Welcome! We are glad you will attend the 2018 Annual Conference Session of the Alabama-West Florida Conference. The session will be June 3-6, 2018 at Frazer Memorial United Methodist Church in Montgomery, Alabama.

Reservations
Visit http://www.awfumc.org/ac2018 if you or members in your group wish to make a reservation for lunch(es), the Clergy Spouse Luncheon, the Laity Banquet, participate in the Biometric Health Screening (see below), volunteer, and/or reserve childcare. The online reservation system does NOT register your attendance to annual conference. Attendance is marked and counted at the registration/check-in table inside the host church.

From the Pension and Health Benefits Office
Clergy enrolled in the Conference active health insurance plan are required to fulfill two requirements (1) an Online Health Quotient and [HQ] (2) a Biometric Health Screening by August 31, 2018 to avoid a $50.00 monthly personal wellness surcharge. There will be an opportunity to complete the online HQ and the health screening at Annual Conference. Opportunity to complete both requirements (HQ and health screening) will take place on Monday, June 4th and Tuesday June 5th from 7:30 a.m. until 12:30 p.m. The health Screening is a FASTING screening.

Laity and dependents on the active health insurance plan may also participate in screening, but are not required to do so. Individuals not on the Conference active health plan may also participate in the screening, a fee will apply (see someone in the health screening area).

Mission Offering
The Conference offering will support Communities of Transformation.

UMCOR Relief Kits
At annual conference in June 2018, we are asking churches to bring UMCOR kits yet again. As an added variation from previous years’ collections, we are asking each district to bring individual items for the hygiene and school kits. Bring bulk supplies as listed for each district (see your district website). Supplies and all completed kits will be shipped to the UMCOR depot in Baldwin, Louisiana.

Completed kits are welcome – school and hygiene kits. For instructions on how to assemble each of the kits, visit the UMCOR website.

From the Journal Editor
The 2018 Journal will be available for digital download from the conference website or hard copy purchase from Amazon. Notice of availability and links for ordering will be announced from the conference office when the Journal becomes available.

From the Conference Secretary
Members of annual conference are encouraged to become familiar with all conference standing rules included in this Book of Reports. Specifically Standing Rule 15 and the section entitled Administrative Procedures of the Annual Conference. If you have questions, please contact the conference secretary, David Saliba, at (850) 492-2135.
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2018 ANNUAL CONFERENCE WORKING AGENDA
The Alabama-West Florida Conference
June 3 – 6, 2018
Frazer Memorial United Methodist Church, Montgomery, Alabama
IMAGINE a Church that is the Hope of the World!
Ephesians 1:18

Sunday, June 3
1:00 p.m.  Exhibits, Registration Set Up – Atrium
2:30 p.m.  Church and Society – 3101
3:00 p.m.  Conference Registration Opens – Atrium
          Cokesbury Bookstore Opens – Servery
          Alabama Rural Ministry (ARM) Snack Bar – Atrium
          Appointive Cabinet Meeting – Parlor
3:30 p.m.  Tellers Orientation – Wesley Hall
          Mass Choir Rehearsal – Sanctuary
4:00 p.m.  Committee on Petitions and Resolutions – 7201
          Global Ministries – 3101
4:30 p.m.  Assistant Secretaries Orientation - Wesley Hall
          Fellowship of Local and Associate Members Meeting – 7202/7209
          Bishop’s Dinner – 7204
5:00 p.m.  Pages Orientation – Wesley Hall
          Memorial Luncheon Set Up – 4100
          Mass Choir Meal – Fellowship Hall
          Board of Ordained Ministry Meeting – 6111
5:30 p.m.  Conference Registration Closes
          Mass Choir gathers – Sanctuary
          Opening Worship Processional gathers – Chapel
6:00 p.m.  OPENING WORSHIP CELEBRATION
             with Holy Communion – Sanctuary
             Greetings from Host Pastor:  Rev. Larry Bryars
             Sermon: Bishop James Edward Swanson, Sr.
             “The Sea is No More”, Revelation 21:1-5 CEB
             Music: Mass Choir
             Offering: Communities of Transformation
7:30 p.m.  Clergy Session – Wesley Hall
             Laity Session – Sanctuary
Monday, June 4

7:00 a.m. Conference Registration Opens (closes at 2:00 p.m.) – Atrium
Experiential Prayer Room – Surge (7 a.m. - 5 p.m.)
Asbury Foundation Breakfast – 6102

7:30 a.m. Board of Laity – 6111

8:00 a.m. Biometric Health Screening (Fasting) for Persons on
Conference Health Plan (closes at 2 p.m.) – Cokesbury Room

8:30 a.m. Opening Worship – Wesley Hall
Sermon: Rev. German Gomez
Commissioning of Deaconesses

9:30 a.m. CONFERENCE BUSINESS SESSION – Wesley Hall
Gathering Music: Jarvis Wilson and Keith Wilson
Hymn: *And Are We Yet Alive*
Video: 50th Year Celebration of being the United Methodist Church
Opening Prayer:
Welcome from the Host District Superintendent – Rev. Allen Newton

Opening Business and Organization of the Conference –
Wesley Hall
Setting the “bar” of the Conference
Election of secretarial staff
Approval of the 2017 Conference Journal
Adoption of the 2018 Conference Working Agenda
Presentation of the 2018 Consent Agenda

Committee on Standing Rules (to lay on the table overnight)
– Shirley Woodie

Committee on Resolutions and Petitions (to lay on the table
overnight) – Rev. Christina Shaver

10:10 a.m. Break – Preparation for Worship

(Families of deceased clergy and clergy spouses gather in Chapel; mem-
bers of annual conference are invited to come by to greet them prior to the
memorial service. Cabinet and worship participants will gather in Parlor)

10:30 a.m. ORDER OF THE DAY - Memorial Service and
Holy Communion – Sanctuary
Liturgist: Rev. Olivia Poole
Sermon: Rev. June Jernigan
**Monday, June 4 (Cont.)**

12:00 p.m.  General Lunch – Fellowship Hall  
Memorial Service Luncheon – 4100  
Asbury Club Luncheon – 8110 North Gym  
Wesley Heirs Luncheon – 6102  
Candler Club Luncheon – 6111  
Duke Club Luncheon – 7203  
CFA Investment Committee – 6105

1:30 p.m.  CONFERENCE BUSINESS SESSION – Wesley Hall  
Gathering Music: Jarvis Wilson and Keith Wilson  
Video Methodist Homes of Alabama and North West Florida  
Opening Prayer:

Board of Laity Address – Beverly Maddox  
Reports of the UMM/UMW/Lay Servants

Committee on Episcopacy – Alexis Tibbetts

Committee on Nominations – Rev. David Saliba

UM Children’s Home

Board of Ordained Ministry – Rev. Jim Sanders  
Recognition of Commissioning and Ordination classes  
Recognition of First-Time Licensed Local Pastors  
Recognition of Licensed Local Pastors who completed Course of Study  
Recognition of Clergy in Extension Ministries and Appointments Beyond the Local Church

*(Retirees gather in Parlor by 2:45)*

3:30 p.m.  ORDER OF THE DAY - Recognition of Retiring Clergy – Wesley Hall  
Gathering Music: Jarvis Wilson and Keith Wilson  
Opening Prayer:  
**Receiving Line for Retiring Clergy - Atrium**

7:00 p.m.  Service of Ordination & Commissioning – Montgomery First United Methodist Church (Choral Concert at 6:20 p.m.)  
Sermon: Bishop David Graves  
Music: Montgomery First United Methodist Church Choirs  
**Ministerial Education Fund Offering**  
Reception – Fellowship Hall, Montgomery First United Methodist Church
**Tuesday, June 5**

7:00 a.m. Conference Registration Opens (closes at Noon) – Atrium
Experiential Prayer Room – Surge (7 a.m. - 5 p.m.)
COSROW – 6111
Deacon Breakfast – 6102

8:00 a.m. Biometric Health Screening (Fasting) for Persons on
Conference Health Plan (closes at 2 p.m.) – Cokesbury Room

8:30 a.m. Opening Worship with Holy Communion
Sermon: Rev. Sheila Bates

9:30 a.m. **CONFERENCE BUSINESS SESSION** – Wesley Hall
Gathering Music: Jarvis Wilson and Keith Wilson
Video: 30th Year Celebration of AWFC having our own
   Resident Bishop
Opening Prayer:


   Presentation from the Council of Bishops on
   The Way Forward, Bishop David Graves

10:45 a.m. Break

11:00 a.m. Gathering Music: Jarvis Wilson and Keith Wilson
Opening Prayer:

   Forum on Consensus Decision Making moderated by
   Julia Kuhn Wallace

11:45 a.m. Clergy Spouses (active, retired, surviving) Gathering –
   FUMC, Montgomery

12:00 Noon General Lunch – Fellowship Hall
   Cabinet – Parlor
   Spiritual Formation – 7207/7209
   Birmingham-Southern Luncheon – 6111
   Strengthening the Black Church for the 21st Century – 7208

1:30 p.m. Gathering Music: Jarvis Wilson and Keith Wilson
Video: Birmingham-Southern College
Opening Prayer: Linda Flaherty-Goldsmith, President, BSC

   *Action* on Standing Rules – Shirley Woodie

   *Action* on Resolutions and Petitions – Christina Shaver
Tuesday, June 5 (Cont.)

Connectional Ministries – Celeste Eubanks

United States Disaster Response Award – Rev. Yollande Yambo, Africa Regional Representative

Special Awards and Recognitions
  Local Church Heritage Award - COAH
  One Matters Award – Town and Country Commission
  Francis Asbury Award – BHECM

2:50 p.m. Break

3:15 p.m. Gathering Music: Jarvis Wilson and Keith Wilson
  Video: Huntingdon College
  Opening Prayer: Cam West, President, HC

Special Awards and Recognitions
  Denman Evangelism Award – Division of Evangelism – Rev. Larry Anderson
  Alice Lee Award – COSROW – Ruth Ann Powers
  Bishop’s Scouting Award – Board of Laity – Vaughn Nichols
  Susanna Wesley Award – Board of Laity
  Scholarship Award and Report of the United Methodist Connectional FCU

Academy of Congregational Excellence –

Conference Announcements and Recess

5:00 p.m. Laity Banquet – Mary Ellen Bullard Address – Fellowship Hall
  Nancy Graves, Speaker; Pastor Gina and Friends, Music

7:00 p.m. Elective Panel Discussion with Bishop David Graves and the General Conference Delegation – Wesley Hall

Wednesday, June 6

No conference registration

7:00 a.m. Experiential Prayer Room – Surge (7 a.m. - 10 a.m.)
  Reconciling Ministry Friends Breakfast - 6111
  WCA Board - 3120

8:30 a.m. Opening Worship with Holy Communion
  Sermon: Rev. Olivia Poole
Wednesday, June 6 (Cont.)

9:30 a.m.  CONFEREECE BUSINESS SESSION – Wesley Hall
Gathering Music: Jarvis Wilson and Keith Wilson
Video: 50th Year Remembrance of the Assassination of
Martin Luther King, Jr.
Opening Prayer:


Action Item: Conference Board of Pension and Health
Benefits – Rev. Bob McKibben

Action Item: Commission on Equitable Compensation –
Rev. W. Michael Cobb

Council on Finance and Administration – Beebe Frederick
Action Item: 2019 Conference Budget
Statistician’s Report – Mickey Wilson
Election of Annual Conference Treasurer/Statistician

Change in Charge Lines
Property Resolutions

Closing Business of the Conference
Where shall the 2019 session be held?
Courtesies and Appreciation – Rev. Wesley Wachob

Conference Announcements

11:00 a.m.  ORDER OF THE DAY – Episcopal Address & Sending
Forth Service
Fixing of the 2018 - 2019 Appointments – Wesley Hall
Gathering Music: Jarvis Wilson and Keith Wilson
Opening Prayer:

Adjournment Sine Die

NO WEDNESDAY LUNCH AT HOST CHURCH

Meeting of the General Conference Delegation
OPENING WORSHIP

James Edward Swanson Sr. is the resident bishop of the Mississippi Conference of The United Methodist Church. His tenure began Sept. 1, 2012, with his first public appearance one day earlier to the conference’s Seashore District. He went there to be with those affected by Hurricane Isaac. The hurricane made landfall on August 28, 2012, causing additional devastation to Mississippi coastal communities recovering from Hurricane Katrina seven years earlier. Swanson travels the Mississippi Conference teaching, “We are one Church in 1,030 locations.”

His contagious spirit of hospitality, a determination to excel at being “the you” God created each person to be and spirited preaching has helped bring life, laughter and light to congregations in the Mississippi Conference and beyond. He continues to emphasize that winning people to Christ requires risk-taking love and crossing old boundaries to discover where the Holy Spirit is at work.

Swanson was elected a bishop of The United Methodist Church during the 2004 Southeastern Jurisdiction Conference. He was assigned to the Holston Conference where Swanson served for eight years. Under his leadership, the Sudan Mission initiated. The number of United Methodist congregations in Sudan grew from three to 30 between 2006 and 2012. A residential home for Sudan’s district superintendent was built and used as a training site for clergy and laity of South Sudan. Plans were laid for Holston to raise funds for the campaign, Imagine No Malaria to prevent and treat the deadly malaria disease in Sub-Saharan Africa. The campaign resulted in $1.2 million dollars. Swanson serves as the president of the General Commission of United Methodist Men for 2017-2020. He was re-elected to the post following his service for 2012-2016. Swanson is a member of the International Association of Methodist Schools, Colleges and Universities (IAMSCU). He serves on the board of trustees for Emory University, Rust College and Millsaps College. He is also the chairman of the board of trustees at Gammon Theological Seminary.

Swanson is a sought-after preacher, workshop leader and lecturer. He has presented to people in Japan, Korea, Brazil, Russia, Estonia, Chile, Canada, the Holy Land, Egypt, Liberia, Sudan, Uganda, South Africa, Zimbabwe and throughout the United States.

Bishop Swanson is the son of the late Carl Swanson and Arnola Triplett. He is married to Delphine Yvonne Ramsey Swanson. They have the joy of being parents to six adult children, Karen Latrese Swanson Jones married to Earl Jones Jr.; James Edward Swanson Jr. married to Yaki Bryant Swanson; Shondell Swanson married to Angela Drain; Carlton Eugene Swanson married to Ivis Rosario; Janae Evonne Swanson Brown married to Vernon and Joshua Emile’ Swanson married to LaShay. The Swanson’s are blessed with 15 grandchildren.
MEMORIAL SERVICE

Rev. June Jernigan is an Elder in the Alabama-West Florida Conference and serves as Assistant to the Resident Bishop and Director of Ministerial Services. Ordained as a transitional deacon in 1997 and an elder in full connection in 2004, she has previously served pastoral positions at Gulf Breeze UMC and First United Methodist Church of Millbrook. She was previously appointed as Director of Ministerial Services for the conference in 2010, and, in 2015 was Rev. Jernigan was appointed District Superintendent of the Baypines District. She returned to the conference office 2016 to serve in her current position.

Rev. Jernigan is a certified ministry coach through Passion in Partnership Ministry and coaches clergy and ministry candidates in other Southeastern Jurisdiction conferences. She was a co-writer of the Residency in Ordained Ministry curriculum currently being used by our Board of Ordained Ministry. Rev. Jernigan has one son, Jon, who lives in Nashville and manages the franchise office of Motivated Movers. She is an animal lover and has a cat named Tiger and a Cavalier King Charles Spaniel puppy named Piper. She spends time training Piper with the hopes of her one day becoming a trained therapy dog who can visit nursing homes and hospitals.

MORNING WORSHIP

Rev. German Gomez is a missionary with the Board of Global Ministries of The United Methodist Church assigned as pastor to San Juan Mission in Clanton, Alabama, through the National Plan for Hispanic and Latino Ministries.

Some of German’s responsibilities include being the pastor of mission, jail ministry, social work, and mission development. “I have a calling to preaching, teaching and discipling,” German reflects. Previously, he taught Sunday School classes at the Centreville UMC in Centreville, AL, where he is a member.

German shares thoughts with us on his mission experience and how he sees God moving through his ministry: “When I see families change through the work of the Holy Spirit; when I go to the jail and preach and see the change the Lord brings to the prisoners, and when the prisoners leave the prison the
Holy Spirit brings them to the church.”

Born in Cuitlahuac in Veracruz, Mexico, German has three children: Aarendy, Irais, and Aaron.

**MORNING WORSHIP**

**Rev. Sheila Bates** is a native of Northern Virginia and the daughter of Pastor Elington and the late Linda Bates. Rev. Bates currently serves as an Associate Pastor at Dauphin Way United Methodist Church located in Mobile, Alabama where she resides with her daughter. Prior to her current appointment, Rev. Bates was appointed as the Director of Student Faith and Leadership Formation at The General Board of Higher and Ministry (GBHEM), located in Nashville, Tennessee. During her time in ministry, she has also served as the Director of Campus Ministry for the Wesley Foundation at Tuskegee University, and the Children and Youth Pastor at St. James UMC in Alpharetta, Georgia.

Rev. Bates received her Bachelor of Science degree from Suffolk University in Boston, Massachusetts and her M.Div. from Gammon Theological Seminary in Atlanta, Georgia where she was inducted into Theta Phi, a Theological Honor Society. Rev. Bates will be ordained in June 2018 as an Elder in Full Connection in the Alabama West Florida Conference of the United Methodist Church.

Her ministry passion to create discipleship and spiritual formation pathways, clearly defines her work with college age students, young adults, and all who desire to authentically encounter God. Rev. Sheila Bates also has a passion for writing and her published work may be found in *The Prophetic Voice* and *Making Peace*. When Sheila is not ministering at Dauphin Way UMC or facilitating events, you will find her traveling and enjoying quality time with her friends and family.

**Reverend Olivia Poole**, a native of Montgomery, Alabama, was raised in the congregation of First United Methodist Church where her family was actively involved, and her mother continues to teach Sunday school. She attended Auburn University and received a Bachelors of Science in Business Administration before going to Emory University’s Candler School of Theology. Olivia is pursuing her Doctor of Ministry through Duke Divinity School at Duke University and is in the process of writing her thesis. Her thesis, “Go and Tell the Others: Women Who Proclaim in the Fourth Gospel” explores manner in which the Samaritan
woman at Jacob’s well and Mary Magdalene proclaim the Good News with those they encounter. Olivia has participated in the Lewis Fellows Program offered by the Lewis Center for Church Leadership of Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington D.C.

Reverend Poole is the pastor of Mount Zion United Methodist Church in Smiths Station and has previously served as the Associate Pastor at First United Methodist Church in Prattville. She currently serves on the Conference Board of Ordained Ministry as well as the Board of Trustees. Olivia is married to Reverend Steve Reneau who is the pastor of Trinity United Methodist in Phenix City. Steve and Olivia have a one-year-old son, Grantham. Grantham brings them great joy and is the light of their life!

LAITY BANQUET

Mrs. Nancy Graves is a native of Knoxville, Tennessee. She met her husband David while attending the University of Tennessee. Her senior year of college, David accepted a position at a church in Chattanooga, Tennessee where Nancy transferred and graduated from the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga. They will be celebrating their 37th wedding anniversary this month.

Nancy and David have two children. Their daughter Casey and son-in-law Bryan live in Kingsport, Tennessee with their children Brooks and Lucy. Their son Gregg lives and works in Chattanooga, Tennessee.

Before moving to Alabama-West Florida, Nancy served as executive assistant to the assistant superintendent of Kingsport City Schools and administrative assistant in the office of the director of schools for Maryville City Schools in Tennessee.

When not traveling with her husband, Nancy enjoys reading, cooking and decorating. She cherishes the times she is able to be with family, but most importantly, she loves the Lord.

FORUM MODERATOR

Julia Kuhn Wallace is a layperson that has served on the staff of the General Board of Discipleship of the United Methodist Church. Her areas of expertise include: Mediating Church Disputes and Transforming Conflict; Assessing Congregational Vitality through Church Potential Studies; Choosing Viable Options for Declining
Ms. Kuhn has worked at all levels of the Church as well as denominational task forces and gatherings. She is a respected Presenter, Group Facilitator, Consultant and Missiologist.

**GUEST MUSICIANS**

Jarvis R. Wilson was born and raised in Atlanta, Georgia. He is the youngest of three sons born to the late Clarence and Gladys Wilson. At four years of age, he began music lessons under his Mother’s tutelage. Among others, Jarvis also received training from the late Mrs. Alberta Williams King (mother of Martin Luther King, Jr.) and renowned concert organist, Mr. David Stills. A true lover of gospel music, Jarvis began playing the organ in church when he was 10 years old. Accompanying his mother, he brought church alive at Troy Street Baptist Church in Atlanta, Georgia. He furthered his education at the now Clark-Atlanta University. As predestined by God, he has been glorifying and magnifying the Lord through music and song since that time.

Jarvis has served in many capacities at several churches throughout the Atlanta, Georgia area. He has also served as organist and worship leader for several United Methodist Church Annual Conferences and Southeast Jurisdiction (SEJ) conferences. A highlight of his career includes serving as Principal organist for the Wesley Heritage Tour in London, England and Bermuda with the late Bishop Cornelius L. Henderson. Recently inducted into the Morehouse College Martin Luther King, Jr. Board of Laity Sponsors and Preachers in recognition of his passion, influence and resources to support the work of peace, reconciliation, nonviolence, justice and moral cosmopolitan social progress, Mr. Wilson has received several awards and recognitions. He is a member of Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia Music Fraternity.

Jarvis is the founder of CEGSW Enterprises, LLC and Worship Enhancement Workshop Ministries where he conducts choral workshops nationally and internationally. He currently serves as Minister of Music and Hillside International Truth Center and the Historic West Hunter Street Baptist Church both in Atlanta.

The father of three children, Jarvis gives all thanks and praises to God for the blessings he continues to bestow upon him. For God gave us music so that we might pray without words.
Keith C. Wilson has spent nearly thirty years as a music director, instructor, pianist, and vocalist creating wonderful music around the world. He has been continuously noted for his strong conviction of bringing high quality contemporary and standard music to his audiences. Keith received his formal training at Georgia State University in voice performance. His background in classical music, theater, gospel and spirituals has placed him in the forefront of the music community.

Mr. Wilson was chosen to coordinate and conduct a 5,000-voice choir for the Paralympics Games’ opening ceremonies. On behalf of the City of Atlanta Bureau of Cultural Affairs, he conducted the Atlanta Super Choir, performing on several European tours representing the city. Keith is very proud of his work as music coordinator on the feature film The Gospel where he worked with such greats as Yolanda Adams, Kirk Franklin, Fred Hammond, and Donnie McClurkin. He has also worked in theatre for the Black Nativity, The Amen Corner, One Mo’ Time, Zion, and Theatre of the Star’s Purlie, starring Melba Moore, Robert Guillaume, and Sherman Hemsley.

Having previously served at several churches in Atlanta, Georgia, Keith is currently the Director of Music/Worship Arts at Ben Hill United Methodist Church and director of the nationally recognized Majestic Choir of Ben Hill UMC. He has made a commitment to designing and implementing organized, creative, and intelligible programs that help build the knowledge and skills of Christians in the performing arts. Mr. Wilson is the proprietor of 14W Music, dedicated to the instruction of voice and piano. Keith has recently founded The New Philharmonic Concert Chorale, an ensemble of thirty-six professional singers with a refreshingly distinct expressiveness that performs a wide variety of music genres.
THE STANDING RULES with Committee Revisions

[All paragraph references are to the 2016 Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church except as otherwise noted, and these numbers are printed in bold.]

INTRODUCTION

The Alabama-West Florida Conference of The United Methodist Church shall be organized and structured according to the mandates of the latest edition of The Book of Discipline, and shall act in all respects in harmony with the policy of The United Methodist Church. In keeping with those standards, this conference commits itself to the elimination of discrimination (see ¶604.1). The following Standing Rules are adopted by the Alabama-West Florida Conference for its own governance and to fit its specific setting for mission and ministry. The Alabama-West Florida Conference shall follow Roberts Rules of Order except where superseded by explicit rules in The Book of Discipline or in these Standing Rules.

1. These Standing Rules shall be implemented, applied or amended as follows:
   A. These rules shall be effective at the end of the annual conference at which they are passed. All rules remain in effect until they are rescinded or amended by a two-thirds vote of those present and voting on the next day after the proposed amendment has been presented in writing.
   B. Any proposed changes in the Standing Rules should be received in writing by the chairperson of the Committee on Standing Rules no later than February 1.
   C. Any of these rules, except Standing Rule (SR) 1D, may be suspended by a two-thirds vote of those present and voting at annual conference.
   D. A change in the number of districts may not be made later than the first business session of the annual conference.

OFFICERS OF THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE

2. The conference secretary and the Journal editor (nominated by the Conference Committee on Nominations, see SR 5B) and the treasurer/statistician and the conference registrar (nominated by the Council on Finance and Administration) shall be elected at the first session of the annual conference following the general conference, with tenure of office to begin on December 1, following their election, and to serve for the succeeding quadrennium. (¶603.7 and ¶619)

COMMITTEES RELATING TO THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE

3. There shall be a Committee on Standing Rules, composed of the conference secretary, the director of Connectional Ministries (see SR 5A), the conference treasurer, the Journal editor and five at-large members including the chairperson. This committee shall be nominated by the Committee on
Nominations (see SR 5B), shall include both lay and clergy, and shall be elected by the annual conference. Additional nominations may be made from the floor.

4. There shall be a Committee on Resolutions and Petitions, composed of four clergy and four lay persons, nominated by the Committee on Nominations, which shall consider all petitions addressed to the general, jurisdictional, and annual conferences. After consideration, the committee shall submit the petitions, with its written recommendation and the rationale for each recommendation, to the annual conference for action. Resolutions shall be submitted to the committee by February 15, except in cases where it can be demonstrated by the author of a late petition that the situation which gave rise to making the petition was not apparent until after the deadline for petitions. The committee shall provide copies of all resolutions submitted by February 15 to all voting members present at the conference session. The maker of the late resolution shall supply these copies of his/her resolution if submitted after February 15. No resolution will be received on the last day of the session.

5. A. The leadership, missional and administrative structures of the Alabama-West Florida Conference shall come together at a “common table” or organization known as the “Connecting Our Resources and Empowerment” Team or CORE Team. The means of electing and appointing representatives connected to the CORE Team, which includes boards, committees, councils, commissions and divisions of the Leadership Team, the Mission Team, and the Administrative Team, are spelled out in these Standing Rules (also see SR 24 and following).

B. There shall be a Committee on Nominations, composed of: the resident bishop, who shall be the chairperson; the conference lay leader; the conference secretary, who shall be the secretary of this committee; the director of connectional ministries; the conference treasurer; the conference presidents of United Methodist Men (UMM) and of United Methodist Women (UMW); a United Methodist youth; the eight district lay leaders; the eight district superintendents; the Conference Office program staff; and three at-large members chosen by the bishop with attention given to the need for inclusive representation. This committee shall nominate persons quadrennially to the CORE Team, conference boards, commissions, committees, councils, etc., as listed in these Standing Rules and as needed by other conference institutions (per the bishop’s discretion). Nominations shall be consistent with the most recent Book of Discipline, with attention given to inclusiveness, diversity and expertise. The committee shall submit its nominations as early as possible in the annual conference session. Additional nominations may be made from the floor.

6. There shall be a Committee on Courtesies and Introductions, composed
of three lay and two clergy members, which shall be responsible for presentation of visitors to the conference, and for a report in the closing session expressing appreciation to persons and groups who have rendered special services in the program.

7. There shall be a Committee on the Journal, appointed quadrennially by the bishop, composed of two members, who shall examine the minutes of daily sessions for accuracy and report the findings to the conference.

8. The Council on Finance and Administration (CFA) shall handle expenses of the conference session. There shall be a Conference Administration Fund, the amount to be fixed annually by the Council on Finance and Administration, with assessments for the fund to be allocated annually to individual pastoral charges on the apportioned formula basis. When the Annual Conference makes lodging and/or meals available, CFA will establish reasonable fees for members and other guests; any meals offered at reduced or no charge will be funded by the Annual Conference Administration Fund. Instructions for reservations and payment shall be provided by the conference registrar no later than the time online reservations for annual conference become active.

9. The Annual Conference Session Planning Committee:
A. There shall be an Annual Conference Session Planning Committee, composed of the presiding bishop who shall serve as chairperson, the host district superintendent, the conference secretary, the Journal editor who shall serve as secretary of the committee, the conference director of communications, the assistant to the bishop and director of ministerial services, the conference registrar, the conference treasurer, the chairperson of the Conference Division of Worship, the director of connectional ministries, the conference lay Leader, the host district lay leader, the conference president of United Methodist Women, the conference president of United Methodist Men, the chairperson of the Committee on Ethnic Local Church Concerns (¶632), a United Methodist youth, and a United Methodist young adult.

B. The Annual Conference Session Planning Committee shall arrange tentatively the program of the annual conference session, and shall submit the program to the opening session for possible amendment and adoption as its agenda. The Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper shall be included in the program.

C. A period of recognition of retiring clergy shall be held during the conference session, with a suitable program arranged by the Board of Ordained Ministry.

D. A memorial service commemorating each clergyperson or “surviving
spouse” or diaconal minister who died since the last annual conference shall be arranged by the Annual Conference Planning Committee and the Division Chair of Worship in conjunction with the Commission on Archives and History. The Commission shall also provide a memoir of the deceased for publication in the *Journal*.

**ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES OF THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE**

10. The rules of order of the preceding general conference shall govern parliamentary procedure in this conference in all matters not covered by the standing rules. In order to be recognized to address the conference, each person must identify him/herself as to name and the capacity in which he/she is entitled to speak to the session.

11. Reports and resolutions:
A. All reports and resolutions shall be consistent with the Guidelines for Reports; and shall be placed on the conference agenda by the conference secretary in the order designated by the Annual Conference Session Planning Committee. Proposed resolutions and changes to the conference standing rules shall lie on the conference secretary’s desk for at least one business session before being acted upon by the conference.

B. By a two-thirds vote of those present and voting an agenda item may be taken up out of order for consideration.

C. All amendments to reports of boards and agencies as printed in the *Book of Reports* and all motions arising from the floor of the conference shall be made in writing to the conference secretary.

D. At the annual conference session, no materials (handouts, etc.) shall be placed on the pews or seats when the conference is in recess, unless a prior majority vote approves an exception to this rule.

12. In order to expedite the business of the conference, the Consent Agenda Committee, composed of the secretary of the annual conference, the chairperson of the Committee on Standing Rules, the director of connectional ministries, and the *Journal* editor, in consultation with agencies or individuals presenting reports, recommendations or resolutions, may present in the *Book of Reports* a written list of items which shall be known as the Consent Agenda. Items on the Consent Agenda shall be considered as adopted by consent of the annual conference. An individual item may be removed from the Consent Agenda by a written request signed by twelve lay and/or clergy members of the annual conference and presented to the conference secretary prior to the first business session. When a matter has been removed from the Consent Agenda, it shall be placed into the regular agenda at an appropriate time.
13. Election of General and Jurisdictional delegations:
A. Delegates to the general and jurisdictional conferences shall be elected at
the annual conference session in the calendar year preceding the quadrennial
General Conference according to stipulations in ¶502.3, ¶502.4 and ¶515
respectively of the Book of Discipline. In compliance with the 2016 Book of
Discipline ¶35, all eligible clergy shall be listed on the ballot for General and
Jurisdictional Elections. They shall serve in all sessions of these conferences
held during the quadrennium. In addition to those delegates funded by the
general and jurisdictional conferences, the Alabama-West Florida Conference
shall pay the expenses of only one more alternate delegate, lay and clergy, to
the general and jurisdictional conferences at the rate paid to the delegates.

B. In the election of delegates, the presiding bishop shall appoint four teams
of tellers (two clergy teams and two lay teams), each team consisting of one
representative from each district, one of whom shall serve as head teller.

C. In the election of these delegates, the ballots shall be furnished to the
conference by the conference secretary at the time of voting. No vote shall be
valid unless cast on the ballot designated by the presiding bishop.

D. One year prior to an electing annual conference, the Board of Laity shall
make plans and policies regarding the lay elections, and give guidance to
laity regarding the process of caucusing, nominating and electing the lay
degregation. Following the opening session of the electing annual conference,
the laity, in their orientation session, will give opportunity for any persons
seeking election (whose name has not been put in nomination in advance) to
provide a single printed profile sheet for distribution.

E. A general code of ethical standards will be demonstrated by every
candidate, lay and clergy. Every individual’s right to exercise his/her voting
or political expression should be consistent with the Social Principles of The
United Methodist Church.

F. Endorsements of candidates will be made only by individuals and/or local
churches, or the district electing caucus.

14. Annual Conference lay members:
A. Lay members to the annual conference shall be elected yearly in the
charge conferences. One youth member to the annual conference (age 12-17)
(expenses to be paid by their district) and one young adult member (age 18-
30) shall be selected from each district. The conference secretary (if lay), the
conference lay leader, the director of conference lay servant ministries, the
conference president of United Methodist Women, the conference president
of United Methodist Men, a United Methodist youth, the conference
secretary of Global Ministries (if lay), a United Methodist young adult, active
deaconesses and home missioners under episcopal appointment within the
bounds of the annual conference, district lay leaders, and diaconal ministers, shall be lay members to the annual conference. (For churches with more than one clergyperson under appointment, see ¶32 of the Book of Discipline.)

B. In compliance with the disciplinary requirement (¶32) to keep lay representation in the annual conference session equal to that of clergy, the conference secretary shall ascertain whether the upcoming session will be in balance with respect to lay and clergy membership as of January 1 each year. If additional lay members are needed, the conference secretary shall add them using the following guidelines:

1. The first eight shall be the district presidents of United Methodist Women. In the event that fewer than eight are needed, the secretary shall make the determination on the basis of the last reported church membership totals of the districts, moving from the largest downward in scale.
2. The second eight shall be the district presidents of the United Methodist Men. In the event that fewer than eight are needed, the secretary shall make the determination on the basis of the last reported church membership totals of the districts, moving from the largest downward in scale.
3. Next, the secretary shall name an additional youth and young adult from each district. In the event that fewer than sixteen are needed, the secretary shall make the determination on the basis of the last reported church membership totals of the districts, moving from the largest downward in scale.
4. Next the secretary shall name full-time lay workers on the professional staff of the Conference Office.
5. Next the secretary shall name the lay members of the Conference Board of Ordained Ministry.
6. Next the secretary shall name lay members of the general and jurisdictional delegations (including alternates) in the order of their election.
7. Next the secretary shall name lay persons who are chairpersons of CORE Team boards, commissions, councils, etc., in the order listed in the CORE organizational document, and the at-large members of the CORE Team.
8. Next the secretary shall name lay members of the Council on Finance and Administration.
9. The remainder shall be at-large members divided among the eight districts and selected by each district. In the event that there is a remainder of less than eight, the secretary shall make the determination on the basis of the last reported church membership totals of the districts, moving from the largest downward in scale.
10. If a person is selected by the above process who is already a member of annual conference as the delegate from his/her church/
charge, he or she may serve in the new capacity and thus empower
the church’s alternate delegate to attend as the voting representative
of the charge. The district superintendent and district lay leader
of each district may assist in this process in conjunction with
their district’s orientation session in preparation for the annual
conference.

15. The Conference Journal and Book of Reports:
The publication and distribution of The Annual Conference Journal and the
Book of Reports shall be supervised by the Editorial Committee, chaired by
the Journal editor and composed of the conference secretary, the director of
ministerial services, the treasurer/statistician, and the director of connectional
ministries. The Journal editor shall be responsible for preparation of the
Book of Reports and its distribution either in printed or electronic form
to all eligible persons. Materials and reports to be included in the Book of
Reports shall be in the hands of the Journal editor NO LATER THAN the
last Monday in February. The Book of Reports shall contain instructions
for ordering the Journal. The Council on Finance and Administration shall
determine the cost of each Journal including mailing. All names, addresses,
reports, resolutions, and/or other materials to be included in the Journal
of the Alabama-West Florida Conference shall be in the hands of the conference
secretary no later than ten working days after the close of annual conference.

16. Board Memberships and Trusteeships:
A. With the exception of the Board of Ordained Ministry, no person
may serve on more than one quadrennial agency of this conference at
the same time. Except as provided by the Book of Discipline, one’s term
on a quadrennial agency shall not exceed eight years within any twelve
consecutive years. Elected membership on non-quadrennial agencies is
limited to no more than eight of any twelve consecutive years, with the
exception of the Board of Laity. For the sake of administrative and program
continuity, this standing rule shall not apply where existing constitutions
require the retiring chair to continue to serve for a period not to exceed
two years. The quadrennial agencies are: the Conference Board of Global
Ministries, the Board of Discipleship, the Board of Church and Society, the
Board of Congregational Development, the Town and Country Commission,
the Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministry, the Committee on
Ethnic Local Church Concerns (¶632), the Board of Ordained Ministry,
the Commission on Equitable Compensation, the Board of Pension and
Health Benefits, the Council on Finance and Administration, and the at-large
members on the CORE Team.

B. Persons may be enlisted to assist boards and agencies for specific task
force responsibilities.

C. No person shall serve on more than one board of trustees or board of
directors of institutions or agencies related to this annual conference at the same time. Nothing in this rule shall be construed to mean that persons may not serve concurrently on boards of trustees or directors and as members of quadrennial boards and agencies or ex-officio trustees or directors, where disciplinary provisions apply.

D. Persons who fail to attend and participate in the meetings and programs expected of their elected position for one year without legitimate excuse shall be replaced. The person chosen by the Committee on Nominations to fill the unexpired term may also be elected to serve an additional quadrennium.

E. No person shall serve more than nine consecutive years (three terms) as a trustee of any agency or institution related to this annual conference, nor shall this person be eligible for election again to that board for three years.

17. Organizational stipulations for boards and agencies:
A. All conference program boards, commissions, divisions, and committees, except as provided by the Book of Discipline, shall begin their tenure immediately upon election at annual conference.

B. Every year the Conference Committee on Nominations shall complete its work four weeks before the date set for the regular conference session, in order to inform nominees of their selection and anticipated confirmation.

18. There shall be eight districts in this annual conference.

19. A district conference shall be held annually in each district of this annual conference, with its program year starting in January. The voting membership of the district conference shall be consistent with the directives of the United Methodist Book of Discipline, (¶658-659).

20. Each district shall have a District Committee on Nominations composed of the district superintendent as chairperson, and with a membership of three clergy and four lay persons, elected annually. No member may serve for more than three consecutive years with the exception of the district superintendent. The District Committee on Nominations may submit to the district conference the names of one clergy and one lay person for election for each district work area and age-level ministry, and such other persons as are needed for membership to the District Council on Ministries or District CORE Team. Persons to be nominated shall be consulted by their district superintendent prior to the submission of their names. The District Committee on Nominations may fill vacancies with replacements to take office immediately. Such persons shall be confirmed at the next meeting of the district conference (¶659.1).

21. Neither a district superintendent nor a paid staff person of the annual
conference shall serve as an elected member on a quadrennial board, commission, or committee, except as specifically provided by the Book of Discipline. Vacancies occurring by appointment of members of boards, divisions, commissions and committees to the district superintendency shall be filled by the conference session when such appointments are made.

22. In the allocation of askings on the formula basis, the financial strength of the church shall NOT include monies expended for the following items:
   A. Principal and interest on capital indebtedness.
   B. Buildings and capital improvements.
   C. General Advance Specials and World Service Special Gifts.
   D. Conference Advance Specials.
   E. Remittances by United Methodist Women to the conference treasurer.
   F. Remittances to any authorized conference capital fund campaign.
   G. Remittances to the Birmingham-Southern College Scholarship Fund and/or capital gifts.
   H. Remittances to Huntingdon College Scholarship Fund and/or capital gifts.
   I. Children’s Home White Christmas Offering and Homes for the Aging/Fountain of Love offering.
   J. Special Day Offerings of the General Church: (One Great Hour of Sharing, etc.)
   K. All apportioned funds from the General Church, the conference and the districts.
   L. Benevolences paid directly by the local church.
   M. Direct billing for pension and health benefits.

23. The treasurer of the annual conference shall make the final settlement regarding apportionments, and disburse all funds to the annual conference boards, commissions and committees or treasurers after the close of the fiscal year, following the guidelines of zero-based budgeting.

24. There shall be a Clergy Effectiveness Team which shall be a resource to the bishop and cabinet to assist clergy who are having significant difficulty with effectiveness in ministry. To assist the Bishop in carrying out the responsibilities of ¶334.3 and ¶359.1b, the team will meet with the referred clergy person to identify concerns and design collaboratively a corrective plan of action for a return to more effective ministry.

A. Membership: There shall be eight members who shall be appointed by the Executive Committee of the Board of Ordained Ministry. The members of the team shall not be members of the Conference Board of Ordained Ministry. The majority of the team shall be clergy and at least one member shall be a layperson. In addition, the director of the Office of Ministerial Services and a district superintendent appointed by the bishop shall be ex-officio members without vote. In the event
the district superintendent of the referred clergy person is an ex-officio member of the team, that district superintendent shall recuse himself or herself, and the bishop shall appoint another district superintendent to sit on the team for that case only. In the event any member of the team is appointed to or attends the same local church as the referred clergy person, that member of the team shall recuse himself or herself, and the bishop shall appoint another clergy person or layperson to sit on the team for that case only.

B. Terms of Service: The team membership shall be divided into two classes of four years each. To promote continuity, four of the initial members shall be elected for two-year terms, and four of the initial members shall be elected to four-year terms. Notwithstanding conference rules of longevity regarding total length of service in an elected position, members shall not be appointed to serve two consecutive terms on the team.

C. Officers: The team shall elect a chair and a secretary every two years.

D. Referrals: The bishop and the cabinet shall refer to the team those clergy who are experiencing a pattern of diminished effectiveness in their ministry. The team shall meet with the referred clergy person and his/her district superintendent, and shall develop a plan to enable and support the restoration of effectiveness. The team shall continue to meet with the referred clergy person until such time as he or she has established a pattern of effectiveness, or, in the opinion of the majority of the members of the team, until the team determines that the referred clergy person is not making sufficient progress. The team shall report its conclusions to the bishop and cabinet.

E. Method: The team, the referred clergy person, and his/her district superintendent together shall develop a plan for the attainment of agreed upon goals that will demonstrate renewed effectiveness for ministry. The work of the team may include psychological testing, spiritual direction, coaching, health screening, random or directed drug testing, retreats, counseling, mentoring, educational opportunities, or other programs as needed to assist the clergy person in attaining effectiveness in ministry. A letter detailing the agreed upon goals and plan of work shall be sent to the referred clergy person from the Office of Ministerial Services immediately following the meeting in which the plan is developed. Progress shall be demonstrated and documented at each meeting.

F. Meetings: The team shall meet at least two times per year and the chair shall give reasonable notice of the meeting dates to all members as well as to the bishop and cabinet.
G. Financial Support: The team shall determine its financial needs in order to be effective, and shall submit any request for funding to the Office of Ministerial Services to be included in its budget.

25. Pastors in all classifications (licensed local pastors, provisional members, associate members and members in full connection, including those receiving Equitable Compensation grants) shall receive annual paid vacation with the church/charge being responsible for pulpit supply. Good vacation time benefits ministry. Since pastors are on call 24 hours a day, seven days a week, time away (when the parish is “vacated”) can bring renewal and refreshment for the tasks at hand.

Time devoted to continuing education or spiritual formation shall not be considered vacation time.

At least one day per week should be considered personal time, apart from vacation.

It is further expected that pastors who are in the first year of an appointment need to show sensitivity concerning the scheduling of their vacations. It is recommended that pastors in their first year refrain from taking vacation during the first month of their new assignment. Also, please be sensitive to extenuating circumstances that might arise from unforeseen moves. It is also recommended that first-year vacation be distributed across the year and not taken all at once. On the other hand, it is recognized that pastors and their families having just moved, with all the stress moving can bring, certainly are entitled to, and should take, some vacation time during the first summer.

It should be emphasized that clergy who move from one church to another within the United Methodist connection should not be expected to “earn” vacation in each new place as new employees. The situation is analogous to a branch-manager of a company being sent to another branch within the company.

Finally, continuing education for pastors is a requirement of the denomination (¶ 350) and time should be allowed for fulfilling this requirement. Continuing education is not to be considered vacation time. A clergy member’s continuing education and spiritual growth program shall include professional formation leaves at least one week each year and may include at least one month during one year of every quadrennium (¶ 350.2)

These policies should be applied with utmost cooperation and sensitivity between pastors and congregations, considering both the needs of the local churches and of pastors’ families. If there appears to be a problem
in this regard, It Is Imperative that the pastor, the Staff/Pastor Parish Relations Committee, and the district superintendent meet to seek a solution.

The church pays the cost of providing pulpit supply during vacation period. Vacation days not used in any single appointment year are lost and do not accrue, nor shall the charge be obligated to pay additional compensation for any such unused days.

Guidelines for vacation periods shall be based on the credited years of service as indicated in the service record published annually in the Alabama-West Florida Conference Journal. Vacation shall be calculated based on the conference year July 1 – June 30.

Full-time pastors in all classifications shall receive the following minimum annual paid vacation with the church/charge responsible for pulpit supply:

- 1-3 years = 2 weeks, including 2 Sundays
- 4-7 years = 3 weeks, including 3 Sundays
- 8-10 years = 4 weeks, including 4 Sundays
- 11 or more years = 5 weeks, including 5 Sundays

Part-time pastors in all classifications shall receive a minimum of two weeks of annual paid vacation, including two Sundays, with the church/charge responsible for pulpit supply.

BOARDS AND AGENCIES OF THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE

26. There shall be a Conference CORE Team, as outlined in the “Plan of Organization for the Alabama-West Florida Conference.” Policies or procedures for the CORE Team shall be guided by the most current Book of Discipline. The “Plan of Organization for the Alabama-West Florida Conference” shall be available on the conference website. Other offices, program boards, commissions, etc., as required by the Discipline but not a part of the CORE Team, are also authorized. Also see SR 5.

27. There shall be a Golden Cross fund and offering to aid medical needs of conference members/pastors. The chair of Golden Cross shall be nominated by, and shall report to, the CORE Team Division of Missions.

28. There shall be a Conference Policies and Personnel Committee appointed by the Bishop and approved by the CORE Team. The Committee shall establish uniform and equitable policies and procedures in the employment of Conference staff. It shall be the goal of our annual conference that all conference and district offices maintain reasonably consistent and inclusive policies regarding personnel, as is appropriate to each locale.
29. There shall be a Board of Ordained Ministry as provided by the Book of Discipline (¶635).

30. There shall be a Board of Laity, as described in the Book of Discipline (¶631), which shall be composed of the conference lay leader, the district lay leaders, the conference president of United Methodist Women (UMW), an additional officer of UMW, the conference president of United Methodist Men (UMM), the conference scouting coordinator, the conference director of Lay Servant Ministries (LSM), an additional officer of LSM, a United Methodist youth, and a United Methodist young adults, and the first elected lay delegate to general conference. Additionally, the following shall serve ex-officio: the presiding bishop, one cabinet representative, and the director of connectional ministries.

31. The conference lay leader shall be nominated by the Conference Board of Laity and elected by the annual conference at the time of quadrennial reorganization. Additional nominations may be made from the floor. The conference lay leader may serve no more than two succeeding quadrennia as the conference lay leader. All other officers within the Board of Laity shall be elected by the board. Vacancies in the office of conference lay leader shall be filled by nomination from the board in the interim, and confirmed at the following annual conference.

32. There shall be an Academy for Congregational Excellence, Inc. as authorized by the CORE Team, composed of officers and board members specified in the Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws of the Academy for Congregational Excellence.

33. There shall be a Commission on Equitable Compensation as provided by the Book of Discipline (¶625), composed of twelve members, six lay and six clergy, at least one clergy and one lay being from churches with fewer than 200 members. In addition, one superintendent named by the cabinet and a staff person from the fiscal office shall be members.

34. There shall be a Commission on Archives and History as provided by the Book of Discipline (¶641). Eight members shall be elected by the annual conference at the beginning of each quadrennium for a term of four years. Ex-officio members with vote shall include a representative from Huntingdon College, the conference historian (unless receiving compensation), the president of the AWFC Historical Society, the resident bishop, and the conference secretary. The Archivist shall be an ex officio member without vote. A chairperson, vice-chairperson, and recording secretary/financial secretary, shall be elected by the commission.

35. There shall be a Board of Pension and Health Benefits as provided by the Book of Discipline (¶639), composed of eighteen members elected to 8-year
terms, arranged in four-year classes to include representatives of both lay and clergy of both sexes. The Joint Committee on Clergy Medical Leave shall be constituted as provided by the Book of Discipline (¶652), with efforts made to be inclusive.

36. There shall be an Assembly Grounds Board of Trustees, constituted as authorized by a Corporation Charter from the State of Alabama, record of which can be found on page 112 of the 1958 Journal of our Annual Conference, and all amendments thereto. The current Articles of Incorporation and bylaws shall be available on the conference website.

37. There shall be a Council on Finance and Administration as provided by the Book of Discipline (¶611), composed of eight lay, five clergy members, and the ex-officio members as specified in ¶612. Unless the following are otherwise reimbursed, the CFA shall pay from the Conference administrative budget the reasonable and relevant expenses (as set or approved by CFA) of: the conference secretary’s office; expenses of the Council on Finance and Administration; all expenses of printing, honoraria, and incidental expenses connected with annual conference sessions; expenses of cabinet meetings; expenses of all conference agencies and special committees not participating in the conference benevolence budget; room and board at annual conference of agencies and special committees meeting with the Council on Finance and Administration for the purpose of making budget requests; honoraria of the conference secretary and assistant secretaries for annual conference, the registrar and assistants, the Journal editor; all expenses incurred by the Journal Editor in preparing/printing the Book of Reports and the conference Journal.

38. There shall be an Episcopal Residence Committee as provided by the Book of Discipline (¶638), composed of the chairperson of the Committee on Episcopacy, the president of the Annual Conference Board of Trustees, the president of the Conference Council on Finance and Administration, and two at-large representatives selected by the bishop. Efforts shall be made to keep membership inclusive, and at least two members of this committee shall be women.
RESOLUTIONS

A Resolution Calling for the Renaming of the Third Monday in January by the State of Alabama

WHEREAS “The United Methodist Church recognizes the prophetic witness of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and his message of justice and peace embodies the spirit of the Social Creed, the Social Principles of The United Methodist Church and the inclusiveness of our denomination. His words continue to inspire and guide our commitment to the whole Gospel and the observance of Martin Luther King Jr. Day enriches and strengthens our social witness today” (The Book of Resolutions of The United Methodist Church - 2008, Resolution #61, 2004 Book of Resolutions); and

WHEREAS, the State of Alabama is one of only two states that continue to recognize the third Monday in January as Robert E. Lee/Martin Luther King Birthday, and the recognition of General Robert E. Lee on the same holiday as Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. represents an era of slavery and oppression in contrast to Dr. King’s message of justice and peace; and

WHEREAS, it is a transgression against our biblical understanding of human equality in the image of God to continually subject nearly one-third of the State of Alabama’s population to a perceived celebration of their own dehumanization; and

WHEREAS, our nation’s pledge of allegiance is not to the Confederacy that General Lee represents, but to the United States of America; and

WHEREAS, most public school systems utilize the same holiday calendar as the State of Alabama so the schoolchildren of Alabama are led to think that General Lee’s influence on our nation is just as important as Dr. King’s; and

WHEREAS, the culture expressed in the recognition of General Lee’s birthday as a State of Alabama holiday on the same day as the federal recognition of Dr. King’s birthday is a point of hindrance in the recruitment of clergy from outside of the Alabama-West Florida Conference, thereby limiting the quality of leadership for the good of our local churches; and

WHEREAS, the recognition of General Lee as a State of Alabama holiday on the same day as Dr. King’s federally recognized holiday has proven to be a divisive issue among Alabamians, erecting unnecessary barriers of understanding and unity among our citizens,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Alabama-West Florida Conference of the United Methodist Church, in the love of Christ, who came to bring justice and peace, beseech our Legislature without further delay to change the State of Alabama holiday on the third Monday of January to only recognize Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.’s birthday, thus recognizing only Dr. King’s prophetic witness of justice and peace on the federally recognized holiday,
LET IT FURTHER BE RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be sent to the Governor of Alabama and every member of the Alabama State Legislature.

Submitted by

Dr. Darren M. McClellan  Dr. Cory Smith
Dr. Brian Miller  Rev. John C. Russell, Jr.
Dr. Jeremy K. Pridgeon  Dr. Wesley H. Wachob
Dr. Robbins Sims  Dr. Geoffrey Lentz
Rev. Sheila Bates

UNITED METHODIST CHILDREN’S HOME

UMCH is proposing a change that will allow for greater board diversity in areas such as race, expertise and funding by opening up 25% of our board seats to individuals who are not members of a United Methodist church. UMCH is committed to its longstanding identity as a United Methodist organization, and as such, believe in diversifying the board in ways consistent with the social principles as outlined in the Book of Discipline.

CERTIFICATE OF AMENDMENT TO THE
RESTATED CERTIFICATE OF FORMATION
OF UNITED METHODIST CHILDREN’S HOME

Article VI, Section 6.02, of the Restated Certificate of Formation is hereby deleted in its entirety and the following is substituted in lieu thereof:

6.02. The number of directors shall be not more than thirty (30), which shall include, at a minimum, the Bishop of the Alabama-West Florida Conference of the United Methodist Church (the “Alabama-West Florida Conference”) and the Bishop of the North Alabama Conference of the United Methodist Church (the “North Alabama Conference”). Of the remaining directors, seventy-five percent (75%) thereof shall be members of a United Methodist Church located in, or a member of the Annual Conference of, either the Alabama-West Florida Conference or the North Alabama Conference. The remaining twenty-five percent (25%) of the directors may be chosen from any religious denomination, shall reflect gender and ethnic diversity, and shall be chosen, to the extent reasonably possible, from the geographic locations in the States of Alabama and Florida which are served by the United Methodist Children’s Home. Any director vacancies shall be filled as provided in the Filing Entity’s Bylaws.
**CONSENT AGENDA**

The following reports indicated by agency name and beginning page number are part of the CONSENT AGENDA. They will be considered as having passed by consent of the annual conference unless they are removed from the CONSENT AGENDA on Monday, June 4, at the morning business session. **PLEASE READ THE REPORT CAREFULLY PRIOR TO THE ABOVE DATE. (See Standing Rule #12)**

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ACADEMY FOR CONGREGATIONAL EXCELLENCE

The Academy for Congregational Excellence is a ministry to the Alabama-West Florida Conference designed to live out its vision of “Effective Leaders, Fruitful Churches, and a Transformed World”, by raising the level of leadership within the Annual Conference. We all know that leadership, laity and clergy, is vital in terms of living out our mission of “Making Disciples of Jesus Christ to Transform the World.” ACE provides ministries and becoming partners with the Conference initiatives that will help everyone get better at being leaders who raise up other leaders.

ACE has worked in several ways to offer courses and events that would strengthen clergy and laity leaders. Here are some examples.

- **Becoming a More Effective Leader Course:**
  Ten monthly sessions for clergy and laity that addressed needs determined by a survey of clergy and laity across the Conference to provide help in areas identified by the survey. Approximately 115 people have participated in this course. ACE can deploy trained people into districts at the request of the superintendents to provide training for laity and clergy in many areas, such as Managing Your Time, Conflict Resolution or Transformation, Teams and Team Building, Stewardship, and Moving from Membership to Discipleship.

- **EQUIP Training:**
  Pastors and laity from smaller membership churches experienced a retreat that focused on leadership training, and an opportunity to take it back to the local church and teach others. This training or similar is currently available at request from churches, pastors, or district superintendents.

- **Partners in Preaching:**
  Led by Dr. Sam Persons Parkes, groups meet monthly in various locations around the Conference to study, learn together, practice preaching, and develop skills to make them even more effective as preachers. We are ending our 2nd year of these classes in 2018. Hopefully, more can follow in the next Conference year.

- **Leadership Alabama-West Florida:**
  Dr. Blake Horne and Dr. Rob Couch are working together to set up teams of laity to discover ministries that will address the context of their respective districts. It is patterned after Leadership Alabama. This is to be launched in 2018.

- **Working with the Annual Conference:**
  In 2018, ACE is partnering with the Annual Conference in the Next Steps Ministry, led by Dr. Victor Dingus. ACE is providing the funding
for Lewis Leadership Institute to provide training for small membership churches to determine their ‘Next Steps’ to make them more fruitful in making disciples. Also, ACE is helping to **fund a second year** to have Dr. Dingus continue working with the small membership churches in the Annual Conference. In addition, **ACE is being asked to put together a process for grants to be received by small membership churches** who want to take steps in a new ministry that will reach new people and/or meet needs in their respective communities. This is patterned after the Ministry Accelerator in the Virginia Conference.

Please visit our Website and Facebook page. There, you will find helpful information about leadership, articles, videos, and other sources that can be helpful in becoming better spiritual leaders. We plan to do more work on our Website this coming year. We welcome your ideas and want to meet your needs. Please communicate with us to let us know your thoughts.

If your district or local church has a need, contact Rev. Ron Ball, Director of ACE, through email at tball8859@yahoo.com or by phone at 850-624-2372. Our Administrative Assistant is Mrs. Allison Frost, and she can be reached by calling Aldersgate United Methodist Church, in Montgomery, Alabama. Our Board of Directors are diligently working to make ACE a wonderful gift to the churches of Alabama-West Florida. You can go online to our Website AWFACE.org to see the membership list, and to get information. Thank you for allowing us the privilege of serving this great Conference.

In Christ,
Rev. Ron Ball, Director
Academy for Congregational Excellence
CONFERECE CORE TEAM
CONNECTIONAL MINISTRIES

This has been an incredible year of adaptive change and fruitful ministry in the Alabama-West Florida Office of Connectional Ministries. It is an honor and a privilege to serve together with Bishop Graves, Conference Lay Leader Beverly Maddox, the Cabinet, as well as all the capable and talented clergy and lay leadership in our conference. Working to be stewards of the vision of the annual conference (¶608.6.c.(1), Book of Discipline, 2016) has provided us with unique opportunities to realign our resources and efforts. This process of realignment continues even now, as we seek to help the local churches live into the conference vision of being invitational and missional, regardless of size or location. To achieve this goal, we are blessed with the wonderful gifts, grace, and hard work of our Connectional Ministries team: Fred Blackwell, Celeste Eubanks, Amelia Fletcher, Sandy Gutting, Rev. Rob Haynes, Susan Hunt, Jennifer Lusher, Sarah McWilliams, Rev. Allison Posell, Martha Rovira, and Rev. Jeremy Steele.

One of the most dependable, consistent efforts in the areas of mission, advocacy, mercy, and justice comes from our Office of Mission and Advocacy, led by Susan Hunt. She coordinates the work of many of our conference missions and agencies as they work to bring the light of God’s presence into the dark areas of poverty, crime, disenfranchisement, exclusion. Her leadership in coordinating our Courageous Conversations has been invaluable.

Another bright spot in our shared ministry has been the development of a position for Director of Leadership Strategies. In that role, Jennifer Lusher was instrumental in developing “A Place at the Table,” a series of gatherings for intentional conversation about inclusivity and diversity in the local church. Recently the General Commission on Religion and Race awarded our conference a $15,000 grant to further offer and develop such opportunities, particularly with clergy leadership in mind. Our new Director, Celeste Eubanks, is working to take this effort to the next step.

A new focus of leadership development will be to provide more than just Annual Conference meeting experiences for our pages. When they are not actually running messages on the floor of the conference, they will gather together for times of learning, spiritual development, and fun as we identify, nurture, and raise up the future leaders in the faith.

One of the key components in this development of young leaders has been and continues to be the ministry of Rev. Jeremy Steele and Caroline Hare as they utilize innovative ways to train and support youth workers across our conference.

Our Hispanic/Latinx Ministries have provided greater impact within several
communities this year as churches have opened new facilities and offered new services. A new Board of Directors for Hispanic/Latinx Ministries has been formed to help provide direction for and support of that ministry as it works to expand and reach more people for Christ. Martha Rovira, Coordinator of Hispanic Ministries provides leadership in this effort.

Another new focus of the CORE Team has been the shift away from continued yearly funding of a few local missions to providing a means of providing grants to local churches who wish to begin a new ministry or to take a present ministry to the next level. That process is currently under development, with input from the CORE Team and from the Academy for Congregational Excellence (ACE). ACE is also developing a mission accelerator program that will teach basic planning and functional skills that will help assure the success of those who receive CORE Team grants.

The local mission agencies transitioning from annual Conference funding to other funding sources have seen increases in support from District and local churches, both financially and in terms of human resources. Our grant writer, Kristi McClellan, has achieved wonderful success by helping these local missions apply for and be awarded grants which have thus far collectively totaled more than $160,000!

The Antioch Project, a program to help revitalize mid-size churches, has morphed into the Antioch Partnership with a focus on developing leaders – clergy and lay – in any size church. Two training sessions have been held at Blue Lake for any who are interested, and more are planned. The assessment of the strengths and potential of the local church, together with recommendations and support, known as a Barnabas Weekend, remains available to churches that want to move to the next level in Kingdom work. There is still no charge to the local church or to leaders participating in the training: this is the result of your apportionment dollars at work for you. None of this would be possible without the incredible insight, wisdom, and work of Susan Hunt, Director of Mission and Advocacy, and Rev. Allison Posell, Connectional Ministries Adjunct for the Antioch Partnership. Sandy Gutting has provided consistent excellent support for all our efforts.

Communities of Transformation (COT) provides a shining example of success in ministries of mercy and justice. A collaborative effort that crosses social, economic, and denominational lines, it helps people escape the grip of chronic poverty by developing supportive relationships as they learn new ways to approach life. We mourned the death of COT developer and leader Laurel Blackwell this year, even as we celebrated the gift of her ministry and its lasting effects. Fred Blackwell is faithfully continuing that good work, with help from Janet Wooten and a staff of outstanding volunteers and VISTA workers. COT will continue to bear lasting fruit for the Kingdom!
A new addition to the ministries supported by the CORE Team this year is QuadW, a program that places interns in urban settings to learn as they carry out vital ministry in that context. Rev. Don Woolley and his team are working to broaden their efforts across our conference as we raise up new leaders. Rev. Lisa Pierce’s work with Alabama Rural Ministries (ARM) is expanding and including more people as they seek to end substandard housing in rural Alabama. The lives of those served, as well as of those volunteers serving, are changed forever!

It is a daunting task, in the space of a few paragraphs, to adequately describe the many activities and efforts of Connectional Ministries. We are a group in constant adaptive change, seeking to make our various ministries effective and successful in a constantly changing world. As our church moves forward, our goal is to remain firm in our commitment to win people to Christ, to see the unseen, to transform lives, and to help our church change the world. We work to do that by offering resources, tools, and support to the local churches as they strive to fulfill their own missions.

The experience of working alongside so many gifted and faithful leaders is both humbling and encouraging as they remind us that God’s power will equip us for God’s work in all circumstances. Even in uncertain times, God’s love is a sure thing and his call on us to be his hands and feet never fades or diminishes. What an honor to be part of this people called Methodist – one in Christ, one with each other, and one in ministry to all the world!

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Nancy Watson
Director of Connectional Ministries
CONFERENCE DISASTER RESPONSE MINISTRY

The ministry of Disaster Preparedness, Response, and Recovery has been active on all fronts in 2017. The robust training of early response volunteers has made significant inroads into building a base of volunteers to respond. The ministry added several new trainers who have added depth in training and provided support to response volunteers. The current list of trainers is available with contact information and scheduled training events on the Conference website.

A “Train the Trainer” workshop held by UMCOR convened at Gulf Shores UMC for three days in February. Trainers from across the jurisdiction learned new strategies and information from UMCOR leaders.

While response and preparedness training are pillars of a good program, it is extremely important to this ministry to have the understanding and support of the Conference cabinet and district superintendents in preparedness, response, and recovery. Bishop Graves and the current Cabinet completed response training in February. Their willingness to give of their time is much appreciated and vital to launching a successful response to Conference disasters as well as maintaining and sustaining a healthy recovery effort.

In May the Small Church Conference at Blue Lake invited Disaster Response & Recovery to participate in their workshop. Because it is critical for our smaller congregations to understand that there is ministry in response at all levels, two sessions were specifically designed to address their questions and offer opportunities.

The recovery efforts in the Century, FL community closed in April. Many thanks go to the team of Lynn Dobry and Felic Fussner for the heart-felt ministry they provided as they worked with teams from across the country and Canada. Letters of recognition and appreciation from our partners at World Renew and BRACE (Be Ready Appliance in Escambia County, FL) spoke to their dedication and integrity. Pastor Janet Lee represented the church and community with a voice of love and determination. With the UMCOR grant and the hard work of the Florida Recovery Team and local church, the Century community is on its way to regaining the historic streets, neighborhoods, and buildings that make it special.

In August two devastating hurricanes called us into response. Harvey hit the Texas Conference August 17 and AWF stood to support with supplies and volunteers as the call was made. As the trailers headed west to Mauriceville, TX and other areas, a new storm hit our sister conferences of Florida and South Georgia on August 30. Dr. Rob Haynes led the response
efforts of churches along the Panhandle who served as material collection sites, gave aid to evacuees, and served in other supportive roles in creative ways. Our churches also provided gift and gas cards at local shelters. Response is not done alone and the partnerships of our districts, the North Alabama Warehouse, and Salvation Army helped the flood survivors in the Jacksonville, FL area.

We have continued a close working relationship with our colleagues at UMCOR and throughout the connection. We have delivered thousands of flood kits, health kits, and other supplies to our neighbors impacted by the 2017 events. We owe a great deal of thanks to Mike Norris for his expertise and service in this area. We have loaned our shower trailer to the Florida Annual Conference for use by recovery and rebuild teams. We appreciate Rev. Rob Gulledge and his team for their work on this. In addition, we have used UMCOR to help us increase our ability to respond inside our annual conference, should the need arise, and to continue to respond to our neighbors. This help has come through a grant, training, and other assistance.

As these hurricanes impacted our neighbors, there was a smooth transition of leadership in the AWF Conference Disaster Ministry. After fourteen years, it is time for a fresh approach, time to give a continuum of services, time to maintain/build relationships with partners. Dr. Rob Haynes has the skills and heart to lead this ministry and will serve as team coordinator with prayerful integrity. I will remain engaged with the ministry as a recovery specialist in coastal efforts.

It has been my honor and blessing to serve the Alabama-West Florida Conference and UMCOR through three bishops, hurricanes, floods, tornadoes, oil spills, and in “blue sky days of preparedness”. Both the leadership and staff of Alabama-West Florida Conference and UMCOR have supported and offered their resources, talents and time to help make our response and recovery efforts successful and meaningful. Thank YOU!

Respectfully submitted,
Amelia Fletcher
DISTRICT REPORTS

BAYPINES DISTRICT
The Baypines District had another successful year as we expanded our ministries and continued to engage our congregants - encouraging them and ourselves to grow as Disciples. We continue to be challenged because our District is so diverse geographically, but we are finding ways to overcome that. We are excited about the many things that are going on in the District. Below are some of the highlights from this past year.

One of the very exciting things happening in our District centers around the ‘Next Steps’ program, with five of our churches are participating. This program is designed to engage small membership churches to examine themselves and ask hard questions about moving forward. The participating churches from our District are all very excited about and have found the program to be very helpful. We are looking forward to expanding “Next Steps” this year to additional churches in the Baypines District.

The District is in great financial shape and we are excited about that. We continue to be debt free as a District and our apportionment contributions continue to rise. As a result, our missional giving also continues to increase. We are now able to engage in new opportunities, such as Next Steps, that we could not consider in the past.

Our United Methodist Men and United Methodist Women continue to be a powerful force in our District. They are active and involved in many local, District and Conference projects. As we look to the future; our goal is to have an active UMM and UMW group in each church.

Our Lay Servant Ministries are thriving in the District. We have many trained Lay Servants who are active in and provide leadership in their local churches, teach classes, lead various ministries, and even serve as pastors of local churches. We have an upcoming Lay Servant training event scheduled in the District for early March. We praise the efforts of our Lay Servants and the District Lay Servant Ministries leadership team.

Our Missions programs are thriving, and we celebrate them. Many of our churches are actively engaged in missions in their local communities, in our state and nation, and to the ends of the earth. This year, we will again host a District trip to Costa Rica and a District trip to the Red Bird Missionary Conference where we sponsor three churches. We are thrilled to be offering these opportunities and we will be looking to establish local projects that can be offered District-wide as well.

Another very exciting accomplishment in our District is our partnership with the San Pedro mission, serving the Hispanic community in Baldwin County. We have committed financially to the church, and we were able to help them acquire land for a church building. Our goal is to help them become self-sufficient and a chartered United Methodist Church. Blue Lake Camp, located in our District, continues to do well and continues to improve its facilities.
Finally, our District has many trained and badged ERT’s and always responds quickly and with great compassion. We have great leadership for disaster response at the District level and we will continue to train and equip individual responders and teams.

It has been a great year for the Baypines District, and we are so thankful for the leadership of our District Superintendent, Rev. Dr. Darren McClellan. We look forward to moving forward, with his continued guidance and encouragement, as we seek new ways to be transformed Disciples of Christ.

Patrick G. Shubird, Chairperson
District Core Team

DOTHAN DISTRICT

The Dothan District is very thankful for all the Lord has done in 2017. The Dothan District Core team and the churches of our district have spent the year looking for opportunities to spread love and grace in the communities in which we live.

The Core Team worked diligently on Super Sunday to ensure that we were providing our congregations with the knowledge they needed for both conducting the business of the church and preparing them go out and spread the Good News. Our District Superintendent, Rev. Sara Shaver, conducted a very informative session on the work of the SPRC/PPR committee while Mr. Frank Dunnewind, Conference Treasurer & Director of Administrative Services, met with the chairpersons of the Finance committee of our local churches. These sessions were very well attended and provided the chairpersons with the information they needed to help in conducting the business of their respective churches. Opportunities were also available for growth in the areas of Financial Planning for Christians and Making Disciples.

Fundraising for the victims of the Christmas flood of 2015 continued in 2017. The Dothan District continued to work with Habitat for Humanity as we looked for opportunities to help the people of Elba. Many offerings were taken by the churches in the district and with their help we were able to collect the money needed to fund the building of a home in the Elba area. We look forward to starting the work on that house and the doors it will open for ministry.

The Dothan District had several gatherings throughout the year. We used these as a chance for the members of the district to worship and fellowship together

Submitted by
Clifford W. Haynes
Dothan District Lay Leader
MARIANNA-PANAMA CITY DISTRICT
The Marianna-Panama City district is working hard on the mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. Throughout the district, our congregations are committed to advance the Kingdom of God. Here are some highlights and updates on ministry in the Marianna-Panama City District in 2017:

• Lynn Haven UMC hosted this year’s District Conference and Training Event on Sunday, January 29, 2017. New District Officers were elected, and the 2018 Budget was approved. Dr. Victor Dingus lead a workshop entitled “The Next Step”, offering support to our small churches who want to take the next step in revitalization and community impact. Rev. Dan Pezet, the Director of Congregational Vitality, lead the workshop “Tweaking Church: Taking Your Best Ministries to The Next Level”.

• Our Annual District Youth Rally was held at Panama City First UMC on the evening of January 29, 2017. Over 150 youth and youth leaders from around the district enjoyed an evening of fellowship, fun and worship. Carl Fountain was the evening’s speaker and “The Consumed” provided the music.

• This summer the Marianna-Panama City District had the privilege of hosting the Cabinet Retreat. Woodlawn UMC graciously provided meeting space and local churches provided evening meals. It was a valuable time for the cabinet to learn and grow together under our new episcopal leader, Bishop David Graves.

• The District Lay Ministry continues to grow strong under the leadership of Linda Hornsby. Lay Ministry training was in full force last year with seven district lay servants attending training at Blue Lake in March. Ten participants attended “Train the Trainer” in April and 23 attended the taking basic and advanced classes during the September training event. Our district’s 43 Certified Lay Servants and 22 Certified Lay Speakers shared 216 messages in 64 different churches this year. Lay Speaker/Servant Ministry is critical to the ongoing ministry of the Marianna-Panama City District.

• This year’s hurricane season brought challenges for our entire country. In true United Methodist Church fashion, our district stepped up to help. In partnership with UMCOR and our conference disaster recovery ministries, four of our local churches along the I-10 corridor opened their doors as comfort stations to evacuees during hurricane Irma.

• Work among the homeless community in Panama City continues with First UMC, Panama City taking the lead. The Saturday morning breakfast program thrives with involvement from several United Methodist churches, as well as other religious organizations in the area. Panama City First UMC opened their doors to the homeless on nights when the temperature fell below 32 degrees.
• Under the leadership of Mike and Liz Bennett, The Ark continues mission work in the Panama City Beach community. Their outreach includes hosting J-1 workers from overseas, a transitional living program, a summer work travel program, a winter ministry with snowbirds, and serving on the Bay County Human Trafficking Task Force. The onsite coffee shop, The Pour, helps offset a portion of the Ark’s operating cost as well as serves as an excellent way to touch neighbors with the love of Jesus Christ.

• Charge Conference Training events were held on September 17 (hosted by Parker UMC) and September 18 (hosted by Bonifay UMC). These were opportunities for new pastors and new leaders to gain an understanding of the charge conference meeting and the preparations necessary for its successful fulfillment.

• On November 12th, Chipley UMC graciously hosted our annual District Conference. Leadership for 2018 were elected and the budget for 2019 was approved.

• Next Steps Ministries, with Dr. Victor Dingus, is working in partnership with two of our small membership churches. This first cohort serves not only to increase vital ministry and outreach at these churches, but to serve as a witness to the larger district about the value of intentional planning and ministry. We hope to kick off our second cohort of small membership churches working with Next Steps in 2018.

• ERT training for disaster recovery was held at Lynn Haven UMC on October 28. The Marianna-Panama City District is committed to providing leadership, training, and work teams in order to equip our local churches for ministry in the wake of whatever disasters inevitably come our way.

We look forward to the year ahead with great anticipation of what our churches and leaders will do in answering the challenge to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Respectfully submitted,
Shelly Slate, District Administrator
Doug Pennington, Superintendent

MOBILE DISTRICT
The clergy and laity of the Mobile District are excited to report:
• Two churches are participating in the Antioch Partnership
• Singspiration (a gathering of church choirs on the 2nd Sunday of every month) collected food for families at Thanksgiving and toys for children at Christmas
• Raise the Roof continued to host interns who repaired and replaced roofs throughout the Mobile area
• The North Mobile Planning Council hosted a White Christmas dinner at
Ebenezer UMC where $23,000.00 was collected for The United Methodist Children’s Home

- There were 160 of us at our Annual District Conference where we heard about Davis Rhodes’ work in Tanzania and the Chickasaw Children’s Choir sang a traditional Tanzanian worship song in Swahili (hand and foot motions included) and we had breakout sessions about:
  - Ezra Reports
  - UMVIM work in Tanzania
  - 1st Annual Love in Action (District mission day)
  - SPRC Training
  - Church Security

- The 1st Annual Love in Action event supported West Wilmer UMC as members from across the Mobile District did yard work, cleaned storage areas, made electrical improvements, and scrubbed showers and toilets – followed by a great meal and a birthday cake for three of the volunteers

- BOMACE (District Trustees) supported the Dumas Wesley Plane Pull as a sponsor and also participated as a team

- QuadW Missional Outreach received a $2.6 million grant (over 5 years) to continue its work providing opportunities for college students to spend the summer in missions throughout the United States

- BOMACE (District Trustees) sponsored a Hole for the United Methodist Inner City Mission Annual Golf Tournament

- Open Doors Resale Store distributed $130,000.00 to local ministries

- Pastors and laity participated in the Pastors’ Cook-off at the University of South Alabama Wesley Foundation – South Brookley UMC won, again

- The Vision Center hosted A Place at the Table, our August Pastor’s Meeting, and our Annual District Conference

- Christ UMC, Ebenezer UMC, Toulminville-Warren St UMC, and St. John UMC hosted Courageous Conversations

- Lay Servant Ministry training was held in two forums to meet the needs of those interested
  - 5 week session on Wednesday evenings
  - 1 day session on a Saturday

- 48 Charge Conferences were held and we began our sermon series on Grace – Prevenient Grace this year, Justifying Grace in 2018, and Sanctifying Grace in 2019

All of this and each local church provided opportunities to worship every Sunday, myriad ways to participate in missions and ministries locally and internationally, and numerous Bible studies all through the week.

We are both thankful for the work being done by the people of the Mobile District. We look forward to a new year to be in ministry to the world as individuals and as the local church.

We imagine each of our local churches as the hope of the world!

Ms. Clara Ester, District Lay Leader
Dr. Debora Bishop, District Superintendent
MONTGOMERY-OPELKA DISTRICT

After several years of faithful leadership and service as the Montgomery-Opelika District Superintendent, Rev. Dr. Robbins Sims returned to the local church effective July 1, 2017. At that same time, Rev. Dr. Jeff Wilson returned to the Montgomery-Opelika District and began his tenure as the District Superintendent.

During the 2017-2018 conference year, three churches completed the Next Steps process under the leadership of Dr. Victor Dingus: Glenwood, Pierce Chapel, and Hopewell (Opelika). These three churches have sought God’s will for a more fruitful and vibrant ministry, as they prayerfully responded to these four questions: Who are we now? What is God’s purpose for us now? Who are our neighbors now? And what is our next step? It is our hope that other churches will move forward in ministry using the Next Steps process in the coming year.

Three district-wide clergy gatherings were held during the previous year (in addition to our annual Christmas party with our friends in the Montgomery-Prattville District). Each of these clergy gatherings included time for fellowship, worship, business, lunch, and learning. In January, Rev. Dr. Brent Strawn, Old Testament Professor from Candler School of Theology, taught our pastors from his recent book, The Old Testament is Dying: A Diagnosis and Recommended Treatment. At each of these three gatherings, our pastors were challenged to form clergy peer groups within the district for learning, friendship, and accountability. The expectation is that every fulltime clergyperson appointed to serve in the Montgomery-Opelika District will be actively and regularly involved in some sort of clergy peer group by the end of 2018.

At the district conference held in January, clergy and lay from around the district gathered at St. James UMC in Montgomery to elect district officers and set the district budget. After these two items of business, Sgt. Ben Blackburn of the Opelika Police Department shared with the gathered group concerning safety plans in the local church, including ways to prepare for an active shooter situation.

Also, at our district conference, the following individuals were elected to serve on the Montgomery-Opelika District Strategy Team: Rev. Robin Wilson, Rev. Tim Meadows, Rev. Richard Williams, Rev. Brandon Dassinger, Rev. Audrey Rodgers, Rev. Katrina Paxson, Rev. Chris Kelsey, Rev. Lisa Pierce, Elizabeth Smithart, Anthony Leigh, and Chuck Gambrell. Focused on how the district can empower local churches to fulfill their mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world, this group will work with our district superintendent during 2018 to discern a district strategy. The district strategy will be used to guide the district superintendent, the district CORE team, and others as we allocate resources, determine priorities, and seek God’s preferred future for the people called Methodist within the Montgomery-Opelika District.

Respectively submitted,
Rev. Dr. Jeff Wilson, Superintendent
MONTGOMERY-PRATTVILLE DISTRICT
The Montgomery-Prattville District is, as Bishop Graves would say, “boldly” stepping out in faith and in action. In 2017, I humbly accepted the honor to serve as your District Lay Leader. District Lay Leaders have a role and responsibility to advocate for the laity. This happens through partnerships with the bishop, district superintendent, and local church leaders as we go about equipping the saints for the ministry and mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Through activities such as prayer, learning, serving, Mission/Outreach, advocacy, and community building we have endeavored to promote the mission of The United Methodist Church and respond to what God is calling us to do as follows:

Advocacy/Communication: We must stay informed as to issues that impact the life of the church.
To start the 2017 year, we held our District Conference followed by a Town Hall Meeting where Bishop Graves provided information on current and upcoming items of interest for our conference. Additionally, we participated in the denomination-wide “Praying Our Way Forward” initiative which included 75 weeks of focused prayer for The United Methodist Church with each annual conference taking one week to have intentional prayer for the mission of The United Methodist Church. Our week was September 11-15; and, Bishop Graves asked local churches with chimes or bells to sound them on Wednesday, September 13, 2017, from 5:23-5:30pm.

Also, newsletters were sent containing updates regarding the election of Bishop Karen Oliveto, the Judicial Council’s Decision, and the importance of observing Laity Sunday. Participation was requested from the General Board of Church & Society for “A Call to Pray.” We had a time of prayer and encouragement at the Alabama State House at the Legislative Prayer Breakfast. The breakfast was a time to be in prayer with our lawmakers and elected officials that their decisions would be in accordance with God’s will for our state.

Spiritual Growth: Our church family includes many different people. It is important to discover the skills that help us work more harmoniously with each other.
Several churches held Lenten Luncheons with inspirational speakers and times of prayer and fellowship. Good Friday services interpreted the ‘seven last words of Jesus’ in creative unique ways such as poetry, art, song, spoken word and mime.

We gained a better understanding of our denomination’s stance on social issues by attending a seminar presented on the Social Principles. Also, several lay and clergy members attended “A Place at the Table”, a gathering of ethnic believers seeking intentional conversations about inclusion and unity throughout the United Methodist church.

Learning Opportunities: It is important to continue to develop
leadership skills and to discover or rediscover spiritual gifts
Beverly Maddox, Conference lay leader, presented a district-wide Lay Leader Training Seminar titled, “What’s My Job”. It was a time of learning and getting acquainted. Ms. Cami Hacker, presented “Knowing and Understanding Your Personal Preference for Leading”. This workshop provided an opportunity to consider our personality and the personalities of those around us. Finally, participants learned how to blend those personalities in our efforts to be of service and pointing others to Christ.

An Emergency Response Training course readied participant to be of assistance in the event of a disaster.

Service: In 1 Peter 4th chapter we are instructed to “serve one another with whatever gift each has received.”
Our district Lay Servant Ministry is blessed to have dedicated Lay Servants who are willing to provide leadership in various ministries and filling pulpits. In 2017, Lay Servants provided leadership in 59 congregations and delivered well over 100 sermons. Lay Servant Training for the district was held at Greenville First UMC. We appreciate the leadership of Tom Crenshaw.

United Methodist Women continue to be an active and viable source of “Faith, Hope, and Love in Action” throughout our communities in the district as well as globally. Each year, United Methodist Women members prepare for faithful living and action by doing mission studies at Mission u. Millbrook First UMC of our district hosted the Mission u event. This event was attended by women from all over the Alabama-West Florida Conference. We are thankful to Penny Colin, district president of United Methodist Women for her service.

All over the district churches participated in the Great Day of Service with the purpose of seeing to the needs of our community, connecting with individuals, community agencies and other churches.
Mission/Outreach: We are to provide services to people who may not otherwise have access to those services.
We were given the opportunity to discern how to engage the children in our community by learning the possibilities of organizing child care out-reach programs in our churches. More than 2,000 shoe boxes were decorated and filled for Operation Christmas Child. Many cans of food were collected for food pantries, and over 9,700 food items were provided for Operation Backpack throughout the year.

Over the course of annual conference, Montgomery-Prattville District collected 1,641 UMCOR Relief Kits. We also responded to the conference Disaster Response and Recovery Ministry request for assistance to provide cleaning buckets and hygiene kits for those affected by hurricane events.

Community Building: The Church is to be a community of diverse believers, working and serving together for the transformation of the world.
We held a Multicultural Event promoting diversity and unity. The event featured ethnic cultures, tasty food, and artifacts from around the world. We are grateful to Fred and Laura Blackwell and all the churches and volunteers
who work through Communities of Transformation to help individuals order their lives.
We now have ten district churches living in community together for the purpose, with God’s help, of discerning ministries they may engage in together. The churches have been meeting for several months and all has not yet been revealed regarding God’s plans for them. The district benefited from many blessings in 2017. Together we can open many more doors in 2018!

In His Service,
Reverend John Brooks, District Superintendent
Cathy Givan, District Lay Leader
Website: http://www.montgomeryprattville.org

PENSACOLA DISTRICT
We have had a busy, fruitful year in the Pensacola District. Many thanks to the District CORE Team for the good work they have done this past year in planning the ministry and mission of our district.

In January we held our annual District LITE (Leadership Intensive Training Event), hosted by the Navarre United Methodist Church. We held several leadership training classes to help prepare our leadership in the District. It was well attended and the feedback was good. While the adults attended training at Navarre UMC, over 400 of our youth gathered at Community Life UMC for their annual FUSED event. A good time was had by all as they engaged in games, fellowship, and worship.

Our District responded to various weather disasters. Churches made flood buckets and health kits. We provided materials in response to the hurricanes in Texas, Louisiana, and Florida. We also sent work teams to some locations. Many thanks to all of the churches who served as locations to bring disaster supplies. A special thanks to Cokesbury UMC for their willingness to be our main drop point for supplies.

Our District United Methodist Women remain active in the district. They have been involved in many projects, ministries, and missions, not only locally, but throughout the world. We are thankful for all they do in our local churches and District.

Our District Lay Servant Ministries, led by Mr. Bruce Knecht, remains strong. Mr. Knecht and his team do a great job providing training and recruitment. Many of our lay speakers have preached, often called on at the last minute. We are thankful for this ministry and for all they do.
We have encouraged all of our ministers to have coaches. Most now have a coach and are finding the experience helpful. Several of our churches have also had an on-boarding event. This has proven beneficial especially for our pastors moving into new assignments.
The Pensacola District has continued to provide quarterly spiritual formation events. In these continuing education events, we provide training on some aspect of spiritual formation. We are thankful for our spiritual formation team that plan these events.

For over 50 years our District has had a group known as the District Board of Missions. This group has been responsible for helping start around 50 churches in our District. This year we changed our name to the District Board of Church Development. This enabled us to change our mission. Our first action item was to buy property and building for our Hispanic Church and ministry. We had a great celebration where we handed over the keys to their new facility that was completely paid for. The Board also gave them $10,000 to help with expenses to get the building ready for worship, Sunday school, and small groups. The Board of Church Development then gave St. Mark UMC a grant of $150,000 to replace their AC/Heating units and windows at their church and parsonage. We then awarded a $95,000 grant to the Pensacola United Methodist Community Ministries to do the same for their facilities. PUMCM, under the direction of Rev. Robin Noble, serves well over 20,000 meals a year. They minister to the “marginalized” in many ways. We are thankful for the Pensacola Board of Church Development and the difference they are making in our district. We cannot find another group like this anywhere in the United Methodist Church. We are thankful for them, their vision, the great work they do and the spirit in which they do it.

We are so thankful for Mrs. Mary Hernandez, our District administrative assistant. She does a great job in helping all of us do our work. Mary is always ready to help and always does it with grace. We appreciate the great job she does in keeping us all straight, her contagious attitude, and her great spirit.

We look forward to the future, celebrate our past, and are doing ministry and mission in the present!

Respectfully,
Dr. Tim Trent
Pensacola District Superintendent
LEADERSHIP TEAM REPORTS
BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND CAMPUS MINISTRY
GENERAL AGENCY REPORT

GBHEM launched a new mission and vision in August 2017. The updated mission and vision simplify GBHEM’s role as the primary leadership development agency for The United Methodist Church.

Mission: Build capacity for United Methodist lay and clergy leaders to discover, claim and flourish in Christ’s calling in their lives, by creating connections and providing resources to aid in recruitment, education, professional development and spiritual formation. Vision: Generations of thriving, diverse and compassionate Christian leaders for The United Methodist Church and the world.

OUR WORK THROUGHOUT 2017 AND 2018
The Office of Discernment and Enlistment at GBHEM hosted Exploration, a biennial event for young adults ages 18-26 to hear, discern, and respond to God’s call to ordained ministry as a United Methodist deacon or elder. More than 350 attended the event in Portland, Oregon in November 2017.

The Young Clergy Initiative (YCI) funded 34 innovative projects across the church in 2017 to attract young people to ordained ministry. Since its inception, more than 100 projects have been funded through YCI.

GBHEM works with the Commission on Central Conference Theological Education (CCTE) to distribute grants for the theological education of pastoral leaders in the Central Conferences. In 2017, the CCTE awarded 67 grants totaling more than $1 million to the seven Central Conferences of The United Methodist Church.

The Publishing Ministry, established to engage, nurture, and advocate for the intellectual life of The United Methodist Church, released 13 books in 2017, reaching more than 10,000 people.

In 2017, GBHEM’s Office of Loans and Scholarships awarded 2,000+ students with $4.1 million in scholarships and 350 students with $1.4 million in low-interest loans. More than $1.6 million was awarded to 200 recipients of the Excellence in Clergy Leadership Scholarship, which helps United Methodist clergy avoid excessive educational loan debt, minimize financial stress and build financial acumen.

To aid pastors in their ministry journey, GBHEM’s Candidacy Office introduced EM360. A formation guide to help pastors and congregations meet mission and ministry goals, EM360 is a tool to help clergy leaders identify and gauge pastoral effectiveness. In 2017, 1,438 candidates
enrolled in UMCARES to seek certified candidacy for licensed or ordained ministry. A total of 589 candidates were certified.

The Black College Fund distributed more than $9.68 million in 2017 to the Historically Black Colleges and Universities related to The United Methodist Church for faculty development, infrastructure maintenance, academic programs and scholarships.

Clergy Lifelong Learning led African-American United Methodist pastors who lead predominantly white churches in cross-cultural diversity training in South Korea in 2017. Continuing education and coaching opportunities are available through the innovative, multilingual platform, UMC Cyber Campus.

In 2017, Schools, Colleges, and Universities established the Siri S. Gadbois Fund in partnership with the National Association of Schools & Colleges of The United Methodist Church (NASCUMC) for mentoring among institution leaders (kickoff in 2018). The Cutting-Edge Curriculum Award was created to recognize 10 exceptional faculty members who are building effective and innovative academic courses (winners announced at the end of 2018 spring semester).

In partnership with Discipleship Ministries, GBHEM provides e-readers to theological schools in remote areas of Africa and Asia, offering access to the latest textbooks and references books. The E-Reader Project distributed 667 e-readers in 2017 and nearly 2,500 devices to 22 theological seminaries since the program inception in 2013.

In 2017, GBHEM and the Association of United Methodist Theological Schools (AUMTS) hosted two academic theological colloquies. Initiated in service to the intellectual life of the church, the colloquies are intended to be a resource for the church. The first colloquy (March 2017) focused on human sexuality and church unity, the second (November 2017) reflected on the practice of Missio Dei. Both events produced a study guide and book.

BIRMINGHAM-SOUTHERN COLLEGE
2018 Annual Conference Chaplain Report
Year 2017 was a year of transition for Religious Life at Birmingham-Southern College. Our office assistant of seven years moved to a new job, and our beloved Laura Sisson retired after 22 years of service to the college. At the end of June 2017, we welcomed Kathryn Davis as our new office assistant. In August 2017, Quinten Lochmann joined our office as the new associate director of Religious Life. Similar to Laura’s role, Quinten works primarily with our United Methodist churches and students, focusing on the distribution and management of the various United Methodist scholarships.
Kathryn and Quinten have already been hard at work and have created an online application form for United Methodist scholarships at BSC! In addition, Quinten has moved into the role of BSC Wesley Fellowship director. I previously served in that role, but instead now direct the Pre-Ministry Covenant Group which consists of about a dozen students each year who meet weekly to participate in conversations, study, and prayer meant to help them in their ministry discernment process.

We are currently working on a few new initiatives to expand our current programming including partnering with local UM congregations to host a retreat each semester for Wesley Fellowship students, and developing new means of funding Wesley Fellowship and the Pre-Ministry Covenant Group. Wesley Fellowship now requires sustaining funding as well as resources to host special learning, retreat, and service events. The Pre-Ministry Covenant Group also now requires funding for existing learning activities. We are seeking to provide our pre-elder track students with the opportunity to attend General Conference so they are more connected with and aware of the circumstances and the processes of the world-wide UMC.

As always, I am thankful for the opportunity to serve the UMC and Birmingham-Southern College; and our staff team greatly appreciates all the churches and individuals who support our ministry with their prayers, presence, gifts, service, and witness.

Enrollment:
After welcoming 375 new students in the fall of 2017 that included 349 first-years and 26 transfers, Birmingham-Southern College expects to grow enrollment with the tuition reset announced in the fall of 2017 (effective for class entering Fall 2018). Read more about the tuition reset at https://www.bsc.edu/lowertuition/index.html. This past year admissions personnel visited more than 715 high schools and attended more than 450 college fairs during recruitment travel.

Reaction to the Tuition Reset has been overwhelmingly positive. Recruiters report that reactions from prospective parents and students have been very positive and we are seeing an impact with increases to both first-year and transfer applications. We have heard many references to “we had crossed you off our list because of price” or “now I can look at you.” Recapturing this audience was a primary focus of the tuition reset and recruiters saw significantly more student and parent traffic at college fairs and High School Visits.

The tuition reset is having its desired impact in attracting more student and family interest in BSC from across the state, and beyond. Early indications are positive with more applications and admitted students at the time of this writing. More information will be shared in the future once our enrollment is determined for next year, but the current trends are very exciting.
Bridge to the Future Strategic Planning:
In addition to the reset, the College’s faculty and staff have engaged in some significant strategic visioning work for the future of BSC. Among ideas being explored are the creation of an innovative first-year seminar, which will both enhance new students’ ability to be successful at BSC and help connect them to the community in which they live and study. Changes in how faculty advises students and the deep integration of experiential learning experiences for all students, like internships and student research, are on the horizon.

New programs and collaborations added during the current academic year include new academic majors in: Creative and Applied Computing, Architectural Studies and Academic Distinctions in Poverty Studies and Public Health Studies. Additionally partnerships with peer institutions, such as the dual-degree nursing program with UAB and a 3-3 law program with Cumberland School of Law and many articulation agreements developed with community colleges in the region have been added this year.

As always, you are invited to bring students to events and receptions on campus and in your area. Indeed, your continued support through participating directly in recruitment activities, reaching out to prospective students, or simply referring them to us is deeply appreciated. Feel free to contact me or the Admission office for event schedule or to meet the recruiter for your area.

Linda Flaherty-Goldsmith  Rev. Julie B Holly  Quinten Lochmann
President  Chaplain  Associate Director, Religious Life

Sara H. Newhouse  David M. Eberhardt, Jr., Ed.D.
Vice President for  Vice-President for Student Development
Admission & Financial Planning

HUNTINGDON COLLEGE
Huntingdon College Campus Ministries has experienced another fruitful year of participation, discipleship, and vocational discernment. The Reverend Rhett Butler ‘13 began his first appointment as Chaplain in Summer 2017. He has continued the visionary ministry of The Reverend Woods Lisenby ‘11 during his three years at Huntingdon. “Surely the presence of the Lord is in this place!”

The worshipping community grew steadily for the three years that Chaplain Lisenby served the College, and the growth trend has continued. Campus Ministries reached an all-time high attendance for weekly worship of 186 students at one of its Fall Semester 2017 Tuesday Night Worship (TNW) services. The Campus Ministries student leadership goal for TNW in 2017-
18 was to reach 100 students in worship each week, a goal that has been surpassed 12 times as of February, 2018.

Campus Ministries offers two weekly worship services that are open to all members of the Huntingdon community. Huntingdon College is committed to worship formed by the deep traditions of The United Methodist Church. The main worship service is Tuesday Night Worship. This is a high-energy student led service with an emphasis on creating a space that is inviting for non-Christians. Huntingdon students have begun fondly referring to TNW as “Church for people who hate Church.” By that, they mean significant numbers of new attendees are previously unchurched students who feel welcome to, “Come to Church,” many for the first time in their lives!

Campus Ministries also offers a weekly Eucharist which is celebrated at 11:45 a.m. every Wednesday during the school year. This 30-minute liturgical service provides a mid-day time of reflective worship ending with Holy Communion. In addition to these two regular worship services, a variety of small groups are available to the student body. Small group attendance averages over 60 weekly.

Chaplain Butler works closely with Department of Religion faculty in assisting Huntingdon students in the discernment of ministerial vocation. The Chaplain led seminary trips to Asbury, Duke, and Emory during Fall 2017. These on-campus visits are immensely beneficial for Huntingdon students in discerning calls to ordained ministry and in making decisions about seminary attendance. Huntingdon continues to be committed to raising up ordained ministers in the Alabama-West Florida Conference of The United Methodist Church.

The College is entering its third year of sponsoring the Huntingdon Leadership Academy (HLA). HLA is a weeklong residential camp for high school students designed to mentor students in discerning God’s call for their lives. HLA is directed by the Reverend Macon Armistead ‘14. The Huntingdon College Chaplain, Religion faculty, local United Methodist clergy, and community leaders in Montgomery gather as speakers and small group leaders to make this week a foundational moment in the faith journey of high school students.

As I conclude my 39th year as a United Methodist Elder in Full Connection, and my 15th year as President of Huntingdon College, I give thanks for the hallowed ministry of Christian higher education at Huntingdon. “To God Be the Glory!”

(The Reverend) J. Cameron West
President, Huntingdon College
ALABAMA STATE WESLEY FOUNDATION

My Sisters and Brothers in Christ,
I am again elated at the opportunity to share with you a glimpse of the exciting and life changing experiences that our student leaders of the Wesley Foundation at Alabama State University have been part of this past year. Each year lends itself to unique avenues for transformative ministry opportunities on campus and in the larger Montgomery community. Along with our weekly worship activities, the Wesley Foundation is active in several residential worship facilities on the ASU campus.

Our students are also highly sought after by neighboring communities for mentorship and leadership opportunities. Last year our students took on the task of partnering with a local UMC church to reach its community and engage residents about the importance of health education to combat escalating health disparities within economically deprived communities.

The Wesley Foundation ASU’s student leaders partnered with a local church to reach its community and engage residents about the importance of health education in the spring and summer of 2017. Presently in our conference, we have experienced the closure and consolidation of several churches, however, African-American churches are suffering disproportionately from the major generation gap between the baby boomer/busters and our millennials that has resulted in stagnant youth and young adult participation. The catastrophic effect of missing generations in our congregations is felt economically, results in church closings, and ultimately the disintegration of yet another pillar of hope in the Black community.

To bridge this gap and address the attendance disparities of our youth and young adults, the Wesley Foundation at ASU decided to play a greater role in the life of African-American churches in communities that are more vulnerable to high-risk behavior in part due to the legacy of social stratifying policies and practices in the city of Montgomery. After making the necessary needs assessment for the Narrow Lane community, the Wesley Foundation at ASU and Zion Fellowship UMC connected with other businesses, educational institutions and community-based organizations to inform and empower the residents about HIV/AIDS, hepatitis C and substance abuse. This partnership not only proved to be beneficial, but it allowed a local UMC African-American congregation to witness the impact they can make with the help of willing partners. Together, we can accomplish anything and with God ALL things are possible!

As we move forward in this new year with hope and expectancy, our student leadership team and board of directors are renewing our commitment to the call of service from our local communities to assist community gatekeepers with strengthening our communities from the inside out. The Wesley Foundation at ASU is committed to moving forward in transforming our
world by pledging to share in the struggles of others and offering them hope through the ministry of presence, service and action. Thank you for all that you do!

Sincerest Regards,
Rev. Dr. Charity Starr Mitchell, Director/Campus Minister

Executive Board Members
President- Gloria Williams
Vice President - Cathy Washington
Secretary- Regina Hicks
Treasurer- Crystal Jackson

AUBURN WESLEY FOUNDATION AND COOPERATIVE PARISH
On behalf of the students and staff of the Wesley Foundation and the congregations of the Auburn Wesley Cooperative Parish, we want to thank the Conference for their support and prayers. Exciting times continue and we are extremely thankful! The student ministry continues to be strong and vibrant. The student led model claims and develops leaders. The Parish brings some of those leaders into three small membership churches to explore callings and experience ministry. We have a unique opportunity and are trying to faithfully claim it!

In July of 2017 an adjustment was made in the Parish. Two churches received part-time local pastors and the Parish was reduced to three churches. Under the leadership of the Rev Dr. Anna Crews Camphouse and three or four students, Armstrong UMC, Loachapoka UMC and Notasulga UMC comprise the Parish.

Thank you Alabama West Florida Conference, the Montgomery Opelika District, Rev Dr. Jeff Wilson and Bishop Graves for your support!

Student Ministry
Program Ministry (weekly)
• Worship – Sunday 8 PM
• Prayer Breakfast - Wednesday 7 AM
• Graduate Student Lunch & Devotion - Wednesday Noon - Student Center
• Thursday Night Dinner- 6:30 PM
• Freshman Community- Thursday 7:15 PM
• 5 or 6 Bible Studies – Thursday 7:30 PM
• 14 to 15 Discipleship Groups throughout the week
• Intramural Sports
• Worship Bands (2 groups)
• Choir- restarts January 2018

Regular Events (not weekly)
• Retreats (Fall, Winter, Conference, and Freshmen)
• Game Day Tailgate
• Social Events (4 or 5 per semester)
• Holy Week
• Seminars- (topics vary)

Other Events
• Winter Ski Trip, Make a Difference Day, Parish 5th Sundays etc.

Mission / Service
Local
• Super Mission Saturdays- Home Repair with ARM
• Monthly Food Bank w/ Loachapoka UMC
• Gleaning/Crop Drop twice per year
• Work Week Service Fundraisers

National
• Fall mission – Baton Rouge
• Christmas Mission (Flood Relief – Florida)
• May Mission- Puerto Rico
• Youth Caravan Summer 2018
• Children’s Caravan 2018

Auburn Wesley Parish
Directed by Rev. David Goolsby
• Lead Pastor Rev. Dr Anna Crews Camphouse
  • Armstrong UMC
  • Loachapoka UMC
  • Notasulga UMC
  • Student Pastors – Through the year- Conner Feemster, Kevin Lazarus, Anne Louise Pass, Tripp Gullede, Branden Belser, and Davis Kinchler. Also serving at Pepperrell UMC and Gold Hill UMC before July 1 – Wesley Rhodes and Leo Gonzalez

Auburn Wesley Foundation Staff
Director/Campus Minister – Rev. David Goolsby
Associate Director/ Campus Minister and QuadW Associate– Rev. Tony Jeck
Parish Pastor/ Campus Minister- Rev. Dr. Anna Crews Camphouse
Director Freshman Ministries/ Local Pastor at Pepperell UMC- Rev. JT Mercer
Director of Administration, Alumni & Development – Patricia Stevenson
Administrative Assistant (part time) – Becca Mercer
Book Keeper- (part time) – Stephanie Jeck

Thank you Alabama West Florida!
Grace and Peace,
David Goolsby
TROY UNIVERSITY WESLEY FOUNDATION

Troy University Wesley Foundation Board
Co-Chairs: Jennifer Wilson and Trent Ernest
Secretary: Tammy Powell

Class of 2019: Bart Wallace, Tammy Powell, Melissa Mikul
Class of 2020: Lillis Sullivan, Trent Ernest, Kenny Green, Jennifer Wilson
Class of 2021: Dusty Taylor, Buddy Starling, April Johnson, Linsey Sanders
Class of 2022: Madison Hale, Ken Chance, Melanie Adams

Ex Officio: Rev. Danny Arnold, Rev. Steve Winton, Rev. Ed Shirley
Honorary Life Member: Home Homann
At large, student, and additional Board members: Stephen Spivey

TUSKEGEE WESLEY FOUNDATION

I am excited to be called to share in the ministry of Christ via the Wesley Foundation at Tuskegee University. Serving as Campus Minister and Director of Tuskegee Wesley has been a great honor and a privilege. I am in awe that God loves me enough to allow me to serve with such an enthusiastic group of young adults.

In September 2017, I was appointed as the new director of the Tuskegee Wesley Foundation. Upon my arrival I found a committed group of 15 students who met every Tuesday night for bible study and fellowship in the Tuskegee University Chapel. By the end of the Fall semester, December 2017, ‘the Wes’ had an average attendance of 30 students at our weekly Tuesday night Bible Study. The Tuesday Night Bible study is our main ministry event. While we are happy for the increase in numbers, our greatest joy, has been watching the students grow spiritually. Students have grown spiritually as they worship together, study together, and as they embrace each other as family while sharing the love of Christ on the campus of Tuskegee University and abroad.

Through the Tuskegee Wesley Foundation, students this year have worked in the local food pantry, planned and planted a community garden, built a playground for local elementary students, sponsored the education of a child in Uganda, provided study bags for over 600 university students, participated in Operation Christmas Child, and more. We have witnessed students move from doubt to faith, from knowing little scripture to quoting memory verses, from no church participation to active participation, and from rejecting others to embracing them. We look forward with great anticipation to watching God continue to move through the lives of our students.

We thank the Alabama/West Florida Conference for your continued support, prayers and love.

We thank the Alabama/West Florida Conference for your continued support, prayers and love.
Yours in Service
Rev. Audrey Rodgers
Director/Campus Minister
Tuskegee Wesley Foundation

Tuskegee Wesley Foundation Board
Chair: Dr. Deloris Alexander
Vice Chair: Rev. Lisa Pierce
Treasurer: Ms. Joyce Carter Hill
Secretary: Mr. Zach Beasley

Class of 2018: Mr. James Arrington, Mr. Zach Beasley, Dr. Wylin Wilson,
Class of 2019: Rev. Lisa Pierce, Ms. Jakaela Davis, Mrs. Karen Boswell,
               Mr. Lee Thomas
Class of 2020: Ms. Joyce Carter Hill, Dr. Deloris Alexander,
               Mr. Roland Vaughan
Class of 2021: Dr. Rob Lyda, Rev. Richard Carter, Rev. Tom Skeen
Class of 2022: Mr. James Arrington, Dr. Chitra Nayak, Ms. Tameika Williams

Ex Officio: Bishop David, Graves, Rev. David Goolsby, Dr. Jeff Wilson
At large, student and additional Board Members: Braxton Bush

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH ALABAMA WESLEY FOUNDATION
The Wesley Foundation continues to reach the students of the University of South Alabama and beyond. We strive for all students to experience purpose, meaning, and abundant life as authentic disciples of Christ. It is a privilege to be on the front lines shaping the next leaders of our church. Wesley is a place for students to learn, live out, and be changed by what it means to love God and love their neighbors. Students at Wesley GROW their faith in Christ, CONNECT with other students in Christian fellowship, and SERVE their neighbors in response to the love of Christ.

Grow
Wesley helps students grow their faith through DISCIPLESHIP and WORSHIP. In depth Bible studies, worship services, prayer groups, accountability groups and small groups are all weekly events at Wesley. Every week at our Tuesdays night services, students experience scripture, prayer, discussion, sermons, conversations and reflective exercises.

Connect
FELLOWSHIP is so important for college students that are hungry for authentic community. This community is built through connections between students doing life, sharing experiences and having fun together. If we
expect students to remain or become Christians in college, then Christian fellowship is vital! We weekly engage students (not already involved with Wesley) on campus through various forms of outreach. Our building (just off of campus) is also a great asset for connection. What a blessing it is to have a place for students to connect and call home. We use this “home-base” as a place to do ministry as well as launch students out into ministry!

Serve
We believe in loving our neighbors through OUTREACH and MISSION. We equip students to be in mission every day wherever they are. We want our students to know that mission is not just something that we do, but it is who we are. College campuses are a ripe mission field. Our students are on mission in dorm rooms and classes and everywhere in-between. We give students opportunities to get out of their comfort zones and experience God in different contexts. This is done through opportunities for local missions (working with local agencies) as well as mission trips. This May we will be working with the UMC in Beaumont, TX on flood relief efforts.

Board of Directors
USA Wesley has a great board of directors! Our board meets every other month and whenever necessary. Along with normal board responsibilities, the board is essential for our fundraising efforts every year. We are very thankful to both, the Mobile and BayPines Church and District Superintendents that support us and help us with these fundraisers! Our board continues to work hard to provide for our program and building needs. We are thankful for such great board members!

Our 2018-2019 Board of Directors Officers includes: Crystal Couch (Board Chair), Amanda Messer (Vice Chair), Cris Smith (Treasurer), Destiny Dunn (Secretary), Scott Weldon (Finance Chair), Brent Cumbest (Property Chair), Harold Williamson (Personnel Chair), and Amanda Messer (Nominations Chair).


Class of 2020: Jay Cooper, Crystal Couch, Anna Costarides, David Hamby, Trip Sullivan, Kimberly Ingram, Scott Weldon, and Stan White.

Class of 2019: Judy Burnham, Brent Cumbest, Kim Doss, Amanda Messer, Amy Mitchell, Matt O’Riley, Cris Smith, and Harold Williamson.

Wesley will undergo some leadership changes starting in the Fall of 2018, so please keep this vital ministry to young adults in your thoughts and prayers. USA Wesley is thankful to the pastors and laity of The AWF Conference for
it’s amazing support! Specifically we thank the Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministry for its continued support and investment in the church’s future!

Grace & Peace,
Johnny Peters
Director / Campus Minister
University of South Alabama Wesley Foundation

UNIVERSITY OF WEST FLORIDA AND PENSACOLA STATE COLLEGE WESLEY FOUNDATION

Highlights of the Year: 1. Watching disciples be made by amazing students seeking God and sharing his love with others. 2. We began Monday night meals and it has brought us closer together as we share a common mealtime. 3. Our Wesley Band recently celebrated the one-year anniversary of the contemporary service at St. Marks UMC where they serve weekly. 4. Our Wesley Foundation helped host Meltdown, the biggest youth event in our conference, with close to a thousand youth and adults in attendance. 5. Seeing students receive a call to ministry.

Programing: We make disciples by meeting twice a week at UWF for worship and study. On Monday nights at 5:30 we have a meal together, our band plays a few songs, and we have a study on a certain scripture. Our Thursday night get together is at 9pm with a time of fellowship, the band, and then a discussion on a certain topic relating to college life. Along with the weekly events we do fun outings like beach parties, camping, cookouts, and mission trips.

Why Campus Ministry Is Important: We are bridging the gap between youth ministry and adulthood. Many churches have a budget and a staff person for youth ministry but give very little effort to young adult ministry. When we don’t continue to focus on our young people they leave the church and often don’t come back till they have children if at all. College is when students are making major decisions about what they want to do for a living and who they want to be. We as a church need to be there for these students in this formative time.

What You Can Do to Help: Please pray for us. Invite us to your church to share our story. Invite your young people to come join us when they get to college. Continue to partner with us through your financial support by missions’ donations, budget line items, the Advance Special, and your connectional giving. We would be thrilled to send our band (we even do southern gospel), our students (some are quite eloquent), or our pastor (he’s itching to preach). Thank you for your love and support.

Nominations Report:
Officers: Clint Jernigan, Chair; Matt Hull, Vice Chair; Ashley English, Treasure; David Morris, Secretary
Class of 2020: Myron Smith, Patty Northup, David Morris, Pam Avery, Gail Baughman, Jonathan Hart
Class of 2021: Sandra Thompson, Clint Jernigan, Jim Hurd, Beth Herndon, Brandon Pierce, Alethia Zambesi, Betsy Bowers, Karen Barnes

In God’s Love,
Rev. Stuart Worth, Campus Minister
UWF/PSC Wesley Foundation
THE BOARD OF LAITY REPORT

The members of the Conference Board of Laity are: Beverly Maddox, Conference Lay Leader; Frank Jenkins, Associate Conference Lay Leader; the eight District Lay Leaders: Mandie Kinsey, Baypines District; Billy Dozier, Demopolis District; Cliff Haynes, Dothan District; Cameron Winton, Marianna/Panama City District; Clara Ester, Mobile District; Chuck Gambrell, Montgomery/Opelika District; Cathy Givan, Montgomery/Prattville District; and Gene Floore, Pensacola District; David Bowen Conference Director of Lay Servant Ministries; Helen Edwards Conference Lay Servant Ministries at large; Frank Moore, Conference President of United Methodist Men; Vaughan Nichols, Conference Scouting Coordinator; Debbie Bell, Conference United Methodist Women President; Nancy Shealy, Conference UMW at large; Barbara Boland, treasurer and at large; Dr. Nell Stott, at large; Pat Shubird, at large; Matt Langford, Young Adult; Megan Baker, Young Adult; Sydney Wilson, Youth; Chase McKoon, Youth; Dr. Steve Furr, General Conference Delegate, Past Conference Lay Leader; and Ex-officio Members: The Resident Bishop, David Graves; Cabinet Representatives, Rev. Timothy Trent, Dr. Debora Bishop; and Director of Connectional Ministries, Rev. Nancy Watson. I am thankful for these individuals who come together to complete the Conference Board of Laity. They dedicate untold hours to strengthening the laity in our conference.

The Board of Laity sponsors the Laity Banquet each year at Annual Conference. Our guest speaker for 2017 was Patricia Barnes of Sister Schubert Rolls. She gave a very encouraging, inspirational and entertaining message. The Laity Banquet was well attended by both Laity and Clergy. The Conference Board of Laity would like to thank you all for supporting and attending the Laity Banquet. It is a positive statement of Clergy and Laity in Partnership in Ministry.

The Board of Laity will continue to stress the importance of Laity working together with Clergy to strengthen the witness of the Alabama-West Florida Conference. A strong and positive relationship between Clergy and Laity is vitally important as we face uncertain times in our churches and in the world. By staying strong in faith and standing together, we will grow in grace, in spirit, and compassion.

Galatians 5:22-23 (*The Message*) But what happens when we live God’s way? He brings gifts into our lives, much the same way that fruit appears in an orchard—things like affection for others, exuberance about life, serenity. We develop a willingness to stick with things, a sense of compassion in the heart, and a conviction that a basic holiness permeates things and people. We find ourselves involved in loyal commitments, not needing to force our way in life, able to marshal and direct our energies wisely.

I love the words at the beginning of Galatians 5:22 from the Message. “But
what happens when we live God’s way”? When we live God’s way, we “Imagine a Church That’s the Hope of the World” and “Imagine by Faith, it can Happen”. When we live God’s way, we become the light of the world and the light of Jesus shines brightly in a dark and lost world. Others are drawn to us and we have the privilege of bringing them into the full salvation of Jesus Christ. Living God’s way, we reach more people and make more disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

The laity in our conference are the feet and hands of our mission in ministry led by the inspired preaching and leadership of our clergy. We are living God’s way and I have the proof! – The proof is in the reports of the Conference Board of Lay Servant Ministries, the United Methodist Men, the United Methodist Women, and all the many outreach ministries in the local church.

Several years ago, the AWF Conference Board of Laity chose Ecclesiastes 4:12 as reminder that together we are stronger. “And one standing alone can be attacked and defeated, but two can stand back-to-back and conquer; three is even better, for a triple-braided cord is not easily broken.” We have had some mountaintop experiences and we have had some deep in the valley experiences. Despite what the world tells us, we are not broken! We stand together, all to the Glory of God.

Beverly Maddox
AWF UMC Conference Lay Leader

LAY SERVANT MINISTRIES

Lay Servant Ministries is one of the most significant lay leadership development programs available in the United Methodist connection. Through this system of equipping and empowering, lay servants have the opportunity to grow as disciples of Jesus Christ who then go and make other disciples.

We go into the world in outreach and mission offering hospitality to those not yet in the body. We offer Christ by providing an opportunity for people to commit their lives to God through baptism by water, the Spirit and profession of faith. We nurture people in Christian living to help them find a true sense of purpose in life and what it means to live their belief through acts of piety, acts of mercy, and other means of grace. Through engagement we send out these grace-filled followers of Jesus Christ who are putting their faith into action, helping to transform the surrounding community, and offering hospitality in the name of Jesus Christ.

There are three categories of lay servants under Lay Servant Ministries: Certified Lay Servants, Certified Lay Speakers, and Certified Lay Ministers.
A Certified Lay Servant is a professing member of a local church or charge or a baptized participant of a recognized United Methodist collegiate ministry who desires to serve the church, who knows and is committed to Scripture and the doctrine, heritage, organization, and life of The United Methodist Church. This is a person who has received specific training to witness to the Christian faith through spoken communication, to lead within a church and community, and to provide caring ministry. The Certified Lay Servant must have approval of his/her Senior Minister before beginning the process and must take the Basic Course and one Advanced Course.

A Certified Lay Speaker is a Certified Lay Servant whose call has been affirmed by the Conference Committee on Lay Servant Ministries to serve the church in pulpit supply. In addition to the Basic Course, one must complete the following courses to become a Certified Lay Speaker: Leading Worship, Leading Prayer, Discovering Spiritual Gifts, Preaching, United Methodist Heritage, and United Methodist Polity.

A Certified Lay Minister is a Certified Lay Servant or Certified Lay Missioner who is called and equipped to conduct public worship, care for the congregation, assist in program leadership, develop new and existing faith communities, preach the Word, lead small groups, or establish community outreach ministries as part of a ministry team with the supervision and support of a clergyperson. Approval is granted through the Board of Ordained Ministry and assignment is made by the District Superintendent. A track of study is required to become a Certified Lay Minister. All three categories have annual renewal, education, and reporting requirements. We are especially appreciative to Rev. June Jernigan, Conference Director of Ministerial Services, for her work in developing our Conference guidelines for the Certified Lay Minister program.

Our Conference Committee has also approved our lay servants being allowed to take a number of the advanced courses online through BeADisciple.com. During 2017 our District Directors held trainings in seven of eight districts and we held a Conference Committee training event at Blue Lake in March 2017. During 2017 we were asked to substitute for clergy 1,036 times. Our lay speakers spoke in 199 different churches. At the end of the year, we had 265 Certified Lay Servants, 161 Certified Lay Speakers, and 2 Certified Lay Ministers.

We are extremely grateful for the support of the clergy in the Conference and for the help and support of the District Superintendents. We give thanks for the overwhelming support given to us by Bishop David Graves. We are also very thankful for our Conference Committee on Lay Speaking Ministries.
Our Committee consists of:
Conference Director – David Bowen

District Directors –
Baypines: Peggy Duck Branch
Demopolis: Lynne Adams
Dothan: Carolyn Myers
Mariana/Panama City: Linda Hornsby
Mobile: John Sellers
Montgomery/Opelika: Pat Caylor
Montgomery/Prattville: Tom Crenshaw
Pensacola: Bruce Knecht

At-Large Members:
Beverly Maddox, Helen Edwards, Matt Langford, Edna Williams, Candace McKim, Judy Reiter, Mike Arnold, Mary Messer, and Rev. Steve Kopp.

Our Conference remains active in the national Annual Conference Directors of Lay Servant Ministries and in our organization within the Southeastern Jurisdiction. Our Conference director, David Bowen, serves as the secretary of the Southeastern Jurisdiction Annual Conference Directors of Lay Servant Ministries. We are excited to be the host conference for the Southeastern Jurisdiction Annual Conference and District Directors of Lay Servant Ministries 2018 meeting. The meeting will be July 12-14, 2018 at First United Methodist Church in Montgomery. This meeting will have special training for all Annual Conference and District Directors in the Southeastern Jurisdiction. We will also offer the Basic Course and several Advanced Courses that will be available all lay servants.

David Bowen
Conference Director of Lay Servant Ministries

UNITED METHODIST MEN
The United Methodist Men of the Alabama-West Florida Conference have worked diligently in 2017 to implement our mission of supporting spiritual growth among men, and helping men to mature as disciples as they encourage spiritual formation in others.

Our yearly Men’s Advance was held in April of 2017. Our theme was “Rough Cut Men” Real Men, Real Life, Real Impact. David Dusek was the workshop speaker. The Advance Keynote Speaker was Bishop David Graves, our Resident Bishop. He provided a challenging message on the responsibilities of men’s ministry in the church and conference.

The Joe Garris Sr. Outstanding Men’s Ministry Award, was established to recognize the vision and leadership of Joe Garris, the first AWF Conference UMM President. The award is presented annually to a UMM Unit for their service in promoting men’s ministry in their church, community, and the
AWF Conference. The 2017 recipient was Cokesbury United Methodist Church.

The Robert Powell, Men’s Ministry Achievement Award was established to recognize the leadership and inspiration of Robert Powell, a former Conference President and National President of the United Methodist Men. The award is to recognize an individual who demonstrates the qualities of discipleship and provides by example, spiritual growth among men. The recipient for 2017 was Rev. Tim Trent, District Superintendent of the Pensacola District.

Additionally, the Conference United Methodist Men have established an annual presentation of The Susanna Wesley Award of Excellence to be presented at the Laity Banquet during the Alabama-West Florida Annual Conference. The third annual recipient was Helen Edwards of Selma, AL.

We rejoice in the work of our local units and their pastors to strengthen and renew the men’s ministries programs in the local church. Our goal is to empower the ministry of Jesus Christ through men within the congregations of the United Methodist Church.

Our Upper Room Living Prayer ministry continues to be a central piece in our spiritual development and mission work. In 2017, the Alabama-West Florida Conference United Methodist Men provided $3,500 to the Upper Room Prayer Center. In addition to supporting this vital ministry with our gifts, we have encouraged churches to establish new prayer groups to answer the prayer line and conducted a call center during the Annual Conference.

Activities of the UMM charter groups are varied and include Prayer Ministry, Bible Study, Lectionary Study, support of EMS Ministry, support of Boy Scouts, Blue Lake Methodist Camp improvement projects, local church Youth Program support, church Trustee project support, community outreach, district Pastor Appreciation Banquets, support of the Upper Room Living Prayer Center, fellowship outings and dinners, and Men’s Ministry support to churches.

We rejoice in the work of our local units and their pastors to strengthen and renew the men’s ministries programs in the local church. Through their efforts, activities in local churches have grown, new men have been invited to share in discipleship, and new charter units have been added to the conference. Our goal is to empower the ministry of Jesus Christ through men within the congregations of the United Methodist Church.

Frank Moore, President
Alabama West Florida Conference
United Methodist Men
UNITED METHODIST WOMEN (UMW)

PURPOSE:
First and foremost is: to know God and experience freedom as whole persons through Jesus Christ; to develop a creative, supportive fellowship; and to expand concepts of mission through participation in the global ministries of the church.

FUNDING:
In 2017, The Alabama-West Florida Conference United Methodist Women met and exceeded our $126,200 Pledge to Mission to the National organization and exercised good stewardship within our annual budget. Our mission dollars continue to journey throughout specific projects and help in establishing Methodist Women’s societies in other countries and also include help with hospitals, schools and assist with agriculture projects. Additionally, other funds collected were distributed to specific conference and district agency destinations within our local church communities.

FOCUS:
Leadership Development, Yes, we continue to develop future leaders where the central mission of United Methodist Women present opportunities and development. We uniformly trained many leaders within the Districts and Local Units to some duties for organizing our vision - lead our own personal change in order to transform the world. 
Conference and District Executive Mission Teams, Yes, we are attentive to the scope of mission work for the United Methodist Women Purpose within the Local Unit (at the Church). We meet in person, the conference call and the world-wide web regularly to organize and administer the policies for the stewardship of funding our mission for women, children and youth. 
Cooperative Mission u and district mission studies. Yes, we attended Mission u where we studied Covenantal Communities, Missionary Conferences and Climate Justice. Our study lessons of Biblical, social and geographical nature prepared study leaders to lead or assist these same studies at their Local Unit. 
Reading Program, Yes, we have a Reading Program where a diverse range of books in categories like Education for mission, Nurturing for community, Social action, Spiritual growth and Leadership development are available to expose us to concepts of mission. We continue the focus and special emphases on Climate justice, Maternal and Child Health, Criminalization of Communities of Color and Economic Inequality.

GOALS:
Meet our current 3500 members at 146 Local Units to encourage direction and focus on the same vision of turning faith, hope and love into action on behalf of the agencies that assist women, children and youth in our communities and around the world. In the coming year our Hope as we begin
to hold our annual meeting in the districts is that we can encourage and invite ALL women in the church to come “listen and learn” about our United Methodist Women heritage and outreach work in missions.

“This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters the presence behind the veil, where the forerunner has entered for us, even Jesus, having become a High Priest forever.” Hebrews 6: 19-20 NKJV

2017 Report prepared by Deborah S. Bell (Debbie), President 2017-2018
Alabama-West Florida United Methodist Women
ADMINISTRATIVE TEAM REPORTS
CONFERENCE BOARD OF PENSION AND HEALTH BENEFITS
The Board of Pension and Health Benefits offers quality health-care, disability, pension, retirement, financial planning, long-term care and death benefit coverage to the clergy and churches of the Alabama-West Florida Conference.

With the continued uncertainty in the health-care environment the Board continues to give careful attention to our resources as we look toward the future. Our greatest resource is confidence in God’s abundance and goodness.

Your Board of Pension and Health Benefits shall be prudent in long-term planning, and we shall be optimistic in our management of the Board’s important benefits programs. We are committed to the goal of sustainable churches, a sustainable Alabama West Florida Annual Conference, and a sustainable United Methodist Church.

Report 1 – Health Insurance

The Board works hard to provide excellent health care coverage to our clergy and lay participants through a partially self-funded insurance plan, administered by Blue Cross – Blue Shield of Alabama. Montgomery lay member Mike Horsley serves as chairperson of the Insurance Subcommittee of the Board. The Board continues to provide for and support the Wellness Subcommittee. The cost of this health insurance plan is covered by participant premium equivalents, church direct billing, and apportionments. While contributions to the Clergy Retired Benefit Stabilization Fund are presently suspended, it remains a part of our funding plan to guarantee the financial strength of our Health Insurance Plan and to help offset the unfunded liability for retiree benefits. The Board’s health insurance reserve investment fund market value as of December 31, 2017 was $6.9 million. The Board of Pension and Health Benefits also maintains an Operating Reserve Fund at the United Methodist Foundation with a balance of $500,000.

In order for the plan to remain viable and available to all, participation by eligible clergy must be mandatory. The only exemption being when the clergyperson can provide satisfactory evidence that he/she is covered by a spouse’s group plan or that he/she is covered by a military or government retirement health plan. In an effort to minimize health claims and stabilize premium equivalents, an additional requirement for remaining in the plan is the minimal participation in the Annual Conference Wellness Initiative. Plan participants must complete an annual Biometric Screening and Health Quotient. Participation in additional wellness activities offered by the Board is optional but highly encouraged. In 2016, the first year of this initiative, there were 308 participants who completed the Biometric Screening and
Health Quotient. The number of clergy members who failed to complete the requirement has decreased each year.

Clergy who are 65 years of age or older, not in retirement status and serving under a 75% or full-time appointment will remain on the active insurance plan with premium equivalents being direct billed to the church. No premium reduction is applied. Spouses under age 65 of clergy not in retirement status and serving under a 75% or full-time appointment may remain on the active plan.

A surviving spouse who was on the active plan at the time of the pastor’s death may remain on the plan and receive a premium reduction of 2.9% per service year over five years. When the spouse reaches age 65 and is Medicare eligible, he or she will have access to the Medicare Supplement Plan and any appropriate premium reductions. Should the surviving spouse remarry coverage will no longer be available.

A divorced spouse and dependents of a pastor who were on the active plan at the time of the divorce may remain on the active plan but must pay the established premium equivalent for themselves and their dependents. Should the divorced spouse remarry coverage will no longer be available.

The Board of Pension and Health Benefits seeks to increase the insurance reserves each year in its efforts both to maintain fiscal strength and stability in our insurance program and to offset the unfunded liability associated with providing post-retirement medical benefits to current and future retirees. The board established a target of $4,468,783 for 2018. The 2019 target will be $4,671,909 and the Board will recalculate the target annually. The Conference unfunded liability for retiree health benefits was estimated in 2015 to be approximately $27,600,000. A recalculation of the Conference’s unfunded liability for retiree health benefits was estimated in 2017 to be approximately $24,300,00, a significant improvement accomplished by sound financial practices. The summary of the 2017 study results are included in Report 2. The full report is available upon request to the Board of Pension and Health Benefits office.

The Group Health Benefits Plan is not a form of entitlement. The Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits reserve the right to amend the active and retired plan of benefits and the eligibility needed to qualify. With the approval of the Annual Conference the Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits may eliminate either or both of these plans.

The Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA) health benefit provisions amend the Employee Retirement Income Security Act, the Internal Revenue Code and the Public Health Service Act to require group health plans to provide a temporary continuation of group health
coverage that otherwise might be terminated. The law generally applies to all
group health plans maintained by private-sector employers with 20 or more
employees, or by state or local governments. The law does not apply to plans
sponsored by the Federal Government or by churches and certain church-related organizations. While providing COBRA coverage was optional in the past, the Board of Pension and Health Benefits believes that it is no longer necessary and not in keeping with our commitment to faithful stewardship of
Annual Conference funds.

Conference health care coverage is available for lay employees of local
churches, and the Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits
encourages every church with lay employees to consider adding
this important benefit. For information on premiums and enrollment
requirements, please contact the Conference Fiscal Office.

### 2017 HEALTH INSURANCE RECEIPTS AND EXPENDITURES

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2017 Health Fund Receipts and Expenditures</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Beginning Balance</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Receipts</strong></td>
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<td>Apportionments</td>
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<td>Premiums</td>
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<td>Clergy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lay</td>
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<tr>
<td>Retired</td>
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<td>Refunds on Claims</td>
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<td>Reinsurance</td>
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<td>Misc Receipts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Receipts</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Available</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Expenditures</strong></td>
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<td>Claims Direct-BCBS</td>
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<td>ACA Fees</td>
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<td>Miscellaneous</td>
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<td>Fund Operations</td>
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<td><strong>Total Expenses</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Net Available over Expenses</strong></td>
<td>$(86,292.41) $480,303.45</td>
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Report 2 – Report of Actuarial Valuation of Post-Retirement Medical Benefits of Employees and Retirees

In response to the direction of the 2000 General Conference, every two years the Alabama-West Florida Conference retains an outside consulting firm to calculate the liabilities associated with providing postretirement medical benefits to current and future retirees in accordance with the terms of its existing plans and contribution arrangement. The report in Exhibit 1 was prepared by PRM Consulting Group, based on conditions existing as of January 1, 2017.

The full report presents actuarial liabilities for the plan, as well as the applicable expense and liability amounts that would exist in the conference-reported plan financial information in accordance with the Standards issued by the Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB) (ASC 715, and formerly FASB Statements 106, 132R and 158).

In addition, cash flow information is presented which projects the future claims and participant contributions for the current group of active and retired participants, along with the resulting employer costs. Cash flows, liabilities, and the net periodic post-retirement benefit costs have been calculated based on conditions existing as of the January 1, 2017 measurement date.

Please contact the Fiscal Office at 888-873-3127 if you would like to review the report in its entirety. In this report (Number 2, Exhibit 1), we summarize the information provided through the valuation. Currently there is no formal funding plan established, although the Board of Pension and Health Benefits seeks to use any revenues over expenditures in the health insurance program to build up reserves and to underwrite this liability. We fund the annual retiree health costs through apportionments and individual monthly premium equivalents.
Exhibit 1 – Summary of Principal Plan Liabilities and Costs


**Benefit Obligation**

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<tr>
<th>Reconciliation</th>
<th>2016 Fiscal Year</th>
<th>2015 Fiscal Year</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Benefit Obligation, beginning of year</td>
<td>$21,160,008</td>
<td>$20,284,167</td>
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<td>Service Cost</td>
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<td>625,164</td>
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<td>Interest Cost</td>
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<td>Contributions by Participants</td>
<td>85,508</td>
<td>90,648</td>
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<td>Actuarial (Gains) and Losses</td>
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<td>Foreign Currency Exchange Rate Changes</td>
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<td>Benefits Paid</td>
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<td>Business Combinations</td>
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<td>Divestitures, Curtailments or Settlements</td>
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<tr>
<td>Special Termination Benefits</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Benefit Obligation, end of year</strong></td>
<td><strong>$24,244,293</strong></td>
<td><strong>$21,160,008</strong></td>
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</table>
Report 3 - Post-Retirement Medical Benefits for Retirees

**Purpose of the Plan:** This is a retiree health plan designed to supplement the amounts Medicare pays for some hospital, medical, and surgical services. The Plan is not designed to cover all the expenses that Medicare does not pay. You must be eligible for Medicare and enrolled in Parts A and B of Medicare in order to receive any benefits under the Plan. Part D is recommended but not required to participate in the Plan. However, drug coverage is not included in the Plan. The Plan is self-insured by the Alabama-West Florida Conference of the United Methodist Church. This means that the Conference pays for all claims out of its own assets and does not buy an insurance policy to pay benefits under the Plan. Blue Cross is responsible for administering claims under the Plan; Blue Cross does not insure the benefits under the Plan.

**Eligibility: Retirees**

- All clergy who retire from active service in the Alabama West Florida Annual Conference and are eligible for Medicare have access to the plan for themselves and their Medicare eligible spouses if they meet the following conditions. The clergy member must have been actively serving in the conference and been participating in the Active Health Plan for five (5) years immediately prior to retiring. A clergy member who is eligible to enter the program but chooses not to enroll and remains outside of the program for twelve (12) months, will give up their eligibility in the MEDSUPP for themselves and their spouse.

- Upon reaching age 65 and being Medicare eligible, the spouse will go on the Medicare Supplement Plan at the full Medicare Supplement premium equivalent. Once the clergy participant enters retirement status, appropriate premium equivalent reductions will be applied for both the clergy and spouse as outlined below.

- Annual conference employees who are employed with the conference at the time of their retirement and are at least age 65 at retirement have access to the plan for themselves and their Medicare eligible spouses.

- Local church lay employees who have been continuously employed within the Alabama-West Florida Conference for 20 years and are at least age 65, in retirement status, enrolled in the active insurance plan at least five (5) consecutive years immediately prior to retirement, have access to the plan for themselves and their Medicare eligible spouses. Premiums must continue to be paid by the church on church check. A lay employee, who is eligible to enter the program but chooses not to enroll and remains outside of the program for twelve (12) months, will give up their eligibility in the MEDSUPP for themselves and their spouse.
Premium Equivalent Reductions

- To be eligible for a premium equivalent reduction for themselves and their spouses, clergy and annual conference lay employees must be enrolled in the conference active insurance plan for at least five (5) years prior to retirement and have five (5) or more years of service in the Alabama West Florida Conference. Years of service for clergy are as recorded by Wespath Benefits and Investments. Years of service for annual conference lay employees are as recorded in their employment records. Retired local church lay employees are not eligible for premium reductions.

- Participants retiring on or before July 1, 2016 will receive the premium reduction for themselves and their Medicare eligible spouses that were in place for them on July 1, 2016.

- Participants retiring after July 1, 2016 with 5 to 34 years of service will receive a 2.9% premium reduction for each year of service for themselves and their Medicare eligible spouses.

- Clergy members retiring after July 1, 2016 with 35 or more years of service will receive a full premium reduction for themselves and their Medicare eligible spouses.

- With respect to married individuals that are each clergy with appointments in the Alabama West Florida Annual Conference, each such clergy must satisfy Medicare and Plan eligibility requirements and premium reductions will be applied to each such clergy and not because of their status as a spouse of a clergy.

Premium Equivalent for Appointed Retired Clergy (under age 65)

Church’s Premium Payment: Equal to the premium equivalent for the active plan established annually by the Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits.

Premium Equivalent for Appointed Retired Clergy (age 65+)

Church’s Premium Payment: Equal 80% of the premium equivalent for the Medicare Supplement Plan established annually by the Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits.

Clergy’s Premium Payment: Premium equivalent minus premium reduction.

Clergy Spouse: Full Premium equivalent minus premium reduction.
Pastors Retiring Prior to Age 65:

Retired pastors who have not reached the age of eligibility for Medicare and have 30 or more years of service as recorded by Wespath Benefits and Investments may remain on the active plan with a premium reduction of 2.9% per service year. Their dependents may continue on the active coverage by paying the full premium equivalent established by the Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits. When the clergy member reaches the age 65, he or she will have access to the Medicare Supplement Plan and any appropriate premium reductions. When the spouse reaches the age 65, he or she will have access to the Medicare Supplement plan and any appropriate premium reductions as well. In the case of clergy couples without dependent coverage, individual clergy persons will be eligible in their own rights and premium reductions will be applied as individuals not as spouses of a clergy.

Pastors Retiring Under the Twenty Year Rule:

Retired pastors who have not reached the age of eligibility for Medicare and have 20 or more years of service but less than 30 as recorded by Wespath Benefits and Investments can remain on the active plan but must pay the established premium equivalent for themselves and their dependents. When the clergy member reaches the age 65, if he or she remained on the active plan, he or she will have access to the Medicare Supplement Plan and any appropriate premium reductions. When the spouse reaches the age 65, he or she will have access to the Medicare Supplement plan and any appropriate premium reductions as well.

Pastors on Clergy Medical Leave:

Clergy on Clergy Medical Leave and receiving Comprehensive Protection Plan disability benefits must qualify for Social Security Disability, and elect Medicare, on or before the end of their 24th month following the receipt of Comprehensive Protection Plan disability benefits.

Once qualified for Medicare, clergy on Social Security disability have access to the Medicare Supplement Plan and any appropriate premium reductions. Clergy on Clergy Medical Leave and receiving Comprehensive Protection Plan disability benefits who are not eligible for or choose not to elect Medicare coverage, may continue active coverage by paying the full monthly premium equivalent.

Retiree Benefit Stabilization Fund

Contributions made by clergy to the Retiree Benefit Stabilization Fund (RBSF) remain in suspension. The RBSF will continue to be maintained for present and future use.
The Reverend Amy Persons chairs the Pension sub-committee of the Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits. The Board continues to be delighted by the fine work of Wespath Benefits and Investments. With assets exceeding $21 billion and over 91,000 active and retired participants, Wespath Benefits and Investments ranks in the top 100 pension plans in the country and is the largest faith-based not-for-profit financial service organization in the world. In addition, Wespath Benefits and Investments acts as a socially responsible investor and participates actively in shareholder advocacy, proxy voting, portfolio screening, and community investing. Wespath Benefits and Investments is the largest denominational investor in affordable housing programs for low and moderate-income families in the nation. To date, they have allocated nearly $1 billion to affordable housing and community development investments.

Many current and future retirees find that their pension benefit is derived from several different plans. While the number and variety of plans make calculating pension benefits confusing, the various plans offer a certain level of security due to the diverse ways in which retiree pensions are funded.

1. The Pre-1982 plan bases the pension payment for a retired person on the number of years served with pension credit prior to 1982 and the Past Service Rate (PSR). The Board of Pension set as its goal to offer a sustainable PSR increase in future years. In 2018 the PSR is set at seven hundred fifty-eight ($758) per service year for retired clergy and five hundred thirty dollars and fifty cents ($530.50) for surviving spouses. For 2019 the Board proposes 0% increase leaving the past service rate the same as in 2018. The Annual Conference adjusts the pension benefits of those living in Conference provided retirement homes by a reduction of $50.00 per month for clergy and $35.00 per month for surviving spouses.

2. The Ministerial Pension Plan (MPP) was the mandatory retirement plan for clergy serving from 1982 through 2006. Under this plan, the Conference Board of Pension contributed 12% of the Denominational Average Compensation (DAC) on behalf of each eligible clergy person under appointment. Benefits at retirement are based upon specific decisions made by the retiring participant.

3. By mandate of the 2004 General Conference, beginning in January 2007, Wespath Benefits and Investments replaced the MPP with the Clergy Retirement Security Program (CRSP), which has two components – a Core Defined Benefit Plan and a Core Defined Contribution Plan. The Core Defined Benefit Plan determines a pension benefit using the following formula by multiplying 1.25% of the Denominational Average Compensation (DAC) in the year of retirement by the number of years of credited service after
2006. The Core Defined Contribution Plan determines the pension benefit from the defined contribution of 3% of the participant’s plan compensation. Clergy appointed to less than full time service and Part Time Local Pastors at 75% are credited for service at seventy-five (75%) by mandate of the 2012 General Conference benefits under this plan stopped accruing on December 31, 2013. Participants will lose no earned benefit.

4. The 2012 General Conference modified the Clergy Retirement Security Program. The January 2014 plan retains the two components – a Core Defined Benefit Plan and a Core Defined Contribution Plan. The Core Defined Benefit Plan determines a pension benefit using the following formula by multiplying 1% of the Denominational Average Compensation (DAC) in the year of retirement by the number of years of credited service after 2013. The Core Defined Contribution (DC) Plan determines the pension benefit from the defined contribution of 2% of the participant’s plan compensation. In addition, the conference will match participant’s voluntary personal contributions to The United Methodist Personal Investment Plan (UMPIP) up to 1% of the participant’s plan compensation and deposit those matching funds into the participant’s CRSP DC account. Clergy appointed at not less than 75% of full time service and Part Time Local Pastors appointed at not less than 75% are required to participate in the Clergy Retirement Security Program. Clergy appointed at less than 75% are not eligible to participate in CRSP, but may and are encouraged to, participate in the UMPIP.

5. The United Methodist Personal Investment Plan (UMPIP) is a voluntary defined-contribution plan for personal contributions and rollovers made by clergy and lay employees.

When the recommendation of the Alabama West Florida Conference Commission on Equitable Compensation is approved and in cooperation with the cabinet, the Conference Board of Pension sets the following appointment salary service standards for 2019:

1. Elders, Provisional Members, Associates Members and Local Pastors at or greater than $37,200 will serve at 100% and are eligible for pension and health insurance benefits, unless appointed by the Bishop and the Cabinet to less than 75%.

2. Elders, Provisional Members, Associates Members and Local Pastors at or greater than $27,900 but less than $37,200 will serve at 75% and are eligible for pension and health insurance benefits, unless otherwise appointed by the Bishop and Cabinet to a lower percentage.

3. Elders, Provisional Members, Associates Members and Local Pastors at or greater than $18,600 but less than $27,900 will serve at 50%,
unless otherwise appointed by the Bishop and Cabinet to a lower percentage, and are not eligible to participate in CRSP or the health insurance plan.

4. Elders, Provisional Members, Associates Members and Local Pastors at or greater than $9,300 but less than $18,600 will serve at 25%, unless otherwise appointed by the Bishop and Cabinet to a lower percentage, and are not eligible to participate in CRSP or the health insurance plan.

Retiring pastors may expect their pension benefits to come from multiple plans – Pre-1982 based on years of service with pension credit before January 1, 1982 and the PSR or the Defined Benefit Service Monies (DBSM) whichever provides the greater annuity payment, MPP based on defined contributions from 1982 through 2006, supplemented by PIP and UMPIP contributions, CRSP based on the number of service years between 2007 and 2013 and the DAC in the year of retirement and CRSP based on the number of service years after 2013. Because of the change in plans, it is important for participants to verify that the pre-2017 appointment information, including appointment percentages for less than full time appointments, listed in the Journal of the Alabama-West Florida Conference each year is correct. The Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits will assume that the Journal information is correct unless a correction is submitted in writing and verified within the conference year in which the Journal is printed.

The Cumulative Pension and Benefit Fund served as a voluntary defined-contribution retirement plan through 2006, funded through employer contributions made on behalf of deacons (prior to 2006), diaconal ministers, and lay employees of local churches. This fund is now part of the UMPIP plan.

Information from Wespath Benefits and Investments is available online at www.gbophb.org.

The Board of Pension and Health Benefits recommends that the apportionment line item for Conference Claimants Fund be set at $500,000 for 2019. Since pension liabilities are tied to the Conference Average Compensation, the market results of Wespath Benefits and Investments plan assets, and the change in actuarial mortality tables, future increases in the Conference Claimants Fund line item may track with these variables and Wespath Benefits and Investments actuarial projections.

We call attention to ¶622 of The Book of Discipline 2016 of The United Methodist Church relative to the requirement that the apportionment for the pension and benefit programs be paid in proportion to the payment of the pastor’s salary by the local church. The Discipline gives the church treasurer the primary responsibility for the application of proportional payment. If the
church treasurer fails to do this, the pastor is then required to adjust his/her cash salary.

**Report 5 – Supplement One to the Clergy Retirement Security Program**

This Supplement One is applicable to the Alabama-West Florida Conference and is effective January 1, 2007. It replaces any previously executed Addendum A (or Attachment 1) and shall be in effect until amended by the Annual Conference in accordance with the provisions of the Clergy Retirement Security and the Comprehensive Protection Plan revised January 1, 2007.

CPP contribution base shall be the active participant’s plan contribution for a plan year not to exceed 200% of the Denominational Average Compensation. The CPP contribution rate shall be 3% of the contribution base of each active participant. [CPP Section 4.01(a).]

The CPP church contribution shall be made monthly to the plan by the Annual Conference in accordance with the Plan Document. Such CPP church contributions shall be transferred monthly from the deposit account of the Alabama-West Florida Conference by Wespath Benefits and Investments to the Comprehensive Protection Plan. The Annual Conference shall maintain an amount in its deposit account sufficient to provide for the monthly transfer of the church contributions on behalf of its active participants. The Alabama-West Florida Annual Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits is hereby authorized, at its discretion, to arrange with Wespath Benefits and Investments for active participation in CPP by persons who are eligible under special rules but not automatically included as active participants. [CPP Section 3.03(a)]

All full and associate members appointed to Sabbatical Leave or to attend school shall continue to participate in CPP, provided the Conference makes the required contribution based on 3% of the plan compensation [Disciplinary Paragraph 351; CPP Section 3.02(a).]

The surviving spouse benefit will be 70% of the participant’s formula benefit.

**Report 6 – Alabama West Florida Annual Conference Comprehensive Funding Plan for Plan Year 2017**

The 2012 General Conference established a requirement for Annual Conferences to develop a comprehensive funding plan to identify both liabilities and resources. Due to staffing changes the Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits has not developed the 2017 plan and submitted it to Wespath Benefits and Investments for review. At this time, we are waiting for its completion and submission. As in the past we anticipate a
favorable opinion letter from Wespath once complete. If received in time it will be published in the 2018 Journal following annual conference. If you would like to see the complete plan once submitted, contact the Fiscal Office at 888-873-3127.

Report 7 – Claimants’ Memorial Fund

We recommend the continuation of the Claimants’ Memorial Fund. Funds being invested by this board with the interest will be used for the benefits of the conference claimants. Individuals and groups are invited to make voluntary contributions in any amount as memorials to deceased ministers, members of minister families, or lay persons. Checks should be made payable to the Alabama-West Florida Conference and sent to the conference treasurer, Montgomery, with the name or names of the persons being memorialized. Families of those so memorialized will be notified that a memorial gift was received.

Report 8 – Special Appointment Pension Responsibilities

In keeping with ¶1506.3.a, and 4, of the 2016 Discipline, we recommend that those clergy appointed to extension ministries be approved for pension responsibility on this Annual Conference in the following full time appointments: the director of the Assembly Grounds, the director of the Mobile Inner City Mission, the director of each Wesley Foundation, the Chaplain at the United Methodist Children’s Home, the Director of the Pensacola Urban Ministry and the Pensacola Hispanic Ministry provided such appointments are made as members of this Annual Conference under ¶344.1a(1) and 346.1 of the 2016 Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church. The district superintendents, clergy appointed to the Conference Connectional Ministry, Ministerial Services, and the Fiscal Offices are approved with pension responsibility on this Annual Conference.

We recommend that special appointments to the United Methodist colleges and universities and other general agencies shall be listed as with pension responsibility on the institution or agency.

We recommend that chaplains in the Armed Forces be listed with pension responsibility on the chaplaincy of the military service.

We recommend that clergy under appointment as approved evangelists, area appointments and other special ministries shall be listed with pension responsibility on this Annual Conference only upon payment to the Conference Claimants Fund an amount equal to 14% of the DAC as determined by Wespath Benefits and Investments.

By special arrangement those clergy or probationary members on Sabbatical
leave or appointed to attend school may qualify for the Comprehensive Protection Plan.

We recommend that special appointments to non-Methodist institutions shall be listed without pension responsibility on this Annual Conference. We recommend that all missionaries shall be listed with pension responsibility on the General Board of Global Ministries.

**Report 9 – Depositories**

We recommend that the official depository for pension funds shall be the same as that designated by the Conference for other Conference funds as well as Wespath Benefits and Investments.

**Report 10 – Pensions for Lay Employees**

We strongly endorse the UMPIP and the Lay Long Term Disability Plan administered by Wespath Benefits and Investments for lay employees of United Methodist local churches and agencies. In keeping with §258.2g (12) of the 2016 United Methodist Book of Discipline, we recommend and urge our churches to use these plans provided by the General Church to provide pension equal to at least 3% of compensation and death and disability coverage for our lay persons who serve our churches.

Churches and agencies should contact Wespath Benefits and Investments, 1901 Chestnut Avenue, Glenview, IL 60025, (800) 851-2201 for information on becoming plan sponsors for the UMPIP for lay employees.

**Report 11 – Full Time Service as a Requirement for Pension Credit Pre-1982**

We call attention to the following provisions relative to full time service, rendered prior to January 1, 1982, as a normal condition for pension credit which appears in §1506.3 of the 2016 United Methodist Book of Discipline

A. Full-time service of a ministerial member or a lay pastor shall be required as a normal condition for pension credit; provided, however, that such credit may be granted for part time service by a three-fourth vote of those present and voting in the Annual Conference, on recommendation of the conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits.

B. Full-time service shall mean that full time is devoted to the work of a pastor by one who has not attained the mandatory age of retirement for a Conference member, who is not attending school as a regular student, who is not substantially employed in non-pastoral work; and whose cash support per annum from all church sources is
not less than the schedule of equitable compensation adopted by the Annual Conference for those in this person’s classification.

It should be noted that service of either a ministerial member or lay pastor is without pension credit if it is not full-time service as defined, except in cases of approved part-time service.

**Report 12 – Resolutions Relating to Rental/Housing Allowances for Retired or Disabled Clergypersons of the Alabama – West Florida Annual Conference**

The Alabama – West Florida Conference (the “Conference”) adopts the following resolutions relating to rental/housing allowances for active, retired, or disabled clergypersons of the Conference:

WHEREAS, the religious denomination known as The United Methodist Church (the “Church”), of which this Conference is a part, has in the past functioned and continues to function through ministers of the gospel (within the meaning of Internal Revenue Code section 107) who were or are duly ordained, commissioned, or licensed ministers of the Church (“clergypersons”);

WHEREAS, the practice of the Church and of this Conference was and is to provide active clergypersons with a parsonage or a rental/housing allowance as part of their gross compensation;

WHEREAS, pensions or other amounts paid to active, retired, and disabled clergypersons are considered to be deferred compensation and are paid to active, retired, and disabled clergypersons in consideration of previous active service; and

WHEREAS, the Internal Revenue Service has recognized the Conference (or its predecessors) as the appropriate organization to designate a rental/housing allowance for clergypersons who are or were members of this Conference and are eligible to receive such deferred compensation;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

THAT an amount equal to 100% of the pension or disability payments received from plans authorized under *The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church* (the “Discipline”), which includes all such payments from Wespath Benefits and Investments during the year 2019 by each active, retired, or disabled clergyperson who is or was a member of the Conference, or its predecessors, be and hereby is designated as a rental/housing allowance for each such clergyperson; and
THAT the pension or disability payments to which this rental/housing allowance applies will be any pension or disability payments from plans, annuities, or funds authorized under the Discipline, including such payments from Wespath Benefits and Investments and from a commercial annuity company that provides an annuity arising from benefits accrued under a Wespath Benefits and Investments plan, annuity, or fund authorized under the Discipline, that result from any service a clergyperson rendered to this Conference or that an active, a retired, or a disabled clergyperson of this Conference rendered to any local church, annual conference of the Church, general agency of the Church, other institution of the Church, former denomination that is now a part of the Church, or any other employer that employed the clergyperson to perform services related to the ministry of the Church, or its predecessors, and that elected to make contributions to, or accrue a benefit under, such a plan, annuity, or fund for such active, retired, or disabled clergyperson’s pension or disability as part of his or her gross compensation.

NOTE: It should be noted that the above applies only to the clergyperson and not to the surviving spouse. The rental/housing allowance that may be excluded from a clergyperson’s gross income in any year for federal income tax purposes is limited under Internal Revenue Code section 107(2) and regulations there under to the least of: (1) the amount of the rental/housing allowance designated by the clergyperson’s employer or other appropriate body of the Church (such as this Conference in the foregoing resolutions) for such year; (2) the amount actually expended by the clergyperson to rent or provide a home in such year; or (3) the fair rental value of the home, including furnishings and appurtenances (such as a garage), plus the cost of utilities in such year. If you need further information concerning this exclusion, please contact your CPA or the Conference Fiscal Office.

Report 13 – Special Grants

The Conference Board of Pension recommends that the following monthly grant be made for the 2017 Conference year:
Oakley W. Melton, III $300.00

Report 14 – Homes for Claimants

The Board of Pension and Health Benefits owns 8 living units for persons who retired from the conference prior to 2003. Ms. Beth Gordon is chairperson of the Homes sub-committee of the board. No additional assignments of homes to retirees will take place, and homes are being sold as they are vacated. Home sales proceeds are placed in the Homes for Claimants account for homes operating expenses.
Report 15 – Policy for Claimants Home Occupants

Should an occupant of a claimant’s home choose to relocate from a claimant’s home the following policy will apply:

Documented moving expenses not to exceed $2,000 will be reimbursed. A grant not to exceed $3000 will be given to offset documented closing costs for the purchase of a home or documented rental deposit for an apartment, town home or assisted living facility.

The moving expenses and grant will be available to clergy persons or a surviving spouse occupying a claimant home. It is not available to family members when the home is vacated as a result of the death of a clergy person or surviving spouse.

Report 16 – Need-based Housing Grants

By direction of the Annual Conference, the Board began selling vacant homes in 2003. Beginning in 2005, the Board began offering need-based housing grants for retiring clergy. To qualify an applicant must be:

A clergy person who retires with a minimum of 20 years full-time service with pension credit in the Alabama-West Florida Conference and is receiving his/her pension.
An un-remarried surviving spouse of an active clergy person with a minimum of ten (10) years full-time service in the Alabama-West Florida Conference. He/she must have been married to the qualified clergy person during the years of qualifying service. Exceptions may be considered in the case of death prior to 10 years of service.

The surviving spouse of a retired clergy person who was married to that clergy person at the time of his/her retirement.

Clergy persons who are placed on Clergy Medical Leave by the Annual Conference.

APPLICATION PERIOD:

Clergy that retire June 1, 2003 or thereafter may apply for a grant any time subsequent to their retirement. Surviving spouses may apply within one year of the date of death of the clergy person. Clergy persons who are placed on Clergy Medical Leave by the Annual Conference may apply within one year of being placed on Clergy Medical Leave or they may apply subsequent to retirement, provided they retire on or after June 1, 2003.

To be considered for a grant, the applicant and spouse’s post-retirement earned income from all sources must be equal to or less than 1.25% of the denominational average compensation (DAC) in the year of application. Applicants must submit a Board of Pension and Health Benefits Financial Statement, along with the most recent 1040 Income Tax Form including all schedules. Applicants must also complete an interview with a Grant Committee appointed by the Board of Pension.

Grants are intended to assist retiring clergy to obtain housing. The money granted to applicants should be used to aid with some form of housing such as down payments, closing costs, rental deposits, etc. Grants are awarded on a one-time basis up to $3,500, as set forth herein. Grants will be disbursed within 30 days after approval by the Grants Committee.

Grants are not guaranteed but will be awarded based upon the Grant Committee’s discretion considering financial need, circumstances, available grant funds and the totality of the overall circumstances.

Amendments
These guidelines maybe amended from time to time by simple majority of the Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits.
Wespath Benefits and Investments offers other outstanding services to active and retired clergy including Voluntary Supplemental Life Insurance through UNUM. Active and Retired clergy (and participating UMPIP lay employees) have access to free financial planning services through EY (Ernst and Young). For more information on these services, please contact the Pension and Health Benefits office.

Report 18 – Alabama-West Florida Conference Policy on Clergy Medical Leave and CPP Benefits
(Approved June 2005)

TERMS:
Medical Leave: A conference relations status of a clergy member who is unable to perform his or her ministerial work because of a physical or emotional impairment, the conference may grant medical leave upon recommendation of the conference boards of ordained ministry and pension.

CPP Disability Benefits: Benefits paid by the Comprehensive Protection Plan to clergy persons who are determined by Wespath Benefits and Investments to be eligible for these benefits and are on medical leave.

Medical Leave is granted to clergy who are members of the annual conference who are unable to perform their ministerial work because of incapacity due to health matters and disabling conditions. It is not a status that is used to solve appointment problems.

The 2016 Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church References:
¶ 356. Medical Leave Due to Medical and Disabling Conditions that Prevent Performance of Ministerial Duties—1. When clergy who are members of an annual conference (¶ 369) are unable to perform their ministerial duties because of medical and disabling conditions, upon recommendations of the conference Board of Ordained Ministry and the conference board of pensions, and by a majority vote of the executive session of clergy members in full connection with the annual conference who are present and voting, they may be granted annual medical leave without losing their relationship to the annual conference; provided, however, that such leave may be granted or renewed upon reasonable and appropriate investigation of the case by the joint committee on clergy medical leave of the annual conference, or the party responsible for managing clergy medical leaves in accordance with the annual conference’s policies, which will report its findings to the conference Board of Ordained Ministry and the conference board of pensions. This relationship may be initiated by the clergy member...
or cabinet with or without the consent of the clergy member through the Board of Ordained Ministry. When medical leave is given without the clergy member’s consent, reasonable accommodation shall be offered whenever possible. When a clergy member is granted medical leave by the annual conference, if the medical evidence has not yet met the standards for the receipt of benefits as set forth in the Comprehensive Protection Plan, section 5.04, the conference board of pensions may authorize payment of the benefits in the amount that would otherwise be payable from the Comprehensive Protection Plan. The payments shall be made by Wespath Benefits and Investments as a charge to the annual conference granting the medical leave. If payments from the Comprehensive Protection Plan are subsequently approved, the annual conference will be reimbursed for benefits already paid, not to exceed the amount otherwise payable from the Comprehensive Protection Plan. Each medical leave granted by the annual conference shall be recorded in the conference minutes.

2. When clergy who are members of an annual conference are unable to perform their ministerial duties between sessions of the annual conference on account of medical conditions, with the approval of a majority of the district superintendents, after consultation with the executive committee of the conference Board of Ordained Ministry and the executive committee of the conference board of pensions, a medical leave may be granted by the bishop for the remainder of the conference year; provided, however, that such leave may be granted upon reasonable and appropriate investigation of the case including accommodation provisions by the joint committee on clergy medical leave of the annual conference, or the party responsible for managing clergy medical leaves in accordance with the annual conference’s policies, which will report its findings to the conference Board of Ordained Ministry and the conference board of pensions. When a clergy member is granted medical leave by the bishop, if the medical evidence has not yet met the standards for receipt of benefits as set forth in the Comprehensive Protection Plan, section 5.04, the conference board of pensions may authorize payment of the benefits in the amount that would otherwise be payable from the Comprehensive Protection Plan. The payments shall be made by Wespath Benefits and Investments as a charge to the annual conference granting the medical leave. If payments from the Comprehensive Protection Plan are subsequently approved, the annual conference will be reimbursed for benefits already paid, not to exceed the amount otherwise payable from the Comprehensive Protection Plan.

3. When clergy members on medical leave provide medical evidence that they have recovered sufficiently to resume ministerial duties, or are able to return through reasonable accommodation, in consultation with the appointive cabinet, upon recommendation of the joint committee on clergy medical leave or the conference relations committee, and with the approval of the executive committee of the conference Board of Ordained Ministry,
they may receive an appointment from a bishop between sessions of the annual conference, thereby terminating the medical leave. Such appointment shall be reported immediately by the cabinet to the conference board of pensions and to Wespath Benefits and Investments. Such termination of leave, together with the effective date, shall also be recorded in the minutes of the annual conference at its next regular session.

¶ 635.2(l). Conference Board of Ordained Ministry

“The duties of the annual conference board of ordained ministry shall be...

k) To interview applicants and make recommendation concerning: (1) changes from the effective relation to a leave of absence or retirement; (2) return to the effective relation from other relations; (3) honorable location; (4) readmission of located persons and persons discontinued from probationary membership; (5) sabbatical leave; (6) medical leave; (7) appointment as a student; (8) termination; and (9) changes to or from less than full-time ministry.

“The board shall keep a record of these changes and the reason behind them and place a copy in the permanent records of the annual conference maintained by the secretary of the conference.”

¶ 652. Each annual conference shall establish a procedure by which it will manage clergy medical leave. The annual conference may establish a joint committee on clergy medical leave (JCCML). If the annual conference establishes such a committee, it should be composed of at least two representatives each from the Board of Ordained Ministry and the conference board of pensions, who may be elected by those boards at the beginning of each quadrennium and at other times when vacancies occur, and a district superintendent appointed from time to time by the bishop to represent the cabinet. The joint committee shall be encouraged to include in its composition a person with a disability, preferably someone under appointment. Unless and until other members are elected, the chairperson and registrar of the Board of Ordained Ministry and the chairperson and secretary of the conference board of pensions, or others designated by them, shall be authorized to represent their respective boards. The committee shall organize at the beginning of each quadrennium by the election of a chairperson and a secretary. If the annual conference does not establish a joint committee, the annual conference’s established policy and process for managing clergy medical leave nonetheless should involve the Board of Ordained Ministry, the conference board of pension and representation from the cabinet.

The duties of the annual conference, with respect to clergy medical leave, or the joint committee on clergy medical leave, or its equivalent, shall be:

a) To study issues related to clergy medical leave in the annual
b) To provide for a continuing personal ministry to any clergy on medical leave of the conference and to aid them in maintaining fellowship with the members of the conference.

c) To provide advice and support to and, where appropriate advocacy for, clergy on medical leave in (i) applying for and securing disability benefits from the Comprehensive Protection Plan and government programs, (ii) exploring possible sources of interim financial assistance before disability benefits can be obtained, (iii) establishing rehabilitation and return-to-service programs, and (iv) assessing the need for and providing reasonable accommodations.

d) To make recommendations to the Board of Ordained Ministry, the conference board of pension, and the cabinet on matters related to clergy medical leave, including steps for the prevention of the need for medical leave, the process of granting medical leave, benefits, grants or other assistance, and programs of rehabilitation.

e) To cooperate with and give assistance to Wespath Benefits and Investments in its administration of the Clergy Retirement Security Program, the Comprehensive Protection Plan and other benefit plans for clergy on medical leave, and to the extent applicable assist with the disability benefits and other benefits provided under those plans.

Going on Medical Leave

1. When an eligible clergyperson requests CPP Benefits:

2. Application is requested from Conference Pension and Benefits Officer or Wespath Benefits and Investments.

3. Application is completed:
   a. Form A. Applicant Information for Long-Term Disability Benefits is completed, signed by the applicant, and mailed to Wespath Benefits and Investments.
   b. Form C, Clergy Disability Benefits Application is completed and signed by the applicant including the Authorization to Release Information page to Wespath Benefits and Investments and mailed to the District Superintendent.

4. The District Superintendent signs Form C, acknowledging that the individual is applying for disability benefits and mails it to the Conference Pension and Benefits Officer.

5. The Conference Benefits Officer signs Form C, acknowledging that the individual is applying for disability benefits.

6. The Conference Benefits Officer contacts by phone or email each member of the JCCML to alert them to the fact that the individual is applying for CPP Disability Benefits and signs Form C for the Chair of (JCCML) The Conference Pension and Benefits Officer mails Form C to Wespath Benefits and Investments.

7. Form F. The District Superintendent must state, in writing, that
the Bishop has or will grant the individual clergy medical leave. The District Superintendent must also indicate one of the following:

a. The applicant will be granted clergy medical leave ONLY if disability benefits are approved from the CPP and if approved the date incapacity leave will begin,

b. The applicant has been or will be granted medical leave and the conference deposit account should be charged for conference disability grant in the amount of:
   - Greater of 70% of plan compensation or 40% of DAC (standard CPP benefit)
   - Other (specify amount)

c. The applicant has been or will be granted medical leave without benefits and the date medical leave will begin.

If the conference deposit account is to be charged with CPP benefits (option b), the conference Pension and Benefits officer will coordinate approval with the Executive Committee of the conference board of pension and health benefits.

Form F is signed by the Conference Pension and Benefits Officer and mailed to Wespath Benefits and Investments.

The Conference Pension and Benefits Officer will provide a copy of Form F to the board of ordained ministry Executive Secretary to ensure that the board of ordained ministry takes appropriate action. Because of HIPPA privacy regulations, it will be the standard position of the JCCML to recommend to the board of ordained ministry the status recommended by Liberty Mutual Insurance.

**Coming Off Medical Leave**

For participants with a date of disability prior to December 31, 2012; among the reasons a participant will no longer receive CPP disability benefits are the following:

1. If a participant becomes disabled on or prior to the date he/she attains age 60, and is receiving disability benefits in the Conference year in which he/she attains age 65, and the disability continues, then the benefits will terminate on June 30 following the person’s 65th birthday anniversary (if the final day of the regular session of such person’s conference falls in the month of May or June, or, otherwise, on the last day of the month in which the closing day of such Conference session occurs) Para 5.04 d. (7) CPP Plan Document.

2. If the participant becomes disabled after age 60, and the disability
continues, then the benefits will terminate on the earlier to occur of (i) June 30 following the end of a five-year period from the date the disability was determined to have begun (if the final day of the regular session of such person’s Conference falls in Mayor June, or, otherwise, on the last day of the month following the end of such five-year period in which the closing day of such Conference session occurs); or (ii) June 30 following such person’s retirement date (if the final day of the regular session of such person’s Conference falls in Mayor June, or, otherwise, on the last day of the month in which the closing day of such Conference session occurs). Para 5.4 d. (8)

CPP Plan Document.

3. If the individual provides medical evidence that they have recovered sufficiently to resume ministerial work or are able to return through reasonable accommodations, a request must be submitted to the Bishop and the Joint Committee on Clergy Medical Leave.

For participants with a date of disability January 1, 2013 or later;

Age Benefit Table

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<th>Benefit Duration</th>
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<tr>
<td>63</td>
<td>48 Months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>64</td>
<td>42 Months</td>
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<tr>
<td>65</td>
<td>36 Months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>66</td>
<td>30 Months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>67</td>
<td>24 Months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>68</td>
<td>18 Months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>69</td>
<td>12 Months or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>until Age 72, whichever occurs earlier</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The JCCML, through the Conference Pension and Benefits Officer, may request a referral through the Disability Management Alternatives for the name of a physician available and competent to provide an Independent Medical Evaluation of the individual’s request. Because of HIPPA privacy regulations, the JCCML will request only a recommendation from the physician as to the individual’s ability to resume work and will follow the physician’s recommendation as to making a recommendation to the board of ordained ministry. Alternate, and at the discretion of the JCCML, the recommendation of Liberty Mutual regarding continuation of CPP Disability Benefits may form the recommendation of the JCCML to the board of ordained ministry.

Having received the recommendation from the JCCML, the Board of Ordained Ministry will conduct the interview required in ¶635.2 (k).
If an individual receives an appointment between sessions of annual conference, the cabinet must report the appointment immediately to the conference board of pension and Wespath Benefits and Investments. Such termination of medical leave, together with the effective date must also be recorded in the minutes of the annual conference at its next regular session.

Part-Time Appointments

If an individual seeks a part-time appointment in anticipation of coming off medical leave the following information is required:

1. The appointment cannot last longer than 12 months.
2. The written recommendation of the individual’s doctor. The operative word is recommendation. That is, the doctor believes that it is in the medical best interest of the individual to begin part-time service and is encouraging and cooperating with the return to part-time service.
3. The number of hours that the individual will work.
4. When the appointment will start
5. Will the person serve a church as the only pastor or will the individual serve as an associate of a church?

Approved: Board of Pension and Health Benefits - 01/12/2005
Board of Ministry - 03/01/2005

Report 19 – Death Benefit Program

Since January 1, 1995 the conference has participated in Wespath Benefits and Investments’ Basic Protection Plan, now Clergy Supplemental Life. Clergy Supplemental Life is an additional death benefit added to the regular death benefit provided by the Comprehensive Protection Plan (CPP) in which each full-time clergy, with a base compensation and housing equal to at least 25% of the Denominational Average Compensation (DAC).

2017 Death Benefit for Active Participants
Active Participant CPP death benefit $50,000.00
Active Participant Clergy Supplemental Life death benefit (under age 70) $25,000.00
Active Participant Clergy Supplemental Life death benefit (70 or older) $16,250.00

2017 Death Benefit for Retired Participants
For clergy who retired before January 1, 2013 in the year of death 30% of DAC
For clergy who retired after January 1, 2013 $20,400.00
Retired Participant Clergy Supplemental Life benefit $ 5,000.00
For additional information related to other death benefits go to the Alabama-West Florida website at: www.awfumc.org

Report 20 – Investment Policy
Approved by Board of Pension and Health Benefits 2-7-2018

A. Statement of Purpose
The purpose of the Investment Policy is to provide governance and oversight to investments of the Alabama - West Florida Annual Conference funds. The intent is to facilitate and not hinder conference agencies in the execution of their duties related to the management of their investment portfolios and in the use of their funds.

In recognition of their fiduciary responsibilities and the authority given by the 2016 Book of Discipline (¶613.5), the Board of Pension and Health Benefits (BOPHB) delineate the governance of the investment of the funds. This Investment Policy shall comply with the policies related to Conflict of Interest and Investment Management of Annual Conference Pension and Pension Related Funds under ¶1508 of the Book of Discipline (2016) and the Conflict of Interest Policy of the Alabama - West Florida Conference.

B. Delineation of Responsibilities
While the 2016 Book of Discipline (¶612.1) states the purpose of the Council on Finance and Administration shall be to develop, maintain, and administer a comprehensive and coordinated plan of fiscal and administrative policies, procedures, and management services for the annual conference, the BOPHB is granted authority to govern the investment of pension funds per ¶612.5a (4) of the 2016 Book of Discipline. Therefore, under this Investment Policy all operational policy decisions and implementation are delegated to the BOPHB for the following accounts: Deposit Account, Ministers Memorial Endowment fund and Pre 82-Funding Account (outside of the Plan), (the “Funds”).

The BOPHB shall at least once per year review the Investment Policy, the effectiveness of the Investment Committee, and the overall results of the investments, and will acknowledge in writing that they have done so.

The BOPHB shall retain responsibility for various functions related to the investments. These functions include, but are not limited to setting spending policies, assigning of members to the Investment Committee, and recommending changes and updates to the Investment Policy.

The BOPHB shall exercise fiduciary standard of care; the standard of care when making decisions is the Prudent Expert Standard, defined as: “the care, skill, prudence and diligence under the circumstances then prevailing that a prudent person acting in a like capacity
Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) § 2550.404a-1 Investment duties.  

C. Members of the Investment Committee
The BOPHB Investment Committee shall be selected by the BOPHB. The Committee shall be composed of a minimum of 7 members. The chairperson and other officers shall be selected by the Committee from among its members. The members’ individual terms shall not exceed the Individuals’ term on BOPHB and shall be staggered to provide for continuity and experienced leadership. Committee members may include but are not limited to individuals from BOPHB, Conference Finance and Administration (CFA), the Board of Trustees (BOT), and the Conference Treasurer.

D. Responsibilities of the Investment Committee
To define and develop investment goals, and other operational guidelines;
To recommend to the BOPHB, the selection and discharge of the Investment Manager (s);

To monitor and evaluate the performance results and standard deviation of the Investment Manager (s) investment funds;

To provide a semi-annual written account of the investment results, accounting summary and any significant developments to BOPHB and the Conference Treasurer who serves as its staff;

To establish asset allocation parameters, risk tolerance and an investment strategy that apply to the individual Funds;

To require all portfolios be managed with the aim of maximizing funds available for mission in a manner consistent with the Funds’ objectives;
To establish expectations for investing in alignment with the Social Principles of The United Methodist Church;

To establish effective communication procedures between the Committee, the BOPHB, the staff and the outside service providers;

To monitor and control investment expenses;

To delegate in writing the execution and administration of certain Committee responsibilities as appropriate to the Conference Treasurer who serves as its staff; the delegation of duties and responsibilities of the Conference Treasurer as contained in ¶619 of the Book of Discipline (2016);

To carry out any other duties required for the legal operation of the investments, including but not limited to hiring outside vendors to perform
various services;

To report to the BOPHB any significant deviations from this policy for prior approval before they are implemented.

E. Investment Manager(s)
To achieve its investment objectives and to ensure alignment with United Methodist Policies and alignment with the Social Principles of The United Methodist Church, the Investment Manager of Annual Conference Funds, shall be Wespath Investment Management, a division of Wespath Benefits and Investments, (formerly the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits), a general agency of The United Methodist Church. The primary role of Wespath is to assist the Committee by providing investment management and custody services. The use of Wespath shall be affirmed each year by the BOPHB.

The investments within the funds shall be invested in accordance with the Investment Strategy Statement and Statement of Administrative Investment Policy of Wespath Benefits and Investments and Wespath Investment Management (https://www.Wespath.org/assets/1/7/investment_policy.pdf).

This document is considered an addendum to this policy. The Committee acknowledges that the Wespath document may be modified at any time by Wespath without specific consent of the Committee. The Committee will request annually, a red-lined copy of the Investment Strategy Statement and Statement of Administrative Investment Policy. The Committee’s contact person will determine whether any changes merit disclosure to the Committee.

F. Investment Performance Benchmarks
The investment performance of total portfolios and asset class components will be measured against the published benchmark for the respective investment funds, as well as, against commonly accepted performance benchmarks. Consideration shall be given to the extent which the investment results are consistent with the investment objectives and guidelines as set forth in this Investment Policy.

G. Risk Posture and Time Horizon
The Committee understands the long-term nature of the investable assets relative to each Fund’s objectives. It further understands, capital market returns will vary from year to year due to a variety of essentially unpredictable factors, including in general: changing market valuations and trends, the interplay of global economic cycles, changing monetary conditions, and the occurrence of geopolitical events, natural disasters and other exogenous forces. The Committee recognizes that risk must be assumed in the investment pool(s) in order to achieve a pool’s investment objective
over an acceptable long-term time horizon of 10 to 20 years. The Committee will endeavor to invest in a manner that achieves a risk-adjusted rate of return appropriate for each of the investment Funds based on the target asset allocation directed by the Committee. In addition to the capital markets risks, the Committee also considers and seeks to effectively manage and control the following forms of risk:

**Asset Protection Risk** is the risk of loss due to fraud, embezzlement or financial system failure, which is mitigated through strong internal controls and the use of licensed trust companies to custody investment assets. Through the Wespath Funds, assets are custodied with Bank of New York Mellon.

**Purchasing Power Risk** is the risk of loss when the rate of return on investments does not keep up with rate of inflation. For mitigation, the Committee will understand and implement investment strategies that increase the probability of producing positive real rates of return over the accepted time horizon.

**Liquidity Risk** is the risk of loss arising from situations that include not having enough cash and/or cash equivalents to meet the obligations of the Committee and where the sale, if possible, of illiquid assets will yield less than their fair value. To mitigate this risk, the Committee will use proper cash management planning and employ asset allocation strategies constructed with highly liquid capital market securities.

**H. Responsibilities of Investment Manager(s)**

The Investment Manager(s) shall provide the Conference Treasurer and the Investment Committee as necessary the following reports:

The portfolio’s complete holdings;
1. A review of the investment performance measured against the respective benchmarks;
2. A commentary on investment results in light of the current investment environment and the goals and guidelines;
3. A review of the key investment decisions and the rationale for the decisions;
4. A discussion of the Investment Manager(s) outlook and what specific decisions this outlook may indicate;
5. Any recommendations as to changes in goals and guidelines in light of material and sustained changes in the capital market; and any significant change in the Investment Manager’s outlook, ownership or key employees.
I. Socially Responsible Investment Guidelines
As an Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church, the Annual Conference is committed to the implementation of the socially responsible investment policies in The Book of Discipline (2016) (¶717);

“Sustainable and Socially Responsible Investments-In the investment of money, it shall be the policy of The United Methodist Church that all general boards and agencies, including the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits, and all administrative agencies and institutions, including hospitals, homes, educational institutions, annual conferences, foundations, and local churches, make a conscious effort to invest in institutions, companies, corporations, or funds with policies and practices that are socially responsible, consistent with the goals outlined in the Social Principles. All United Methodist institutions shall endeavor to seek investments in institutions, companies, corporations, or funds that promote racial and gender justice, protect human rights, prevent the use of sweatshop or forced labor, avoid human suffering, and preserve the natural world, including mitigating the effects of climate change. In addition, United Methodist institutions shall endeavor to avoid investments in companies engaged in core business activities that are not aligned with the Social Principles through their direct or indirect involvement with the production of anti-personnel weapons and armaments (both nuclear and conventional weapons), alcoholic beverages or tobacco; or that are involved in privately operated correctional facilities, gambling, pornography or other forms of exploitative adult entertainment. The boards and agencies are to give careful consideration to environmental, social, and governance factors when making investment decisions and actively exercise their responsibility as owners of the companies in which they invest. This includes engaging with companies to create positive change and hold them accountable for their actions, while also considering exclusion if companies fail to act responsibly.”

Further, the Socially Responsible Investment Program stated in the Investment Strategy Statement and Statement of Administrative Investment Policy of Wespath Benefits and Investments and Wespath Investment Management (https://www.Wespath.org/assets/1/7/investment_policy.pdf), as revised, is the authority for the Annual Conference’s Socially Responsible Investment Guidelines.

J. Target Asset Allocations and Rebalancing Guidelines
The purpose of allocating among asset classes is to ensure the proper level of diversification and standard deviation (risk) for each portfolio. The Committee recognizes that rebalancing is a critical element in controlling the long-term asset allocation of the Funds. The Committee also recognizes that asset allocation shifts may arise from cash flows and through different market fluctuations. Each investment Fund will be rebalanced quarterly during the months of March, June, September, and December using the Institutional
Investor Portal rebalancing feature provided by Wespath to minimize deviations from the determined target allocations. The primary considerations in the asset allocation decisions and rebalancing process are:

1. Maintain inflation-adjusted purchasing power;
2. Grow the corpus of the funds to meet future obligations;
3. Achieve a minimum return in excess of inflation but with minimal annual fluctuations in the corpus; and,
4. Maintain the longevity of the assets and their distributions while taking into consideration that there may be no additional contributions.

K. Investment Guidelines, Asset Classes and Target Asset Allocations
The Committee shall require that Wespath follow all guidelines as established in the Investment Strategy Statement and Statement of Administrative Policy of Wespath Benefits and Investments and Wespath Investment Management (https://www.Wespath.org/assets/1/7/investment_policy.pdf). This policy guides the investment of the underlying investment funds. To achieve its investment objectives, the Investment Pool shall be allocated among one or more funds managed by Wespath. The purpose of allocating among investment funds is to seek a prudent level of diversification and to mitigate risk.

The following table defines each account’s allocation range and target allocation:

**Allocation Guidelines for the Investment Accounts**

**1. Deposit Account**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Investment Fund</th>
<th>Allocation Range</th>
<th>Target Allocation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Short - Term Fund (STIF)</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**2. Deposit Account Reserves**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Investment Fund</th>
<th>Allocation Range</th>
<th>Target Allocation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Short - Term Fund (STIF)</td>
<td>25% - 35%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fixed Income (FIF)</td>
<td>35% - 45%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ext - Term Fixed Income (ETFIF)</td>
<td>00% - 10%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple Asset (MAF)</td>
<td>10% - 20%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US Equity (USEF)</td>
<td>05% - 15%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**A. Ministers Memorial Endowment Fund**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fund</th>
<th>Allocation Range</th>
<th>Target Allocation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Short - Term Fund (STIF)</td>
<td>10% - 20%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fixed Income (FIF)</td>
<td>25% - 35%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Ext - Term Fixed Income ((ETFIF)) 00% - 10% 5%
Multiple Asset (MAF) 15% - 25% 20%
Equity Social Value Fund (ESVPF) 00% - 10% 5%
US Equity (USEF) 20% - 30% 25%

B. Pre-82 Funding Account

Fund
Multiple Asset (MAF) 100%

L. Amendments and Revisions
Amendments or changes to this Investment Policy may be made by
the BOPHB and incorporated directly into the policy as a revision and
restatement or acknowledged and noted in an addendum until such time as
the Investment Policy is revised and restated.

Report 21 – Articles of Incorporation

AMENDED AND RESTATED
ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION
OF
BOARD OF PENSIONS AND HOMES FOR CLAIMANTS
OF THE ALABAMA-WEST FLORIDA ANNUAL CONFERENCE
OF THE METHODIST CHURCH

The Corporation was incorporated in Montgomery County, Alabama,
on June 24, 1957, and its organizational charter is recorded in Corporation
Book 35, Page 235, in the Office of the Judge of Probate of Montgomery
County, Alabama. These Amended and Restated Articles of Incorporation
were duly adopted by the Corporation and approved by the Alabama-West
Florida Conference of the United Methodist Church as required by the
Articles of Incorporation of this Corporation. The Articles of Incorporation
of the Corporation are hereby amended and re-stated as follows:

ARTICLE ONE
The name of the corporation is hereby amended to “BOARD
OF PENSION AND HEALTH BENEFITS OF THE ALABAMA-
WEST FLORIDA CONFERENCE OF THE UNITED METHODIST
CHURCH, INC.”

ARTICLE TWO
The duration of the corporation shall be perpetual.

ARTICLE THREE
(A) The corporation is organized exclusively for charitable, religious,
literary, educational, and scientific purposes within the meaning of Section
501(c)(3) of the United States Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended,
for the benefit of the Alabama-West Florida Conference of the United Methodist Church.

(B) The corporation shall be empowered to do and perform such acts as may be necessary or appropriate in carrying out the foregoing purposes of the corporation, including but not limited to pursuing activities to implement the pension and health benefit programs of the Alabama-West Florida Conference of the United Methodist Church and to exercise any of the powers granted to not for profit corporations by the Alabama Nonprofit Corporation Act consistent with the corporation’s status as an organization (i) exempt from Federal income tax under Section 501(a) and (c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, and (ii) to which contributions are deductible under Section 170(c)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended.

(C) No part of the net earnings of the corporation shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to its members, trustees, officers, or other private persons, except that the corporation shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purposes set forth in these Articles. No substantial part of the activities of the corporation shall be the carrying on of propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and the corporation shall not participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of or in opposition to any candidate for public office. Notwithstanding any other provision of these articles, the corporation shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on (a) by a corporation exempt from federal income tax, under section 501(c)(3) of the United States Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, or (b) by a corporation, contributions to which are deductible under section 170(c)(2) of the United States Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended.

(D) This corporation is intended to be an organization which is described in Section 501(c)(3) of the said Internal Revenue Code and which is exempt from Federal income tax under Section 501(a) of the said Internal Revenue Code and which is not a “private foundation” within the meaning of Section 509(a). All terms and provisions of these Articles and all operations of the corporation shall be construed, applied and carried out in accordance with such intent. For purposes of these Articles:

(1) “qualified organization” means an organization which is organized for charitable, religious, literary, educational, or scientific purposes and qualified as exempt from Federal income tax under Section 501(a) and (c)(3) of the said Internal Revenue Code; and
(2) “qualified purposes” means those purposes under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, which are permitted of the corporation as a qualified organization which is not a private foundation under the said Internal Revenue Code;

(3) Reference to any section of the United States Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, includes the corresponding provision or provisions then in effect of any subsequent Federal tax laws.

ARTICLE FOUR
The Corporation shall oversee and manage the pension and health benefit programs of the Alabama-West Florida Conference of the United Methodist Church and shall be responsible for the implementation and funding of the pension and health benefits programs of the Alabama-West Florida Conference of the United Methodist Church, as the same shall exist from time to time. The Corporation shall have the authority to implement such pension and health benefit programs as the Board of Directors shall determine from time to time.

The Board shall also have the authority to acquire and dispose of real estate as the Board may determine from time to time. The Board shall have the authority to invest and reinvest any of its assets in support of its mission in accordance with the direction of the Board of Directors as the same may seem appropriate, from time to time. In addition, the Board may establish trust funds or other investments as the Board may deem appropriate, from time to time. The Corporation shall have the authority to perform any other business or activities delegated to it by the Alabama-West Florida Conference of the United Methodist Church.

All actions of the Board shall be subject to The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church as the same may be established by the United Methodist Church. All funds held by the Corporation shall be held in trust for the benefit of the Alabama-West Florida Conference of the United Methodist Church.

ARTICLE FIVE
The corporation is to have no members and no capital stock.

ARTICLE SIX
(A) The location of the principal office of the corporation shall be 4719 Woodmere Boulevard, Montgomery, Alabama 36106.

(B) The address of the initial registered office of the corporation is 4719 Woodmere Boulevard, Montgomery, Alabama 36106 and the name
of its initial registered agent at such address is Bishop David Graves, or the then presiding Bishop of the Alabama-West Florida Conference of the United Methodist Church, Inc.

ARTICLE SEVEN
The current members of the Board of Directors of the Corporation shall continue in office and shall serve such terms of office as may be determined by the Corporation from time to time, pursuant to its By-Laws; provided however that the Board shall be composed of one-half clergy members and one-half laity members. All members of the Board of Directors shall be residents of the area of the Alabama-West Florida Conference of the United Methodist Church and members of a United Methodist Church. The Board of Directors shall have the power to adopt By-Laws for the Corporation and amend the same from time to time.

ARTICLE EIGHT
These Articles of Incorporation may be amended by the vote of two-thirds of the Directors of the Corporation after written notice of the proposed Amendment being provided to the Directors not less than 10 days prior the meeting at which such Amendment is to be considered; Provided, however, that no Amendment to these Articles of Incorporation shall be effective unless such Amendment is approved in writing by the Presiding Bishop of the Alabama-West Florida Conference of the United Methodist Church prior to the submission of the Amendment to the Board of Directors for vote thereon.

ARTICLE NINE
Upon the dissolution of the corporation, assets shall be distributed for one or more exempt purposes within the meaning of section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, or shall be distributed to the federal government, or to a state or local government, for a public purpose. Any such assets not disposed of shall be disposed of by a Court of Competent Jurisdiction of the county in which the principal office of the corporation is then located, exclusively for such purposes or to such organization or organizations, as said Court shall determine, which are organized and operated exclusively for such purposes.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the undersigned, Reverend Robert C. McKibben, Chairperson, has hereunto set his hand and seal this 6 day of March, 2018.

[Signature]
Robert C. McKibben, Chairperson
STATEMENT OF APPROVAL

State of Alabama,

Montgomery County.

I, David Graves, Presiding Bishop of the Alabama-West Florida Conference of the United Methodist Church, do hereby certify that the foregoing Amended Articles of Incorporation was submitted to the Annual Conference of the Alabama-West Florida Conference of the United Methodist Church for approval and, upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the Alabama-West Florida Conference of the United Methodist Church did approve the Amended Articles of Incorporation.

This the 6th day of March, 2018.

David W. Graves
Presiding Bishop

This completes the reports of the Board of Pension and Health Benefits for 2018.

Submitted by, The Reverend Doctor Robert C. McKibben
Chair, Board of Pension and Health Benefits
BOARD OF TRUSTEES

REPORT 1 – FUND BALANCES

The Board of Trustees of the Alabama-West Florida Annual Conference holds in trust all properties of the Annual Conference. The real properties held are the following: The Episcopal Residence: 3291 Lancaster Lane, Montgomery and the Annual Conference Office building at 4719 Woodmere Blvd, Montgomery. The Board is the Trustee for the following bequests (cost value as of December 31, 2017):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FUND</th>
<th>COST VALUE</th>
<th>BENEFICIARY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Norris Allen Fund</td>
<td>$211,090</td>
<td>Board of Ministry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Hattie B. Norred Fund</td>
<td>$104,865</td>
<td>Board of Trustees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. C.B. Gilmore Fund</td>
<td>$198,437</td>
<td>Board of Trustees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Lowndesboro Trust</td>
<td>$7882</td>
<td>Lowndesboro UMC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Mary Lloyd Reynolds</td>
<td>$134,012</td>
<td>Board of Missions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. J.B. Skinner Estate</td>
<td>$1,367,869</td>
<td>Children’s Home</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Board of Trustees holds these funds in trust, with the revenues being used as directed by the donors.

We call attention to the resolution adopted by the Annual Conference of 1988, which designated the Alabama-West Florida United Methodist Foundation as the official depository for discretionary endowment funds owned by the Annual Conference and its related boards and agencies. Local churches are encouraged to use the Foundation for endowment funds in order to insure proper management and fiduciary accountability.

REPORT 2 - SIGNATURE AUTHORITY

In keeping with ¶2515 of The 2016 Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church, the President and any one of the following officers of the Board of Trustees may sign any required written instruments necessary to carry out the action authorized by the Annual Conference regarding the sale, transfer, lease or purchase of Annual Conference property: The Vice President or the Secretary.

REPORT 3 - DESIGNATION OF UMC OWNED PROPERTY AS CULTURAL, HISTORICAL, OR ARCHITECTURAL LANDMARK

Paragraph 2512.7 of The 2016 Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church directs that “the board [of trustees of the annual conference], after consultation with the conference commission on archives and history. . . shall develop a policy for an annual conference response, on behalf of any local church, church-related agency, or district or annual conference board of trustees located within the bounds of the annual conference, to any governmental effort to designate a property held in
trust for the benefit of The United Methodist Church (¶2501) by any such board of trustees as a cultural, historical, or architectural landmark.”

Governmental designation of church-owned real property as a cultural, historical, or architectural landmark severely infringes upon and restricts the rights of the church as a property owner and as a religious institution.

Governmental designation of church-owned real property can cause a reduction in the market value of the property.

Typically, the exterior facade of a building may not be altered without governmental permission.

Depending on governmental requirements, alterations of the interior may be forbidden without governmental permission.

Improvements (such as buildings) on the property are either forbidden to be demolished, or can be demolished only after extensive and expensive applications and hearings.

Sale of landmarked property, when it is no longer required for church purposes, becomes almost impossible; a buyer is not given the freedom to demolish the structures on the property or to use it as he/she sees fit. Such limitations would render church-owned property virtually unable to be sold in the future.

The church could be blocked from transforming the donations given in the past to establish real property for United Methodist use into new establishments for United Methodist Church use, a promise made to the donors at the time their donations were originally solicited.

In exchange for such limitations on the use of property, governmental bodies typically will compensate the property owner for such reduction in property value and limitations on development and use by allowing federal and state income tax credits against actual expenditures made for future rehabilitation work done to the property. Such income tax credits are worthless to a church, however, because a church does not pay income taxes.

Because of the restrictions and infringements upon the rights of the church as a property owner and religious institution, in general such governmental designations should be discouraged.

There may be, however, instances when allowing such a land-marking to take place is in the best interests of both the public and the church. Therefore, the following principles are established as the policy of the Alabama-West Florida Annual Conference:
1. Any Board of Trustees which voluntarily wishes to cooperate with a governmental body in having that property landmarked which the Board of Trustees holds in trust for The United Methodist Church shall do the following:
   a. Comply with the provisions of ¶s 2515, 2539, 2540, 2541, and/or 2543 (as appropriate) of *The 2016 Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church*, just as if such land-marking were a sale of the property.
   b. Obtain a majority vote of the Bishop and Cabinet, combined, approving such a voluntary land-marking of church-owned property.

2. On behalf of the Alabama-West Florida Annual Conference, the Annual Conference Board of Trustees, as the designated successor in interest to church-owned property held in trust for the United Methodist Church under ¶2549.3 of *The 2016 Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church*, and as the designated agency “to intervene and take all necessary legal steps to safeguard and protect the interests and rights of the annual conference anywhere and in all matters relating to property and rights to property” of any of its agencies, organizations, or local churches under 2512.4, is directed to intervene, at the request of the superintendent of the district in which the affected property is located, to oppose any governmental effort to involuntarily designate any such property as a cultural, historical, or architectural landmark. This intervention may include engaging what legal or professional counsel is needed. Such intervention may include opposing such land-marking designation in any or all state or federal courts, if necessary and appropriate. The Annual Conference Board of Trustees may, at its discretion, undertake such intervention by financial assistance to the affected board of trustees. Such funding shall come first from any positive balance in the fund described below. Additional funding, if necessary, be requested from the Annual Conference Council on Finance and Administration.

3. The Annual Conference Committee on Finance and Administration shall establish an interest-on-investments account to be used, at the discretion of the Annual Conference Board of Trustees, to help defray the costs of opposing governmental efforts at involuntary land-marking of church-owned property as described above. Funds contributed to this fund may only be used for the designated purpose. Any use of these funds will be reported to the Annual Conference. Income generated from this account may be used by the Annual Conference Council on Finance and Administration (or its successor organization) for any purpose it shall designate. The Annual Conference Board of Trustees is directed to a) request monies from the apportioned budget of the Annual Conference, as reasonably available, and b) solicit voluntary contributions, to put into the account to hold in reserve for the designated purpose.

**REPORT 4 - GENERAL TRUST GUIDELINES**

In the absence of specific guidelines regarding the investment and distribution of gifts to the Alabama-West Florida Conference Board of Trustees, the board
establishes these guidelines in order to provide ongoing support of the ministries identified by the donor. The use of “Board of Trustees” in this document refers to the Board of Trustees of the Alabama-West Florida Conference of the United Methodist Church.

• The objective of the trust is to conserve principal as an ongoing source of funding.
• Any part of the principal may be withdrawn only in extreme and overwhelming circumstances, bordering on the financial survival of the entity designated by the donor and must be approved by the Board of Trustees.
• Fund management will be provided through the services of the Alabama-West Florida United Methodist Foundation.
• Up to 100% of the income may be utilized upon approval of the Board of Trustees.
• The Board shall use the “Corporate Law” definition of income, which generally defines income as earnings from all sources including interest, dividends, net rentals and capital appreciation.
• Realized capital gains will routinely be treated as an increase in principal value unless approved by the Board of Trustees for distribution as part of “income”.
• The use of a trust fund as collateral for a loan will be decided on a case by case basis by the Board of Trustees.
• Board of Trustees will determine the investment strategy for each fund and any changes in investment strategy will require approval of the Board.
• Any material change to the income distribution policy requires approval of the Board of Trustees.
• Board of Trustees encourages the use of the General Trust Guidelines for all additional gifts.

REPORT 5 - 15 PASSENGER VANS

In an extra ordinary action The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (see www.nhtsa.gov) issued a safety advisory for the fourth time in five years saying:

• 15 passenger vans are far more prone to rolling over than school buses, cars, or mini-vans.
• Occupants of 15 - passenger vans are less apt to wear seat belts.
• 15 - passenger vans are three times more likely to roll over when fully loaded than when they have fewer than 10 passengers.

Federal law does not let car dealers sell the vans for transporting people 18 years and younger.

The South Carolina United Methodist Advocate, dated May 2001 stated: School buses average 0.2 deaths per 100 million miles. Vans average 1.2 deaths per 100 million miles.

The Alabama-West Florida Chancellor states, “I believe that the use of these vans should be strongly discouraged by the Conference. There have been studies which tend to show that 15-passenger vans can become unstable in emergency situations where the vans are fully loaded. While the vans have not been prohibited by the
Department of Transportation, the use of fully loaded vans to transport passengers has been strongly questioned. There is evidence that a fully loaded 15-passenger van exceeds the design criteria for the suspension systems of the van. Under emergency braking or handling maneuvers, the van can become unstable and there have been several crashes involving fully loaded vans. Consequently, it is my opinion that the Conference should strongly discourage the use of 15-passenger vans for the transportation of people in our Conference. Although the Conference cannot prohibit the use of these vans, I believe we should strongly discourage the use of these vans due to the liability concerns and safety concerns.”

It is the recommendation of the Board of Trustees that churches not use or purchase 15 passenger vans to transport passengers and that before churches do so that they obtain competent legal advice and consult with their insurance company.

**REPORT 6 - PARSONAGE STANDARDS**

The Book of Discipline states, “Housing provisions shall comply with Annual Conference housing policy and parsonage standards.” In order to establish a housing policy and housing standard the Annual Conference recommends three options available for the local church. The Annual Conference does not put one option above the other. The options are co-equal, depending upon the local situation.

The Charge Conference shall review the recommendations of the Pastor-Parish Relations Committee regarding provision of adequate housing for the pastor(s) of a local Charge in consultation with the District Superintendent, the Charge shall choose one of these three options.

**OPTION ONE**
Housing Allowance: Any congregation considering a housing allowance shall consult with the District Superintendent to understand all the positive and negative aspects of housing allowances. Before implementing a housing allowance, a congregation must obtain the District Superintendent’s permission. The congregation must present a tentative draft budget for the first two years and demonstrate the impact of the change on the overall fiscal health of the congregation. If the congregation decides to sell an existing parsonage, the church leadership shall follow the Discipline guidelines for selling the parsonage and using the proceeds of the sale.

Upon recommendation of the Pastor-Parish Relations Committee and the Board of Trustees with approval by the Finance Committee, the Charge Conference shall provide an annual housing allowance. The housing allowance shall not be considered as part of compensation or remuneration of the pastor(s).

**OPTION TWO**
Upon recommendation of the Pastor-Parish Relations Committee and the Board of Trustees with approval by the Finance Committee, the Charge Conference shall
provide a parsonage that furnishes only major appliances, installed floor covering and window dressing.

OPTION THREE
Upon recommendation of the Pastor-Parish Relations Committee and the Board of Trustees with approval by the Finance Committee, the Charge Conference shall provide an adequately furnished parsonage, with quality furnishings, that complies with these standards:

REQUIRED MINIMUM STANDARDS
In addition to the Discipline requirements for parsonages the following is required for all parsonages, in the Alabama -West Florida Annual Conference.

• Electrical wiring that meets code and is sufficient to meet today’s needs for electricity.
• Climate control - both heating and air conditioning

Rooms:
• Living Room or Great Room
• Dining Room or eating area large enough for at least 8 people
• Kitchen
• 3 bedrooms
• 2 baths
• Indoor laundry area
• Shelter for 2 vehicles
• Secure storage area

Equipment:
Good quality, dependable appliances:
• Stove
• Microwave
• Dishwasher
• Refrigerator with freezer compartment
• Washer and dryer
• Hot water heater of at least 60 gallons
• Wired for basic cable or satellite dish service
• Maintained smoke alarms
• Current fire extinguishers for kitchen and other required areas
• Vacuum, if there are carpets

If no lawn service and pastor is expected to maintain lawn the following are minimum requirements:
• Gas mower
• Trimmer or weed eater

Furnishings:
• Quality window coverings in neutral colors that insure privacy
• Quality floor coverings in neutral colors that is durable and easy to maintain

Maintenance:
• Regular pest control inspection and treatment
• Annual termite inspection and treatment
• Landscaping and maintenance thereof should be representative of the neighborhood
• Regular schedule for painting both on the outside and inside of the house as needed.
• Any needed repairs should be done in a timely manner
• Annual carpet cleaning
• Regular maintenance and cleaning of chimneys if one exists

CARE OF THE PROPERTY
1. The pastor and family should care for the parsonage as good stewards for the Lord’s property, carefully avoiding undue wear and tear, but at the same time they should “be at home” in the parsonage, knowing that the home and furnishings are to be used with inevitable and expected depreciation.
2. The pastor and family are responsible for the repair or replacement of furnishings when, through negligent use of furnishings, breakage results, but ordinary wear and tear, such as is expected when a house is lived in, is the responsibility of the Board of Trustees/Parsonage Committee.
3. The church shall provide an adequate amount of insurance of the building, furnishings, and equipment and for public liability. The minimum amount of insurance carried on the parsonage should be equal to 80% of the replacement value of the building, furnishings, and equipment. All clergy families are responsible for insuring all of the family’s personal items.
4. There shall be a plan identifying repairs, replacements or additions that need to be made to the parsonage. All broken and worn-out furniture or equipment should be removed.
5. The Board of Trustees in consultation with the parsonage committee shall keep the parsonage and furnishing in good repair. They shall furnish the clergy family with a list of those church members who can do minor repairs and the names of repair companies with whom the church does business. A list of procedures to follow when repair work is needed should also be given to the clergy family
6. Regular pest control inspection and treatment, annual termite inspection and annual carpet cleaning should be budgeted.
7. The pastor and spouse should be consulted in the selection of furnishings and equipment.
8. If the vacating parsonage family had pets they shall be responsible for having the house and yard treated for fleas and other parasites before moving. They shall also be responsible for having the carpeting and upholstery cleaned and must vacate the house early in order to allow for this process to occur.
9. Each pastoral charge should place an amount in the budget annually for normal maintenance and repairs to the building, furnishings, and equipment or the replacement of same if necessary.
REPORT 7 - POLICY STATEMENT CONCERNING SEXUAL MISCONDUCT BY CLERGY OF THE ALABAMA-WEST FLORIDA CONFERENCE OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH, INC.

The Alabama-West Florida Conference of the United Methodist Church, Inc. affirms The 2016 Book of Resolutions, Sexual Abuse Within the Ministerial Relationship and Sexual Harassment Within the Church, which states that sexual abuse within the ministerial relationship and sexual harassment within the church are incompatible with biblical teachings of hospitality, justice and healing. In accordance with The 2016 Book of Discipline ¶161(F), we affirm that all human beings, both male and female, are created in the image of God, and thus have been made equal in Christ. As the promise of Galatians 3:26-29 states, all are one in Christ. Therefore, this Conference of the United Methodist Church supports equity among all persons without regard to ethnicity, situation or gender.

Statement of Purpose

Clergy members of this conference are in a position of sacred trust, responsibility and power which affords the opportunity for unique relationships of grace and caring. Sexual misconduct by the clergy violates this trust and constitutes an abuse of the power and position of the clergy. It is the purpose of this policy to prohibit sexual abuse, sexual harassment and sexual misconduct by the clergy members of this conference in the performance of their responsibilities as ministers of the gospel. It is also the purpose of this policy to provide a method for reporting such misconduct and a procedure for resolution of complaints of misconduct involving clergy members of this Conference.

Theological Foundation

All persons are created by God. Scripture teaches that male and female are created in the image of God, and are of equal value in Christ. Jesus was sent into the world that all persons may experience whole relationships with God and each other. We are called to live in a right relationship with God, with one another, and with ourselves. This calling to live in the fullness of our God-created humanity requires that we sustain a vital relationship to God so that we may maintain the dignity of all life, and treat each other with respect and dignity. The 2016 Book of Discipline states: “We affirm that sexuality is God’s good gift to all persons. We believe persons may be fully human only when that gift is acknowledged and affirmed by themselves, the church and society.”

Definitions

Sexual harassment is defined by The 2016 Book of Discipline,¶161(J) as “any unwanted sexual comment, advance or demand, either verbal or physical, that is reasonably perceived by the recipient as demeaning, intimidating, or coercive. Sexual harassment must be understood as an exploitation of a power relationship rather than an exclusively sexual issue. Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to, the creation of a hostile or abusive working environment resulting from discrimination on the basis of gender.” Sexual harassment may occur in any environment where
the work of the church takes place. Sexual harassment also includes intimidating or coercive behavior that threatens or results in a tangible employment action.

**Gender Harassment** is behavior that is harassing in nature against a woman because she is a woman or against a man because he is a man.

**Sexual abuse** is conduct of a sexual nature that is in violation of the legal rights of others and/or conduct that is prohibit by law. Sexual abuse includes criminal sexual conduct or sexual contact by force, threat or intimidation that is in violation of the laws of the states of Alabama or Florida. As applicable to interactions with children or vulnerable persons, the term “sexual abuse” includes the subjectation of a child or vulnerable person to any sexual act by any person responsible for their care in violation of the laws of the states of Alabama or Florida. To uphold the moral standards of the United Methodist Church as defined by *The 2016 Book of Discipline*, no person under the age of 18 nor any vulnerable adult may give consent to sexual acts.

Sexual abuse within the ministerial relationship occurs when a person within a ministerial role of leadership (pastor, educator, counselor, youth leader, or other person of leadership) engages in sexual contact or sexualized behavior with a congregant, parishioner, client, employee, student, staff member, co-worker or volunteer.

**Sexual Misconduct** is conduct which is a chargeable offense within the meaning of §2702 of *The 2016 Book of Discipline*. Sexual misconduct may also be an abuse of power through sexual contact or activity (not limited to sexual intercourse) which exploits the vulnerability of a parishioner, client, staff member, or volunteer, or conduct which causes or allows those persons to engage in sexual conduct with a person in a professional relationship (whether paid or unpaid) to this annual conference.

Sexual misconduct may also include any sexual contact or activity (not limited to sexual intercourse) between a person in a therapeutic or counseling role or relationship with a parishioner or client. In such instances, consent is not a defense. Such behavior is inappropriate and immoral.

**Policy Statement**

Sexual harassment, gender harassment, sexual abuse and misconduct of a sexual nature within the life of the Church interfere with its moral mission. The Alabama-West Florida Conference of the United Methodist Church prohibits and will not tolerate these behaviors, which are sinful, demeaning, abusive and wrong. This Conference commits itself to the fair and expedient investigation of any complaint of sexual and gender harassment, sexual abuse or misconduct of a sexual nature within the Conference and will take action deemed appropriate and in compliance with the *Book of Discipline*. Further, it shall be the policy of The Alabama West-Florida Conference of the United Methodist Church to create an environment of
hospitality for all persons, male or female, which is free from this type of sinful conduct and which encourages respect, equality and kinship in Christ.

**Procedure for Reporting Complaints**
Some instances of harassment can be resolved informally by conversation between the parties or facilitated by mediation. In all other instances, conduct that is in violation of this policy must be reported immediately. Such a report may be made either to the Presiding Bishop of the Conference or any District Superintendent of this Conference. A report of such conduct may be reported to the Presiding Bishop at the Bishop’s office in Montgomery, Alabama or to the District Superintendent at any of the District Offices within the Conference. Upon receipt by a District Superintendent of a report of clergy misconduct of a sexual nature, the District Superintendent must immediately report such complaint to the Presiding Bishop.

**Non-Retaliation for Reporting**
The Alabama-West Florida Conference of the United Methodist Church will not retaliate against any person who brings forward a complaint or reports any conduct prohibited by this policy. All staff, leaders and volunteers are expected to immediately report any knowledge of harassment, abuse or misconduct to any one of the persons listed above. Prompt and appropriate investigation and corrective action, where appropriate, will be taken, including discipline. Persons who make false accusations may also be disciplined in the event that the accusations have been proven false.

**Investigations**
All investigations and remedial measures shall take place according to the pertinent provisions of the *Book of Discipline*. Nothing contained in this policy shall be construed to in any way alter or enlarge on any requirement of the *Book of Discipline*. All complaints or reports of conduct that is in violation of this policy shall be promptly and thoroughly investigated in accordance with the *Book of Discipline*. All investigations shall be consistent with fair process as set forth in ¶2701 of *The 2016 Book of Discipline* and the Decisions of The Judicial Council of the United Methodist Church.

**Confidentiality**
While The Alabama-West Florida Conference of the United Methodist Church cannot guarantee absolute confidentiality, it will make every reasonable effort to maintain confidentiality by disclosing information concerning the complaint or the investigation only on a “need to know” basis and as necessary to promote God’s call for justice, reconciliation and healing.

**Mandatory Reporting**
The Alabama-West Florida Conference of the United Methodist Church will comply with all applicable state or federal laws regarding the mandatory reporting of misconduct of a sexual nature committed by any clergy.
Mediation and Reconciliation

The Alabama-West Florida Conference of the United Methodist Church encourages resolution of disputes and conflicts by mediation and reconciliation. Where appropriate, the Conference encourages parties to utilize mediation in order to reach a just and equitable resolution of the matter, giving due consideration to the severity of the situation, the position of the parties and nature of the conduct involved. Where appropriate, the conference encourages the utilization of mediation agencies such as Just Peace, and appropriate support teams.

REPORT 8 - SAFE SANCTUARIES POLICY
and MINIMUM STANDARDS

INTRODUCTION. One mission of The Alabama-West Florida Annual Conference Board of Trustees is to support the work of the local church. At each meeting the members keep in front of them the question, “How will this action help the local church?” Our prayer is that the revised Safe Sanctuaries Policy and Minimum Standards will help the local church accomplish its ministries while ensuring the safety of our children, youth, and at-risk or vulnerable adults. We encourage clergy and laity to read this policy and make it an essential part of the operations of your local church. If you have any questions you may contact any member of the Board of Trustees.

I. THEOLOGICAL BASIS. The theological basis of the Safe Sanctuaries Policy and Minimum Standards (SSPMS) is grounded in the following:
A. Children are important! Jesus said, “Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me . . .” (Mark 9.37, all Scripture references are from the New Revised Standard Version). We ought to offer hospitality and protect children. Jesus said, “If any of you put a stumbling block before one of these little ones who believe in me, it would be better for you if a great millstone were fastened around your neck and you were drowned in the depth of the sea.” (Matthew 18.6; Mark 9.42).

B. The Social Principles of The United Methodist Church state that “. . . children must be protected from economic, physical and sexual exploitation, and abuse.” Id, Paragraph (¶) 162C.

C. Members of the United Methodist Church regularly pledge commitment to demonstrating the love of Jesus Christ so that each person will be “. . . surrounded by steadfast love, . . . established in the faith, and confirmed and strengthened in the way that leads to life eternal” (Baptismal Covenant II, United Methodist Hymnal, p. 44).

D. Paragraph 2702 of The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church 2016 names child abuse, sexual abuse, sexual misconduct, and sexual harassment as chargeable offenses for both clergy and lay members.
II. DEFINITIONS. The following definitions shall be used in establishing, applying, and interpreting the SSPMS:

A. Abuse
1. **Physical abuse** occurs where a person intentionally causes bodily harm to a child, youth, or at-risk or vulnerable adult.
2. **Emotional abuse** occurs where a person speaks violently or cruelly to a child, youth, or at-risk or vulnerable adult, or otherwise exposes a child, youth, or at-risk or vulnerable adult to violence or emotional cruelty.
3. **Neglect** is abuse which occurs where a person endangers the health, safety, or welfare of a child, youth, or at-risk or vulnerable adult by failing to act in a reasonable manner.
4. **Sexual abuse** occurs where an adult or another older or more powerful youth has sexual contact with a child, youth, or at-risk or vulnerable adult.

B. Personnel
1. **Governing body** refers to the local church leadership approved and elected by the annual Charge Conference of the local church and in compliance with *The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church 2016* (¶ 243, 244, and 247). Examples may include Church Council, Administrative Board, Board of Stewards, etc.
2. **Authority figure** is a person who is the primary leader of any youth, children, or at-risk or vulnerable adult activity and such person is required to be twenty-one (21) years of age or older.
3. **Assistant** is a person who gives help to and is directed by an **authority figure** in the course of any youth, children, or at-risk or vulnerable adult activity including, but not limited to, volunteers, interns, camp counselors, and Vacation Bible School workers. Such an assistant must be at least twelve (12) years of age. However, in order to count for satisfying requirements of the **two adult rule** (¶ II.C.1, below,) such assistant must be an **adult** as herein defined.
4. **Adults** are all persons who have attained the age of majority (19 years in Alabama and 18 years in Florida).
5. **Floater** is an adult who acts as an **assistant** to an **authority figure** to monitor covered activities or events (¶ II.C.2, below,) in order to comply with the **two adult rule** (¶ II.C.1, below,) when achieving such compliance by use of two non-related adults is unfeasible.
6. **Children** are all persons from infants through the fifth grade or sixth grade, as determined by each local church in order to conform with grade-level practices of its local area schools regarding classifications of elementary schools and middle or junior high schools.
7. **Youth** are all persons in the sixth-grade or seventh-grade through the twelfth-grade, as determined by each local church in order to conform with grade-level practices of its local area schools regarding classifications of middle or junior high schools and high schools.
8. **At-risk or vulnerable adults** are adults with physical, mental, and/or developmental impairment or disability.
C. **Activities**

1. **Two adult rule** is a core principle regarding the supervision required for **covered activities** and **overnight events**. This rule means that a minimum of **two adults** who are not related to each other should be utilized in all programming with **children**, **youth**, and **at-risk or vulnerable adults**. However, when unfeasible to staff at buildings and outdoor areas with two non-related adults, there should be at least an additional adult serving as a **floater** with visual and physical access to all areas where such programming occurs. Visual and physical access means either an open door or door with a window that provides a line of sight enabling the **floater** to see into a room or other building space and to see fully outdoor sites where **covered activities or events** take place.

2. **Covered activities or events** for purposes of this document include all church programming for **children**, **youth**, and **at-risk or vulnerable adults**.

3. **Overnight events** are a type of **covered activity or event** which extends through the evening and which may include summer camps, retreats, mission trips, and lock-ins.
   a. **Room sharing limits** means that adults staying with young people during **overnight events** must be the same gender as the young people and that such adults must not be alone in a lodging room with a young person at any time and must not share a bed with a young person unless he/she is an immediate family member or guardian of such young person and of the same gender.
   b. **Immediate family member or guardian room sharing exception** means that an immediate family member or guardian of a young person who is chaperoning an **overnight event** is permitted to share a room and bed with his/her child no matter the gender as long as no other young people are sharing the room.

4. **Transportation**
   a. **Transportation** is a **covered activity** whenever such transportation is provided in a church-owned or leased vehicle (car, SUV, van, bus, etc.) or when a church staff member is the driver of or present in any vehicle used for such transportation. This provision shall not apply to multi-vehicle caravanning transportation. Two adults are not required to occupy each of the private vehicles in a caravan.
   b. Any such transportation provided for a church-sponsored or church-hosted program of day-care, pre-school, or after-school care that is licensed under the laws of Alabama or Florida shall abide by and conform with the respective state laws and regulations, if any, applicable to such a transportation function.

III. **POLICY STATEMENT**. In covenant with all United Methodist congregations and the Alabama-West Florida Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church, we endeavor as follows:

A. We shall strive to provide for physical safety and spiritual growth of all our children, youth, and at-risk or vulnerable adults.

B. We shall strive to demonstrate the love of Jesus Christ so that each person will be “... surrounded by steadfast love, ... established in the faith, and confirmed and strengthened in the way that leads to life eternal” (*Baptismal Covenant II, The United Methodist Hymnal*, p. 44).
C. We shall strive to prevent physical, emotional, or sexual abuse of children, youth, and at-risk or vulnerable adults involved in any ministry sponsored by our Annual Conference or our local congregation.

D. We shall strive to provide and facilitate the use of reasonable care and effort in caring for the children, youth, and at-risk or vulnerable adults involved in any ministry sponsored by our Annual Conference or our local congregation.

E. We shall strive to minister to and act in the best interests of persons who are experiencing abuse or who have been victims of abuse in the past.

F. We shall strive to be aware of and comply with our legal responsibilities regarding the types of abuse addressed in this document.

G. We shall strive to screen all current and future staff, and all volunteers for every program that involves children, youth, and at-risk or vulnerable adults.

H. We shall strive to acknowledge, respond to, and investigate all questions or reports regarding alleged abuse.

I. We shall strive to adhere to biblical church discipline, particularly as recognized in ¶ 2702 of *The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church 2016*, which names child abuse, sexual abuse, sexual misconduct, and sexual harassment as chargeable offenses for clergy and lay members.

J. We shall commit to observe the Safe Sanctuaries Policy and Minimum Standards.

IV. STANDARDS: THEIR ADOPTION. Local churches within the Conference may adopt their own Safe Sanctuaries Policy and Minimum Standards, provided such standards equal or exceed in strength of protection for children, youth, and at-risk or vulnerable adults the minimum standards here stated. In the absence of such local church action, the minimum standards that shall be utilized in implementing and applying the Safe Sanctuaries Policy and Minimum Standards undertaken in the above-stated covenant with other United Methodist congregations and the Alabama-West Florida Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church shall be as follows:

A. RESPONSIBILITY FOR IMPLEMENTATION. Implementing the Safe Sanctuaries Policy & Minimum Standards (SSPMS) at a local church shall be the responsibility of the Pastor in Charge, the governing body, and a permanent Safe Sanctuaries Committee (SSC) organized in compliance with the local church’s governance process.

B. SAFE SANCTUARIES COMMITTEE. A Safe Sanctuaries Committee (SSC) shall have the responsibility for developing local church safe sanctuaries policies and minimum standards and procedures; communicating with and educating the congregation concerning those policies and procedures; recruiting, screening,
and training paid staff and volunteers; conducting site inspections and making recommendations; retaining records; and regularly reviewing conference policies and procedures, applicable state laws, and the insurance policy provisions and insurer requirements. Such periodic training and education on Safe Sanctuaries Policy and Minimum Standards and procedures provided by the Alabama-West Florida Conference shall be attended each quadrennium by the local church Pastor in Charge and SSC chairperson or other SSC designated member. Further, it is recommended that attendance at such conference-wide training include at a minimum designees from the local church who will be personally coordinating and conducting safe sanctuaries training for employees and staff within the local church.

C. MEMBERSHIP OF SAFE SANCTUARIES COMMITTEE. The membership of the Safe Sanctuaries Committee (SSC), in addition to its chairperson, shall include, but not be limited to, the Pastor in Charge, Governing Body chairperson, Lay Delegate to AWF Annual Conference, Lay Leader, Staff/Pastor-Parish Relations Committee chairperson, Board of Trustees chairperson, and may include, if such offices and positions exist, Youth Director, youth leadership team representative, Children’s Director, children’s leadership team representative, Day Care Director, After School Program Director, and one or two at-large lay members.

D. ACCOUNTABILITY AND REPORTING. The following accountability and reporting measures shall be developed and employed:
1. Congregational Accountability. The SSC shall report to the Governing Body of the local church congregation at least annually and at such other interim times as circumstances relating to its responsibilities may require. In addition, the SSC shall regularly inform the Governing Body and the congregation at large concerning its efforts to recruit volunteers. Also the Governing Body and congregation shall regularly be informed and reminded by the SSC of the Safe Sanctuaries Policy and Minimum Standards content, and the Standards, Qualifications, and Screening requirements under the SSPMS that are applicable to employment of paid staff and to granting permission for service by volunteer workers. The SSC shall periodically announce and publicize that a church member may at any time upon request to the Pastor in Charge or his/her designee review and/or obtain a personal written copy of the complete policy document.
2. Infractions/Incidents Accountability. Actions or conduct concerning any personnel and covered activities as defined in this SSPMS document that are observed by or otherwise brought to the attention of a person (paid staff member; volunteer worker; parent or other relative of a child, youth, or at-risk or vulnerable adult; church member, church visitor, or guest; etc.) which is reasonably believed to be an infraction or incident in violation of this SSPMS should be promptly reported to the Pastor in Charge and to the Safe Sanctuaries Committee chairperson, or in the absence of either or both to their designated staff church employee. Resources and instructions for reporting suspected infractions or incidents constituting abuse (whether of child, youth, at-risk or vulnerable adult) proscribed by this policy document should be conspicuously posted in and about the local church buildings and campus.
E. QUALIFICATIONS REQUIRED FOR SERVING CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND AT-RISK OR VULNERABLE ADULTS FOR VOLUNTEER PERSONNEL. The qualifications for volunteer service in a local church with duties and responsibilities that include serving children, youth, and at-risk or vulnerable adults shall be as follows:
1. Must have demonstrated an active relationship in the local church where service will occur for a minimum of three months prior to being permitted to serve as an authority figure.
2. Must be competent to work effectively in the served activity as an assistant in the judgment of the supervising staff member or supervising authority figure.

F. SCREENING AND BACKGROUND. The local church shall obtain background checks on all persons serving with children, youth, or at-risk or vulnerable adults. Such persons shall be subject to the following requirements and actions:
1. Complete an Application/Commitment form.
2. Be interviewed by the director of the ministry or program to be served.
3. Have experience and qualifications necessary for the staff position or volunteer service sought.
4. Attend training by the church or annual conference in maintaining the SSPMS; or in the event of an unforeseen circumstance requiring use of a substitute worker who has not had such training, that substitute worker must be briefed on the SSPMS by the director or other supervisor before beginning work.
5. Consent to initiation by the local church of the following background check(s):
   a. Multi-state criminal and sexual offender check based on social security number.
   b. Motor vehicle records check (for those who will be transporting children, youth, or at-risk or vulnerable adults). The Alabama-West Florida Annual Conference recommends background checks be run through the Trak-1 Company or other reputable screening company. A background check will be valid for five years unless the individual has been absent for twelve (12) months or longer.
6. The process for conducting the above described background checks and for handling the results received shall include the following:
   a. Authority to initiate requests for criminal/sexual offender and motor vehicle background checks (see ¶ IV.F.6, above,) shall be limited to the Pastor in Charge or to his/her designated senior non-cleric staff employee.
   b. Upon receipt of background checks documents/data, whether favorable or unfavorable, its confidentiality shall be maintained. For such background check reports concerning a staff member, secure distribution will be made only to the Pastor in Charge, the SSC chairperson, and the Staff-Parrish Relations (Pastor-Parish Relations) Committee chairperson. For such background check reports concerning a volunteer, secure distribution will be made only to the Pastor in Charge and the SSC chairperson. For both categories of persons further actions shall be taken in accordance with provisions in Section G below.
G. UNFAVORABLE REPORTS
1. The individual who has been the subject of a background check, the results of which are unfavorable, shall be so informed in writing with a Notice of Unfavorable Background Check form (see Conference website for forms).
2. If an unfavorable report concerns a volunteer applicant, the Pastor in Charge and another church leader (laity or staff) chosen by the Pastor in Charge shall meet with the volunteer applicant to review and discuss the report.
3. If the unfavorable report concerns a staff applicant, the Pastor in Charge and Staff-Parish Committee chairperson shall meet with the staff applicant to review and discuss the report and shall thereafter take such personnel action as shall be deemed appropriate.
4. Review of unfavorable reports containing any history of criminal charges or convictions or of any reported non-criminal conduct nevertheless suggesting potential unfitness for employment or volunteer status may take into consideration the following factors:
   a. The nature and seriousness of the crime or conduct
   b. The relationship of the crime or conduct to the purpose and nature of the church job or program for which employment or volunteer status is sought
   c. The age of the person at the time of the commission of the crime or conduct
   d. The time elapsed since the person’s crime or conduct
5. Any background check reported charge, conviction, or conduct that deals with sexual abuse or child abuse shall bar the person from working as an employee or volunteer with children, youth, and/or at-risk or vulnerable adults.
6. Documentation of the employment or volunteer decision made shall be placed in the person’s application or employee personnel file.

H. RECORD RETENTION.
1. Records from the screening process including Application/Commitment interview forms and information from prior employment, references, and background checks shall be maintained in personnel and application files by individual name for each staff member/volunteer.
2. Both paper and electronic media records shall be kept safe and secure.

I. TRAINING STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS. The local church, within fourteen (14) days of employment or the beginning of volunteer service, shall provide training regarding safe sanctuaries policy, minimum standards, and procedures to such new workers who will work with children, youth and/or at-risk or vulnerable adults. Additionally, regularly occurring (at least annual) continuing education for safe sanctuaries training is required of all such workers (new and old). Attendance at all training programs shall be documented and retained in personnel files of the attendees. Upon completion of the training, attendees will sign an acknowledgement they have received the training and understand the SSPMS. The training should include, but is not limited to, the following:
1. The definitions and signs of child abuse and reporting of child abuse
2. The church’s policy and procedures on child abuse and the reasons for having them (i.e. two adult rule, sign-in and sign-out sheets, procedures to follow if an
accident occurs, procedures to follow for reporting an alleged incident of child abuse, information on state child abuse laws)
3. The need to maintain a positive classroom environment, including appropriate discipline and age-level characteristics
4. Appropriate behavior for teachers and leaders of child, youth, and at-risk or vulnerable adult events
5. Definitions of appropriate interpersonal boundaries (ways of touching students, appropriate language, etc.)
6. All forms used by the church for application, background checks, reporting, and teacher files

V. REPORTING AND CHILD ABUSE INTERVENTION RESOURCES.
Child abuse reporting requirements and procedures for the states of Alabama and Florida and a list of child abuse intervention resources are provided below.

A. Reporting abuse or alleged abuse in Alabama. Alabama’s mandatory child abuse and neglect reporting law states that all school teachers and officials, social workers, day care workers or employees, mental health professionals, members of the clergy as defined in Rule 505 of the Alabama Rules of Evidence, or any other person called upon to render aid or medical assistance to any child, when the child is known or suspected to be a victim of child abuse or neglect, shall be required to report, or cause a report to be made of the same, orally, either by telephone or direct communication immediately, followed by a written report, to a duly constituted authority. When an initial report is made to a law enforcement official, the official subsequently shall inform the Department of Human Resources of the report so that the department can carry out its responsibility to provide protective services when deemed appropriate to the respective child or children.

B. Reporting abuse or alleged abuse in Florida. All cases of suspected abuse must be reported to the Florida Abuse Hotline. Initial reports should NOT be made to the county/local branch of the Florida Department of Children and Families. The Florida Abuse Hotline may be reached at 1-800-96-ABUSE. Reports may be faxed in; however, the preferred option for the Florida Department of Children and Families is for persons to call the Florida Abuse Hotline and talk to a Hotline counselor.

C. Child Abuse Intervention Resources. Below are child abuse intervention reporting resources and contacts for use by the local church.
1. National Child Abuse Hotline 1(800) 4-A-CHILD
2. Florida Child Abuse Hotline 1(800) 96-ABUSE
3. County Department of Human/Children Services
4. Area Child Protective Services; for Alabama, the appropriate county Department of Human Resources (DHR)
5. National Committee for the Prevention of Child Abuse 1(312) 663-3520
6. Parents Anonymous 1(800) 421-0353
7. Alabama Sex Offender Registry http://community.dps.state.al.us
RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE ALABAMA - WEST FLORIDA BOARD OF TRUSTEES

WHEREAS, the 2016 Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church provides that the Annual Conference shall have the authority to determine the manner in which proceeds from the sale of abandoned church assets may be distributed; and

WHEREAS, the Conference Trustees hereby recommend to the Annual Conference that it adopt certain policies and procedures pertaining to discontinued and abandoned church property, real, tangible, and intangible, including, but not limited to, church buildings and furnishings, parsonages and any other church-owned furnishings, cemeteries and records relating thereto, membership, baptismal, and other historic records, Christian and church insignia, and gifts held in trust, assets of any endowment foundations or invested funds; and

NOW THEREFORE, be it resolved and recommended by the Board of Trustees of the Alabama - West Florida Conference that the following policies and procedures be adopted during the next business session of the Annual Conference of the Alabama - West Florida Conference of The United Methodist Church:

Report 9 - POLICIES AND DISTRIBUTION OF PROCEEDS FROM THE SALE OF DISCONTINUED OR ABANDONED LOCAL CHURCHES AND THEIR ASSETS

The Annual Conference of the Alabama - West Florida Conference of The United Methodist Church hereby establishes the following policies and procedures for the distribution of proceeds of discontinued or abandoned churches and their assets. In all instances regarding the disposition of the assets of a local church as a result of discontinuance or abandonment of a local church, the current United Methodist Book of Discipline shall be consulted and followed along with these policies and procedures, which are designed to provide for the orderly gathering and disposition of said assets:

A. Discontinued Churches
1. The district superintendent initiates the process for the assessment of a local church’s potential following the steps prescribed in the current Book of Discipline.
2. Upon reaching the conclusion that a local church no longer serves the purpose for which it was organized, the district superintendent shall initiate the process by which the local church may be declared or may declare itself discontinued.
3. When remaining members are available, a charge or church conference will be held for the purpose of approving discontinuance.
4. If there is a cemetery cared for by the trustees of a local church, the local church trustees shall arrange for the incorporation of a Cemetery Association, either among themselves or including other interested persons in the community, and the cemetery
shall be deeded to said Cemetery Association. In so doing:
A. A separate survey of church and cemetery property will be required.
B. The conveyance of the cemetery property must be approved by the church conference or charge conference prior to the conveyance.
5. Any action to discontinue a local church requires an affirmative vote of the presiding bishop and a majority of the district superintendents and the district board of church location and building.
6. When a local church is discontinued according to the above procedures, the district superintendent, relying upon his or her sole discretion in the best interest of the Conference and in compliance with applicable church and civil law, shall be responsible for, and is the legally authorized representative of the Conference for: a) transferring remaining members to other United Methodist Churches, b) obtaining the deed to the property and a legal opinion as to any reversion restrictions in the deed, c) determining which group or persons will be responsible for the upkeep of the building and maintaining insurance premiums, and d) making recommendations for the future use of the property to the Annual Conference. If no recommendation is made, it shall be deemed abandoned consistent with Paragraph 2549.2(b) of the 2016 Book of Discipline.
7. District Superintendents will present resolutions for the discontinuance of churches during the next business session of the Annual Conference.

B. Abandoned Churches
1. A local church that is already discontinued, may be further declared to be abandoned. The change in status from “discontinued” to “abandoned” may be made by local church/charge conference action, or at the recommendation of the district superintendent.
2. The following groups must approve the change in status: the presiding bishop and a majority of the district superintendents and members of the district board of church location and building. Upon approval of the change in status from discontinued to abandoned, the district superintendent will so notify the Conference Board of Trustees.
3. It is understood that this change in status means that the church and its assets are available for future sale or disposal by the Conference Board of Trustees.
4. The district superintendent or his/her designee and the Conference Board of Trustees shall cooperatively care for the following details: a) appoint a committee to conduct an immediate inventory of all local church assets; b) prepare a final accounting of outstanding financial obligations of the local church, to include any monies owed to the Conference, including but not limited to, any accrued direct bill obligations and current year apportionments that have not been paid; c) consult and follow the most recent Checklist for the Discontinuance or Abandonment of Local Church Property prepared by the GCFA Legal Department, d) provide all building keys and security codes, if any, to the Conference Board of Trustees, e) remove sacred objects of special value, church insignia and symbols, f) secure the buildings and exercise control over access thereto, and g) secure any gift, legacy, devise, annuity or other benefit that becomes available to the Conference as a result of a church’s becoming abandoned.
C. Sale of Abandoned Churches
1. The Conference Board of Trustees and the district superintendents shall cooperate in the sale of abandoned churches.
   The following steps must be followed:
   (a) An independent appraisal be secured, the cost of which will be deducted from the sale proceeds.
   (b) All listing agreements shall include the following wording: “The seller is required by The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church to give consideration to other denominations represented in the Commission on Pan-Methodist Cooperation and Union. The seller reserves the right to reject offers from independent church organizations not connected with the Commission.”
   (c) The Conference Board of Trustees may hire a real estate agent to list the sale at fair market value, and must provide necessary insurance, utilities, and upkeep of the property pending the sale, the cost of which will be deducted from the sale proceeds.
   (d) All written offers for purchase must be directed to the Conference Board of Trustees.
   (e) For an offer to be accepted, a majority of the Conference Board of Trustees must accept the offer by affirmative vote and authorize all deeds and other legal documents for the transfer of the property.
   (f) The Conference Board of Trustees shall request a written statement from the presiding bishop indicating that the ad interim sale of the abandoned church property has been executed in conformity with Paragraph 2515 of the 2016 Book of Discipline.
   (g) The Conference Board of Trustees shall report all sales of abandoned church property in a given year at the next business session of the Annual Conference.

D. Distribution of Net Proceeds from the Sale of Abandoned Churches
1. The Conference Board of Trustees shall distribute the net proceeds from the sale of abandoned churches pursuant to Paragraphs 2549.3, 2549.5, and 2549.7 of the 2016 Book of Discipline and this policy.
2. All proceeds from the sale of abandoned churches located in non-urban centers, as defined in Paragraph 2549.7, shall first be applied to satisfy any and all financial obligations of the abandoned church, including, but not limited to, unpaid pension and health benefits for the current year, any unpaid apportionments for the current year, and any other short-term or long-term liabilities incurred by the abandoned church. The remaining funds shall be distributed as follows:
   A. One half of the net proceeds shall be distributed to the Emerging Ministry Account of the district trustees in the district where the abandoned church was formerly located. Said proceeds shall be held in trust for use by the district for missional purposes, including, but not limited to places for United Methodist worship, ministry, or faith development; provided, however, in the event that the district trustees fail to use said proceeds in accordance with this provision within three years of receipt, or fail to receive an extension from the Conference Trustees, the said proceeds shall revert to the Conference Trustees to transfer to the Board of Congregational Development to use for new church starts and congregation revitalization within the Conference.
B. The remaining half of the net proceeds shall be transferred by the Conference Trustees to the Board of Congregational Development to use for new church starts and congregational vitalization within the Conference.

3. All proceeds from abandoned churches in urban centers of the Conference, after all financial obligations of the abandoned church, including, but not limited to, unpaid pension and health benefits for the current year, any unpaid apportionments for the current year, and any other short-term or long-term liabilities incurred by the abandoned church, shall be distributed to the respective district trustees’ Emerging Ministry Account to be used by the District Superintendent in consultation with the Cabinet in the Urban Center in which the sold property is located; provided, however, in the event that the district trustees fail to use said proceeds in accordance with this provision within three years of receipt, or fail to receive an extension from the Conference Trustees, the said proceeds shall revert to the Conference Trustees to transfer to the Board of Congregational Development to use for new church starts and congregation revitalization in Urban Centers within the Conference.

4. The Conference Treasurer shall provide quarterly financial reports to the Conference Trustees and to the Cabinet on the Conference Property Fund with income received and disbursements made for the Conference Property Fund, the District Emerging Ministry Accounts and the Conference Congregational Development Account. The President of the Trustees shall include in the Trustees Report to the Annual Conference a Financial Report on the Conference Property Fund.

REPORT 10
CONFERENCE - WIDE INSURANCE PROGRAM
(UNITED METHODIST INSURANCE)

In September 2006 the Board of Trustees joined United Methodist Property and Casualty Trust (PACT) by insuring all of the annual conference owned property and operations. In 2007 the Annual Conference adopted, but did not make mandatory, a resolution to establish PACT as the conference-wide insurance carrier for all of the churches and ministries of this annual conference beginning January 1, 2008.

In 2011 the denomination’s top financial agency (GCFA) became the single owner of the PACT program. The General Council on Finance and Administration approved a plan to allow the United Methodist Property and Casualty Trust Company to buy out the 12 annual (regional) conferences and two general agencies that then owned the company. The new entity became United Methodist Insurance (UMI). In 2015 fifty-two churches and agencies were insured by UMI through the Alabama-West Florida Conference.

The Conference began and ended 2017 with a balance of $285,211.55.

We will continue to offer the UMI coverage to churches in the Alabama-West Florida Conference via the UMI partnership which began January 1, 2010, with the Church Insurance Agency Corporation (CIAC). The Church Insurance Agency
Corporation is the Episcopal Church equivalent of UMI, that is, a captive that has provided ministry protection for the Episcopal churches in the US for over 100 years. CIAC will provide UMI the program administration services, including billing and endorsement changes. Their Alabama-West Florida representative, Mr. Paul Stephens who lives in Nashville, has proven to be of benefit to the local churches of the annual conference. He can be reached at (615) 599-6830, cell number (615) 477-1583 or pstephens@cpg.org.

**REPORT 11 - MINIMUM INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS**

The Book of Discipline 2016 Par. 2533.2 requires local church trustees to annually compare the existence and adequacy and report on the adequacy of local church property and liability insurance coverage “to ensure that the church, its properties, and its personnel are properly protected against risks.” Since 1797, the Book of Discipline has provided that the property and assets of local churches are held in trust for the benefit of the denomination. Inadequate insurance puts local church property and assets at risk; including the denomination’s trust interest therein. Therefore, Trustees of the Alabama-West Florida Conference, representing the denomination’s trust interest, have adopted the following minimum insurance requirements for local churches:

**COMMERCIAL PACKAGE POLICY**, to include the following minimum limits:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coverage</th>
<th>Occurrence</th>
<th>Aggregate</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Buildings, Organs &amp; Contents</td>
<td>Insured to Replacement Value, “All Risk” Coverage</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fine Arts</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Pastoral Counseling Liability</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hired and Non Owned Auto Liability</td>
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<tr>
<td>Employee Benefits Liability (EBL)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Medical Payments</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual Misconduct Liability</td>
<td>$1,000,000</td>
<td>$2,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crime / Employee Dishonesty</td>
<td>$25,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**DIRECTORS & OFFICERS (D&O) POLICY**, including the following minimum liability limits:

- Directors’ & Officers: $1,000,000
- Employment Practices Liability (EPL): $1,000,000 (including Sexual Harassment)

**WORKERS’ COMPENSATION POLICY**, including supply clergy

- Bodily Injury by Accident: Each accident $1,000,000
- Bodily Injury by Disease: Policy limit $1,000,000

**UMBRELLA POLICY (Excess Liability)**

An Umbrella policy is suggested but not required

This excess policy must extend over Commercial General Liability, Pastoral Counseling, Employee Benefits Liability, Owned Auto, Hired & Non-Owned Auto
and Workers Compensation. A higher per occurrence limit may be appropriate based on specific risk characteristics such as church size and/or scope of operations and ministries.

Per Occurrence Limit $1,000,000 (minimum)  Aggregate $1,000,000

REPORT 12 – ANNUAL CONFERENCE
CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY

Article I
Purpose
The purpose of this conflict of interest policy is to protect the Alabama West Florida Conference of the United Methodist Church’s (a nonprofit organization, hereafter referred to as the “Conference”) interest when it is contemplating entering into a transaction or arrangement that might benefit the private interest of an officer or director of the Conference or another Interested Person as defined below, or might result in a possible excess benefit transaction. This policy is intended to supplement but not replace any applicable state and federal laws governing conflict of interest applicable to nonprofit and charitable organizations.

Board members or other Interested Persons as defined below have a fiduciary duty to exercise good faith in all transactions involving the Conference or one of its Affiliates as defined below. A rule of honest and fair dealing shall apply to transactions between Interested Persons and the Conference. They shall not knowingly use their positions or knowledge gained therefrom to materially or financially benefit, so that a conflict of interest may arise between the Conference’s interest and that of any Interested Person.

Article II
Definitions
1. Interested Person
Any director, principal officer, employee or member of a committee with governing board delegated powers, who has a direct or indirect financial interest, as defined below, is an Interested Person. If a person is an Interested Person with respect to any board, committee or corporation controlled or wholly elected by the Conference (“Affiliate” or “Affiliates”), he/she is an Interested Person with respect to the Conference and any other of its Affiliates for the purposes of this policy.
2. Financial Interest
A person has a financial interest if the person has, directly or indirectly, through business, investment, or any family member of such person:
   a. An ownership or investment interest in any entity with which the Conference has a transaction or arrangement,
   b. A compensation arrangement with the Conference or with any entity or individual with which the Conference has a transaction or arrangement, or
   c. A potential ownership or investment interest in, or compensation arrangement with, any entity or individual with which the Conference is negotiating a transaction or arrangement.
For the purposes of this Policy, “compensation” includes direct and indirect remuneration as well as gifts or favors that are not insubstantial, and the term “family member” includes the person’s spouse, brothers, sisters, ancestors and lineal descendants.

A financial interest is not necessarily a conflict of interest. Under Article III, Section 2, a person who has a financial interest may have a conflict of interest only if the appropriate governing board or committee decides that a conflict of interest exists.

Article III

Procedures

1. Duty to Disclose
In connection with any actual or possible conflict of interest, an Interested Person must disclose at the earliest possible time the existence of the financial interest and be given the opportunity to disclose all material facts to the directors and members of committees with governing board-delegated powers considering the proposed transaction or arrangement.

2. Non-participation in Decisions
Any person who is required to disclose a conflict of interest pursuant to this policy shall not participate in any deliberations, consideration, discussion, or determination of any matter in which such person has a conflicting interest and shall not vote at any stage of such proceedings. Such person will be excused from the meeting room at all times that such matter is being discussed or voted upon by the remaining members of the board or committee.

3. Determining Whether a Conflict of Interest Exists
After disclosure of the financial interest and all material facts, and after any discussion with the Interested Person, he/she shall leave the governing board or committee meeting while the determination of a conflict of interest is discussed and voted upon. The remaining disinterested board or committee members shall decide if a conflict of interest exists.

4. Procedures for Addressing the Conflict of Interest
a. An Interested Person may make a presentation at the governing board or committee meeting, but after the presentation, he/she shall leave the meeting during the discussion of, and the vote on, the proposed transaction or arrangement involving the possible conflict of interest.

b. The chairperson of the governing board or committee shall, if appropriate, appoint a disinterested Person or committee to investigate alternatives to the proposed transaction or arrangement.

c. After exercising due diligence, the governing board or committee shall determine whether the Conference can obtain with reasonable efforts a more advantageous transaction or arrangement from a person or entity that would not give rise to a conflict of interest.

d. If a more advantageous transaction or arrangement is not reasonably possible under circumstances not producing a conflict of interest, the governing board or committee shall determine by a majority vote of the disinterested directors
whether the transaction or arrangement is in the Conference’s best interest, for its own benefit, and whether it is fair and reasonable. In conformity with the above determination, the governing board or committee shall make its decision as to whether to enter into the transaction or arrangement.

5. Violations of the Conflicts of Interest Policy
   a. If the governing board, committee or management has reasonable cause to believe an Interested Person has failed to disclose actual or possible conflicts of interest, it shall inform the Interested Person of the basis for such belief and afford the Interested Person an opportunity to explain the alleged failure to disclose.
   b. If, after hearing the Interested Person’s response and after making further investigation as warranted by the circumstances, the governing board, committee, or management determines the Interested Person has failed to disclose an actual or possible conflict of interest, it shall take, or shall refer to the appropriate body to take, appropriate disciplinary and corrective action.

Article IV
Records of Proceedings
The minutes of the governing board and all committees with board delegated powers shall contain:
   a. The names of the persons who disclosed or otherwise were found to have a financial interest in connection with an actual or possible conflict of interest, the nature of the financial interest, any action taken to determine whether a conflict of interest was present, and the governing board’s or committee’s decision as to whether a conflict of interest in fact existed.
   b. The names of the persons who were present for discussions and votes relating to the transaction or arrangement, the content of the discussion, including any alternatives to the proposed transaction or arrangement, and a record of any votes taken in connection with the proceedings.

Article V
Compensation
   a. A voting member of the governing board who receives compensation, directly or indirectly, from the Conference for services is precluded from participating in the discussion of, and voting on, matters pertaining to that member’s compensation.
   b. A voting member of any committee whose jurisdiction includes compensation matters and who receives compensation, directly or indirectly, from the Conference for services is precluded from participating in the discussion of, and voting on, matters pertaining to that member’s compensation.
   c. No voting member of the governing board or any committee whose jurisdiction includes compensation matters and who receives compensation, directly or indirectly, from the Conference, either individually or collectively, is prohibited from providing information to any committee regarding compensation.

Article VI
Dissemination of Policy
The Conference Treasurer’s Office shall be responsible for ensuring that a copy of
this Policy is provided to each employee of the Conference and its Affiliates and to each Interested Person as defined above on an annual basis.

Article VII
Periodic Reviews
To ensure the Conference operates in a manner consistent with its charitable and religious purposes and does not engage in activities that could jeopardize its tax-exempt status, periodic reviews shall be conducted. The periodic reviews shall, at a minimum, include the following subjects:

a. Whether compensation arrangements and benefits are reasonable, based on competent survey information and the result of arm’s length bargaining.
b. Whether partnerships, joint ventures, and arrangements with management organizations, if any, conform to the Conference’s written policies, are properly recorded, reflect reasonable investment or payments for goods and services, further charitable purposes and do not result in inurement, impermissible private benefit or in an excess benefit transaction.

Article VIII
Use of Outside Experts
When conducting the periodic reviews as provided for in Article VII, the Conference may, but need not, use outside advisors. If outside experts are used, their use shall not relieve the governing board of its responsibility for ensuring periodic reviews are conducted.

Submitted by,
Mrs. June Carpenter, President
Conference Board of Trustees

COMMISSION ON EQUITABLE COMPENSATION (CEC)
“It is the purpose of the commission on equitable compensation to support full-time clergy serving as pastors in the charges of the annual conference by: (a) recommending conference standards for pastoral support; (b) administering funds to be used in base compensation supplementation; (c) providing counsel and advisory material on pastoral support to district superintendents and committees on pastor-parish relations; and (d) submitting an arrearage policy to be adopted by the annual conference.” (¶625.2, 2016 Discipline)

The CEC assists congregations which have potential for growth to become capable of financially supporting a full-time pastor, and assure that all full-time appointed pastors in the AWF Conference receive minimum salary. The CEC recommends the following guidelines for all churches/charges in our conference that apply for a subsidy grant:

1. Only full-time pastors, certified by the Board of Ordained Ministry (district and conference levels as applicable), approved by the annual conference, and appointed to a church or charge are eligible for a CEC subsidy grant. No associate pastor, part-time local, or supply pastor shall be eligible for a subsidy grant. The amount of
equitable compensation a pastor may receive is based upon the taxable cash salary prior to any voluntary employee reductions such as a 403(b) plan or written cafeteria plan plus utility exclusions, excluding a housing allowance in lieu of a parsonage. Full-time local pastors without a parsonage must receive a housing allowance to bring their total plan compensation up to 60% of the denominational average compensation so that they will be eligible for Comprehensive Protection Plan benefits.

2. No pastor shall receive a subsidy grant from CEC when the pastor receives income from any other church source if that income plus salary from the charge is more than minimum salary. No pastor serving outside the bounds of our conference shall be eligible to receive equitable compensation.

3. For a pastor to receive an equitable compensation subsidy grant, the church/charge must pay at least 80% of minimum salary for the year in which CEC a subsidy grant is provided, and have paid at least 50% of the previous year’s apportionments. Direct Bill health insurance and pension payments shall be waived for charges upon their initial approval for a CEC subsidy grant if no outstanding arrearage exists. Each succeeding year of receiving a CEC subsidy grant, churches/charges must make progress toward providing full clergy compensation according to the following schedule to qualify for a continued subsidy grant. Percentages listed below apply to the approved minimum salary for the calendar year in which a subsidy grant will be received:

- **Year 2:** 85% of minimum salary and 100% apportionments paid
- **Year 3:** 90% of minimum salary, and 100% apportionments paid
- **Year 4:** 90% of minimum salary, 100% apportionments, and Defined Benefit portion of Direct Bill paid
- **Year 5:** 95% of minimum salary, 100% apportionments, and complete Pension portion of Direct Bill paid

After five years of receiving a CEC subsidy grant, a church/charge may be approved for a sixth year of exemption from the Health Insurance portion of the Direct Bill if the charge is paying 100% of minimum salary, 100% of apportionments and 100% of the pension portion of the Direct Bill.

4. Churches/charges applying for a CEC subsidy grant that are already paying above 80% of minimum salary shall be expected to make appropriate progress toward becoming self-sustaining in accord with the schedule in Paragraph 3.

5. The CEC recognizes that occasionally circumstances will demand special consideration. The district superintendent of the applying church/charge should assess such cases and present rationale for a subsidy grant to the CEC. Churches/charges must be willing to participate in a formal congregational development effort offered by the annual conference.

6. District superintendents are required to review all equitable compensation situations in their districts to ascertain the necessity for assistance and, whenever possible, seek to reduce the need for a CEC subsidy grant. The district superintendent shall be responsible for the accurate completion and submission of subsidy grant applications to the CEC. The secretary of the CEC shall not issue a check order for an equitable compensation subsidy grant until all criteria have been met as
determined by the CEC.

The CEC recommends a **minimum salary of $37,200 for all full-time appointed clergy for 2019.**

**Equitable Compensation Disbursements for 2017**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Amount ($)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Choctaw/Washington (Demopolis)</td>
<td>4,572</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eutaw (Demopolis)</td>
<td>3,660</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Matthew/Jackson Chapel (Demopolis)</td>
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<tr>
<td>St. Paul/St. Mary (Demopolis)</td>
<td>22,302</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thomastan (Demopolis)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pinckard/Denton Rd. (Dothan)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Westside/St. Paul Charge (Dothan)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aldersgate/Sunflower (Mobile)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Theodore First (Mobile)</td>
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<tr>
<td>West Side/New Life (Mobile)</td>
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<td>Capitol Heights (Montgomery-Prattville)</td>
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<tr>
<td>New Beginnings (Montgomery-Prattville)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>67,066</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Arrearage Policy**

1. In the event that the local church treasurer becomes aware that the church will be unable to provide to the pastor full payment of a regularly scheduled payroll, housing allowance installment, or full payment for regular directly billed benefit payments such as pension and health care, the church treasurer shall immediately notify both verbally (within 24 hours) and in writing (within 3 days) the pastor, lay leader, and chairs of S/PPRC, finance, trustees, and the church council of the impending arrearage. Upon receipt of such notice, the chair of S/PPRC and/or the pastor shall immediately (within 3 days) notify the DS of the impending arrearage. It is the pastor’s responsibility to keep copies of all written notifications and to provide additional written confirmation to the DS when an arrearage has taken place. Failure to document salary or benefit arrearages may result in a loss of compensation and/or forfeiture of pension and benefits.

2. Upon receipt of notice of an impending arrearage, the chair of S/PPRC shall immediately (within 24 hours) call a meeting of the pastor, lay leader, and chairs of finance, trustees, and the church council to discuss the financial situation and seek remedies to prevent an arrearage from occurring. Such remedies might include drawing from invested funds, an emergency appeal for special giving from the congregation, or emergency grants or loans from the District or Conference. In accord with *Discipline ¶624,* such remedies cannot include a reduction in the pastor’s compensation until the beginning of the next conference year.

3. If after consultation with the lay leader and chairs of S/PPRC, finance, trustees, and church council it becomes apparent that the church may be facing a long term financial crisis, the chair of S/PPRC shall notify in writing the pastor and DS that:
(a) a CEC subsidy grant is necessary to maintain compensation for the remainder of the conference year, (b) a change in pastoral compensation may be necessary at the beginning of the following conference year, or (c) a change in pastoral appointment as deemed necessary by the bishop and cabinet.

4. If the local church becomes delinquent in the pastor’s compensation (i.e. more than 30 days), then the district superintendent shall notify the CEC, which on its own initiative may send a representative to meet with the local church and pastor to seek resolution of the issue, or develop a payment plan with the local church/charge so that the pastor receives full payment of compensation by the end of the conference year. The district superintendent shall be invited to participate in this process.

5. If the local church is already receiving a subsidy grant, the CEC may: (a) determine if all subsidy grant funds allocated to the church were used to pay the pastor’s salary, (b) examine the original subsidy grant application to determine if the amount requested was reduced, (c) require an outside audit of all church funds in compliance with GCFA Guidelines, [www.gcfa.org](http://www.gcfa.org). The CEC shall notify the district superintendent in writing of its findings and recommendations.

6. If a local church becomes delinquent in the payment of the pastor’s direct billed pension and benefits (i.e., more than 30 days), then the conference treasurer shall notify the conference benefits officer, the district superintendent, and the CEC. On behalf of the conference, the benefits officer and/or DS shall develop a written payment plan with the local church so that the conference receives full payment of pension and benefits by the end of the conference year.

7. *Discipline* ¶2543.1 makes clear that no real property on which a church building or parsonage is located shall be mortgaged to pay for the current or budgeted expenses of a local church (including arrearages), nor shall the principal proceeds of a sale of any such property be so used. This provision shall apply alike to unincorporated and incorporated local churches.

8. In extreme and unresolved circumstances, the local church and/or pastor may petition a session of the annual conference for assistance in payment of the arrearage, after completing the required financial audit of the church.

9. It is the responsibility of the pastor to provide evidence of an arrearage by providing documentation such as: treasurer’s reports, charge conference reports of adopted compensation, check stubs, W-2 forms, and a Certification of Payment Form signed by the pastor, S/PPRC chair, trustee chair, treasurer, and church council chair.

10. The statute of limitations for filing a claim for funds from the annual conference (i.e., notification to the DS) for any salary arrearage is one year from the date of the initial arrearage. Once an appointment ends, the pastor no longer has claim on the local church for compensation funds (¶342.4, *Discipline*).

Rev. Michael Cobb, Chairperson
Commission on Equitable Compensation
COUNCIL ON FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

Report No. 1 - ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Purpose: To develop, maintain, and administer a comprehensive and coordinated plan of fiscal and administrative policies, procedures, and management services for the Alabama-West Florida Conference.

1. The Council on Finance and Administration (CFA) shall be organized in accordance with ¶610 and 611 of the 2016 Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church and Standing Rule No. 35 in the 2016 Journal of the Alabama-West Florida Conference.

2. The Council on Finance and Administration (CFA) shall meet prior to Annual Conference and during session as needed. A fall and winter/spring meeting of CFA shall be held. The president of the Council may call other meetings.

3. All persons interested in presenting a request to CFA are invited to do so or to attend any of the Council meetings. All Council meetings shall be open to all interested persons, except when, by majority vote, the council elects to meet in executive session.

4. The Committee on Investments within CFA shall be responsible for reviewing, approving, and supervising all banking relationships of CFA with special attention given to investments including those of conference agencies.

5. The Committee on Audit and Review within CFA shall have responsibility for reviewing audits of all agencies receiving funds from the Annual Conference.

6. The Regions Bank shall be designated to serve as the conference depository to receive funds and keep specified records.

Report No. 2 - CONFERENCE OFFICERS

The Council on Finance and Administration shall be responsible for budgeting and for the work of the conference officers as listed in Standing Rule No.2.

A. Conference Secretary

The conference secretary fulfills the responsibilities prescribed by the 2016 Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church and the Standing Rules of the Alabama-West Florida Conference.
B. Conference Fiscal Officer and the Fiscal Office

1. The responsibilities of the Fiscal Office shall include: Conference Treasurer/Director of Administrative Services; Statistician; Conference Benefits Officer and Executive Secretary of the Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits; and other responsibilities assigned by the Council on Finance and Administration.

2. The Fiscal Officer shall keep records, make reports, and handle all financial transactions of all conference agencies.

3. The Fiscal Office shall prepare reports as required by the Council on Finance and Administration (CFA), and mail copies to persons who may need such reports.

4. All apportioned district and conference funds shall be channeled through Regions Bank and records kept by the Fiscal Office of the Conference.

5. The Fiscal Office shall disburse all checks pertaining to every fund and keep proper files of the copies of the check orders from the secretaries authorizing the issue of such checks. Copies of the checks issued shall be filed after having been charged against the account upon which they have been drawn.

6. The Fiscal Office shall tabulate, church by church, fund by fund, the information given on the remittance blanks for the conference depository.

C. Journal Editor - Conference Journal and Brochure of Reports

1. The Journal Editor shall chair the Editorial Committee (Standing Rule No. 15), and be responsible for the publication and distribution of the Annual Conference Journal and the Book of Reports for the Annual Conference.

2. All boards, commissions, committees and other agencies submitting reports to be included in the Book of Reports must have the reports in the hands of the editor no later than the last Monday in February.

3. The Journal Editor shall have authority to edit reports but not to change the meaning of any part of any report.

4. Standing Rule No. 15 shall be followed in distributing the Book of Reports. It shall be the responsibility of the district superintendents to supply the names and addresses of lay members no later than the last Monday of February. Additional copies shall be made available to the conference registrar.
5. All memoirs (including photographs) must be in the hands of the editor by the closing of the last business session of the annual conference. Responsibility for this material shall reside with the Commission on Archives and History.

6. All material to be included in the Journal (other than those in 5 above) must be in hands of the editor not later than ten (10) working days after the close of the Annual Conference.

7. The Annual Conference Journal shall be distributed according to Standing Rule No. 15. Instructions for ordering the Journal will be provided in the Book of Reports.

D. Conference Registrar and Registration Policies

1. The Conference Registrar shall have full responsibility for interpreting the eligibility of those covered under Standing Rule No. 8 for entertainment at the Annual Conference Session. This may be appealed to the Council on Finance and Administration.

2. The Conference Registrar shall supervise registration of and assignment of rooms to Annual Conference delegates and handle calls for persons attending sessions.

3. Chairpersons of boards and agencies who are not elected delegates and attend the Annual Conference in order to give reports shall have their expenses paid by their own board or agency.

4. All physical preparation for Annual Conference shall be under the Registrar’s supervision in cooperation with the Dais Committee, Worship Committee, and host facility staff.

5. No materials will be allowed on the registration table other than that necessary for registration. Other arrangements should be made to distribute materials through the site manager.

6. Use of dining halls, rooms, or areas shall be determined by the site manager. Fees for dining rooms shall be paid by the group using such rooms.

7. Space and/or rooms to be used for displays shall be assigned by the site manager and no other. Space shall be assigned on a first come basis.

8. Commercial displays will be allowed only in a room assigned and publicized for this purpose, with the exception of Cokesbury, which will continue to have a room assigned only to it.
9. Special needs, such as hymnals, altar furnishings, projectors, etc., shall be arranged through the site manager at least two weeks before conference. Needs arising during Annual Conference, which could not be anticipated, will also be arranged through the site manager.

Report No. 3 - BONDING REQUIREMENTS

Paragraph 618.1 of the 2016 Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church gives CFA responsibility for the fidelity bonding of the conference treasurer. CFA recommends that the present policy of bonding be continued through the United Methodist Insurance. Paragraph 618.2 of the 2016 Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church gives CFA the responsibility of requiring all agencies and boards for which the conference treasurer does not serve as treasurer to have fidelity bonding of there is such amounts as it deems adequate.

In order to avoid the depositing of conference funds in any one bank in excess of the insured limits, CFA shall serve as the clearing house for all agencies in the Annual Conference making deposits in any bank, either savings or checking accounts. Bank accounts shall not be opened by any agency without approval by CFA. No agency shall permit the total amount deposited in anyone bank to exceed insured limits without CFA approval.

Report No. 4 - BUDGETING, FUNDING, and AUDITING PROCEDURES

1. All boards and agencies are required to cooperate with the conference treasurer in the development of detailed financial reports of the income, expenditures, remaining balances, and audits.

2. Program budget requests shall follow the prescribed procedures established by the CORE Team.

3. Agencies may request, or be asked, to meet with CFA to clarify their budget request or report.

4. The Conference Resource Center and all boards and agencies receiving funds from conference benevolences with budget amounts approved by the Annual Conference shall be allowed to draw funds or make expenditures on a monthly basis as needed. Funds available monthly for the program boards will be those approved by the CORE Team from the available pool. Funds available for the Conference Resource Center will be based on the benevolence receipts of the current year. Agencies of the Annual Conference that require monthly support will receive 1/12 of the approved allocation each month. Any expenditure more than the amount approved by the CORE Team in any Conference program board account shall be cleared with the
President of CFA and the Director of Connectional Ministries.

5. All expenditures from the Interest on Investments Account shall be approved by a majority vote of CFA.

6. Each Agency, whose records are not kept by the Fiscal Office, is required to bond its treasurer and provide a certificate of insurance to CFA. Such agency shall provide a copy of its audit and other reports to CFA as deemed necessary by CFA. (¶618.2 of the 2016 Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church) Reports to CFA shall be in such detail, and provided at such times, as the Council shall direct.

7. CFA may withhold conference funds from any agency or board that fails or refuses to present proper bonds or audits. Such withholding shall continue until proper requests are met.


Report No. 5 - ZERO-BASED BUDGETING

The following proposal for “zero-based” budgeting is presented by the Council on Finance and Administration (the original proposal was adopted by the Conference on June 1, 1988):

1. All program area budgets of Annual Conference boards and agencies will begin the year with a zero balance.

2. The annual budgets for program boards and agencies shall be prepared on a “zero-base.” It is intended that all programs, projects and functions, old and new, be analyzed and reevaluated regularly and systematically by the CORE Team. Groups requesting budgeted funds shall be required to justify those requests in detail to explain why money is needed, specifically what it will be used for, the resulting benefits, and what would result if the request were denied.

3. At the end of the fiscal year, the unused balances for each board and agency shall be transferred to a reserve account, which shall be designated the “Mission and Ministry Fund.”

4. The Mission and Ministry Fund shall consist of the following:
   a. Funds remaining in the CORE Team Missional Giving Fund at the end of the year;
   b. Funds which may be budgeted for the Mission and Ministry Fund
   c. Funds received from terminated activities which remain unused for those activities when transferred by the CORE Team
d. Interest earned from sources as may be provided by the Council on Finance and Administration
e. Funds from other sources that may be deposited by any board or agency or group within the Annual Conference.

5. Additional use of Mission and Ministry funds by program boards and agencies or for other program purposes of the Annual Conference shall be approved by a majority vote of the CORE Team.

**Report No. 6 - FUND RAISING and COLLECTION POLICIES**

CFA makes the following recommendations for those causes for which no funds are allocated:

1. That each local church observe World Communion Sunday, Human Relations Day, One Great Hour of Sharing, United Methodist Student Day, Peace with Justice Sunday, Native American Awareness Sunday, and Golden Cross Sunday and that special offerings be received or budgeted for these special days.

2. That our conference continue to give its hearty support to the Advance Special program at both the General and Conference levels. (See complete listing of approved Conference Advance Special programs in the Journal Report of the Board of Global Ministries or the General Conference data log of Mission Handbook.)

3. That the Alabama-West Florida Conference fully support the following programs and give sponsoring agencies permission to raise and receive funds, provided that there be no goals or quotas placed on local churches:

   A. Blue Lake
      1) Camps for the underprivileged and special youth (Blue Lake Assembly Ground Trustees)
      2) United Methodist Women’s Blue Lake Support
      3) Blue Lake Partner Program (Assembly Ground Trustees)
      4) “Camping Sunday” for Blue Lake improvement and volunteer recognition (Assembly Ground Trustees)
      5) 20in12 Blue Lake Campaign
      6) “Blue Lake Sunday” to help reduce debt at Blue Lake (Assembly Ground Trustees)

   B. Homes for the Aging
      1) “Fountain of Love Offering,” for Homes for the Aging (primarily in February) (The Board of Global Ministries)
      2) Support for New Homes sponsored by Methodist Homes for the Aging

   C. The White Christmas and fifth Sunday church school offerings for th Children’s Home
D. Golden Cross Ministries (primarily on Mother’s Day) (The Committee on Health and Welfare Ministries)
E. Youth Service Fund (United Methodist Youth)
F. Huntingdon College (Board of Higher Education)
G. Mobile Inner City Mission Endowment Fund (Board of Global Ministries)
H. United Methodist Men’s Kingdom Builders Project (Board of Laity)
I. New Church Development Fund (Commission on New Congregational Development)
J. Wesley Foundation
   1) University of South Alabama Wesley Foundation Capital Fund Campaign
   2) University of West Alabama Wesley Foundation Capital Fund Campaign
K. Central Conference Pension Initiative (Board of Pension and Health Benefits)
L. Academy for Congregational Excellence
M. 5 on the 5th (Nellie Burge BOD)
N. Dumas Wesley Roof Repair Project
### General Church Funds

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fund</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>% Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>World Service</td>
<td>1,834,158</td>
<td>1,759,863</td>
<td>-1.87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ministerial Education Fund</td>
<td>619,493</td>
<td>607,911</td>
<td>-1.87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black College Fund</td>
<td>247,110</td>
<td>242,490</td>
<td>-1.87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africa University Fund</td>
<td>55,302</td>
<td>54,268</td>
<td>-1.87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Episcopal Fund</td>
<td>543,659</td>
<td>533,013</td>
<td>-1.87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Administration Fund</td>
<td>217,792</td>
<td>213,719</td>
<td>-1.87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inter-denominational Coup Fund</td>
<td>48,449</td>
<td>47,943</td>
<td>-1.87%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Southeastern Jurisdictional Fund

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fund</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>% Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SEJ Administration Fund</td>
<td>29,100</td>
<td>27,535</td>
<td>-5.03%</td>
</tr>
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</table>

### Annual Conference Funds

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fund</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>% Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Blue Lake Operation</td>
<td>190,708</td>
<td>150,708</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blue Lake Capital Improvement and Debt Retirement</td>
<td>97,304</td>
<td>97,304</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital and Operating Fund (Trustees)</td>
<td>190,000</td>
<td>180,000</td>
<td>-5.26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1) Conference Administration Fund</td>
<td>662,400</td>
<td>778,500</td>
<td>17.53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) Conference Ministries</td>
<td>1,250,600</td>
<td>1,376,000</td>
<td>10.03%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) Congregational Development</td>
<td>388,700</td>
<td>578,000</td>
<td>48.70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District Superintendents Fund</td>
<td>1,055,800</td>
<td>1,125,000</td>
<td>6.55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equitable Compensation Fund</td>
<td>50,000</td>
<td>210,000</td>
<td>320.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homes for the Aging</td>
<td>64,450</td>
<td>64,450</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academy for Congregational Excellence</td>
<td>75,000</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-100.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Higher Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fund</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>% Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Huntington/Birmingham Southern College</td>
<td>620,830</td>
<td>620,850</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Aid, Huntington College</td>
<td>246,430</td>
<td>246,450</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wesley Foundation/Campus Ministry</td>
<td>572,634</td>
<td>680,000</td>
<td>18.75%</td>
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</table>

### Board of Pension and Health Benefits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fund</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>% Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conference Claimants Fund</td>
<td>500,000</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-100.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Insurance Fund</td>
<td>1,500,000</td>
<td>1,000,000</td>
<td>-33.33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Board of Pension and Health Benefits</td>
<td>25,000</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-100.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Total Conference Budget

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fund</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>% Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11,081,468</td>
<td>10,573,705</td>
<td>-3.71%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Report No. 7 - APPORTIONMENTS Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>[1] Includes:</th>
<th>Amount 1</th>
<th>Amount 2</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Archives and History</td>
<td>72,400</td>
<td>60,000</td>
<td>17.43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Board of Ordained Ministry</td>
<td>60,000</td>
<td>161,500</td>
<td>16.92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Episcopal Office Expense</td>
<td>130,000</td>
<td>130,000</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiscal Office</td>
<td>247,000</td>
<td>247,000</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual Conference Administration</td>
<td>135,000</td>
<td>160,000</td>
<td>20.30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moving Fund for Reserves</td>
<td>20,000</td>
<td>20,000</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sub Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>662,400</strong></td>
<td><strong>778,500</strong></td>
<td><strong>17.53%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>[2] Includes:</th>
<th>Amount 1</th>
<th>Amount 2</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Connectional Ministries/Communications</td>
<td>714,600</td>
<td>750,000</td>
<td>10.53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mission and Ministry Fund</td>
<td>536,000</td>
<td>566,000</td>
<td>9.33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sub Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,250,600</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,316,000</strong></td>
<td><strong>10.03%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Connectional Ministries/Communications:**
Supports salaries, benefits and expenses for six (6) program staff and two (2) support staff. Also supports general office expenses including telephone, printing, mailing, computer and miscellaneous expenses.

**Mission and Ministry Fund:**
536,000  
566,000

This fund supports eight (8) of the Boards related to the Conference CORF Team. They are: Committee on Local Church Concerns, Church and Society, Discipleship, Global Ministries, Identity, Higher Ed and Campus Ministries, Historic Ministries and Town and Country.

The Mission and Ministry Fund also provides support for agencies related to the annual conference and new and emerging ministries. Those being supported in 2018 are: Thomas Wesley Community Center, Mobile Inner City Missions Ministries, Mary Ellen's Health (formerly Nellie Breeze Community Center), The Ark (formerly Noah's Ark), Alabama Rural Ministries, Pensacola United Methodist Community Ministries, Milk and Honey, Communities of Transformation and Quad W.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>[3] Includes:</th>
<th>Amount 1</th>
<th>Amount 2</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Congregational Development Office</td>
<td>148,700</td>
<td>128,000</td>
<td>53.33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Church Pastor Salaries</td>
<td>170,000</td>
<td>260,000</td>
<td>54.71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Church Development Fund</td>
<td>50,000</td>
<td>50,000</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church Rejuvenation Fund</td>
<td>20,000</td>
<td>20,000</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sub Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>398,700</strong></td>
<td><strong>528,000</strong></td>
<td><strong>48.73%</strong></td>
</tr>
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</table>
## APPORTIONMENTS - SUPPLEMENTAL REPORT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fund</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2017 Received</th>
<th>2017 %Received</th>
<th>2017 Expended</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>World Service Fund</td>
<td>$1,758,485</td>
<td>$1,510,804</td>
<td>85.92%</td>
<td>$1,510,804</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ministerial Education Fund</td>
<td>$593,935</td>
<td>$532,012</td>
<td>89.57%</td>
<td>$532,012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black College Fund</td>
<td>$236,915</td>
<td>$209,037</td>
<td>88.23%</td>
<td>$209,037</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africa University Fund</td>
<td>$53,021</td>
<td>$48,430</td>
<td>91.34%</td>
<td>$48,430</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Episcopal Fund</td>
<td>$520,759</td>
<td>$434,750</td>
<td>83.48%</td>
<td>$434,750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Administration Fund</td>
<td>$208,806</td>
<td>$186,430</td>
<td>89.28%</td>
<td>$186,430</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interdenominational Coop Fund</td>
<td>$46,450</td>
<td>$37,633</td>
<td>81.02%</td>
<td>$37,633</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTALS</strong></td>
<td><strong>$3,418,371</strong></td>
<td><strong>$2,959,097</strong></td>
<td><strong>86.56%</strong></td>
<td><strong>$2,959,097</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### SEI FUNDS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fund</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2017 Received</th>
<th>2017 %Received</th>
<th>2017 Expended</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SEI Administration</td>
<td>$29,100</td>
<td>$26,266</td>
<td>90.26%</td>
<td>$26,266</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTALS</strong></td>
<td><strong>$29,100</strong></td>
<td><strong>$26,266</strong></td>
<td><strong>90.26%</strong></td>
<td><strong>$26,266</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### ANNUAL CONFERENCE FUNDS

| Fund                                            | 2017   | 2017 Received | 2017 %Received | 2017 Expended  |
|                                                |        |               |                |                |
| Blue Lake Operation Fund                       | $196,450 | $154,860    | 78.83%         | $154,860       |
| B/L Cap Impr/Debt Retirement Fund              | $100,250  | $79,027      | 78.83%         | $79,027        |
| Capital and Operations (Trustees)              | $193,800  | $161,644     | 83.41%         | $161,644       |
| Conference Administration Fund                 | $664,900  | $599,071     | 90.10%         | $599,071       |
| Conference Resource Center                     | $674,100  | $669,422     | 99.31%         | $669,422       |
| Connection Ministry Prog Pool                  | $536,000  | $421,256     | 78.59%         | $421,256       |
| Congregational Development Fund                | $388,700  | $352,799     | 90.76%         | $352,799       |
| Dist. Superintendent's Fund                    | $1,021,450 | $1,021,452 | 100.00%        | $1,005,794     |
| Equitable Compensation Fund                    | $40,000   | $31,531      | 78.83%         | $67,814        |
| Huntington/BSC                                 | $620,850  | $489,410     | 78.83%         | $489,410       |
| Student Aid, Huntington                        | $246,450  | $194,275     | 78.83%         | $194,275       |
| Wesley Foundations                             | $530,350  | $496,952     | 93.70%         | $496,952       |
| Homes for the Aging                            | $64,450   | $50,806      | 78.83%         | $50,806        |
| Conference Claimants Fund                      | $700,000  | $648,136     | 92.59%         | $648,136       |
| Health Insurance Fund                          | $1,400,000 | $1,400,526 | 100.04%        | $1,400,526     |
| Academy for Congregational Excellence          | $75,000   | $59,122      | 78.83%         | $37,189        |
| Bd. of Pension and Health Benefits             | $32,000   | $25,226      | 78.83%         | $9,008         |
| **TOTALS**                                     | **$7,484,750** | **$6,855,515** | **91.59%**     | **$6,837,989** |

### GRAND TOTALS

|                  | $10,932,221 | $9,840,878 | 86.56% | $9,823,352 |
1. CFA believes that all apportionments are needed in the amounts apportioned. Furthermore, CFA believes that all churches have the capacity to pay apportionments in full. In 2016, 90.07% of apportioned funds were paid by local churches. In 2017, 90.11% of apportioned funds were paid by local churches. CFA continues to encourage all churches and all United Methodist Christians in the Alabama - West Florida Annual Conference to participate fully in our connectional ministries through generous serving, generous giving, generous living, generous leading, and generous praying. The 2019 Conference budget reflects a .96% increase in Connectional Missional giving (apportionments.) General Church apportionments have decreased by $66,665 or 1.87%. Jurisdictional apportionments decreased by $1,464 or 5.03%. Over-all Annual Conference Connectional Missional (apportionments) increased by 2.34% in 2019.

2. By action of the 2001 Annual Conference, the following schedule shall be used in setting apportionments for new churches:

- 1st full year: no apportionment
- 2nd year: 25% apportioned
- 3rd year: 50% apportioned
- 4th year: 75% apportioned
- 5th year & following: 100% apportioned

3. Apportionments shall be made to all churches using the apportionment formula outlined in CFA Report - Formula and Allocations.

4. Local churches shall provide for the audits of local church records as provided in ¶258.4d of the 2016 Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church.

Report No. 9 - FORMULA and ALLOCATIONS

1. In 2012 a task force was formed to evaluate the fairness of the current formula for determining conference apportionments. They reviewed formulas used in each of the Southeastern Jurisdiction Annual Conferences. The task force recommend, and the 2013 Annual Conference approved, the continued use of the current apportionment formula.

2. Therefore, the apportionments shall be developed using a formula based on financial strength of the local churches and membership of the local churches. Financial strength will be weighted 75% and professing membership will be weighted 25% in the formula. Apportionments will be determined by local church decimal applied to the amount of each budget item at the conference level.
3. The financial strength of a local church in calculating the decimal formula shall be based on all local expenditures (lines 48-57 of the Local Church Report to the Annual Conference). This eliminates all apportionments (including direct billing) and special giving from the formula. (Listing: Standing Rule No. 22)

4. The winter/spring meeting of the Council on Finance and Administration shall be the time for receiving requests from all boards and agencies for the ensuing year. All boards and agencies should be advised that they place their allocations in jeopardy when they fail to submit timely budget requests.

5. The local church will enter the Local Church Report information using the “UMC GCFA Statistical Input System” located on Alabama-West Florida Conference Web Site (www.awfumc.org) Contact the District Superintendent’s office for the User Name and Password if they are not known by the church pastor. The pastor and chairperson of the Committee on Finance or the church treasurer shall review the annual local church report as being correct before its final submission. The Fiscal Office will establish a date by which it should be notified if corrections are necessary. If no corrections are identified by that date, the fiscal officer will consider the report accurate. When the new year’s apportionments are run in July/August, there will be only one set of apportionments, which will be the final set. There will not be a “Trial Set” of apportionments.

**Report No. 10 - DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENTS’ COMPENSATION**

CFA voted to continue the District Superintendent’s 2018 salary of $120,475 thru 2019. Further adjustments to District Superintendent’s compensation are hereafter tied to the CAC, Conference Average Compensation. District Superintendent’s salary will increase or decrease at the same percentage as the CAC changes.

District Superintendent’s travel expenses will be paid on voucher from a travel pool of $92,000. The executive committee of CFA shall adjust the rate per mile, as needed, within this limit.

1. District superintendents shall receive no supplementary travel funds from district administration funds.

2. Each district shall place funds in its budget for district parsonage utilities, up to a total of $4,500, for each calendar budget year. Utilities to be included are electricity; gas, water sewage, and basic television cable or satellite services, telephone, Internet service, and trash collection.
3. The districts which provide district superintendents a housing allowance in lieu of a parsonage shall designate the housing amount in the minutes of the District Conference. This designation shall be made in advance of payment of such allowance, either upon appointment or in advance of the calendar year thereafter.

4. Each district shall place in its district administration fund an amount not to exceed $2,000 for continuing education.

**Report No. 11 - MOVING GUIDELINES and EXPENSES**

The second Sunday following the adjournment of Annual Conference shall be the last Sunday of pastoral responsibility for each conference year. The official moving day will be Tuesday, June 19, 2018 and may be adjusted according to the needs and concerns worked out in consultation with the clergy persons, the churches and approved by the District Superintendent.

The entire June salary shall be paid to the pastor by the church from which he/she is moving. In effect 50% of the annual salary will be paid January through June; with the remaining 50% paid by the church receiving a new pastor. Health insurance contributions and/or premiums, as well as any UMPIP payments are to be deducted from the pastor’s compensation for the full month of June, with the receiving church beginning such payments in July.

Upon retirement, disability, termination, or death of a minister serving within the bounds of the Annual Conference and serving a full time appointments under the provisions of ¶333.1 of the 2016 *Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church*, the conference shall pay up to $3,000 for documented moving expenses to the first place of retirement, termination, or disability or the first place of dwelling for a surviving spouse. Moving expenses to be reimbursed shall not be incurred prior to retirement or termination notification to the Bishop and will be reimbursed after the move is completed.

Guidelines for clergy under appointment:

1. Following notification of appointment change by the district superintendent, the Chairperson of the PPRC should contact the minister to be appointed to communicate the church’s policy in paying moving expenses and to discuss moving plans.

2. The receiving church is responsible for the first $3,000 of documented moving expenses and is encouraged to pay all documented expenses for the incoming ministerial family.
Report No. 12 - ANNUAL CONFERENCE EXPENSES

1. A charge of $28.00 per person, per night, will be made for all who use Conference provided housing. (Standing Rule No.8) CFA will be responsible for studying and investigating possible locations and expenses for housing during future sessions of the Annual Conference.

2. The Book of Reports will contain instructions for ordering printed regular bound copies of the Conference Journal. (Standing Rule 15)

3. Electronic versions of the Book of Reports and the Conference Journal may be substituted for printed copies.

Report 13 - CREDIT CARD POLICY

Organizations for which the Council on Financial and Administration have responsibility and or the Fiscal office provides financial services must coordinate approval before establishing credit card account and credit limits for consumer credit accounts.

Report No. 14 - INVESTMENT POLICY STATEMENT

SCOPE OF THIS INVESTMENT POLICY STATEMENT
This statement of investment policy reflects the investment policy, objectives, and constraints of the Council on Finance and Administration of the Alabama-West Florida Conference. (CFA)

PURPOSE OF THIS INVESTMENT POLICY STATEMENT
The Council on Finance and Administration sets forth this statement of investment policy in order to do the following:
1. Define and assign the responsibilities of all involved parties.
2. Establish a clear understanding for all involved parties of the investment goals and objectives for assets.
3. Manage assets according to prudent standards as established in common trust law and in accordance with general guidelines by the General Council on Finance and Administration of the United Methodist Church.
4. Establish the relevant investment horizon for which assets will be managed.

In general, the purpose of this statement is to outline a philosophy and attitude which will guide the investment management of the assets towards the desired results. It is intended to be sufficiently specific to be meaningful, yet flexible enough to be practical.

DEFINITIONS
1. “The Council on Finance and Administration” is the governing council
established to administer the assets as specified by The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church in its most recent edition and applicable actions of the annual conference.
2. “The Council on Finance and Administration” shall be referred to hereinafter as the “Council” in regard to this policy statement.
3. “The Investment Committee” consists of members of the Council, appointed by the Council, to act on behalf of the Council to administer this policy. It shall be referred to hereinafter as the “Committee” in regard to this policy statement.
4. “Investment Manager” shall mean any individuals or organizations employed to manage the investment of all or part of the assets.
5. “Investment Broker” shall mean any individual or organization employed to provide advisory services, including advice on investment objectives and/or asset allocation, manager search, and performance monitoring.
6. “Assets” shall mean all funds and securities for which the Council is responsible.
7. “Securities” shall refer to the marketable investment securities which are defined as acceptable in this statement.
8. “Investment Horizon” shall be the time period over which the investment objectives, as set forth, are expected to be met. The maximum investment horizon for these assets shall be set by the Council.

DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY
The Committee is responsible for directing and monitoring the investment management of the assets. As such, the committee is authorized to delegate certain responsibilities to professional experts in various fields subject to Council approval. These include, but are not limited to the following:
1. The Investment Broker may assist the Committee in: establishing investment policy, objectives, and guidelines; selecting investment managers; reviewing such managers over time; measuring and evaluating investment performance; and other tasks as deemed appropriate.
2. If an Investment Manager is used, he/she has discretion to purchase, sell, or hold the specific securities that will be used to meet the investment objectives.
3. The Custodian will physically (or through agreement with a sub-custodian) maintain possession of securities administered by the Committee, collect dividend and interest payments, redeem maturing securities, and effect receipt and delivery following purchases and sales. The custodian may also perform regular accounting of all assets owned, purchased, or sold, as well as movements of assets into and out of the investment accounts.
4. Additional specialists such as attorneys, auditors, and others may be employed by the Committee to assist in meeting its responsibilities and obligations to administer assets prudently.

If such experts employed are also deemed to be fiduciaries, they must acknowledge such in writing. All expenses for such experts must be
customary and reasonable, and will be borne by the Council as deemed appropriate and necessary.

ASSIGNMENT OF RESPONSIBILITY
Responsibility of the Council
The Council is charged by law, the Book of Discipline and the actions of the Alabama-West Florida Conference of The United Methodist Church with the responsibility for the management of the investment assets. The Council and Committee shall discharge their duties solely in the interest of the annual conference, with the care, skill, prudence and diligence under the circumstances then prevailing, that a prudent person, acting in a like capacity and familiar with such matters would use in the conduct of an enterprise of a like character with like aims. The specific responsibilities of the Committee, subject to the approval of the Council, relating to the management of investment assets include:
1. Projecting the investment needs and communicating such needs to the investment brokers/investment managers on a timely basis.
2. Determining the Council’s risk tolerance and investment horizon, and communicating these to the appropriate parties.
3. Establishing reasonable and consistent investment objectives, policies, and guidelines which will direct the investment of the assets.
4. Prudently and diligently selecting qualified investment professionals, including investment manager(s), an investment broker, and a custodian.
5. Regularly evaluating the performance of the investment manager(s) to assure adherence to policy guidelines and monitor investment objective progress.
6. Developing and enacting proper control procedures: for example, replacing an investment manager due to a fundamental change in investment management process or failure to comply with established guidelines.
7. The Conference Treasurer shall serve as the contact person for the investment brokers or investment managers.

Responsibility of the Investment Broker
The investment broker’s role is that of a non-discretionary advisor to the Committee. Investment advice concerning the management of investment assets will be offered by the investment broker and will be consistent with the investment objectives, policies, guidelines, and constraints as established in this policy statement. Specific responsibilities of the investment broker include the following:
1. Assisting in the development and periodic review of investment policy.
2. Conducting investment manager searches when requested by the Committee.
3. Providing “due diligence” or research on the investment manager(s).
4. Monitoring the performance of the investment manager(s) to provide the Committee with the ability to determine the progress toward the investment objectives.
5. Communicating matters of policy, manager research, and manager performance to the Committee.
6. Reviewing asset investment history, historical capital markets performance, and the contents of this investment policy statement with any newly appointed members of the Committee and Council.
7. Executing orders for the purchase and sale of securities.

Responsibility of the Investment Manager(s)
Each investment manager must acknowledge in writing its acceptance of responsibility as a fiduciary. Each investment manager will have full discretion to make all investment decisions for the assets placed under its jurisdiction, while observing and operating within all policies, guidelines, constraints, and philosophies as outlined in this policy statement. Specific responsibilities of the investment manager(s) include the following:
1. Discretionary investment management including decisions to buy, sell, or hold individual securities, and to alter asset allocation within the guidelines established in this policy statement.
2. Reporting, on a timely basis, quarterly investment performance results.
3. Communicating any major changes to economic outlook, investment strategy, or any other factors which affect implementation of investment process or the investment objective progress of investment management.
4. Informing the Committee regarding any qualitative change to investment management organization: Examples include changes in portfolio management personnel, ownership structure, investment philosophy, etc.
5. Voting proxies, if requested by the Committee, on behalf of the Council, and communicating such voting records to the Committee on a timely basis.

INVESTMENT GUIDELINES

Allowable Assets
1. Cash Equivalents
   • Treasury Bills
   • Treasury Money Market Funds
   • Repurchase Agreements
   • Certificates of Deposit
   • Common Development Fund of the AL-WF United Methodist Development Fund, Inc.
   • Flexible Demand Note offered by The United Methodist Development Fund
2. Fixed Income Securities
   • U.S. Government and Agency Securities
   • Mortgage Backed Bonds
   • Income Fund of the Al-WF United Methodist Foundation, Inc.
   • Fixed Term Notes offered by The United Methodist Development Fund
3. Equity Securities
   • Common Stocks of U.S. Corporations
4. Restrictions
Investments shall not knowingly be made in securities in which the corporate entity has a significant interest in distilled spirits, wine or other fermented juices, tobacco, gambling, pornography or firearms. Investments shall not knowingly be made in securities of corporate entity in which the core business:

- Manufactures cigarettes, cigars, chewing tobacco, smokeless tobacco, or in a company in which 10% or more of gross revenues are derived from supplying key components to the tobacco industry or the sale and marketing of tobacco related products.
- Produces alcoholic beverages (beer, wine, distilled liquor) or in a company in which 10% or more of gross revenues are derived from supplying key elements for alcohol production or from the sale, distribution or marketing of alcoholic beverages.
- Owns or manages casinos, racetracks, off-track betting parlors; or in a company that derives 10% or more of gross revenues from the production of goods and services related to the gaming or lottery industries.
- Derives 10% or more gross revenues from the production, distribution or sale of products or devices that are interpreted to be pornographic, meet the legal criteria for obscenity or legal definition of “harmful to minors.”
- Derives 10% or more gross revenues from the manufacture, sale or distribution of antipersonnel weapons such as land mines, “assault type” automatic and semiautomatic weapons, firearms, and ammunition provided for commercial and private markets.

Prohibited Assets and Transactions
Prohibited investments and transactions include, but are not limited to the following:

- Commodities and Futures Contracts
- Private Placements
- Options
- Short Selling
- Margin Transactions

Diversification
In order to achieve a prudent level of portfolio diversification, the securities of anyone company or government should not exceed 10% of the total assets under management, and no more than 20% of the total assets should be invested in anyone industry. With the exception of U.S. Government securities, no fixed income issues may exceed 15% of the market value of the fixed income portfolio.
Guidelines for Fixed Income Investments and Cash Equivalents

- Assets may be invested only in investment grade bonds rated A (or equivalent) or better.
- Maximum maturity for any single fixed income security is 10 years.
- Money Market Funds selected shall contain only U.S. Treasury securities.

Investment Policy Review
To assure continued relevance of the guidelines, objectives, financial status and capital markets expectations as established in this statement of investment policy, the Council shall review this policy at least annually.

Report No. 15 – GIFT POLICY

The AWFUMC Gift Policy applies to all Agencies, Boards, Commissions and Committees. The purpose is to establish consistent and equitable recognition for leadership/service to the Annual Conference.

No apportioned funds will be used to recognize service as a leader/member of Conference Agencies, Boards, Commissions and Committees upon their termination of service. Funding for such recognition in the form of a gift is the sole responsibility of the members of the Agencies, Boards, Commissions or Committees.

Report No. 16 - FISCAL YEAR END

1. The Fiscal Office will close the annual financial records on the fifth working day of January.
2. This date will be the last day that apportionment payments can be credited to the prior year asking.
3. Churches sending apportionment payments AFTER December 31 must do one of the following:
   a. Deliver payment to the Fiscal Office in Montgomery AL any time before 10:00 a.m. on the closing date.
   b. Mail the payment. Regardless of the postmark date, payments received after 10:00 a.m. on the closing date cannot be credited to the prior year apportionments.
   c. Deposit payment in the Annual Conference account on or before 1:00 p.m. on the closing date at a local Regions Bank. Fax a copy of the bank receipt and a copy of the remittance breakdown to the Fiscal Office when the deposit is made. Call the Fiscal Office (1-888-873-3127) to obtain the current deposit account number.
4. The Fiscal Office must know of these deposits on the closing date. Persons without access to a fax machine should call 1-888-873-3127 and report the deposit information. **Please Note:** The bank’s business day may end earlier.
than the time the bank closes. For example, often deposits received after 2:00 p.m. are credited to the next day’s business. CONTACT THE LOCAL BANK TO DETERIME WHEN A DEPOSIT MUST BE MADE, IN ORDER TO BE CREDITED ON THE CLOSING DATE.

Submitted by,
Mr. Beebe Frederick, President
Council on Finance and Administration

**Conference Audit Statement**

The Council on Finance and Administration of the Alabama-West Florida Conference of the United Methodist Church engaged Warren Averett, LLC to conduct audits of the Council on Finance, Connectional Ministries, Conference Administration, and Episcopal Office Accounts for the Conference Fiscal Year 2017. Warren Averett, LLC issued unmodified opinions on each of the statements of cash receipts, disbursements, and transfers of the above-referenced funds. The audited financial statements will be published in the 2017 Alabam-West Florida Annual Conference Journal and will be available upon written request to the Conference Fiscal Office, att: Conference Treasurer, 4719 Woodmere Boulevard, Montgomery, Alabama 36106.
BOARD OF CONGREGATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The Conference Board of Congregational Development (BOCD) exists to enable the Alabama West Florida Conference of the United Methodist Church to better fulfill its mission of “making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world” by:

1. Starting new congregations in connection with district and local church partners.
2. Encouraging and resourcing existing congregations to start Fresh Expressions of church.
3. Assisting existing congregations, large or small, to excel in ministry, i.e., Antioch Partnership.

Key factors in starting new congregations are identifying pastors with the gifts and graces for church planting, finding local church planting partners, and determining the most needed new church places.

The Board of Congregational Development administers a process for evaluation of candidates recommended by District Superintendents to pastor a new church start. Pastors who may have such an interest should discuss it with their District Superintendent. During 2017, seven pastors involved in starting new churches received some salary support along with pension and health benefits from the board. In addition, New Church Grants were awarded as follows: $22,000 to The Source in Montgomery; $20,000 to Embrace in Auburn; $30,000 to St. John in Mobile; and $30,000 to Century in Pike Road.

The Board of Congregational Development is also about encouraging and resourcing existing congregations to start fresh expressions of church. Fresh Expressions is a missionary minded movement of people who are creating new kinds of church alongside existing congregations. It is designed for churches who desire to move into their mission fields and connect with the growing diverse and unchurched population. It is a movement of the church that is about going where people are and creating relatively small new communities of faith which are often lay-led. Churches of varying sizes are engaging in this movement of creating new, fresh expressions of church.

At its heart, Fresh Expressions is about reaching people who are not currently being reached, and building the body of Christ right where they are. This is an indigenous, context oriented, mission field driven, local church connected approach to creating new places for new people.

The Board of Congregational Development is also engaged in the ministry of local church revitalization. This ministry is coordinated through the Director of Connectional Ministries, Rev. Nancy Watson. She has developed and is part of The Antioch Partnership Team along with members Susan Hunt, Allison Posell and Sandy Gutting.
In the 2016/2017 Conference year, revitalization efforts continue with fifteen churches within the Dothan, Pensacola, Mobile, Montgomery-Opelika, Montgomery-Prattville and Marianna-Panama City, Demopolis and Baypines Districts. In the 2016/2017 Conference year six churches began their AP Journey. This is an initiative which assists churches to enter a new level of fruitful, dynamic and vital ministry. The Antioch Partnership consists of three main phases:

- Leading the local congregation through a time of prayer, reflection, and self study.
- Sending a team to develop recommendations for the church to fulfill in the future.
- Providing coaches to help the church fulfill its recommendations.

As a further resource in church revitalization, district offices and individual churches are supported with demographic information for their geographic area. Contact Sandy Gutting at (850) 291-1244 for assistance with this information.

The Board of Congregational Development also evaluates and awards local church Revitalization Grants. In 2017 a Revitalization Grant was given to Gonzalez UMC Pensacola in the amount of $10,000.

This report is submitted with our deepest gratitude and thankfulness for the dedication and contributions by the members and staff who represent this board. Your consideration in these matters will be greatly appreciated.

In the love of Christ,
Frederick G. Outlaw, Chairperson

**BOARD OF DISCIPLESHIP**

**Members:** Lisa Hunt, Mel Barkley, Lisa Ausley, Barbara Wilder, Larry Anderson, Patti Bodenhamer, Sam Persons Parkes, Jay Cooper, Nancy Watson, Tripp Gulledge, Jimmy Jeffcoat, and Kevin Watson

**The Division of Stewardship:** Sam Persons Parkes, of the CBOD sponsored a half-day workshop in Montgomery in February 2018, titled “Growing the Culture of Generosity in Your Church” with content provided by Chris Stovall of Generis (www.generis.com). Several of our local churches have had substantial success with Generis models including FUMC Bay Minette, Crosspoint UMC, and Foley UMC. Jay Cooper and Nolan Donald also were on hand to describe their experience. Chris gave some excellent hands-on strategies for augmenting the gift of generosity in our church communities. Fifteen persons representing thirteen churches/ministries were in attendance. They are working on a series of one-hour webinars that people can engage
from any location that will provide similar content and training.

**The Division of Education:** Lisa Ausley reports the following event. With a heart to share best practices and encourage vitality and health in the local church, Crosspoint UMC hosted its 2nd “Becoming a Healthy Growing Church Conference” February with almost 300 attendees from approximately thirty-eight churches in the AWF Conference. The Conference opened with “Attitudes, Approaches, and Adjustments to Get a Church Growing” and ended with “Take Home Points for Church Health”.

**The Division of Spiritual Formation:** Patti Bodenhamer and her team have taken on the mantle of ministry and have provided many moments of blessings and light.

*Spiritual Direction Training* (2017-2020) is suited to those who hunger to experience deeper intimacy with God, to grow in attentiveness to God’s movement, are drawn to compassionate listening, feel a call to companions others on the spiritual journey and seek spiritual community with others. There are 25 new trainees attending the Spiritual Director’s three-year training at Blue Lake. Trainees have both enjoyed and been challenged by faculty member Amy Oden from St. Paul School of Theology as well as participation in covenant groups. All are amazed at the span of the different folks who are represented among those who are attending.

Nineteen current Spiritual directors were blessed by a Reunion Retreat for Spiritual renewal and nourishment (Jan 2017). It was amazing how the Spirit engaged the group as the directors journeyed through their time together.

**Annual Conference Experiential Prayer Room** (June 2017)- Sacred Space was prayerfully created for those at annual conference to step apart, to come away for prayer, silence, Scripture and sacred readings, prayer labyrinth, and prayer beads. The Prayer room provided a prayerful space amid the busyness and work at conference.

“A Day Apart with Means of Grace”-Two of these events were hosted during the past year. The first in September 2017 with thirty people attending was titled *Introduction to the Means of Grace*. The second event in November 2017, “Meditating with the Scriptures” hosted twenty-five persons. Five additional of these events are planned for 2018-2019 with both clergy and laity encouraged to attend.

**Academy for Spiritual Formation Five/Day Spiritual Academy** (Sept 2017)- “The Disciples Way” with faculty Dr. Luther Smith, Professor Emeritus of Church and Community at the Candler School of Theology; and, Rev. Marjorie Thompson, director of Pathways in Congregational Spirituality with Upper Room Ministries.

Drum Circles were led by facilitator Rev. Jackie Slaughter, Spiritual director, for spiritual formation groups in both the Alabama-West Florida and North Alabama Conferences. Rev. Slaughter also facilitated drum circle community-building events for several local churches and the Montgomery Community of Transformation.

The Older Adult Task Force report comes from Barbara Wilder. The Task Force continues to provide programing for senior adults of the conference. In September 2017, they hosted the annual event “One Day” at FUMC Ozark with 119 participating. Bishop David Graves was the keynote speaker. Their annual Inspirit Retreat was held in April 2018 at Blue Lake. Rev. George Mathison was the keynote speaker. All older adults in our conference are invited to attend these two annual events and/or join the Task Force if interested.

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Hunt, Chair

BOARD OF GLOBAL MINISTRIES
DIVISION OF ADVANCE SPECIALS
The General Advance is the official program of the United Methodist Church created to give churches the opportunity to go the extra mile in giving. We endeavor to continue to communicate the Biblical call for mission and assist all people through training and leadership development to understand how the United Methodist Church ministers to the needs of the world. The Conference Advance Special program is for projects within the bounds of the annual conference, as recommended by the Conference Board of Global Ministries, and is consistent with the goals of the General Advance. (2016 Book of Discipline ¶656)

The Conference Advance Specials are used to feed the hungry, help women and their children who need shelter, minister to our college students, repair homes for the elderly and poor, minister to our Hispanic-Latino members, provide a safe place for children to study and play, minister to those with special needs, end the cycle of poverty, and for inner-city and at-risk children. Please consider the ministries listed below for your Extra-mile giving.
2018 ADVANCE SPECIALS
0110-19 Alabama Rural Ministry (ARM)
0110-7 Circles of Transformation
0110-2 Dumas Wesley Community Center
0110-1 Hispanic Ministries
0110-6 Nellie Burge/Mary Ellen’s Hearth
0110-133/134 Pensacola State College/Univ of West Florida Wesley Foundation
0110-51 Prodissee Pantry
0110-40 Society of St. Andrew
0110-22 Transformational Recovery Mission
0110-132 Tuskegee Wesley Foundation
0110-90 UM Children’s Home
0110-3 UM Inner City Mission, Mobile
0110-136 University of West Alabama Wesley Foundation

Receiving Conference Advance Special status does not guarantee any funding, only the opportunity to open channels for extra-mile giving throughout the bounds of our annual conference. The actual money received will depend completely on donor gifts. Extra-mile giving to any of these Conference Advance Specials should be sent to the Conference Treasurer marked with their Advance number; 100% of every Advance gift is sent directly to the mission or ministry of your choice. Through our Advance giving, we continue to make a positive and enduring impact on the world Christ has called us to serve.

More information, including the guidelines and application, can be found at www.awfumc.org/advance or by contacting Michael Lawler at michaeljlawler@aol.com. Applications to apply for Advance Status are due January 1, each year; and the Annual Review to maintain the Advance Status is due by January 31, each year.

Respectfully submitted,
Michael J Lawler, Advance Specials Chairperson
Conference Board of Global Ministries, Advance Specials Division

COMMITTEE ON ETHNIC LOCAL CHURCH CONCERNS
DIVISION OF DISABILITY CONCERNS
As a part of the Board of Advocacy, the mission of the Division of Disability Concerns is to work alongside, and to assist with resources and programs for churches specific to supporting individuals with disabilities. We foster awareness by educating individuals and congregations about the needs and gifts of those with disabilities and promote participation and inclusion within the church.
A web page for Disability Ministries has been created on our AWF Conference website: http://www.awfumc.org/disabilityministries. This page provides links to resources that are beneficial to churches and individuals and includes information about:

The DisAbility Ministries Committee of the UMC
UMW: The Church and People with Disabilities
Accessibility Audit for Churches (revised in 2018)

To celebrate “the gifts and graces of persons with disabilities,” each Annual Conference is encouraged to observe a Disability Awareness Sunday. February 25th, 2018 was designated as the date for the Alabama West Florida Conference, placed on the event calendar and was promoted in the News Connection. To assist congregational planning, resources are provided on our web page and churches are urged to share how they celebrated this event.

On February 9, 2018, “Night to Shine” prom events were hosted by Community Life UMC in Gulf Breeze, Ozark First UMC, and Perdido Bay UMC in Pensacola. Night to Shine is an unforgettable prom night experience, centered on God’s love, for people with special needs aged 14 and older. On one night, more than 500 churches from around the world hosted Night to Shine for approximately 90,000 honored guests through the support of 175,000 volunteers! Following these events, we have been encouraged to see churches and communities develop additional programs for individuals with special needs.

How does your church welcome and include persons with disabilities? We would like to hear about it, and we invite you to participate in forming a task force on disabilities to share insights, ideas and information with others.

Respectfully submitted by:
Berta Hurston
Division of Disability Concerns

ALABAMA-WEST FLORIDA CONFERENCE COMMISSION ON THE STATUS AND ROLE OF WOMEN 2017-18
The General Commission on the Status and Role of Women is one of 12 church wide agencies of The United Methodist Church which is financed through the World Service Fund (apportioned giving from local congregations). It is one of two independent commissions, the other being the General Commission on Religion and Race, charged with advocating, monitoring and challenging the church to seek justice and inclusiveness. The Commission is accountable to the General Conference.

The Commission challenges the United Methodist Church to a commitment for the full life and participation of women in the complete life and mission
of the church. It serves as an advocate for and on behalf of women and seeks to eliminate inequities in relation to women in the church as to the diversity of the United Methodist Church, including laity and clergy, youth and young adults, older adults, racial/ethnic women and men, persons with disabilities and regional representatives.

The Commission is helping the church be a more reliable and trustworthy agent of the liberating Gospel of Jesus Christ so that we recognize every person as a “full and equal part of God’s human family.” (The Book of Discipline)

Through training, education, research and monitoring, the Commission:

- Nurtures women leaders in the church
- Addresses gender discrimination
- Confronts sexual harassment and abuse and advocates for victims
- Raises awareness about women’s issues and opportunities
- Identifies institutional sexism and recommends ways to diminish it

The conference annual Event was held January 20-21-23, 2018 at Blue Lake Camp. The event centers on education, strategy and/or awakening. This year’s Event was led by facilitators, The Reverend Lynn Smilie Nesbitt and Rabbi Lynne Downey Goldsmith. They work under the name, “The Preacher and the Rabbi”. The topics included, Biblical women, How to respect each other’s faith, Jewish prayer shawl and Christian prayer shawl, The Jewish roots of Jesus, How to form interfaith groups and The Jewish concept of Tikkiun Olam, (Repairing the world). Such interesting discussions and plenty of time for for conversation and questions!

We are excited to announce that “The Preacher and the Rabbi” will be with us for the next Alabama-West Florida COSROW Event on March 8 & 9, 2019, with more exciting and interesting interaction. Registration flyers will be available at the COSROW display table during Annual Conference. Also annually, an award named for a truly great leader in Alabama-West Florida Conference, Alice Lee, of Monroeville, Alabama is given to an outstanding female leader from our conference. She must have church and community leadership and be an outstanding person to carry forth the leadership of Alice Lee. The 2017 recipient, Daphne Johnston, epitomizes service to God, to the Church and to her community and conference for the Respite Program at FUMC, Montgomery.

To carry out our mandate to full ordination of women, the conference COSROW presents at least one $1,000 scholarship to a female clergy candidate or a female seminarian entering into full time service to the church. The recipient must be attending a United Methodist seminary. To date, COSROW has presented 26 scholarships since 1997. The scholarship is named for Jane Walker of Opelika, Alabama, who was an outstanding woman
in her own right. For 2017, the committee chose Kristen Curtis Wright. She is attending Candler School of Theology at Emory University. The scholarships are presented, annually, at the Annual Conference COSROW Breakfast on Tuesday morning at 7:00 AM, Room 6111.

Since 2009 there has been a scholarship named for the immediate past chair of COSROW, Ruth Gynther of Auburn, Alabama. Ruth worked tirelessly during her tenure to make the conference organization viable and visible. Her scholarship is for first-timers to attend the annual COSROW Event at Blue Lake.

COSROW monitors Annual Conference and the Annual Conference Committee on Nominations for equal representation and equal access to leadership, helps members attend General Church trainings and represents the MAJORITY membership in the United Methodist Church.

Applications for all awards and scholarships are available on the conference website at: www.awfumc.org or by contacting the Alabama West Florida Conference Headquarters at: 334-356-8014.

Ruth Ann Powers
CONFERENCE COMMITTEE REPORTS

COMMISSION OF ARCHIVES AND HISTORY
Archivist’s Report
The Methodist Archives Center (MAC) is the depository for the Alabama-West Florida Conference of the United Methodist Church. It is located in the Houghton Memorial Library on the Huntingdon College campus in Montgomery, Alabama. The Methodist Archives Center performs a joint function for the college and the conference.

The Commission on Archives and History (COAH) is the agency responsible for management of the Methodist Archives Center. It is the responsibility of the archivist and those working at the MAC to maintain the daily operation of the Center. We also assist the COAH with their meetings, the Memorial Service held at each AWFC Annual Session, and the memorial Luncheon which is given for the immediate family members of those deceased clergy and spouses who were remembered at the Memorial Service. It is also the archivist’s responsibility to gather information and write the memoirs printed each year in the Journal of the AWFC. We also assist the AWFC Historical Society with their meetings and projects throughout the year.

In 2017 the MAC answered one-hundred-sixty-two reference questions. They consisted of the following: General Public (Methodist Related) 44.44%; Methodist Conference 25.93%; General Public (College Related) 17.9 %; College Library Faculty/Staff 3.7%; College Faculty/Staff 3.09%; College Students 3.09%; and College Alumni 1.85%. The Methodist Archives Center had over forty walk-in visitors (15 Church Related; 25 College Related).

The following are the names and numbers of the accessions received and processed for the Alabama-West Florida Conference:

- MC801 Dothan District Records
- MC802 Library, Publications, Periodicals
- MC803 Reference Files
- MC804 Audio Visuals
- MC805 Artifacts
- MC806 Charge Conference Records
- MC807 Methodist Protestant Church
- MC808 Dothan District United Methodist Women
- MC809 Fort Deposit United Methodist Church
- MC810 Brundidge United Methodist Church
- MC811 Bowen United Methodist Church
- MC812 Alabama-West Florida Conference Fiscal Office
- MC813 Blue Lake Methodist Assembly
- MC814 Bolyston United Methodist Church
- MC815 Clió United Methodist Church
- MC816 Union Springs United Methodist Church Court Case
- MC817 Bishop J.O. Andrew Collection
The following are the names and numbers of the accessions received and processed for Huntingdon College:

- HC301 Reference Files
- HC302 Audio Visuals
- HC303 Library, Publications, Periodicals
- HC304 Artifacts
- HC305 Capstones
- HC306 Discontinued Plaques
- HC307 Deed, Tuskegee Female College
- HC308 F.W. Crenshaw Family

HISTORICAL SOCIETY PRESIDENT'S REPORT
The Alabama-West Florida Conference Historical Society (AWFC-HS) is a voluntary membership organization formed to work with the Annual Conference Commission on Archives and History (COAH) in the collection and preservation of materials related to the history of the United Methodist Church and its antecedents. The Society promotes research, writing, and publication in the field; and develops interest in United Methodist history and skills for pursuing it among local church historians and others. Anyone who is interested in preserving the heritage of our Conference and our local churches is welcomed and encouraged to join and participate.

At the 2017 AWF Annual Conference, the Society assisted the COAH in organizing, setting up, and decorating the area where the annual Memorial Luncheon was held; and assisted in serving the catered meal. Society members also helped the Commission as it greeted and guided surviving spouses and family members as they assembled and attended the Annual Service of Remembrance in honor of the past year’s deceased Clergy.

We also maintained an informational display adjoining the COAH display and provided brochures and other information concerning our work to those who stopped by.

The Society’s 2016 Annual Meeting was held on September 21 at the Pensacola, Florida, First United Methodist Church. This is the oldest organized Methodist Church in Florida and dates back to 1821 when a mission was established by the Mississippi Conference and the Reverend Alexander Talley was appointed as a missionary to Pensacola.

Pensacola FUMC Associate Pastor Rev. Brandon Bures welcomed the Society and Jeb Hunt, Creative Director of PFUMC led the program with music and singing. Church Historian Jeanne Tew provided an interesting and informative history of the church which is known as “Florida’s First Methodist Church.” Her presentation was followed by a tour of the church’s beautiful sanctuary, library, archives, and other facilities. A delicious lunch,
served by church volunteers, was provided in The Wright Place.

The afternoon session reconvened in the Wesley Abbey. Glenda Pace, Archivist for the PFUMC and a local genealogist, gave a talk concerning the street names of Pensacola and the historical significance of the various names.

After expressing the Society’s appreciation to the church and those who organized and participated in hosting the sessions, President Young adjourned the meeting and encouraged everyone to attend the 2018 Annual Meeting.

The 2018 Annual Meeting will be September 20, 2018, in Camden, Alabama, hosted by the Camden United Methodist Church. Our program will include information about Circuit Rider Rev. Ebenezer Hearne, called the “Father of Methodism in Alabama” who is buried in the Camden Cemetery. Lunch will be served in the Gaines Ridge Dinner Club which is located in what was originally Rev. Hearne’s home.

During the 2017-2018 Conference Year, the Society continued its presence on social media. Our website at www.awfhistory.com and our official Facebook page, www.facebook.com/awfmethodists, are helping to make us more widely known. Our quarterly publication, “The Circuit Writer,” is published and distributed in both electronic and printed form and provides interesting articles and photographs concerning our Alabama-West Florida Methodist history and the activities of the Society.

We are continuing the work begun by the founders of the Society and those faithful members who have worked diligently to help preserve our shared heritage. We again recall the admonition in Job: “Ask the former generations and find out what their ancestors learned, for we were born only yesterday and knew nothing, and our days on earth are but a shadow.” (Job 8)

Respectfully Submitted,

Jim Young, President

THE EPISCOPACY COMMITTEE

The Episcopacy Committee has had an amazing year working with Bishop Graves. We met at Evergreen Methodist Church this year on September 19 and December 7 and will have our final meeting of this year on April 23 in Montgomery at the Conference Office. Dr. Bryars reminded us at our first meeting the importance of our work and that it would be reported to the SEJ Episcopacy Committee. At our first meeting we reviewed our Covenant of Confidentiality and discussed SMART (Specific, Measureable, Attainable, Relevant, and Timely) goals to be set for our conference this year by Bishop Graves.
These goals were:

- emphasis in the conference office on relationships and high productivity
- preaching across the conference and meeting with leadership staffs
- promoting diversity in deacon and ethnic groups
- paying close attention to the appointment process
- meeting with young clergy and appointing women to larger roles
- recruiting more people to seminaries to supply pastors in our conference
- helping all 450 churches in our conference become more vital
- increasing membership and disciples through incubators
- touching isolated churches and assisting fragile churches
- increasing emphasis on lay leadership
- decreasing racism and increasing inclusivity

These goals all met the SMART criteria and determined our further conversations.

Most recently we reviewed survey results from Bishop Graves’ annual evaluation submitted by members of the Episcopacy Committee and the Extended Cabinet. This Survey Monkey was compiled with anonymous feedback that was automatic and blind to participants. Results were not separated from the Extended Cabinet and the Episcopacy Committee. This assured confidence that all identities were protected. The evaluation process provides an opportunity for the Bishop to inform the Episcopacy Committee of what he is doing in specific areas especially if many members mark “unknown” to a specific item. It also helps us as committee members understand the breadth and depth of what our Bishop does so we may be better advocate for our conference and better support his work.

This Episcopal Evaluation had eight areas of evaluation. These areas were:

- Ongoing Formation
- Administrative Responsibilities
- Leadership
- Preaching and Teaching
- Appointment Making
- Building Healthy Relationships
- Articulates and Supports the Initiatives of the UMC
- Strengthens the Connection

Following the compilation of the results they were discussed with Bishop Graves by Larry Bryars, Steve Furr and Alexis Tibbetts and then the Episcopacy Committee as a whole. Bishop Graves was rated high in all areas. Much of the time was spent reviewing the areas of the evaluation where the Episcopacy Committee had little knowledge. Our thanks go to Mary Catherine Phillips, Director of Communications for our Alabama-West
Florida Conference, for assisting with this survey. Episcopacy committee discussions this year with Bishop Graves included; the supervisory roles of the bishop, communication with clergy, identification of new leaders, decision making processes, balancing the demands of the General Church and our area needs, significant happenings in the conference, things in need of attention in our conference, and success in making disciples of Jesus Christ and transforming our world. Bishop Graves has been authentic, transparent, humble, civil and accountable with our committee and it has been a joy to work with him this year.

Susu Millsap has served as our Residence Committee Chair and notified us that renovation of a bathroom by Norris Construction was completed this year in the episcopal residence along with repairs to flooring and a damaged watercolor painting. Mrs. Graves (Nancy) has been lauded for her assistance and cooperation with the residence. Bishop Graves has expressed his appreciation for our help.


Respectfully submitted,
Alexis Tibbetts
Episcopacy Committee, Chair
CONFERENCE AGENCY REPORTS

BLUE LAKE UNITED METHODIST ASSEMBLY

The mission of Blue Lake United Methodist Assembly is making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world while connecting people to God’s creation.

Blue Lake’s core values are to be an intentional place apart: extend genuine Christian hospitality and community; nurture Christian faith and discipleship; develop Christian spiritual leaders; teach creation care and appreciation; collaborate with United Methodist Churches and agencies; and equip guests to do love and service.

Year 2017 brought many positive changes to Blue Lake. Our Program Director, Jeff Wilson, has finished his first year and has done a wonderful job. We have a new Food Service Coordinator, Laura Heartline. She has returned to run the kitchen at the place where she had her first job as a teen. It is a blessing from God to provide the staff that I can work with here daily.

We continue to upgrade the facilities at Blue Lake, in 2017 we improved the internet access at camp (not yet where we hope it will be soon). We replaced the roofs on the Linwood addition and Oakwood Chapel both with new metal roofs. We have built a house for the Program Director and removed the old trailer that served as that residence. The Hospitality House has been remodeled and is open for pastors to come to Blue Lake for their own personal retreat.

Blue Lake is grateful for the Board Members who commit to serve and to vision the future of this ministry. We are grateful to the NOMADS ministry that come to camp each year and help us with camp projects that we would struggle to do without them. These updates to camp help us to provide the most inviting, comfortable, and safe space possible. We are grateful for the many organizations, families, churches, and individuals who come to Blue Lake for worship, recreation, fellowship and respite. And for the parents who trust us to help in the spiritual formation of their children.

We are also grateful to Bishop Graves, the Cabinet, Clergy and members of the Alabama West Florida Conference, who continue to love us, pray for our ministry, support us, and share our space with joy and passion.

Steve Lewandowski
Executive Director
METHODOIST HOMES OF ALABAMA & NORTHWEST FLORIDA
ALABAMA-WEST FLORIDA CONFERENCE REPORT

The Hope of Older Adults

Psalm 71 is the song of an old man. The man talks about his struggles, troubles, triumphs, and God’s help and faithfulness through it all. He pleads twice with God to not forget him in his old age. Although American society tends to marginalize the contributions of its older citizens, that is not the case in the Alabama-West Florida Conference. Embracing the vision of Conference leaders more than 56 years ago, our Methodist Homes continue to thrive as places where older adults are respected and revered.

A new day dawned for Wesley Place on Honeysuckle in Dothan in 2017. The bulk of our 16-month campus-wide redevelopment project was completed in April, and deeply affected the culture of the retirement community at every level: assisted living, specialty care (memory care) assisted living, short-term rehab and long-term nursing care. As impressive as the physical transformations are at Wesley Place on Honeysuckle, the new Rehab Inn and the comprehensive renovations merely provide the backdrop for a transformed culture which changes the way older adults are treated in a community life setting. The creation of households and neighborhoods brings family-like warmth and engagement in daily life as never before. The focus on resident-directed care empowers resident choice in daily care and services, restoring privacy and dignity to the community setting as never before. I imagine that our aged psalmist would be pleased.

We have enjoyed providing safe, affordable apartment homes for people with low income since 1981. These communities are aging, and we began making significant improvements in 2017 that will continue during 2018. The Epworth House in Selma is receiving all new windows, entry doors, repairs to EIFS, and new paving. Wesley Scott Place is receiving new roofing on all buildings, along with new signage and landscaping.

Our Assisted Living communities are doing very well. In Montgomery, Wesley Gardens residents are enjoying a newly renovated kitchen. At Mathison Retirement Community in Panama City and Wesley Haven Villa in Pensacola we have made significant improvements to emergency preparedness plans. These improvements were made in anticipation of new Florida regulations in the wake of a very sad situation experienced by one nursing home during Hurricane Irma. We have always provided generators for our Florida communities, even though it was not required. However, these improvements, along with robust emergency plans, ensure that our Methodist Homes are well prepared.

As always, I want to thank you for your support of the Fountain of Love Fund and ask that you continue to remember the Fountain of Love in your churches. Each special offering, missions grant, and missions budget item,
as well as apportionment giving, helps make it possible for us to take care of residents who find they are no longer able to pay for their entire monthly care. In fact, no resident has ever been asked to leave a Methodist Home due to their inability to pay.

Thank you for your faithful support and prayers for the Fountain of Love and all our Methodist Homes in the Conference.
Christopher Tomlin
President & CEO

BOARD OF TRUSTEES
Class of 2021
Mrs. Martha John Allison - Montgomery
Dr. Jerry Dooling – Dothan
Dr. Henry Roberts – Pensacola
Dr. W. Herb Sadler – Gulf Breeze
Mrs. Terrye Takacs – Gulf Breeze

UNITED METHODIST CHILDREN’S HOME
Brothers and Sisters in Christ,
For the past 128 years The United Methodist Children’s Home has been caring for orphaned and vulnerable children as a witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Through group homes, higher education homes, transitional living homes, foster homes (regular, therapeutic and enhanced), adoption services and family preservation; UMCH extends the ministry of its supporting congregations in the North Alabama and Alabama-West Florida Conferences of the United Methodist Church. In this brief report I will highlight the vital statistics of our work in 2017, as well as summarize the programmatic highlights and developments.

BOARD UPDATE
- Glenda Allred, a member of First United Methodist Church of Montgomery, Alabama, provided excellent leadership in her 1st year as UMCH’s board president. UMCH’s 2017 board consisted of 20 clergy and lay persons from across the AL/West Florida (12) and North Alabama (8) conferences.

- In 2017, UMCH welcomed the following board members:
  - Jeannie Dodson (Canterbury United Methodist Church, Birmingham)
  - Bishop David Graves (Alabama/West Florida Conference)
  - Andrea McCain (First United Methodist Church, Montgomery)
  - Jerry Maygarden (First United Methodist Church, Pensacola)
  - Warren Matthews (First United Methodist Church, Greenville)
  - Kim Stagner (Florida board; Gulf Breeze United Methodist Church)
- Steve Umphrey (Mountain Chapel United Methodist Church, Birmingham)
- Kirby Williams (Florida board; Good News United Methodist Church, Santa Rosa Beach)

- UMCH’s clergy advisory board, led by Dr. Patrick Quinn of Frazer Memorial United Methodist Church of Montgomery, continued bi-annual meetings to provide UMCH with sustained feedback and counsel regarding the ministry’s strategic direction. Clergy from both conferences are represented on the clergy advisory board.

PROGRAM/MINISTRIES UPDATE
- In 2017, UMCH served 76 youth through our group homes, higher education homes, and transitional living homes. In addition, UMCH served 160 children through our foster care ministries in Alabama and Northwest Florida, a 32% increase over 2017.

PROGRAM/MINISTRIES UPDATE CONTINUED
- UMCH served 226 families through our Family Preservation Ministry in South Alabama and Northwest Florida, which represented caring contact with 884 individuals. This 38% increase in families served over 2016 was primarily due to expanding the program into Northwest Florida (Escambia, Santa Rosa, Okaloosa, and Walton Counties). This ministry has a 90 plus percent success rate in preventing family dissolution due to child neglect. UMCH also served 28 families through its adoption services ministry.

- The Florida Foster Care Ministry (Escambia, Santa Rosa, Okaloosa, and Walton Counties) experienced continued growth in 2017. After seeing a 19% increase in children served in 2016, this ministry served 109 children in 2017 (a 16% increase over 2016) and delivered an average of approximately 245 days of care to each of these children. In all, the program provided 15,598 days of care for children in 2017 (an 18% increase over 2016).

- All in all, UMCH made a difference in the lives of 1,307 individuals (a 27% increase over 2016) through our various ministries in 2017.

- 100% of UMCH’s eligible high school seniors (6) graduated in 2017.

- At the end of summer 2017, UMCH completed its fourth academic year of the residential higher education program with homes in Tuscaloosa and Florence. In 2017, this program served 23 young men and women, with the first graduate of the program completing a degree in finance from the University of North Alabama. She graduated with a 3.6 GPA.
UMCH is continuing to provide service and learning opportunities for our youth which they would not otherwise experience. UMCH sent a team of 20 youth and 10 staff to the Woodlawn Community of Chicago June 11-17 for a week of learning and serving through Sunshine Gospel Ministries. In addition, UMCH also held its 5th Annual Awards Weekend at Camp Beckwith in Fairhope, Alabama on May 19-21, 2017. We value this time to celebrate our kids and youth.

**CONGREGATIONAL OUTREACH**

- In 2017 various UMCH staff visited our United Methodist Congregations on 88 different occasions to share testimony about the transformational ministry of UMCH to children, youth, and at-risk families.

- UMCH’s President/CEO visited 17 different United Methodist congregations on 14 Sundays in 2017, preaching in nine services and delivering 14 ministry moments/award presentations.

**CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE**

- Annual fund gifts from all churches, individuals and foundations totaled $1,981,007 in 2017, a 5% increase over 2016 and a 6% increase over the previous 3-year average.* Gifts from churches of the Alabama/West Florida Conference totaled $823,240 for 2017, a 7% increase over 2016 and 4% increase over the previous 3-year average.

**FUTURE**

- UMCH and Glenwood Inc. of Birmingham have entered into an agreement to operate a collaborative ministry through UMCH’s home on Overton Rd. in Birmingham. The Overton Rd. home was recently renovated to house adolescents with Autism Spectrum Disorders who, for whatever reason, are unable to live with their parents. The Overton Rd. home will house up to 8 youth beginning in the late spring of 2018, operated by Glenwood in collaboration with UMCH.

- After intense planning and study, UMCH has decided to create a new non-profit organization and brand from UMCH’s existing programs and ministries in the Florida Panhandle. Although it will operate under a different, yet-to-be-determined name from UMCH, the new organization and brand will be a wholly owned subsidiary of UMCH and will continue to be an extension of the ministry of the AL/West Florida conference’s churches. This effort will coincide with an increased UMCH emphasis on marketing and development activity in the Florida Panhandle.

The United Methodist Children’s Home is a ministry of the Alabama-West Florida and North Alabama Conferences of the United Methodist Church to the hurting and forgotten children of Alabama and Northwest Florida.
With God’s help and the support of our United Methodist churches, we are developing new and creative ways to fulfill the greatest and most ageless mission an organization could hope to have: “To follow the example of Christ by embracing all God’s children……one child, one family at a time.”

God bless you, churches and believers of this great annual conference, for seeing the great needs of our children and responding so faithfully!

Grace and Peace,
K. Blake Horne, Ph.D.
President/CEO
The United Methodist Children’s Home

*Annual fund giving only. Does not include estate gifts or ongoing contributions from trusts.

UNITED METHODIST CONNECTIONAL FEDERAL CREDIT UNION
Chairman’s Report-
James Mitchell, Chairman

Your Board of Directors’ primary job is to set direction for and manage the credit union, making sure it is operated in a sound and prudent manner and that all decisions are guided by the best interests of the members. During 2017, we continued to implement those strategies necessary to both maintain growth and preserve a strong financial picture. We believe in “Helping Our Members Afford Life” by continuing to provide inexpensive financial services and outstanding member service.

Our major achievements this year include:

- We increased our asset size by over 1%, added new members and increased loans to members.
- We improved our VISA Credit Card Program by adding Score Rewards so that members get more value when using their credit card.
- We added a new car buying service, so we are better able to help members purchase new and used vehicles in all three states that we serve.
- We continued to update technological enhancements for our products and services through a conversion to a new core system on February 28, 2018.

Of course, all of this could not have been achieved without our staff, my fellow board members, and other volunteers that helped make 2017 another great year for your Credit Union. Most importantly, however, I want to thank
you, our members, for continuing to do business with your Credit Union.

**Supervisory Committee Report-**
**Maryanne McCurdy, Chair**

Committee Members: Winnie Dean, Charles Houston, Shoune Lawton, Clarence Thrower

United Methodist Connectional Federal Credit Union’s Supervisory Committee independently evaluates the soundness of the credit union’s operations and activities. This committee is responsible for a series of internal and external audits that are performed to ensure that the Credit Union complies with generally accepted accounting principles. This committee also makes certain that United Methodist Connectional FCU’s audited financial statements provide a fair and accurate representation of the financial condition of the credit union and is compliant with state and federal regulations.

As a result of the audits held and in conjunction with the annual examination of the National Credit Union Administration (NCUA), it is the opinion of the Supervisory Committee that the financial condition of United Methodist Connectional Federal Credit Union continues to remain strong and well managed, with sound policies and programs. The Credit Union is also compliant with the Credit Union’s by-laws, Georgia, Florida and Alabama state laws relating to credit unions, and applicable federal laws and regulations.

The Supervisory Committee would like to commend the staff, management and volunteers of the Credit Union for their efforts in maintaining the soundness and safety of the credit union.

**Treasurer’s Report-**
**Michael McQueen, Treasurer**

United Methodist Connectional Federal Credit Union ended 2017 with a strong balance sheet and positive net income. We will maintain our strategy of continued, controlled growth as we strengthen both our balance sheet and income statements in the years to come.

2017 Highlights:
- Assets increased from $29,086,895.58 as of December 31, 2016 to $29,378,422.73 as of year-end 2017.
- Loans to members increased from $17,361,756.01 at year-end 2016 to $17,532,168.51 as of year-end 2017.
- Income on investments increased from $83,960.01 in 2016 to $106,433.44 as of year-end 2017.
• Income increased by $30,537.70.
• Operating expenses increased slightly from $1,213,675.32 in 2016 to $1,335,584.26 in 2017.
• Net income increased from $22,842.11 as of year-end 2016 to $53,379.81 as of year-end 2017.

Your Board of Directors, Management and Staff are committed to ensuring the stability and financial success of your Credit Union now and in the future. Our net worth remains healthy and our net income doubled in 2017.

### Benefit Obligation

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<tr>
<th>Reconciliation</th>
<th>2016 Fiscal Year</th>
<th>2015 Fiscal Year</th>
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<tr>
<td>Benefit Obligation, beginning of year</td>
<td>$21,160,008</td>
<td>$20,284,167</td>
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<td>Service Cost</td>
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<td>Interest Cost</td>
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<td>Contributions by Participants</td>
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<td>Actuarial (Gains) and Losses</td>
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<td>Foreign Currency Exchange Rate Changes</td>
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<td>Benefits Paid</td>
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<td>Business Combinations</td>
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<td>Divestitures, Curtailments or Settlements</td>
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<td>Special Termination Benefits</td>
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<td>Other</td>
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<td>Benefit Obligation, end of year</td>
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<td>Equity</td>
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<td>Shares of Members</td>
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<td>Net Income</td>
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<td><strong>Total Equity</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Total Liabilities &amp; Equity</strong></td>
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<td><strong>$29,378,422.73</strong></td>
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### Income Statement

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<th>Summary as of 12/31/16</th>
<th>Summary as of 12/31/17</th>
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<tr>
<td>Interest on Loans</td>
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<td>Income on Investments</td>
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<td>Fees &amp; Charges</td>
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<td>Other Operating Income</td>
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### Operating Expenses

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<td>Employee Benefits</td>
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<td>Travel &amp; Conference</td>
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<td><strong>Total Operating Expenses</strong></td>
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| Income From Operations | $118,371.57            | $146,713.47            |
| Income Before Dividends| $118,371.57            | $146,713.47            |
| Dividends              | $95,529.46             | $93,333.66             |
| Gains/(Loss) on Assets | $0.00                  | $0.00                  |
| **Net Income**         | **$22,842.11**         | **$53,379.81**         |
ALABAMA-WEST FLORIDA
UNITED METHODIST FOUNDATION, INC.
As the Foundation enters into its 39th year of service to the AWF Conference, we are thankful and blessed for all the partnerships we have made with churches and those to come. We currently manage approximately $89 million and are honored to have been part of distributing over $3 million in vital funds back to local churches and conference agencies as requested in 2017. These funds help to support ministry and transform lives in their community, in the Conference, and beyond. We work tirelessly as your partner in ministry to not only be your fund manager but to also provide valuable guidance alongside free resources, consultations, and workshops to help your ministry thrive for generations to come.
Our mission is to encourage generosity as a way of life, foster planned giving, develop successful endowment programs, and manage funds to strengthen the work of Christ’s church. We view everything we do as a ministry of generosity, and our goal as an AWF Conference agency is to see lives changed, generosity increased, churches grow, and ministries expand. We are in the transformational, not transactional, business.

Our Services:

Free Resources
As a result of our partnerships with churches and agencies, we are providing free resources and services to encourage good stewardship in the AWF Conference. These resources include:

- Monthly eblasts containing valuable tips and resources that can be copied and used in the local church
- Quarterly newsletters with updates on ways to promote generosity and new ways to give
- A Marketing Handbook, brochures, and printables that highlight legacy giving, generosity, and financial stewardship as a way of life

Church Endowment Programs
Endowment programs help facilitate planned giving in the church. We offer personalized step-by-step service and marketing materials designed to educate, encourage, and support future financial needs of your church. In 2017 the Foundation opened twenty-one new account relationships with churches and ministries. Rather than take a ‘one size fits all’ approach to each account relationship as a whole, we track individual accounts within each church or agency and apply tailored disbursement and investment options to each account.

Investment Services
Our investment services are uniquely created to provide diversified, low-cost investment options for managing church and agency funds. The Foundation staff assists in developing a custom investment plan for each participating organization or donor. Returns on our investment funds were outstanding again in 2017, outperforming benchmarks in all three funds.
Generosity Development/Workshops
We offer generosity development to churches and agencies through educational programs that foster a better understanding of giving and stewardship as acts of worship and discipleship. Workshops are available on long-term financial planning, investment strategies, wills and estate planning, charitable gift options, the gift-making process, and more.

Fund Administration Services
We provide trust fund accounting, regular disbursements, and all other fiduciary administration in easy to read statements. Foundation statements, which were updated in 2017, are mailed and available online for authorized church members.

To learn more about the Foundation’s services email us at foundation@alwfumf.org or call (334) 793-6820.

The Board of Directors unanimously endorses and recommends the following board and officers.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Officers:
Current President: Ross Cotter
 Incoming President: Beebe Frederick
 Treasurer: Herbert Barr
 Terri Turner, Executive Director

LAY DIRECTORS

Class of 2018
Herbert Barr – Dothan    Eric Canada – Mty/Opel    Jeff Outlaw – Dothan
Bill Hill – Demopolis    Lany Simmons – Baypines  Jon Heath – Dothan
Beebe Frederick – MTOP

Class of 2019
Chris Beam – Pensacola   Laureen Lynn – Mobile  Talana Wilkins – Dothan
John Bullard, Jr. – MTPT  Howard Meadows–MTPT  Jana Ealum – MTPT
Mark Davidson – Mobile   Mike Norris – MTPT

Class of 2020
Tommy Boyd – MTPT      James Hall – Dothan    Henry Hooks – MAPC
Aubrey Stabler – MTPT   Dennis Adams – Baypines
Jennie Hoppenjan – Pen   Jody Dunn – Mobile    Gene Floore – Pen
Mike Tucker – MAPC      Olen Kirby – Demopolis
Stephen Burch – Pen     Ed Reifenberg – MTPT

Ex-Officio Members: The Resident Bishop, All District Superintendents, and the Conference Lay Leader.
ALABAMA-WEST FLORIDA
UNITED METHODIST DEVELOPMENT FUND, INC.
The United Methodist Development Fund for the Conference provides sources of financing for church and church organizations’ building projects, renovation projects and property purchases. In 2017 the Development Fund extended loans to four churches for building projects and to purchase property for a church to build on in the future. These loans are made possible by deposits from local churches, agencies and church members looking for both competitive rates on liquid funds and the opportunity to participate in church building and growth.

Loans through the Development Fund are only offered on a first mortgage basis or by assigning assets already held through the United Methodist Foundation and currently offer a rate of 3.50%. The Development Fund does not charge points or closing costs for establishing a loan; however there are certain normal filing requirements. The Development Fund staff works diligently to respond promptly to the needs of the church and works as a consultant to determine the financial impact of the debt amount on the church.

Any church or individual can invest in the United Methodist Development Fund accounts. Applications are available through the United Methodist Foundation office or on our web page, www.alwfumf.org. Interest on the deposits, currently earning 1.0%, may be mailed to you as frequently as quarterly or reinvested into the same.

For information on rates and availability of funds please call Terri Turner at (334)793-6820.

We appreciate the hard work of our Board of Directors and their commitment to providing the services vital to church growth in our Conference. We endorse and recommend the following board and officers.

Henry Hooks, President
Terri H. Turner, Executive Director

President: Henry Hooks
Executive Director: Terri H. Turner
Board of Directors: Henry Hooks, Hope Johnson, Clay Carnathan, Pat Luna, Ben Barron, Howard Adams
Conference Treasurer: Mickey Wilson
Conference Missions Secretary: Susan Hunt
Conference Lay Leader: Beverly Maddox
Resident Bishop: Bishop David L. Graves
U.M. Foundation President: Ross Cotter
Cabinet Representative: Rev. Sara Shaver
CONFERENCE MISSIONS AND MINISTRIES

ALABAMA RURAL MINISTRIES - ARM
We are grateful for the ways our Conference supports ARM! We are passionate about developing servant leaders who work with us to transform communities by creating sustainable homes, strengthening families, and building strategic partnerships! All for God’s glory!
Here is a glimpse into 2017 and part of 2018:
Sustainable Homes/Owner Occupied Home Repair: We served with 34 families and completed repairs for fourteen homes. Mission volunteers (collaborators) made them safe, warm, dry and beautiful.
Our affordable housing project for veterans in Tuskegee is now in full swing and set for completion by December 2018. We completely gutted and reframed the inside and are grateful to Auburn and Tuskegee University’s Building Science and Architecture programs.

We are laying the ground work for building a new home in Tuskegee on a donated lot. In partnership with the Auburn Rural Studio (School of Architecture), these are small homes with affordable mortgages for those with significantly limited incomes.

ARM@AU: Our student organization was in its third year this past fall and continues to grow on the Auburn campus. They serve one Saturday per month and help coordinate ARM events with the AU campus. Plans are underway for more student groups across the state.

MLK Day of Service (January 2018) hosted over 130 volunteers canvassing the Macon and Lee County community to do home repair, children’s ministry, serve at the food pantry, and street cleanup. A community worship service was held on Sunday night honoring the work and legacy of Dr. King.

Make a Difference Day: Hosted by Cornerstone Church in Auburn where we had another 150 volunteers serving in late October. Nine families were served!

Strengthen Families: Son Shine Kids Day Camp continued serving in both Livingston and Tuskegee each hosting approximately 35 kids ages five to ten. Several churches and individuals helped fund the camp by becoming a day camp sponsor. Each camp costs $10,000 and we raised over $16,000 through our sponsorships.

Financial Literacy Class: ARM hosted its first financial literacy class in partnership with the Alabama Cooperative Extension Agency. We had seven of our home owners complete the training that included budgeting, having money based conversations (try that with your spouse!), predatory lending, banking and more. This training will equip and strengthen our family’s ability to steward their limited financial resources.
Leadership Development:
Summer Mission Teams: ARM continues to host our summer mission teams, and, they are the most fruitful time of our ministry. In the summer we host the greatest volume of our mission volunteers and serve the greater bulk of our families in home repair. In 2017 we hosted 21 church teams in the summer. During the day, youth serve in home repair and day camp ministry. At night, they dig into the scriptures, worship together and process their experience with the intent of taking the ministry back home. These camps are run by 14-16 college students who serve as camp counselors.

Lead Up 2018: This leadership practicum hosted twelve high school students who learned how to take an idea and transform it into an action plan. Students designed plans such as providing alternatives to abortion, how to stop gun violence, efforts in nutrition and obesity, and so much more!

The big fundraisers: Cycle of Service 2017 remained a three-day, 100 miles/day ride across the Black Belt. It raised over $26,000! Cycle of Service 2018 is now a 2.5 day ride going from Mississippi to the Chattahoochee River in Phenix City, Alabama.

What’s coming? ARM is developing two main initiatives: First, an intensive internship year living in Christian community and serving directly in the Macon and Lee County Communities. We are working with United Methodist supported seminaries in this effort.

Second, we recognize the struggle of small membership churches with their youth and mission dreams. Through a district model, we will work with districts to establish district mission teams that can serve with ARM even if they only have a few youth. Stay tuned!

We are so grateful to all of our church partners, district ministry partners and all of our Wesley Foundations! We look forward to how God will continue to grow us in the future as we work to make disciples for the transformation of the world!

Rev. Lisa Pierce, ARM Director

Alabama Rural Ministry Board of Directors 2018-2021
Class 2018:
John Bibliss, Amy Kelsey, Rev. Jamal Oliver, Paul Schrantz, Margaret Vollenweider

Class 2019:
Jimmy Aulner, Dara Hosey, Scott Middleton, Ken Story, Dave Mashburn, Fred Callahan
Class 2020:
Sharon Wilbanks, Roger Sailors, Karin Hopkins, John Fox
Class 2021:
Tyler Adams, Carla Bell, Tom Meagher, Barbara Miller, Kate Thornton,
Sharon Tolbert, Rob Welbaum

Ex Officio:
Bishop David Graves, Rev. Dr. Jeff Wilson, Montgomery/Opelika DS,
Susan Hunt, Conference Missions Coordinator, Rev. David Goolsby,
AU Wesley Director- Rev. Audrey Rodgers, TU Wesley Director
Students: Kaylee McCutcheon

THE ARK
The Ark continues, with God’s ineffable help, sailing in its mission to “be the presence of Christ on Panama City Beach” in 2018.

Since the last report, the Ark has been blessed to receive donations of material, labor and dollars valued over $100,000. Contributions include church service work days, Conference gifts, anonymous donations, and even a check for $1,000 from a young man who thanked a staff member for ‘saving his life’! The result of these blessings includes a new metal roof on our largest building, over ten tons of new air-conditioning, a remodeled Chapel, 100% of the property freshly painted and an additional 40 bunk beds with mattresses. These donations, along with the profit from Ark operations, have led to the strongest financial position and improvement of property in memory. As a result, the Ark is ready to continue sailing for many more seasons.

2016
With Katie Winton at the helm, the Ark focused the summer on International Student J1 Visa housing. The J1 program is a student exchange that promotes US goodwill, our culture and foreign policy. The Ark’s mission developed as we noticed the local need for clean and safe housing. This also opened the opportunity to bring the international world to us to share the Gospel. We welcomed close to eighty students at peak summertime to experience living and working in the US. In the effort to sharpen our mission performance, Katie hired Andy Wise, a Brit US citizen who speaks several languages, as our summer J1 Director. Andy did an amazing job entertaining, transporting, counseling, and sharing Christ’s love with our crew from all over the world. His most challenging moment came when one young girl from Kosovo became ill and had to be transported to Shands Hospital in Gainesville, Florida some 250 miles away. The illness could have taken her life but for the grace of God she survived and returned home to her very thankful parents. The rest of the summer was a breeze for the students filled with memories of a lifetime.
New Directors in 2017
With the dawn of 2017, the Ark began with a change of its captain. After three awesome years, Katie Winton left to take on new challenges. One of the Ark Directors with his wife came aboard to assume the role. Liz and Mike Bennett were involved from the beginning of the Ark’s 2013 makeover and have been passionate about continuing to improve all aspects of the property & mission. Their experience in the retail & hospitality business has proven to be an excellent asset as their new stewardship has solidified. Liz said after a few months on the job, “I am excited about learning new things and putting my faith into action as I fully rely on God to lead this ship”.

Student / Retreat Housing
Shortly after the year began, The Ark received an offer to lease the majority of its 162 beds to a group that has been transforming lives for Jesus Christ on PCB for many years. Campus Outreach (C.O.) is a Christian organization that focuses on teaching discipleship and evangelizing to college students worldwide under the mission statement “Glorifying God by Building Laborers on the Campus for the Lost World”. They believe the college campus is the most strategic field of ministry in the world today. The Ark and C.O. agreed to a summer trial in 2017 by signing up for 120 of those beds for their annual seventy-day Summer Beach Project (SBP). The students are required to work full-time jobs while participating in weekly rallies, evangelistic outreach, corporate worship, socials and discipleship groups. Their goal is to grow their personal relationships with God and learn how to impact others for Jesus Christ. Their 2017 stay was so successful that an agreement was signed for an additional three years.

Transitional Living
Our Transitional Living program began again in the off-season and continues to take our spiritual breath away. As the tourist season winds down, we encounter an influx of people who find themselves in monetary crisis often leading to homelessness. Our simple gift of love with a safe place to sleep brings immediate tears, appreciation and new hope to every new tenant in this program. As we unzip their past...their hurts, their addictions, and their abuse, a revealing healing begins to take place and words begin to fail as God ineffably takes control. The stories could fill a book….and one of the unintended God guided consequences happened right before our eyes this past year. The remaining J1 International students & American C.O. students overlapped several weeks with our new transitional living tenants. This overlap gave the students the beautiful opportunity to witness to these hurting folks and even assist us in the practice of Christ’s hospitality! Many, many lives were impacted and changed.

We opened ten units (40 beds) for the Transitional Living program from September-April. The rooms stay full and the program is intended to help individuals get back into financial stability through Dave Ramsey
Financial Peace teachings and spiritual growth classes. To deeply connect to our guests, we also began a new spiritual Sponsorship Program that has served the mentor as much, if not more, than those who are served. Weekly attendance at a church of their choice, Celebrate Recovery and an onsite Ark worship service on Wednesdays are encouraged and well attended by those hungry for real change. As a reflection, we’ve had twelve professions of faith and baptisms in the Gulf of Mexico, and over a dozen individuals and families who moved upward to jobs and apartments.

**Pour Coffee & Cafe**
As for The Pour, our full-service cafe & coffee shop, its sales more than doubled in 2017. Its increased profit has greatly supported our cause and it’s warm and eclectic environment offered fellowship to all who enter the doors. It continues to be the perfect tool to attract the believer, the seeker, and even the lost all in the same space while inviting questions as to why we do what we do. With our mission statement fixed permanently to the wall, the staff continually answers those questions, invites people to serve, receives donations and prays with customers as needed. The baristas even tour customers around the property who wish to follow God’s call to open their own version of The Ark!

**2018 and Beyond**
As we look forward to Summer 2018, we are most excited about the surprises that God will undoubtedly keep bringing our way. It would be such a blessing to recreate what happened to Semih Doker, one of our J1 International students, last summer. He was a devout Muslim college senior from Turkey who came to the U.S. for his Work/Culture adventure and stayed at the Ark for the summer. In addition to the awesome time he had with us on wave runners, paddleboards and visiting Christian churches, the week before he left he accepted Christ as his Lord and Savior and asked to be baptized in the Gulf. This year we are planning a more intentional mingling of International and American students through worship experiences and festivities. The results we pray will make eternal differences in the lives of all involved.

As for the facility, we intend to make several more building improvements to include: paving the front of the coffee shop, installing a new roof on our mid-sized dorm, sprucing up landscaping all over the property, and many small home improvements. We are ready to promote the facility in new and bolder ways to fill the 75 open beds during the months of August – March. We are also excited that our special Pastor Sabbatical Room is now available for those in need of rest and renewal during the off-season. And with the beach access directly across the street, the Ark is the perfect place for retreats, conferences, family reunions and more.

Liz and Mike Bennett will continue to serve their second year as co-directors
for 2018. As we work together with the Ark Board of Directors, staff and volunteers, we pray God opens the floodgates of His blessing on all aspects of the Ark and its mission.

Thank you all for your prayers and support!

The Ark
www.thearkpcb.org
850-234-3084
Info@thearkpcb.org

The Pour
www.thepourpcb.com
850-234-3084
thepourpcb@gmail.com

COMMUNITIES OF TRANSFORMATION
Communities of Transformation (COT) is a ministry of the Alabama-West Florida Conference of the United Methodist Church. This initiative is a conference-wide effort to engage in ministry with the poor as one of the four areas of focus of the United Methodist Church. Our ministry reaches those who live on the margins of society – families who struggle, who live in isolation, who are unemployed and underemployed, who are recovering addicts, and families who are stuck in all manner of difficult life circumstances.

This initiative of the AWFUMC has resulted in the formation of surprising and unprecedented community alliances. New partnerships have been formed as others have stepped forward to join the United Methodist Church in this COT effort. Partners have included churches from many denominational backgrounds, community leaders, public officials, and community agencies. Diverse, multicultural leadership teams have included people from every socio-economic group. Community agencies and other denominational groups have contributed time, talent, labor, and passion, as well as in-kind and cash donations to the ministry.

Communities of Transformation (COT) is an ambitious volunteer-driven ministry initiative that requires broad congregational, denominational, and community support. The upfront communication, visioning, and preparatory work required to position a community for start-up is extensive and very time consuming. We currently have nine sites: Brewton, Demopolis District at Pine Hill, Dothan, Eufaula, Evergreen, Mobile, Montgomery, Phenix City, and Selma. Three of these sites, Demopolis District at Pine Hill, Evergreen, and Montgomery, have been established in the last year. This increase in sites occurred despite a challenging year for our Conference Leadership team. Laurel Blackwell continued to provide leadership while struggling with personal health issues. Laurel’s untimely death saddened us all, but it also left us with a renewed commitment to carry out the work she started in COT.

Sharing Good News is an important part of our weekly meetings, and we would like to share our Good News with you.
Brewton has flourished under new site coordinator Shae Hines. The fifth class of participants has completed the Awaken curriculum. Their financial workshop held in February was attended by more than forty interested people. They continue to meet at Brewton FUMC.

Demopolis District at Pine Hill has seen the complete transformation of the educational wing at Pine Hill UMC in preparation for hosting COT meetings. District Superintendent Allen Newton has guided the Demopolis District Vision Team as they have built community support for COT. Rev. Dawn Bond of the Pine Hill Charge has worked closely with site coordinator Rev. Reba Wiley as COT becomes established in the Demopolis District. Their first Taste and See was held on January 25, 2018, with twenty-four people attending.

Dothan continues to draw motivated participants from Wallace Community College’s Adult Education program. Participant Christina Baxley successfully completed Wallace’s Medical Assistant program and passed her state board exam. She was immediately employed by Southern Bone and Joint in Dothan. She is just one example of a life transformed by COT. Site coordinator Tara Sanders leads as Dothan continues to meet at Evergreen Presbyterian Church.

Our Eufaula site serves the whole community. Site Coordinator Beverly Brown shares that she sees both participants and volunteers benefitting from the exchange of thoughts and ideas shared in meetings. The site has connected with the community through agencies like HIPPY, local daycares, Eufaula City Schools, Wallace Community College, the Alabama Career Center, Crisis Center of Barbour County, Eufaula Housing Authority, and the Barbour County Extension Office. Volunteers there provide vital support to Beverly and the entire site.

Evergreen, led by site coordinator Anita Watson, lets their innovative spirit shine through the Evergreen COT Community Garden of Hope Park. Their scarecrow family, consisting of Papa, Mama, Junior, and little Irma (remember the Hurricane?), was created by the imaginative COT volunteers and welcome all who come into its gates-- even deer! The garden personifies what continues to happen in Evergreen: lasting and diverse friendships grow along with the Community Garden.

Mobile is the only site with a permanent meeting space set aside for the exclusive use of COT. The Vision Center has allowed them to have a room of their own there, complete with our beautiful logo painted by participant Cathy Irby. Parenting skills are an important focus of the Mobile site, and site coordinator Katy Wrona has worked to form a partnership with Help Me Grow Alabama that has provided great opportunities for development in that area.
Montgomery began their second year of community and has had two classes of participants complete the Awaken curriculum. This year’s participation in the River Region Alternative Gift Fair sponsored by Montgomery FUMC provided site coordinator Jennifer Lancaster an opportunity to connect with other agencies in the area that help meet participants’ needs. Relationships with Mary Ellen’s Hearth, Family Promise of Montgomery, the Central Alabama Community Foundation, Montgomery Area Council on Aging, Valiant Cross Academy, Common Ground, and more help build a network of support to change lives in Montgomery.

Phenix City has had five classes of participants complete the Awaken curriculum. Joan Gatewood is their new site coordinator. She has introduced topics from insurance to exercise, truly addressing all five of COT’s areas of personal development: financial, spiritual, relational, intellectual, and physical. Rev. Brady Baird, pastor of host church Summerville UMC, encouraged the group to create a phrase to close meetings. The group adapted line from the hymn “Here I Am, Lord.” Each week as the meeting closes, members tell each other, “I will hold you in my heart.”

Selma is one of COT’s longest-running sites. Site coordinator Margaret Bennett has recently moved meetings to a new location at Church Street UMC where Rev. Lance Eiland is the pastor. Five classes of participants have completed the Awaken curriculum. In January, seven members of COT Selma traveled to the Demopolis District site at Pine Hill UMC to help facilitate their startup. The COT initiative is designed to be a generative process. COT sites are designed to replicate themselves. We anticipate replication from one community to another, with the first site helping to establish the second site, and we have seen this model work thanks to Selma’s help with Pine Hill.

We are thankful to all the churches, pastors, and lay leaders who work with Communities of Transformation to change lives in our conference. We look forward to meeting more of you who would like to become involved. Our plans for 2018 include establishing multiple new sites. To find out how you can be involved in this life-changing initiative, subscribe to our newsletter at http://awf-email.brtapp.com/subscribe, visit our website at https://www.communitiesoftransformation.org, or visit our Facebook page at https://www.facebook.com/CommunitiesofTransformation.

DUMAS WESLEY COMMUNITY CENTER
Introduction
The Dumas Wesley Community Center (DWCC) is a neighborhood based non-profit organization located in the Crichton community of Mobile, Alabama. Founded in 1903 by the Woman’s Society of Christian Service (present day UMW); the agency’s original mission was to serve poor women and children who worked in the cotton mills of the Crichton
community. Over the years DWCC evolved to meet the changing needs of the community; becoming a multi-service center offering after-school programs, senior services, neighborhood outreach, transportation services and transitional housing for homeless families.

Most households served by the Center are headed by single mothers with an average household income of less than $15,000 per year. Of those served directly by DWCC, 69% are low-income and approximately 95% are minority.

Mission Statement
The mission of the Dumas Wesley Community Center of Mobile, Alabama is to EDUCATE, EMPOWER and ENRICH our local community through collaborative programs of Christian service that: provide for immediate human needs, strengthen family life, develop leadership and encourage personal responsibility.

Neighborhood Outreach
The intent of our Neighborhood Outreach and Advocacy program is to implement and foster trust and belief in the residents of Crichton, thus serving as a catalyst for the advocacy and betterment of the community. Our major goals are:

• Rehabilitation of family life through education and services that enhance awareness of the needs of self, other family members and neighbors.
• Improve the lives of disadvantaged and underserved area youth, families and senior citizens by ensuring adequate nutrition, healthcare, preventative education, and referrals to area social service agencies and resources.
• A renewal of community interest in the neighborhood as a place of pride, resulting in increased personal self-esteem and security in the home environment.

Youth Programs
The After-School Achievement Program (ASAP) provides a safe environment for community youth to participate in age-appropriate activities. Specific programs include:

• Sports where teens participate in church and city basketball leagues.
• “Safe Haven” daily recreation with game rooms, outside play and basketball.
• Tutoring and computer lab
• weekly piano and choir classes
• Summer Recreation with sports, arts and crafts, field trips and a camping experience at Blue Lake.
• Youth Empowered Wednesdays led by the Junior League of Mobile offers workshops, speakers, arts and crafts, and sports activities.
• You Still Have a Choice Program led by the Mobile Police Department offers dialogue about choices and consequences. The program is designed to reduce recidivism for juvenile criminal offenders.

**Sybil H. Smith Family Village Transitional Housing Program**
The Sybil H. Smith Family Village transitional housing program began serving homeless families since July 1999. To date, the Center has served over 1011 individuals from seven Alabama counties, the Mississippi coast area and the Florida panhandle. This unique program provides homeless families with the tools to establish and maintain self-sufficiency. It combines transitional housing of up to 24 months with on-site support services as well as referrals to other community agencies and institutions. Eighty-five percent of our clients successfully complete the program, become gainfully employed and remain in permanent housing. This percentage is well above the national average (60%) for similar transitional housing programs.

**Senior SAIL Program**
The Dumas Wesley Senior Activities for Independent Living (SAIL) Program provides seniors age 60 plus with a hot congregate meal, daily activities and dependable transportation to medical appointments. This program is available to senior residents living in Crichton and Toulminville.

*Transportation:* The purpose of the program is to provide seniors with no-cost transportation to doctors, hospitals and other health facilities. Eighty-one percent of those served live alone and are dependent upon Dumas Wesley for this much needed service.

*Senior Activities for Independent Living (S.A.I.L.):* provides daily activities average of 60 seniors. A hot, nutritious meal is served to 25 seniors at the center, while 36 homebound seniors also receive meals. Participants enjoy a variety of activities, including games, sing-alongs, nutrition education, speakers, health checks and field trips. Trips to the grocery store are provided one day per week. Information referrals are made on health and wellness issues, Medicare, Social Security, Fair Housing and other social services.

**Other Partner Programs:**
*The Joseph Project:* A Community Food Pantry, named for the Joseph story in Genesis 41, is a partnership between the Ashland Place United Methodist Church and the Dumas Wesley Community Center serving an average of 100 individuals each week.

*The Clothing Closet:* Dumas Wesley Community Center offers a community-wide, volunteer-support clothes closet that serves an average of 30 individuals each week.
Monitoring of Home Day Care Feeding Program: Dumas Wesley staffs the monitoring of the feeding program in 59 home daycares in Mobile and Washington Counties. This program plays a vital role in improving the quality of day care and making it more affordable for local low-income families. Homes must be licensed and approved to qualify for meal reimbursements. Dumas Wesley monitors each provider through quarterly on-site visits, in-home trainings and annual workshops.

Assistance to Refugee and Immigrant Populations: Attorney Perry Noble has brought pro bono legal services to Dumas Wesley, serving immigrant and refugee families and individuals.

How can you participate in the ministry of Dumas Wesley Community Center? For over a century we have been proudly serving our community. We have a well-established reputation for quality service among our multi-generational client base. We serve hundreds of needy families every year. That is special to us - our programs meet the whole family’s needs. We want to continue to meet these needs for generations to come, but without your support our programs wouldn’t be possible! We ask for your continued prayers, monetary support and sharing of your talents and skills through volunteerism. Thank you and God bless!

Yours in Service,
Kate Carver
Executive Director
Dumas Wesley Community Center

GOLDEN CROSS
Golden Cross is a special fund of the United Methodist Church. It exists in order to:

- Respond to the most pressing health care needs.
- Allow the local church to give with compassion.
- Adhere to the guidelines set forth by the Conference.

The Golden Cross represents Christ’s healing presence in a hurting world. As United Methodists we are active in and support the ministries of Christian care by reaching out to those in need. The Golden Cross offering is retained within the conference where it is received. The conference designates the use of the offering. The contributions you give to the Alabama-West Florida Conference provide the opportunity to make available financial aid for medical delinquent expense charges from a hospital, physician or pharmacy. **Golden Cross receives no funds from apportioned items; the only source of income is from the people of the local church within our Conference.** Please send your offering to the AWF Conference Treasurer, designated
as “Golden Cross.” Any church may designate Golden Cross Sunday at any time throughout the year.

We find a healthy amount of donations in our account with the Conference office this year; however, we have not had requests for these funds this year. Efforts are being made to remind local church pastors of the availability of funds from Golden Cross through district and conference newsletters.

Guidelines used to assist those in need:

- Assistance shall be available for United Methodists of the conference. Payment toward financial assistance shall be made directly to the hospital, physicians, or pharmacy.
- The Director of Golden Cross will provide each applicant with a form that must be filled out in advance of receiving assistance. It is also available on the website of the AWF Conference.
- A copy of the balance with past due, unpaid balances must be provided with the completed application form.
- This information is to be returned to the Director of Golden Cross.
- Assistance will be granted to a person only upon the recommendation of a pastor or District Superintendent who is in a position to know of the need or circumstances. Assistance will be granted for a pastor only on the recommendation of the District Superintendent.

A copy of the past due bills and the completed application form is to be sent to the Golden Cross Director, Julie Terrell, 26610 Bridge Lane, Andalusia AL 36421. The amount of assistance granted to any person shall be limited to a total of $1,200.00 for any combination of hospital, physician, or pharmacy bills. Local church pastors are encouraged to contact the Golden Cross Director at (850) 712-0456 to assist members of their congregations who may need assistance from the Golden Cross fund.

Respectfully Submitted,
Julie Terrell, RN

MARY ELLEN’S HEARTH AT NELLIE BURGE
Organization Overview
For over 114 years, Nellie Burge Community Center has been serving vulnerable families in the River Region. After a lengthy assessment of needs in the community, the board determined that the Nellie Burge Community Center could best serve the community by providing transitional housing for homeless women with children. The center was reopened in 2011 and the ministry was renamed “Mary Ellen’s Hearth” in honor of long time board member and volunteer Mary Ellen Bullard. With strong roots in civic engagement and community collaboration, Mary Ellen’s Hearth helps
families move to a more stabilized status. In an otherwise wealthy county, deep pockets of poverty and a dearth of affordable housing option leave some families unable to meet their most basic needs. While all of the families we care for are low income, according to HUD definitions, 50% of our families are very low income and 30% are extremely low income. Families living in poverty are under constant distress. Hunger, scarcity, and housing insecurity caused by poverty often lead to chronic trauma. Under these conditions, families are ill-equipped to gain access to stabilizing services that could lead to self-sufficiency. By stabilizing a family’s housing situation and providing critical services that support movement towards self-sufficiency, Mary Ellen’s Hearth works to mitigate the effects of homelessness on the children and families we serve. The following program components provide essential support so families experiencing homelessness can make transformational changes:

**Transitional Shelter (Mary Ellen’s Hearth)**

In the time we have worked with families, we recognize that a 90-day stay in emergency shelter is rarely if ever enough time to heal from the traumas that impede positive life changes. In response to this significant need, Nellie Burge Community Center opened Mary Ellen’s Hearth to serve as a stabilizing transitional housing option. Families are housed for up to two years during which time they receive comprehensive support services and work towards identified goals for a successful transition to safe, affordable, decent housing.

**Support Services**

During their time in transitional housing, families receive comprehensive support services designed to help parents care for themselves and their families, begin intentionally improving their life skills and decision-making abilities, and develop the internal resources necessary to become self-sufficient. Services include Intensive Case Management, Life Skills Training, Children’s Services, and On-going Support Services for families who have moved into permanent housing.

**Mission Statement**

The mission of Mary Ellen’s Hearth is “offering hope, help and healing to homeless women and children through Christian love and values.” We offer hope by providing life skills training. We offer help through our transitional housing services. Finally, we offer healing by covering everything with Christian love and support. Our goal is for residents to leave the program fully prepared for independent living, with their dignity and self-respect restored.

**PROGRAM IMPACT**

Mary Ellen’s Hearth provided critical housing and support services to 39 families, comprised of 39 adults and 78 children (direct services) and of the 39 families served over half of the children were five years old or younger.
The following outcomes were achieved in 2017 by families residing in transitional housing:

- 28 families who moved to permanent housing received on-going case management support services to improve their chances of success during their continued journey towards self-sufficiency
- 28 Residents maintain employment for at least 10 months
- 288 life skills workshops were provided to the Residents
- 128 children received a series of life skills workshops designed to inspire creativity/ team work and improve basic living skills.
- Two Residents received high school diploma/GED
- 147 adults (indirect service) received indirect services
- 960 meals were provided to those in need through our partnerships with Truth and Reality Ministries
- 19,152 meals were provided to home-bound seniors through our partnership with MACOA

**Diamond’s story:**
Because of Diamond’s determination, in six months, she paid off over $5,500.00 in past debt. She earned an accredited high school diploma online. Her plans are to begin the employment process for the Montgomery Police Department. “Mary Ellen’s Hearth surrounded me with people who truly care about me” “It was the first time in my life that I was able to resist the urge to run away when things felt too difficult for me to handle,” said Diamond. “I started to realize that even when there are setbacks, if you keep moving up – even small moves – you are still moving and making things better.”

**Jakitra’s story:**
A mother of three, Jakitra had an apartment and full-time work, but as her hours were cut back, she couldn’t make ends meet and could no longer pay the rent. She came to Mary Ellen’s Hearth, anxious and hopeless. She had totally given up. Jakitra said that before long at Mary Ellen’s Hearth she began to feel a sense of calm and relief. With the encouragement and support from staff, she has maintained employment for one year, paid off over $3,256.00 in past debt and two of her three children are honor students. The family is doing well and has moved out of Mary Ellen’s Hearth into their own apartment through our money management program. “For the first time, I feel like a bright future is a real possibility for me and my children have.”

Mary Ellen’s Hearth 1226 Clay Street
Montgomery, AL 36104
Call 334-264-4108
Visit maryellenshearth.org

“She opens her hand to the poor and reaches out her hands to the needy” - Proverbs 31:20

Thank you for supporting Mary Ellen’s Hearth at Nellie Burge.
THE UNITED METHODIST INNER CITY MISSION
The United Methodist Inner City Mission serves the poorest community within the city of Mobile. During the past year, the Mission served a total of 250 students K-12 in its After School, Summer Tutorial, and Enrichment Programs. Through a partnership with ‘Feeding the Gulf Coast’, students were served hot meals during the school year. Breakfast and lunch were served during the summer for all children and youth in the community age eighteen and younger. These programs offer the students an opportunity to improve their academic skills, learn life skills and receive small group mentoring. During the summer, students go on field trips to the Exploreum, Dauphin Island Sea Lab, and Africa Town. They also enjoy swimming and other outdoor activities. Volunteers from local churches provide Bible School for those attending the summer programs. The ‘God in the Garden Program’ includes a large Community Garden that is staffed by volunteers from Mobile Master Gardeners and Urban Growers. Taylor Park Community Center, staffed and operated by the Mission, offers football, basketball, baseball and softball for children and youth in the community. Our coaches are volunteers and include many men and women who grew up through the Mission. This is their way of giving back to the Mission and to the community.

We continue to serve breakfast during the week for those who are homeless and those who receive very little income. Through our Oakdale Community Service Club, our Day Program for Senior Citizens provides various activities including: shopping trips, lunch and learn sessions, step dancing to keep them active, and daily devotionals. The participants also perform service work by visiting nursing homes and volunteering at Open Doors.

Glory-sightings this past year have been many. Three of our former students are now attending Alabama A&M. One of these students was originally referred to us when he was twelve years old by a judge in juvenile court. He is now on his way through college. The number of senior citizens participating in our Seniors Day Program continues to grow. We continue to be blessed by being able to share God’s unconditional love daily with those we serve.

This has been a very challenging year with cuts in funding. As we look toward the future with larger cuts in funding facing the Mission, we pray that you will continue to remember us with your prayers and your gifts. We will not be judged on how rich or powerful we are, but rather we will be judged on how well we serve the poor, the oppressed, and the least of these.

Rev. Tonny H. Algood, Director
United Methodist Inner City Mission
HINTON RURAL LIFE CENTER
Two Thousand Seventeen was a year of exciting growth for Hinton Rural Life Center, which increased staff, built a new facility and added key new services. Hinton Center is a mission agency of the Southeastern Jurisdiction of The United Methodist Church, located just outside the small town of Hayesville in Western North Carolina on the Northeast Georgia border. Hinton Center also serves as a Christian retreat and conference center where guests come to retreat, reflect and renew.

One of two important positions Hinton Center added in 2017 was a community engagement coordinator. This coordinator works with community leaders to address practical issues raised by our recent quality of life study of the area including; substance use, housing and children’s issues. Hinton Center hired a community volunteer coordinator to establish and oversee a Volunteer Center that serves a three-county area. The Volunteer Center, which launched in January 2018, manages volunteer opportunities for non-profits, schools, churches and other qualifying organizations.

An Easter sunrise service marked Hinton Center’s first official event in our new Outdoor Worship Center, which sits on the shore of beautiful Lake Chatuge. Construction of the Outdoor Worship Center, which can hold up to 100 guests, was completed in Fall 2017 and funded by a grant from The Duke Endowment.

Additionally, Hinton Center began offering Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) training in the fall. MHFA gives skills needed to reach out and provide initial help and support to someone who may be having a mental health crisis or developing a substance use problem.

While Hinton Center’s newest elements created exciting new opportunities for ministry, many of our well-established outreach programs enjoyed promising expansion of their own. Hinton Center volunteers contributed a total of 23,837 hours to our ministries in 2017.

Christmas Care of Clay County received a record outpouring of support from the community in 2017, as Hinton Center helped provide needed clothing for 406 area children. Likewise, demand for our firewood ministry increased from a year earlier, and our volunteers distributed 166 loads of wood to residents who still depend on this fuel to heat their homes in winter.

Finally, home repair remains a central element of our missions work. While this ministry is most active in the summer, we offer opportunities year-round. Our theme for 2018, “Cultivate Hope,” is based on Jesus’ parable of the sower from Luke 8:4-8. How can we, as followers of Christ, live into the hope found through a relationship with Jesus, as individuals and as faith communities? How can we extend that hope to others, not only by helping to
meet the needs of our neighbors, but also by valuing their strengths and gifts?

Inspired by Jesus Christ, Hinton Rural Life Center’s purpose is to engage individuals, congregations, and communities in transformation through retreat ministry and missional outreach. Whether you want a weekend sabbatical on Lake Chatuge, or to help build a wheelchair ramp in the community, Hinton Center offers something for everyone. Come see for yourself! Learn more at www.HintonCenter.org, or contact us at 828-389-8336.

Jacqueline Gottlieb & Dawn Livingston

LAKE JUNALUSKA ASSEMBLY, INC.
The leadership of Lake Junaluska Assembly, Inc. are happy to report that they once again ended the year “in the black”, wrapping up 2017 with a balance of over $60,000.00. We continue to accomplish this without any operational apportionment support from the Southeastern Jurisdiction. Lake Junaluska has embraced the new financial model that was approved by the 2008 SEJ Conference and remains committed to not only “living within their means” but also to ensure the long-term sustainability of their mission to be a place of Christian hospitality where lives are transformed through renewal of soul, mind, and body. Two Thousand Seventeen was also a wonderful year for charitable giving. The organization received $2,521,170 from 1557 individuals. We are so grateful to receive the support of new and returning donors each year, affirming the mission of Lake Junaluska through their charitable giving.

As we continue to refine and implement our plans for improvements to facilities, grounds, and programs, Lake Junaluska continues to solidify its commitment to one of its most important assets, our staff. Of the $60,000.00 “profit” from 2017, $38,000.00 was distributed in profit sharing to all current staff who worked in 2017. In addition, an across the board 1.5% pay increase was given to all current staff in 2018. The remainder, along with the generous support of our donors, is being used for a wide array of ongoing capital improvements. We look forward to reporting our progress to include a complete renovation of Lambuth Inn. Lake Junaluska is working diligently to refine and improve its existing programming for youth and adults. We continually seek to implement new innovative programs that align with their mission.

As a member of the United Methodist Church within the Southeastern Jurisdiction the leadership of Lake Junaluska wants you to know that “your” asset, Lake Junaluska, is doing very well. You can be very proud of this important organization within the jurisdiction and the larger United
Methodist Church. We are striving to be good stewards of the resources with which you have entrusted them.

To learn more about what is going on at Lake Junaluska, please pick up a copy of the 2018 Discover Lake Junaluska magazine. Peruse its pages to read about the impact of the programs, to learn about new projects we are working on, and to familiarize yourself with the calendar of events. We hope you will come and visit this year for a conference, a retreat, or a vacation to be transformed and renewed in soul, mind, and body.

Submitted by the Lake Junaluska Assembly Inc. Executive Team

AFRICA UNIVERSITY

Africa University is deeply thankful to the congregations of the Alabama-West Florida Conference for strengthening their support and investing in the Africa University Fund (AUF) apportionment at 91.34 percent in 2017. The university community is especially grateful to the conference for growing its support by more than three percent in 2017. Thank you, Alabama-West Florida United Methodists, for your continuing generosity and faithfulness to this ministry.

Africa University enjoyed a banner year in 2017, thanks to United Methodists in the Alabama-West Florida Conference and throughout the connection who organized celebration events to mark the university’s 25th anniversary. These efforts brought Africa University’s impact to the forefront and encouraged congregations to reaffirm their commitment to the institution’s mission of nurturing global leaders.

A record 35 annual conferences achieved or exceeded their 100 percent investment to the AUF. The strong support of the Alabama-West Florida Conference helped the Southeastern Jurisdiction to achieve an overall investment of 98.15 percent to the AUF.

Institutional Update:

- Africa University hosts a vibrant campus community of 1,417 full-time students as well as faculty and staff from 31 nations. Another 392 students are studying part-time. Amidst transition in the governance of Zimbabwe, teaching and learning activities at Africa University have continued uninterrupted.
- A leaner, more-streamlined academic structure, which includes the new Institute of Theology and Religious Studies, is encouraging innovation and enhancing Africa University’s relevance to The United Methodist Church and to sub-Saharan Africa.
- Africa University is making trailblazing, regional contributions in migrant and refugee protection, in child rights, and in Africa’s efforts
to eradicate malaria and other insect-borne diseases.

- More than 8,000 graduates are engaged in efforts to make disciples, minister to the poor, improve public health, and better the quality of life in communities across Africa. Among them is the Rev. Jean Ntahoturi (MTS-2005 and MBA-2006), elected legal representative of The United Methodist Church in Burundi in May 2017, and credited with leading a divided church to unity after more than a decade of contentious relations.

- By 2020, a business incubation hub that was launched at Africa University in 2017 is expected to deliver commercially-viable products and services that have been developed in partnership with African innovators and investors.

As Africa University embraces emerging opportunities for service within and beyond the church in Africa, the ongoing support of the Alabama-West Florida Conference is of vital importance. It is the university’s prayer that the members of the Alabama-West Florida Conference will continue to work diligently to grow their annual investment to the AUF to the level of 100 percent.

Please keep Africa University in your prayers. As you and your fellow congregants take stock of Alabama-West Florida Conference’s impact in ministry, remember the young people who are being equipped at Africa University. On June 9th, Africa University will add more than 600 new graduates to the ranks of its alumni. Your graciousness is their miracle and they give thanks to God for you.

Thank you, Alabama-West Florida Conference, for your foundational role in the Africa University story. Thank you for being a part of 25 incredible years of bringing this dream to life. You are building a global legacy as you invest and journey in ministry with Africa University. May God bless and keep you always in an abundance of grace and mercy.

James H. Salley
Associate Vice Chancellor for Institutional Advancement
Africa University Development Office
1001-19th Avenue South
P O Box 340007
Nashville, TN 37203-0007
Tel: (615) 340-7438
Fax: (615) 340-7290
jsalley@gbhem.org
www.support-africauniversity.org
Dear Colleagues in Ministry:

Greetings from Boston University School of Theology (BUSTH) as we travel together in this journey of discipleship!

BREAKING NEWS:

- **Students**: Our entering students were the most diverse in our history, creating remarkable opportunities for in-depth exchange and fruitful collaboration.

- **Faculty**: We welcomed three amazing faculty this year: Rebecca Copeland in Theology (focus on environmental theology); Theodore Hickman-Maynard in Black Church Studies; and Cornell William Brooks as Visiting Professor of Social Ethics, Law, and Justice Movements. Thanks to loyal alums, we also endowed the Harrell Beck Professorship in Hebrew Scripture and installed Kathe Darr as the first Beck Professor.

- **Congregations**: The Lilly Endowment awarded the Center for Practical Theology $1.5 million to create an innovation hub, which will foster creative vocational reflection in congregations, and a sharing of the congregations’ wisdom.

- **Doctor of Ministry**: The DMin in Transformational Leadership is soaring with lively student cohorts that are broadly ecumenical, culturally diverse, and global. The model includes intensives, online courses, and faculty mentoring.

- **Scholarships**: We continue our offer of free tuition to UMC registered candidates for ordained ministry, and we continue to build student scholarships and housing as a central campaign priority. New scholarships include the Dale Andrews Scholarship in Practical Theology and Race, Korean Student scholarship, and the Bishop John H. Adams and Dr. Dolly D. Adams Scholarship for candidates for ordained ministry in the AME, AMEZ, and CME churches.

- **Arts Initiatives**: Recent exhibits and events include “Symbols and Art of China, Korea, and Japan” and “Bridging Divided Communities through the Arts”

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

- **Congregational courses**: Courses in congregations with church leaders and students learning together.

- **Religion and Conflict Transformation Clinic**: Internships and workshops that foster justice and reconciliation.

- **Travel seminars**: Courses engaging local communities on Arizona-Mexican border, Israel and Palestine, India, spiritual life centers, and Serbia and Croatia (with focus on interreligious dialogue).
• **Ecumenical partnerships:** Continuing close work with UMC, AME and other Wesleyan denominations, while launching robust Communities of Learning with the Episcopal Church and United Church of Christ.

• **Partnership with Hebrew College:** Joint courses and public events, plus co-sponsoring The Journal of Interreligious Studies. The focus is on enriching theological education with interreligious learning and leadership opportunities.

**TAKING ACTION GLOBALLY AND LOCALLY:**

• **Campus action:** Work to improve accessibility and sustainability. BUSTH is the first certified Green School in BU, and is active in the Green Seminary Initiative. It has also been named as one of the “Seminaries that Change the World.”

• **Internships in global service and peacemaking:** Student-initiated internships for service with communities across the world, and for just peacemaking projects with international organizations.

**COMMITMENT TO JUSTICE:** Celebrating differences while joining in action.

- Faculty and students have led and participated in service for victims of hurricanes and fires, protests on behalf of Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, protests of white supremacist movements, protests and services on behalf of immigrants and DACA young people, and ecumenical and interreligious witnesses for justice in the city of Boston.

- The community (often student-led) has had deep conversations on issues that divide (including theological issues). We seek to foster respectful listening that builds community life and communal action.

**OTHER NOTABLE NEWS:**

- Celebration of the 40th anniversary of the Anna Howard Shaw Center

As BUSTH looks back on 2017, it celebrates transformational leaders who keep the word of Jesus Christ alive. Their living legacy and perceptive witness gives us hope and courage for the future.

Blessings and gratitude,

Mary Elizabeth Moore, Dean

**CANDLER SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY**

For more than 100 years, Candler School of Theology at Emory University has prepared real people to make a real difference in the real world. Since our founding in 1914, more than 10,000 students have graduated from Candler, where they have been shaped as thoughtful, principled, and courageous Christian leaders dedicated to transforming the world in the name of Jesus Christ.
One of thirteen official seminaries of The United Methodist Church, Candler has been included on a list of “Seminaries that Change the World” for five years running and was recently named a “Bright Spot in Theological Education” by Auburn Seminary.

Candler is also one of seven graduate professional schools of Emory University, a top-tier research institution offering extensive resources and a demonstrated commitment to service. Our location in Atlanta provides a hands-on learning environment rich with opportunity: The General Board of Global Ministries is headquartered here, as are numerous public health, international development, and social service organizations. Simply put, there is no better place to prepare for ministry that engages our major denominational priorities: developing leaders, starting and growing churches, ministry with the poor, and improving global health.

To keep pace with the needs of the church and the world, Candler offers sixteen degrees: six single degrees and ten dual degrees pairing theology with bioethics, business, international development, law, public health, or social work. One of our newest degrees is a Doctor of Ministry that is ninety percent online, so students can remain in their places of ministry as they study and immediately apply to their context what they learn in class. Our Teaching Parish program allows eligible United Methodist students to serve as pastors in local churches while they’re enrolled—they earn a salary as they earn course credit and pastoral experience, plus they are mentored by an experienced United Methodist elder.

Candler’s student body continues to reflect the diversity and breadth of the Christian faithful, with an enrollment of 455, reflecting 49 percent women, 35 percent people of color (U.S.), and a median age of thirty. Students represent 39 denominations, with half coming from the Methodist family. Eighty-two percent of students are seeking a degree to prepare them as ministry professionals.

Candler has a deep commitment to alleviating student debt and employs a multi-pronged approach to tackle this issue. In 2017-2018, we awarded $5.3 million in Candler scholarships, with 97 percent of MDiv students receiving aid and the average scholarship covering 75 percent of tuition. Plus, our comprehensive “Faith & Finance” program teaches money management skills that serve our students now and will continue to serve them—and the churches they lead—well into the future.

Half of Candler’s faculty are United Methodist and 58% come from traditions within the larger Methodist family. This year, we welcomed fellow United Methodist Helen Jin Kim to the faculty as Assistant Professor of American Religious History, and we sent best wishes along with our colleague Mary Lou Greenwood Boice as she retired after 25 years of remarkable service to Candler.
Candler draws considerable strength and inspiration from its relationship with The United Methodist Church. Our ability to fulfill our mission of educating faithful and creative leaders for the church’s ministries throughout the world depends upon your support, gifts, and prayers. Thank you for the countless ways you advance this vital ministry in the life of our denomination. Visit us in person in Atlanta or online at candler.emory.edu to see firsthand how Candler prepares real people to make a real difference in the real world.

—Jan Love
Mary Lee Hardin Willard Dean and Professor of Christianity and World Politics
Candler School of Theology

DUKE DIVINITY SCHOOL
Under the leadership of Elaine A. Heath, dean and professor of missional and pastoral theology, Duke Divinity School has continued to work on our strategic planning process. In the academic year 2017–2018, the strategic planning committee was assembled, composed of representatives from the faculty, staff, student body, and Duke Divinity’s Board of Visitors. The committee has sought extensive feedback from stakeholders including alumni, church leaders, and donors as well as our community of faculty, staff, and students. The committee is paying close attention to developments within theological education and the cultural changes affecting both church and academy. They hope to present a framework document in the spring of 2018 with a strategic plan submitted for approval in November 2018.

This year we launched several innovative programs to equip laypeople and to support students. The Neighborhood Seminary, a partnership with the Northern Piedmont District of the Western North Carolina Conference, is a two-year noncredit training program that began this year with a cohort of 18 people. The cohort participates in four team-taught courses per year led by faculty, staff, and graduate students from Duke Divinity School in partnership with local practitioners and ministries. The cohort also undertakes an intentional, contemplative model of spiritual practice combined with sequenced contextual learning experiences with local practitioners throughout the two-year program. Heidi Miller, Ph.D., directs the Neighborhood Seminary program.

We also launched a new academic support program to help incoming students learn how to think and write theologically. The Refresher and Intensive for Scholarly Enrichment (RISE) program began with a two-day pre-orientation workshop for new students this August. Over half of the incoming class—83 students—registered for this self-selecting program that includes lectures, panels, and workshops to help them navigate academic work and succeed
at seminary. Academic support continues throughout the year, with Divinity School professors and preceptors as well as academic support staff in contact with each other and struggling students to develop plans to help them.

This year we welcomed students from a range of backgrounds who are called to serve God and the church. In 2017, our total enrollment was 606 students: 369 are enrolled in the M.Div. degree program; 58 in the M.T.S.; 10 in the Th.M.; 46 in the Th.D.; 83 in the D.Min.; 23 in the M.A.C.P.; 4 in the M.A.C.S.; and 10 who are special students or auditors. Thirty-seven percent of our students are United Methodist, with an additional three percent from other Wesleyan traditions, and 46 percent of our M.Div. students are United Methodist. Eleven percent of all students are Baptist, eight percent are Anglican or Episcopalian, four percent are Roman Catholic, ten percent are Presbyterian or Reformed, with the rest from 21 other denominations or faith traditions.

Three new certificates were approved this year. The Certificate in Missional Innovation, which can be earned as part of a Master of Divinity degree, is intended for students interested or involved in innovative forms of ministry. They will receive training in contextual evangelism and church planting with the goal of converting, gathering, and discipling people who are often neglected or unreached by existing church structures. The Certificate in Theology and the Arts, which can be earned alongside the M.Div., M.T.S., or Th.M., aims to help students appreciate and articulate the mutual enrichment of theology and the arts. The Certificate in Theology and Health Care is a new fully accredited residential graduate program that provides robust theological and practical engagement with contemporary practices in medicine and health care. The certificate aims to equip Christian health care practitioners with foundational courses in Christian theology, Scripture, and the practical issues they encounter.

In 2017, the Duke Forward comprehensive campaign concluded, having raised critical endowment and expendable funds to support the people, programs, and activities of the university. Duke Divinity School raised $114.1 million, 143 percent more than the goal of $80 million. This support enables the Divinity School to provide scholarships and fellowships to students, build faculty excellence, and launch new programs and research efforts. We are grateful to God for the generous partnership of many alumni, other individuals, churches, and foundations. These gifts are helping to move Duke Divinity School forward into preparing men and women who will serve their neighbors and lead the church of the future.

Our faculty continue to provide exemplary service in the classroom, for the church, and to the wider culture. Just one example is Edgardo Colón-Emeric, assistant professor of Christian theology, continues the Duke Divinity tradition of Methodist engagement in ecumenical initiatives. As part of the
Joint International Commission for Dialogue between the World Methodist Council and the Roman Catholic Church, Colón-Emeric presented to Pope Francis the Spanish translation of the latest bilateral statement. Colón-Emeric has also been actively involved in Methodist churches and seminaries in Latin America, including an effort to train lay pastors in Guatemala that has involved Duke Divinity staff and doctoral students.

Several efforts and programs at Duke Divinity School this year have sought to further our commitment to supporting and learning from students and communities that have been too-often marginalized. Our Convocation & Pastors’ School featured professors, pastors, and activists who addressed ways that the church can dismantle bias and hate. The Center for Reconciliation had a full slate of programs, including a conversation series on navigating conflict that was open to the public; a pilgrimage to significant sites in Durham; and participation in reconciliation events in East Africa and Northeast Asia. Thanks to a grant from the General Board of Higher Education & Ministry’s Young Clergy Initiative, Duke Divinity School received a grant to help develop leadership for the Black church within the UMC through mentorships, funded field education placements with experienced Black pastors, and attendance at the Convocation for Pastors of Black Churches. Within our school, Dean Elaine Heath has met regularly with the leaders of the Black Seminarians Union and a team of faculty and staff to address concerns around implicit bias in grading, training in cross-cultural competency, additional scholarship support for students, and staffing needs to support an increasingly diverse student population.

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.

Respectfully submitted by the Office of Dean Elaine A. Heath

GAMMON THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
Gammon Theological Seminary, located in Atlanta, GA, is the United Methodist constituent member of the Interdenominational Theological Center (ITC), a consortium of historically African-American theological schools. Gammon/ITC is a co-educational, professional graduate school of theology. Its faculty personifies vigorous scholarship, rigorous academic discipline, and significant research in the service of the church and other communities in the world. Gammon/ITC is the world’s premier resource for black church scholarship and faith-based solutions to the spiritual and socio-economic challenges confronting the African American community and beyond.
Founded in 1883 by the Methodist Episcopal Church and with assistance from the Freedman’s Aid Society, today Gammon Theological Seminary is one of the thirteen theological schools of the United Methodist Church. The faculty and administration of Gammon/ITC create an environment in which critical thinking, investigative reflection, decision making, and responsible action are fostered. Gammon/ITC is a member of the Atlanta University Center Complex, the world’s largest enterprise of African American higher education. It is also a member of The University Center of Georgia and the Atlanta Theological Association. The school is fully accredited by the Association of Theological Schools and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

Gammon/ITC offers the following degree programs: the Master of Divinity, the Master of Arts in Christian Education, and the Doctor of Ministry. Admission is open to qualified men and women of the United Methodist Church.

The support of this Annual Conference helps Gammon/ITC students carry on a proud tradition. They are taught to think independently and communicate effectively. They are also challenged to become involved in finding solutions to problems that affect the human condition, and to become active in the community beyond this campus. Additionally, graduates of this institution are encouraged to maintain a lifelong desire for intellectual growth, spiritual development, and the acquisition of skills for the practice of ministry. Gammon/ITC has had a very exciting and busy year living out its mission, which is to recruit, support and educate pastors and leaders for the United Methodist Church. Gammon Theological Seminary is extremely grateful to this Annual Conference for your support of theological education, and for your commitment to ensuring that God’s church will be served by persons who are called and trained to lead us forward.

Grace and Peace,
Ken J. Walden, Ph.D.
President-Dean

GARRETT-EVANGELICAL THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
In 2017-2018, Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary focused on the following priorities:

- **Responsive and Relevant Theological Education:** Respond to the educational and professional development needs of prospective students, alums, clergy, and laity by providing relevant theological education in a variety of formats and investing in our competent and diverse faculty.
- **Inclusivity in Our Relationships:** Ensure we are equitable, just, and inclusive in our relationships with the variety of diversity we encounter (e.g., racial, cultural, sexual orientation) within both our seminary and
local communities.

- **Ensuring a Vibrant Future**: Establish a vibrant future by investing in employees, instituting new policies and procedures, caring for the earth, and generating gifts to sustain the seminary for generations to come.

**RESPONSIVE AND RELEVANT THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION**

**Scholarships Available for Fall 2018**

Continuing the seminary’s commitment to reducing student debt and addressing the financial needs of students seeking a theological education, Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary has an additional 25 full-tuition scholarships available for individuals applying for admission as a full-time student in Fall 2018. For more information, please visit www.garrett.edu/news.

**Two New Master of Arts Degrees**

**Master of Arts in Public Ministry**

In Fall 2018, Garrett-Evangelical will accept students into the newly formed Master of Arts in Public Ministry program. Students in this program aspire to fulfill their Christian vocations to love God and serve neighbor through public ministries of advocacy, organizing, and justice-making in collaboration with other communities of faith and conscience. In particular, this program equips laity serving in community, social, or justice-oriented organizations who seek to enhance their public work by engaging with theological education and formation. Concentrations tracks are available in Ecological Regeneration, Racial Justice, or Child Advocacy.

**Master of Arts in Spiritual Formation and Direction**

Through rigorous academics paired with profound spiritual formation, the Master of Arts in Spiritual Formation and Direction is designed to provide you with advanced training in the spiritual and devotional practices that lead to both personal and communal growth. Graduates of this program aspire to fulfill their Christian vocation to love and serve God and neighbor through the task of spiritual direction and companionship. Most of the courses in the Spiritual Direction concentration include a spiritual direction module, which – when successfully completed – leads to a certificate in spiritual direction. Those skills may be used in a direction setting, but they may also inform and enhance your approach to leadership, preaching, teaching, and pastoral counseling.

**Connectional Learning**

Connectional Learning is the name for Garrett-Evangelical’s new take on continuing education. We seek to create education and training suited to your unique professional, vocational, and spiritual needs. Our new suite of offerings enables you to choose the programming that fits best for your physical location, ability to travel, learning preferences, time, and budget. We saw tremendous growth in this area with an increase in the number and
type of programs we offered online, on campus, and regionally. We are actively preparing our Fall 2018 offerings to announce them at our Annual Conference visits.

Upcoming programs that may be of interest to you are a community organizing workshop held in Chicago on June 18-22, 2018. In Fall 2018, we will launch our online “Financial Management for Churches and Nonprofits” course for clergy to attend with a lay leader. Registration opens in late spring/early summer. This course was designed as part of our Lilly Endowment grant, “Leading Vibrant Congregations: A Collaboration of Faith and Finance.” To learn more about our offerings and stay up to date on future programs, please visit: www.garrett.edu/connectional-learning.

**Faculty Scholarship**

Our faculty has been busy. In 2017, faculty members wrote twelve books and numerous chapters in books, articles, and blog posts. Here are four faculty publications that may be of interest to you:


**INCLUSIVITY IN OUR RELATIONSHIPS**

Since the launch of our strategic plan in 2015, we have been working to pay greater attention to race, diversity, and inclusivity in our community. This work began with a Racial Equity and Diversity Inclusion Audit. We have been working through the results of the audit to inform changes we need to make in our community. One of our major initiatives this year is to create a community statement that names, celebrates, and affirms the variety of persons we encounter as well as challenges the seminary with specific goals to fulfill its commitment to grow and serve all persons equally and justly. We plan to have this statement vetted by our faculty, staff, students, and trustees this spring and will publish it on our website following the Board of Trustees approval in May. As we develop this statement, we are continuing to offer training opportunities and encourage lectures and discussions on race, diversity, and inclusion.

**ENSURING A VIBRANT FUTURE**

*Hope for Creation and Green Seminary Certification Program*

Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary is committed to addressing
the urgent environmental crises facing the world’s peoples today and to
promoting the just and wise care of God’s creation for the flourishing of all.
This commitment is rooted in an affirmation of God’s love for the world, an
embrace of our human vocation to be faithful stewards of the good earth,
and an active hope in God’s promise to establish justice and righteousness
throughout the land.

We are in the midst of integrating sustainable practices and ecological
awareness as a participant in the Green Seminary Initiative (GSI) for the
Seminary Environmental Certification Program. A three-year program, this
certification will assist Garrett-Evangelical as it integrates care for creation
into areas of education and spiritual formation; liturgy, ritual, and worship;
building and grounds management; community life; and public leadership.

Thank you for your continued interest in our work. We are grateful to serve
The United Methodist Church and the church at large. For more information
about Garrett-Evangelical, I encourage you to visit our website, www.garrett.
edu, or visit us on campus.

Cordially,
Lallene J. Rector, President

UNITED THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
United Theological Seminary in Dayton, Ohio, celebrated a 77% increase
in new students for the fall of 2017. While 71 new students enrolled in
September 2016, 126 new students enrolled in September 2017. This was
made possible by increasing student aid opportunities and empowering
faculty members, trustees and administrators to personally recommend
candidates for a $5,000 grant toward tuition. United experienced God’s
provision, trusting what God said through St. Paul: “[God] is able to
accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine” (Ephesians
3:20).

Many of the seminary’s new students are current pastors who want to
become more effective leaders for the Church through a Doctor of Ministry
degree. United’s Doctor of Ministry program has 170 students enrolled this
year from 29 states, two non-US countries and 27 Christian denominations.
The average number of doctoral students in all Association of Theological
Schools (ATS) is 60 students, making United one of the largest Doctor of
Ministry programs among ATS member schools.

The Doctor of Ministry program provides academic rigor, peer group
support, spiritual growth and practical application. Pastors identify a need
within their community and, with the support of a peer group, mentor and
United faculty, develop a model of ministry that will resolve the challenge in
their congregations or communities.
Rev. Rudy Rasmus, pastor of the 9,000-member St. John’s United Methodist Church in downtown Houston is a current doctoral student, who says he has been both challenged and supported in the DMin program. “The program is rigorous,” Rev. Rasmus says. “It is contextual, it is intentional and the professors and staff are at the top of the form.”

United also has 212 students enrolled in the Master of Divinity degree program who usually seek to serve as pastors in local congregations. Eighty-eight percent of entering students are ordained or seeking ordination to serve a local congregation compared to 56% in other ATS member schools. United also provides a two-year Master of Arts in Christian Ministries degree, which many persons serving as Directors of Christian Education or other local church positions pursue.

United provides flexible course options: 90% of students take at least one course online, and courses are also available as traditional on-campus courses, week-long on-campus intensive classes and virtual courses that meet simultaneously on campus and in the cloud via webcast.

If you are interested in pursuing further seminary education, contact United’s Office of Admissions at admissions@united.edu or call 800-322-5817.

Grace and Peace,

Dr. Kent Millard, President
United Theological Seminary
Dayton, Ohio

**WESLEY THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY**

Wesley Theological Seminary, located in Washington, D.C., continues to equip the next generation of Christian leadership for the church and the world. As a United Methodist seminary, we form students to lead innovative ministries while remaining grounded in our biblical and theological traditions.

Whether you are clergy or laity, an alumnus or a prospective student, looking for master’s or doctoral work or continuing education or simply deeper biblical knowledge, Wesley wants to support you in your current and future call to ministry. Here are a few ways Wesley can help you grow in faith, wisdom, and ability.

*Expand your leadership skills*

Wesley’s internationally respected Lewis Center for Church Leadership is a key resource for cutting-edge church research and disciple-growing strategies for the local church. Under the directorship of the Rev. Dr. F.
Douglas Powe, Jr., the Lewis Center’s Leading Ideas e-newsletter, reaching almost 20,000 people in ministry each week, and has launched its new podcast – Leading Ideas Talk. Sign up or listen at www.churchleadership.com/

The Institute for Community Engagement at Wesley continues its innovative online Health Minister Certificate Program from Heal the Sick to prepare congregations for public health work in their parishes. Some scholarships are available for this program. Contact Tom Pruski at tpruski@wesleyseminary.edu for more information or to register for future certificate classes.

Wesley also offers opportunities for individual study without pursuing a degree. The Certificate in Faith and Public Life explores the foundations of public theology, religious freedom, and civil discourse through graduate courses. For more information, visit www.wesleyseminary.edu/fpli.

A Certificate in Wesleyan Studies is available online via the Wesley Theological Seminary Lay Academy. Topics include United Methodist identity, early church history, Christian ethics, interfaith relations, and the intersection of faith and science. The courses can also be taken for personal education and enrichment. More information can be found at www.beadisciple.com/wesley/.

Take your ministry to the next level
Wesley continues to be a leader in Doctor of Ministry programs, offering practical and spiritually renewing tracks in theological education. Wesley announces an exciting new 2019 Doctor of Ministry track, in partnership with Wesley House in Cambridge, UK: “Winds of the Spirit and Ministries for a Changing World.” Other 2019 tracks will include Church Excellence, Spirituality and Story, a 13th Global Asian Church track and Public Engagement: Healing Communal Brokenness and Despair. Find out more or apply at www.wesleyseminary.edu/doctorofministry/.

Discover exciting pathways to seminary studies
Wesley understands the struggle of responsibly accepting your call while being concerned about balancing life, family, ministry and student debt. We are here to help make responding to that call possible. Through our partnership with Shenandoah University and our new 3+3 Fast Track B.A./M. Div. program, students enter ministry with less debt after earning their degree in 6 years. Learn more at www.wesleyseminary.edu/3+3degrees.

Wesley’s Master of Divinity degree can now be completed via online, weekend, short-term intensive, and weeknight courses in 5 years. This format is designed to be more accessible to those with busy ministry,
work, and/or family commitments throughout the region. Check out upcoming flexible course offerings for summer and fall 2018 at http://www.wesleyseminary.edu/admissions/try-a-class-3/

The new African American Church Studies Master of Divinity specialization gives contextual preparation for the unique opportunities and challenges our future leaders may encounter in African American churches, while the Public Theology specialization allows master’s degree students to gain skills for community leadership and advocacy. Wesley continues to offer our 36-hour Master of Arts and a 60-hour Master of Theological Studies to equip those called to ordained deacon ministries or to other ministries beyond the pulpit.

Contact us at (202) 885-8659 or admissions@wesleyseminary.edu about how Wesley’s degree programs can equip you for your next step in ministry.

Enrich your congregational outreach and explore new dimensions of ministry
Through the Wesley Innovation Hub, Wesley is working with 20 local congregations to design innovative ministries to enrich the religious lives of young adults. Follow the work and connect with resources at www.wesleyseminary.edu/wesley-innovation-hub/. The Wesley Innovation Hub is made possible by a generous grant from the Lilly Endowment.

In a time of polarization, the Center for Public Theology, under the leadership of Distinguished Professor of Public Theology Mike McCurry, continues to equip pastors, seminarians, people of faith, and the media to create spaces for civil dialogue at the intersection of religion and politics. The Center also provides events, such as the Wesleyan Political Theology Project, to help faith leaders lead prophetic, open dialogue in their communities. For more information, visit http://www.wesleyseminary.edu/ice/programs/public-theology/.

The Luce Center for Arts and Religion remains the only seminary-based program uniting arts and theology. The Luce Center offers regular classes and workshops with visiting artists. For information on past and upcoming opportunities visit www.luceartsandreligion.org.

Stay connected
Ready to join in our mission? Wesley provides more than $2 million dollars annually in scholarships to our students thanks to the consistent support of graduates, congregations and friends of the seminary. Find out more about how you can be part of the future of Wesley at www.wesleyseminary.edu/support/.

We invite you to stay in touch through the year and learn more of the latest
developments at Wesley by signing up for our monthly electronic newsletter, eCalling, at www.wesleyseminary.edu/ecalling.

We look forward to continuing to serve you and your community as we seek to live into God’s dream together. Blessings to you for a fruitful and faithful Annual Conference.

--The Rev. Dr. David McAllister-Wilson, President
CONFERENCE OFFICERS

Resident Bishop: David Graves  334.356.8014
4719 Woodmere Boulevard, Montgomery, AL  36106
bishop@awfumc.org

Conference Secretary: David R. Saliba  850.492.2135
13660 Innerarity Point Road, Pensacola, FL  32507-8833
david@perdidobay.church

Journal Editor: Jackie Slaughter  334.263.0950
P. O. Box 250224, Montgomery, AL  36125
theladyvicar@gmail.com

Conference Registrar: Allison Posell  334.239.8327
Allison.posell@gmail.com

Conference Lay Leader: Beverly Maddox  251.931.3052
34171 Nims Fork Rd, Robertsdale, AL  36557-9325
beverlymaddox@yahoo.com

Interim Treasurer: Mickey Wilson  334.356.8014
4719 Woodmere Blvd, Montgomery, AL 36106
mickey@awfumc.org

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Director of Ministerial Services and Assistant to Resident Bishop

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DISTRICT CONTACT INFORMATION

Baypines:  Darren McClellan, DS, P.O. Box 1711, Bay Minette, AL 36507-1711
           251.580.2021 • Fax: 877.580.8141
           Email: bpdist@bellsouth.net
           Administrative Assistant: Stephanie Diehl

Demopolis: Allen Newton, DS, P.O. Box 1279, Demopolis, AL 36732-1279
           334.289.0519 • Fax: 334.289.3828
           Email: umcdoff@bellsouth.net
           Administrative Assistant: Patty Kirkpatrick

Dothan:  Sara Shaver, DS, 172 Belmont Dr., Dothan, AL 36305
           334.792.4259 • Fax: 334.671.4114
           Email: umcdothan@gmail.com
           Administrative Assistant: Brittany Freeman

Marianna/Panama City:
           Doug Pennington, DS, 121 West 23rd St., Panama City, FL 32405
           850.215.1131 • Fax: 850.215.1151
           Email: office@mariannapcdistrict.org
           Administrative Assistant: Shelly Slate

Mobile:  Debora Bishop, DS, 6333 Picadilly Sq. Dr., Mobile, AL 36609-5103
           251.345.3313 • Fax: 251.345.3315
           Email: admin@mobileumc.com
           Administrative Assistant: Kim Doss

Montgomery-Opelika:
           Jeff Wilson, DS, 4719 Woodmere Blvd, Montgomery, AL 36106
           334.239.7329 • Fax: 334.239.7364
           Email: mtopds@mpdumc.org
           Administrative Assistant: Ashley Epler

Montgomery-Prattville:
           John Brooks, DS, 4719 Woodmere Blvd, Montgomery, AL 36106
           334.239.7329 • Fax: 334.239.7364
           Email: mtptds@mpdumc.org
           Administrative Assistant: Ashley Epler

Pensacola: Timothy Trent, DS, P.O. Box 2727, Pensacola, FL 32513-2727
           850.434.0118 • Fax: 850.434.0119
           Email: admin@umcpensacoladistrict.org
           Administrative Assistant: Mary Hernandez
CONFERECE CENTER
4719 Woodmere Boulevard, Montgomery, AL 36106
334.356.8014 • toll free 1.888.873.3127
afwrcrc@awfumc.org • www.awfumc.org

EPISCOPAL OFFICE
David Graves, Resident Bishop

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OFFICE OF MINISTERIAL SERVICES
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FISCAL, PENSION, BENEFITS OFFICE
Mickey Wilson, Interim Treasurer

Wendy DeVos, Controller

Belinda Carnie, Benefits Coordinator

Sharon Beasley, Accounting Clerk

FAX: 334.277.0109
bishop@awfumc.org

FAX: 334.277.0109
june@awfumc.org

FAX: 334.356.8029
marycatherine@awfumc.org

FAX: 334.356.8029
nancy@awfumc.org

FAX: 334.356.8029
sarah@awfumc.org

FAX: 334.356.8029
susan@awfumc.org

FAX: 334.356.8029
celeste@awfumc.org

FAX: 334.356.8029
martha@awfumc.org

fred.blackwell01@gmail.com

FAX: 334.274.1052
mickey@awfumc.org

FAX: 334.274.1052
wendy@awfumc.org

FAX: 334.274.1052
belinda@awfumc.org

FAX: 334.274.1052
sharon@awfumc.org
OFFICE OF CONGREGATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
2600 W. Strong Street, Pensacola, FL 32505
850.291.1244 • FAX: 850.433.9961

Sandy Gutting, Office Administrator sgutting@mchsi.com

DISASTER RESPONSE AND RECOVERY MINISTRY
11560 Champion Road, Fairhope, AL 36532
251.270.2932

Rob Haynes, Conference Coordinator disasterresponse@awfumc.org

METHODIST ARCHIVES CENTER
1500 E Fairview Avenue, Montgomery, AL 36016
334.833.4413 • FAX: 334.263.4465

Sharon Tucker, Archivist stucker@hawks.huntingdon.edu
Blake Denton, Research Assistant bdenton@hawks.huntingdon.edu

FREQUENT CONTACTS
Alabama Rural Ministry (ARM) http://www.arm-al.org
Birmingham-Southern College http://www.bsc.edu
Blue Lake United Methodist Assembly http://www.bluelakecamp.com
Credit Union http://www.unitedmethodistcu.com/main.php
Dumas Wesley http://www.dumaswesley.org
Huntingdon College http://www.huntingdon.edu
Inner City Mission http://mobileinnercitymission.blogspot.com
Lay Servant Ministries http://www.awfumc.org/layservantministries
Mary Ellen’s Hearth at Nellie Burge Community Center http://www.nellieburge.org
Methodist Homes Corporation http://methodisthomes.org
Milk and Honey http://www.milkandhoneyoutreach.org
Pensacola UM Community Ministries http://pumcm.org
The Ark http://www.thearkpcb.org
UMM http://www.awfumc.org/unitedmethodistmenumm
UMW http://www.awfumc.org/unitedmethodistwomenumw
United Methodist Children’s Home http://www.umch.net
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## 2018 Annual Conference Tellers

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