 466 from 16 countries and 38 states, 45% persons of color (U.S.), and a median age of 28 among MDivs. This diversity is a blessing, enriching our students and our larger community and providing a "learning laboratory" for ministry in the 21st century – ministry that reaches across difference, works to resolve injustice, and embodies Christ's love in and among us.

Candler offers six single degrees (MDiv, MTS, MRL, MRPL, ThM, DMin) and ten dual degrees. Our DMin is 90% online, so students can remain in their places of ministry while earning their degrees. Its high 87% completion rate illustrates both the quality of our students and Candler's commitment to their success. This year, we increased online offerings in other degrees as well. Now students can complete the Master of Religion and Public Life completely online; the Master of Religious Leadership with concentrations in Youth Ministry, Justice, Peacebuilding and Conflict Transformation, or Wesleyan Leadership and Heritage in a hybrid format; and MDiv students can complete core classes online. Plus, our new Remote Teaching Parish (RTP) program allows MDiv students who have jobs in ecclesial settings far from our Atlanta campus to take core classes online and complete their contextual education requirements at their place of ministry, participating in mentor-led online groups with other RTP students.

Alleviating student debt through generous financial aid is a top priority. In 2020-2021, we awarded more than \$6.8 million in financial aid, with 100% of MDiv and 98.5% of all students receiving support. All MDiv students who are certified candidates for ordained ministry in the UMC receive full-tuition scholarships, and all MDiv, MTS, MRL, and ThM students who are enrolled part-time or more receive a scholarship covering at least 50% of tuition for the length of their program.

Hundreds of laity and theology students alike have joined in classes and events offered through The Candler Foundry, our innovative program to make theological education accessible to all. Through short and semester-length courses taught by Candler faculty, videos and discussion guides to spark conversation in groups or one-on-one, and online panel discussions, those who want to delve more deeply into theology and the Bible have the chance to do just that. View the latest offerings at candlerfoundry.emory.edu.

Associate Dean of Methodist Studies the Rev. Dr. Anne Burkholder will retire from Candler at the end of the 2021-22 academic year. We are grateful to God for her energetic and skillful leadership in this vital area as she strengthened the connection between our students and conferences throughout the UMC, mentoring them as they discerned their call and navigated the ordination process.

Candler's ability to fulfill our mission to provide the church with the faithful and creative leaders it needs depends upon your prayers, partnership, and support. Thank you for the countless ways you advance this essential ministry in the life of our denomination. We invite you to visit us online at candler.emory.edu.

Jan Love, Mary Lee Hardin Willard Dean and Professor of Christianity and World Politics

DREW

DREW UNIVERSITY THEOLOGICAL SCHOOL – Madison, New Jersey – www.drew.edu

In spring and fall of 2021, Drew Theological School began returning to its Madison, New Jersey, campus for some classes, meetings, and worship. As with many churches, in person events were held in spaces equipped for live-streaming or Zoom participation. The shift to remote learning during COVID-19 pandemic thus significantly expanded our online course offerings and accessible community events. Now, a number of students in Drew's masters programs will progress through their programs in U.S. and global locations far from New Jersey. This year, we welcomed 150 new students, again the largest class in a decade, and have a current enrollment of 376 students.

Drew cultivates pastors, preachers, deacons, activists, teachers, and thought leaders who are taking their place as the next generation of faith leaders and change agents. Diversity is a hallmark of our student body, including theological, vocational, age, and especially racial and national diversity both international – Asian, African, and South American and U.S. – black, white, Latinx, and Asian American – students. Our student body is truly global, with 35% of students from 21 different countries. For the first time in its history, Drew has an African student association, initiated by Drew Theological School students from 14 African countries, that is already contributing richly to the Drew community both on campus and online. We have welcomed new faculty in Latinx ministries and world Christianity. We have also seen an increase in United Methodist students particularly interested in the school's Gospel-inspired traditions of social justice advocacy and widely inclusive ministry. We are proud that many United Methodist Global Fellows have recently chosen to continue their journey in ministry at Drew. Our UMC graduates are serving in Greater New Jersey, Eastern Pennsylvania, and New York conferences as well as conferences across the country.

The faculty is committed to continuing to develop the curriculum in ways that take seriously the wide range of lived experience and calls to ministry of the students that gather in our global classrooms. All degree programs at the Theological School include interdisciplinary courses that demand out-of-the-box thinking, apprenticeship training that addresses real-world issues, and modes of learning that promote adaptability and innovation. Our MDiv and MATM degrees include a required gateway year, vocational pathways, and experiential learning that develops and deepens adaptive leadership skills. The curriculum features a team-designed and taught interdisciplinary sequence of core courses reflecting the integration of the theological disciplines and practices characteristic of the life of faith. The faculty have also articulated shared values that are infused across the teaching and learning at Drew: a commitment to anti-racism; gender and sexual-identity equality; eco-sustainability and environmental justice; and interfaith understanding and cooperation.

Melanie Johnson-DeBaufre, Interim Dean



DUKE DIVINITY SCHOOL – Durham, North Carolina – www.divinity.duke.edu

Edgardo Colón-Emeric, the Irene and William McCutchen Associate Professor of Theology and Reconciliation and director of the Center for Reconciliation, began his two-year term as the dean of Duke Divinity School on July 1. Colón-Emeric earned both his M.Div. and Ph.D. from Duke and has been a member of the faculty since 2008. He has served as the director for the Hispanic House of Studies and as the director for the Center for Reconciliation (CFR). Under his leadership, CFR expanded its capacities, partnerships, and areas of engagement, including convening the Americas Initiative. He also sought to strengthen connections between Duke Divinity and local Hispanic-Latino/a ministers and churches, often in partnership with The Duke Endowment's support for rural congregations and pastors in North Carolina. An ordained elder in the North Carolina Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church, he directs the Central American Methodist Course of Study and the Peru Theological Initiative and serves on the United Methodist Committee on Faith and Order and on both national and international Methodist-Catholic

dialogues. Recognizing that he is entering the dean's office at a pivotal time for the school, Colón-Emeric stated his commitment to keep the Divinity School heading in a life-giving direction: "The world needs the church, and the church needs the theologically grounded, intellectually vibrant, and socially innovative pastors and leaders that we train. From the heart of Duke University, we cultivate wisdom that is joyfully orthodox, Christ-centered, Spirit-led, and irrevocably anti-racist for the sake of the church in its mission for the life of the world." He is the first Latino dean of the school.

This year the school launched several new programs to provide support for current and future students. A new partnership with North Carolina Wesleyan College will enable qualified undergraduates to take master's level courses at Duke Divinity School beginning in 2022. The Duke Accelerated Pastoral Formation Program offers select juniors and seniors the option to begin coursework toward Duke's Hybrid M.Div. or Master of Arts in Christian Practice (M.A.) degree programs while completing their baccalaureate degree. Funded by the support of the Kern Family Foundation, the Accelerated Program will help students lower educational debt incurred in the preparation for ministry process and accelerate their timeline to engaging the field of ministry. In the spring the school launched the Asian House of Studies, a formational community that will support Asian and Asian-American students; build a network of Asian and Asian-American students, alumni, and church leaders; and provide resources for Asian theological studies. Asian House of Studies is under the leadership of Sangwoo Kim, a consulting professor and senior director of the Methodist House of Studies, and Jung Choi, a consulting professor and senior director of Wesleyan Formation Initiatives.

Three new certificates were approved this year, and all can be earned as part of the residential M.Div., Hybrid M.Div., M.T.S., and M.A. degree programs. The Certificate in Methodist/Wesleyan Studies is aimed at pan-Methodist/Wesleyan students who want to engage in robust and intentional training in Wesleyan theology and spiritual practice in preparation for leadership positions in Methodist and Wesleyan organizations and churches, such as the United Methodist Church, AME Church, AME Zion Church, and Korean Methodist Church. In the Certificate in Latinx Studies, students will practice and hone skills for ministry while becoming part of a learning community that is committed to Hispanic/Latinx communities and seeks to learn from Hispanic/Latinx traditions and cultures. The Certificate in Worship is designed to prepare Duke Divinity students to engage in practical formation and theoretical reflection on the worship of God in Christian congregations. The new certificate is one of several measures being introduced by the school in response to listening sessions on racial justice and cultural competency that revealed a desire and need for both formation and expression that would welcome, support, enhance, and celebrate worship from diverse racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds.

In January, the school announced 12 full-tuition fellowships to support incoming residential Master of Divinity degree program students who pursue a certificate in Black Church Studies or Latinx Studies. In addition to providing full-tuition scholarships, the Black Church Studies and Latinx Studies Fellowships provide vocationally specific formation and mentoring opportunities for the fellows and up to \$24,000 in stipend support and internship opportunities through the Office of Field Education. The fellowships begin in the fall of 2022.

The Office of Wesleyan Engagement announced the "Rediscovering the Heart of Methodism" project. This project is a missional initiative of the Divinity School with the support of the Kern Family Foundation. It seeks to nurture innovative leadership within the Wesleyan tradition as a constructive and hope-filled response to a turbulent ecclesial landscape.

Supported by a gift from the Duke Endowment, the school launched To Heal the Wounded Soul, a project to strengthen Wesleyan pastors in the Carolinas who are Black, Indigenous, or people of color, including from the AME, AME Zion, CME, and UMC churches. Led by the Office of Black Church Studies and the Clergy Health Initiative To Heal the Wounded Soul will develop peer networks, support groups, and retreats to address the specific mental, emotional, and spiritual needs of this community.

This academic year Duke Divinity School welcomed the largest incoming class in the school's history, with 259 new students from 31 different states and five other countries – India, Zimbabwe, Colombia, Mexico, and South Korea. Enrollment in the flagship M.Div. degree program jumped to 133 students, up from approximately 110 students during each of the previous four years. The growth was heavily driven by the first cohort of 52 Hybrid M.Div. students. There were 27 denominations represented in the M.Div. entering class, with 38 percent affiliated with the United Methodist Church (up from 30 percent in 2020). Anglican-Episcopal students made up 13 percent of the new M.Div. students (up from nine percent the prior year); non-denominational students, 11 percent; and Baptists, 10 percent. The Doctor of Ministry (D.Min.) welcomed 36 students, the Master of Theological Studies (M.T.S.) gained 33, and the M.A. saw 17 new students. The Master of Theology (Th.M.) enrolled 12 students, and the Doctor of Theology (Th.D.) enrolled

seven new students. The Certificate in Theology and Health Care welcomed five residential students to campus and a large first cohort of 14 students in the hybrid version of the program. Across all degree programs at the Divinity School, 32 percent of the incoming class identified as a race or ethnicity other than white. Black students made up 18 percent of all students; Latinx students, six percent; Asian students, two percent; and American Indian students, two percent. Women made up 47 percent of incoming students across all programs.

Three new faculty members, with expertise ranging from the Reformation era in the history of Christianity, to Methodist and Lutheran studies, to Latinx theology, joined the faculty in 2021. Polly Ha is an Associate Professor of the History of Christianity whose work focuses on the history of Christianity and the construction of diverse confessional and ecclesiastical traditions in the Reformation and post-Reformation world. Ronald K. Rittgers is the Duke Divinity School Chair in Lutheran Studies and Professor of the History of Christianity, and his research interests include the religious, intellectual, social, and cultural history of medieval and early modern/Reformation Europe, focusing especially on the history of theology and devotion. Daniel Castelo, William Kellon Quick Professor of Theology and Methodist Studies, taught intensive Wesleyan theology courses in Mexico, Honduras, and Brazil, and then took a teaching post at a Mexican seminary for three years. He has been an active participant in the Central American Methodist Course of Study program and recently has served as a doctoral mentor for the Hispanic Theological Initiative.

We remain deeply grateful for the relationships among The United Methodist Church, this Annual Conference, and Duke Divinity School. We look forward to working with you in the task of preparing men and women for Christian ministry. To learn more about Duke Divinity School, please visit our website at www.divinity.duke.edu.

Edgardo Colón-Emeric, Dean of Duke Divinity School



METHODIST THEOLOGICAL SCHOOL IN OHIO – Delaware, Ohio – www.mtso.edu

Thank you for this opportunity to bring you news from MTSO.

With \$1 million grant, MTSO supports existing religious leaders and helps form new ones

MTSO has received a five-year grant of \$999,665 to establish “Connecting Pathways: A Multi-Faceted Approach to Strengthen and Sustain Current and Future Faith Leaders.” The project is being funded through Lilly Endowment Inc.’s Pathways for Tomorrow Initiative.

The project utilizes MTSO’s distinct strengths in two distinct parts. Part One, “Connecting Pathways: Congregations and Other Ministry Partners,” supports existing religious leaders, focusing on anti-racism training and resourcing. Working with partner organizations, MTSO helps faith leaders to assess land use and church food programs to assist in building community engagement. Part Two, “Connecting Pathways: Vocational Exploration Intensive for Young Adults,” invites young adults to imagine the possibilities for lifelong faith, offering experiential learning, theological reflection, worship, and relationships with healthy community leaders and vibrant faith communities. It introduces the whys and hows of ministry, connecting participants with faith leaders, including some of those involved in Part One of the project.

New initiative enhances scientific literacy for seminarians

MTSO has a longstanding commitment to preparing religious leaders who are conversant in and respectful of science. An important part of that effort is “Questioning Science with Good Faith: Shifting the Engagement of Science in Seminaries,” a project that integrates science into church history and theological studies curricula while also contributing to the public discourse on intersection of science and religion. The project is made possible by a \$75,000 grant from the American Association for the Advancement of Science Dialogue on Science, Ethics, and Religion program. The grant is funded by the John Templeton Foundation. In September 2021, MTSO offered an online, multi-professional conversation, “Pastors, Pandemics and Public Health: Building Collaborative Responses to COVID-19.”

Full-tuition scholarships extended to those pursuing United Methodist candidacy

MTSO and the school's donors pledged to extend a full-tuition pledge to all prospective students who are pursuing United Methodist elder or deacon candidacy. The MTSO admissions staff is happy to answer questions about this initiative at 800-333-6876 or admissions@mtso.edu.

Danny Russell, Director of Communications



SAINT PAUL SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY – Leawood, Kansas / Oklahoma City, OK – www.spst.edu

Educating tomorrow's leaders by offering on-campus, online, and hybrid learning courses at a FLEXible schedule, Saint Paul School of Theology is a seminary of the United Methodist Church committed to the formation of people for innovative, creative ministry. Grounded in the academic study of faith and ministry, theology is practiced in a traditional classroom and a contextual curriculum.

As the global pandemic continues to bring challenges to our daily lives, Saint Paul School of Theology began the 2021-2022 academic year, again offering students an option to attend courses via Zoom or on-campus while maintaining safety protocols. Our weekly chapel service continues to be available online, allowing staff and students to come together as one institution where all are invited to create a sacred atmosphere from wherever they are. In addition to faculty and staff serving as chapel speakers, we were blessed to have alumni and special guest speakers Rev. Winter Hamilton of Manchester UMC, Rev. Delesslyn Kennebrew, Rev. Dr. Carol Cook Moore, and more. Chapel recordings are available on the Saint Paul YouTube channel for those who cannot join live.

Saint Paul staff and faculty continue to contribute to the academy, church, and society. This year, we have had many faculty and staff changes. After many years of tremendous service to students and the Seminary, Dr. James Brandt and Dr. Hal Knight announced retirement plans effective at the end of the 2021-2022 academic year. In addition, Dr. Jeanne Hoeft will step down from her role as Vice President of Academic Affairs and Dean at the end of the academic year but will continue as faculty. New additions to the Seminary family include Dr. Joshua Bartholomew, Assistant Professor of Ethics, Church and Society; Dr. Tiffany Nagel Monroe, Executive Director of the Oklahoma Campus; and Rabbi Michael Zedek, Rabbi-in-Residence.

The faculty of Saint Paul School of Theology maintains high standards of scholarship, research, publication, and engagement. Over the past year, their many activities and publications have been so numerous that space permits only the sharing of selected highlights.

- Dr. Nancy Howell, Professor of Theology and Philosophy of Religion and Oubri A. Poppele Professor of Health and Welfare Ministries, was re-elected to a second term on the Executive Committee of the International Society for Science and Religion. She also had an article published in a South African journal. With more than a decade of service, she serves on the Broader Social Impacts Committee of the National Museum of Natural History at the Smithsonian.
- Dr. Casey Sigmon, Assistant Professor of Preaching and Worship and Director of Contextual Education, was invited to be a writer for "Lent Another Way," an e-course, with The Plural Guild and The Many, and she offered the convocation address for Colgate Rochester Crozer Divinity School in Fall 2021. She also applied for and received a grant from the Wabash Center for Teaching to support my project entitled: "Resisting the Plagiarized Pulpit: Helping Students and the Professor to Find trust their voice through Artistic Instructional Design."
- This January, Dr. Joshua Bartholomew, Assistant Professor of Ethics, Church and Society, was the guest speaker at a Kansas City event, "Black Theology and the Black Panthers: A Conversation with Dr. Joshua Bartholomew." In addition, he was recently interviewed by Climate Central for the article "A moral imperative: Monastic sisters in rural Midwest make faith-based case for climate action."

Saint Paul welcomed 45 new students for the 2021-2022 academic year. New student enrollment for the Fall semester increased by 44% (34 new students), with an overall increase for the year of 73%. With the COVID-19 pandemic still in our midst, prospective students previewed the Saint Paul community and curriculum via online visits. Students joined in community worship, attended classes, and participated in online discussions with current students to discern if Saint Paul was indeed their choice for theological

education. Enrollment remained strong for the Master of Divinity (MDiv) degree program with promising growth in our newly designed Master of Arts in Theological Studies (MATS) and Master of Arts in Christian Ministry (MACM) programs.

In September, Saint Paul held the 2021 Harrington Lecture online featuring Dr. Eboo Patel. His lecture, "We Need to Build: Field Notes for Diverse Democracy," expanded knowledge and built skills, helping people become the kind of leaders our diverse democracy needs. In the Spring Semester, Saint Paul Evangelical Society, led by Dr. Hal Knight, hosted a forum given by Dr. Amos Yong, Professor of Theology and Mission, and Dean of the School of Mission and Theology at Fuller Theological Seminary, on "The Holy Spirit and People of other Faiths: Relational Christian Witness in the 2020s." Later in the semester, the Evangelical Society hosted a lecture featuring Dr. Joy Moore, Professor of Biblical Preaching and Vice-President for Academic Affairs and Academic Dean at Luther Seminary. And for the first time, on May 13, Saint Paul held a hybrid commencement celebration via Zoom, allowing graduates to come together from both the Kansas and Oklahoma Campuses with attendees viewing from around the country. We honored the 2022 Distinguished Graduate Award Winner and Commencement Speaker Dr. Stan Copeland during the ceremony.

For the 2021-2022 fiscal year, Saint Paul Course of Study (COS) School educated 228 individual students, 49 of which were new students, with approximately 550 registrations and offering a total of 50 courses. Serving 32 Conferences, including 94 Districts, 121 Full Time and 106 Part-Time Licensed Local Pastors comprised these registrations. Saint Paul Course of Study School welcomed new Regional Director Dr. Lucas Endicott. Dr. Endicott has been serving as Associate Director for the Office of Mission, Service, and Justice at the Missouri Annual Conference and lecturing at Central Methodist University. Due to the continuing pandemic, the school has continued its course offerings in both asynchronous and synchronous online formats. Utilizing this online format, we reached students in 24 states. Plans include an increase in the number of hybrid course offerings. This fiscal year has also ushered in the new ability of online registration completed by the student and access to their student account through Populi as used by Seminary students. All our students share the same benefits by integrating Course of Study School into Populi, making them a more integrated part of the Saint Paul experience.

Saint Paul Board of Trustees added two new members to their ranks: Ms. Debra "Debbie" Buzard, Director of Outreach Ministry at First United Methodist Church of Kearney; and Rev. Martin "Tino" Herrera, Congregational Care Pastor at UM Church of the Resurrection. Through a Board initiative related to diversity and inclusion, the Saint Paul Board of Trustees has devoted a significant portion of the last year's meetings to church leaders with experience and expertise in creating more diverse and inclusive communities and organizations. Aiding Saint Paul's trustees in better understanding these issues, the Board hosted the Rev. Dr. Benjamin Boswell in April 2021. Dr. Boswell, Senior Pastor of Myers Park Baptist Church in Charlotte, North Carolina, described the anti-racism work he has led in that community. The City of Charlotte awarded Dr. Boswell its Martin Luther King, Jr. Medallion for his work. In July 2021, Congressman Emanuel Cleaver II of Kansas City shared his perspective on the racial and social justice issues confronting our nation and the efforts he and his colleagues in the House of Representatives hope to undertake in response. With the Board's assistance, led by Board Chair Rev. Dr. Tex Sample, the seminary focuses on its mission. Our trustees continuously enhance and evaluate the strategic plans to guide us into the future.

As we have happily reported in years past, Saint Paul is financially sound and operates with a balanced budget. These last years' changes have established a solid financial foundation for years of sustainability. As always, we continue to be grateful for donations from the community that provide technology, scholarships, and evolving academic programs to students. Our significant investments in technology have allowed us to maintain a hybrid educational delivery model providing a safe learning environment during the continuing pandemic.

Our aim has always been to utilize technology as a conduit to bring faculty and students together regardless of whether they are on-campus or joining remotely through Zoom. We took a hard look at the distance learning landscape during the pandemic to see how we could substantially enhance the classroom experience. After significant testing, we opted to replace our distance-learning classroom technology with Neat's offerings, including technology still in development. All our classrooms began upgrades in Fall 2021 with offerings from Neat. Each smaller classroom added a 65" neat.board, a self-contained screen that functions as a full Zoom room, as well as an electronic whiteboard. Anything written or drawn on these boards is transmitted through Zoom to the screens in the classroom and remote Zoom participants. This content can also be saved and emailed to all participants. We implemented neat.bars in other classrooms that connect to our classrooms' existing screens. We are currently implementing neat.bar pros, just released at the end of 2021, in each of our large classrooms. At Saint Paul School of Theology, we have always tried

to be pioneers with distance-learning technologies. We are very early in the lifecycle of this stimulating and groundbreaking technology. We are thrilled to partner with Neat and Zoom in revolutionizing the classroom experience.

Saint Paul School of Theology is blessed to be your partner in ministry and help those seeking to discover more and answer the call. We are grateful for your support of our students and our seminary. May we continue to live into the call of Jesus Christ to be faithful witnesses for healing in these unsettled times and for generations to come.

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

Neil Blair, President



UNITED THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY – Dayton, Ohio – www.united.edu

For the past 150 years, United Theological Seminary has educated men and women for Christian ministry within the historic traditions of the United Brethren, Evangelical United Brethren and United Methodist churches. On October 11, 1871, United Theological Seminary, then Union Biblical Seminary, held its first classes in Dayton, Ohio. From a starting class of 11 students, the seminary has grown to 488 students in its most recent academic year,* representing 39 denominations, 11 countries, and 39 states. Today's seminary serves a diverse student body that is 53% African American.**

On October 10, 2021, the seminary celebrated its 150th anniversary and burned the mortgage on its current campus facilities, freeing up \$400,000 annually to support student scholarships.

In 2021, United received a grant of \$1 million from Lilly Endowment Inc.'s Pathways for Tomorrow Initiative to expand the seminary's Houses of Study, which offer specialized master's tracks to equip students for the unique ministry needs of the communities, movements and denominations they serve. The seminary has introduced six **Houses of Study**, currently enrolling for 2022-23:

- Fresh Expressions, directed by Dr. Michael Beck;
- Mosaix, in partnership with Mosaix Global Network and directed by Rev. Chip Freed;
- Hispanic, 100% in Spanish for Spanish-speaking leaders, directed by Dr. Jorge Ochoa;
- Black United Methodist, directed by Dr. Vance Ross;
- Global Pentecostal, directed by Dr. Mark Chironna;
- and Global Wesleyan, directed by Rev. Gregory Stover.

Because United believes so passionately in this initiative, the seminary has dedicated additional resources to offer half-tuition scholarships for inaugural students in its Houses of Study programs.

United also introduced the **Academic Dean's Scholarship**, which provides 50% tuition for the duration of a master's degree program, and the **Presidential Scholarship**, awarding up to \$5,000 per year to new students.

In honor of United's 150th anniversary year, a generous donor gifted \$2 million to help graduating students reduce their educational debt. Each graduate in the 2021-22 academic year will receive up to \$20,000 toward student debt from theological and previous academic studies.

As United looks forward to the next 150 years with gratitude and anticipation, the seminary remains committed to the preparation of faithful and fruitful Christian leaders to make disciples of Jesus Christ.

Dr. Kent Millard, President

* Student data represent 2020-2021 headcount enrollment.

** Figure represents those who responded.



WESLEY THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY WASHINGTON, DC

WESLEY THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY – Washington, DC – www.WesleySeminary.edu

Some days, it seems that we, and the religious, civic, and educational institutions we love, stand peering into the fog of an unknown future as questions resound: What does our collective future look like, and who will lead it? In the midst of these questions, Wesley remains committed to supporting pastors and churches and to preparing graduates to lead innovative ministries grounded in God's mercy and justice. We stand ready to accompany you on the path to which God is calling you.

Creating new models of education that respond to students' needs

Building on Wesley's strengths and responding to student needs, Wesley is pleased to announce two pathways for master's level students beginning in Fall 2022. For students who reside on or near campus, classes will continue to be offered **each week on campus** during daytime and evening periods. For students needing to remain in their own contexts, Wesley will offer a hybrid pathway that invites students to campus for a **one-week intensive immersion** each semester, with the remaining coursework being held online. Learn more about how you can be part of the Wesley community and the Washington, DC experience through these pathways at <https://www.wesleyseminary.edu/mdiv/>.

These course pathways also support our FlexMA, a degree program built to provide robust learning and theological formation for busy individuals that integrate faith, life, and professional experience with the flexibility needed to customize content and accommodate hectic schedules. Whether preparing for bi-vocational ministry in congregational and institutional settings, going deeper in one's own spiritual journey, or integrating faith and theology into an existing career or "third career" post-retirement, wherever God is calling, the FlexMA will help you prepare to respond fully. Learn more at <https://www.wesleyseminary.edu/flexma/>.

Research projects support congregational community engagement and envision future ministry

Four grants from the Lilly Endowment Inc, totaling \$5.25 million, undergird Wesley's research into and support of congregational thriving and innovation.

- A new five-year project through the Wesley Innovation Hub will have two main foci: a one-year Design Fellowship to equip young adult leaders and the Wesley Design Lab, featuring both in-person and online curricula, training, and other resources for congregational innovation. Young adults ages 23-29 years are invited to apply for the Design Fellowship, which will provide an \$8,000 stipend, community formation, spiritual direction, graduate-level courses in design thinking for ministry and hands-on experience leading innovation in congregations. Wesley will also be seeking creative persons of faith to be "Innovators in Residence" at Wesley and partner churches who have interesting challenges or opportunities for young adult ministry. To learn more: <https://www.wesleyseminary.edu/wesley-innovation-hub/>
- A second new grant will undergird Wesley's move toward comprehensive theological education for the whole church. Wesley will strengthen its existing excellent master's and doctoral programs while also expanding a suite of pre-degree, post-degree (continuing education), and non-degree courses to meet the current and emerging needs of spiritual leaders in their context.
- Now in its second year of The Source Collaborative, Wesley continues to work with congregations in adjacent UMC annual conferences to identify markers of thriving and pursue them. Congregations and coaches interested in joining the 2023 cohort should apply by Sept. 1, 2022 via innovation@wesleyseminary.edu.
- The **Religious Workforce Project**, run by the Lewis Center for Church Leadership, studies religious work in congregations across several denominations to understand current and future needs. Learn about emerging data at <https://religiousworkforce.com/>.

Using research and partnerships to reach and equip the next generation of ministers

Wesley is ready to work with you as we make theological education more accessible and relevant to the realities of ministry today. Wesley offers an 81-hour Master of Divinity, a 36-hour Master of Arts, and a 60-hour Master of Theological Studies, any of which can be focused on specializations in public theology, urban ministry, arts and theology, missional church, children and youth ministry and advocacy, or African

American church leadership. Courses are available in person, online, and in intensive hybrid formats. Info at www.wesleyseminary.edu/admissions/try-a-class-3.

Wesley provides \$2 million annually in scholarships via regular merit awards, ranging from 25% to 100% tuition with stipends, including **full-tuition scholarships** for qualified applicants recommended by WTS alumni, campus ministers, or Christian service ministries; **Next Call in Ministry scholarships** for students working in a non-ministry setting for at least 10 years; and **Generación Latinx Scholarships** for emerging Latinx leaders for ministries within and beyond the church.

Take your ministry to the next level

The **Certificate for Children and Youth Ministry and Advocacy** (CYMA) is a **non-residential certificate completed in 12 - 15 months** via online classes and up to two residential sessions (www.wesleyseminary.edu/admissions/cyma-3). The **Certificate in Faith and Public Life** explores the foundations of public theology, religious freedom, and civil discourse (www.wesleyseminary.edu/ice/programs/public-theology/public-life/).

Wesley's premiere **Doctor of Ministry programs** includes three new 2022 tracks: Ministry in a Digital Age; Justice, Compassion, and Witness in a Turbulent World (Cambridge, UK); and a program focused on Latinx ministry. In 2023, we will again see popular DMin tracks: the Cambridge UK track, Military and CPE Chaplains, Global Church Leadership program, Church Leadership Excellence and a ground-breaking track on Trauma. Visit www.wesleyseminary.edu/doctorofministry/.

Enrich your congregational outreach and explore new dimensions of ministry

The **Lewis Center for Church Leadership** conducts leading edge research for the local church. The Lewis Center's **Leading Ideas e-newsletter** and Leading Ideas Talk podcast is the go-to source for over 20,000 people in ministry each week. Subscribe at www.churchleadership.com.

The **Community Engagement Institute** embraces a vibrant vision to be the premier center for churches and faith-based organization engaging their communities. The innovative online **Health Minister Certificate Program** prepares congregations for public health work in their parishes. Contact: Dr. Tom Pruski, tpruski@wesleyseminary.edu.

The **Center for Public Theology** equips pastors, seminarians, people of faith, and the media to create spaces for civil dialogue at the intersection of religion and politics. Visit <http://www.wesleyseminary.edu/ice/programs/public-theology/>.

The **Henry Luce III Center for the Arts and Religion** works with students, religious communities, artists, and scholars exploring the intersection of the arts and theology. Visit www.luceartsandreligion.org.

Stay connected

Contact us at (202) 885-8659 or admissions@wesleyseminary.edu and join the Wesley Community online via www.facebook.com/wesleyseminary, on Instagram @wesleyseminary, on Twitter @WesTheoSem, or sign up for our electronic newsletter.

The Rev. Dr. David McAllister-Wilson, President

GENERAL BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND MINISTRY

GBHEM seeks to promote innovative and experiential opportunities for transformative learning, higher education, and ministry formation worldwide. The agency works with key partners, churches, and institutions in Africa, Asia Pacific, Europe, and Eurasia, Latin American and the Caribbean, and North America to offer connectional, contextual, and collaborative programs to support the Church, the Academy, and the world. Among its various activities, GBHEM is responsible for two initiatives approved by General Conference: The Methodist Global Education Fund for Leadership Development (MGEFLD) – which includes the Grants and Scholarships Program (GRASP) – and the Central Conference Theological Education Fund (CCTEF). The agency also maintains Regional Hubs for Leadership, Education and Development (LEAD Hubs) in various locations around the world, has helped create and support the International Association of Methodist Schools, Colleges, and Universities (IAMSCU), and works with regional education associations on five continents. GBHEM is currently partnering with general agencies and other organizations to support important projects on COVID-19 vaccine equity, mindfulness and wellbeing, net-zero emissions, human rights, and the promotion of a culture of generosity throughout the United Methodist worldwide connection.

In 1972, The United Methodist Church reaffirmed its support of the 11 historically black colleges and universities related to the denomination by creating the Black College Fund and this year we celebrate its 50th Anniversary. Support for the Black College Fund supports the education of world-changing leaders by investing in the hopes and dreams of students from around the world. Continued support for the Black College Fund renews the vision for the next generation of transformational leaders.

We celebrate GBHEM awarding more than 2,250 students a total of \$4,084,979 in scholarships in 2021. These future leaders range from first year freshmen to doctorate level students across the denomination. We are grateful for the support received in recognizing United Methodist Student Day, World Communion Sunday, and Native American Sunday which helps fund a portion of our scholarships. The remaining funds for these awards come from gifts, annuities, and endowments GBHEM has invested and administered for decades.

Worldwide Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access (WIDEA) is a strategic focus area for GBHEM to align its work with the mission and ministry of congregations and constituents around the world. This renewed commitment includes advanced staff development in intercultural competency, active listening, and a deeper understanding of and appreciation for difference so relevant programs and services may be developed, offered, and implemented more equitably and effectively.

GBHEM remains committed to building and sustaining collaborative cross-conference networks that foster collegiality and guide credentialing for ordained and licensed ministry. We have partnered with conference leaders to clarify the role of those in ministry while assisting in the interpretation and application of relevant paragraphs within *The Book of Discipline*. We have supported the work of recruiting, guiding, and credentialing candidates and clergy through the development of Passage – a comprehensive registry resource – as well as a virtual onboarding module for new district and conference board members.

Hundreds of years before amazon.com, John Wesley stuffed the saddlebags of circuit riders with books of theology and biblical interpretation – selling them to fund the movement while spreading it literally. GBHEM continues this innovative spirit by leveraging social enterprise opportunities and creative partnerships as a way of reducing its reliance on apportionments while continuing to focus on delivering the very best services, products, and programs to United Methodist constituents around the world.

The same spirit of service and leadership that first inspired John Wesley lives on in each of us. Today, GBHEM looks confidently to the future taking bold and creative action, remaining good stewards, and continuing to support The United Methodist Church in innovative and meaningful ways.

Greg Bergquist, General Secretary