

**SECTION VII
REPORTS OF COUNCILS, BOARDS, COMMISSIONS, COMMITTEES,
AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS**

THE COUNCIL ON FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

Recommendations to the 2015 Annual Conference

Each and every disciple of Christ is called to be stewards of the mysteries of God. On behalf of the Council on Finance and Administration, I want to thank all United Methodists in South Carolina for their generosity of many gifts in 2014. We again achieved a nearly 90% payment average of apportionments. While, the Council would have wanted a higher rate, all congregations are to be commended for their continued and sacrificial support of their extended ministry through the South Carolina Annual Conference.

The following pages outline the complete ministry funding plan for our South Carolina Annual Conference in the Calendar/Conference Year 2016. The Council has sought to prepare this document with deep prayer and most faithful reflection. The overall budget again meets our continuing target of at or around 15% of total Conference average net funds. CF&A seeks to review budgeting goals over a longer time period. The assistance of all agencies, boards and commissions in this effort is critical.

Again, CF&A will staff an information table on the concourse level. This table will provide resources on stewardship, financial administration, and the Annual Conference budget. Please stop by during our time of conferencing this year in Florence. We are also very excited about our upcoming second Stewardship Summit next spring (2016) in the upstate of South Carolina. Dr. Kennon Callahan will be our keynote speaker.

CF&A is most grateful for the calm, effective and efficient ministry of our Conference Treasurer/Director of Administrative Services, Anthony "Tony" Prestipino and his helpful staff in the use of the resources of our Annual Conference. Tony has served our Annual Conference well and faithfully for five years. His insight and skill will be greatly missed as he moves to the Florida Annual Conference.

We welcome at this Annual Conference session a new servant of the church, Mrs. Elizabeth (Beth) Westbury who will be nominated as our new Annual Conference Treasurer and Director of Administrative Services. She comes "across the street" so to say from significant positions at our sister institution, Columbia College. We welcome her perspective, expertise and contributions to our common life and to the administrative ministry of United Methodists in South Carolina. I am also constantly grateful for the devoted work of every lay and clergy member of the Council on Finance and Administration. They attend, interact, debate and support the work of the Council in a most faithful and dependable manner.

May God continue to bless and guide all the ministries of our beloved SC Annual Conference!
The Reverend David C. Surrent, President, Council on Finance and Admin.

Report No. 1

- A. The compensation for the District Superintendents for the year 2016 will be set at 98,000. (DS compensation for 2014 was \$94,217 and for 2015 is 96,101)
- B. The Council on Finance and Administration of the South Carolina Annual Conference, The United Methodist Church, hereby initially designates 15% (\$14,700) of the district superintendent's salary for the year 2016 as allocated for parsonage utilities and maintenance, not including maid service and such expenses as paid by the district.
- C. The District Administration Fund will be handled as follows:
 - 1) The item "Office Expense" in the District Administration Fund will be for the operation of the District Office to pay such items as secretary, postage, and supplies and will be set at \$21,000 per district.
 - 2) Exceptions: Inasmuch as the Columbia District Office must be in The United Methodist Center, one-half of that office rent will be paid from the Conference Expense Fund. Inasmuch as the Columbia District superintendent is designated as the Cabinet secretary, one-half of the salary and benefits of the secretary in that office will be paid from the Conference Expense Fund.
 - 3) Travel (in and out-of-district) is set at \$150,000 for the total of all districts, plus \$6,000 for the common lodging and meal expenses of retreats. This will be set at \$13,500 per district or an allocated amount set by the Cabinet not to exceed a total

of \$170,000. In addition, insurance & pensions is expected to be approximately \$293,000 (\$24,416 per district), and continuing education will be set at the amount recommended by the Commission of Equitable Compensation (currently at \$750 per superintendent).

- 4) Vouchers for continuing education must be approved prior to payment. The unused portion of the Continuing Education allowance may be carried forward from year to year during a district superintendent's tenure, not to exceed a total amounting to three year's Continuing Education allocation. Not more than fifty percent of accumulated funds shall be used for travel expenses. The accumulation is cancelled in full when a district superintendent leaves the superintendency. It does not carry forward to the new district superintendent. However, by application to the CF&A in advance of leaving the superintendency, the district superintendent may within a reasonable length of time use the unused portion of the Continuing Education allowance to take training that would assist in his/her return to the parish ministry or other appointment. For the year in which there is a move, one-half of the Continuing Education allowance will be available for each superintendent.
- 6) The funds for program in each district are based on the membership of the district, beginning with a base of \$2,800 for the smallest membership district and adding \$100 for each one thousand (1,000) members, or major fraction thereof, above 18,000. These funds are not guaranteed and are contingent upon the apportionment receipts and other requirement of the district administration fund. The schedule for 2016 will be as follows:

District	2014 Membership	Amount
Anderson	13,993	\$ 2,800
Charleston	24,496	\$ 3,400
Columbia	34,040	\$ 4,400
Florence	17,565	\$ 2,800
Greenville	21,323	\$ 3,100
Greenwood	15,900	\$ 2,800
Hartsville	18,078	\$ 2,800
Marion	22,282	\$ 3,200
Orangeburg	18,095	\$ 2,800
Rock Hill	16,621	\$ 2,800
Spartanburg	15,454	\$ 2,800
Walterboro	13,890	\$ 2,800
Totals	231,737	\$36,500

- D. Each District Board of Trustees shall administer all funds for the District Parsonage Fund, which provides funds for parsonage payments, repairs, insurance and furnishings (not to include parsonage utility payments). The moving expenses of an in-coming district superintendent may also be paid from the District Parsonage Fund, not to include more than \$350 packing expenses. Each district office shall provide its trustees with regular reports of all receipts and expenditures of the District Parsonage Fund.
- E. Below are the percentages of average net funds that each church is asked to pay to its respective District Parsonage/Office Fund:

District	Parsonage	Office	Total	Avg. Net Funds
Anderson	\$ 15,000	\$ 37,000	\$ 52,000	.007001
Charleston	23,000	40,000	63,000	.005780
Columbia	25,000	45,000	70,000	.004090
Florence	25,000	45,000	70,000	.009316
Greenville	30,000	30,000	60,000	.005261
Greenwood	45,000	35,000	80,000	.010450
Hartsville	17,000	32,000	49,000	.006224
Marion	50,000	25,000	75,000	.007068
Orangeburg	25,000	40,000	65,000	.009485
Rock Hill	10,000	27,000	37,000	.004900
Spartanburg	22,000	25,000	47,000	.006185
Walterboro	25,000	40,000	65,000	.013586
Total	\$ 312,000	\$ 421,000	\$ 733,000	

Report No. 2

- A. We recommend that the following special observances be a part of the program of each local church and that appropriate free-will offerings be received.
- Human Relations Day – January 17, 2016
 - Golden Cross Sunday – February 1, 2016
 - One Great Hour of Sharing – March 6, 2016
 - Native American Awareness Sunday – April 10, 2016
 - Peace with Justice Sunday – May 22, 2016
 - Epworth Children's Home
 - Mothers' Day – May 8, 2016
 - Work Day – September 11, 2016
 - Church school offering first Sunday each month
 - Aldersgate Special Needs Sunday – August 14, 2016
 - Youth Service Fund Sunday – September 18, 2016 (youth offering)
 - World Communion Sunday – October 2, 2016
 - Conference Advance Specials Sunday – November 6, 2016
 - United Methodist Student Day – November 27, 2016
- B. We offer the following:
- 1) That all boards, commissions and committees receiving funds from the conference treasurer shall submit with each voucher adequate supporting data (receipts, bills, contemporaneous travel log, etc.). Payments in excess of \$1,000 should be approved by the Conference Treasurer in advance.
 - 2) That boards, agencies and conference institutions which are allowed to withdraw lump sums from the conference treasurer shall submit an annual audit (with management letter) by a certified public accountant to the Council on Finance and Administration, along with evidence of fidelity insurance coverage and compliance with payroll tax laws.
 - 3) That all boards, commissions and agencies of the conference reimburse persons at a rate of 24 cents per mile when traveling on conference business. In order to encourage carpooling, we recommend that if a car contains two persons traveling on church business, the mileage rate be increased to 32 cents; if a car contains three or more persons all traveling on church business, the rate be increased to 40 cents per mile. Pastors who are members of such agencies should submit reimbursement requests to their appointed church or charge for the difference between their conference reimbursement and the approved IRS mileage rate, since participation in the ministries of the district and conference is an expected responsibility of all appointed pastors. Conference employees will be reimbursed at the approved IRS mileage rate when traveling on church business. We recommend that other expenses for travel on church business be paid. We also recommend that the guideline amount paid to a person for meals shall be \$7.00 for breakfast, \$13.00 for lunch and \$20.00 for the evening meal.
 - 4) That conference boards and agencies may not spend in excess of funds received on budget for the given conference year, except that funds carried forward may be spent in addition to funds received in the current year if such carryover funds were included in the budget presented to CFA. Any expenses beyond the combination of anticipated receipts (based on previous-year percentage of payment) plus budgeted carryover funds will not be paid by the treasurer.
 - 5) That "average net funds" as used in the calculation of 2016 apportionments shall mean for each church the two-year average of net funds in the years 2014 and 2013. Newly organized churches will be phased in over four years, but for the years prior to the organization of the new church, the net funds figure will be zero. Churches that provide a housing allowance in lieu of a parsonage may exclude the lesser of the actual housing allowance or 25% of the minister's compensation.
 - 6) That "net funds" be defined as the total of figures reported on lines 48 through 57 (inclusive) of Table 2.
 - 7) That once the apportionments are calculated from Table 2 statistics for any given year, those apportionments cannot be altered. Needed corrections can be made on Table 2 reports for use in future year calculations.
 - 8) That the funds received on the apportionment for Methodist Homes Residents' Assistance (item 12, Report No. 1) be divided 50% to Methodist Oaks (Orangeburg), 35% to Wesley Commons (Greenwood), 15% to Methodist Manor

of the Pee Dee (Florence); that the funds received on the apportionment for Senior College Scholarship Fund (item 9, Report No. 1) be divided in three equal parts, one-third each going to Wofford College, Columbia College and Claflin College; that the funds received on the apportionment for Camps and Retreat Ministries (item 7, Report No. 1) be distributed to the various Camps and Retreat Ministries as determined by the Board of Trustees of the South Carolina United Methodist Camps and Retreat Ministries.

- 9) That the Annual Conference Council on Finance and Administration be authorized to grant amounts from the Conference Contingency Fund or Permanent Reserve to meet any individual emergency or unanticipated need.
- 10) That the salaries and fixed essential expenses of Conference Connectional Ministries (section A-4 of the Conference Benevolences budget) be funded up to 100% of budget by using funds from the Contingency Fund; the remainder of that budget will be funded at the percentage paid on the line item.
- 11) That the salaries and benefits portion of the Campus Ministry budget be funded up to 100% of budget by using funds from the Contingency Fund; the remainder of that budget will be funded at the percentage paid on the line item.
- 12) That the budgets of the District Superintendent Salaries, Director of Administrative Services, the Conference Archivist Contract and the Coordinator of Clergy Services be funded up to 100% of budget by using funds from the Contingency Fund.
- 13) The Council on Finance and Administration of the South Carolina Annual Conference, The United Methodist Church, hereby designates 15% of the salary for each conference clergy staff for the year 2016, exclusive of a designated housing allowance as allocated for utilities and maintenance, not including maid service.
- 14) That local churches of the conference incorporate. An informational pamphlet prepared by the Conference Chancellor and the Cabinet is available at www.umcsc.org. After incorporation, churches should take care to maintain with the Secretary of State, an accurate, up-to-date record of the name and address of their registered agent.

Report No. 3

The recommended apportioned budgets for the Senior College Scholarship Fund, Spartanburg Methodist College, and Methodist Homes Residents' Assistance Fund have been reduced. These causes are significant ministries. Therefore, we ask those churches with sufficient resources to continue in 2016 to contribute what was apportioned for these funds in 2009. This combined request will be calculated for churches based on the apportionment formula and included on the bottom of the apportionment statement as a voluntary asking.

Report No. 4

The Council on Finance and Administration nominates Elizabeth G Westbury as Conference Treasurer/Director of Administrative Services and Conference Statistician for the remainder of the 2012–2016 quadrennium.

Report No. 5

In accordance with the Disciplinary requirement to publish the conference investment policy at least once a quadrennium, CF&A's investment policy is to invest Conference Funds in accordance with the 2012 *Discipline* paragraph 613.5 and under the additional guidelines:

- A) Forms of investment authorized:
 - 1) short-term United States treasury bills or bonds and bonds of U.S. government agencies,
 - 2) savings or money market accounts that are Federally Insured, certificates of deposit in any Federally Insured savings and loan association, commercial bank, credit union
 - 3) term notes or demand deposits of The United Methodist Development Fund.
 - 4) funds managed by the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits
 - 5) endowments with The South Carolina United Methodist Foundation, Inc., or The United Methodist Church Foundation
- B) Limitations:
 - 1) no stocks (common or preferred stocks) or real estate may be purchased unless the funds are under the management of the General Board of Pension

- and Health Benefits, The South Carolina United Methodist Foundation, Inc., or The United Methodist Church Foundation
- 2) no corporate or municipal bonds may be purchased unless the funds are under the management of the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits, The South Carolina United Methodist Foundation, Inc. or The United Methodist Church Foundation
 - 3) no loans may be made except where authorized by action of the Annual Conference, or as part of an investment of the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits
 - 4) no investments may be made with maturities longer than 36 months, with the exception of term notes with The United Methodist Development Fund
 - 5) no investment may exceed the then-current limit on FDIC or FSLIC insurance without approval of CF&A, with the exceptions of: the primary checking account(s); collateralized certificates; or funds on deposit with The United Methodist Development Fund, The General Board of Pension and Health Benefits, The South Carolina United Methodist Foundation, Inc., or The United Methodist Church Foundation
- C) Income on invested funds will be credited to the Permanent Reserve Fund of the Conference unless the funds are for the Annual Conference Trustees, Equitable Compensation, pension or health benefits, or are invested under a trust or as an endowment.

Report No. 6

Following is a listing of the 2014 Average Net Funds for each district for the total Conference. These are the figures used in the calculation of the 2016 apportionments.

District	2014	District	2014
Anderson	7,427,440	Hartsville	7,872,339
Charleston	10,898,965	Marion	10,610,760
Columbia	17,115,016	Orangeburg	6,852,789
Florence	7,513,630	Rock Hill	7,550,508
Greenville	11,403,617	Spartanburg	7,598,884
Greenwood	7,655,408	Walterboro	4,784,450
TOTAL			

Report No. 7

The Conference Administration Fund (Item 6, Report No. 1) shall be divided as follows:

Fund	Approved for 2015	Requested for 2016	Recommended for 2016	% Change
1 Contingency Fund	\$ 270,000	\$ 270,000	\$ 270,000	0.0%
2 Journal Publication	20,000	17,500	17,500	-12.5%
3 Ministers Book	1,000			-100.0%
4 Director of Administrative Services Office	717,750	732,105	732,105	2.0%
5 Print Media Services Deficit Reduction	20,000			-100.0%
6 Conference Expense Fund	240,000	240,000	240,000	0.0%
7 Administrative Committees	3,000	4,000	4,000	33.3%
8 Conference Secretary	45,000	45,000	49,000	8.9%
9 Methodist Center Trustees	26,000	26,000	26,000	0.0%
10 Coordinator of Clergy Services	190,000	206,000	206,000	8.4%
11 General Conference Delegates	5,000	5,000	5,000	0.0%
12 Judicial/Administrative Proceedings	15,000	15,000	15,000	0.0%
TOTALS	\$ 1,552,750	\$ 1,560,605	\$ 1,564,605	0.8%

Report No. 8

The Conference Benevolences Fund (Item 1, Report No. 1) will be divided as follows:

Fund	Approved for 2015	Requested for 2016 ^F	Recommended 2016	% Change
A. Connectional Ministries				
1 Conference Advance Specials				
Ministry Programs	\$ 155,000 \$	155,000 \$	155,000	0.0%
Special Salary Supplements	20,500	20,500	20,500	0.0%
Sub-totals (1)	\$ 175,500 \$	175,500 \$	175,500	0.0%
2 Board/Agency Programs				
District Councils	\$ 90,000 \$	78,000 \$	78,000	-13.3%
The Board of Church and Society	18,000	12,987	12,987	-27.9%
The Commission on Christian Unity & Interreligious Concerns	750	550	550	-26.7%
The Committee on ELCC	37,750	44,750	44,750	18.5%
The Committee on Native American Ministry	3,750	3,500	3,500	-6.7%
The Commission on The Status & Role of Women	1,000	100	100	-90.0%
The Commission on Religion & Race	750	500	500	-33.3%
Advocacy Subtotal	62,000	62,387	62,387	
The Board of Education	7,000	8,000	8,000	14.3%
Division on Young People	35,000	35,000	35,000	0.0%
The Board of Evangelism	750	750	750	0.0%
The Board of Higher Education & Campus Ministry	27,000	27,000	27,000	0.0%
The Commission on Worship	4,000	4,000	4,000	0.0%
Discipleship Curriculum		7,000	7,000	100.0%
The Commission on Archives and History	750	750	750	0.0%
Discipleship Subtotal	74,500	82,500	82,500	
The Board of Laity	13,000	10,900	10,900	-16.2%
Lay Leadership Subtotal	13,000	10,900	10,900	

	Communications	2,400	2,400	2,400	2,400	0.0%
	The Board of Global Ministries	35,000	35,000	35,000	35,000	0.0%
	The Board of Health and Welfare Ministries	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000	0.0%
	Disaster Response	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	0.0%
	Outreach Subtotal	46,400	46,400	46,400	46,400	-2.0%
	Total Board and Agency Programs (2)	\$ 285,900	\$ 280,187	\$ 280,187	\$ 280,187	-16.0%
3	Board/Agency Administration	\$ 40,000	\$ 33,000	\$ 33,000	\$ 33,600	2.0%
4	Operations (100% guaranteed)	\$ 1,433,514	\$ 1,462,184	\$ 1,462,184	\$ 1,462,184	
5	Communications					
	Electronics	42,500	45,000	45,000	45,000	5.9%
	Resource Center	22,000	22,000	22,000	22,000	0.0%
	Public & Media Relations	20,000	20,000	20,000	22,000	10.0%
	Sub-totals (5)					
6	Advocate	\$ 84,500	\$ 87,000	\$ 87,000	\$ 89,000	5.3%
		\$ 132,000	\$ 129,000	\$ 129,000	\$ 129,000	-2.3%
		\$ 2,151,414	\$ 2,166,871	\$ 2,166,871	\$ 2,169,471	0.8%
	Sub-totals (A)					
	C. Other Conference Agencies					
	Cabinet Emergency Fund	23,000	23,000	23,000	26,000	13.0%
	Bishop's Contingency Fund	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	0.0%
	Episcopal Office	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000	0.0%
	Committee on Episcopacy	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	0.0%
	Episcopal Residence	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	0.0%
	Archives & History: Conference Archivist Contract	22,500	22,500	22,500	24,000	6.7%
	Ordained Ministry					
	1) Operations	49,730	54,730	54,730	54,730	10.1%
	2) Career Planning Programs	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	0.0%
	Sub-totals (B)	\$ 158,730	\$ 163,730	\$ 163,730	\$ 168,230	6.0%
	Total Conference Benevolences	\$ 2,310,144	\$ 2,330,601	\$ 2,330,601	\$ 2,337,701	1.2%

Report No. 9

We recommend that the following funds be apportioned to churches on the basis of percentages of average net funds.

FUND	Approved for 2015	Requested for 2016	Recommended for 2016	% Change	Average Net Funds Factor
1 Conference Benevolences	\$ 2,310,144	\$ 2,340,814	\$ 2,337,701	1.18%	2.18%
2 Retiree Health/Transition/Contingency	1,952,536	2,052,536	2,027,536	3.70%	1.89%
3 District Superintendents Salary	1,153,216	1,176,000	1,176,000	1.94%	1.10%
4 Equitable Compensation	550,000	550,000	550,000	0.00%	0.51%
5 District Administration	830,000	830,000	830,000	0.00%	0.77%
6 Conference Administration	1,552,750	1,584,605	1,564,605	0.76%	1.46%
7 Camps & Retreat Ministries	328,000	328,000	328,000	0.00%	0.31%
8 Congregational Development	960,000	960,000	960,000	0.00%	0.89%
9 Senior College Scholarships	1,167,161	1,167,161	1,100,000	-6.11%	1.03%
10 Spartanburg Methodist College	634,838	634,838	634,838	0.00%	0.59%
11 Campus Ministry	637,801	637,801	650,000	1.88%	0.61%
12 Methodist Homes Residents' Assistance	540,228	540,225	540,228	0.00%	0.50%
Sub-total	\$ 12,616,674	\$ 12,801,980	\$ 12,698,908	0.65%	11.84%
13 World Service **	\$ 2,045,912	\$ 2,022,012	\$ 2,022,012	-1.18%	1.88%
14 Episcopal Fund **	613,614	651,818	651,818	5.86%	0.61%
15 General Conference Administration **	246,952	244,127	244,127	-1.16%	0.23%
16 Ministerial Education **	702,384	694,197	694,197	-1.18%	0.65%
17 Interdenominational Cooperation **	54,958	54,318	54,318	-1.18%	0.05%
18 Black College **	280,188	276,922	276,922	-1.18%	0.26%
19 Africa University **	62,695	61,991	61,991	-1.14%	0.06%
20 Jurisdiction Mission/Ministry #	85,093	85,093	85,093	0.00%	0.08%
Sub-total	\$ 4,091,796	\$ 4,091,796	\$ 4,090,478	-0.03%	3.82%
TOTALS	\$ 16,708,470	\$ 16,893,776	\$ 16,789,386	0.48%	15.66%

** Line items marked with ** are General Conference apportioned funds.

Line item marked with # is a Southeastern Jurisdictional apportionment.

Respectfully Submitted,
 David Surrett, President
 Valerie Brooks-Madden, Vice-President
 David Taylor, Secretary

THE CONFERENCE CONNECTIONAL MINISTRIES

We are living in challenging times. It seems that the more things change, the more they stay the same. What has changed? The Bible has changed not the message but translation of the message. Now, access to those translations is available digitally. It is hoped that our relationships with God and with one another grow and deepen over time.

In the midst of great changes, some things stay the same. The Bible still carries the message of the Good News of God's saving love. We still live in relationship with God and one another. And human beings by nature still tend to resist change.

This context of rapid change in the midst of the constancy of faith informs the work of Connectional Ministries. As we continue to live into the structure that changed in 2012, we are growing in our capacity to hold onto the things that we need to hold onto as we adapt to the rapid changes in our world.

In the past year, two notable changes have occurred. We have reconfigured the Higher Education and Campus Ministry Committee into a larger Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministry to allow for stronger connections, support, and accountability among the annual conference, the colleges and universities, and the campus ministries.

This board will have an organizational meeting with assistance from the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry to review their disciplinary responsibilities and begin their work in a more effective way as soon as it can be arranged with general agency staff.

Second, in response to the motion referred to Connectional Ministries at the last Annual Conference, we have empowered a Racial Reconciliation Design Team to give leadership to the churches of the Annual Conference in how to engage in meaningful conversations and processes that will allow for communities to identify their particular challenges, to work toward healing, and to begin to move forward faithfully. You can read about the team's work and recommendations at the conclusion of our report.

Below you will find a summary of the work of the Ministry Areas and Committees of Connectional Ministries. It is a privilege for us to be able to serve the Annual Conference with the goal of equipping churches for ministry and connecting them in ministry beyond ourselves.

Cynthia Williams
Convener of Connectional Ministries

ADVOCACY AREA

Rev. Amiri Hooker, Convener

The Advocacy Area includes committees on church and society, status and role of women, religion and race, and ethnic local church concerns.

The Social Principles of The United Methodist Church affirm "those in rightful authority who serve the public, and we support their efforts to afford justice and equal opportunity for all people" (§164F "Civil Obedience & Civil Disobedience," *Book of Discipline*).

Christians are called to witness to the reconciling love of God in Jesus Christ. United Methodists must be an example of social change by creating spaces of honest, faithful dialogue across differences and divides. The South Carolina Advocacy Ministry Area has been engaging United Methodists in the Annual Conference to continue to seek racial reconciliation and to recognize and affirm the sacredness of all people. Further, we acknowledge the pain and death that black men and their families are suffering, in light of decisions by grand juries in Missouri and New York, as well as a concern about ongoing police violence/militarization in some communities. We have also seen the plight of health injustice and poverty throughout South Carolina. Our Advocacy Ministry Area is composed of the following committees and Boards and ex officio members from the Board of Church and Society, Commission on the Status and Role of Women, Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns, Ethnic Local Church Concerns, Native American, Religion and Race, Peace with Justice Coordinator, Bishop's Cabinet representative, General Board of Church and Society – ex-officio, Convener UMW – ex-officio, and ELCC UMW – ex-officio.

Most of the leadership and training for our work area comes from the General Board of Church and Society, our work with the General Commission on Religion and Race, Peace with Justice Training, and the ministry Projects of Racism Ethnic Local Concerns of ELCC.

Since the days when Jim Crow, cross burnings, segregated schools, and unjust voting laws were the order of the day to the season in which we now live, the people of the United Methodist Church as Wesleyans have worked to forge ahead with efforts to restructure the church for maximum effectiveness as advocates for justice and equity within and beyond the church and community. In an effort to promote more vital congregations, those who do the work of The Advocacy Ministry

Area even if they do not call it "advocacy," the Advocacy Ministry Area dealt with a proposal from the convener to dramatically change funding and the division of labor in our work area.

The changes include the following:

- Combining the work of the committees to function in fewer groups,
- establishing new goals that would coordinate ministry among the boards and committees, and
- working collaboratively on budgeting in the Advocacy Ministry area.

The purpose for these changes was to accomplish some specific and measurable goals:

- train individuals and local churches to become advocates for change and transformation in the Annual Conference and districts and local churches;
- take action on creating strategic plans for ELCC (Task Forces), COSROW, Religion and Race;
- take action to change the culture around the Annual Conference as to what it means to participate in the Advocacy Ministry Area;
- share tools, tips, and techniques on how every local church can be most effective in its Advocacy;
- develop stronger working committees dedicated to specific tasks as delegated by the Annual Conference; and
- elect a vice convener to co-facilitate some of the needed changes.

Church and Society in South Carolina works closely with the South Carolina Christian Action Council (SCCAC). SCCAC in its 81st year continues to raise a reasoned Christian voice in the public square. Focusing on only one issue in its first decade and a half, for the past 64 years the Council has advocated for a more just society as a visible witness to the unity Christians have been given in Christ Jesus.

Legislative Issues the Council will watch in the coming year include the following:

- Legislation to bring to Federal dollars earmarked for South Carolina, dollars which would close the Healthcare Gap in SC.
- Legislative action resulting from the decade's long court battle for full and equitable funding for a high quality public education for all our children, especially in early education.

SCCAC is also doing work in the area of racism and support for the SC HIV/AIDS Council. At several times during the years, members of the Connectional Ministry Staff and the Advocacy Work Area have partnered with SCCAC to join state house rallies and protests.

Peace with Justice (PWJ) had an active year in 2014, and we look forward to continuing our support of missional, educational, and advocacy-related ministries through the Conference and local church. In 2014 PWJ gave \$2,000 to help support the Freedom School at Francis Burns UMC, and we offered \$500 grants to help local churches engage their communities in promoting literacy in conjunction with the Million Book Effort. In 2015 we will be sending a team of four United Methodist college students from around the state to participate in a Korean Delegation with the Mississippi Annual Conference and in partnership with the General Board of Church and Society. The four UM college students will travel to Korea on June 30 to join Korean Methodist students in a conversation about global social justice issues. Upon their return, the students will be required to speak about their experience at local UM churches.

The Native American Committee seeks to promote inclusion of Native Americans in the South Carolina Conference; explore and implement awareness of and appreciation for Native American presence, history, traditions, and spirituality; promote Native American Awareness Sunday in this Conference and dispense the funds contributed on Native American Awareness Sunday to ministries and community development in this Annual Conference and the Southeast Jurisdiction. The Native American committee members represent a number of Indian cultures and have a point of contact with other Native communities. Committee members are of Santee, Ojibwa, Cherokee, Wassamassaw, Catawba, Pee Dee, and Waccamaw heritage.

Tribal Reports: Catawba-Beckee Garris reported that it is in the midst of an after school program. Mentors came from schools to help in math and reading. On November 22nd, the Culture Center held a Native American Craft Fair at the Longhouse, 996 Avenue of Nations. Edisto-Cathy Nelson reported that the funding for feeding program started by Roman Catholic Sisters years ago has dried up. Now they are not able to do hot meals for the Elders or widows. Catawba Tribal Update the Catawba Indian Nation's Boys and Girls Club just celebrated their first anniversary with an Open House to show what they are doing there. They also have mentors who come and help with their homework before they begin playing pool, basketball, and other sports. The Girls on the Run have begun practicing for another 2.5K race. The girls were so

successful last year that the boys showed an interest in having their own running team. So now they have a Boys Who Run team who are training to run in their first 2.5K race later this summer. Both teams are made up of 4th-6th graders.

The 4-H Club recently began to prepare raised garden beds. Members have seeds already growing in their hot house to be transplanted as soon as the weather allows.

The Native American Committee sponsored its annual training for local church Native American Representatives on February 7 at Platt Springs United Methodist Church. About 50 representatives learned about Native American history and tribes in South Carolina and the many ways that the United Methodist Church is working with them.

After lunch, drummers from Rocky Swamp American Indian Ministries led the group in worship. During the smudging ceremony outside the church prior to the worship, a bald eagle circled the group twice in the bright blue sky.

The official date for Native American Ministries Sunday is April 19, 2015; however, the date can be celebrated at any time during the church year.

Status and Role of Women advocates for full participation of women in the total life of The United Methodist Church. We are helping the church recognize every person—clergy and lay, women and men, adults and children—as full and equal parts of God’s human family. Our small committee has been doing the work of COSROW and celebrating the follow up from last year’s information drive with a small gathering in September and more training planning to come.

We welcome the new UMW representative, Cathy Ford. She, in turn, talked about UMW’s annual retreat. Committee member Evelyn Pauling wrote the UMW message in the March issue of the *Advocate*. The group is pleased with the feedback from our newsletter, *The Eve Newsletter*. The March issue was great with particular emphasis on Women’s History and Women in the Pulpit. These newsletters were e-mailed to the DSs with the request we serve them in the fall with training or train at the state level, if they prefer.

Concerning the recent Annual Conference monitoring of women’s involvement request of national (called “General COSROW”), Cathy Mitchell indicated that in 2009, when the monitoring was last done, she trained some of our committee members then and some from Race and Religion’s Committee to complete the survey. It has been recommended that members access the GCOSROW.org website/Monitor and Resources/Toolkit; it’s a lengthy tool, so I suggest that it be scanned to see what is involved. The Committee suggests persons interested in COSROW also register for the agenda p. 2 national free COSROW webinar. Those registering should prepare for the five questions posed to discuss.

Sheila Haney, Convener

Ethnic Local Church Concerns (ELCC) has awarded 96 scholarships to individuals to attend training and continuing education events and five grants to local churches for 2014. This year, ELCC has organized an African American Task Force and a Hispanic Latino Task Force. Plans to organize a Korean American Task Force are underway.

Ethnic local churches in South Carolina are uniquely suited to engage in ministry with the poor communities of color in our state. During the 2013 - 2014 cycle of the ELCC mini-grant program, seven small-congregation ethnic local churches were funded on a competitive basis to support programs that help the poor in these churches and in communities. Most of the programs promoted youth development focusing on literacy, cultural awareness, spiritual development, and nutrition. Some funded programs also provided services for senior citizens in the community that emphasized senior nutrition, healthy living, and small group spiritual development. In both areas, the churches included in their programs resources for food to feed the participants. Low-income households spend a greater share of their income on food. Food accounts for 17.1% of spending for households making less than \$10,000 per year compared to the US average of 12.6%.

The ministries of these small congregation churches were in line with the United Methodist Church’s emphasis on Ministry with the Poor and the Pan Methodist priority of Children in Poverty. One in four children is at risk of hunger, and, among African-Americans and Latinos, one in three children is at risk of hunger. The number of people in the US who live in poverty is increasing to record levels as the gap between rich and poor continues to grow. The official US poverty rate in 2009 was 14.3%, an increase from the year before. There were 43.6 million people in poverty; 50.7 million had no health insurance.

South Carolina has a 17.5% poverty rate compared to the national poverty rate of 14.3%. Despite the improving economy nationally and for many South Carolinians, poverty remains a challenge for many people in the “Forgotten South Carolina.” And for South Carolina, there is a unique phenomenon. The poverty rate by race is 5.5% higher for households of color. “The Council of Bishops of the United Methodist Church believes that God is calling this Church to a

new level of dedication and commitment on behalf of children and the impoverished. The Council is taking steps, through the Episcopal Initiative on Children and Poverty, to assist the Church in responding to God's call."

DISCIPLESHIP AREA

Rev. Ross Chellis, Convener

The Discipleship Area includes committees on education, evangelism, worship, children, youth, young adult, older adult, and higher education and campus ministry.

The Children's Ministry Committee has continued to support and be involved with the South Carolina Conference Pan-Methodist Campaign for Children in Poverty. The theme "And How Are All the Children?" has continued to be a driving question for our churches, and the response has been incredible. Churches have reached into their communities and have made a difference in the lives of children. Mentoring programs, partnerships with schools, food drives, clothing closets, reading programs, and other initiatives have continued to be dreamed and implemented for our children. Our Million Book Effort collected over 500,000 books for children, and all have been distributed throughout South Carolina. We urge everyone to become involved in the 1,000,000 hours of service with and for children.

Martha F. Thompson

The Committee on Worship in 2014 provided leadership and logistical support for the various worship services at the meeting of the Annual Conference in Florence. In 2015 we anticipate doing the same with a plan to continue using a wide spectrum of participants, both on stage and behind the scenes. We recognize the valuable work being done by many District Connectional Ministries in support of inspiring worship in local churches. We continue to evaluate how the Conference Commission on Worship can best assist local churches as they seek to provide vital worship experiences in their community.

Rev. Steven King

The Evangelism Committee receives applications and selects recipients for individual evangelism awards and the Bishop's Five Star Awards for local churches.

OUTREACH AREA

Rev. George Olive, Convener

The Outreach Area includes committees on communications, disaster response, health and welfare, and global ministries.

THE CONFERENCE BOARD OF GLOBAL MINISTRIES (CBGM)

As we begin this report, the members of the CBGM, all want to express our concern and offer our fervent prayers for the Reverend Calvin B. Washington as he struggles with his recovery from a recent illness. We also want to thank Reverend Washington for his leadership of our board in his capacity as the convener since 2013.

In the year 2014, the CBGM became proactive in helping local churches become familiar with and apply for the funding available under the auspices of our board. We became aware that many churches in need did not have knowledge of how the CBGM could help them in both existing and new ministry opportunities. As a result, the CBGM has put out the word, and we gladly report that we received more requests than we had funding available this year. We rejoice in the fact that the CBGM is making a difference in the lives and ministries of the Annual Conference and the local churches. Recently, members of the CBGM have reviewed and made recommendations for the approval for this year's grant cycles. As we considered these requests, we asked ourselves two questions: Does this request help the Annual Conference make disciples for Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world? And does this request make space for new people within our churches and/or connected ministries? We believe that those who received funding met these criteria. The CBGM has either direct or indirect oversight of several areas, and this report will briefly cover them. Several have their own reports given at other areas.

Spartanburg Methodist College. SMC is not only a highly regarded educational institution, but it is also an outreach ministry of the South Carolina Annual Conference. SMC provides opportunities and growth and learning for many students who would not otherwise have them. The CBGM nominates the Board of Trustees (in conjunction with the president of the college) and recommends the line item in the Annual Conference budget for SMC. Dr. Colleen Keith, president of SMC, has provided the Annual Conference with a report on the college for information. We, as the CBGM, encourage all members of the Annual Conference to support SMC by paying all Conference apportionments.

Communities of Shalom. We continue to define the relationship between the Annual Conference and the Communities of Shalom. Although the Annual Conference, through the CBGM, has supported the Communities of Shalom since their inception, that relationship has never really been defined. The Congregational Specialist continues to work with the Communities of Shalom and will report to the CBGM and the Annual Conference when this work is complete. Communities of Shalom are community organizing ministries, helping each community look at issues and problems within the community and how to best address those issues using resources available. The CBGM provided the Communities of Shalom \$10,000 in support in 2014.

Hunger Ministries. The Hunger Ministries program is an extension of the CBGM designed to encourage churches and individuals to donate each year to help churches who work with hunger issues and to directly feed hungry people through such ministries as soup kitchens and food pantries. The CBGM was able to distribute \$17,500 in support of these ministries in 2014.

Church Extension Partnership. Originally a program to help smaller membership churches (100 members or fewer) with physical repairs, this program has been expanded to include physical repairs or to equip churches wishing to extend their outreach into the local community. Three "calls" are given each year at Lent, Advent, and Annual Conference in which individuals and local churches can contribute to the designated recipient of the call to help with their ministry. The CBGM would like to emphasize that this particular program is one in which the local church can be a "partner" by taking up a special offering or offerings during the season specified. The CBGM was able to distribute \$4,067 for this ministry in 2014.

James M. Belin Trust Grants. This trust fund supports new missions and ministries located within the boundaries of the South Carolina Annual Conference. The Board of Trustees is nominated by the CBGM and elected by the Annual Conference. The Belin Trust provides grants to be distributed by the CBGM each year. To be considered for a grant, the organization applying for the funds must be considered either a new ministry or a new ministry within an existing program of the organization applying for the grant. Funding can be obtained as a ministry connected with a local church or an agency sponsored by the United Methodist Church. The CBGM was able to distribute \$146,609 in support of these ministries in 2014.

Advance Special Ministries (ASM). These are missional organizations within the bounds of the South Carolina Annual Conference that have been recommended by the CBGM and approved by the Annual Conference. These organizations must apply for certification every quadrennium for approval by the Annual Conference and apply for funding every year. These organizations have their own board of directors which must have United Methodist representation to be eligible as an ASM. The Annual Conference supports these organizations in several ways. The primary way is through the connectional system of the United Methodist Church. By being sponsored by the Annual Conference, these organizations have the ability to solicit funding through the local churches in their surrounding area and statewide. The CBGM encourages local churches and districts to partner with an ASM in their vicinity and support them with not only financial help but also in the many other ways in which help is needed. These organizations are also supported by a line item in the Connectional Ministries budget. This amount was \$124,000 in 2014. And, lastly, ASMs are supported by an offering taken through Advance Special Sunday each year.

In addition to these ministries, the CBGM also provided support for Mission Interns in the amount of \$4,800 and an Emergency Response Trailer grant of \$10,000.

The CBGM looks forward to the great ministry which will be accomplished in the future as a result of the efforts of the board. A special thank you to all those who served as a part of the CBGM in 2014.

Stephen D. Gaither, Asst. Convener

The Health and Welfare Committee (HWC)

Our bodies are the temples of God, and, to that end, we are called to be good stewards of this earthly tent. The HWC has entered into partnership with the USC Prevention and Research Center to provide assistance to help our congregation through their **F**aith, **A**ctivity, and **N**utrition (FAN) program. Through both educational literature and hands on demonstrations, **FAN** will help our congregations to enjoy healthy diets; help promote physical activity to eliminate some medical conditions; and help with the healing of others and well as the decrease of some medical complications, thereby giving our members a better quality of life as we continue on our faith journey. This partnership is starting in the Columbia District in the Fairfield community. We pray the pastors and congregations will participate fully in this effort.

Joyce Timmons

Communications

We are blessed to have Matt Brodie on the Conference staff doing such an outstanding job of enabling the communications efforts of the various boards, agencies, and ministries of the Conference through his work with the umcsc.org web site and through other means. This past year, he worked to develop a comprehensive data base of contact information for clergy and lay leadership around the Conference to improve the opportunity to target appropriate audiences for the news and information that needs to disseminate in a timely manner. The building of this extensive list will be an on-going project and will help to make possible effective mission and ministry throughout the Conference.

In addition, the office of communications hosted a Southeastern Jurisdictional Communications workshop at Lake Junaluska. Over 50 local church pastors and communicators attended the two-day workshop. The success of this event has been evident, and Mr. Brodie will host another training session in September of 2015. The Communications Committee helped to support these efforts by providing United Methodist Communicators 24 \$100 scholarships to attend the trainings for local SC churches and will do the same in 2015.

Disaster Response

Yet again we in South Carolina have been extremely fortunate that we have not experienced any major disasters this past year. In fact, it was a relatively quiet year throughout the Southeast Jurisdiction, and this experience has lessened the call for involvement by our Early Response Teams led by Billy Robinson and the SC UMWIM. Billy and his team continue to appeal for additional volunteers, and training is scheduled around the Conference to enable volunteers to become certified and credentialed early responders. Also, eight members of our Conference attended the SEJ Disaster Response Academy in Biloxi, MS. Greg Varner, the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator, held a meeting in April of the Conference Disaster Response Team. A major focus coming from that gathering is the finalization of a Conference Disaster Response Plan and a focus on local church training. Of critical importance is that we in this state, bordering on the ocean, with a fault line running through the state and thus the potential for a catastrophic earthquake, with nuclear power plants, with military bases and other targets for terrorist activities, with rivers and dams, with huge tracts of forests vulnerable to wildfires, with the ever present threat of tornadoes, with all of these threats we must never lose our focus on the need to be prepared, whether that be for a small, local disaster where neighbor helps neighbor, or whether it means reaching out in Christian love and compassion to the survivors of larger disasters around the state, around the nation, or around the world.

LAY LEADERSHIP AREA

Barbara Ware, Convener

The Lay Leadership Area includes teams on Lay Servant Ministry, Lay Servant Leadership Development, Spiritual Formation, Stewardship, and Annual Conference Missions Fair.

This has been a busy year for the Lay Leadership Area. Bishop Holston launched the first ever Bishop's Road Shows starting in September 2014 and concluding in February 2015. The Bishop, along with various Conference staff and laity, spent 12 Saturdays in the districts. The hope is that this venture will have a positive impact across the Annual Conference. Over 1,500 laity attended the 12 sessions and had the chance to meet Bishop Holston and his wife, Felecia. Next fall, clergy will join laity and Bishop Holston for continued discussion and dialogue. The laity in the South Carolina United Methodist Conference are active persons who work to enrich the lives of so many. The UM Women, UM Men, our Lay Servant Ministries program, our children, our youth, our young adults, and our older adults all work toward a common goal of making disciples for Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. We continue to be led within Lay Leadership by our three task force teams and their team leaders: Lay Servant Leadership Development, Shelia Shanklin; Spiritual Formation, Suzy Speas; Stewardship, Dennis Sullen. Also included on the Executive Lay Leadership Team are Donald Love, Conference Associate Lay Leader; Jenny Rawlings, Lay Leadership Secretary; and Lisa Livingston, Convener. We welcomed one new District Lay Leader, Anna Feagin, as she replaces Max Jackson in the Hartsville District. District Lay Leaders are Anderson, Freda Brock; Charleston, David Braddon; Columbia, Betty Void; Florence, Dennis Sullen; Greenwood, David Salter; Greenville, Michael Cheatham; Hartsville, Anna Feagin; Marion, Becky Green; Orangeburg, Gregg Riley; Rock Hill, Bill Click; Spartanburg, Earline Powell; and Walterboro, Pamela Goodwine-Glover. It is an honor and a privilege to serve alongside such committed folks.

Barbara Ware, Conference Lay Leader

Lay Servant Ministries

- Annual Instructors Academy provided Prayer Worship, Fellowship, and Instructional Leadership Training.
- Training annually at Instructors Academy was offered on several courses to ensure knowledge and clarity throughout the Conference.
- Lay Servant Instructor pulled together and trained lay leadership on the current Apportionment Packet for the Conference.
- Lay Servant Instructor trained instructors at the Annual Academy on the Apportionments. This was featured in the November Edition of the *Advocate*.
- Lay Servant Directors are Busy Planning, Organizing, Coordinating and providing training for Laity to equip them to be leaders in mission and ministries in the local church and community. Each of us is gifted by the Holy Spirit to be a servant of God's Kingdom. Lay Servant Ministries provide educational opportunity that will enhance our spiritual gifts.
- As a result of Spiritual Formation through our schools, many have gained biblical knowledge and wisdom and have been made Disciples for Jesus for the transformation of the world.
- Lay Servants Lead, Care, Communicate: prayer missions, Bible studies, food pantries, pulpit supplies, leadership at meetings, worship services, the fostering of care-giving ministries, and teaching and administering Sunday Schools. Home, hospital, and senior center visits; assistance with Holy Communion; giving; and training, studying, and discussing the Word of God are also provided.
- These ministries are involved with District and Conference Connectional Ministries Teams.
- These ministries are connected with Bishop / Lay Leadership Retreat to promote improved avenues for missions and ministries.
- These ministries are engaged with the Bishop Road Shows to build "Healthy Laity Teams and Healthy Churches."

Submitted by Jackie Jenkins, Conference Director of Lay Servant Ministries

Lay Servant Leadership Development Task Force Team

This committee has been working hard to introduce the new Apportionment Seminar to as many groups as possible. All District Lay Leaders and District Directors of Lay Servant Ministries were invited to take part in the initial training, and many of them are now trained and ready to lead the seminar. This seminar will be our first item in the TOOLBOX as we get it up and running. It is available to any church or group that will host the seminar. The idea of a Toolbox comes from a strong desire on the part of the Executive Lay Leadership team to provide means for the local congregations to get the answers to questions and concerns the members might have. Toolboxes will be provided for each of the District Lay Leaders and District Directors of Lay Servant Ministries. In turn, they will be asked to distribute the information with all local churches through the Local Church Lay Leaders and Lay Servants. Items for the Toolboxes are being developed and supplied by each of the three areas of Lay Leadership: Lay Servant Leadership, Spiritual Formation, and Stewardship. The team continues to develop other items for inclusion in the Toolbox, and discussion about what is needed and how to go about presenting to reach the local church has been extensive. Topics include educating members on United Methodist history, encouraging members to discover spiritual gifts, clarifying the process of sanctification, improving communication, and presenting these questions: "What does it mean to be connected?", and "What is the General Conference?" In addition to providing the physical Toolbox, it is the team's intent to have virtual copies available as well.

Submitted by Shelia Shanklin,

Lay Servant Leadership Development Task Force Team Leader

Stewardship Task Force Team

Our stewardship efforts in the last several months have primarily involved developing and selecting resources for our Lay Leadership Resource Toolbox, which will be introduced during the 2015 Annual Conference. Committee members attended the Stewardship Summit last fall and have studied stewardship resources published by the Lewis Center for Church Leadership in developing this resource. Plans are being made to include in the Stewardship Tray of the Toolbox, a resource sheet which is a quick reference guide to the more popular websites, books, and newsletters of organizations that promote a holistic approach to stewardship. This resource will help leaders sort through the numerous resources available that seem to grow daily. We have also included in the Toolbox a workshop resource that offers a variety of workshop topics on stewardship and is available to any United Methodist church, charge, cluster, or district that would like to host an event in a specific area. We have developed a list of persons, clergy and laity, who are available to be facilitators for these events. Other tools still available

are the Stewardship Resource CD as well as the *Stewardship Alive Manual* in electronic format and the Stewardship Web Page, which is currently being updated. Our task continues to be one of providing key information and resources for individuals and churches in order to help them reach their full potential as faithful stewards, and we welcome the opportunity to assist in this area!

Submitted by Dennis Sullen, Stewardship Task Force Team Leader

Spiritual Formation Task Force Team

The Spiritual Formation team is committed to bringing opportunities and information to the local church, district, and Conference. We have updated our page on the Conference website to include information about spiritual practices. Information is included about each practice and where to go for further study. We are also working within the Lay Leadership team as a whole to put a Toolbox in the hands of our District Lay Leaders and District Lay Servant Directors. This Toolbox will contain physical resources, contact persons for specific areas and needs, as well as where to find more resources. The Spiritual Formation team will be writing and compiling resources that will address practices such as centering prayer, praying in color, and using a bead and a prayer. We are excited also about opportunities that are developing where Spiritual Formation will be working together with various laity led groups.

Submitted by Suzy Speas, Spiritual Formation Task Force Team Leader

Mission Fair at Annual Conference

Lay Leadership received many positive comments on the Mission Fair Event that was held June 2, 2014, during Annual Conference. The Mission Fair recognized local church involvement in ministries with children and ministries related to poverty. Thirty-four exhibitors, representing 48 churches in our Conference, set up tables and displayed pictures, posters, and written descriptions of children and poverty related ministries and even provided a representative to answer questions and talk about these missions. We are grateful to all those who participated as exhibitors and also for all those who attended this exciting event! In light of the excitement and overwhelming request to do it again, the Lay Leadership team seeks to plan and host another exciting Mission Fair event during the 2015 Annual Conference.

*Submitted by Donald Love, Associate Conference Lay Leader,
on behalf of the Mission Fair Planning Committee that includes*

*Donald Love, Lisa Livingston, Jenny Rawlings,
Shelia Shanklin, Suzy Speas, and Dennis Sullen.*

REPORT OF THE RACIAL RECONCILIATION DESIGN TEAM

Racism has been a systemic and personal problem within the United States and The United Methodist Church (UMC) and its predecessor denominations since the inception of the UMC. United Methodist Christians, like the rest of God's human family, represent many races, colors, cultures, languages, backgrounds, and life experiences. Local congregations, districts, and the community we serve within South Carolina Annual Conference are becoming more diverse. However, the South Carolina Annual Conference is committed to the eradication of racism.

The motion referred to Connectional Ministries asked that \$10,000 of Emerging Ministry funds be used to create a task force and to host two one-day conferences in 2015 to address racial prejudice and injustice as theological and missional imperatives in local churches and communities. The original motion called for two conferences to be held—one at Wofford College and one at Claflin University—and for all clergy and at least one layperson from each local church to attend the conferences. Each pastor would report at charge conference what is being done in the local church and community toward racial reconciliation and justice and set specific goals. In support of his motion, the maker, Rev. John Culp, told the body he remembered when he came into the Conference 45 years ago and witnessed the merger of the two Conferences: one predominantly white and the other African-American. While we have made much progress since then, he said, "Racism still exists in our churches and our society."

Concern was raised on the floor regarding the referral Connectional Ministries because of a perception that nothing would be done. The Connectional Ministries Convener, Cynthia Williams, informed the body she was confident Connectional Ministries has created an environment where this organization is able to act capably on issues that come before it.

As a follow-up, two weeks after Annual Conference, the executive body of Connectional Ministries established an intentionally small, racially diverse team, with the specific goals of creating a model by the fall meeting to deal with the intent of the Conference motion and to find a way to further the conversations in the Annual Conference around the sins of racism. The

Reverend Amiri B. Hooker was selected as chair of the newly formed SC Conference Racial Reconciliation Design Team (RRDT).

The RRDT read as a group The SC Conference Plans of Merger and the following books: *Methodism's Racial Dilemma: The Story of the Central Jurisdiction* by Bishop James S. Thomas; *A Mile in My Shoes: Cultivating Compassion* by Trevor Hudson; *Black People in the Methodist Church* by William B. McClain; *The Cross and the Lynching Tree* by James H. Cone; *Just Us or Justice?: Moving Toward a Pan-Methodist Theology* by F. Douglas Powe Jr.; and *Love in Hard Places* by D. A. Carson.

After reading *A Mile in My Shoes: Cultivating Compassion*, by Trevor Hudson, the design team felt that members of the Conference could best cultivate compassion and understanding about racism if they made pilgrimages together and visited some of the racially significant sites in SC first hand.

The concept of pilgrimage is to go and to participate in an event rather than merely to be an observer or just to hold a meeting. The team wants people actually to go to places of racial significance and to say, "This is what happened here; this is part of our racial legacy in South Carolina. How do we begin to unravel and unmask the racial issues around this location?"

The long-term goal is to create healing and encouragement at racially sacred locations across the Conference; this effort would lead to equipping and supporting leadership to eradicate racism.

In October 2014 on the campus of South Carolina State University, The RRDT held an event that allowed us to have conversation about one of the sorrowful moments in state and national history, the Orangeburg Massacre. The Orangeburg Massacre refers to the shooting of protesters by South Carolina Highway Patrol officers in Orangeburg, South Carolina, near South Carolina State University on the evening of February 8, 1968. Approximately 150 protestors were demonstrating against racial segregation at a local bowling alley. Three of the protestors, African American males, were killed, and 28 other protestors were injured. This Racial Reconciliation Pilgrimage around the Orangeburg Massacre looked at how an act of racism led to one of the most wretched days in the history of South Carolina and to a 40-year cover-up and campaign of misinformation by the governor and state government. Paradoxically, the Orangeburg Massacre occurred next to Claflin University and a major United Methodist Church, Trinity UMC, that have produced many leaders in our denomination.

When the task force arrived on the SC State University's campus, we proceeded into the discussion of the massacre and heard a presentation by Bobby Eady, a student protester who, at the age of 17, was wounded during the massacre. Eady told how it felt to be there during that time; he discussed the pain he felt from the betrayal of his state, community, and church in the cover-up. Eady said all the students were unarmed and in retreat from the Highway Patrolmen at the time of the shooting.

The RRDT then heard from Dr. Cleveland Sellers, current president of Voorhees College. At age 23, he was also wounded during the shooting from white Highway Patrolmen. Dr. Sellers told us his story of persecution and of being banned from Orangeburg for years. In fact, he was the only person, white or black, convicted of a crime in connection with the shooting.

Another key conversation we experienced was with a campus staff member, Sonja Bennett-Bellamy, who was a child in Orangeburg at the time of the massacre. She related her stress year to year during the commemorations of the massacre, and of trying to get people to understand the need for healing from the pain.

We had good discussions facilitated by Tan Kirby Davis, The Kirby Resource Group, a consulting and training organization that specializes in organizational effectiveness, leadership development, diversity and inclusion, and community relations. We discussed how there are places in South Carolina that from one side of the tracks might as well be in Ferguson, Missouri—just as strange, just as uncomfortable, just as much another world, just as full of suffering and strangers and fellow believers and "angels unaware." Understanding these issues is significant for our learning what it means to be Christian.

These pilgrimages to Racial Reconciliation are going to change the church. The RRDT group knows that the model will work because members of the group have already been changed (transformed) as we have been developing the model. And as we change the way we talk about the pain and the hope that comes from conversation around racism as pilgrims and learners, these events will create partnerships among persons from across the Conference in different ages, races, and classes.

The RRDT also hopes to use other methods of fulfilling its role as a resource for creating strategies and programs that educate and support systemic and personal changes to end racism and work multiculturally. One example of this type of process in building new bridges for racial healing and unity is by our going to see movies like *Selma* and having groups of clergy and lay persons learn more about the history of South Carolina and racism in general. Another

example is to develop and place on the Conference website information for local congregations to begin the process of looking at how they can have conversations about issues of race.

Lastly, we see the work of eradicating racism in the South Carolina Annual Conference as more than the work of a task force set up following a specific motion made on the floor of the 2014 Annual Conference. We celebrate and trust the work of the United Methodist Church connection in this area. The General Commission on Religion and Race was created by The United Methodist Church in 1968 to address the turbulent and exciting unrest, disease, hope, and new possibilities unleashed as legalized racial segregation and separation were being dismantled in church and society.

The Commission was the vehicle through which the denomination invited white people and people of color to a common table to tackle institutional racism, engage in new conversations about what a truly desegregated and global church could look like, and chart a course for living out the Gospel of Jesus Christ in a more authentic and all-people-embracing way.

Thus, the RRDT makes the following recommendations to the Annual Conference:

- 1) That the work initiated under the task force entitled the Racism Reconciliation Design Team (RRDT) be located under the Advocacy Ministry Area in the Religion and Race Committee, adding willing members of the RRDT as members of that committee with particular experience and resources. This move will locate the ongoing work of addressing racism in South Carolina in a standing committee of the Annual Conference.
- 2) That the Religion and Race Committee and the Advocacy Area build into their budget funding for this ongoing work that will be done in collaboration with The General Commission on Religion and Race to provide resources for congregations and church leaders that increase the following: intercultural competency, institutional equity, and vital conversations.
- 3) That the Cabinet incorporate in the Annual Charge Conference reports ways to encourage ongoing conversation in local churches around this issue. Suggested questions include:
 - a. What is your local church doing to address issues of Racism and Racial justice/injustice?
 - b. How have the members of your local church moved forward in Racial Reconciliation as individuals, community, and a congregation?

Report 2 – Part I Special Days for 2016

A. MANDATED BY GENERAL CONFERENCE

Human Relations Day (GBGM, GBGS, CORR)	January 17
Ecumenical Sunday (CUIC)	January 24
Week of Prayer for Christian Unity (CUIC)	January 18-25
Black History Month	February 2016
Golden Cross Sunday (GBGM)	February 7
Boy Scouts Sunday / Scouting Ministries Sunday (UMM)	February 14
Women's History Month	March 2016
World Day of Prayer	March 4
Girl Scouts Sunday / Alt. Scouting Min. Sunday (UMM)	March 13
One Great Hour of Sharing (GBGM)	March 6
Native American Awareness Sunday (GBGM)	April 10
Asian Pacific American Heritage Month	May 2016
Christian Home Month (GBOD)	May 2016
National Day of Prayer	May 5
Christian Family Week	May 2-8
Heritage Sunday (Archives and History)	May 22
Peace with Justice Sunday (GBGS)	May 22
Hispanic Heritage Month (GBGM)	Sept. 15-Oct. 16
World Communion Sunday (GBGM, GBGH, CORR)	October 2
Children's Sabbath: A National Observance	October 9
Lait Sunday (GBOD)	October 16
Organ and Tissue Donor Sunday (GBGM)	November 13
United Methodist Student Day (GBHEM)	November 27
World AIDS Day	December 1

INTERFAITH COMMUNITY SERVICES

PO Box 8177, Columbia, SC 29202

(803) 252-8390

Interfaith Community Services (ICS) of South Carolina

“Partners in faith serving children and families in South Carolina for over 40 years.”

Interfaith Community Services works with faith and community partners to improve the lives of low-income children and families in South Carolina. ICS has enjoyed a 40-year partnership with the South Carolina United Methodist Conference in this work.

ICS's Mission is to convene, educate, and coordinate faith and other community partners to build strong families and strong communities. ICS envisions a united faith community improving the quality of life in South Carolina by working together to build strong families and healthy, thriving children.

Guiding Principles:

The faith traditions at the heart of ICS call on all people to love their neighbors as themselves. This tradition requires the sharing of gifts and resources of this life justly, working in partnership for the common good, and providing an environment that promotes the development of everyone's strengths and skills. ICS practices honesty and integrity in all activities. ICS provides service in the spirit of unity and sincerity. These principles guide the work of ICS and inspires its mission.

KILLINGSWORTH

Executive Director: Reverend Diane A. Moseley
1831 Pendleton Street, Columbia, SC 29201

(803) 771-6359
www.killingsworth.org

As a ministry of the United Methodist Church, Killingsworth provides transitional housing to adult women who are going through significant life changes. In 1947 Corrie Killingsworth's vision of a safe, supportive Christian home for young women leaving home for the first time became a reality. In 1972 the focus shifted to women who had experienced significant life crises and were preparing to transition back into the community as more stable, responsible citizens.

Residents are referred from across South Carolina when they leave addiction treatment facilities, in-patient and outpatient mental health facilities, the prison system, shelters for victims of violence, and individual helping professionals and local church pastors. Residents are expected to work or go to school and be able to pay a nominal fee for residency. Residents are provided not only a safe supportive community, but also life skills, Bible study and spiritual development, work support, educational assessment, parenting skills, and personal counseling as they prepare to return to their homes or create new ones.

JUBILEE ACADEMY

3390 Pine Belt Road, Columbia, SC 29240

(803) 787-3009

Jubilee Academy is a faith-based organization working to turn the hearts and lives of inner-city children, youth, and families towards Christ and academic excellence.

Vision: Jubilee Academy envisions educated, productive citizens who have exchanged the bondage of welfare and poverty for freedom in Christ in the hope that these individuals will be the firm foundation for future generations, according to God's word.

Nothing is more critical to a community's long term sustainability than a well-educated and well-adjusted child. Ensuring that all of the children of the Midlands receive the support they need to become well-adjusted, educated, productive members of the community will guarantee a bright future for both these children and the community at large. Jubilee is committed to changing lives forever and breaking the cycle of generational poverty, which keeps these children from reaching their full potential.

PATH - People Attempting To Help

Executive Director: Cheri Curtin
PO Box 52, York, SC 29745

(803) 684-3992
<http://pathministriesofyorksc.org>

PATH's mission is to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, shelter the homeless, and give financial aid to those in crisis. PATH serves York School District #1, which includes York, Sharon, Hickory Grove, Smyrna, and McConnells. Through a food pantry, a week's supply of

groceries is provided to qualifying households once a month. Financial aid is given for basic needs up to every 4 months (maximum 3 times a year), and this aid would be used for rent, electricity, natural gas, water, prescription medications, and other small qualifying needs. The York Lions Club takes referrals through us for optometric care, and two dentists here provide emergency care to clients when PATH calls. PATH has its own thrift store to provide clothing and household needs every two months to each client who has a need.

RURAL MISSION, INC.

Executive Director: Linda D. Gadson
PO Box 235
3429 Camp Care Road, Johns Island, SC 29457
843-768-1720

info@ruralmission.org
lindagadson@ruralmission.org
www.ruralmission.org
Also on Facebook

The Rural Mission is in its 41st year of serving the needs of the low income families, children, the elderly, and migrants in the rural Sea Islands area near Charleston. The Mission provides faith, a hand up, and a chance to overcome poverty, hardship, and crisis.

The Mission, its staff, and volunteers serve through the operation of the Migrant Headstart Program for migrant children and their families in Charleston and Colleton Counties. Low income substandard homes are repaired, rehabbed, and replaced through the Housing Workcamp Program. Hardship assistance is provided in many forms for daily basic needs. The Mission's prayer ministry serves those in need of comfort, encouragement, and spiritual growth. A place and a calling exist for all who wish to serve and volunteer, regardless of age or skills.

Please go to www.ruralmission.org to learn more and to be a part of the Rural Mission ministry as a friend and supporter or as a volunteer answering the call to missions. The rural Sea Islands offer a unique setting and experience for all to grow in faith and maturity.

THE COASTAL SAMARITAN COUNSELING CENTER (CSCC)

Executive Director: The Reverend Kathy T. Heustess, MSW, LISW-CP
901 North Kings Highway (at FUMC)
Myrtle Beach, SC 29577
Phone: (843) 448-4820 Fax: (843) 448-9875

www.coastalsamaritan.org
executivedirector@coastalsamaritan.org

The CSCC mission is to assist people on their journey toward healing and wholeness. The CSCC ministers to individuals, couples, and families in crisis through affordable pastoral counseling, education, and consultation.

CSCC also promotes and maintains close associations with various churches, faith communities, and clergy in the Grand Strand area. Assisting area business, non-profit, and ministry leaders, the CSCC offers relevant educational and consultative services to help create, strengthen, and sustain a culture of excellence that is needed in today's postmodern world.

While CSCC's main office is in the heart of Myrtle Beach at First United Methodist Church, CSCC offers eight convenient satellite locations around the Grand Strand. Beyond these local connections, CSCC is affiliated with a national network of faith-based counseling centers called The Samaritan Institute. The Samaritan Institute accredits counseling centers which have a theological purpose, offer basic counseling services, utilize a holistic perspective, and require staff to have professional credentials. The Institute's mission is to help affiliated centers provide team-oriented, cost-efficient counseling, education, and consultation which emphasize the interrelatedness of mind, body, spirit, and community.

THE TRACY JACKSON PROGRAM OF GIFT

Director: Mary Lou Edens, UMC Deaconess
PO Box 606, Abbeville 29620

Phone: 864-366-8517
marylouumd@yahoo.com

The Tracy Jackson Program of GIFT has a mission to feed the bodies, minds, and spirits of children. GIFT provides a free summer day camp experience, including free breakfast and free lunch and activities when school is not in session.

In the summer of 2013 GIFT served an average of 225 breakfasts a day and 322 lunches a day to children in Abbeville County and in the city of Anderson. In Abbeville over 60% of the public school children get free or reduced priced meals at school; in the Anderson area, it is over 94%.

For some of the children, their first knowledge of God is the grace said at meals in the GIFT program and through the care of the site workers.

The GIFT motto is "We do it for the children." The prayer is to serve Christ by serving God's children.

UNITED METHODIST VOLUNTEERS IN MISSION-

South Carolina UMVIM-SC

www.umvim-sc.org

UMVIM began as a vision that ordinary people could make an extraordinary difference in the world. South Carolina is proudly the home of these visionaries and the beginning of this amazing ministry that is now worldwide and supported by many Conferences across the United States. It has also served as the model for other denominations as they have followed the lead to create hands on ministries through the years.

Today UMVIM is men and women who are adventurous in their faith. They yearn to not only serve Christ, but also to serve Him in new and exciting ways. They want to broaden their horizons of faith as well as the height and breadth of their lives. They want to go where the need is greatest and meet that need with faith, hope, and love.

UMVIM is a fellowship of believers – lay and clergy, men and women, adults and youth – who have stepped out in faith to serve the needs of communities around the world.

UMVIM consists of people just like you, who have felt and followed the call of Christ in their lives to go out into the world to share this vision and spread the Gospel of Christ through actively working to ease the burdens of others through construction, medical clinics, evangelism, VBS, and many other means.

Acting as the hands and feet of Christ, UMVIM missionaries help others at home and throughout the world through activities such as construction and medical. Whether it is building a chapel in the Philippines or building and staffing an eye clinic in Haiti, the men and women of UMVIM strive to put shoe leather on their faith. There are multiple opportunities for short term or long term service, and opportunities year round in many places.

UMVIM meets monthly (except in June and July) on the first Tuesday of each month at Leesville UMC, in Leesville, SC, at 7:30 p.m. All are invited to attend, even those who have not participated in UMVIM before.

UNITED MINISTRIES OF GREENVILLE

Executive Director: Keith Trout
606 Pendleton Street, Greenville, SC 29601

(864)232-6463
www.united-ministries.org

United Ministries was founded as Greenville Urban Ministries in June 1970 by the South Carolina Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church. It was chartered as an Inter-denominational non-profit organization in 1974 and became known as United Ministries in 1982. United Ministries' mission is to provide life changing opportunities and advocacy for people who lack education or employment skills, who are in financial crisis, or who are homeless, and to provide this advocacy for those who can help.

A direct service agency intently focused on solutions to poverty and homelessness, United Ministries offers financial assistance with rent and utility bills, heating and cooling assistance, medication for life-threatening illnesses, food, day shelter services, case management, job training, job placement, a free GED program, and advocacy.

WALLACE FAMILY LIFE CENTER (WFLC)

Shipping: 574 Old Wire Road West
Mailing: P.O. Box 56 Wallace, SC 29596

843-479-7991
<http://wflc.tripod.com>

The WFLC is a family oriented facility. Its mission is to provide educational, cultural, recreational, and religious programs to enrich the lives of the people who live in the Wallace/Bennettsville communities.

The following programs are currently offered: Adult Education for those desiring to complete their high school education; Arts and Crafts classes for adults to engage in various projects; Homemakers' Club for the discussion of relevant issues such as Power of Attorney and offered through a partnership with the local Clemson Extension Office; After School Program Tutoring and Enrichment operating Monday-Friday for 25 scholars; Summer Reading Program/Children Defense Fund Freedom Schools program, for 25 to 30 scholars during the summer months, provides learning in a safe and fun environment; Youth Council for youths ages 12-18 to help them to become more active citizens in the community; and one week of Vacation Bible School at the end of the Summer Reading Program.

Other Ministries, Programs

- Scouting (Girls and Boys): Retired leaders and volunteers are welcome to join and help out'
- Food Pantry (all donations are welcomed): Community food drive is held every year at the Center and BI-LO in Bennettsville, SC.

- Clothes Closet (accepting items year round): Gentle used clothing/towels provided for those in need.
- Operation Christmas Child (call today for details): The opportunity to share with a needy child and his/her family during the Christmas Holiday.

ALDERSGATE SPECIAL NEEDS MINISTRY

"My People will live in peaceful dwelling places, in secure homes, in undisturbed places of rest." (Is.32:18)

It was an exciting year for Aldersgate Special Needs Ministry (ASNM). In its year twelve, it was blessed with support from many directions. As a helping ministry under the umbrella of the South Carolina Annual Conference, it is dependent on churches, classes, choirs, companies, corporations and compassionate, caring individuals to grow and support its services.

In its first 10 years, it was enabled to build two houses that have become home for a dozen adult special needs persons. This resource has come at a time when there is a growing need for care of persons not able to care for themselves. Their caregivers, usually parents or other relatives, have given loving care to keep them in the homes where they have grown up. But there comes a time when the circumstances of the aging of those loving family members and changing needs of the special needs persons reach their limits. A different kind of care is needed, and there are fewer and fewer choices, as State and Federal services decrease.

This year Aldersgate partnered with a family looking for a way to honor the memory of a special needs family member, and, with The United Methodist Manor of The Pee Dee, which made available a site, the gifts of a number of individuals, churches, and groups will enable "Rick's House" to open its doors to become home for four special needs men in the Pee Dee. Located at 3700 Hamer Circle on the perimeter of The Methodist Manor of The Pee Dee in Florence, the physical facility was completed at the end of February 2015. Mrs. Kathleen Baskin, mother of Frederick "Rick" Howard DeBerry, Jr., along with other family members made contributions that enabled this opening to happen.

A Dedication of "Rick's House" is set for April 19, 2015, at 2:30 p.m. at the home.

Additional gifts from churches, groups, and individual donors are being received to complete the furnishing of the house as well as to provide start up funds for recruiting, training, and hiring staff members. Several persons are ready to become residents.

This third house built in 12 years, joining the Columbia Builder's Care Home, which houses six women at 731 Sims Avenue near the Epworth campus and Aldersgate at The Oaks, housing six men on the campus of The Oaks in Orangeburg, will be home to four additional men. We will make a small dent in the need. It is a good start.

Churches of the Annual Conference are reminded to participate in **ALDERSGATE SPECIAL NEEDS MINISTRY SUNDAY, AUGUST 9, 2015**. Please let your congregations know ASNM is here and give them a chance to make a contribution, however large or small. The opportunities are great. The needs are great. Pray that we can grow in our ability to make the most of the opportunities and to meet the needs.

For information, check the Conference web site or contact Betty Moss McGuirt, Chairperson of ASNM, at: mmcguirt@sc.rr.com or 843-237-8040. Envelopes, brochures, and speakers can be yours.

To God be the glory!

Betty Moss McGuirt, Chairperson

EPWORTH CHILDREN'S HOME

Epworth Children's Home has completed 119 years of providing residential care for children from South Carolina who cannot remain in their own homes. The primary goal of this Annual Conference mission is to provide a safe, nurturing, faith centered residential environment where children who are not able to remain in their homes receive the best possible care and are prepared to lead wholesome and productive lives.

During this Conference year Epworth Children's Home accomplished the following:

- I. Completed the first full year of operation of the Performance and Quality Improvement Department (PQI) that will keep Epworth on the cutting edge of providing quality childcare to residents and their families. The Duke Endowment awarded Epworth a three year grant of \$190,000 to launch the new PQI initiative. The PQI

department is designed to promote evidence based practices and measure all outcomes by objective standards.

- II. Celebrated the first full year of serving the residents of the Midlands Family Care Center, which is a ground breaking venture for helping children stay with their mothers during a time when mothers and children would normally be separated. Epworth, in partnership with Lexington Richland Alcohol and Drug Abuse Council and in coordination with the SC. Department of Social Services is providing residential care and services for mothers who are in danger of having their children removed from their homes. A grant from the Duke Endowment is providing start up funding for this program.
 - III. Continued to create a culture of success which is reflected in the following statistics for the third year in a row: 100% of Epworth's high school students graduated and were accepted into institutions of higher learning; 76% of residents had no failing grades; 97% of residents had two or fewer behavior referrals; 50% of residents earned academic honor roll at their schools; 88% of residents maintained a "C" average or better.
 - IV. For the second year in a row received the coveted 4-star rating from Charity Navigator for sound fiscal management and commitment to accountability and transparency. Charity Navigator is the leading charity evaluator in America. The 4-star rating is the highest rating awarded.
 - V. Averaged 88 children per day in the residential population plus supported 11 higher education students who lived off campus. In addition, the Epworth Early Intervention (EEI) program averaged 14 children per week in a preschool program. This program serves children who experience developmental delays. The EEI program also served 37 families on a regular basis through its home based component. One hundred fifty children were served at any given time through this program.
 - VI. Began year eight of a Funds Development Plan that includes the goal of increasing per church member giving to a minimum of \$6.00 per member. The per member giving average for 2014 was \$7.19. Church giving increased by \$72,868 in 2011; increased by \$109,541.59 in 2012; and increased by \$22,000 in 2013. Total giving increased in 2013 by \$102,887 and by \$204,878 in 2014. The number of churches that failed to respond to Epworth's financial appeals for children increased from 213 to 226. There were 358 churches that met or exceeded the minimum of \$6.00 per member average. This is an increase of .92 cents per member from 2013. A complete report can be located at www.epworthchildreshome.org.
 - VII. Adopted a budget of \$5,878,469 for the fiscal year 1-1-15 through 12-31-15. This includes \$90,000 in Title I funds, and grants from the City of Columbia and from Richland County for the Independent Living Initiative.
 - VIII. The Epworth Board of Trustees continued the policy of reducing the amount drawn from the endowment and transferred to budget expenditures by \$200,000 each year until the maximum draw is 5% or below per year. The difference in the amount drawn from the endowment and operating costs has to date been covered by a combination of reducing operating costs and by increasing revenue and donations. The endowment draw has been reduced by \$1,100,000 per year. The goal of a draw of 5% or less was achieved again this year.
 - IX. Continued to be accredited by EAGLE Accreditation Commission of the United Methodist Association. The EAGLE accreditation is effective for the period of five (5) years, July 2010 through July 2015.
- The United Methodist Association serves more than 380 health and human service organizations and professionals nationwide. The Educational Assessment Guidelines Leading toward Excellence or EAGLE accreditation involves meeting a set of high standards that are designed to enhance the governance of and the quality of services provided by an institution.
- X. Continued to expand the Higher Education Program by adding resources to the Supervised Independent Living Initiative. This program is designed to serve youth between the ages of seventeen (17) and twenty-one (21) who are "aging out" of child care, yet need limited supervision, guidance, and a home as they learn job skills and transition into the adult world.
 - XI. At the time this report was written, the firm of DeLoach and Williamson, LLP, was conducting the annual independent audit; thus, no audit information was available. By the time this report is published, the audit information should be available at www.epworthchildrenshome.org.
 - XII. Thirty-nine percent of Epworth's income is generated from a combination of state and federal money and fees for service payments. This amount is far lower than most other

homes. It is largely through the generosity of South Carolina United Methodists that once again Epworth has been able to provide over four million dollars in fully subsidized services to children and families in South Carolina.

John E. Holler, Jr., President, CEO

THE METHODIST MANOR

The Methodist Manor mission is to provide an extraordinary continuing care community offering exceptional selection of living option and personalized services. We recognize that aging is a normal process which people experience in different ways. We want to provide a lifestyle that enhances the quality of life for each person, wherever he or she may be in that process. We continually strive to create an independent and secure living environment that encourages enriching and fulfilling lives through the practice of self-determination.

Methodist Manor opened its doors in December 1991 guided by traditional values, and a strong commitment to service, hospitality, community, friendship, and care. Residents enjoy a lifestyle that embraces spiritual, social, emotional, and physical well-being. The community campus is located in Florence, South Carolina. The Manor offers independent living in the form of patio homes and spacious one or two bedroom apartments; assisted living suites for those looking a supportive environment; Magnolia Terrace for dementia, memory support, and Alzheimer Care; and the Healthcare Center, which provides skilled nursing care. Home Health services as well as additional programs are designed to provide personal assistance to residents and enable them to retain their independence longer in the comfort and privacy of their independent home or apartment.

Methodist Manor is a 501(c)(3) Corporation, a not for profit senior living community. The Manor currently serves about 230 residents. It is guided and directed by Methodist Manor Board of Trustees, elected through the SC Annual Conference and that works closely with the management company, executive director, and staff to ensure support and continual strategic planning for the growth of current and future residents' needs of Methodist Manor. The Manor is continuously upgrading and refurbishing its accommodations to maintain the level of quality expected by people seeking retirement housing. A number of services, activities, and programs enhance the residents' quality of life. The Manor embraces a customer-focused model for service delivery that redirects the variety of services and amenities being provided so that residents' choices and conveniences are incorporated. Methodist Manor regularly offers enriching cultural programs and entertainment, along with organized programs such as shopping and sight-seeing excursions, intergenerational programs, and a variety of fitness and wellness programs. A superior dining service offer a culinary trained chef and professional staff who deliver an elegant dining experience to our residents. The Manor provides numerous offerings, multiple dining options, expansive service hours, and special events and catering services.

The South Carolina Methodist Conference contributes monies to the Residents' Financial Assistance fund. These funds are used by the Manor to assist those residents whose resources have been depleted and are now not adequate to meet their monthly service fees. The Manor provided assistance to six residents during the year of 2014, totaling \$108,458.00. We would like to request \$109,000.00 for the year 2015 to be able to cover the cost of their current assistance, rent increases, and meal costs for these eight residents.

With continued leadership from the Methodist Manor Board of Trustees, management, and staff, we are committed to providing a lifestyle that enhances the quality of life for each person. We continually strive to create an independent and secure living environment that encourages enriching and fulfilling lives through the practice of self-determination for our current population and future older adults.

John Orr, Chairman, Trustees

Teresa L. Tabor, Executive Director, Methodist Manor

THE MINISTRY AND MISSION OF THE OAKS

Mission Statement

Our mission is to provide superior retirement living Continuing Care and a working environment that nourishes the human spirit and preserves personal dignity by addressing the whole person in an atmosphere which witnesses Christian values and love.

The Oaks was established in 1953 and opened with the first ten residents in 1954 at its main campus just south of Orangeburg, SC. Today, the Oaks serves more than 500 residents and clients on its main campus, at its PACE facility in Orangeburg, and in the greater Orangeburg community. On the main campus, the Oaks provides several active Independent Living options, Assisted Living and Skilled Nursing Care as well as Rehabilitative Services. As the retirement environment has changed, the Oaks has expanded its services and where and how it provides them.

The Program of All-inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE) provides holistic medical and health-related care to poor, frail, elderly clients in the greater Orangeburg community and is operated in a modern day facility located at 153 Founders Court, Orangeburg, SC. PACE is currently serving 139 participants and has been approved to expand into Bamberg County when more Medicaid slots become available from the state.

Live@Home Choices provides services that improve quality of life and allow clients to stay in their homes and communities longer and more independently than they would be able to on their own. Home care and in-home technology in concert make the program work.

On campus, the Oaks offers many activities that nourish residents and clients physically, mentally, and spiritually. These activities are now available to the community through the Passport to the Oaks, which allows these clients who do not live on our campus to participate in activities and use facilities such as the swimming pool and fitness center. Live@Home Choices is also available on campus, allowing residents to stay in the Independent Living and Assisted Living options longer. As part of the Oaks broader Christian mission, space and support have been provided for the first Aldersgate Home in South Carolina. Aldersgate Special Needs Ministry is a ministry of the South Carolina Conference of the United Methodist Church that provides residence and support for adults with developmental disabilities. The Oaks site provides for 6 male residents.

The Oaks is a 501(c)(3) corporation, which is a not-for-profit charitable and religious organization. It is directed by the Oaks Board of Trustees which is a 21-member board consisting mainly of South Carolina United Methodist clergy and laity. Each board member is qualified before being asked to serve, resulting in each member bringing particular skills to benefit the Oaks. The Board of Trustees is committed to the mission of the Oaks and works closely with the Chief Executive Officer and his staff to look strategically at the Oaks future. The Board of Trustees, Executive Committee and Finance Committee meet at least quarterly to monitor the status and review the direction of the Oaks. Sub-committees of the board meet regularly throughout the year, ranging from committees that consider services offered to board governance issues. In addition, annual planning sessions are held with the board of trustees and executive and senior staff to determine the future direction of the Oaks.

We are excited about our new Oaks ARMS (Alzheimer's, Respite, Memory Support) Adult Day Center at The Oaks which is open and is serving participants. This program will care for 24 dementia participants from the Orangeburg Area. In the near future, The Oaks will bring on line a 31-bed Assisted Living Dementia unit for those persons who need the specialized care.

Our new Home Health Service and a physician office located on our campus along with an audiologist, podiatrist, and optician provide convenient health care services for our residents.

The Oaks offers a discount on move-in fees to retired Methodist pastors and continues to assist residents who have outlived their resources. The generous apportionment of the SC Conference of The United Methodist Church helps greatly with this effort, and The Oaks is most appreciative.

Our new 11 acre Lake is part of our long range plans to enhance our amenities as we develop new living options for our residents of the future. At 11 acres, stocked with fish, the Lake is large enough for canoes, kayaks, small sail boats, as well as our Oaks Yacht Club. Offering myriad outdoor activities for residents and groups such as Scouts, students, and naturalists, the Lake is a major element in our planned cottage expansion.

As the retirement environment and the needs of those individuals who are served continue to change, the Oaks will remain committed to its ministry and mission and provide new and innovative services to do so. If you are not already familiar with the Oaks, we invite you to contact us, visit our facilities, and find out more about our services.

The Reverend Charlie Thomas, Chairperson of Board of Trustees

WESLEY COMMONS

On behalf of our residents, customers, employees, and board members, we want to thank the South Carolina United Methodist Conference for its continued support of our mission.

Fiscal Year 2014 marked another year of continued progress of our programs and services. We currently serve over 400 residents on our campus. We are very pleased to see our campus

occupancy continuing to grow from a steady migration of retirees from across the country. With more than two-thirds of our residents moving to Wesley Commons from more than 100 miles away, we have re-engineered our services and amenities to accommodate this booming population. Involvement with our resident committees allows us to continuously fine tune the scope of our offerings for the present while we prepare for the future.

With the continued success of our Wellness and Healthy Lifestyle Programs, our campus has remained vibrant and active. Our enhanced wellness complex continues to serve over 250 customers, not including a significant number of employees, every week. Class types range from weightlifting and water aerobics to yoga and massage. Aquatic Therapy is also available through our extensive rehabilitation program by skilled physical and/or occupational therapists. Approximately 60% of our independent living residents participate in over 30 different classes each week and roughly 32% of our assisted living residents participate in our programs as well. The Skilled Nursing Facility also participates via satellite Wellness Programs and Moving Masters through the coordination of our Therapy Department and Certified Recreational Therapist. Participation in our wellness programs has added more than improved health for our residents; it has sparked a youthful energy and excitement felt campus wide.

To continue and maintain our growth and lifestyle offerings, we are finalizing plans for expanded and unique dining venues, culinary experiences, and services. Our already active outdoor recreation areas will soon be expanded for opportunities such as pickle ball, bocce ball, picnic/grill areas, and other outdoor spaces for activity and socializing. We are also fine tuning plans for a state of the art inpatient rehabilitation program, to include a new therapy gymnasium, long term care facility as well as plans for additional community living, assisted living and special care homes and apartments.

We are extremely happy to share that we are preparing to break ground on another significant expansion of services and offerings at Wesley Commons. Our latest expansion will touch every area of our campus. The first phase of our plans will add another restaurant venue to our Residential Living Campus with new indoor and outdoor offerings. Concurrently, we will build another assisted living house in our Palmetto Place neighborhood to enable our ability to serve many currently on waiting lists for that service. The last and largest part of the expansion in our first phase will be the creation of a new medical/wellness campus designed to house a new, exceptionally unique post-acute rehabilitation facility and a long term skilled nursing home. Our challenge, which we remain vigilant to overcome, is to design these exceptional programs to be affordable and viable for a diverse population.

More specifically, our new medical facility will continue to serve a Medicaid and lower income population that are ½ of the entire population served. We believe that, if we can achieve this goal, its success will spread to others, so that in the near future, a skilled nursing home will look and operate nothing like what we have accepted in the past, regardless of one's income.

As we have shared, Wesley Commons received a mandate by the state to reduce the number of low income (Medicaid) patients being served by a significant factor. While we support the state's vision to become fiscally responsible stewards of taxpayer resources, our board and staff stayed true to our heritage of care and refused to turn our backs on those who called Wesley Commons home. To that end, the state imposed a significant fine on Wesley Commons for not turning our backs on those most in need. While this state action is a setback in our ability to continue our mission of care to an economically diverse population, we have a renewed passion to seek new and better ways to serve those in need, regardless of the changing headwinds.

As you can see, our ministry to serve our older brothers and sisters continues to grow as a result of our expanding programs. In 2014, Wesley Commons provided over \$1,200,000 of subsidized care. We are grateful for the support of the Methodist Conference in its allocation of just over \$180,000 towards assisting those in need. The support of the Conference and other private donors enables Wesley Commons to provide support for many in need.

Wesley Commons', Methodist Oaks', and Methodist Manor's need for support will only increase as our communities continue to grow and, conversely, our state and federal funding for our nation's seniors continues to be reduced. Wesley Commons' current level of support is extremely taxing on our resources. Our ongoing Ministry will not be possible without the constant support of our friends, such as the Conference. We thank you for your continued financial support of those who built our great nation and deserve our fullest attention.

In His Interest,

*The Reverend James F. Patterson, Chairman
David B. Buckshorn, President/CEO*

CLAFLIN UNIVERSITY

University Highlights

Recognized as one of the nation's leading liberal arts institutions, Claflin University sustained its commitment to provide an environment for high quality living and learning with a plethora of inspirational and motivational events. The spiritual life of the campus continues to be enhanced and uplifted with traditional activities that included the University's official kick-off of its Young Clergy Initiative during the revered Granville Hicks Leadership Academy for Laity and Clergy.

Claflin University was ranked for the 16th consecutive year by *U.S. News and World Report* in 2014. The University was also ranked the number one liberal arts college in South Carolina and among historically black colleges or universities in the nation by *Washington Monthly* in its 2014 Best Liberal Arts Colleges rankings. Claflin was once again ranked one of the top colleges in the nation by *Forbes.com*. Claflin University also ranked first among HBCUs on the *U.S. News and World Report* Short List for its 52.2% alumni giving rate.

Dr. Henry N. Tisdale celebrated his 20th year as president of Claflin University. The Visionary Leadership Gala was held in September in honor of him and his wife, First Lady Alice Carson Tisdale, as well as all 20-year-plus employees of the University. This gala raised nearly \$400,000 for scholarships.

Claflin University was chosen as one of nine HBCUs nationwide to help the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation set about transforming higher education as part of the Foundation's HBCUs Pursuing Transformative Change initiative. The goal is to ensure student access and success at institutions in the 21st century by creating a system of higher education that addresses the challenges students face when transitioning to college.

International students now have the opportunity to learn the English language and culture before beginning their journey to receive an American academic education through Claflin University's new Intensive English Language Program, which was launched this summer. The 12-month, research-based program aims to enable students to improve their English language proficiency rapidly and effectively so that they can adjust to American classroom cultures and university environments.

Emmanuel Pressley, a senior politics and justice studies major from Hemingway, was named Claflin University's first-ever Harry S. Truman Scholar in April – and the only one from South Carolina in 2014. The Truman is a highly competitive, merit-based award offered to U.S. college students who want to go to graduate school in preparation for a career in public service and is considered a steppingstone to other prestigious awards, including the Rhodes Scholarship and the Marshall Scholarship.

In an effort to continue and expand its tradition of access and success, Claflin University launched three fully online degree programs in the fall. Degrees offered through Claflin Online include the Bachelor of Arts in Criminal Justice, the Bachelor of Science in Organizational Management, and the Master of Business Administration. Another new online degree program will be launched in fall of 2015.

For the past four years, Claflin University has participated in the President's Interfaith and Community Service Campus Challenge by offering interfaith forums and awareness events that draw hundreds of student participants. This year's event featured a panel discussion that included representatives from Christian, Buddhist, Islamic and Hindu traditions.

The 22nd annual Granville Hicks Leadership Academy for Laity and Clergy was held February 12-13 in the University's James and Dorothy Z. Elmore Chapel. The two-day event included a panel discussion, worship service, luncheon, workshops, and lectures. The theme for this year's event was "Hurting Communities, Hurting Leaders: Meeting the Next Decade of Challenges in Ministry." Keynote speaker was Rev. Olu Brown, lead pastor of Impact Church in Atlanta, Georgia, who talked about "Developing Next" in ministry and individually.

In addition, this year's Granville Hicks Leadership Academy also served as the official kick-off for Claflin's Young Clergy Initiative. Claflin was awarded a \$100,000 grant from The United Methodist Church's Young Clergy Initiative Fund in the fall to increase the number of potential candidates to become qualified ministers to serve United Methodist churches. The grant will support a recruitment effort and program at the University that is centered on introducing rising high school seniors to the ordained ministry in the UMC, and will foster partnerships involving Claflin and faith communities across the region.

Claflin University celebrated Religious Emphasis Week during February 8-13 in the institution's James and Dorothy Z. Elmore Chapel. Speakers were Dr. Lewis Brogdon, assistant professor of philosophy and religion in Claflin's Department of Philosophy and Religion; Rev. Kevyn J. Amos, University chaplain; Rev. Connie Barnes, director of the Wesley Foundation; and Rev. Darvin A. Adams, visiting pastor from Toledo, Ohio.

Additionally, Clafin continues to offer Sunday services at the James and Dorothy Z. Elmore chapel and a mid-week "Pour Hour" service featuring speakers from the campus and community each Wednesday evening. The chapel remains a place where visitors can seek refuge, meditation, and spiritual growth.

COLUMBIA COLLEGE

Recognized by *U.S. News and World Report* as a best value institution and ranked among the best regional universities in the South, Columbia College is a dynamic learning and living community, where students, faculty, and staff work together to build leaders our communities need most.

Since our founding 161 years ago by the South Carolina United Methodist Conference, Columbia College has supported and encouraged young women in their pursuit of a quality education. The College is known for its emphasis on leadership and service and is home to a nationally renowned honors program led by the 2010-2011 United States Professor of the Year.

This past year we fully implemented and started seeing results of exciting new initiatives to foster the next generation of leaders. Our Institute for Leadership and Professional Excellence assures that every student has a personalized plan to transition from college to her career. Beginning in her first year, each student has a personal board of directors comprised of an academic advisor, a career counselor, and a community mentor. This intensive mentoring is combined with a progressive plan of professional development and applied learning. Every student gets real-world experience through internships so that when she graduates she is ready to further her education or to begin a fulfilling career.

To make this experience possible for deserving young women, we offer many scholarships including the Momentum Scholarship for young women with big dreams who are motivated to realize their fullest potential. Our Momentum Scholarship recipients are involved in their high schools, in the community, and in their churches. They are academically accomplished and have a personal determination that might outshine their standardized test scores.

More than 25% of our students are scholar/athletes participating in 10 conference sports. Our athletes are the current NAIA National Champions of Character, receiving the highest award in the country for their performance on and off the field.

Young women arrive at Columbia College from many backgrounds and interests, yet they share one common trait: they are serious about making a change for the better—in their own lives and in their communities.

We are confident that our initiatives will further enhance the value of a Columbia College education. New scholarship programs help us make that value available to more bright, ambitious, and talented young women for whom Columbia College is the right college choice.

Faith continues to be an important part of Columbia College. It forms the values and principles by which every member of the College community lives and works each day. Guided by our Chaplain and Director of Church Relations, Reverend Roy Mitchell, we live our beliefs and strive always to be people of character and commitment and advocate for social justice and service to the community. We hold weekly chapel services for students, faculty, and staff, with a wide variety of speakers from various backgrounds.

In 2014, we dedicated a new sacred space on campus: Mitzi's Prayer Labyrinth & Meditation Garden. When Mitzi Winesett '70 passed away in 2012, after a lengthy battle with cancer, Columbia College lost a beloved staff member, alumna, and friend. Thanks to the generosity of Southern Mutual Church Insurance and the many friends and family members Mitzi left behind, Columbia College has preserved her legacy through a quiet place of spiritual reflection. This beautiful space also serves as the location for a new monthly "Community Prayer Time."

The theme for our weekly chapel services for fall 2014 was "Care of the Earth," and we focused on ecology and the environment. For spring 2015, the theme is "Women of the Bible." This semester, students can also participate in a student-led Bible study on "Anonymous Women of the Bible." Columbia College will connect with the Methodist Student Network at the University of South Carolina in March, and our Heavenly Creations Gospel Choir will provide music for worship.

We deeply value our connection to the United Methodist Church, and to further nurture that relationship, Reverend Mitchell organized Columbia College Day in thirteen churches across the state this past year. Incorporated into regular Sunday services, these days recognize alumnae and family connections in United Methodist churches throughout South Carolina.

I have the opportunity to speak with the congregations we visit about Columbia College and thank them for their apportionments to the four UMC colleges of South Carolina. I share information about the UMC Foundation Dollars for Scholars Program and make congregations

aware that Columbia College will also match any Methodist Scholarship from a church or the Conference up to \$1,000, thus their scholarship dollars can be tripled.

Thank you to the SC United Methodist Conference for the support you give us in so many ways. We are doing great things with education ministry at Columbia College, and I am excited about our direction. We are continuing Columbia College's longstanding commitment to community engagement, social justice, and learning through service to others, as we educate women to be confident leaders who will positively change their own lives and the lives of others.

Elizabeth A. Dinndorf, President

SPARTANBURG METHODIST COLLEGE (SMC)

As a partner in ministry with the South Carolina Conference of The United Methodist Church and as one of the Conference's worthy missions, SMC is proud of living into the United Methodist connection in meaningful ways. We are excited to share the following updates with you from the 2014-15 academic year:

- **Strategic Planning.** SMC completed its most recent strategic planning process and is implementing initiatives that follow four themes: Expanding Impact; Engaging Students; Transforming Spaces; and Developing People. Under consideration are these initiatives: looking at new academic programs; updating facilities; providing expanded learning opportunities and training for faculty, staff and students. SMC will continue her mission to bring a quality college experience to deserving students through our four themes.
- **Success Rate.** Our success rate of 83% defined as students who begin their college career at SMC and then continue on beyond SMC, continues to exceed that of other two-year colleges. The national average is 20%. As a result of this success rate, colleges like Wofford College and the College of Charleston have established bridge programs with SMC, and others have stepped up their recruitment of our students for senior college completion. SMC maintains strong articulation agreements with a long list of four-year colleges and works to provide seamless transfer opportunities.
- **United Methodist Support for Students:** 5.1% (35 students) of the student body at SMC receive United Methodist scholarship support, including two dependents of United Methodist clergy members. Funds include the United Methodist Higher Education Foundation (Dollars for Scholars and Foundation Scholarships) as well as funding from the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry (UM allocation, UM general scholarships, and UM private loan fund). This support is above and beyond the very generous apportionment funding SMU receives as a mission of the South Carolina Conference.
- **Academic Program.** SMU has searches underway for three faculty members in English, Economics/Business, and Mathematics. These new colleagues will join a vibrant faculty that includes 57% (26) with the terminal degree in their fields. Several faculty members have active research lives in addition to teaching freshman and sophomore-level classes and invite students to participate in research with them. We are pleased to have awarded tenure to psychology professor Dr. Mary Jane Farmer this academic year.
- **Commitment to Service and Worship.** SMC was once again named to the national President's Honor Roll for Service for the fifth consecutive year. Under the guidance of Rev. Candice Sloan, Chaplain of the College and Director of Church Relations, the SMC community provided over 6,000 hours of service in Spartanburg and elsewhere. In addition, Rev. Sloan provides outstanding worship and reflection opportunities for the campus community, including a special program on faith formation in the Fall 2014 semester, a program which served as her project for the completion of her Doctor of Ministry degree from Wesley Theological Seminary. We look forward to addressing Rev. Sloan as "Rev. Dr. Candice Sloan" in the near future.
- **Fundraising.** SMU completed its \$15 million "Pioneering the Future: The Centennial Campaign for Spartanburg Methodist College" in April 2014 and is now working on fundraising for projects that support the "Transforming Spaces" theme from our strategic planning work. Chief among those projects are facilities for teaching science, programs to better engage students, residence hall updates, and fitness facilities for all of our students to use.
- **Athletics.** The athletic program continues its outstanding success, with baseball and softball achieving national rankings prior to their seasons. If you haven't taken in a Pioneer athletic event, you need to!

Among some very special news, SMC History Professor Dr. Katherine Cann and former SMC President Rev. Dr. George Fields published a book in October 2014: *Turning Point: The American Revolution in the Spartan District*. According to the publishers (Hub City Press), the book tells the story of how inexperienced backcountry militiamen in the Old Spartan District bottled up the British and learned how to defeat a seasoned foe. As a bonus, there's a guide to the Spartanburg Revolutionary War Trail, a driving tour of twelve spots in the Spartan District that were central to the American victory.

Thank you for your continued support of our mission at SMC.

Respectfully submitted,

Colleen Perry Keith, Ph.D. President of the College

WOFFORD COLLEGE

At Wofford College the 2014-15 academic year has been marked by incredible vision, planning, and growth. In October the Board of Trustees approved the Strategic Vision document, which lays the framework for Wofford's continuing quest to be a premier, innovative, and distinctive national liberal arts college defined by excellence, engagement, and transformation in its commitment to prepare superior students for meaningful lives as citizens, leaders, and scholars. We are grateful that the United Methodist Church is our steadfast partner in this mission, and I am thrilled to report that the Strategic Vision is already becoming a reality. The Rosalind S. Richardson Center for the Arts and the Jerry Richardson Indoor Stadium, both scheduled to be complete in the fall of 2017, are exciting projects that will give all of our students, as well as our alumni and the Spartanburg and United Methodist communities, venues to explore and engage the world through Wofford.

In the fall, the college also welcomed the largest class in the college's 160-year history. Many of these first-year students have already studied abroad, completed internships, and formed the type of close-knit relationships that are hallmarks of a Wofford education. The college's student body now exceeds 1,600 students, with 16% of those from United Methodist families. The college's 246 United Methodist students shared in more than \$6.8 million in financial aid this year (100% of the South Carolina Annual Conference's contribution goes toward financial assistance for these deserving students).

One of those students is current senior Palmer Cantler (Class of 2015). Palmer has definitely made the most of her Wofford experience: she has studied abroad, held leadership and service positions on campus, and sung the National Anthem at Wofford sporting events. This spring, Palmer was offered a full scholarship to attend Duke University's Divinity School, where she plans to enroll in the fall. The scholarship includes three paid internships as well. Palmer is just one excellent example of the results of the partnership between Wofford College and the United Methodist Church.

Other examples of recent student successes include four Wofford students who have accepted the Teach for America call and will be working in under-served schools across the country for the next two years: a student who has been selected as a University Innovation Fellow by the National Center for Engineering Pathways to Innovation funded by the National Science Foundation; Truman and Fulbright scholarship finalists who will know more about their postgraduate plans in the late spring; and a student who just had an essay published in *South Carolina Wildlife* magazine.

Recent national publications validate the college's commitment to an affordable and extraordinary student experience. The Princeton Review's new book, *Colleges That Pay You Back: The 200 Best Value Colleges and What It Takes to Get In – 2015 Edition*, praises Wofford for offering students and families a high rate of return on their educational investment. *Kiplinger's Personal Finance* recently included Wofford on its list of the country's best values in private colleges, *U.S. News and World Report* listed Wofford as a top 40 great school at a great price, and the *New York Times* included Wofford among the top 99 most economically diverse top colleges. This means that Wofford is home to students across the income spectrum and that we successfully graduate students in four years so that they may begin to embrace their world.

During their four years at Wofford, our students learn to be servant leaders by engaging in projects in cooperation with the General Board of Global Ministries, the Board of Church and Society, and the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry. Leading these efforts are Perkins-Prothro Chaplain and Professor of Religion, Dr. Ron Robinson, Wofford Class of 1978, and the Rev. Paige Matthews, a 2007 Wofford graduate and minister with young adults and college students at Mauldin United Methodist Church, who recently joined the Wofford campus ministry staff and works with the Wofford Wesley Fellowship one day each week. We are also

pleased to announce that Chaplain Robinson has expanded the services of the Office of the Chaplain to offer coaching to students, faculty, and staff. He's already logged more than 250 hours of coaching in the past year and is completing the credentialing process to become a certified coach in the United Methodist Church.

We invite our friends and partners in the South Carolina Conference of the United Methodist Church to visit us at any time. Come see for yourself all of the good work we are doing together for the students at Wofford College.

Nayef H. Samhat, President

THE CHARLESTON WESLEY FOUNDATION

Charleston Wesley Foundation (CWF) is charged with providing Methodist campus ministry for the campuses of The Citadel, College of Charleston (CofC), Charleston Southern University (CSU), Trident Technical College (TTC), and the Medical University of South Carolina (MUSC). The 2014-15 Conference year has been one of transition for the CWF as the former director, Lisa Hawkins, returned to ministry within the local church, and I took over as director. CWF is grateful for her years of unparalleled nurture and compassion to the students under her care for the past 13 years.

This year has seen the continuation and growth of active ministries at The Citadel and CofC, as well as the founding of an active weekly ministry on the CSU campus. A major development at the Citadel has been the formation of a worship band that leads the musical portion of each week's worship. The music team has also begun to bless several local congregations on Sunday mornings throughout the year. This band, along with the increased efforts of small group table leaders, has led to increased participation at the weekly worship gatherings. The CofC students have begun several weekly prayer meetings to allow more time for those students to gather in the essential ministry of prayer. CSU has moved from periodic participation in joint CWF events to establishing a weekly Bible study.

In addition to the weekly worship gatherings, CWF has engaged in several spiritual growth retreats, including a fall retreat to Lake Wiley, a women's retreat weekend, and a trip to Divine Rhythm in collaboration with the Holston Conference. The various campuses were also brought together regularly through Friday night fellowship dinners at my family's home.

CWF has been very active in witness and mission this year. On several occasions, the students have written letters of thanks and appreciation to other students, professors, school administrators, food staff workers, etc. in an expression of Christian thanksgiving and love. Twenty shoeboxes were collected for Christmas Child. Several outreach events were held in the Citadel barracks to bless the cadets and share God's love within the battalions. CWF participated in a fall and spring mission weekend at Rural Mission on John's Island. We partnered with Winthrop Wesley for the fall event. The weekends allowed the students to help families in desperate need in our local island communities. Finally, the CWF will be embarking on its first international mission trip to Ecuador in support of the Methodist Church in Pijal and the surrounding villages.

The weekly worship and study gatherings, prayer meetings, fellowship gatherings, retreats, and outreach events are bearing spiritual fruit within the participating students. Some of this influence can be seen in four students now considering a call to vocational ministry, two in the military and two in local church settings. Other fruit can be witnessed in the testimony given by the 60+ attendees at our weekly worship and study meetings, or the 800+ students we have connected with through our campus outreach, ecumenical Christian worship, and mission trip events.

While there is much to celebrate, there is still much work to do. It is beyond the ability of one minister to reach so many campuses and students. Much has been done, as mentioned above; however, there are more students who need discipleship and pastoral care than can be cared for. The leadership of TTC specifically has pleaded for us to have a greater presence on the TTC campus. This college's unique setting along with a lack of manpower has led to the stalling of ministry attempts there. The main focus on that campus and MUSC has been connecting seeking students to local UMC congregations during their campus student fairs.

To address these needs, the amazing CWF board of directors and I have devoted much time to developing infrastructure by building up student leadership to be disciples of CWF attendees, by preparing for student interns, and by exploration of how to bring more pastoral care to the Charleston area campuses. Along with these efforts, we have exploring how to plug CWF students into local congregations while they are in Charleston attending college. We are learning valuable lessons along the way.

We could not be where we are today without the office space and meeting space provided by Trinity UMC and Bethel UMC, respectively. Additionally, the monetary donations and food

provided by some of the congregations in the Charleston district are crucial in making the ministry of CWF possible.

In the spirit of faithfulness to Christ's calling upon us as a Church, I pray you will find ever increasing ways to support the Wesley Foundations and college ministry in your local area. The fields are ripe for the harvest if we as a Church are willing to give our prayers, presence, resources, gifts, and witness to these students in our midst.

In Christ,

Aaron Meadows, Director, Campus Pastor

THE CLEMSON WESLEY FOUNDATION

This is a great time to serve in campus ministry. Students at Clemson University and Tri-County Technical College (TCTC) are passionate about loving God. They are equally passionate about serving others. As I wrap up my second year at Clemson Wesley (CW), I wish to celebrate many things with you. CW and Clemson UMC (CUMC) continue to work closely in a covenant relationship to reach the students, faculty, and staff at our local institutions. As in past years, we have connected with over 600 students this school year. Several hundred students call CUMC home for Sunday morning worship, while hundreds more are active in CW.

Over the past year, we had more than 100 students participate in weeklong mission trips to Tuscaloosa, New Orleans, Denver, and Little Rock. In addition to these week-long trips, our students also engage in weekly outreach to the local community. These weekly service opportunities include working at an animal shelter, working in a retirement home, talking with homeless people, and volunteering at a soup kitchen. Students at CW also engage in over 13 different small group opportunities throughout the week. We have two worship services, Evensong and Eventide, which average 80 and 39 in attendance, respectively. In all that we do, CW continues to be a place that welcomes all students as they are, treats them like family, helps them grow in their faith, and finds ways to serve both God and neighbor.

One of the challenges and celebrations of campus ministry is that we must operate with an intense sense of urgency. In my short two years, I have already said goodbye to four different groups of graduates, and because of the dynamic nature of campus ministry, half of my congregation are new students who have arrived after me. Needless to say, there is little time to spare when operating with a 4-year window, at best, to impact the lives of students.

On the flip side, this constant welcome and sending of students creates excitement. Our mission in the UMC is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. There are not many contexts like mine where I literally send 25% of my congregation into the world each year with the hope of greater transformation. Each year we send graduates to seminary or into the candidacy process. Equally as important, each year we send dozens of teachers, nurses, engineers and business people into the world to live and serve others from a gospel perspective. As hard as it is to see these students leave, there is also a great sense of optimism knowing that they are today's new leaders. We are sending them into your communities and churches.

Investing in vital campus ministries that are bearing tangible fruit is an investment in the future of the UMC and the communities we live in. It is my hope that the SC Conference will continue to fund and even increase funding for campus ministries. Bishop Holston encourages us to dream God-sized dreams, and we desperately need God-sized vision for our campus ministries.

Many of you already understand the importance of this great ministry. All that we do at CW would not be possible without all of the Sunday school classes, men's and women's groups, youth pastors, clergy, individuals, and congregations across the Conference who faithfully support Clemson Wesley through apportionments and special gifts. It is an honor to partner with you as we reach out to our young adults on campus.

Rev. Steve Simoneaux, Director, Campus Minister

THE COLUMBIA WESLEY FOUNDATION- METHODIST STUDENT NETWORK

The reign of God is breaking in upon us, even now, Jesus proclaimed. As people are healed, the good news proclaimed, the captives set free, and the blind made to see, the reality of God's healing, reconciling, and transforming power is manifest in our midst. The reign of God is breaking into the lives of students at the University of South Carolina and into the campus ministry called the Methodist Student Network (Wesley Foundation) as we worship, serve each other and especially the "least of these," learn about the mysteries of faith, offer hospitality, work for justice, and work for the full realization of God's rule. The Methodist

Student Network is a Pentecost community of faith comprised of students from many faith traditions, ethnicities, nationalities, and socio-economic backgrounds. It is a community striving to be hospitable to all regardless of background, language, sexual orientation, or maturity of faith. We are young, imperfect but passionate about the spiritual life, and intentional about living out this life in practical and faithful ways. These are some of the signs of the reign of God breaking in among us.

We serve on 11 occasions as a ministry each week. We go daily to the Washington Street Soup Cellar to pour tea, serve food, entertain through music, and offer words of encouragement. We tutor and mentor two times a week after school at the Prosperity Project, a program for at risk, latch key children from Gonzales Gardens. We work four times week with an ESL program for adults and caring for the children in West Columbia. Additionally, we serve on many other occasions and contexts such as Epworth's Children's' Home, the Tucker Center, Rural Mission, Agape, and Harvest Hope.

We are **in mission** a number of times each year. This past year we took five different mission trips to demonstrate and share the gospel in word and deed. We took groups to serve on these occasions for various lengths of time to Detroit to do urban ministry through the Cass Community Center and UMC. We also traveled to the Sea Islands twice to aid in the work with Rural Mission. Over spring break we went on mission to Missaulli, Ecuador, where we performed a variety service including offering a dental and optometry clinic. In May we traveled to Toronto, Canada, to work with the L'arche Community serving the mentally and physically challenged.

About 80 students gather in small groups throughout the week to support one another and to **learn more about their faith**. We have two freshman groups, several coed groups, a graduate group, and Bible/theology study groups, and a group geared to international students just beginning to explore the Christian faith. We also have a men's and a women's group. We have based these groups on a Covenant Discipleship model. This year we held four retreats involving some 200 students to allow concentrated time for building the community and intentionally connecting with God.

We **worship** Sunday evening in a lively and joyous manner, utilizing the various gifts of students and a diversity of traditions from the global church. Afterwards, we eat together a meal donated by a local United Methodist church or prepared by our students. We include elements of worship in other settings including the small groups.

The Campus Ministry Center is a place of **hospitality** where many students gather to socialize, eat, study, and meet to talk. It is also home to other groups and ministries. We have a dinner group for internationals that meets bi weekly and continue to work with students and other religious organizations to build interfaith relations. The Table of Abraham was one of the projects we sponsored.

We offer sincere thanks to all the people and churches that support this connectional ministry. This ministry would not be possible without this support. We thank the Board members, local churches, Sunday School classes, and UM Men's and Women's groups. We are grateful that they are so helpful. And, of course, I offer thanks to my students and staff. They are what make us as vital and dynamic as we are. Thanks be to God for all of you.

*Tom Wall- United Methodist Campus Minister
Columbia Wesley Foundation Director*

THE FRANCIS MARION WESLEY FOUNDATION

This had been a year of transition for the Wesley Foundation at Francis Marion University. The Wesley Foundation, known on the FMU campus as Alive in Christ, began the year with a new student leadership team and a new campus director. We came together as a team with new and old ideas, and have been successful in carrying out many of them.

To help publicize Alive in Christ our student leadership made sure that we were represented in the student organizational fairs held on campus in August and then again in January. Plans are underway to further publicize our group by participating in the Unity event again this year. This is a program that involves all Christian groups on campus. Our student leaders have done a great job of inviting new students to our group, as well as the other students in our group.

We kept the previous logo with "Live, Love and Learn" along with the tree. We spent time talking about Love this year because the students picked domestic violence as a social justice topic for discussion.

One of the challenges for the group is our meeting space. We borrow a classroom each week on campus. Everything we need for the evening has to be brought in, since we have no storage space on the campus. The whole room has to be rearranged each time by the students for our program and then returned like we found it.

We meet on Monday nights for food, fellowship and a time of Bible study. This semester attendance on Mondays averages around 25 students per week. The program is reaching approximately 65 students overall. Churches in the Florence District and one church in the Marion District have been supportive by providing suppers for us for which we are greatly appreciative. We have had wonderful speakers share with us on Monday nights, too. Other activities that have provided fellowship time along with a time of spiritual formation have been through off campus activities. One off campus activity was a retreat to Asbury Hills this winter. This retreat was a weekend full of team building activities, spiritual reflection and service. In addition, a group met one Saturday morning for a kayaking trip, which most of them had never experienced before. Activities are being planned to raise funds to support a local women's shelter for abused women. Also, a Saturday mission day is planned in Florence, along with plans to volunteer another Saturday at the local animal shelter.

One of the first comments that I heard from a student about Alive in Christ was, "this is my family and my church". These students are a diverse group of compassionate, open, loving students. They come together to support each other. For many of the students in our group it is the first time anyone from their family has gone to college.

I'm thankful and grateful for all those who have supported us whether it was praying, giving financially, providing transportation, bringing food, or with words of support. I'm also grateful for the opportunity to walk along beside these students on their spiritual journey while at FMU and to serve God in this way.

Blessings,

Lou Jordan, Campus Director

FURMAN WESLEY FELLOWSHIP

One of our goals at Furman Wesley Fellowship is to be a place where students are invited to be themselves, a place where all are invited to wrestle with beliefs that may be challenged by the campus life, and a place where we are invited into a relationship with God and one another. Furman Wesley seeks to be a place to "*Be, Belong, Engage, and Connect.*"

In our winter newsletter I wrote about being on campus at random times and on random days, and hearing my students say, "*What are you doing here?*" when we had an unexpected encounter. Below is an excerpt of that article that speaks to what we seek to be, and do, on the campus of Furman University:

"What are you doing here?"

I had just spent the day working in Furman's Trone Student Center, and as I drove home, these words resonated in my heart. "What did they mean?" I thought to myself. "I work here, I'm usually around campus!" However, it was a fair question; it was a Monday, and there is no official Wesley event that happens on Monday, so to see me in the Trone Center was a bit startling I suppose. It must have been, I mean, four different students walked by and asked me that very question, "What are you doing here?"

Yes, we have our Tuesday night gatherings and our Thursday lunches – and even my Office Hours on Thursday afternoons. Yet, it was this day, a random Monday, that provided reassurance that campus ministry is a vital part of our United Methodist Church. On this day I got very little work accomplished; rather, I spent most of the day in conversation with students about all that was going on in their lives. Some of the interaction was light-hearted and silly, and some was very poignant and serious, but all of it was meaningful. It was an opportunity to connect as fellow sojourners on the path of faith.

The scriptures are filled with stories of Jesus going to someone's house to teach, to heal, to call, and even to raise the dead. Jesus did not require that the people come to him when they needed something; he chose to be where they were in the hopes that in these divine moments they may understand better what it means to live as God intended. However, I imagine that at moments in his ministry, he too encountered the question, "What are you doing here?" Maybe when Jesus showed up at Mary and Martha's after Lazarus' death, he was greeted with the question, "What are you doing here [now]?" Possibly, when he entered Matthew's tax collecting office, he heard, "What are you doing here?" Most certainly after three days in the tomb, there was the refrain of, "What are you doing here?"

Our ministry on college campuses is about being Jesus' hands, feet, ears, and hearts to the college community. It is about showing up at moments they don't expect, but so desperately need, with an encouraging word, an ear to listen, and a heart to care. I am so thankful to the SC Annual Conference, the Furman Wesley Board, my student leadership team, and the awesome

young adults at Furman for the opportunity to serve this campus. It is an honor to walk alongside some of the best that our world has to offer!

May this be our Annual Conference's message to our young adults: when asked, "What are you doing here?" let's answer, "We're here for you!"

Rev. Edward L. McCutcheon
Campus Minister

THE ORANGEBURG WESLEY FOUNDATION – CAMPUS MINISTRY CENTER

For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven. (Ecclesiastes 3:1).

This is the season of celebration: Orangeburg Wesley is 40 years old! We praise God as we celebrate our ministry with students, faculty, and staff at Claflin and South Carolina State Universities and the larger Orangeburg community. We will have special events throughout the year to observe the 40th year of this ministry. Your participation is requested. We also invite all former participants of the Orangeburg Wesley Foundation to contact us for inclusion in the anniversary booklet.

As I enter my second year of campus ministry, the learning curve is narrowing. The past year has been a time of expectation, prayer, and faith-renewal. Without a doubt, God became more apparent in the challenges and the faces of the students and adults who participated and offered themselves in campus ministry.

In the past year, considerable work has been done to upgrade the facility. The connec-tional church was at work to assist us in this endeavor: United Methodist Volunteers in Mission, Orangeburg District United Methodist Men and United Methodist Women, Trinity UMC, St. Paul UMC, St. Andrews UMC, North Orangeburg UMC, Edisto Fork UMC, St. Mark UMC, Canaan UMC, the Body Challenge Covenant Group, and Claflin University. We are grateful for the support of the Annual Conference in assisting with funds to help with the improvement of the facility.

The board of directors provided outstanding leadership in the development of partnerships with local churches, businesses, organizations, and individuals who contributed their time, talents, and resources to the ministry. They were also instrumental in the selection of a ship as the ministry model to describe the scope of campus ministry to the transitory student population we serve. A tag line was also included: (*Orangeburg Wesley is Sailing on the Sea of God's Love – Get Aboard the Wesley Ship*). Each semester, we launch or introduce a different ministry ship with special events, to include fellowship, worship, leadership, discipleship, stewardship, relationship, and partnership.

The student representatives on the board of directors motivated us to be intentional in the ministry opportunities. An increased number of students were exposed to campus ministry and participated in the following activities:

- Monthly Gathering (cookouts, games, rations)
- Tune-Up Tuesday (Bible study and snacks)
- Thankful Thursday (meal and worship)
- Servant Saturday (community outreach)
- Service Sunday (ministry sharing to various churches)

We had the opportunity to attend NEXT in Denver, Colorado. It was cost prohibitive to sponsor more than one student. This was a remarkable event hosted by the UM Collegiate Ministry of the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry. Every college student should have the opportunity to attend this splendid event where young adults from across the country come to network, to be inspired with testimonies from their peers, to participate in hands-on ministry, to gain insights into their ministry calling, and to receive information and converse with seminary representatives.

We are excited to have our first campus ministry intern. The purpose of the intern is to assist the director/campus minister in the enhancement of ministry offerings, networking and sharing the ministry with students, and becoming the face of the Wesley Foundation on campus. The intern will have time to develop leadership, supervisory, and relational skills.

Each semester, I meet with the presidents of the universities in an effort to keep the lines of communication open and strengthen our on-going partnerships. The time with the presidents has become one of the highlights of my ministry for it provides an occasion for visionary forecasting, fellowship, and encouragement. Additionally, I continue to make myself available to frequent the numerous activities at both universities and the larger Orangeburg community.

Campus ministry needs your help. I am requesting the support of pastors and higher education coordinators to intentionally develop a relationship with the campus minister before students leave their local community. Then when they arrive at their respective college or university, they

will be familiar with the ministry and parents will have a local contact. Preaching opportunities or other leadership roles for the campus minister in the life of the local church; listing the campus ministry contact information in the directory of the church; and encouraging parents to accompany their young adult to the campus ministry office when they are in the city are some small ways in which to promote campus ministry. With all of us working together, young adults will be aware of and have access to this significant service, and campus ministry will continue to be an essential ministry in the life of the South Carolina Annual Conference.

Finally, ministry is challenging in all settings. Let us encourage and support one another so that the beloved community of God will be evident on earth as it is in heaven. I am grateful for the many friends and volunteers who came to my aid with words of encouragement, unlimited advice, free lunches, and personal resources. Thank you for your prayers, your love, and your support. Thank you!

To God be the glory for the opportunity to serve in this unique and rewarding ministry,
Rev. Constance "Connie" Barnes, Director and Campus Minister

THE WINTHROP WESLEY FOUNDATION

Ministry can be such a strange and wonderful adventure.

At Winthrop Wesley in 2014, students enjoyed weekly opportunities to gather for dinner, fellowship, and worship at SUPPLY on Monday nights; free pasta and fellowship at Pasta Lunch on Tuesdays; and fellowship and discipleship at two different student-led small groups. Winthrop Wesley also offered multiple service/mission opportunities such as Mission Weekend at Rural Mission on John's Island, SC; the York County CROP Walks; multiple Stop Hunger Now packing events; participation in the SC UMC Million Book Effort; and numerous local projects with churches and organizations in the Rock Hill area. Additionally, students participated in many different relationship-building activities such as the Divine Rhythm retreat in Gatlinburg, TN; our fall rafting retreat at Lake Junaluska; and many game nights, movie nights, and holiday parties.

As usual, in 2014 our ministry was busy engaging students in the name of Jesus and providing them with vital opportunities to experience and live out the love of Christ while growing in faith together. The students were not the only ones impacted, however. My involvement in the planning and execution of the Million Book Effort often took me away from campus during the spring semester, and an unexpected family illness sidelined me for the first part of the fall semester. As a result, neither of those semesters went how I had planned or expected, but I believe that they went exactly as God intended. Regardless of my absences, Winthrop Wesley continued to shine God's light on campus and within our community. Students still experienced God in powerful ways, and I received a humbling reminder that I have been blessed and privileged to be a part of what God has been doing in and through our ministry (with or without me).

The 2014 year was a great year for Winthrop Wesley, and I thank God for that, but I also thank the South Carolina Conference, the Rock Hill District, and all of our other supporters for helping to make this success happen. It is an honor to partner with you in transforming the lives of young persons in and through the name of Jesus Christ. Please prayerfully consider continuing your support of Winthrop Wesley and your other campus ministries around the state as we continue to serve God on our respective campuses. May God bless you abundantly for all of the ways that you have been a blessing to us.

Blessings and Peace,

Rev. Ricky Howell, Campus Minister

THE BOARD OF ORDAINED MINISTRY

It has been an honor this year to serve as Chair of the Board of Ordained Ministry and to have the joy of working with a group of dedicated and committed laity and clergy. At the forefront of our work is our primary purpose of recruitment, examination, and credentialing of candidates for commissioned and ordained ministry. We are also seeking to focus on developing leaders who can help local congregations to be effective in making disciples, who commit themselves to God's transforming work in communities and beyond. Acknowledging that the church is seeking to be faithful in a changing culture, we encourage these persons, who are entering the ordained and licensed ministry, to accept the challenges of proclaiming and embodying the gospel through faithful service.

Our District Committees are extensions of the Conference Board and are faithfully guiding persons in the candidacy process and reviewing the work of those called to licensed ministry. Our local pastors are critical to our ability to serve the variety of churches in the South Carolina Annual Conference.

Seeking to strengthen the mentoring component, some of our Districts are beginning to explore the possibility of group mentoring for local pastors. This would create an opportunity for our local pastors to share their ministry experiences and learn from each other. If these models are effective, we will look toward using this model conference-wide.

We want to thank all of our churches who continue to support the Ministerial Education Fund, which helps our seminarians and local pastors in the Course of Study underwrite the cost of their education. This past year \$158,640 was provided for those who made application for funds.

The Board of Ordained Ministry also offers several scholarships for full time students. We thank the **Reverend Jeffrey Salley** and his committee for their work in reviewing the applications and choosing the recipients.

The following are those chosen to receive the 2015 scholarships:

2015 Scholarship Recipients

T. Dennie Smith Scholarship: James Vaught – \$1,000

The South Carolina Seminary Student Scholarship

Meegian Gossard – \$1,000; Sean Michael Kilpatrick – \$1,000

With joy and thanksgiving for their calls and commitment, we are pleased to recommend 16 candidates for full membership and ordination and 17 candidates for provisional membership and commissioning. We will celebrate with these tonight as they are commissioned and ordained in service to Christ's church.

We have had two new initiatives this year that we pray will strengthen those early days of formation for candidates for the ordained and licensed ministry.

The first comes through the efforts of the Recruitment and Enlistment Committee of the Board. The **Reverend Megan Gray** and the **Reverend Mandy Taylor** have co-chaired this initiative. They applied for grants from the Young Clergy Initiative through the General Board. This grant will fund the following: **Quest: Pursuing God's Call**. This is a weekend retreat designed specifically for youth ages 13-18 to explore and discern God's call on their lives. The retreat will be held September 11-13, 2015 at Asbury Hills Camp. During this weekend, participants will join pastors and leaders from all over the South Carolina Conference, as well as other young people, who are also exploring God's call to ministry.

The second initiative comes through an invitation to participate in the creation of a new curriculum for churches: **Listen. Discern. Respond**. This is an all-inclusive church curriculum featuring Worship Outlines; Sunday School and Small Group Curriculum for Adults, Youth, and Children; and an optional retreat format. This will be a free resource for churches to use as they strive to create a culture of call within their congregations.

The hope is that through these new initiatives we will continue to create a culture within our Annual Conference that fosters a sense of calling in the lives of all Christians.

Under the leadership of the **Reverend Joe Cate** we have initiated our first cycle of the candidacy group mentoring process.

On January 8-10, 2015, over 40 candidates in ministry from all over the state of South Carolina gathered at Buncombe Street UMC in Greenville to learn more about the candidacy process. Eighteen mentors were selected based on their experience in ministry, generous spirit, and diversity and began working alongside these candidates. Candidates were exposed to each type of ministry through panel discussions, worship with one another to build community, and regional groups for support in the exploration of their journey and call to ministry. This has resulted in over 50 certified candidates attending our licensing school in May.

We also want to recognize others who have reached milestones in their preparation for effective ministry.

The following have completed the five year Basic Course of Study in 2014:

**Daniel Hall, Gusta Ganes, Jack Gibson, Richard Goldie,
Benjamin Graham, Debbie Miller**

The following are recognized for professional/paraprofessional certification:

John Farhney – Professional Certification in Youth Ministry

Val Kenney – Paraprofessional Certification in Youth Ministry

Finally, I want to recognize and thank the **Reverend Ken Nelson**, Coordinator of Clergy Services, and **Mrs. Martha Liles**, Administrative Assistant to that office, for their selfless support of all the work of the Board.

Bishop Holston in response to business question 17 or ¶ 604.4, 605.6- Are all the clergy members of the conference blameless in their life and official administration? The answer is yes with the exceptions which have been noted or acted upon in the clergy session held on Sunday, June 7, 2015.

Respectfully submitted,

R. Wayne Horne, Chair

THE BOARD OF PENSION AND HEALTH BENEFITS

PENSION SECTION

Report Number One

- A. The Board of Pension and Health Benefits (BPHB) requests that the South Carolina Annual Conference fix **\$750** per service year as the rate for annuity payments to retired ministers under Supplement One of the Clergy Retirement Security Plan (otherwise known as Pre-82) for 2016. (This rate was \$735 for the year 2015.) This request shall include service annuity credits approved prior to January 1, 1982. An eligible surviving spouse shall receive 75% of the formula benefit upon the death of the participant.
- B. The Board of Pensions requests that direct billings to salary paying units be made to give the BPHB (The Pension Fund), **\$4,726,980.00** for the pension program of the South Carolina Annual Conference for the fiscal year ending December 31, 2016, and that this sum be apportioned or billed to the charges of the South Carolina Annual Conference.
- C. **Resolutions Relating to Rental/Housing Allowances for Active, Retired ,or Disabled Clergypersons of the South Carolina Annual Conference**

The South Carolina Annual 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, terminated, and disabled clergypersons are considered to be deferred compensation and are paid to active, retired, terminated, and disabled clergy-persons 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 the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits ("GBOPHB"), during the years 2014, 2015, and 2016 by each active, retired, terminated, 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, severance, 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 the GBOPHB and from a commercial annuity company that provides an annuity arising from benefits accrued under a GBOPHB 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: 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 thereunder 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.

- D. For 2016, each institution, organization, or district to which a minister is appointed and enrolled shall pay to the South Carolina Annual Conference BPHB an amount equal to \$492 per month for full time clergy for the Defined Benefit portion of the Clergy Retirement Security Plan (CRSP) for all full-time clergy (including deacons) who are under Episcopal appointment (receiving compensation) at a local church, charge, conference, or conference-responsible unit or entity related to the South Carolina Annual Conference. (This rate was \$492 per month for the year 2015.) An amount equal to 3.0% of the appointed participant's Plan Compensation shall be paid for the defined contribution portion of the CRSP. This amount must be matched by a contribution of 1% by the participating pastor in his/her United Methodist Personal Investment Account. Any surplus funds collected will be used for actuarial and collection smoothing. An amount equal to 3.0% of the appointed participant's Plan Compensation, limited by 200% of the Denominational Average Compensation shall be paid for Comprehensive Protection Plan funding or other benefit plan. Such payments shall be made for each minister so appointed and paid monthly in equal payments each month during the year 2016, or in advance for monthly crediting in 12 equal installments from deposits made in the Deposit Account of the South Carolina Annual Conference with the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits, by the treasurer of the South Carolina Annual Conference. In the event that monthly credits to the minister in appointment's Church Account exceed the funds deposited for the minister in special appointment, an interest charge made at 12% per annum shall be made. This interest payment is due the following month with interest charges on a daily factor until the institutional account of the minister under appointment is current. Churches/charges participating in the ACH automated payment system may receive up to a \$10.00 per month discount on their pension payment.
- E. For 2016, each institution, organization, or district to which a part time minister is appointed and enrolled shall pay to the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits of the United Methodist Church, an amount equal to 12% for participation in a defined contribution 403b pension program called the United Methodist Personal Investment Plan (UMPIP). For all clergy who are under Episcopal appointment and considered part time (receiving compensation) at a local church, charge, conference, or conference-responsible unit or entity related to the South Carolina Annual Conference, an amount equal to 9.0% of the appointed participant's Plan Compensation shall be paid for the matching portion of the defined contribution portion of the UMPIP. This amount must be matched by a contribution of 3% by the participating pastor in his/her United Methodist Personal Investment Account. Each church with a less than full-time clergy will be required to complete an adoption agreement with the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits prior to November 1, 2015. The pension cost, both the church's share and the participant's match, will be billed from the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits.
- F. The fiscal year of the Board of Pensions shall be the same as that of the South Carolina Annual Conference
- G. The BPHB authorizes one time moving expense reimbursement grants, not to exceed \$1,500 and including up to \$350 in verified packing expenses, for newly incapacitated ministers receiving CPP Incapacity Benefits, surviving spouses of ministers, participants in the Voluntary Transition Program, or newly retired ministers in benefit, moving from the parsonage provided by the charge. Persons moving must file for the one time reimbursement grant not later than 90 days after first reception of pension or disability benefits and may use the funds for moving expenses and/or for connection/tap on or hook up fees in the new residence.

**Report Two
2016 Pension and Welfare Operating Budget**

Requirement	2015 Budgeted	2016 Estimated
Past Service Payment		
Clergy Retirement Service Plan (CRSP)		
Defined Benefit Amount	2,827,665.00	2,707,836.00
CRSP Defined Contribution (3%)	1,226,000.00	1,275,200.00
CRSP CPP (3%) or Benefits Funding	1,123,764.00	1,153,600.00
Clergy Transition*	126,825.00	126,825.00
Grants/Contingency*	30,000.00	30,000.00
Total Estimated Requirement	\$5,334,254.00	\$5,293,461.00
Estimated Income		
Institutional Payments	419,401.00	409,656.00

Apportionment*	156,825.00	156,825.00
Direct Bill Payments	4,758,018.00	4,726,980.00
Total Estimated Income	\$5,334,244.00	\$5,293,461.00
*Amount to be apportioned		
Clergy Transition*	126,825.00	126,825.00
Grants/Contingency*	30,000.00	30,000.00
TOTAL APPORTIONED PENSIONS	\$156,825.00	\$156,825.00

* To be apportioned

*Herman B. Lightsey, Jr., Chairperson
Thelma Hudson, Secretary*

THE BOARD OF PENSION AND HEALTH BENEFITS
GROUP INSURANCE SECTION
Report Number One

The insurance program of the South Carolina Conference is designed to provide its eligible employees (as defined herein) and their eligible dependents with a comprehensive plan for major medical benefits and a Medicare supplement. The following are eligible for coverage under the program:

1. Those fully employed and funded by a local church either as Elders in Full Connection, Deacons in Full Connection, Associate Members, Full Time Local Pastors, Provisional Elders, Provisional Deacons, Provisional Deacons/1992, Diaconal ministers related to and serving a local church within the South Carolina Annual Conference and included in the Hospitalization and Medical Expense Program Adoption Agreement.
2. Ministers who are full-time employees of and funded by the Annual Conference boards, councils or agencies.
3. District Superintendents.
4. Students appointed as full-time local pastors appointed to and funded by a charge within the boundaries of the Annual Conference and actively at work.
5. Lay persons who are full-time employees of and funded by the Annual Conference.
6. Retired clergy who have been under full-time appointment to a local church with pension responsibility by the South Carolina Annual Conference and who are immediately eligible to receive pension or incapacity benefits, and who have participation in the active group health plan of the South Carolina Annual Conference, the last ten (10) years of which were continuous and consecutive, shall be eligible for participation in the retiree health care program of the Annual Conference and their respective spouses if spouse is covered at least five continuous and consecutive years immediately prior to retirement. **A retired participant at the time of his or her early retirement date or normal retirement date, will be allowed to be tolled if coverage under a previous employer's or spouse's group plan is available during the period of time between the termination of employment and the early retirement date or normal retirement date and loss of such coverage.**
7. Retired lay employees who have attained age 62 and have been full-time employees of the South Carolina Annual Conference or a local church of the South Carolina Annual Conference and who are immediately eligible to receive United Methodist pension or incapacity benefits and who have participation in the active group health plan of the South Carolina Annual Conference, the last ten (10) years of which were continuous and consecutive, shall be eligible for participation in the retiree health care program of the Annual Conference and their respective spouses if spouse is covered at least five continuous and consecutive years immediately prior to retirement. **A retired participant at the time of his or her early retirement date or normal retirement date will be allowed to be tolled if coverage under a previous employer's or spouse's group plan is available during the period of time between the termination of employment and the early retirement date or normal retirement date and loss of such coverage.**
8. Those retired clergy or incapacitated employees, referred to herein as lay persons, immediately eligible to receive pension or disability benefits from the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits at the beginning of the month following the month in

- which the retired relation or disability leave with disability benefits takes place and who had a minimum of ten (10) continuous and consecutive years of active participation in the South Carolina Annual Conference group health plan at the time of retirement or the granting of Basic Protection Plan incapacity benefits by the General Board of Pensions and their respective spouses if spouse is covered at least five continuous and consecutive years immediately prior to retirement.
9. Ordained ministers from other United Methodist annual conferences and ordained ministers from other Methodist denominations and other denominations under Episcopal appointment fully employed and funded by a local church or charge of the South Carolina Annual Conference under the provisions of Paragraphs 346.1 and 346.2 of the 2008 *Book of Discipline*.
 10. Full-time employees and their eligible dependents enrolled and funded by a local church of the South Carolina Annual Conference currently meeting the underwriting guidelines of the South Carolina Annual Conference group insurance plan. The salary-paying unit must establish the funding basis with the Annual Conference on the current advanced premium.
 11. Funding for the group insurance plans upon retirement in benefit from the South Carolina Annual Conference shall be based on full-time employment by the Annual Conference, full-time appointment to a local church or eligible extension ministry with pension responsibility by the South Carolina Annual Conference. Funding shall be \$200.00 per month for single participant and \$400.00 per month for married participants and an additional \$200 per month for dependents who meet the requirements of paragraph six. (This funding is expected to be \$100.00 per month for single participant and \$100.00 per month for married participants and an additional \$100 per month for dependents who meet the requirements of paragraph six for those retirees retiring after 2015). **This funding will be paid through a Health Reimbursement Account. This funding cannot be allowed to purchase an employer group policy other than one sponsored or administered by the Annual Conference or its designee.**

Report Number Two Major Medical Insurance Benefits

The South Carolina Annual Conference has elected to participate in Health Flex, the managed health care plan of the General Board of Pensions and Health Benefits of the United Methodist Church.

The South Carolina Annual Conference has elected for active HealthFlex BlueCross/BlueShield – Option B1000 HealthFlex Pharmacy Plan P2 (percentage copay) as the Standard Health Care Plan. The yearly health plan deductible is \$1,000 individual and \$2,000 for family and, as an option, the Consumer Driven Health Plan (CDHP). The yearly CDHP deductible is \$2,000 individual and \$4,000 family, but a Health Reimbursement account is funded at a \$1,000 individual and \$2,000 family level.

The South Carolina Annual Conference will participate in the Healthflex Incentive Program in 2015 and 2016. Details of this plan are available on the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits website under the Healthflex tab which describes the current incentive program. **These wellness and incentive programs support and encourage participants and spouses to choose healthy behaviors that lead to positive health results.** An active participant and covered spouse could earn incentives up to **\$400** under this plan.

Some of the highlights of these incentives for 2015 are as follows:

- Blueprint for Wellness Screening earns \$100 HealthCash through Virgin Healthmiles program. This must be accomplished during the dates determined by the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits and are usually: April 1-July 31, **2015**.
- Completion of the HealthQuotient™ (health risk assessment) must be accomplished to avoid a higher deductible (\$250/\$500) during the dates determined by the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits which are August 1–September 30, **2015**.
- **Participants can earn points to earn the quarterly targets for demonstrating a healthy or improved level for the following health measures: blood pressure, fasting glucose (blood sugar), triglycerides, HDL cholesterol (high-density “good” cholesterol), waist circumference, and body mass index (BMI). These Wellness Points are earned on the WebMD Website and can earn up to \$150 HealthCash.**

- Walking and meeting quarterly activity targets earn \$150 in HealthCash through the Virgin Healthmiles program. These quarterly deadlines are March, June, September, and December.

The incentive plan for 2016 is expected to continue to emphasize Completion of the HealthQuotient™ during August to September, Blueprint for Wellness Screenings during the period April to July, and participation in wellness activities year round.

Additional information on the major medical expense plan is available from the Board of Pension and Health Benefits, Post Office Box 3787, Columbia, SC 29230.

Report Number Three Retiree Medicare Primary Benefits

The South Carolina Conference of the United Methodist Church will be offering its Post 65 retirees one group Medicare supplement option and an option to choose a Supplemental Plan through the Retiree Benefits Choice™ through AmWINS Group Benefits. One medical plan option will be similar to the current retiree plan and will be called the Standard plan. **The additional option will be a hybrid Medicare Exchange by which a retiree can choose a plan from the Medicare Marketplace.** There will be corresponding Rx options with the Standard Plan.

AmWINS Group Benefits will be the administrator for the retiree benefit plans. AmWINS Group Benefits specializes in retiree benefit programs for companies, municipalities, and religious organizations. AGB has over 700 retiree benefit clients nationally.

AmWINS Group Benefits will provide the following services for the retirees of The South Carolina Conference of the United Methodist Church:

- Retiree communications enrollment kit
- Group retiree meetings
- Retiree call center services
- Retiree website
- Billing and collecting of premiums
- Ongoing service and support for retirees

A handbook explaining the provisions of Medicare is available from any district office of the Social Security Administration.

Report Number Four Administrative Procedures

Enrollment in HealthFlex, the group insurance plan of the South Carolina Annual Conference, must be made within the first 30 days of eligibility or the first day actively at work. Late enrollment or enrollment for January 1st of any year must be completed with the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits during open enrollment, which is prior to November 30th of the preceding year. It should be noted that any continuation, changes, or initiation of Flexible Spending Accounts (Medical Reimbursement or dependent care accounts) must be done during this time through the open enrollment process and not on the ministerial support form.

Eligibility requirements are also set forth in the *HealthFlex Administrative Manual* published by the Health Care Division of the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits of the United Methodist Church, 1901 Chestnut Avenue, Glenview, IL 60025-1604.

Billing: At the first of each month, the BPHB will send premium statements to the participants enrolled in the Conference Insurance Program and to participants with Flexible Spending Accounts. Payments for group health premiums and Flexible Spending Accounts premiums shall be made on a monthly basis. At the first of each month, the Board of Pension and Health Benefits will send a statement to the salary paying units share of premiums relating to the participants enrolled in the Conference Insurance Program. These payments should be made on a monthly basis.

Cancellation of Coverage: It is imperative that each participant in the Conference Insurance Program keeps his/her premium payments current. The Board of Pension and Health Benefits has instructed the benefits administrator to cancel the insurance coverage or the Flexible Spending Account of any participant who does not pay his/her premium by the end of the month for which he/she has been billed. **Clergy who are 60 days in arrears will be subject to immediate cancellation. Once cancelled, the participant's coverage cannot be reinstated until the next open enrollment period and then only if the unpaid balance has been paid.**

Ministers Serving in Eligible Extension Ministries: It is required that all Conference boards and agencies, served by ministers and others eligible for group insurance participation, pay for the "institutional share" of the insured's premium. This provision shall apply to the district superintendents, conference staff and those serving United Methodist agencies for whom the South Carolina

Annual Conference has pension responsibility. In every case the full cost of the group health premium must be paid by the insured or the employer or through the combined payments of the insured and the employer. Premium payments shall be made in accordance with the instructions printed on the quarterly "Statement of Account." Premium payments are due at the first of the month for which the participant is billed.

Applications for enrollment in the Conference Insurance Program are available from the Board of Pension and Health Benefits, P.O. Box 3787, Columbia, SC 29230. The change enrollment form must be completed and in the hands of the benefits administrator within 30 days from the date of eligibility. If not, the applicant will be ineligible until the next following enrollment period.

The Board of Pension and Health Benefits is charged with oversight of the group insurance program of the South Carolina Annual Conference, the benefits of which program are outlined in the reports of the Board submitted to the Annual Conference. The Annual Conference approves the group insurance budget of the Board of Pension and Health Benefits. The Board is authorized to negotiate and contract with carriers or the Hospitalization and Medical Expense Program Administrator to maintain the level of benefits for the eligible participants, as defined by the Annual Conference.

The group health plan of the South Carolina Annual Conference (Conference Plan) shall be the plan of first refusal for covering dependents of clergy appointed to local churches in the Conference. Where covered clergy wish to cover their dependents, the local church will seek to cover such dependents through the Conference Plan, rather than purchasing outside health insurance. Local churches may be excused from this requirement in cases where such dependents may be covered through the employer of a covered clergyperson's spouse, or through a governmental plan, such as an SCHIP, and in cases of demonstrable financial hardship.

Report Number Five
Group Health Insurance Operating Budget

Requirements	2015 Budgeted	2016 Estimated
Active and Non-Medicare Retiree Group		
Participant Only	2,914,440.00	2,994,204.00
Participant + One	2,422,620.00	2,264,892.00
Participant + Family	2,678,424.00	2,662,560.00
Total Estimated Active Group	\$ 8,015,484.00	\$7,921,656.00
 Retired Group		
Medicare Eligible Sub Group		
Participant	506,400.00	638,400.00
Participant +1 (Spouse)	681,600.00	369,600.00
Participant less Part D Medicare	7,200.00	21,600.00
Total Estimated Medicare Eligible	\$1,195,200.00	\$1,029,600.00
Total Retired and Active Groups	\$9,210,684.00	\$8,951,256.00
 Other		
Incapacitation/Transition	194,616.00	194,616.00
Contribution to Post Retirement Medical Reserve		673,400.00
Mandatory Coverage Charge	395,600.00	
Total Estimated Other	590,216.00	868,016.00
Total Estimated Requirement	\$9,800,900.00	\$9,819,272.00
 Estimated Income		
Billing to salary Paying Units	6,000,708.00	6,000,708.00
Apportioned to Churches*	1,603,000.00	1,870,711.00
From Insured	2,014,776.00	2,014,776.00
From Medicare Participants	691,511.00	0.00
From Institutional Payments	284,844.00	289,847.00
Total Estimated Income	\$10,594,839.00	\$10,176,042.00
Amount to be Apportioned		
Incapacitated and Transitional Funding *	194,616.00	167,711.00
Post Retirement Health Funding	1,603,000.00	1,703,000.00
Total	\$1,797,616.00	\$1,870,711.00

* Apportioned to churches.

**Report Number Six
2016 Group Health Costs**

The Board of Pension & Health Benefits makes the following recommendation for action by the 2015 South Carolina Annual Conference.

1. That the sum of \$6,000,708.00 be billed to the local church/charges and salary paying units for the Conference Insurance Program in 2016.
2. The Board of Pension and Health Benefits requests an apportionment of \$2,027,536.00:
 - a. \$ 156,825.00 for Transitional Pension Funding.
 - b. \$ 167,711.00 for incapacitated and/or suspended participants.
 - c. \$1,703,000.00 for Post Retirement Health Funding.
3. That participant premium payments be set as estimated below:
 - a. Active personal group insurance health premiums for eligible active clergy/survivor/conference lay employee categories shall be approximately 30% of the total coverage premium for both the preferred provider Organization Plan and the Consumer Driven High Deductible Plan (CDHP).
 1. Effective January 1, 2016, the participant only premium shall be approximately 30% of the rate; this amount is expected to be **\$235.00** per month.
 2. Effective January 1, 2016, the participant plus one premium shall be approximately 30% of the rate; this amount is expected to be **\$493.00** per month.
 3. Effective January 1, 2016, the participant plus family premium shall be approximately 30% of the rate; this amount is expected to be **\$639.00** per month.
 - b. Retiree Premiums Non Medicare Premiums:
 1. Active Premiums would be the Total Premiums for Active Participants less the Defined Contribution. The Defined Contribution would be \$200 per single Participant, and for a couple with a participating spouse the amount would be \$400 per month under the provisions of Report Number One Paragraph Six.
 2. Retiree Premiums for Medicare Supplement premiums for eligible fully funded participants shall be published no later than October 31, 2015, for the year 2016. The Defined Contribution would be \$200 per single Participant, and for a couple with a participating spouse the amount would be \$400 per month under the provisions of Report Number One Paragraph Six.
 - c. **Churches/Charges that have an eligible appointed clergy will be billed a health benefit fee of \$840.00 per month or \$10,068.00 annually.**
4. In accordance with previous action of the Annual Conference and the Board of Pension and Health Benefits, retired participants and their eligible dependents shall have the Annual Conference contribution for group health premiums limited to the lesser of the employer contribution to the Medicare Companion Plan or the percentage indicated in the funding schedule found in Report One.
5. The estimated 2016 monthly group health insurance premiums for persons with negotiated service, compensation, and benefits; Deacons in Full Connection employed full-time, full-time Diaconal Ministers and full-time Lay Employees of local churches, are explained as follows: premiums for both the preferred provider Organization Plan and the Consumer Driven High Deductible Plan (CDHP) **are expected to be as follows: For the standard plan and Consumer Driven High Deductible - \$777.00 monthly (\$9,324.00 yearly) for participant only coverage, \$1,643.00 monthly (\$19,716.00 yearly) for participant plus one coverage, and \$2,130.00 monthly (\$25,560.00 yearly) for participant plus family coverage. Enrollment must be made within 30 days of new hire status, or 60 days prior to January 1, 2016.**
6. A summary of active health plan rating methodology for South Carolina is available in the Conference Benefits for review.
7. It is recommended that the South Carolina Annual Conference delegate to the South Carolina Annual Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits the authority to adjust rates and plan designs to meet the requirements of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

*Herman B. Lightsey, Jr., Chairperson
Thelma Hudson, Secretary*

**SOUTH CAROLINA ANNUAL CONFERENCE
2016 COMPREHENSIVE BENEFIT FUNDING PLAN SUMMARY**

The 2012 *Book of Discipline* ¶ 1506.6 requires that each annual conference develop, adopt and implement a formal comprehensive funding plan for funding all of its benefit obligations. The funding plan shall be submitted annually to the General Board of Pension and Health benefits for review and be approved annually by the annual conference, following the receipt and inclusion of a favorable written opinion from the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits (GBPHB). This summary document is only a portion of the information contained in the actual signed funding plan. As such, it might not contain all the information required for a comprehensive view of the benefit obligations of the conference. You may request the full contents of the 2016 comprehensive benefit funding plan from your conference benefit office.

Following is the summary of the Comprehensive Benefit Funding Plan (CBFP) that received a favorable written opinion from GBPHB for the 2016 conference benefit obligations:

**CLERGY RETIREMENT SECURITY PROGRAM (CRSP) DEFINED BENEFIT (DB)
AND DEFINED CONTRIBUTION (DC)**

Plan Overview: The Clergy Retirement Security Program (CRSP) is an Internal Revenue Code section 403(b) retirement program providing lifetime income and account flexibility designed for those who serve as clergy of The United Methodist Church. The plan is designed to provide participants with one portion of their overall retirement benefits. CRSP replaced the Ministerial Pension Plan (MPP) effective January 1, 2007, which had previously replaced the Pre-82 Plan for service rendered prior to January 1, 1982.

CRSP consists of both a defined benefit (DB) plan, which provides a monthly benefit at retirement based upon years of credited service to The United Methodist Church, and a defined contribution (DC) plan, which provides a retirement account balance established and funded by annual conferences. The Clergy Retirement Security Program (CRSP-DB) annuities total liability as of January 1, 2014 is \$1.105 billion, while total plan assets are \$1.274 billion resulting in a current plan funded ratio of 115%. The South Carolina Conference portion of the liability is 2.8644% and the 2016 contribution is \$2,707,836. The conference anticipates that the amount will be funded by Direct Billed to local churches. Additionally, General Conference 2012 approved a change to CRSP that provides each annual conference the discretion to determine whether to cover three-quarter and/or half-time clergy. The South Carolina Conference has elected to cover clergy serving 1 under CRSP effective January 1, 2016.

Effective January 1, 2014, CRSP-DC plan was reduced from a 3% to a 2% of plan compensation non-matching contribution. Clergy have the opportunity to earn up to an additional 1% CRSP DC contribution by contributing at least 1% of their plan compensation to UMPIP, therefore if a participant contributes at least 1% of plan compensation to UMPIP, the individual will receive a contribution of 3%, which is unchanged from 2013 and prior. The 2016 CRSP-DC contribution is anticipated to be \$850,000 and will be funded by Direct Billed to local churches.

MINISTERIAL PENSION PLAN (MPP)

Plan Overview: Supplement Three to the Clergy Retirement Security Program (CRSP), also known as the Ministerial Pension Plan (MPP) provides clergy with a pension benefit for their years of ministry with The United Methodist Church from 1982 through 2006. MPP is an Internal Revenue Code section 403(b) retirement plan. Effective January 1, 2014, exactly 65% of the account balance must be annuitized when it is to be distributed. The remainder may be rolled over to UMPIP, another qualified plan, an IRA, or paid in a lump sum.

The Ministerial Pension Plan (MPP) annuities total liability as of January 1, 2014 is \$3.018 billion, while total plan assets are \$3.345 billion, resulting in a current plan funded ratio of 111% and no required contribution for 2016. The South Carolina Conference's % of the total liability is 2.6797%. Future MPP annuitants have a total account balance of \$4.332 billion and the South Carolina Conference's portion of that balance is \$111,427,384 or 2.57% of the total.

PRE-1982 PLAN

Plan Overview: Supplement One to the Clergy Retirement Security Program (CRSP), also known as the Pre-82 Plan, provides clergy with a pension benefit for their years of ministry with The United Methodist Church prior to 1982. The Pre-82 Plan was replaced by MPP effective January 1, 1982. If a clergy person retires within the Conference (and does not terminate), the minimum benefit payable is based on two factors: 1) years of service with pension credit and 2) Conference pension rate. Years of service with pension credit are approved by each Conference on the recommendation of the Conference Board of Pensions (CBOP) in accordance with

plan provisions and *The Book of Discipline*. The pension rate, also called the past service rate, is the dollar amount chosen by the Conference as the amount payable for each approved year of service with pension credit. The pension rate may change from year to year. The number of years of service with pension credit is multiplied by the pension rate, and the product is the minimum annual benefit payable to those clergy eligible for Pre-82 Plan benefits. In certain situations, the benefit received from the Pre-82 plan may vary based on the applicability of what is referred to as Defined Benefit Service Money (DBSM), which is the defined contribution feature of the Pre-1982 Plan. At the time that a participant retires, the DBSM account is converted to a life based benefit. At that point, the clergy's benefit is the greater of the PSR benefit or DBSM benefit. If the conference increases the PSR, the clergy's benefit is recalculated; however the DBSM based benefit does not change.

The 2016 Past Service Rate (PSR) recommended to the South Carolina Conference will be \$750.00 representing a 2.04% increase from the 2015 rate. The conference expects future increases to be approximately 2.00%, which is based on: Goal is to increase by 2% per year.

The contingent annuitant percentage is recommended to remain at the 75% level.

Based on the final actuarial valuations from the General Board of Pensions and Health Benefits as of January 1, 2014 for 2016, the portion of the Pre-82 liability attributable to the South Carolina Conference and funded status is, as of 1/1/2014, as follows:

Funding Plan Liability	\$63,654,362	
Assets in the Plan	\$91,889,285	
Funded status	\$30,471,881	represented by a 149.61% funded ratio

ACTIVE HEALTH BENEFIT PROGRAM

Plan Overview: The South Carolina Conference offers the Self Funded-HealthFlex program which is best described as a Self Funded-HealthFlex to its active eligible participants. The total cost of the program for 2016 is anticipated to be \$ 7,921,656 and will be funded by Direct Bill to local churches. It is anticipated that increases for future years will average 6.00%, due to: historical premium increase. Claims have historically increased from 8 to 12 per cent.

POST-RETIREMENT MEDICAL BENEFIT PROGRAM (PRM)

Plan Overview: The South Carolina Conference post-retirement medical program currently offered is a Stipend plan made available to retired clergy.

The expectation for 2016 is to offer a Defined Contribution of \$200 per month for all current retirees and covered spouses and retirees & Spouses retiring prior to 01/01/2016. All eligible retirees and covered spouses retiring on or after 01/01/2016 will receive \$100 a month per covered person. The funding obligation for 2016 is anticipated to be \$1,544,915 with the funding sources to be Account assets and new incoming askings. On a longer term basis, the Conference intends to be funded through apportionments.

Based on the most recent PRM valuation dated 12/31/2014, the following is the funded position of the post-retirement medical benefits:

Accumulated Post Retirement Obligation (APBO) or net conference cost	\$22,129,908
Expected Post Retirement Obligation (EPBO) or net conference cost	\$25,545,174
Service Cost (SC) or net conference cost	\$456,520
Assets designated for PRM	\$13,292,815

These values are based on a 3.55% long term discount rate, a .0% long-term expected return, and a current increase trend of 7.50% with an ultimate medical increase of 5.0%, beginning in 2019.

COMPREHENSIVE PROTECTION PLAN (CPP)

Plan Overview: The Comprehensive Protection Plan (CPP) provides death, long-term disability and other welfare benefits for eligible clergy of The United Methodist Church and their families. It is an Internal Revenue Code 414(e) "church plan" funded by plan sponsor insurance premiums. Generally, clergy are eligible to participate in CPP if the conference or salary-paying unit sponsors the plan and they are able to satisfy the eligibility requirements which include full-time appointment with plan compensation equal to or greater than 60% of the Denominational Average Compensation or the Conference Average Compensation, whichever is less. The South Carolina Conference has elected to make CPP eligible clergy appointed 100% have mandatory participation under special arrangements, while 75% appointed clergy have optional participation under special arrangements.

For 2016, the South Carolina Conference has an expected required contribution to the Comprehensive Protection Plan of \$1,168,800, which is anticipated to be funded by: Direct Billed to Local Churches. The anticipated average increase in future years is expected to be 2.30% per year due to: Change in CAC.

UNITED METHODIST PERSONAL INVESTMENT PLAN (UMPIP) FOR LAY AND CLERGY

Plan Overview: The United Methodist Personal Investment Plan (UMPIP) is an Internal Revenue Code section 403(b) defined contribution retirement savings plan for clergy and lay employees of The United Methodist Church and affiliated organizations. Participants may make before-tax and/or after-tax contributions through payroll deductions. Participant contributions, various optional plan sponsor contributions and investment earnings comprise the individual's retirement account balance.

Conference office lay employees working an average of 30 hours per week or more are eligible after three (3) months for a plan sponsor funded pension contribution of nine (9) % of salary. Lay employees are encouraged to make contributions toward their retirement through payroll deductions to the UMPIP. The estimated contribution for the South Carolina Conference is anticipated to be \$96,700 and will be funded through the Apportionment.

(If appropriate) The South Carolina Conference, as of January 1, 2016 is planning on sponsoring the UMPIP for clergy serving less than full time -time and are eligible for a pension contribution of nine (9) % of salary. The estimated contribution for the Conference is anticipated to be \$436,200 and will be funded by the local church which is the plan sponsor.

OTHER CONFERENCE BENEFIT OBLIGATIONS: DEFINED CONTRIBUTION (DC) TYPE

DC Plan Overview: The South Carolina Conference currently offers a Conference Lay Employee Death and Disability (UMLife) plan made available to full time lay employees. The funding obligation for 2016 is anticipated to be \$17,300 with the funding sources to be: Apportioned. The anticipated average increase in future years is expected to be 2.% per year due to: Increase in Salary estimated at 2.5% and increases due to age.

DC Plan Overview: The South Carolina Conference currently offers a Death Benefit for Pre BPP Conference Lay Employees plan made available to full time lay employees. The funding obligation for 2016 is anticipated to be \$200 with the funding sources to be Apportionment. The anticipated average increase in future years is expected to be -5.%% per year due to: Death of Pre PBB Participants.

OTHER CONFERENCE BENEFIT OBLIGATIONS: DEFINED BENEFIT (DB) TYPE

DB Plan Overview: The South Carolina Conference currently offers a DB Special Grants plan made available to one participant. The funding obligation for 2016 is anticipated to be \$200 with the funding sources to be: Till death of recipient of Special grant of \$16.88 per month. The anticipated average increase in future years is expected to be .0%% per year due to: Negotiated Special Grant. The liability associated with this benefit is estimated to be \$1,000 based on a discount rate of Select%.

CONCLUSION:

The 2016 Comprehensive Benefit Funding Plan and the above Summary document incorporates, to the best of our understanding, the South Carolina Conference's obligations and funding requirements of the benefits provided to the clergy and laity of the South Carolina Conference.

Herman B. Lightsey, Jr., Chair, CBOPHB

David L. Anderson, CBO

Elizabeth G. Westbury, Treasurer Elect

David Surrett, President, CCF&A

THE COMMISSION ON ARCHIVES AND HISTORY

The Commission on Archives and History is responsible for preserving the records of the Annual Conference, a responsibility which also includes collecting the records of the present and ensuring that these records are available for use in our future. The commission also helps the churches of the Annual Conference learn about their rich histories and works to connect South Carolina Methodists to each other and to their past.

The Commission maintains repositories for records at Wofford College and at Clafin University. These records include everything from the minutes of Annual Conferences, copies of the *Southern Christian Advocate*, records of some Conference boards and commissions, records from the Florence, Greenwood, Marion, and Spartanburg districts, biographical directories of clergy, subject files on many churches, and records of some closed churches. We have some personal papers of several former clergy and the records of the United Methodist Women. Current or retired clergy who wish to talk about what to do with their personal papers may contact the archivist.

For the year 2014, we responded to 223 inquiries on the Conference collection. We hosted eight visitors who came to do research in the Methodist collections. The staff copied 253

obituaries from the *Advocate* Obituary Index for researchers. Over the past seven years, we have had some 2,052 inquiries, hosted 255 visits, and have produced 2,165 obituary copies. Our researchers have included everyone from local church historians and family members seeking information on clergy ancestors to professional historians who are doing scholarly research. We also note that since the fall of 2011, the Rev. Luther H. Rickenbaker has served as a volunteer in the archives at Wofford. He has helped in the processing of the Adlai Holler and Wain Marvin Owings Papers, copied obituaries, and written biographical notes about clergy in the online pictorial directory, among other tasks. For the past year, he has been working with the collection of the Rev. Eben Taylor. His work continues to help relate the work of the Conference to the ministry of memory.

The archive is working to make more of its records available online, and those who are interested may look at the archives website – <http://www.wofford.edu/library/archives/methodist.aspx> – to see what's available. Wofford also is hosting an online digital repository with historical addresses, a few Methodist books, and some of the older Conference pictorial directories available. We also have the photographs from those directories available on the archives website, and churches may download and print these materials for displays and publications.

The Claflin University Archives is also busily working on projects to support Methodist history. Just in the fall and winter months alone, Claflin's archives received over 600 items for preservation and 37 requests for information. With assistance from work study students, obituaries and news articles have been separated and placed in binders. Claflin's latest special collections of books have been properly shelved by call numbers and now all special collections items, to include United Methodist special collections items, are easier to locate.

The Commission presents the Herbert Hucks Award for Preservation and Interpretation of church history annually to churches and individuals who have made great strides in keeping and sharing our rich history. These awards are presented during the awards session at Annual Conference. Information on applying for the Hucks Award or nominating an individual or a publication for the award is available on the archives website. Materials for the 2016 awards will be due on February 1, 2016.

We urge the members of the Annual Conference to take history seriously. Each local church bears the responsibility for maintaining its own records. When churches close, the Commission takes on these churches' records disposition responsibility, though those records do not always make their way to the archives. Board and Commission officers may call on the Conference archivist, Dr. Phillip Stone, to talk about the proper disposition of their board or commission or committee's records.

The Conference Historical Society hosted the annual meeting of the Southeastern Jurisdictional Historical Society on June 24-26, 2014, on the Wofford campus. The theme of the meeting was "Methodism and Education in South Carolina in the 19th and 20th Centuries." Among the presenters were Dr. A.V. Huff, Dr. Katherine Cann, Dr. David Mitchell, Dr. Ted Morton, and Dr. Ron Robinson. At the same time, the Historical Society of the United Methodist Church met with us in South Carolina.

As we look forward to a number of milestones in the life of our church and Conference, we hope to be involved in planning appropriate celebrations. In 2016, we will observe the 150th anniversary of the founding of the 1866 Conference. In 2022, we'll commemorate the 50th anniversary of the merger of the 1866 and 1785 Conferences into a new South Carolina Annual Conference. The Annual Conference should begin planning for the recognition of these significant anniversaries.

We thank the Conference for its continuing support and look forward to helping share our ministry of memory.

*William L. Kinney, Jr., chairperson
R. Phillip Stone II, Ph.D., Conference Archivist*

THE SOUTH CAROLINA CONFERENCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

A "Ministry of Memory"

The Conference Historical Society is a volunteer membership organization that works alongside the Commission on Archives and History to promote the study and preservation of Methodist history and of the South Carolina Conference and its antecedents. The Society believes that the study of history ultimately serves God by providing a record and testimony of the Lord's work in us and among us. The Society encourages churches to preserve documents and artifacts as a record for future generations and to remember and celebrate their history as a glory to God.

The Historical Society publishes a newsletter, sponsors educational programs, works to conserve and recognize historic sites, and provides leadership and resources to local churches. Membership is open to anyone interested in the history of Methodism and the South Carolina Conference.

In June 2014, the Historical Society hosted at Wofford College the concurrent annual meetings of the Southeastern Jurisdiction Historical Society and the Historical Society of the United Methodist Church. The meetings included a series of four substantive lectures on the theme of Methodism and Education in South Carolina in the 18th, 19th, and early 20th centuries. Led by the keynote address of the Rev. Dr. A.V. Huff, Jr., Conference Historian, participants learned important lessons about the influence of Methodism in educating the populace from the primary to college levels. Dr. Katherine Cann presented the history of Spartanburg Methodist College and its antecedent, the Textile Industrial Institute; Dr. David Mitchell related the early history of Claflin University; and Dr. Ronald Robinson reported on the historical connection of Methodism and higher education as well as the state of faith at colleges today. Methodist scholars and historians from across the United States praised the quality of the presentations at the three-day conference. Participants enjoyed a field trip to the historic Cokesbury Conference School, Tabernacle Cemetery, and the original location of Allen University. Conference attendants were privileged by the participation of Bishop L. Jonathan Holston as preacher and celebrant at the closing worship and communion service.

The Society continued to raise funds for the reconstruction and restoration of a rare and historic log cabin dating to the 1700s that was used as a lodging place by Bishop Francis Asbury during multiple visits to the South Carolina upcountry. Strategically located with other historic exhibits at the Hagood Mill Historic Site in Pickens County, the Society hopes that the cabin ideally will become a focal point for educating thousands of yearly visitors, including confirmation classes, about the Methodist church and its early history. Approximately \$10,000 has been raised toward a total restoration cost of \$80,000 - \$90,000.

In the fall, the Historical Society began several initiatives. The Society created a page on the Conference website which explains its mission, summarizes recent activities, and provides membership information. The webpage may be accessed at <http://www.umcsc.org/home/home/historical-society/>.

The Society also initiated a membership drive including a special invitation to retired pastors. Further, the Society began laying the groundwork for a greater attention to local church anniversaries with a letter to district superintendents in October 2014, encouraging the celebration of milestone anniversaries of 225, 200, 175, 150, 125, 100, 75, and 50 years. The Society will honor these churches at its spring meeting on April 25, 2015.

As God directs, let us raise our Ebenezer(s) and remember by whose help we have come.
Respectfully submitted,

Joyce E. Plyler, President

THE COMMISSION ON EQUITABLE COMPENSATION (CEC)

Report Number 1

A. The Mission and Changing Focus of the Conference Commission on Equitable Compensation (CEC)

Historically, the CEC has served for the support of full-time clergy in the charges of the South Carolina Annual Conference. Through the years, the Commission has been guided by the United Methodist *Book of Discipline*; the latest version states the following: "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." (*The Book of Discipline, 2012, Paragraph 625.2*) The CEC supports the overall ministry of the local church, especially in transitional situations.

B. Total Compensation for Clergy

1. The CEC reminds churches and charges that salary is only one portion of total compensation. Churches and charges are urged to consider dispersing compensation in ways that will assist clergy and their families to retain as great a portion of their income as is legally possible. Churches and charges are reminded to consider total compensation and not just think of salary when thinking of clergy family needs.

Likewise, clergy are reminded that they are supported in a variety of ways, and total compensation most often exceeds salary.

2. Churches and pastors are urged to keep informed of their income tax responsibilities and rights. Pastors are advised to seek qualified assistance in making decisions that will affect their income tax liabilities.

Report Number 2

A. Budget Request for 2016

1. The CEC requests that a line item apportionment of \$575,000 be made to fund the CEC operational budget for 2016. These funds will be used for base compensation supplements, salary support for clergy in new church starts, special situations, and Hispanic Ministries, as well as support required and/or provided under these recommendations.
2. The request for 2016 represents a \$25,000 increase over 2015.

B. Schedule of Total Minimum Compensation for Clergy Serving in the SC Annual Conference

In accordance with the mandate of *The Book of Discipline*, the Commission recommends that the South Carolina Annual Conference fix the following as its minimum base compensation scale, effective January 1, 2016, and continuing until changed by the Annual Conference:

FOR FULL-TIME APPOINTMENTS AS CLERGY IN THE LOCAL CHURCH:

Category	Amount
a. Full-time Clergy in full connection	\$42,797
b. Full-time Provisional, Commissioned, and Associate Members	\$38,904
c. Full-time Local Pastors	\$36,093

The recommendation represents a 1.6% increase over what was approved for 2015. This increase almost parallels the 1.7% cost of living adjustment made by the Social Security Administration for 2015.

[Please note that the CEC strongly encourages churches to pay the pastor's business expense through an accountable reimbursement plan which is a part of the administrative budget of the church, not part of salary. Please see sections "O," "P," and "Q" below, entitled "O. Reimbursement for Travel and Professional Expenses," "P. Continuing Education," and "Q. Reimbursement as Administrative Cost."]

Please be aware that total compensation for full-time clergy must equal 60% of the denominational average compensation so that full-time clergy may participate in CPP. For 2015, the DAC is \$66,259, and 60% of that amount is \$39,755. For 2016, the DAC is \$67,333, and 60% of that amount is \$40,400. Full-time, provisional, commissioned, associate members and full-time local pastors must be provided with a parsonage or with a housing allowance to bring them up to this level. (For pastors with a parsonage, "total compensation" is calculated at 125% of minimum base compensation.)

C. For Deacons in Full Connection

Those persons who have responded to God's call to lead in service and to equip others for ministry through teaching, proclamation, and worship and who assist elders in the administration of the sacraments and are full-time ordained deacons in accordance with Paragraph 330 of *The Book of Discipline 2012* shall be compensated by the local church not less than the minimum amount for an ordained elder of the Annual Conference. [See Paragraph 331.10(b) of *The Book of Discipline 2012*.] Deacons who are employed by the congregation, charge, or cooperative parish less than full time shall be compensated proportional to the percentage of time being served. (Half time would receive not less than half the minimum salary.) Deacons not employed by a congregation, charge, or cooperative ministry or who are appointed under Paragraph 331.6(d) are not affected.

D. Longevity Increases

A clergy person, who has completed five or more year's full-time service or the equivalent thereof in the South Carolina Annual Conference, shall receive, in addition to the minimum base, a supplement of \$175.00 per year of service for up to 10 years of service. (In practical terms, this increase would not be applied until the fiscal year following the completed Annual Conference year. In other words, the first increase would not be applied until the January after the Annual Conference at which the clergy person completes his/her fifth year.)

Example:

Year 6	Minimum base compensation plus	\$ 875.00
Year 7	Minimum base compensation plus	\$1050.00
Year 8	Minimum base compensation plus	\$1225.00
Year 9	Minimum base compensation plus	\$1400.00
Year 10	Minimum base compensation plus	\$1575.00
Year 11+	Minimum base compensation plus	\$1750.00

E. Housing Allowances

The Commission recommends that all money given to the pastor for housing by the charge he/she serves be considered income if the pastor is not a resident in the charge which he/she serves.

F. Application for Equitable Compensation Support for Base Compensation Assistance

The district superintendent shall request the base compensation assistance required by each charge twice each year (by May 15 for the July through December compensation assistance period and by December 15 for the January through June compensation assistance period); these requests must be approved by the Commission before payment can be made. This request from the district superintendent shall be accompanied by an application form provided by the Commission and completed by the pastor, the pastor-parish relations committee, and the district superintendent indicating income from all sources. Grants shall be made based on fiscal years (January to December), and unless otherwise designated, shall decrease 25% annually. For grants beginning in July, 100% of the approved amount will be provided for the first eighteen (18) months and will decrease 25% annually thereafter.

G. Cross Racial Appointments

If the Bishop and Cabinet, in making a cross-racial appointment, find it necessary to request an equitable compensation supplement, special consideration will be given on an individual basis. Guidelines listed under Report 3 will apply.

H. Cooperative Parish Ministries

The initial directors or coordinators of a cooperative parish ministry which has been approved by the Board of Global Ministries and application made by the district superintendent to the Commission by January 1 preceding the appointment in June of the same year may be eligible for funds not to exceed \$7,000.00. No pastor shall be eligible to receive funds unless the charge he/she serves agrees in writing to release him/her for these added duties. Assistance will be provided over a 4-1/2 year period and will decrease by 25% each year after the first year and a half.

I. Disbursement of Supplements

All compensation supplements from the Commission shall be paid to the local church involved for disbursement to the pastor or clergyperson and shall be disbursed monthly. In the case of new mission situations or churches, monies will be dispersed directly to the pastor until there is a church treasurer. Equitable compensation funds will not be used for moving expenses, businesses expenses, or church administration.

For charges receiving CEC supplements, changes to the total compensation may be made for longevity (see D. Longevity Increases above), changes in clergy status, and changes in minimum base compensation as approved by the Annual Conference. Charges are encouraged to increase their portion of total compensation as they are able and thereby reduce the amount of supplement paid by CEC. Such increases in the portion paid by the local charge above the scheduled amounts will result in a reduction of the CEC supplement by the amount of increase.

J. Utilities Allowance

The Commission requests that the South Carolina Annual Conference designate 15% (or estimate of actual expenses as requested by recipient) of base compensation support funded by this Commission as parsonage utilities allowance. This request is made to satisfy the requirements of the Internal Revenue Service. Under IRS guidelines, this money may be used for household expenses including mortgage or rent payments.

K. Investment of Reserve Fund

The CEC recommends that all funds held in "reserve" be invested and the interest used in the Commission's operating account. In accordance with guidelines established with CF&A in 2013 and presented to the 2013 Annual Conference, the "floor" of the reserve is to be set at \$300,000 in order to meet general projection shortfalls, to allow for the unanticipated start of a new church or missional situation, or to deal with an unexpected disaster.

L. Interpretation

The Commission recommends that an interpretation of its task and policy procedures be given as a part of the District Pastor/Staff Parish Relations Committee Workshops. It is further recommended that this interpretation be done by a member of the Commission upon invitation by the district superintendent.

M. Compensation Guidance

The Commission recommends that district superintendents assist churches and charges in setting appropriate compensation and work load packages in accordance with Paragraph 419.4, 419.6 of *The Book of Discipline 2012*.

N. Ineligibility

The CEC recommends that the following not be eligible for equitable compensation support:

- Retired supply pastors
- Part-time local pastors
- Pastors on leave of absence except as provided in Standing Rule 90
- Special appointment categories within the itinerancy of the United Methodist Church as defined in Paragraph 344.1 a, b, c of *The Book of Discipline 2012*.
- Deacons as defined in Paragraphs 329 and 330 of *The Book of Discipline 2012* (except as appointed under Report 3 of this report and Paragraph 625.4 of *The Book of Discipline 2012*).

O. Reimbursement for Travel and Professional Expenses

The Commission recommends that each church set up a reimbursement account for travel and professional expenses incurred by the pastor in performing pastoral duties. Reimbursement for non-commuting church-related travel shall be at the IRS rate (currently 57.5 cents per mile.) The pastor(s) shall submit a voucher and a log each month for reimbursement. For reimbursement for actual professional expenses (books, subscriptions, periodicals, etc.), the pastor(s) shall submit a voucher with supporting documentation for reimbursement. The amount set by the charge as reimbursement for travel and professional expenses should be determined after consultation with pastor(s) (and the district superintendent, if desired or needed) by the Pastor/Staff-Parish Relations Committee. Each charge should annually evaluate the local needs and expectations of its pastors and set an amount for reimbursement accordingly. Also, the procedures for reimbursement should be clearly stated.

P. Continuing Education

Each charge shall place in its budget an amount of \$750 or more per year to be used by the pastor as a continuing education fund. If the full amount is not used in a given year, the unused portion may be carried forward from year to year during the tenure of a pastor, not to exceed a total amounting to three year's continuing education allowance inclusive of the current year's amount.

Q. Reimbursement as Administrative Cost

The Commission recommends that the reimbursement for travel and professional expenses be a part of the administrative cost of each local church and not considered or reported as part of the pastor's compensation.

R. Vacation Policy

The Commission reminds churches and ministers that vacation time plus time for renewal and reflection are an expected part of compensation. Time away is necessary for personal, spiritual, and family health. It is recommended that all clergy and diaconal ministers be granted, as a minimum, annual vacation and days of renewal according to the following schedule:

Total Years of Service	Number of Weeks
Less than 5 years	a minimum of 2(including Sundays)
5 years -10 years	a minimum of 3 (including Sundays)
More than 10 years	a minimum of 4 (including Sundays)

In addition to the above, it is recommended that the minister, regardless of years of service, be granted one day of retreat a month for prayer and reflection. Also, it is expected that the minister will have at least one day off a week. "Years of Service" reflect number of years under appointment in the ministry of the United Methodist Church, and not the number of years of service on a given charge. "Vacation" is meant as freedom from any responsibility in the local church or charge, district, conference area, jurisdiction, or general conference. Vacation should be a time of rest, recreation, and renewal. It should not be interpreted to mean time the pastor works at a church camp, is on a mission trip, or attends a meeting of a general board, an agency of the conference, or a district retreat. Time away from the charge for Annual Conference and continuing education events shall not be considered vacation time. The charge shall make available as necessary the funds for pulpit supply while the pastor is on vacation.

It is asked that the lay member of the Annual Conference communicate this information to the Pastor/Staff Parish Relations Committee and to the local church.

Report Number 3 Mission Situations

A. Definition

Mission situations are new churches and existing churches in transitional circumstances that are in areas that demand an effective ministry but are incapable of providing such ministry without equitable compensation assistance. Mission situations may also include intentional ministry to persons of low income.

B. Eligibility

To be eligible for equitable compensation assistance in mission situations, the recipient must comply with the following procedures:

1. The District Board for Congregational Development shall be the authorizing body to project a transitional situation, and the Conference Committee on Congregational Development will project all new church starts.
2. The District Board for Congregational Development will refer this situation to the Conference Committee on Congregational Development for verification as a transitional situation and the situation's priority rank among Conference needs.
3. The potential new mission situation will then be referred to the Cabinet for approval. The Cabinet will strive to inform the Commission of potential new mission situations two years ahead of the time the appointment is to start. The Commission will budget for new mission situations after Cabinet approval.
4. At the time of appointment, the Cabinet will then designate a pastor or clergy person and request an appropriate base compensation for that particular mission situation.
5. In all cases where a new mission situation is to be launched, the District Superintendent shall notify the CEC by December 15th preceding the Annual Conference at which an appointment is to be made providing, at that time, the projected base compensation cost to be incurred in July.

Note 1. The local church's share of this base compensation schedule is interpreted to mean all sources of income from the local church or from any other source.

Note 2. In all cases where a mission situation is attached to an existing charge, these situations become charge figures.

Note 3. The district superintendent may apply to the Commission for a compensation that is more in keeping with the amount received by this pastor in his or her previous appointment.

C. Continuation of Supplements and Annual Evaluation

1. If the ministry being served is unable to meet the schedule below for two years in a row, support from CEC will cease after the next year following.
2. An evaluation shall be done annually on each mission situation. The Conference Director of Congregational Development shall provide a report of this evaluation to the CEC by January 1st.

D. Payment of Direct Billing Costs for Pensions and Health Benefits in Mission Situations Only

The Commission on Equitable Compensation will pay only the direct billing costs of persons in mission situations according to the compensation schedules listed below. The Commission will send its proportional share directly to the Conference office of Pensions and Health Benefits.

E. Compensation Schedules for Mission Situations

Part 1.

Schedule for New Church Starts Begun in 2008 and Thereafter

Equitable Compensation for new church starts that were initiated after December 31, 2007, shall be as follows:

Year 1 and 2: The CEC will pay the minimum compensation base according to the minister's category and half of the payment of the direct billing for pensions and health benefits. (New church starts that begin in July will receive 100% funding for the first two and a half years.)

Year 3: Support from Equitable Compensation will not exceed 67% of the minimum base compensation amount. The Commission will pay half of the payment of the direct billing for pensions and health benefits.

Year 4: Support from Equitable Compensation will not exceed 33% of the minimum base compensation amount. The Commission will pay half of the payment of the direct billing for pensions and health benefits.

Year 5: Support from Equitable Compensation will cease for both the base compensation supplement and for payment of the direct billing for pensions and health benefits.
 New Church Travel: Upon request and appropriate documentation, the CEC will provide travel allowance for new church pastors at the following rates:

First year and a half:	up to \$4,000.00 annually
Second full year:	up to \$3,000.00 annually
Third full year:	up to \$2,000.00 annually
Fourth full year:	up to \$1,000.00 annually

Part 2
Schedule for Ministry with Persons of Low Income

Equitable Compensation assistance in ministries with persons of low income will be provided for a pastor or clergy person, when requested by the Cabinet, over a ten and a half year period decreasing as follows:

First Year and a Half: The amount of Equitable Compensation support will be allocated according to the pastor's category. As the sole salary paying unit in this mission situation, the CEC will pay 100% of the clergyperson's direct bill for pensions and health benefits.

After One and a Half Years: Support from Equitable Compensation will decrease by 5% for both the base compensation supplement and for payment of the direct billing for pensions and health benefits.

After Two and Half Years: Support from Equitable Compensation will decrease by another 5% for both the base compensation supplement and for payment of the direct billing for pensions and health benefits.

After Three and a Half Years: Support from Equitable Compensation will decrease by another 5% for both the base compensation supplement and for payment of the direct billing for pensions and health benefits.

After Four and a Half Years: Support from Equitable Compensation will decrease by another 10% for both the base compensation supplement and for payment of the direct billing for pensions and health benefits.

After Five and a Half Years: Support from Equitable Compensation will decrease by another 10% for both the base compensation supplement and for payment of the direct billing for pensions and health benefits.

After Six and a Half Years: Support from Equitable Compensation will decrease by another 10% for both the base compensation supplement and for payment of the direct billing for pensions and health benefits.

After Seven and a Half Years: Support from Equitable Compensation will decrease by another 10% for both the base compensation supplement and for payment of the direct billing for pensions and health benefits.

After Eight and a Half Years: Support from Equitable Compensation will decrease by another 15% for both the base compensation supplement and for payment of the direct billing for pensions and health benefits.

After Nine and a Half Years: Support from Equitable Compensation will decrease by another 15% for both the base compensation supplement and for payment of the direct billing for pensions and health benefits.

After Ten and a Half Years: Support from Equitable Compensation will cease for both the base compensation supplement and for payment of the direct billing for pensions and health benefits.

Travel for persons in ministry with persons of low income will be provided by the districts or districts in which the ministry is located.

F. Ministry with Hispanic/Latino People

The CEC will operate in light of the Annual Conference's decision to make ministry with the Hispanic/Latino population a priority. Support for clergy working in ministry with Hispanic/Latino people shall be made in accordance with the Schedule for Ministry with Persons of Low Income (Report Number 3e, Part 2). The Commission recognizes that adjustments may be necessary on a case by case basis. The district superintendent, after consultation with the Cabinet and the Conference Hispanic Committee may request adjustments in the following areas:

1. An extension of the initial time period from 1-1/2 years up to 2-1/2 years in which Equitable Compensation shall pay 100% of the clergyperson's salary and direct bill for pensions and health benefits. In no case shall this period extend beyond 2-1/2 years. After the extension expires, support will decrease as follows:

After Two and a Half Years: Support from Equitable Compensation will decrease by 5% for both the base compensation supplement and for payment of the direct billing for pensions and health benefits.

After Three and Half Years: Support from Equitable Compensation will decrease by another 5% for both the base compensation supplement and for payment of the direct billing for pensions and health benefits.

After Four and a Half Years: Support from Equitable Compensation will decrease by another 5% for both the base compensation supplement and for payment of the direct billing for pensions and health benefits.

After Five and a Half Years: Support from Equitable Compensation will decrease by another 10% for both the base compensation supplement and for payment of the direct billing for pensions and health benefits.

After Six and a Half Years: Support from Equitable Compensation will decrease by another 10% for both the base compensation supplement and for payment of the direct billing for pensions and health benefits.

After Seven and a Half Years: Support from Equitable Compensation will decrease by another 10% for both the base compensation supplement and for payment of the direct billing for pensions and health benefits.

After Eight and a Half Years: Support from Equitable Compensation will decrease by another 10% for both the base compensation supplement and for payment of the direct billing for pensions and health benefits.

After Nine and a Half Years: Support from Equitable Compensation will decrease by another 15% for both the base compensation supplement and for payment of the direct billing for pensions and health benefits.

After Ten and a Half Years: Support from Equitable Compensation will decrease by another 15% for both the base compensation supplement and for payment of the direct billing for pensions and health benefits.

After Eleven and a Half Years: Support from Equitable Compensation will cease for both the base compensation supplement and for payment of the direct billing for pensions and health benefits.

2. A salary supplement for clergy living in areas where the cost of living is high. The maximum yearly supplement shall be \$2,400.
3. Assistance with travel expenses. In limited circumstances, Equitable Compensation shall provide up to a yearly maximum of \$4,000 to supplement the support provided by the district. When assistance with travel expenses is requested, the district superintendent shall certify that the district will spend at least \$15,000 in the current year to provide housing and travel for the clergyperson.
4. A salary supplement for experience in ministry with Hispanic/Latino people. This supplement will be in addition to any experience merit that a clergyperson receives on the basis of the policy set forth in Report 2, Section D. A clergyperson who has served 5 or more years full-time service in United Methodist ministry with Hispanic/Latino people shall receive a supplement of \$175.00 per year of service for up to 14 years of service.

Example:

Year 6: \$875 in addition to Equitable Compensation base and experience merit
Year 7: \$1,050 in addition to Equitable Compensation base and experience merit
Year 8: \$1,225 in addition to Equitable Compensation base and experience merit
Year 9: \$1,400 in addition to Equitable Compensation base and experience merit
Year 10: \$1,575 in addition to Equitable Compensation base and experience merit
Year 11: \$1,750 in addition to Equitable Compensation base and experience merit
Year 12: \$1,925 in addition to Equitable Compensation base and experience merit
Year 13: \$2,100 in addition to Equitable Compensation base and experience merit
Year 14: \$2,275 in addition to Equitable Compensation base and experience merit
Year 15+: \$2,450 in addition to Equitable Compensation base and +experience merit

All requests for adjustments shall be made in writing. Requests must be approved by the Commission before payment can be made.

Report Number 4

Categories of churches receiving support as of the years indicated:

	Dec. 2011		Dec. 2012		Dec. 2013		Dec. 2014	
	No.	Amount	No.	Amount	No.	Amount	No.	Amount
New church	2	\$44,408	4	\$107,669	3	\$96,815	4	\$159,500
Minimum	12	\$60,787	13	\$89,953	11	\$88,654	12	\$91,710
“Special”	8	\$112,831	6	\$55,803	13	\$103,671	12	\$120,184
Low Income	1	\$12,000	1	\$10,800	1	\$10,800	1	\$10,800
Hispanic/Latino	2	\$70,950	1	\$32,443	1	\$30,735	1	\$30,735
Cooperative Parish	1	\$7,000	2	\$8,750	2	\$10,500	0	\$0
Missional							1	\$15,000
Direct billing costs		\$70,630		\$83,783		\$86,839		\$79,122
TOTALS	26	\$378,606	27	\$388,200	31	\$428,014	31	\$507,051

Categories of pastors receiving support:

	Dec 2011	Dec 2012	Dec 2013	Dec 2014
Effective Members	10	14	17	17
Provisional Members	6	5	5	7
Associate Members	1	1	1	0
Local Pastors (Full Time)	7	5	6	6
Other	2	2	2	1
TOTALS	26	27	31	31

Sincerely,

The Commission on Equitable Compensation
Rev. Jeremy L. Howell, Chairperson,
jhowell@umcsc.org 803-607-1565
Mr. Skipper Brock, Vice-Chairperson
Rev. Morris Waymer, Statistician
Mrs. Lollie Haseleden, Secretary

THE COMMITTEE ON THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The Committee on the Annual Conference is a team of persons tasked with envisioning, planning, implementing, and evaluating the annual conference. The team began meeting soon after annual conference to review and evaluate the 2014 annual conference and to start planning the 2015 gathering.

In 2013, under the leadership and guidance of Bishop Holston, we began using teams to plan and implement annual conference. This shift to a team concept has provided the committee with a sense of purpose and collaboration that has created a better product and a better experience of conference for the lay and clergy members. We continue to operate in teams inclusive of a host, bible study, theme, logistics, production/media/IT, agenda, worship, and future sites teams. At the 2014 Annual Conference, the Rev. Karen Radcliffe was appointed to serve a local congregation and the Rev. Ken Nelson was nominated and elected to serve as the Conference Secretary.

While the business of the annual conference is part and parcel to what we do, our goal is to provide each member of the annual conference with such an experience of excellence that each person will want to reproduce that same standard of excellence in every ministry setting across this annual conference. Our annual conference will include inspiring worship, an opportunity for service, and robust Christian conferencing. In all that we do, our mission is to make disciples for Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world!

The pre-conference informational sessions will be held in May in each of our Districts. A DVD of information will be shared in each district with the pre-conference materials being published on line. This will enable greater access to this information.

The theme chosen for the 2015 Annual Conference is “**A More Excellent Way: Becoming Disciples God Can Use.**” On Sunday evening at 7:30, we will gather for our opening worship

service with Bishop Holston serving as the preacher. On Monday night, we will celebrate with those who will be commissioned or ordained for the work of ordained ministry. Bishop Marcus Matthew, the Resident Bishop of the Baltimore Washington Annual Conference, and a native son of South Carolina will serve as the preacher for this service.

On Tuesday of annual conference, we will partner with STOP HUNGER NOW, an international hunger relief ministry, to package meals for the hungry. Any monies raised over our goal will be sent back to each district and dispersed for local feeding ministries. We will also recognize and celebrate the ministry of those who are retiring. We will conclude our day of service with a worship service that focuses on youth and young adults. The preacher for the service will be the Rev. Jonathan Tompkins, pastor of Travelers Rest United Methodist.

On Wednesday afternoon, we will remember and give thanks for the lives of those who shared in the work of Christ holy church, and who have joined the church the triumphant since we last met. Dr. Tim McClendon will serve as the preacher. Certainly, you will want to be present on Wednesday night as we share in a service praise and thanksgiving featuring the Africa University Choir!

¶603 of *Book of Discipline* provides that the Annual Conference sets the place of the meeting for the sessions of the annual conference, and the presiding bishop sets the date. The standing rules of the conference provide that the Committee on the Annual Conference recommend the site of the next annual conference.

Over the last year the committee on the Annual Conference has been thinking anew about the purpose of annual conference. Our discernment about what we believe God wants our annual conference to be and become has grown! As we begun dreaming new God sized dreams, the possibilities were simply endless. We have asked, however, does our venue enable us to give full expression to all that God is calling us to do and become?

As the result, the committee on the Annual Conference sent out request for proposals to host future annual conferences. Proposals were received from four potential host sites: Florence, Greenville, Fort Mill, and Columbia. After full consideration of each proposal and site visits, the committee will offer a recommendation to the 2015 annual conference for its consideration and action.

As 2015 is a year in which we elect delegates to the 2016 General and Jurisdictional conferences, the committee voted to support a recommendation from our Conference Secretary, that we conduct our elections using electronic balloting. *Vistacom* will serve as our vendor. This will enable us to conduct the business of the annual conference and elect delegates in a timely and efficient manner.

Finally, the committee expresses its gratitude to Wesley and Salem United Methodist Churches and to the Florence District for their work as hosts for the 2015 session and their spirit of radical hospitality.

*L. Jonathan Holston, Chairperson
Kenneth L. Nelson, Secretary*

THE COMMITTEE ON THE CONFERENCE JOURNAL

The primary purpose of the Committee on Conference Journal is to assist the Conference secretary in the annual publication of the pre-Conference materials and the Conference *Journal*. As we transition into the digital era, we must continue reimagining how we produce these resources. As the result of moving into the digital era, we have transitioned from printing more than 2000 copies of the journal to about 150 annually. We now print journals by preorder. We are also producing about 50 copies of the Journal on DVD as the journal is now published on-line annually for free, giving greater access to all.

At the 2014 session of the Annual Conference, the body voted to delete the standing rule which required a printing of the minister's book every ten years. The financial cost of printing such a document far outweighed the benefits of producing this document in an age of digital technology. A significant number of our most recent versions of this publication are still available for purchase.

As we think about the relationship between the pre-Conference reports and the Journal, current conversations focus upon creating an online template for all boards and agencies to use in submitting their reports. This template would provide more of a uniform look for reports in the Journal and should create a faster means for producing both the pre-Conference material and the final copy of the Journal.

Profound gratitude is expressed to the countless number of persons who assist in producing the pre-Conference materials as well as the Conference *Journal*. Many thanks are expressed to the boards and agencies of the Annual Conference who submit their reports in a timely manner.

A special word of appreciation is expressed to Dean Lollis, J.C. Lane, Jeri Katherine Warden-Sipes, Mary Louise Johnson, and Angela Ford Nelson, the assistant secretaries for the South Carolina Annual Conference. Deep appreciation is expressed to Pat Mack, who has been exceptionally patient with me in this new season of learning. Certainly, the *Journal* would not be published without her and our friends at Service Printing.

A personal word of gratitude is expressed to the Rev. Karen Radcliffe, immediate past secretary of the Annual Conference, for the countless hours and invaluable expertise that she has shared over the past year.

Kenneth L. Nelson, Conference Secretary

THE COMMITTEE ON CONGREGATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

It is my pleasure to report to you on the work of the Congregational Development Committee.

Before I comment on the work of the committee, I wish to thank the district superintendents and the Nominations Committee for helping us become a more inclusive group representing the interests of everyone. I recall meetings at which we might have only one minority person and one or two females. However, our last meeting was 28% minority and 44% female. We are not where we want to be, but we very much appreciate the attention this matter has received from those who select the members who sit on our committee.

We thank you for your apportionment dollars – and any other contributions you may feel inclined to make! In new church starts, in existing churches, in the purchase of land, in leadership development, these contributions make a real difference in the Kingdom. The rules of the Annual Conference dictate the percentages of money that are to be spent in each area, and sometimes it is hard to keep from being overwhelmed by the escalating costs of everything.

We know that the development of major initiatives is a major hurdle for congregations, and we are thankful that we are able to assist where we can. We welcome your applications for grants, and we encourage you to make your application as strong as possible. In your application, give us a clear understanding of how this work is going to advance the Kingdom. The projects do not have to be only for construction, but also for staffing or equipment or anything that will help you spread the good news about God. During this year, requests exceeded available money by 4 times, but I still encourage you to apply. Sometimes we can connect you with other funding resources. Sometimes we can give other kinds of help or guidance. And we absolutely want to hold your work up in prayer and celebrate with you. This year we were able to make grants to congregations to help with staffing, equipment, and some key building improvements that will enable the congregations to reach their communities better.

Our bishop and cabinet continue to desire to strengthen and multiply our local churches. The state population continues to grow, and we must do everything we can to share the gospel. Our committee serves as a resource to the cabinet as they do their work. This year, it is hoped that there will be new projects taking place in Columbia and Charleston districts.

We also provide training opportunities for pastors and congregations, and we invite you to contact our director, Rev. Sara White, to see if we can help.

Our office also provides free demographic information for all congregations in our state. Simply go to umcsc.org, click on Congregational Development, and select demographic reports.

This year we noticed that district committees of Congregational Development were involved in some interesting activities. Each district receives 20% of the monies received from their apportionments. Some districts are setting aside a percentage of their grant money for new projects, staffing, and leadership development or education for congregations. Change is tremendously challenging, but there is a wealth of useful information that can make the work easier and more effective.

I want to thank our staff, Laura Hill and Rev. Sara White. These two women are laboring very hard to help us with the harvest. I very much appreciate them, and we all covet your prayers for this ministry.

Rev. Ken Owens, Chair

THE COMMITTEE ON EPISCOPACY

The Conference Committee on Episcopacy seeks to live out its responsibilities by meeting quarterly for accountability, as well as being available to the bishop for counsel, support and dialogue regarding the concerns that affect relationships within the Annual Conference. The committee provides honest feedback in developing a unity of spirit which is necessary for effective

leadership and ministry. In essence, we serve to assist our episcopal family, both in ministry and in living among us, to facilitate an excellent working relationship. Indeed, we are richly blessed to have Bishop and Mrs. Holston in the South Carolina Conference.

This year Bishop and Mrs. Holston initiated "The Bishop's Road Show" as a way to connect and communicate with the laity of the local churches in South Carolina. The road shows consisted of Bishop Holston visiting each of the twelve (12) districts in the Annual Conference and meeting with lay leaders and lay servant leaders from the local churches. In these meetings, Bishop Holston offered invaluable insight, encouragement and assistance. The goal was to develop healthy, strong congregations by building quality relationships between laity and clergy. This effort allowed 1500 or more laypersons to share in conversation with their episcopal leader in helpful ways.

In addition, Bishop Holston supports the work of the Annual Conference by speaking in many areas. He participates in the various retreats held by United Methodist Men, United Methodist Women, Clergy Spouses and Youth (Revolution). He assisted in leading a youth mission immersion trip to Honduras, ordinands on a Holy Land pilgrimage trip and the Million Hours of Service emphasis. It is obvious to all that our bishop is leading us to a more excellent way.

Bishop Holston is also active on the General and Jurisdictional levels. In the Council of Bishops, he serves on the Executive Committee and is chairperson of the Missional Engagement Team. He serves as the 2014-2015 President of the Southeastern Jurisdiction College of Bishops (SEJ/COB), on Lake Junaluska Assembly Board of Directors and a member of the SEJ United Methodist Volunteers in Mission (SEJ/UMVIM).

The Committee encourages Bishop and Mrs. Holston to remember to take time for vacation so that they may be renewed, refreshed and restored both physically and spiritually. The Committee is diligent in making sure that the episcopal residence is a comfortable and safe living space. The Episcopal Residence Committee and Conference Trustees have been helpful in every way. The Committee wants the love and care of the Annual Conference be felt as our episcopal family celebrates birthdays, anniversaries and special occasions in their life. We are grateful to Dr. Timothy McClendon and Dr. Joseph Heyward, who serve as our representatives on the SEJ Committee on the Episcopacy (SEJ/COE). They guide us in the Episcopal Review and Evaluation Process as designed by the SEJ/COE.

Finally, Bishop Holston is a visionary who looks past what is to what can be.

His "God-Sized Vision" infuses the Conference with a spirit of enthusiasm and belief that we can discover a more excellent way and become disciples God can use.

Respectfully submitted,

*Rev. Barbara L. Reid
SC Episcopacy Committee, Chairperson*

THE EPISCOPAL RESIDENCE COMMITTEE

The Episcopal Residence Committee is charged with the maintenance and proper upkeep of the home that is provided for the Resident Bishop of the Columbia Area.

On April 20, 2015, a thorough walk through the Episcopal Residence, which is located in Northeast Columbia, was conducted by this Committee. The home was found to be in good working order and regularly scheduled maintenance is up to date. Seasonal maintenance projects have or will also be addressed. Two capital asset projects are being or have been inspected for repair or replacement. It is hoped that this project list will continue to be utilized for the consistent and appropriate maintenance and upkeep of the home.

The Residence Committee greatly appreciates the efforts of our Bishop Jonathan Holston and his wife Mrs. Felecia Holston, to maintain the Episcopal Residence in an excellent and spotless condition. The assistance of Mrs. Holston and the Conference Treasurer/Director of Administrative Services, Tony Prestipino and his staff has been invaluable.

As of the writing of this report, the committee believes that the Episcopal Residence is properly furnished and updated. The Committee, along with our Episcopal family, pledges to the Annual Conference that proper maintenance will take place regularly and consistently and will include inspections and meetings of the Episcopal Residence Committee as needed. Again the Committee appreciates the Annual Conference for the financial support of this ministry to our Bishop Jonathan Holston and his family.

Respectfully submitted,

*The Reverend Barbara C. Reid, Chair, Committee on Episcopacy
Mr. Brian Braddock, Chair, Conference Board of Trustees
The Reverend David Surrent, President, Council on Finance and Administration*

THE CONFERENCE STAFF RELATIONS COMMITTEE

This committee met multiple times in the previous year to review and update policies and procedures. Those procedures included instituting regular staff evaluations of all conference staff persons. The committee's first meeting this year was postponed due to inclement weather. Another meeting will be scheduled in the coming months to receive staff evaluations, meet the new Treasurer/Director of Administrative Services, and review policies and procedures.

THE OFFICE CLERGY SERVICES

In 2014, the Office of Clergy Services underwent a change of personnel with the appointment of a new coordinator. With her return to the parish, Rev. Karen Radcliffe completed an outstanding tenure in this office. Her support, and that of Tim Rogers, Frank Griffith, and Ted Walter, all who preceded me in this office, has been invaluable as I have taken on this work.

The primary purpose of the Office of Clergy Services is to serve as a support for and liaison between the Bishop and Cabinet and the Board of Ordained Ministry in areas related to all matters of clergy credentialing. This position also serves as a member of the Ministry Advisory Team.

Mrs. Martha Liles, the Administrative Assistant for Clergy Services, continues to provide excellent support to the district offices and candidates. She maintains our database and oversees the process of requesting and receiving the many annual reports for which this office is responsible. The work of this office would not happen without her and the twelve District administrative assistants. We owe them a profound measure of gratitude.

It is a pleasure to work with our Bishop, District Superintendents, and their administrative assistants on many matters related to our clergy, and to support them as they continue the vital and demanding work necessary to identify, nurture, instruct, and supervise the clergy of our Conference.

The most significant challenge facing this office at this time is helping our conference make the shift from a paper-based model of records keeping to the electronic management of records. While our current database written and created by Dr. Ted Walter was far ahead of its time, we have run out of storage space, and need a better way of sharing files with our district offices.

We have begun scanning our paper files into digital files and electronically storing these files in an online document management system called e-Bridge. Our goal is to complete this process by the end of the year.

The Board of Ordained Ministry continues to move forward under the excellent leadership of the Rev. Wayne Horne who was elected to serve as the chairperson in June of 2014. The depth of his experience, his commitment to excellence, his concern for the process, candidates, and the church ensures that together we will continue to move forward.

Without trying to list every event or undertaking of the past year, I continue to respond to requests by phone, email, and correspondence related to licensing, ordination, and all matters related to clergy and their status within the conference. I have met with individuals seeking personal guidance in these areas and have worked to update the training of our District Committees on Ministry. It is a pleasure to serve in this area of ministry and I look forward to the year ahead.

Kenneth L. Nelson, Coordinator of Clergy Services

THE TRUSTEES OF THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The primary work of the Board of Trustees ("Board") is to oversee the maintenance and ultimate disposition of the property of discontinued and abandoned church properties. These issues normally come to the Board from one of two major sources. One source of properties to be overseen is the churches being discontinued currently. In these instances every effort is made to transfer the property to other United Methodist churches, or other appropriate entities. Only when such a transfer cannot be negotiated ahead of time is the property of a discontinued church transferred to the Board. The other major group of properties overseen by the Board is those properties of churches discontinued some years ago, but which have never been properly transferred or disposed of. These properties come to the attention of the Board primarily through inquiries or requests of third parties.

During this church year, the Board sold a parsonage which had been owned by a discontinued Church, and those funds were used to fund renovations at the South Main Mercy Center in Anderson, South Carolina.

The Board receives no apportionment money. Rather, it operates from reserves, rental income of property, and from money generated from the occasional sale of properties. Most properties that the Board deals with do not generate extra funds, as the Board frequently deals with properties that have no natural market. It can be especially difficult to maintain and transfer

cemeteries in a responsible manner. But since it is highly impractical for the Board to actually oversee and maintain properties spread across the state, the ultimate intent of the Board is to transfer the title to all properties under its care as quickly and responsibly as possible.

Attached to this report and incorporated by reference herein is an accounting of the funds of the Board of Trustees for this past year, along with a listing of all real property being overseen by the Board, as required by paragraph 2512.6 of the *Book of Discipline*.

Accounting By Property

District	Property	Designation	
Anderson	Asbury Clark	Undesignated	134,897.99
Anderson	Sharon/Liberty	Care/Maint. Pending Resolution	2,936.52
Greenville	Concord	Undesignated	40,951.92
Greenville	Zion-Andrews	New Beginnings UMC	59,592.71
Greenville	Woodside	Urban Center	107,282.41
Anderson	Orville Parsonage	Sold 2015	-
Anderson	Orville Church	Mercy Center	-
Walterboro	Broomfield	Pending Resolution	(37.36)
Greenwood	Laurens Property	Pending Resolution	(5,019.47)
Greenville	McKinney Chapel	Pending Resolution	(442.82)
Orangeburg	Cameron Property	Pending Resolution	(1,070.63)
Marion	Old Galilee	Pending Resolution	(99.61)
Anderson	St Johns	Pending Resolution	(2,320.00)
Charleston	St Johns	Pending Resolution	7,697.43
Conference	Undesignated	Undesignated	86,932.70
		Grand Total	431,301.79

THE JAMES L. BELIN BOARD OF TRUST

The Belin Board of Trust exists to manage, preserve, and continue the missional legacy of the Reverend James L. Belin. Reverend Belin stated that it was “the long fixed and settled purpose of my life, to devote all that I possess to the promotion of the Glory of God, in advancement of the Missionary Cause.” Accordingly, during 2014 the Belin Board worked to protect the corpus of the trust and direct the income of the trust to benefit missions within the South Carolina Conference of the United Methodist Church.

The Belin Board works in partnership with the Conference Board of Global Ministries to fund new mission projects in South Carolina. Beginning in 2012, the Board began initiatives seeking to expand awareness of Belin Trust grant funding. The Board continued efforts in 2014 and sought to maximize total funding available for awards. In fact, grants paid in 2014 grew to just over \$138,000 from \$91,000 in 2013 (with even more awards expected in 2015).

The Board utilized the services of Debnam Wealth Management Group to assist in the management of the Trust’s over \$5.5 Million investment portfolio and to carry out the socially responsible investment policy. The Board’s Finance and Investment Committee works closely with our advisors to adjust the portfolio to meet the objectives of the Trust while adhering to the investment policy which was updated in 2013.

The Board continued to engage Webster Rogers LLP to perform accounting services including the preparation of quarterly and annual financial statements. DeLoach & Williamson, LLP, performed an agreed upon procedures engagement related to the financial accounting and related statements.

Officers elected for the 2015 year were as follows: Chairperson, Stuart Ford; Vice-Chairperson, Reverend Marty Nason; Secretary, Arch Yeager; and Treasurer, Frank Sanders.

On behalf of the Board, I express sincere appreciation for the assistance of the Conference Board of Global Ministries in the work of expanding missions within the South Carolina Conference. Additionally, I acknowledge the many congregations in our Conference that have helped to continue the legacy of Reverend Belin by utilizing grant funding from the Belin Trust. The missions funded through the local churches are “making disciples for Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world” and transforming lives in the name of Jesus.

On behalf of the Board, I especially wish to acknowledge the faithful work of Reverend Calvin Washington with Global Ministries, and we all continue to pray for his complete recovery.

*Stuart W. Ford, Chairperson
James L. Belin Board of Trust*

THE SOUTH CAROLINA UNITED METHODIST *ADVOCATE* BOARD OF TRUSTEES

This year, the *Advocate* marks 178 years of newspaper ministry to United Methodists in South Carolina. We have a passion to shine the light of the Lord throughout this great state, telling stories of God at work in big churches and small, from the Upstate to the Lowcountry and everywhere in between. Our fervent prayer is that God use this newspaper as His instrument, and we strive to be a full part of the Conference communications team, while maintaining our independent status for journalistic integrity. We do what we can to make stronger, better, deeper, and more numerous disciples of Christ for the transformation of the world. Our prayer-driven newspaper ministry is one that comprises communication, awareness, education, and inspiration, with local, district, conference, jurisdictional, and global reach. We aim to glorify God in all we do.

Thank you for being a part of these last five years, especially, which have seen tremendous growth for the *Advocate*. Today, we have a reputation as a high-quality, highly respected, and highly relevant publication. Since 2010, we have won 64 writing, general excellence, photography, and other awards from the South Carolina Press Association and United Methodist Association of Communicators – including “best newspaper” in our division –multiple times.

We have taken our mission and ministry several giant steps forward this year. One step is the launch of the *Daily Advocate*, a highly successful and well-received *Advocate*-Conference partnership that served all attendees at last year’s Annual Conference (2014). The four-page publication was produced three times on three different days and was placed on attendees’ chairs each day of the event to help them understand key issues and business occurring that day so they could make better decisions for the Kingdom as AC2014 delegates.

The second “giant step forward” has been visioning and implementing *The Messenger*, an eNewsletter partnership between the *Advocate* and the conference Communications Office that started in September 2014. *The Messenger* is distributed weekly to an email communications list that includes nearly 8,000 people and informs people about breaking and important news and events within the denomination.

Third, we have just selected the second recipient of the *Advocate*’s \$1,000 college scholarship fund, launched last year as a way to help students with an interest in business, communications, or journalism who are enrolled at one of the four United Methodist colleges in South Carolina: Claffin University, Columbia College, Spartanburg Methodist College, or Wofford College.

And, finally, after much hard work and effort, we were able to orchestrate the first-ever *Advocate* Awareness Day on Sunday, May 17, when churches and pastors across the state stepped up to get the word out to their members about the *Advocate*’s newspaper ministry. It is our fervent hope that increased readership will increase the Connection; after all, the more people learn through the *Advocate*, the stronger disciples they can be.

In addition to these latest endeavors, we continue to improve and advance our work in every way possible. Financially, we’re on the right track. Ad sales have grown from \$29,318 in 2010 to \$64,782 in 2014—a 121% increase. Circulation continues to grow slowly but surely, with a 3.1% increase from February 2010 to now (this gain says a lot, considering this is an era when print publications tend to see a decrease, or even stop publication entirely, as we transition to a digital media world.) Website traffic is up (AdvocateSC.org), and we remain active daily on social media (on Facebook and Twitter @advocatesc).

We also continue to contribute to the communications ministry of the denomination on the conference, jurisdictional, and global levels. We work as partners with SC Conference Connectional Ministries, the global United Methodist News Service, United Methodist Communications, the United Methodist Women’s Response magazine, United Methodist Men, General Board of Church and Society, and others.

We are also exploring new growth areas, including the creation of an app to better serve readers and potential readers. We estimate one-fifth of the state’s United Methodists read the *Advocate*, and one day our goal is that every United Methodist reads the *Advocate* in one format or another and is inspired by the transformative stories of God at work in South Carolina. We are doing what we can to make this publication extremely affordable. We have developed new print church-wide plans where people receive the *Advocate* for \$10/person per year with 10+ people participating in a church. For churches who do a lot of emailing, online church plans are even less: just \$1/person per year, based on the average weekly church attendance as recorded in the Journal (e.g. if you have 100 people each week in worship, you get a license to distribute the *Advocate* via email to your members for just \$100 total for the whole year).

Thank you for all your support as we continue serving God through our newspaper ministry. And don’t forget: send us your news! Help us tell your story through the *Advocate*.

*The Rev. Angela Ford Nelson, chairperson
and Jessica Brodie, editor*

THE UNITED METHODIST CENTER BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Routine maintenance and operations have been carried out during they year. The trustees also approved some upgrades to the conference rooms such as some new chairs and installing video monitors. Tenants of the Methodist Conference Center include Annual Conference Offices and the *Advocate*. For 2016 rent will not increase. The Trustees will continue in 2015 to evaluate building usage and may seek to find additional tenants to re-purpose now vacant areas such as the print shop.

*Paul Wood, Chairperson
Anthony C. Prestipino, Treasurer and Director of Administration*

THE REPORT OF THE CONFERENCE CHANCELLOR

It is my privilege to serve this conference as Conference Chancellor, legal advisor to the Bishop and the Annual Conference. By standing rule 98, requests for my services are made through the Episcopal office.

Reflecting back and looking forward, I want to again emphasize the importance of incorporation for local churches. I also want to emphasize the importance of annually reviewing all insurance policies to make sure the coverage is comprehensive and up to date. Incorporation and insurance protects the assets of the church, trustees, and individual members.

I also want to ask each church to insure that someone looks at the deeds of your church and other property records for the proper trust cause mandated by the Discipline. The Church should hold and maintain all property documents in a locked, fireproof cabinet.

We continue to grapple with issues around church cemeteries, daycare centers, playground safety, and facility leases. Please enter into your relationships with care and with complete documents.

Please carefully review your congregational Safe Sanctuary Policies and insure that the policies are complied with at all times.

A number of churches in the Conference have experienced employee and staff embezzlements this year. Section 258.4 of the *Book of Discipline* requires that the Committee on Finance to establish written financial policies to document the internal controls of the local church and additionally requires an annual audit of the financial statements which must be an independent evaluation of the financial reports, and records and internal controls of the local church. Each local church should be prepared to demonstrate their compliance with this mandate to their District Superintendent.

Thank you for allowing me to serve the Conference. I appreciate and look forward to the opportunity to continue work with the dedicated clergy, staff and laypersons of the Conference.

Kay G. Crowe, Conference Chancellor

THE MINISTRY ADVISORY TEAM

The Ministry Advisory Team concluded its work with the table group consultant in October 2014. Key outcomes of that work include the following:

- A deep understanding of the work required to be able to function effectively as a team.
- Commitment on the part of Conference staff and elected leaders of the need to work collaboratively and creatively across the various administrative, programmatic, and personnel areas.
- A plan for ongoing collaborative conversation and strategizing around the big-picture challenges and ministry opportunities facing the Annual Conference moving into the future.
- A regular schedule and framework for Ministry Advisory Team meetings that give elected leadership an opportunity for participating in the collaborative work.

Some key topics for ongoing conversation identified by the Ministry Advisory Team include sustainability concerns such as the impact of increasing benefit costs on the Annual Conference budget and the reality of a large number of clergy approaching retirement compared with a smaller number of younger clergy entering the Conference. Topics about missional opportunity include new models for congregational development and focused clergy and lay leadership development.

The Ministry Advisory Team is clear that its role is to advise, namely, to develop ideas, consult around options and consequences, test ideas across different perspectives, and begin to build consensus around a common direction. The implementation of the collaborative process is new, yet the conversation across various areas and departments is already generating new insight, fresh possibilities, and better communication about the opportunities and challenges ahead.

Bishop L. Jonathan Holston

THE REPORT OF THE CABINET

“Dream God-sized dreams!” That’s the way the cabinet report began last year, and these are still challenging words for United Methodist laity and clergy in the South Carolina Conference. As a cabinet, we are convinced that many of our churches are “stepping up to the plate” to “dream big” as they carry out ministry and mission in their communities and beyond! Churches throughout the Conference are effectively seeking to “make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.” Here are a few examples:

- At Shandon United Methodist Church in Columbia, a discipleship program for new believers and new members has been developed. It’s called TREK and focuses on small group spiritual formation and integration into full participation in the church.
- The Charleston District Committee on Congregational Development supported the request of a pastor to host a workshop titled “Reaching New People,” which was led by Rev. Kim Griffith of Griffith Coaching. Individuals from churches in the Rock Hill, Spartanburg, Orangeburg, Walterboro, and Charleston districts attended the workshop. The event was so successful that the district committee is now offering mini-grants for congregational teams to engage in coaching with Rev. Griffith.
- Allen Chapel UMC in the Spartanburg District is in the process of converting their unused parsonage into a “Hope Center,” offering support for the needs of families and individuals living in the surrounding community. The love of Christ will be shared, and people’s lives may be transformed through the “Hope Center.”
- The pastor and lay leadership of College Place United Methodist Church in Columbia have created a welcoming, multi-cultural church that is intentionally reaching diverse people, including people in addiction recovery. College Place sent a team to visit Grace Church in Florida to learn Pastor Jorge Acevedo’s spiritual transformation model for new disciples, especially addicts.

United Methodists in South Carolina are “making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world,” and as district superintendents, we are excited about this vision fulfillment!

This year, the words that are being articulated clearly by Bishop Jonathan Holston are these: “A More Excellent Way!” The theme for this year’s Annual Conference is “A More Excellent Way: Becoming Disciples God Can Use.” The challenge before South Carolina United Methodists is to seek “a more excellent way” in “making disciples of Jesus Christ” and in “becoming disciples God can use.” As followers of Christ, we cannot “make” disciples unless we are “becoming” the disciples God wants us to be – growing in God’s grace every day and opening up our hearts and lives for the Spirit to use us! In our role as “missional strategists,” we want to be helpful to clergy and laity in identifying strategic ways to “make disciples” and to “become disciples God can use.”

Bishop Holston – through his non-stop energy and presence at Conference and district events, sermons in churches, and his “Road Shows” in every district – has been working hard to “connect” with the clergy and laity of the Conference. He has been very intentional about getting to know South Carolina United Methodists and is leading the way for us, as district superintendents, and for everyone to build trust in each other and to develop ministry teams at the district and local church level. One of Bishop Holston’s expectations of each district superintendent is to build cohesive leadership teams in every district, so we have been moving toward that end. We do indeed need the right people in the right positions in our districts so that we can move forward together in ministry and mission. One of our goals as “missional strategists” is to identify both clergy and laity who will become leadership “teams” that can be helpful to local churches and the entire Annual Conference. The “ministry team” concept at every level is vital if we are going to have healthy pastors and healthy congregations in South Carolina.

As Bishop Holston travelled to each district for his “Road Shows,” a huge project to undertake, he was able to share his “A More Excellent Way” message and challenge lay leaders and lay servants to provide significant leadership in their local churches and to work alongside their pastors in a spirit of teamwork. He shared valuable lessons on building trust and ministry teams. He asked those in attendance to come up with three-to-six-month goals for their churches and to seek to reach those goals. A team of Conference staff and leaders accompanied

the Bishop to the “Road Shows,” which were attended by approximately 1,500 persons. Bishop Holston’s and Felecia’s presence at the “Road Shows” had a tremendous impact on the 12 districts. Of course, it was a pleasure and a blessing to have Bishop Holston, Felecia, and the Conference leadership in each of our districts for this time of fun, dialogue, and celebration. [Bishop Holston plans to visit each district again, this time inviting clergy and laity to come together in a spirit of unity and collaboration. You will be hearing more about these exciting visits!]

In the last two paragraphs, the words “team,” “teams,” and “teamwork” were used. Under Bishop Holston’s leadership, the cabinet – both the Extended and Appointive Cabinet – work as a “team”. We seek to be intentional about decisions we make, and we ground our meetings in devotions, Scripture, sacrament, and prayer. We pray for our churches and our pastors, especially those pastors and churches that are experiencing crises. The needs and issues are great, but God sustains us all.

The Cabinet is a diverse body, much like the Church. We do not all look, think, or act alike. Despite our racial, gender, and theological differences, we find common ground in our Methodist heritage and our passion to see The United Methodist Church grow in fruitfulness. We are very intentional at NOT being “silos,” and we work together cohesively, collaboratively, and collectively in all we do. This “teamwork” is especially evident through the appointment-making process. Of course, each of us on the Cabinet wants to make good appointments for the clergy and churches in our respective districts, but we are keenly aware of the needs of *every* district. We work as a team to look at the whole picture, not just our own district. The appointment-making process is complex, and there are many factors Bishop Holston and the Cabinet consider as appointments are made. We spend hours reviewing profiles of churches and pastors and having deep and thorough discussions about “the right match.” Nothing is perfect because none of us are perfect. We trust that God works in the midst of our imperfect system, and God will bring growth for the Kingdom.

Besides appointment-making, Bishop Holston and the Cabinet seek to address other issues of concern and at the same time celebrate what God is doing in the Conference:

- There is ongoing conversation about racial issues and racial reconciliation. Bishop Holston, the Cabinet, and other Conference leaders watched the movie *Selma* together and have engaged in dialogue about the movie and the need for understanding one another’s ethnicity. Churches of different ethnicities are encouraged to see *Selma* (on DVD) together and have conversations that will strengthen their relationships with each other.
- While we are so very grateful for the ministry of United Methodist Women, we are also excited about the growth of Men’s Ministry in the Conference. Another great Men N Ministry event took place in February and was attended by more than 800 men and women from every district. “Teaching” churches are being identified by Conference leadership to help disciple men who will disciple other men.
- Moving toward more cross-racial appointments is certainly a goal for the Cabinet. While we are making strides in this direction and celebrate cross-racial appointments like the three we anticipate for 2015-2016, we have more work to do as we identify pastors and places where cross-racial appointments and the ministry in these appointments would be effective.
- Another inspirational Revolution event for the youth of the Conference was held January 30 through February 1 in Columbia. As always, it was awesome to see so many young people lifting their hearts and voices in praise and worship of God and to witness a large number of these “leaders of tomorrow” making a commitment of their lives to Christ and Christian service.
- The Summit on the Black Church was a quality event. This every-other-year event was well-attended and brought to South Carolina inspiring speakers and helpful workshops. Those who participated in the Summit were truly blessed.
- There has been much conversation related to the following issues:
 - equipping/coaching pastors as they navigate congregations through a huge cultural “shift” in and outside the church;
 - clergy and congregational ineffectiveness;
 - obstacles to church growth in regard to financial resources and staff development;
 - open itinerancy;
 - call vs. career;
 - diversity and inclusiveness;
 - and making strategic appointments based on the needs of churches rather than the needs of the pastors;

These conversations and courses of action to address these issues will continue.

As a Cabinet, we want to make a positive difference as we seek to provide leadership for our clergy and our churches, so we will continue to work together and be the best leaders we can be.

Last year, a purpose statement for the role of the district superintendent was developed, and it reads as follows: *District Superintendents exist to assist the Bishop in creating a healthy culture that engages faith, the community, and the connection so that churches are agents of transformation and grace.* As District Superintendents, we are extensions of the Bishop's office. We take our responsibilities seriously and desire to assist the Bishop in every possible way. We want to do whatever we can so that our churches will indeed be agents of transformation and grace. Bishop Jonathan Holston is a great leader for the South Carolina Conference. We are blessed to have Bishop Holston at the head of the Cabinet table because he puts Christ as the Head of the Body. He leads us – and the entire Annual Conference – in spiritual, compassionate, and wise ways. Thank you, Bishop Holston! The future of The United Methodist Church in South Carolina looks VERY bright under your leadership!

Respectfully submitted,

Richard H. (Dickie) Knight, Dean of the Cabinet

THE UNITED METHODIST MEN (UMM)

South Carolina UMM are responding, lay and clergy, to Jesus Christ's command to go into all the world and make disciples. With the leadership of Bishop Holston, the lay and clergy in the South Carolina Annual Conference are seeking God's will to dream and accomplish "God-Size Dreams" through the discipleship of men and their families.

We have held our Men's Spiritual Retreat at Springmaid Beach for many years. Last year we issued a challenge to lay and clergy to bring 500 men to the retreat. This number was over 2-1/2 times the attendance in the past. We had 530 men and 60+ ladies. This attendance was great, but it created a problem that we have not had in my many years of ministry. We had outgrown the Springmaid Beach Resort facilities. Comment forms made it clear we had to seek a larger facility with much better video and sound capabilities.

Much prayer and consultation with the Bishop and pastors in growing churches led us to Christ United Methodist Church, Myrtle Beach, SC. The church is housed in the old Gatling Brothers Theater, and it has the space, sound, video, and other amenities that are needed to grow this ministry. Pastor Jeff Dunn and his staff are excited to be hosting this event. You will hear in the reports today that this change of venue is a "huge leap of faith" for the men and pastors in the South Carolina Annual Conference.

Teaching churches are the next steps in the transformation of ministry to men, their families, and churches over the next three years. Connectionalism is the ace that other organized religions do not have. We have United Methodist Churches in the SC Annual Conference that have growing ministries for all ages. We invite each of you to come share and listen as these churches share their successes. We encourage you to invite clergy and laity to come and help us change the face of the Methodist Church, one disciple at a time.

We have a lot of work ahead of us if we are to change the Methodist Church in South Carolina and beyond through the discipleship of men and their families.

Teaching Churches:

"Grow Your Church Through Ministry to Men and their Families"

Each teaching church event will be different because each church will share its ideas that have helped it to grow through discipleship of men and their families. We encourage men and women laity and pastors to attend a teaching church in their area or attend as many as they can to gather ideas for growing their churches. This exploration is part of our "connection" as United Methodist to share our successes with sister churches. Come, listen, and learn how to make disciples for Jesus Christ for the transformation of SC and the World. We held our fifth teaching church on January 17, 2015. A total of over 500 men attended these teaching church events.

Save these dates:

- May 17, 2014: Mt. Horeb UMC, Lexington, SC
"How to Grow Your Church through Ministry to Men"
- Utilizing prayer and ministry to men inside the church and outside the church walls
November 15, 2014: Canaan/Sandhill UMC Charge, Ridgeville, SC
Walterboro District, 843-871-2977 office – "Men Building Community"
- November 16, 2014: Aynor UMC, Aynor SC,
Marion District, 843-358-6537 office – "Power of Prayer"
Contact Charles L. Howard: charles1548@gmail.com / 843-222-8051 cell
<https://sites.google.com/site/mariondistrict/>

- January 10, 2015: Bethany UMC, Summerville, SC
Charleston District, 843-873-1230 office – “Renewal in a Traditional Church”
- January 17, 2015: Covenant UMC, Greer, SC
Greenville District, 864-244-3162 office
“How to Grow Your Men through Ministry to Men”
Johnny McGatha /johnnymcgatha@hotmail.com

I will cover several areas of **success and needs**:

- After many years of praying and seeking, we now have a Conference Prayer Advocate. Dennis Sullen, who is also the district lay leader in Florence, is our new Prayer Advocate. Clayton Easter was known as a prayer warrior for many years in South Carolina and nationally. I think God answered our prayer by sending us Dennis, and Clayton confirmed it because at the retreat last year, he handed off all of his “official prayer advocate stuff.” I took this as a sign. Please welcome and utilize Dennis.
- For a number of years we had no men’s leadership in the districts of Anderson, Greenwood, Marion, and Spartanburg. We are trying a new concept which creates ministry teams in districts instead of the normal UMM officer structure. The teams are made of laity and clergy, and they designate leaders to be the conduit to the Conference men. We have new ministry teams established in Greenwood and Marion districts, and we are continuing to work with the district superintendents in Anderson and Spartanburg to establish teams in those districts. As you will see later in this report, Marion District is sponsoring one of the “teaching churches.” We need to strengthen the ministry teams in all districts if we are to grow this ministry. The harvest is plentiful, the labors are few. Pray to the Lord of the harvest to send labors into the field.
- The Bishop has a real interest in and heavily depends on laity to be his hands, eyes, ears, and feet to disciple men, women, and children down to the local church. He is very pleased and excited about the men’s movement to disciple men and their families in this Conference. He wants to have a training event for the leadership of men. This event will be held in the fall of 2015. Our hope is that we will have six men from each of the 12 districts and that at least three will represent the next generation of leadership.
- In addition to this effort the Bishop has planned a “Road Show” to visit with the laity in every district. We were asked to participate, and this participation gives us face time with all of the lay leadership in each district, including the leadership in the local churches. We have also been asked to have representatives of men’s ministry at as many of these events as possible. This program starts in September. Dates are on the web site. As of this report, I have attended all of the events.
- The Conference treasury position is still vacant. We continue to pray for someone with a financial background who can work with the South Carolina United Methodist Church treasurer, Tony Prestipino, to link our banking and online registration process. Please pray about this position.
- Charters have not been talked about in over two years. Instead we talk about discipleship of men and their families and how we want to be the conduit. We have partnered with other laity groups (lay leaders, lay speakers, UMW, UMVIM, etc.), district superintendents, and pastors and we talk about discipleship. But our charters are up. Our plan is to talk to churches about connecting their ministry to men by chartering their church, not the club.

Opportunities and partnerships:

- We continue to partner with the Bishop, district superintendents, pastors, and laity groups to grow this ministry to men and their families. This effort has resulted in a renewed interest in this ministry. The Bishop is partnering with us in this ministry through his leadership and training of laity and his encouragement of pastors. Working with district superintendents, ministry teams are being established in districts with no prior leadership. We are also partnering with the Conference Lay Leader, Barbara Ware, and all of the district lay leaders for this common goal of discipleship of men and their families.
- We have been asked to be involved with a group of black ministers and laity to see how young black men can be mentored to reduce the incarceration rate. Much of the incarceration of young black men relates to the absence of a father figure in the house. The black ministers and laity feel that this is a good fit with our ministry.
- We have also been asked to advertise our ministry with “The Summit on the Black Church” which meets every other year. This year this group is meeting at the Double Tree, Bush River Road, Columbia, SC. October 2-4, 2014.
- We have been invited to the district superintendents’ set up meeting for pastors, the Bishop’s School, the Fellowship of Clergy, and other events and men’s meetings.

- Our partnership with the South Carolina Conference staff has enabled us to do on line registrations, direct deposit of funds, pre-printed name tags and attendance lists and many other things. Without this assistance, we could not handle the retreats and teaching church events. To show our thanks, we sponsored a thank-you lunch on September 30, 2014. Many of our Men's leadership team attended. It was well received.
- I continue to travel to the districts when invited to continue to build relationships.
- We are working on other relationships and plans to enhance and grow this ministry.
- We are participating with the Conference event for young people called "Revolution." This event draws about 2,000 high school and college youth. We are donating Bibles, a youth worship book, and we are also helping with the event.

Update after our Men's Spiritual Retreat February 20-22, 2015, at Christ United Methodist Church, Myrtle Beach, South Carolina:

Our goal this year was to have 750 in attendance. Remember that this is site a different venue, a United Methodist Church. The location that has been used as long as I can remember, had meeting space, dining facilities, and lodging in one location. We were familiar with the facilities and the people. People could park their cars on arrival and never move it until the event was over. Everything was new this year. We negotiated with the church for the meeting area, contracted with hotels to block rooms, and provided no meals. We did this all on faith. God graced us with 850+, and the comments have been overwhelmingly positive. God is good. The Bishop has challenged the SC Church with having 1500 in 2016. Our key presenter will be Rev. Mike Slaughter, author and senior pastor of Ginghamburg Church, and author of *Dare to Dream*, *Renegade Gospel*, and *Christmas is not Your Birthday*. The dates are February 19-21, 2016. Come and see.

Our next step for 2015-16 will continue to utilize teaching churches in different parts of our Conference. We also plan to have at least one teaching church for pastors in cooperation with Clergy Services, which wants to target young pastors at "New Start" and "Re-Start" churches. It is important for pastors to preach to and encourage men from the pulpit.

On April 11, 2015, we plan to host training for the "Bishop's 100 Men" who are willing to "put skin into the game," a personal commitment to work through their local church, the district, and the Conference to disciple men and their families for Christ. The hope is that we will have 300 plus men who will step forward from all 12 districts to commit to this movement to get men to be "Godly men" as Christ intended men to be. Please join us to pray for this ministry.

God has graced us with a Bishop who challenges us to dream "God-Size Dreams." But this Bishop does not just talk. He walks and leads.

Take the challenge; walk the walk; come and see.

The Harvest is plentiful, the labors few. Pray to the Lord of the harvest to send laborers into the field. (Luke 10:2)

Our prayer is that this concept moves across the Church. Will you put some personal "Skin in the Game"?

Respectfully submitted,

Herman Lightsey, President

THE UNITED METHODIST WOMEN (UMW)

South Carolina Conference UMW continue to work to further the Kingdom of God by putting our faith, hope, and love into action. As we go about our daily lives, we strive to fulfill our purpose: to know God, to experience freedom as whole persons through Jesus Christ, to develop creative supportive fellowships, and to expand concepts of mission through participation in the global ministries of the church.

We began our year in January by attending United Methodist Women Leadership Development Days (LDD) at Lake Junaluska. During this meeting, we learned that South Carolina Conference United Methodist Women (SCCUMW) will host the Southeastern Jurisdiction meeting on June 3-5, 2016, at the Embassy Suites in North Charleston. This hosting will be a first for SCCUMW, and we are thankful to Janice Eaddy, treasurer for Southeastern Jurisdiction, for her determination in making sure the event comes to South Carolina. Janice is from the Florence District UMW and is a past SCCUMW officer.

Legislative Day was held at Epworth on February 18th. The topic was "Educating ALL our Children." Dr. John Holler shared the many wonderful successes that Epworth has had in mentoring children and bringing them up to grade level. Workshops included "Volunteering in the Classroom," "Educational Advocacy," and "Building Education Resources using the Assets of Disadvantaged Communities." Bishop Jonathan Holston was the keynote speaker. His topic

was "What the Church Is and Should Be Doing to Educate All Our Children." Ellie Setser of AAUW reported on bills before the House and Senate that focused on education and on women and children. Three legislators visited during the sessions.

During April 25-27, over 100 South Carolina United Methodist Women departed for Louisville, Kentucky, to attend the United Methodist Women Assembly, an event that occurs every four years. Over 7000 women from all over the country and the world gathered in Louisville to worship, listen, learn, fellowship, and be transformed. The Assembly theme, "MAKE IT HAPPEN," was a challenge to all United Methodist Women. Hillary Rodham Clinton, a lifelong United Methodist, was the keynote speaker, and she was enthusiastically received. A new initiative was announced focusing on Infant and Maternal Health Care.

May was a very busy month for SCCUMW with the Spiritual Growth Retreat on May 2-4 and Come Together/Be Together in Myrtle Beach on May 27. Reverend Rebecca Shirley of Platt Springs UMC was the speaker for Spiritual Retreat. Her topic was "Purses, Pocketbooks, and Totes: Carrying the Essential for a Christian Life." Attendance was 289 for the first retreat and 255 for the second retreat. Rev. Shirley's "shop cleaner" was entertaining and brought us a good message. First UMC in Myrtle Beach hosted Come Together/Be Together. Our theme was "A Calling for This Time." The keynote speaker was Corina Esau, Executive Director of Wallace Family Life Center. All in attendance had been encouraged to come dressed like a child spending the day at the beach wearing your most lively beach-inspired shorts, sandals, hats, sunglasses, and visors to be part of our Fashion Contest/Fund Raiser. Following the opening ceremonies and Ms. Esau's talk on Wallace, the attendees broke up into one of seven workshops or a Bible study. Following the workshops and Bible study, participants "voted" with cash donations during the Fashion Contest/Fund Raiser to raise \$1,757.17 for Wallace!

In June, we attended the South Carolina Annual Conference meeting in Florence. This year the four areas of Laity – Lay Leadership, Lay Servant Ministries, United Methodist Men, and United Methodist Women – worked together to celebrate the activities of the laity in the state. A special thank you goes to the Florence District for their assistance in "womanizing" the UMW booth at Annual Conference. All of our five mission projects had posters or handouts at our booth, and Wallace necklaces were for sale. The women of the Florence District were masterful sales people, selling all of the necklaces before the end of the Conference. They also served as ushers, and President Sharon D. Washington took part in the retirement ceremony. This event was an especially meaningful Annual Conference, and it was good to see so many of you there. The Mission Fair, sponsored by the Committee on the Laity, was a huge success, and we were able to have a table to display items such as the collection of used stamps for Marion Mission Projects. A tremendous thank you is sent to all who participated in the Million Book Effort. Now we need to step up to the plate to mentor and participate in helping children learn to read those books!

Mission u (still School of Christian Mission to most of us!!!) was held at Spartanburg Methodist College July 24-26. The "2014 Mission u: Learning Together for Transformation of the World" offered four different studies: "The Church and People With Disabilities," "How Is It With Your Soul," "The Roma of Europe," and a youth study, "Disabilities and Our Response." This year, in response to numerous requests, the school was held for three days so that all participants could be in their own churches on Sunday morning. Registration was 232. Bishop Holston presented a Bible study to the entire group on Friday, and Rev. Robin Dease was the instructor for the spiritual growth study, "*How Is It With Your Soul.*" This year the craft room put "crafts" back into the craft room, and the smell of freshly baked bread permeated the halls! Friday night was a wonderful celebration of Missions, and a total of \$2061.00 was raised for our five mission projects.

The annual membership count shows 16,881 reported members for 2014. This number represents an increase as well as an increase in the number of units reporting.

Throughout the year, we have had a presence in the Methodist *Advocate*, with different members writing an article for each edition. They have focused on different upcoming events as well as general information about who we are as United Methodist Women.

In August, an organizational meeting to begin plans for the 150th Anniversary of UMW which will be celebrated in 2019, was held at Scarritt-Bennett Center in Nashville. A new initiative was announced at this meeting, the unveiling of a Legacy Fund which is intended to underwrite UMW and its mission for the next 150 years. You will be hearing more about this project in the next several years.

We were also saddened by the loss of Dolly Fogle, SCCUMW President from 1993-1996. United Methodist Women from across the state attended her home going services. Dolly was a treasure, and she did much for UMW and for the general church. She was a tremendous leader.

We come full circle as we reflect on our many accomplishments throughout the year at our Annual Meeting held at Carteret Street United Methodist Church in beautiful Beaufort, SC,

on October 24-25. During this time, we worshipped, we fellowshipped, we conducted the business of the Conference, and we set our budget and pledges to mission. We celebrated with a theme, "And What Does the Lord Require of You?" based on Micah 6:8. Reverend Cathy Mitchell, pastor of Wesley United Methodist Church, Johns Island, led our Bible Study and Reverend Kelly Snelgrove, pastor at First United Methodist Church in Harleyville, was our keynote speaker after the business session. Newly elected officers were Marlene Spencer, President; Cathy Ford, Vice President; Gladys Lemon, Chairperson Membership, Nurture, and Outreach; Rachel Shupe, Chairperson, Social Action; Velva Ellerbe, Secretary – Program Resources; Judy Roumillat and Jacqueline Sessions, Committee on Nominations. Beth Addis, Secretary, and Tina Waters, Communications Coordinator, were elected to a 2nd two-year term. These new officers and those continuing to serve were installed by Mary Johnson, past Conference president. We also recognized retiring Officers: Linda DuRant for four wonderful years as our President; Marlene Spencer as Vice President; Cathy Ford as Chairperson – Membership, Nurture, and Outreach; Betsy Graham as Chairperson, Social Action; Judy Roumillat as Secretary for Program Resources; Selena Smith and Patsy Whittaker, members of the Committee on Nominations; Nettie Green, Killingsworth Representative; and Rubye Bing, Rural Mission Representative.

Officers' training was held at Chapin UMC in Chapin with 130 District Officers attending training held for them by their Conference counterparts.

In November, the five new executive team members and two new district presidents traveled to Tempe, Arizona, for Leadership Development Days (LDD) hosted by the UMW national office. LDD provides an opportunity for women in leadership positions to receive training in leadership development. It was a wonderful opportunity for us to be in fellowship with our national counterparts.

As this year closes and we embark upon another year in the history of UMW in South Carolina, let us continue to seek God's blessings in all that we do. We are proud of our heritage, we are passionate about mission, and we are women of action! We put our faith, hope and love in action as we give our pledge to mission, collect used stamps, collect box tops and labels, develop women's leadership skills, participate in hands on mission opportunities, and advocate for justice. The total program of UMW is MISSION; it's why we exist. We are the hands and feet that make God's love real every time we put our faith, hope, and love in action to make the world a better place for everyone including the most vulnerable – women, children, and youth.

In God's Service,

Linda DuRant, President 2014
Marlene Spencer, President 2015

THE SOUTH CAROLINA METHODIST CONFERENCE CREDIT UNION

This year, the South Carolina Methodist Conference Credit Union is celebrating 60 years of service to the ministers and their families, the churches and their members, and the institutions of the South Carolina United Methodist Conference. The Credit Union was chartered on September 19, 1955, by ten elders of the South Carolina Conference (1785). The Reverend Hawley B. Lynn was elected to serve as the first president. Initially the credit union was chartered to serve ministerial members of the Annual Conference and others under appointment of the bishop, employees of the boards and agencies of the Annual Conference, and their family members. Today, membership encompasses not only the clergy of the South Carolina Conference and their families, but also members of the churches, and employees of the local churches, the Annual Conference, the United Methodist Colleges, and retirement homes of the South Carolina Conference. As members of the credit union, individuals and their family members can benefit from a member-owned, not-for-profit, service-driven, relationship-oriented, stewardship model that is at the core of our financial ministry. The Credit Union continues to offer share certificates of deposit although interest rates remain lower than ever before. Although the primary business continues to be new and used automobile loans and personal loans for our members, the Credit Union offers loans to the local churches and institutions of the South Carolina Conference.

The Credit Union remains safe, strong, and sound in its mission to serve its members. The Credit Union ended 2014 with a positive operating balance even after absorbing some long standing "past-due" loans. This year also brought about the retirement, on December 31st, of Mrs. Jenny Morris, Receptionist and Member Services Representative for the past 7½ years. The Board of Directors adopted a new loan platform to comply with Regulation Z as

interpreted under the Dodd-Frank Act. The Credit Union has upgraded its processes to enable remote loan application via the internet and other telecommunication.

The Credit Union's website (www.scmccu) provides protected access to personal accounts and an interactive feature that allows a member to transfer funds from one of his or her credit union accounts to another.

Finally, it is the Credit Union's hope that as its constituents get to know it better, they will want to share with other United Methodist friends the news of the Credit Union's expanding services, and they are also invited to become ambassadors for the Credit Union as it continues to serve United Methodism and United Methodists in South Carolina.

Balance sheet information follows:

Balance Sheet Comparison		
Assets	2014	2013
Cash in Bank	\$ 428,198.85	\$ 275,689.94
Investments	\$2,061,572.28	\$2,178,486.64
Loans Receivable	\$3,043,909.52	\$3,088,245.80
Land	\$ 48,400.00	\$ 48,400.00
Building	\$ 30,742.02	\$ 33,014.70
Furniture and Fixtures	\$ 7,734.12	\$ 11,619.96
Prepaid Expenses	\$ 14,444.84	\$ 14,167.96
NCUA Deposit	\$ 51,066.93	\$ 53,146.21
Other Assets	\$ 6,658.10	\$ 9,779.38
Allowance for Loan Losses	(\$ 30,248.54)	(\$ 24,061.73)
Total Assets	\$5,662,478.12	\$5,688,488.86
Liabilities & Capital	2014	2013
Shares	\$5,081,904.74	\$5,106,693.42
Other Liabilities	\$ 3,425.40	\$ 5,860.77
Guaranty Reserve Fund	\$ 304,175.02	\$ 304,175.02
Undivided Earnings	\$ 272,972.96	\$ 271,759.65
Total Liabilities & Capital	\$5,662,478.12	\$5,688,488.86
Income and Expenses		
Income	2014 Budget	2014 Actual
Interest - Loans	\$232,800.00	\$228,728.11
Interest - Business Loans	\$ 4,800.00	\$ 3,053.14
Fees	\$ 8,820.00	\$ 10,166.53
Share Income	\$ 240.00	\$ 263.69
Investment Income	\$ 18,000.00	\$ 19,767.34
Miscellaneous Income	\$ 900.00	\$ 1,017.81
Total Income	\$265,560.00	\$262,996.62
Expenses	2014 Budget	2014 Actual
Personnel Expenses	\$176,160.00	\$173,722.86
Facilities	\$ 59,100.00	\$ 57,941.80
Professional Fees	\$ 18,720.00	\$ 20,841.36
Dividends Paid	\$ 10,960.20	\$ 9,277.19
Total Expenses	\$264,940.20	\$261,783.21
Net Income	\$ 619.80	\$ 1,213.41

The Reverend Michael L. Guffee described our Credit Union brilliantly last year at the annual meeting when he said as follows:

"Since serving as Chairperson of the Credit Committee for the last year, I have seen how the Credit Union serves its members with affordable loans. Especially loans that assist members when a financial hardship occurs. Many of the loans that we make assist members getting their automobiles repaired, getting braces for their children's teeth, getting emergency medical treatment, paying college tuition, purchasing an automobile when the situation calls for, or with many other hardship situations. Credit Union members assist and help fellow members through the money they invest.

So I would say we are blessed to be part of a community where compassion is demonstrated day in and day out. Hopefully, the day will come when those of us who invest money with the Credit Union will see a better return on our money once again. Until then, we can know our money is serving the needs of our brothers and sisters across the church."

The Board of Directors, committees, and staff of the SCMCCU are grateful for the trust placed in us as financial stewards for the members of the Credit Union.

Board of Directors are as follows: Mr. James Bradley Jr., Mr. William D. Britt, Jr., Rev. Eugene L. Curry, Rev. Roger M. Gramling, Rev. Dennis R. Lee, Ms. Lisa K. Livingston, Rev. Ronald A. Pettit, Rev. Robert M. Vincent, Rev. Lillian H. Washington

Credit Committee members as follows: Rev. Michael L. Guffee, Chairperson; Mr. T. Andy Cox, Mr. Parker Evatt

Supervisory Committee members follows: Mr. Anthony C. Prestipino Jr., Chairperson; Rev. Tiffany D. Knowlin, Rev. Sara A. White

*James Bradley, Chairperson, Board of Directors
Reginald D. Wilson, Jr., President*

AFRICA UNIVERSITY

The Africa University community is blessed and privileged to celebrate the South Carolina Conference's 100% investment in the Africa University Fund (AUF) apportionment in 2014.

South Carolina was one of 31 annual conferences—the highest number in recent years—to invest 100% of their asking in the AUF. We thank you for your prayers and for affirming the impact of this ministry by being faithful and generous with your investment.

In the past year, South Carolina United Methodists took their engagement with Africa University to a new level, resulting in special efforts and a 100% investment in the AUF for the second consecutive year.

Together, we give thanks to God for this Ebenezer moment (*1 Samuel 7:12*). But the work is not yet finished. For every individual who has been touched by the ministry that is Africa University, there are others—tens of thousands, in fact—who are awaiting the miracle of an answered prayer.

As you gather for the 2015 South Carolina Annual Conference, we pray that you will remain steadfast in your efforts to invest 100% of the asking to the AUF, and to other shared ministries, for years to come.

Strategic Priorities: Professor Munashe Furusa took the helm in July 2014 as the fourth vice chancellor in the university's 23-year history. He was formally installed in March 2015 and has put fiscal accountability, student quality of life, and support for academics at the top of his agenda. Africa University is currently engaged in a vigorous review of its academic programs and service delivery that is aimed at enhancing the students' potential for life-long success.

Student Enrollment: Full-time student enrollment at Africa University held steady in 2014 with 1,478 young men and women from 25 African countries. Female students comprised a record 53.4% of the total enrollment in a context where women lag behind men in access to higher education.

Graduation: In June 2014, 480 young people were awarded degrees from Africa University at the 20th graduation ceremony, bringing to total number of alumni to just under 5,300. Without your support, a college education would have been unattainable for the majority of these students.

Training and Research: Africa University remains a sought-after partner in addressing critical skills and capacity gaps in sub-Saharan Africa. A collaboration with the Raoul Wallenberg Institute in Sweden supports a new master's degree program in Human Rights, Peace, and Development. Africa University is also preparing to launch its first Ph.D. program, which links issues of Peace, Leadership, Governance, and Development and targets policymakers.

Leadership and Service: Africa University graduates are answering the call to serve, heal, and uplift communities. Currently, more than a dozen graduates are helping 'the least of these' to experience God's love through service as Global Mission Fellows and missionaries in Africa, Europe, and Latin America.

Please continue to pray for Africa University. And thank you, South Carolina Conference, for your amazing outpouring of love and support. May God bless and keep you always in abundance.

Mr. James H. Salley

Associate Vice Chancellor for Institutional Advancement

Africa University Development Office

P O Box 340007, Nashville, TN 37203-0007

Tel: (615) 340-7438

Email: audevoffice@gbhem.org; www.support-africauniversity.org

**Changing Africa: Learning here. Living here. Leading here.
Serving God. All the time. Everywhere.**

LAKE JUNALUSKA ASSEMBLY, INC.

On February 10, 2015 Lake Junaluska, the Southeastern Jurisdiction of the United Methodist Church, the United States, and the world lost a great leader. Rev. Dr. R. Wright Spears died at the age of 102. He served as a pastor to multiple churches in South Carolina and as the President of Columbia College for 26 years, a time during which he helped that institution navigate momentous social changes. Dr. Spears and his wife Mary Blue retired to Lake Junaluska in 1977 where he continued to promote social justice in all forms. Few organizations have in their history a person as influential as Dr. Spears. He had a vision for Lake Junaluska, and spent his years here quietly encouraging us all to more fully live into the Kingdom of God through our mission of Christian hospitality. Arguably the most influential person at Lake Junaluska in the last 50 years, in both formal leadership roles and quiet behind the scenes work, he understood the importance of balancing the budget while offering a great experience to our guests. He urged us to offer great programming, and at the age of 95 was instrumental in launching the Lake Junaluska Peace Conference. Dr. Spears understood that offering Christian hospitality goes beyond simply welcoming our paying customers. At our best, we are what he envisioned us to be: a place that welcomes all and provides transforming and renewing spiritual experiences and a place that pays attention to the bottom line and is operated more like a college than a church camp. We have a long way to go to be the perfect fulfillment of Wright's vision for Lake Junaluska, but we are further along that path today and more inspired to fulfill our mission "to be a place of Christian hospitality where lives are transformed through renewal of soul, mind, and body" than ever thanks to his influence.

For the third year in a row, we ended the year "in the black." 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 we remain committed to always "live within our means." 2014 was a record breaking year for charitable giving. We received \$1,079,994 from 1,257 individuals. This represents a 34.4% increase in total giving over 2013 and a 2.6% increase in number of donors.

We continue to refine and implement our plans for improvements to our facilities, grounds, and programs. Plans were approved in 2014 to begin an extensive renovation of The Terrace hotel, a project that will have a significant impact on the quality of the guest rooms and public spaces in that facility and will influence the level of service provided to all of our lodging guests. We completed all of the projects planned in 2013 including converting the Jones Dining Hall into a year round facility, renovating the children's playground at the Wilson Children's Building, and numerous improvements to the lake front consisting of a new boat storage area along with a boat dock and fishing pier just to the north of the swimming pool and a beautiful meditation garden to the south. We are working diligently to refine and improve our existing programming for youth and adults and continually seek to implement new innovative programs that align with our mission.

As a member of the United Methodist Church within the Southeastern Jurisdiction we want 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 us and to carry on the legacy of Dr. Wright Spears.

If you haven't already, please pick up a copy of our 2015 program, *Discover Lake Junaluska*. Peruse its pages to read about the impact of our programs, to learn about new projects we are working on, and to familiarize yourself with our calendar of events. We do hope you can come and visit us this year for a conference, a retreat, or a vacation to be transformed and renewed in soul, mind, and body.

Jack Ewing, Executive Director, 828-454-6701

CANDLER SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

For 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 Christian leaders who put faith and love into action, transforming the world in the name of Jesus Christ. Here, students are challenged academically, encouraged spiritually, and immersed in Christian service from the first day they arrive on campus. This unique approach ensures that our graduates are ready to serve wherever God leads.

One of 13 official seminaries of The United Methodist Church, Candler is grounded in the Christian faith and shaped by the Wesleyan tradition. We are one of seven graduate professional schools of Emory University, a top-tier research institution offering extensive resources and a rich context for study. Our location in the city of Atlanta offers a learning environment that reflects the highly diverse communities of the 21st century world. There is no better place for ministry preparation that addresses our major denominational priorities: developing leaders, starting and growing churches, providing ministry with the poor, and improving global health.

During the 2014-2015 academic year, Candler celebrated its Centennial, marking our 100th anniversary with a series of commemorative events highlighting memories of the past and visions for the future. The yearlong celebration began in the fall of 2014 with the dedication of the final phase of our new LEED-certified building and the premiere of *Religion and Reason Joined: Candler at 100*, a new book on our history. The commemoration continued through the spring of 2015 with guest lectures, exhibits, and "Prophetic Voices," a major academic conference addressing the challenges and opportunities facing theology in the 21st century.

Not only has Candler expanded its physical space this year, but we have also expanded degree offerings as well. In response to the changing needs of the church, Candler introduced five new degrees to equip Christian leaders: the Doctor of Ministry, the Master of Religious Leadership, the Master of Religion and Public Life, and two dual degrees with social work and development practice.

Candler's student body reflects the diversity and breadth of the Christian faithful. Our enrollment stands at 447, with 320 seeking the Master of Divinity, 43 the Master of Theological Studies, 14 the Master of Religious Life, 20 the Master of Theology, 29 the Doctor of Ministry, 10 the Doctor of Theology, and 11 non-degree students. The student body is 52% women, 35% people of color (U.S.). The median age of the entering class is 27. Students represent 42 denominations, with nearly half identifying as United Methodist.

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

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

DUKE DIVINITY SCHOOL

The academic year 2014–2015 has been an exciting year as we continue to engage with the church, academy, and society on important ecclesiastical and cultural issues. The heart of our work remains the preparation of men and women for Christian ministry and leadership within the church. As part of that mission, our initiatives, centers, and programs continue to be a vital resource for us to extend the good news of God's invitation into all spheres of a complex and hungry world. Far from being an ivory tower, Duke Divinity School is a place where faculty, students, and staff are eager to use the training for ministry in order to serve others and serve as a light to the world.

Duke Initiatives in Theology and the Arts (DITA) recognizes that the arts shape the imagination of a community and provide the forms through which many people most directly and compellingly encounter the message of the gospel. On Palm Sunday, Duke Chapel hosted the American premiere of the new *St Luke Passion*, written by the eminent Scottish composer James MacMillan. The work was commissioned by Duke Divinity School in conjunction with the Netherlands Radio Philharmonic Orchestra and the City of Birmingham (U.K.) Symphony Orchestra. During the process of composing the piece, MacMillan met several times with a group of theologians and biblical scholars from Duke Divinity School and the University of Cambridge to reflect on the shape and meaning of Luke's narrative. In addition to this stunning choral work, DITA has sponsored lectures by visiting scholars and hosted the first artist-in-residence, Malcolm Guite.

The newest of our initiatives, Theology, Medicine, and Culture, builds on the extraordinary faculty resources offered by four physicians who hold joint faculty appointments in the Medical School and the Divinity School at Duke. Working together with other members of the faculty who share an interest in healthcare and medical ethics, they are developing a range of programs that seek to clarify and strengthen Christian witness and action in the complex world of healthcare. One program, Walking Together, sponsors conferences that address care of the mentally ill in

faith communities. Another, Reimagining Medicine, will gather health professionals at a summer conference to consider proposals for the ways in which local communities might draw on Christian perspectives to shape the delivery of medical care.

The Center for Reconciliation (CFR) celebrated its 10th anniversary this year, and this year has been a time of transition for the center. Co-founder Chris Rice accepted a role with the Mennonite Central Committee in Korea, and he will retain his connection to Duke as senior fellow for Northeast Asia. In that role he will coordinate the emerging work of the Christian Forum for Reconciliation in Northeast Asia, which will be modeled on the successful development of the Great Lakes Initiative (GLI) in East Africa. Duke has helped to support the GLI for the past seven years, and this year full leadership transitioned to local African leaders. The Divinity School has received a major gift commitment to endow a faculty position that will also serve as director of the CFR, and a search has begun to fill that position. In the coming years we intend to strengthen our emphasis on issues of racial reconciliation in local contexts.

Leadership Education at Duke Divinity (LEADD) draws inspiration both from the Christian theological tradition and from the best recent studies and practices of leadership and entrepreneurship. In partnership with the Lake Institute, this year LEADD offered an executive certificate in religious fundraising. LEADD also offers a program for denominational and institutional leaders, Foundations in Christian Leadership. *Faith & Leadership*, the online magazine published by LEADD, continues to reach over 300,000 readers and provide a resource for theological reflection and “traditioned innovation” for all in ministry. This publication’s continued excellent work was recognized again this year with awards from the Associated Church Press “Best of the Christian Press” contest.

The Center for Studies in the Wesleyan Tradition (CSWT) has been a source of internationally acclaimed research and support for Methodist and Wesleyan studies since 1979. This center offers courses for both Course of Study and Divinity students, provides access to outstanding research resources for students and scholars of the broad Wesleyan tradition, and supports the production of critical editions of the texts of John and Charles Wesley in print and online formats. CSWT also sponsors the Summer Wesley Seminar, led by professors Randy Maddox and Richard Heitzenrater, which invites application from scholars to spend an intensive residency at the Divinity School to facilitate their study of Wesleyan heritage.

In addition to our major initiatives, Duke Divinity School has a number of other programs that extend the good news of God’s salvation to disparate parts of our society. Our program in prison ministry sends divinity students into prisons in order to take classes alongside people who are incarcerated. The certificate in prison studies provides students with the opportunity to engage specifically with people in prison and the system that imprisons them in the context of theological education and formation for ministry. Thriving Rural Communities, a partnership among Duke Divinity School, The Duke Endowment, and the North Carolina and Western North Carolina Conferences of The United Methodist Church, helps divinity students, pastors, laity, districts, and conferences cultivate and strengthen Christian leadership and United Methodist congregations in rural North Carolina. The Duke Youth Academy for Christian Formation continues to offer high-school students an opportunity for intensive theological engagement and practice.

Several of our faculty were recognized this year for their scholarship and interdisciplinary expertise. Willie Jennings, associate professor of theology and black church studies, was given the prestigious 2015 Louisville Grawemeyer Award in Religion for his book, *The Christian Imagination: Theology and the Origins of Race*. The Grawemeyer Award in Religion, an annual \$100,000 prize that honors and promotes insights into the study of religion, is given jointly by the University of Louisville and Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary. Norman Wirzba, professor of theology and ecology, was named a Henry Luce III Fellow for 2014-15, and he also received a major Sabbatical grant for Researchers from the Louisville Institute. These awards are supporting his current work on two book projects: *From Nature to Creation: Christian Life in a Postnatural Age*, and *Creation, Creatureliness, and Creativity: An Essay on the Human Place in the World*. Jennie Grillo, assistant professor of Old Testament, received a 2014 Manfred Lautenschlaeger Award for Theological Promise and a W. F. Albright Institute of Archeological Research fellowship to conduct research in Israel. Maria Doerfler, assistant professor of the history of Christianity in late antiquity, was named a visiting research fellow at New York University’s Institute for the study of the Ancient World. Curtis Freeman, research professor of theology and director of the Baptist House of Studies, was appointed the chair the Baptist delegation in a five-year international dialogue between the Baptist World Alliance and the World Methodist Council. Richard Payne, Esther Colliflower Professor of Medicine and Divinity, was named to the Interagency Pain Research Coordinating Committee of the National Institutes of Health by the U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services. This is a federal advisory committee

that supports pain research and promotes collaboration across the government to improve understanding of pain and pain-related treatments.

We continue to welcome students from a range of backgrounds who are called to serve God and the church. In 2014, our total enrollment was 656 students: 462 are enrolled in the M.Div. degree program; 36 in the M.T.S.; 12 in the Th.M.; 45 in the Th.D.; 54 in the D.Min.; 24 in the M.A.C.P.; 15 in the M.A.C.S.; and 3 who are special students. Thirty-nine percent of our students are United Methodist, with an additional 4 percent from other Wesleyan traditions, and 46 percent of our M.Div. students are United Methodist. Fourteen percent of all students are Baptist, 8 percent are Anglican or Episcopal, 3 percent are Roman Catholic, 7 percent are Presbyterian or Reformed, with the remaining 9 percent from other denominations or nondenominational churches.

In addition to the ongoing excellent academic and field education work done by students each year, several students had notable achievements. Two of the top three prizes in the Student Essays in Christian Wisdom competition sponsored by *The Living Church* magazine were claimed by Divinity School students: Kevin Rose M.Div.'16 won second place, and John Zambenini M.Div.'15 won third place. Second-year M.Div. student Jacob Drake was selected to present a paper at the Oxford University Byzantine Society International Graduate Conference held in Oxford, England. Michelle Wolfe M.Div.'14 was awarded a fellowship by FASPE (Fellowships at Auschwitz for the Study of Professional Ethics) to participate in a two-week program in New York, Germany, and Poland for an intensive study of contemporary ethics. Four divinity students, part of a research group in American religious history, were among the winners of grants for research projects using the Religion in North Carolina digital collection. Other students did exemplary work in organizing conferences for ministry to the sexually abused and issues in pastoral care for military veterans.

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,

Dean Richard B. Hays

GARRETT-EVANGELICAL THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Greetings from Garrett-Evangelical!

Early in the calendar year, I met with various constituencies of Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, including alumni, faculty, staff, trustees, and students regarding their hopes and concerns for the school. As a result, we began the 2014-2015 academic year with the following priorities:

- to prepare and equip our graduates as public theologians,
- to nurture a more diverse community at Garrett-Evangelical so that the entire community develops cultural competency,
- to value and promote inclusivity at Garrett-Evangelical, and
- to construct a sustainable model for theological education.

Public Theology

This year we launched a Public Theology Lecture Series to help the Garrett-Evangelical community understand more about the intersection of theological perspectives and shared values held in the public arena as persons in ministry work with others toward the common good and the wellbeing of all persons and creation. The lecture series included the following:

- October 15, 2014: Rev. Janet Wolf, Director of Haley Farm and Nonviolent Organizing for the Children's Defense Fund, lectured on various Children's Defense Fund programs including restorative justice, mass incarceration, cradle to prison pipeline, and freedom schools.
- December 3, 2014: Dr. Mark Lewis Taylor, Maxwell M. Upton Professor of Theology and Culture at Princeton Theological Seminary, considered structures of the global orders and everyday living which public theologians may claim to engage and where "the powers and principalities" are always in contestation in "public" life.

In the fall, we will offer a course, "Public Theology in the City," taught by Dr. David Frenchak, former president of Seminary Consortium for Urban Pastoral Education (SCUPE). The class will collaborate with the mayor's office in Evanston on an anti-violence initiative. Dr. Frenchak will also provide a public theology lecture this spring.

Cultural Competency and Inclusivity

As part of the commitment to nurturing a more diverse community, we welcomed a new Vice President for Academic Affairs, Dr. Luis R. Rivera, our first Latino Academic Dean. Our current ethnic/racial profile is as follows:

- 20% black; 6% Asian; 3% Hispanic/Latino; and 54% White; 14% International
- More than 33 religious traditions, four continents, 15 countries and 36 states are represented in the student body.
- 232 students are United Methodist with 25 additional students from other Pan-Methodist denominations
- 94 new students began their studies at Garrett-Evangelical this fall, raising total fall enrollment to 365 (FTE of 305)
- The average age of the entering Master of Divinity student is 31.
- The study body consists of 52% women.

Consistent attention to issues of inclusivity, justice, and grace within the seminary setting are critical for preparing future leaders to enter an increasingly diverse world. To respond to these concerns, Garrett-Evangelical will offer a number of Circle of Trust conversations this spring for trustees, faculty, staff, and students. Our goals are: (1) to provide safe space to discuss difficult topics; (2) to reduce any gap between stated values and actual behavior, both personally for participants and institutionally; and (3) to update our 1997 statements of inclusivity.

Sustainable Theological Education

Garrett-Evangelical is beginning work on a Sustainable Theological Education Model for the school. We are guided by a commitment to generational stewardship of our resources and to maintaining a thriving seminary for the future. We will attend to the areas of business, academic programs, and external programs.

Our priority continues to be making seminary education affordable. To this end, we award more than \$2.5 million in scholarship aid to students each year, and we lead all United Methodist seminaries in the Dollars for Scholars program with 45 recipients. In October, the seminary publicly launched The Final Lap of its \$100 million Forging Our Future campaign and announced that \$88 million has been received to date. Much has already been accomplished, but more remains to be done, such as expanding the number of new leadership scholarships from 80 to 100, renovating Sherman apartments, endowing several more faculty positions, and continuing to grow the unrestricted endowment. Gifts for any of these goals are always welcome.

Thank you for your continued interest in our work. We are dedicated to serving The United Methodist Church and the church at large. For more information about Garrett-Evangelical and our work, I encourage you to visit our website, www.garrett.edu, and to visit us on campus.

Cordially,

Lallene J. Rector, President

About Us

Garrett-Evangelical is the result of the interweaving of three institutions:

- Garrett Biblical Institute, the first Methodist seminary in the Midwest, was established in 1853 by largely the same church people who founded Northwestern University.
- Chicago Training School, established in 1885, was an important force for women in ministry and for developing service agencies throughout Chicago. Chicago Training School merged with Garrett Biblical Institute in 1934.
- Evangelical Theological Seminary, located in Naperville and founded as a seminary of the Evangelical Church (later the Evangelical United Brethren) in 1873, joined with Garrett Theological Seminary in 1974 to form Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary.

ILIFF SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

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

The Iliff School of Theology's commitment to the Wesleyan tradition of providing intellectually alive and spiritually grounded theological education for our students continues. From Tanzania to Texas, Denver to Delhi, Missouri to Mexico, Iliff students and graduates are holding constructive tension with the human condition as it is and courageously standing with those who seek justice.

This past year saw one of Iliff's largest enrollments since its founding by the United Methodist Church in 1892 – 333 students, 60% female and 40% male, 35% Methodist – all actively engaged in both the classroom and a host of ministry contexts. Some are leading congregations toward revitalization while others are doing ministry by establishing new forms of community.

Interest in online and hybrid classes continues to grow from across the nation in our Journey MDIV Program, one of the first to bring quality theological education online. As a concerted move by Iliff to reduce student debt and grow the ability of students to lead financially sound, engaged communities, many MDIV students are also participating in the Spiritually-Integrated Financial Resiliency Program, funded by a \$250,000 grant from the Lilly Endowment.

We welcomed participants to our first Spanish-Speaking Local Pastors Licensing School hosted in partnership with the Rocky Mountain Conference and participated in healing events for commemoration of the Sand Creek Massacre. In addition, Iliff students participated in an immersion trip to Africa University and are planning an additional experience this year. We look forward to continuing these vital relationships.

Iliff created numerous events for area clergy and supporters. Via forums on leadership, policing, the role of faith in world events, and more, campus speakers included Amy Goodman, Garry Kasparov, and the Rev. Dr. Rebecca Chopp, this year's Jameson Jones Preacher. Bridging theological education to new arenas was further cultivated through Iliff's Authentic Engagement™ Program with trainings for civic and non-profit groups. Our efforts were duly noted by McCormick Theological Seminary's Center for Faith and Service when we were named as one of the nation's "Seminaries That Change the World."

We continue to look to the future with courageous theological imagination. We are grateful for our denominational connection.

*Rev. Dr. Thomas V. Wolfe,
President and Chief Executive Officer
www.iliff.edu · 1-877-887-7822*

METHODIST THEOLOGICAL SCHOOL IN OHIO (MTSO)

Thank you for this opportunity to bring you an update from MTSO.

The care of creation

MTSO continues to seek opportunities to foster and encourage the care of creation. In January, we were the primary host for a multi-site Climate Conversation, jointly presented by the Theological Commons at MTSO and Ohio Interfaith Power and Light, a group offering a religious response to climate change. We also released a recent video sharing the story of Seminary Hill Farm and the ways it fits within the school's broader commitment to ecotheology. You'll find a link to the video at seminaryhillfarm.org. We invite you to download the high-definition video from its Vimeo page and share it in any context you believe will be constructive. We also would be happy to provide a speaker in person or via Skype to discuss this initiative.

Schooler Institute on Preaching

A hands-on 2015 Schooler Institute on Preaching was led by Jorge Lockward, director of global praise for the General Board of Global Ministries of the United Methodist Church, and Valerie Bridgeman, recently appointed associate professor of homiletics and Hebrew Bible at MTSO. We were pleased to offer the wisdom of this dynamic duo to our students, alums, and other participants.

Conference Candidacy Summits

We were pleased to be the host site of the West Ohio Conference's Candidacy Summits for those exploring ordination. MTSO provided our campus facilities for these two-day events, held in August and January. Among other activities, candidates participated in worship, mentoring work, and coffee with district leaders.

MTSO prepares Christian leaders for lives of lasting significance in service to the church and the world. In addition to the Master of Divinity degree, we offer master's degrees in counseling ministries, theological studies, and practical theology, along with a Doctor of Ministry degree. We invite you to stay in touch with us at mtso.edu, on Facebook, and @MTSOedu on Twitter.

**PERKINS SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY
SOUTHERN METHODIST UNIVERSITY**

Perkins School of Theology celebrates our connections with the South Carolina Annual Conference. We are pleased to report that total enrollment at Perkins exceeds 400 students, of which approximately two-thirds are United Methodist and more than one-third are ethnic minority students. Master's degree programs comprise approximately 51% female and 49% male students. The D.Min. program includes students from southern Asia taking classes in Singapore and Dallas. Our Ph.D. program comprises 30 active students, including two Latino Ph.D. students supported through a grant from the Luce Foundation to Perkins' Center for the Study of Latino/Christianity and Religions.

Dr. Jack Levison (Ph.D., Duke, 1985) joined the Perkins faculty as the third appointee to the W.J.A. Power Chair of Biblical Hebrew and Old Testament Interpretation. Dr. John Martin, new director of development, came to Perkins after serving as president of Roberts Wesleyan College in Rochester, New York. Following a nationwide search, a senior scholar and teacher eligible for appointment to the Lois Craddock Perkins Chair in Homiletics is expected to join the Perkins faculty in fall 2015.

Perkins restructured its Master of Divinity degree, effective spring 2015, enabling full-time students to complete the program in three years and reducing overall cost of the degree. The M.Div. now requires 73 term hours of academic credit, including the nine-hour internship.

A new "Master of Arts in Ministry" (MAM) degree has replaced the C.M.M. The MAM offers five tracks: two previously-existing tracks in Christian Education and Urban Ministry and new tracks in Theology and Social Justice, Christian Spirituality, and Evangelism and Mission.

A \$2.5 million gift to SMU will establish the new Susanna Wesley Centennial Chair in Practical Theology at Perkins.

Perkins thanks our many colleagues, friends, and alumni/ae across the connection for generous support in many ways, including referrals of prospective students, as we continue our vital mission of preparing women and men for faithful leadership in Christian ministry.

Grace and Peace,

*William B. Lawrence
Dean and Professor of American Church History*

HINTON RURAL LIFE CENTER

www.hintoncenter.org
2330 Hinton Center Road, Hayesville, North Carolina 28904;
828-389-8336

Making Disciples, Serving Our Neighbors, and Sharing God's Love

Hinton Center is a retreat and conference center nestled in the mountains of southwestern North Carolina overlooking breath-taking Lake Chatuge. For over 50 years, as a mission agency of the Southeastern Jurisdiction, Hinton Rural Life Center has provided opportunities for intentional faith development while its attendees share love for Christ with others through service. Each year, we host individuals and groups for spiritual retreats, group gathering, and service opportunities. We also partner with small and rural congregations in a vitality process, exploring congregational call, encouraging creative missional outreach, and sparking new life.

Together in 2014, we were able to accomplish the following:

- Host over 1400 volunteers who worked on campus, in our garden, and in our community to help those in need
- Deliver over 75 loads of firewood to families who could not otherwise afford to heat their homes
- Repair 123 homes, making them warmer, drier, and safer
- Provide financial counseling to 50 families, helping two families to secure loans to purchase homes
- Host 7 poverty simulations to help the community understand the challenges associated with those living in generational poverty
- Harvest fresh vegetables from our garden for our guests and donate excess vegetables to Clay County Food Pantry and Matt's Ministry, a weekend meal program for children in our rural community
- Lead 18 small and rural churches through Next Step Vitality Ministry

- Engage in 81 worship services with mission volunteers to reflect upon their service in this rural Appalachian community
- Increase Hinton's presence throughout the Southeastern Jurisdiction, with increased web presence moving from 6,000 website hits in 2010 to 60,909 website hits in 2014
- Increase connections through social media from 358 Facebook friends in 2012 to over 1200 in 2014
- Raise over \$100,000, which is two-thirds of our way to our initial goal of \$150,000 in our Capital Campaign

What can we do together in 2015?

- Foster Relationships
- Empower People
- Build Community

But we need your help:

- Pray for Hinton
- Support Hinton Financially
- Participate in Hinton's Ministries

Submitted by,

Dr. Jacqueline Gottlieb, President/CEO