

IV. Daily Proceedings

IGNITING AND SUSTAINING A PASSIONATE SPIRITUAL CONNECTION

FIRST DAY

Thursday, June 11, 2009

CLERGY SESSION

ORDER – Bishop Thomas J. Bickerton called the Clergy Session to order at 9:49 AM

SCRIPTURE AND SONG – After John Jefferis read from Acts 2:1-4, 14-21 members of the Clergy Session joined in a responsive Call to Worship and the singing of “And Are We Yet Alive.”

ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP - Received on motion of Janet Lord according to ¶322: Roger P. Howard.

PROVISIONAL MEMBERSHIP AND COMMISSIONING – Received on motion of Janet Lord according to ¶¶324.4a, c: Elizabeth A. Cochran, Donna B. Gabler, Debra L. Hills. According to ¶¶324.41c: Wade R. Berkey, Brett M. Dinger, Scott L. Gallagher, Linda G. Harrison, Matthew G. Johnson, Justin R. Judy, Brian R. Keller, Tina G. Keller, Laurajane C. LaVerde, D. Ronald Libengood, Christopher A. Morgan, Thomas J. Parkinson, Rebecca W. Patterson, Corben M. Russell, Kelley M. Schanely, Jason E. Schweinberg, Joseph B. Short, , Kellie D. Wild.

FULL MEMBERSHIP/TRANSFER FROM OTHER METHODIST DENOMINATIONS – On motion of Janet Lord according to ¶347.2a, Duk Hee Han was received from the Korean Methodist Church.

FULL MEMBERSHIP AND ELDER’S ORDERS – On motion of Janet Lord, Registrar for the Board of the Ordained Ministry, according to ¶335: Cynthia G. Bloise, Kimberly B. Greway, Sharon M. Hamley, William E. Hastings, Austin P. Hornyak, Steven M. Lamb, Linda D. Landers, Lois F. Swestyn, Paul D. Taylor, Stephen A. Tiffany, Amy R. Wagner.

SCRIPTURE AND SONG – Anthony S. Fallisi read Acts 2:42-47 and the members of the Clergy Session sang, “As a Fire is Meant for Burning.”

REPORT OF THE ORDER OF DEACON – Patricia E. Ciampa gave the report for the Order of Deacon. There are 1,150 Deacons active across the denomination. At present there are 319 commissioned Deacons and 1,696 candidates for Deacon in progress. “Each morning Deacons awake to their calling, to work out their ministry in specialized areas such as Directors of Christian Education, preschool, confirmation, Family Ministries, music, Youth Ministry, discipleship, missions, member care and

supportive pastoral duties working under the supervision of staff parish relations committee and in cooperation with colleagues who are Elders, Local Pastors, and laity leaders.

REPORT OF THE ORDER OF ELDER – William M. Pieringer gave the report of the Order of Elder citing a quote of Francis of Assisi “may Christ teach you what is yours to do” stressing the need to balance between contemplation and action the following list of suggestions was offered: Wear hiking boots to church one day per week to remind yourself we are to be out in the world and not in our office. Change pastor’s office to pastor’s study immediately. Read John Wesley’s Thoughts on the Scarcity of Provisions 1773 and lead a comparative study to economic conditions in Western Pennsylvania 2009. Attend the Great Escape. Remember it is a privilege to study and learn, and cease all grumbling about having to do 40 contact hours of continuing education immediately. Invite your PPRC over for dinner and do not talk about church, ministry, or programs. Elders who are grandparents take your grandkids to the beach. Read *I Would Follow Jesus, writings from the heart* by the Rev. Joseph Stowell. Go to all family birthdays, anniversaries, reunions, picnic, graduations and celebrations – no excuses except funerals. Spend one day remembering that you have chosen to become a United Methodist pastor. No one is born a United Methodist. Read Barbara Brown Taylor’s *Leaving Church*. Do the daily office of readings. Universalis.com is a great resource. Form a relationship with a newly ordained elder, a deacon and local pastor. Learn from them all. Receive communion weekly. Experience a third or fourth world mission trip once in your ministry. Fast for reasons other than blood work or cholesterol check. Become the best-read clergy person in your ministerium. Seek out conversation with persons of a different race, and/or gender. Do more listening than speaking. Read F. Richard Rohr’s *Everything Belongs*. Realize that being a chair of anything implies sitting, and lounging. Reject chairmanships, accept leaderships. Plant a garden somewhere in size between an acre and three marigolds. Spend thirty minutes watching honey bees go in and out of their hives. Pray for such teamwork in your ministry. If they are alive, take care of your parents; if not, then take care of someone else’s. Spend a day near water, in the woods, or biking a rails to trails, once a month. If you hunt, take a kid along; if you don’t, then take the first day of deer season off anyway. Read Henry Abelove’s *The Evangelist of Desire, John Wesley and the Methodists*.

The Great Escape will be held at the Antiochian Village October 13 through 15. 2009.

REPORT OF THE FELLOWSHIP OF LOCAL PASTORS – Anthony S. Fallisi gave the report of the Fellowship of Local Pastors focusing on the importance of continuing education in fulfilling our call to be Faithful, Fruitful and Effective. The report contained a video presentation directing clergy to a webpage at www.olmstedmanor.org highlighting continuing education possibilities.

AFFILIATE MEMBERS – On motion of Alyce Weaver Dunn, Secretary of the Board of the Ordained Ministry, according to ¶¶334.4, 344.4: Jane Ellen Nickell (West Virginia) Robert A. Smith (West Kansas).

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CANDIDACY REGISTRAR – Faith Geer gave the report announcing that all mentors will be required to get training for this quadrennium on September 30, October 6, or October 8.

LOCAL PASTOR REGISTRAR – Patricia M. Nelson introduced graduates from the 2008 Course of Study: Richard “Dick” Carlson, Larry G. Dunn, Daniel Myers and Ruth Moore.

SCRIPTURE AND SONG – Patricia M. Nelson read Ephesians 1:15-23 followed by the members of the Clergy Session singing “Be Thou My Vision.”

LEAVE OF ABSENCE , VOLUNTARY – On motion of Alyce Weaver Dunn according to ¶354.2a) Ernest L. Perry (FE), 1st year; R. Andrew Verner (FE), 1st year; Lee A. Moore (FE), 2nd year; John R. Roble (FE), 5th year; According to ¶354.2a: Jay P. Tennies (FE), 6th year; Ronald E. Thomas (FE), 9th year; David R. Lewis (FE), 11th year; Gordon Barry Davis (FE), 15th year; According to ¶354.2b: Barbara Turpish (FE) year five effective 07/01/2004; Deborah Ackley-Killian (FE) year eleven, effective 12/10/1997; According to ¶354.2c: Martha A. Mattner (FE)

SABBATICAL LEAVE – On motion of Alyce Weaver Dunn according to ¶352, David S. Hampson was granted Sabbatical Leave.

LESS THAN FULL TIME SERVICE – On motion of Alyce Weaver Dunn according to ¶¶ 331.7, 338.2, 1506.4b: Charles Adkins AM, ¼ time, year seven; Clara Belloit, FE, ½ time, year ten; Jerry Belloit, FE, ¼ time, year fourteen; Leah Bergstrom, FE, ¾ time, year four; Todd Davis, FE, ½ time, year two; Allen O. Grimm, III, FE, ½ time, year two; Sharon M. Hamley, FE, ½ time (effective 10/19/09), year one; J. Mark Hurst, FE, ½ time, year five; Orville R. Jones, AM, ½ time, year eleven; Tina G. Keller, PE, ½ time, year one; William Kemp, FE, ½ time, year eight; Linda D. Landers, PE, ¾ time year three; Alice M. McClymonds, AM, ½ time, year four; Seth A. McClymonds, Jr., FE, ½ time, year four; Alice Jean Parker, AM, ½ time, year three; William Pieringer, FE, ¾ time, year seven; Bruce Stollings, FE, ¾ time, year fifteen; John R. Wilson, FE, ¾ time, year sixteen.

INCAPACITY LEAVE – On motion of Alyce Weaver Dunn according to ¶357.2: La Mar E. Carlson (FE), 01/01/09 Kyle C. Cannon (FE), 07/01/09. According to ¶357.1: Jaime Alvarez (FE), Raymond H. Beal, Jr. (FE), Suzanne Devore Bennett (without benefit) (FE), Kyle C. Cannon (FE), LaMar E. Carlson (FE), Mark A. DeBaise (FE), Debra Anne Groeger (FE), Floyd A. Hall (FE), Connie Hoeke (without benefit) (FE), Earl C. Killian II (PM), Bonnie Tyack Friend King (FE), Thomas J. Michalko (FE), Stanley Nixon (AM), Kenneth J. Peters (FE), Randall Roda (FE), F. Jayne Verner (PE), Paul E. Wilson, Sr. (FE).

WITHDRAWAL – On motion of David L. Morse according to ¶360.2, 4: Ronald D. Amon and Stephen R. McGuigan were granted withdrawal.

CONSENT TO THE KENTUCKY ANNUAL CONFERENCE - On motion of David L. Morse according to ¶347.5 consent was granted to the Kentucky Annual Conference to receive Ramon R. Degekolb as transfer from the Evangelical Church.

RETIREMENTS – In celebration of their years of faithful ministry: **Elders:** Patricia A. Comini-Miller ¶358.2b, David A. Eversdyke ¶358.2c, Frank B. Garlathy ¶358.2c, James W. Hamilton ¶358.2c, Terry L. Hurlbutt ¶358.2a, *Mark A. Lenz ¶359.3, Martha A. Mattner (08-01-09) ¶358.2b, Margaret A. Peary ¶358.2a, James E. Rank ¶358.2b, Roger C. Saunders ¶358.2a, Kathleen S. Soltis ¶358.2b, Joanne I. Torma ¶358.2a, *Maurine C. Waun ¶359.3, James M. Weisz ¶358.2b. **Associate Members:** Robert D. Arduino ¶358.2c, Robert B. Jordan, Jr. ¶358.2b, *Gary E. Utz ¶358.2c. **Local Pastors:** According to ¶320.5: Joy A. Blackburn, Thomas A. Blackburn, Robert R. Dornan, John R. Fennell, Phyllis Gramling, James D. Hilliard, Sandra J. Jordan, Robert E. Matthews, Bonnie C. Rupp-Fisher, Robert B. Stultz Jr., F. Lee Thompson, Dixie R. Welker.

APPROVAL OF THE CHARACTER OF CLERGY – Each District Superintendent reported for their district. With the exception of the Erie-Meadville and Washington Districts which each have a complaint in process, there are no complaints or charges against the clergy serving on the remaining districts. Bishop Bickerton reported there are no complaints or charges against the District Superintendents.

COURTESY – Bishop Bickerton introduced Donald Green, Executive Director of Christian Associates of Southwest Pennsylvania, who brought greetings to the members of the Clergy Session.

EPISCOPAL COMMENTS – Bishop Bickerton encouraged the clergy to be as healthy as they can be in order to express the gifts that God has given to them in ministry to the Church. Bishop Bickerton also spoke concerning how the downturn in the economy has effected appointment making this year. There is much heartache involved in considering the needs of everyone even though at times it is hard to understand the decisions that are made.

The Bishop expressed appreciation for the work of Robert W. Higginbotham for his work as Assistant to the Bishop. Bishop Bickerton concluded by saying that it is still a joy to see and share in ministry with all of the clergy.

COMPREHENSIVE MOTION FOR APPROVAL OF THE BOARD'S REPORT – On motion of Alyce Weaver Dunn the clergy session approved all matters contained in the report of the Board of Ordained Ministry and not specifically voted on.

RS1 POLICIES CONCERNING CANDIDACY, MEMBERSHIP, AND ORDINATION – On motion of David L. Morse it was approved.

COVENANT PRAYER – David L. Morse was joined by the chairs of Orders of Deacon, Elder, Fellowship of Local Pastors, and Faith Geer representing laity who laid hands on the Bishop and led in the covenant prayer.

ADJOURNMENT – After the benediction by Bishop Bickerton the Clergy Session adjourned at 11:52 AM.

AFTERNOON SESSION

COMMUNION – The conference gathered at 1:00 PM for the Opening Communion Service. Bishop Thomas J. Bickerton was the Celebrant preaching on the subject, “Burn Baby Burn.” Assisting in the service were: Harry Barbus, Emma Smith, Thomas Chacko, Bianca Silva, Skip Bowyer, Robert Higginbotham, Don Megahan, the Praise Team from Ingomar United Methodist Church.

ORDER – Bishop Bickerton called the conference to order at 2:50 PM and referred the delegates to the Guidelines for Holy Conferencing on page 372 of the Pre-Conference Journal.

COURTESY – GROVE CITY COLLEGE - Mark E. Goswick, Business Manager for the Conference Sessions Ministry Team, introduced Richard G. Jewell, President of Grove City College, who welcomed the conference to the campus of the college.

COURTESY – EPISCOPACY COMMITTEE – Thomas F. St. Clair, Co-Chairperson of the Conference Committee on Episcopacy, introduced Jim and Marlene Bickerton, parents of Bishop Bickerton, and Sally Bickerton, wife of the Bishop and welcomed them to the conference.

EPISCOPAL SECRETARY – Bishop Bickerton introduced Tina Wilson, the new Executive Assistant to the Bishop.

ROLL CALL – After instructions were given by John R. Wilson the Roll Call as taken: Laity 963, Clergy 632, Excused Clergy 61, Non-voting Clergy 12, Total 1,668.

BAR OF THE CONFERENCE – On motion of John R. Wilson, Conference Secretary, the bar of the conference was set as all seats at tables.

ELECTION OF TELLERS – On motion of John R. Wilson, Tellers were elected for this session of annual conference.

CONFERENCE SESSIONS – Nancy Denardo, Chairperson of Conference Sessions, and Mark E. Goswick greeted the conference and gave information concerning the sessions of conference.

AGENDA – Harold J. Yannayon, Chairperson Sub-team on Agenda, presented the agenda and moved its adoption. On a sustained call for the previous question by J-LaVon Kincaid the conference adopted the agenda as amended by Byron K. Myers on a count vote of 772 yes, 517 no.

Motion by Byron K. Myers: The agenda to be amended so that all proposed amendments to The United Methodist Church's constitution be presented for discussion, debate and vote at the beginning of the plenary session scheduled for Friday, June 12 at 1:30 PM. Further, thirty (30) minutes be scheduled for this purpose with the possibility that the usual rules apply for the Conference to extend the time allotted as it may desire. Motion approved.

SUSPENSION OF THE RULES – At the suggestion of Amy E. Bentz, the conference voted to suspend Rule 2.3.8.1.1 in order to consider late arriving legislation.

KEYSTONE FEDERAL CREDIT UNION – Patty Columbe, Treasurer of the Credit Union addressed the conference and suggested tips to help endure the economic times, such as living within a budget, saving, and investing wisely. Dennis Henley, President of the Credit Union Board of Directors presented Bishop Bickerton with a check in the amount of \$3,000 for new church starts.

RECESS – After announcements by Joan E. Reasinger, Legislative Floor Manager, the conference recessed to Legislative Section meetings at 3:30 PM.

EVENING SESSION

MEMORIAL SERVICE – The conference gathered at 7:30 PM for the Memorial Service. Participants in the service were: The Praise Team, Sharon Schwab, The Conference Choir, Bishop Bickerton, Stephen Deyarmin, Brenda Russell, Paul Taylor, Josephine Whitely-Fields, Randy Sweet, David Chin, and Robert Higginbotham. Dale Reese read the names of the honored dead:

FORMER BISHOP: James Mase Ault

ACTIVE CLERGY: Warren Verner Jones, Peter Alden Foreman, William "Bill" Gumpfer, Joseph Allen Onder.

RETIRED CLERGY: Bertrand Roy Hover, Paul Mechem Easter, Paul Anthony Dunn, Harry Donald Lash, Richard C. Haugh, Lloyd Samuel Sturtz, Ronald William Smith, John Robert Donley, Jack Robert Rees, Charles Erwood Goodin, James Richard Webb, Lloyd Arnold Whitcomb, Donald L. Hartman, David Lyman Taylor, Bernard Lee Shuey, Donald Paul Sease, Daniel Robert Orris, William George Morris, Charles Henry A. Woods, Elizabeth Zbilut, Thomas Edwin Spofford, John W. Lofgren, Leonard Edward Durbin, Neal Kay Rogers, George Campbell, Arthur L. Schultz.

CERTIFIED LAY MINISTER: Sam Bavely.

CLERGY SPOUSES: Opal Arline Augustine Faas, Jetta Mayle Scott, Catherine Burns Avery Finney, Helen Schrenk Patterson Cole, Mary Jean Nelson Mays, Armeda "Mimi" Rogers, Leona Lucille Bunn Sheppard, Shirley Verdell Sease, Betty June

Zimmerman Donley, John H. Miller, III, Cynthia Della Donne Curry Blaha, Elsie Fralick Rossbacher, Nancy Ann Toothman, Claire Bishop Halstead, Maxine Leora Chelton Donner, Shirley M. Thompson Hammond, Ruth Virginia Hoffer Spahn, Violet E. Probst, Dorothy Ellen Patterson.

LAITY: William J. Pollard, Jr., Harry “Hap” Hamilton, Paul W. Hoffman, Catherine Irene Newell.

RECESS – The conference was in recess at the conclusion of the Memorial Service.

SECOND DAY

Friday, June 12, 2009

Morning Session

BIBLE STUDY – Lisa A. Grant, Director of Connectional Ministries, led the morning Bible Study based on 1 Kings 17-19. Citing examples from the life of Elijah Lisa spoke about the dangers of burnout. As an alternative, members of the conference were given the Cycle of Grace: Acceptance, Sustenance, Significance, and Fruitfulness. We don’t ignite or sustain anything. It’s about God who is passionate for us and wants to ignite and sustain a passion in us. The study concluded with a French Horn solo of *Amazing Grace* presented by Bethany Morse.

EPISCOPAL ADDRESS – Bishop Bickerton presented the Episcopal Address:

To open my remarks to this Annual Conference I would like to quote from II Corinthians 8. Paul writes,

We want you to know, brothers and sisters, about the grace of God that has been granted to the churches of Macedonia; for during a severe ordeal of affliction, their abundant joy and their extreme poverty have overflowed in a wealth of generosity on their part. For, as I can testify, they voluntarily gave according to their means and even beyond their means, begging us earnestly for the privilege of sharing in this ministry to the saints – and this, not merely as we expected; they gave themselves first to the Lord and, by the will of God, to us. (II Corinthians 8:1-5)

That text summarizes, in part, the feelings that well up within me when I think of the privilege I have of serving here in Western Pennsylvania. I truly believe that we, out of severe trial and unfortunate circumstances, continue to demonstrate our faithfulness to the Body of Christ called the church. What wells up within me is a rich generosity that continues to bless my heart. I, like Paul can testify that, in many ways, you are giving as much as you are able and even, at times, beyond your ability. This is demonstrated in the fact that after the 1st quarter of 2009, we were one of only a handful of Annual Conferences that were reporting an increase in our giving to Mission Share. Earlier in the year we initiated an offer to reduce each church’s Mission Share asking if they chose to do so. Our Treasurer reported each week the moving letters she received either from churches who declined the offer and decided to continue to demonstrate their faithfulness

by 100% giving or from churches who accepted the offer and pledged to work as hard as they could to remain faithful to their obligation to be connectional church. Add to that the continued evidence of faithfulness you have demonstrated in disaster response, missions, and extra mile giving, and you have testimony of a tremendous outpouring of generosity for the ministry that is ours here in Western Pennsylvania. Before Bill Jacka created needed storage space at the Conference Center, flood buckets were stacked just outside my office. The smell of Clorox would filter into my office on a daily basis. While I didn't like the smell I loved the reminder that Western Pennsylvanians are a kind and loving people who demonstrate their loyalty in many ways. Like the Corinthian Church, I believe we have more generosity and more ability to give than we realize. I commend you, thank you for the inspiration you are to me, and urge you to continue to allow God to be your guide.

A person in the Obama administration said several months ago, "You should never let a good crisis pass you by." The economic crisis of our country has provided an opportunity for the church of Jesus Christ to demonstrate where our loyalty lies. If we continue to depend and lean upon the grace of God through the blessing of the Holy Spirit, we will continue to demonstrate more generosity than we could imagine. It follows directly with the old principle of tithing – give what God calls you to give and the blessings you receive in return outweigh any gift you gave or sacrifice you made.

As a cabinet and as a staff, we have begun to look more closely at what the statistics have to say to us about the State of the Church here in our Annual Conference. The cabinet has committed to itself to identifying congregations that are demonstrating evidence of growth and vitality. In turn we are attempting to place our best leaders in those situations. Our staff has begun to monitor more closely the impact and interest that certain program initiatives generate. Our financial wing is producing reliable reports on our giving each month. Each of these initiatives helps us to not only identify the places where we can celebrate faithful, effective and fruitful ministry but also target the places that need our concentration and assistance.

So what DO the statistics reveal to us? Statistics are numbers. But numbers represent people and people are the repositories of souls that need cared for, loved, and forgiven. They are souls that need the call to repentance and genuine acceptance into the Body of Christ.

In 2008, the Western Pennsylvania Annual Conference had 2,353 baptisms and 2,512 Professions of Faith. This is clear evidence that disciples are indeed being formed and made. That's the good news. The bad news is that those numbers continue to decline each year. We had 74 fewer baptisms than the year before and 412 fewer professions of faith.

Even more grim are these statistics. Of our 866 local churches in the Western Pennsylvania Annual Conference, 329 of them had no baptisms. That is 38% of our congregations. Of our 866 local churches, 427 of them had no Professions of Faith. That is 49% of our congregations.

When it comes to Attendance and Membership, we continue to decline in both categories. Our membership dropped in 2008 by 1,850 and our attendance dropped by exactly 900.

But there is good news. Of our 866 churches, 266 of them showed a gain in membership. That is to say that 31% of the churches in Western Pennsylvania are

growing. 275 of our churches or 32% of our churches showed a gain in worship attendance.

The real celebration that I want to highlight in these categories is that for the first time in several years there is not an across the board decline taking place. In certain regions of our Annual Conference, there is evidence of hard work and faithfulness taking place.

Last year, three of our Districts experienced a gain in the number of baptisms. The Greensburg District had 16 more baptisms or a 5% growth, the Butler District had 24 more baptisms or a 9% growth, and the Pittsburgh District has 88 more baptisms or a growth over 28%.

In Professions of Faith the Indiana District showed a gain of 59 Professions of Faith in 208. That is a 40% growth over last year.

And, for the first time in at least five years, we are showing positive trends in our attendance. Two of our Districts are showing a growth in attendance. Greensburg is up 121 or a growth of 1.5% and the Pittsburgh District is up 215 or a growth of 2.9%. These are good blocks upon which to build. If four of our Districts can show positive growth in the areas of Baptisms, Professions of Faith and Attendance, we should be able to add at least two more to those ranks this time next year.

What do these statistics say to us? While we have some celebrations to highlight and some signs of faithfulness that we can use as building blocks for transformation, these statistics reveal that we have much work to do in order to turnaround our decline and being to re-build a vital denomination in this region for the 21st century.

I believe that we have laid a positive foundation for that transformation in the past five years in several ways:

- We have worked to create a new climate and attitude within our Annual Conference. I believe we are working out of a positive posture of possibility rather than a position of negativity and despair. We have worked hard to create a sense of *respect* for one another and increased the acknowledgement of our need on the presence of the Holy Spirit to be our guide.
- We have established a very clear Mission, Vision and Core Values that are the foundation upon which to build every program, initiative and ministry.
- Our Strategic Plan is being actively implemented and sprouts or needed ministries are beginning to break through the crust of our conference.
- We have clearly defined what a Faithful, Effective, and Fruitful pastor is and fulfilled our disciplinary mandate to provide annual evaluations by the SPRC and the District Superintendent.
- We have begun to address the stark absence of continuing education opportunities within the boundaries of our Annual Conference and are once more providing places where we can learn and grow together. Later this week you will see the fruits of those who are laboring in this effort.
- Our Leadership Incubator process continues to grow and build a sense of community, respect, and mutual ministry among pastors and laity in each of our ten districts.
- We have provided the skills necessary for vital and relevant ministry to unfold in each of our local churches. NCD, healthy church workshops, Racism training, and

poverty simulations have had a positive impact on how we approach church health, vitality, inclusiveness and awareness of the wider world.

- The cabinet has committed itself to doing better in appointing pastors to congregations which match their giftedness and need. We are using the same Faithful, Effective, and Fruitful criteria in the manner in which we make appointments in a disciplined and strategic approach. There is, no doubt, that the recent economic struggles have created challenges in appointment-making but we thank God for the opportunity to have each of our available pastors a place in which to serve.
- We have increased communication within our system and created a stronger sense of accountability to one another and to the Mission, Vision and Core Values of the Annual Conference.
- And we are attempting to let the structure help us to fulfill our mission rather than having the structure AS our mission.

There are, however, some clear learnings from these statistics as well. There are some areas which desperately need our prayers and attention:

- Our staff and cabinet must continue to look at intentional ways that we focus our work on the ministry of the local church and continue to provide the resources and opportunities for growth that they need.
- It is clear from these statistics that the depth of the problem goes deeper though than cabinet and staff. It is evident that some of our congregations have decided to grow. They have made a conscious decision to welcome the stranger, clothe the naked and feed the hungry. They have decided to avail themselves of the valuable resources we provide. They have decided to transform the world by making disciples and they have clearly decided to ignite and sustain a passionate spiritual connection with Christ among all people in their region. God is graciously granting pastors and congregations fruit who desire and work for fruit. I would say to congregations who do not fit this category: do not decide to decline and die. There are great resources at your fingertips and a hungry world around you. God is not through with us yet. Feed off of our Mission, Vision & Core Values and develop a strategic plan for ministry that will share the special gifts God has given you with the world.

Many of you are aware of the fact that our denomination has embraced four distinct areas of ministry where we are focusing our attention and emphasis. Providentially, we had already embraced these four areas as a part of our *Believe Again!* strategic plan before the General Conference affirmed them. In this report I must acknowledge with gratitude the amazing work that has been done in our *Believe Again!* Implementation Team. This strategy has begun to be imbedded into who we are as an Annual Conference. Several have inquired when our next strategic plan might unfold. I truly believe that we need to work our current plan for another year to make sure that the Mission, Vision & Core Values of our Annual Conference become a firm part of our DNA and that the goals of the Areas of Focus from *Believe Again!* and the General Church are well implemented. Once we evaluate the progress made in these areas over the next year it may be that at Annual Conference next year we will begin the process of identifying the next steps of our strategy for ministry here in Western Pennsylvania.

The four areas of focus provide for us a forum upon which to identify some of the additional areas of ministry we need to provide in order to create a more solidly positioned Annual Conference for growth. Let me illustrate.

I. The First Area of Focus is DEVELOPING PRINCIPLED CHRISTIAN LEADERS FOR THE CHURCH AND THE WORLD. As I stated earlier, we have made great progress in developing and implementing the “Faithful, Effective, and Fruitful” model for clergy leadership. This, along with evaluations and continuing education development, provides a good model for accountability and covenant in the ministry we share together as clergy. There is, however, a serious need for us to target laity as a focal point for leadership development in the next year. While a Faithful, Effective and Fruitful standard has been established for our laity, there is a tremendous need to increase training, commitment, relationship, and calling among the laity of Western Pennsylvania. For that reason I am announcing that in the next several months I will be establishing a Bishop’s Study Team on Lay Ministry to discuss and implement strategies for how we build the base of effective, confident, and committed laity in our Annual Conference. I also intend to pick up on an idea from one of my colleague bishops and for this year a Laity Cabinet, based loosely on the model of the current cabinet, with the Conference Lay Leader and District Lay Leaders meeting with me once a quarter for conversation and strategic development of lay ministry opportunities in our Annual Conference. While we can celebrate good work in the development of a system of Faithful, Effective, and Fruitful clergy we must all acknowledge that our laity must be better trained, equipped, and challenged to come together in Christian love and go forth together to tell the story of God’s redeeming grace and love.

II. The Second Area of Focus is CREATING NEW PLACES FOR NEW PEOPLE AND REVITALIZING EXISTING CONGREGATIONS. Our new committee on Parish and Community Development has been working throughout the year to establish themselves in these two critical areas of our Annual Conference life and work. It is not easy doing simultaneous development of definitions and standards for revitalizing existing congregations AND thinking about creating new faith communities. Add to that the clear reality that while we have had some successes in New Church Starts over the last twenty years, the number of those successes have not been sufficient to meet the need which exists in our region. The disappointments and setbacks that previous committees have experienced continue to cloud our vision of a new day when we aggressively and creatively begin to systematically and consistently establish new churches. The statistics across the country are confirming of the reality that most Annual Conferences which are growing numerically are Annual Conferences which have successfully adopted and implemented New Church Starts strategic plans which are funded by those Annual Conferences and supported by local congregations who, in many situations, parent those new churches. For that reason I am calling the Cabinet and the Parish and Community Development Committee to commit themselves to a series of a joint meetings throughout this next year to firmly develop a comprehensive strategic plan for New Church Starts with clearly identified places where those starts need to be engaged. Likewise, I would ask this joint group to develop a strategic listing of places where we can approach congregations and to talk with other congregations about specific redevelopment possibilities. I would ask that this joint group work with CFA to develop more intentional ways that our budget can embrace this ministry and report their findings and plans to the

2010 Annual Conference. We will not turn around this Annual Conference until we get serious about starting new churches and providing opportunities for revitalizing existing churches that are not afraid to change here within Western Pennsylvania.

III. The Third Area of Focus is ENGAGING IN MINISTRY WITH THE POOR. (Video) This video highlights the enormous potential which exists in every congregation to identify and actively engage our congregations in ministries with the poor. Our *Believe Again!* Poverty Team has done good work in providing Poverty Simulation events which have done great work among the participants in creating a sensitivity for the plight and victimization of the poor. Yet, we need to expand our focus in this area. More people need to become aware of the poor who live in each of our communities and more of our churches need to explore active ways of engaging in ministry with the poor throughout this region, especially in light of the economic conditions we are facing. There is a piece of legislation we will be considering this week that identifies the need to identify six existing mission projects located in regions of our Annual Conference that can be marketed and promoted so that needed resources can be generated to support the ministries they provide to the poor. Likewise, today I am asking each congregation to develop a plan for engaging in ministry with the poor in your own community with a full report and action plan being given at this year's Charge Conference. Commit yourself to doing something good for the poor between now and Charge Conference so that your report and plan has teeth in it. The poor are all around us and with the advent of casinos and other arenas of gambling emerging all around us, we can be guaranteed that the poor will only grow in numbers. Each of our local churches are mission outposts which can become gathering points for all of God's children, especially those who need a helping hand of grace and love.

IV. The Fourth Area of Focus is COMBATTING THE KILLER DISEASE OF POVERTY BY IMPROVING HEALTH GLOBALLY. Most of you are, no doubt, aware that I have been engaged as the leader of this area of focus for the denomination. The special emphasis in this area of focus is our ongoing work to prevent and eventually eradicate malaria. Building upon the success of the "Nothing but Nets" campaign, we are now seeking to cast a wider net. Our goal is to continue our quest to blanket all of sub-Saharan Africa with insecticide treated mosquito nets. But the Global Health Initiative goes much deeper. We are actively working to strengthen our existing infrastructure of hospitals and clinics throughout Africa and provide training and resources for traditional birth attendants and others who work directly in the remote areas where people live. This work involves an active engagement with people on the continent of Africa on all levels of government, secular agency and ecumenical efforts with denominations. It's a bed net plus campaign that is looking not only at nets and infrastructure but also the critical issues of safe water, sanitation, and medical follow-up.

As many of you know at this session of Annual Conference we will be considering a new partner-to partner relationship with the country of Zimbabwe. This would be a true partnership that would involve not only Western Pennsylvanians on the continent of Africa through work teams, training sessions, and net distributions, it would also involve Zimbabwe becoming engaged in our lives through training in church growth, leadership development, and new church starts. This partnership would make Western Pennsylvania a key player in the development of this area of focus and would potentially give a new level of life and involvement for many of people across this conference. In

order to make this a reality, we will need to work consistently with a team of staff and volunteers to market the partnership across the conference, tell the story of this ministry opportunity, solicit and raise funds for the campaign, and be a bridge between the actual ministry that is unfolding on the continent and the story that is told among our people.

In addition to Zimbabwe, we have an immediate need to raise 1.5 million dollars to blanket the country of Sierra Leone by year's end. Special offerings and immediate appeals are being made across the denomination this month in order to quickly raise money and meet the goal so that this distribution can happen by year's end. That offering will be taken Saturday night here at Annual Conference. It gives us yet another opportunity to show our true spirit of commitment and generosity to the whole church.

Finally, I need to personally ask for the active involvement of this Annual Conference, my Annual Conference, as we unfold the Global Health Initiative Campaign across the denomination in an effort to raise \$75 million dollars to make the world a healthier place for all God's children. Nearly \$9 million has already been raised. Frankly, I cannot do my work across the denomination effectively if I cannot count on the support and engagement of my own Annual Conference in this effort. I need you and, more than that, the denomination needs you to step up and show forth our great potential to become a difference-maker on the world scene through the Global Health Initiative. I am privileged to do this work and will be blessed even more as we together lead our church in this initiative.

V. When the *Believe Again!* plan for ministry was approved two years ago, we embraced a fifth area of focus for this Annual Conference. This was a commitment to work tirelessly to combat and lessen the damaging effects of racism on a significant segment of God's creation. Our Racism team has done tremendous work so far in providing opportunities for sensitivity and training. This work and exposure needs to continue as we attempt to filter this work into every pew of every church in our Annual Conference and then from the pew into all the places where we work, play, and interact with the wider world. This work will not end any time soon as the need continues to be felt. I urge us to not grow weary in this area but remain committed to combating racism with the gospel of Jesus Christ that will settle for nothing less than a posture of doing good, doing no harm and staying in love with God as we reach out to love all of God's children consistently and effectively.

The foundation continues to be laid for a solid ministry here in Western Pennsylvania based on our commitment to make disciples, ignite and sustain a passionate spiritual connection, and love one another. Understand me clearly, it is only a foundation. There is much more to do in order to turnaround a declining denomination and position itself for growth and vitality in the 21st Century. To grow once again we need a solid foundation, one that will not easily or quickly crumble. That foundation must be fortified with the constant prayers of our people and the hard work of our leaders. That is my hope. But it is not a false hope for we have demonstrated repeatedly that we can do all things through Christ who strengthens us.

I started with that passage of scripture and highlighted the reality that out of the handicaps that beset us, great generosity and potential for ministry emerges. That is the hallmark of being a Western Pennsylvanian – a people who, when the odds stack up against us, rise to their highest level of productivity and potential. This is where we are as a denomination. Our backs are up against the wall. The reality of our decline is staring us

in the face. The economic conditions are not conducive to providing the resources necessary to get the job done. Yet, with this undeniable sense of determination, we move forward to *“bring to completion this act of grace.”* I count it the joy of my life and ministry to have the chance to be in ministry with and for you as your bishop. I love you. I’m proud of you. And I pledge to work with you to transform this place so that we can indeed *“ignite and sustain a passionate spiritual connection with Christ among all people in Western Pennsylvania.”* To paraphrase the Apostle Paul:

I want you to know, brothers and sisters, about the grace of God that has been granted to the churches of (Western Pennsylvania); for during a severe ordeal of affliction, their abundant joy and their extreme poverty have overflowed in a wealth of generosity on their part. For, as I can testify, they voluntarily gave according to their means and even beyond their means, begging us earnestly for the privilege of sharing in this ministry to the saints – and this, not merely as we expected; they gave themselves first to the Lord and, by the will of God, to us. (II Corinthians 8: 1-5)

May it be so as we work to be the Body of Christ in all that we do! May it be so. Amen.

CONSENT CALENDAR – Kellie Wild presented the Consent Calendar and gave instruction on how to remove items from the calendar for debate. The deadline for removing items from the Consent Calendar was set at 8:15 PM on June 12.

RECOGNITION OF JIM AND JOLENE TUBBS – Bishop Bickerton presented a citation in recognition and thanks to James L. Tubbs for his eight years of service as Franklin District Superintendent. Words of special tribute were offered to Jolene Tubbs for her special contributions to their ministry.

SUPPORT FOR LAMAR AND RACHEL CARLSON – Bishop Bickerton shared briefly concerning the progress of LaMar Carlson in his recovery from a stroke. Members of the conference were asked to continue to be present to and pray for the Carlson’s during this time of recovery.

2009 CABINET REPORT TO THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE – The Cabinet presented the report.

My name is Jim Tubbs and as Dean of the cabinet, I am privileged to introduce my colleagues of the WPA cabinet.

Bishop Thomas J. Bickerton

Chuck Fowler, Johnstown District Superintendent

Lisa Grant, Director of Connectional Ministries

Pat Harbison, Erie-Meadville District Superintendent

Bob Higginbotham, Assistant to the Bishop

William Meekins, Jr., Greensburg District Superintendent

Pat Morris, Conference Treasurer

Eric Park, Washington District Superintendent

George Porter, Franklin District Superintendent

Don Scandrol, Pittsburgh District Superintendent

Sharon Schwab, Indiana District Superintendent

Frank Sherman, Connellsville District Superintendent

Tom Strandberg, Kane District Superintendent

Jim Tubbs, Franklin District Superintendent (outgoing) and Dean of the Cabinet

Dean Ziegler, Butler District Superintendent

You will notice that we are more than the bishop and ten district superintendents. Under the leadership of Bishop Tom Bickerton, our cabinet (with the exception of appointment-making) includes the conference treasurer, the director of connectional ministries and the assistant to the bishop.

As we parted just one year ago, who could have imagined all that would become woven into the fabric of our individual and corporate lives. Yet, through it all, God's love has sustained us.

God is good! All the time.

The core value of the WPA annual conference is love. This core value permeates our life together as a cabinet and guides our work as leaders in this annual conference.

Bishop Bickerton: Our core value is love

Conference: We love the Lord our God with all our hearts, souls, minds and strength and our neighbors as ourselves.

Dean Zeigler: This value is commanded by Jesus,

Lisa Grant: inspired by our Wesleyan heritage including to spread scriptural holiness over the land

Tom Strandberg: and witnessed through our integrity, accountability and inclusiveness.

Jim Tubbs: We have been building on a foundation of love - literally and figuratively since we were last together at the 2008 session of annual conference.

Bob Higginbotham: While we were together in worship and legislative sessions last June, untold numbers of others were literally, "Building on a foundation of love!" as they helped to construct a Habitat House in Mercer as well as a multitude of other smaller construction projects around our annual conference. We, as a cabinet, were blessed to join in the work and to celebrate the dedication of the Habitat house.

Jim Tubbs: Our core value of Love empowers us to live toward the vision of our annual conference:

Cabinet: To ignite and sustain a passionate, spiritual connection with Christ among all people in western Pennsylvania.

*Jim Tubbs: This is a mighty vision - a challenging vision - one that calls us to open our doors, to stretch our boundaries and pay attention to the margins. And so we pray using the words that Paul wrote to the church at Ephesus (adapted from Eugene Peterson's *The message*):*

Bishop Bickerton: We ask God to strengthen you by God's Spirit

Chuck Fowler: —not a brute strength but a glorious inner strength—

Lisa Grant: that Christ will live in you as you open the door and invite him in.

Patricia Harbison: And we ask God that with both feet planted firmly on love,

William Meekins, Jr: you'll be able to take in with all Christians the extravagant dimensions of Christ's love.

Bob Higginbotham: Reach out and experience the breadth!

Eric Park: Test its length!

Patricia Morris: Plumb the depths!

George Porter: Rise to the heights!

Don Scandrol: Live full lives, full in the fullness of God.

Sharon Schwab: God can do anything, you know

Frank Sherman: —far more than you could ever imagine or guess or request in your wildest dreams!

Dean Zeigler: God does it not by pushing us around but by working within us,

Tom Strandburg: -- God's Spirit deeply and gently within us.

Jim Tubbs: Glory to God in the church!

Bishop, Pat, Pat, Tom, Don: Glory to God in the Messiah, in Jesus!

Chuck, Bob, George, Sharon, Dean: Glory down all the generations!

Lisa, William, Eric, Frank, Jim: Glory through all millennia!

ALL Oh, yes! Amen!

Jim Tubbs: The breadth, length, depth, height, fullness of God's love in Christ cannot be contained. It draws us beyond the margins.

We experienced the boundaries of our life together shattered when we realized our colleague and Washington District Superintendent, La Mar Carlson, after suffering a severe stroke would not be able to return to his appointment. Still we rejoice together that God works through the broken margins and we thank God

That La Mar continues on a slow road of improving health,

That Eric Park has been faithfully serving as the Washington District superintendent since January, 2009

And for the faithful service of William Meekins who cared for the Washington district in the intervening months

Don Scandrol: Take in with all Christians the extravagant dimensions of Christ's love.

Bob Higginbotham: Reach out and experience the breadth!

Jim Tubbs: We experienced the margins of our life together stretched as we participated in continuing education and formation throughout the year.

Patricia Morris: Dr. Len Sweet, the featured speaker at "Our Excellence in Laity" retreat in October, called us to get out of the huddle and to run some plays.

Dean Zeigler: We continued to live into our annual conference goal of dismantling racism by participating in training experiences facilitated by Rhymes Consulting Services and Crossroads Ministry of Chicago and sponsored by the Ethnic Local Church Concerns Committee (formerly the Racial/Ethnic Inclusion Team of Believe Again) designed to empower us to lead a conference-wide effort to dismantle racism in our own lives and the lives of those under the umbrella of our ministry.

William B. Meekins, Jr.: Gil Rendle, former Alban Institute consultant and pastor of two urban churches, came into our midst as an annual conference to be with our pastors for a retreat in the fall, and with the Cabinet and Conference Leaders twice this spring to remind us that God is ready and willing to provide, "...a glorious inner strength— that Christ will live in you as you open the door and invite him in--" in times of turbulence and crisis.

Patricia Harbison: Some of us attended specialized training in Appointment Making with the Texas annual conference, also led by Gil Rendle.

Lisa Grant: The conference on “Living the United Methodist Way” gave us strategies for leading our congregations into the Four Areas of Focus of The United Methodist Church: New Communities of Faith, Leadership Development, Eradicating Poverty and Global Health.

Sharon Schwab: Under the tutelage of Roy Trueblood, we worked with our district teams, as well as the cabinet team, in deepening our ability to serve together as Partners in Ministry.

Frank Sherman: Take in with all Christians the extravagant dimensions of Christ’s love.

Tom Strandburg: Test its length!

Jim Tubbs: Empowered by the Spirit’s guidance, the Cabinet has been able to move through a challenging and complicated appointment season. Reflecting difficult economic times, fewer pastors retired this year than expected and several returned from extension ministries. We continually rely not only on God’s wisdom, but God’s mercy and grace and we discern God’s will in pastoral moves.

Sharon Schwab: Take in with all Christians the extravagant dimensions of Christ’s love.

Don Scandrol: Plumb the depths!

Jim Tubbs: Welcoming Lisa Grant to the cabinet table as the Director of Connectional Ministry, we strove to lead our annual conference in Believing Again! that God is calling us and we are able to be Faithful, Effective and Fruitful in our ministry and mission.

Members of the cabinet not only serve on various conference committees and boards but extend our connection into the wider church:

Eric Park, Pat Morris, William Meekins, Bob Higginbotham and Pat Harbison were part of the 2008 General and Jurisdictional Conference delegation

- *Bishop Bickerton is the chairperson of the UM Global Health Initiative and serves as the international spokesperson for Nothing but Nets*
- *Chuck Fowler serves the NEJ Korean Mission Fellowship.*
- *Pat Harbison serves on the NEJ Leadership Table*
- *Bob Higginbotham serves on the United Methodist Publishing House Board*
- *William Meekins Jr. serves on the General Bd. of Global Ministries*
- *Pat Morris serves on the Gen. Council on Finance and Administration and the NEJ Episcopacy Comm.*
- *Eric Park serves on the Gen. Bd. of Discipleship*
- *Sharon Schwab serves on the Gen. Bd. of Higher Education and Ministry and NEJ UM Rural Fellowship and Town and Country Ministries*

Dean Zeigler: Take in with all Christians the extravagant dimensions of Christ’s love.

Tom Strandburg: Rise to the heights!

Jim Tubbs: Mission shares both support the infrastructure of our ministry and reach far beyond the walls of our local churches and annual conference center. Of every dollar received in our local churches – 8 cents goes toward the Western PA Conference, 3.3 cents to the Worldwide United Methodist and northeastern Jurisdiction and 88.7 cent stays in the local church. Churches in Western PA remain consistently faithful even in the most difficult of times.

Chuck Fowler: We continue to build on a foundation of love as we are connected to each other throughout our annual conference.

Patricia Morris: In 2009 our churches were given the opportunity to request a 5% reduction in their Mission Share. One church that decided to request the reduction, indicated they would pay the original mission share amount and then give the amount of their reduction to a church in their district who was struggling to pay its mission share.

One of our pastors added a note to his church's request for mission share reduction saying that while the church was requesting the reduction in mission share – he was adding his personal check for the reduction amount so his church would pay 100% of the original mission share.

Frank Sherman: God can do anything, you know

George Porter: —far more than you could ever imagine or guess or request in your wildest dreams!

Jim Tubbs: We are called to experience the breadth, length, depths and heights of the power of the love of Christ as we break through the boundaries that keep us inside the walls of our church.

And many of our congregations are doing just that:

Patricia Harbison: One our churches stretches its ministry far throughout the country - and even internationally - as Bible studies, worship services and Christian conversations reach out through the internet. Other congregations offer free community dinners - not a soup kitchen, but a shared meal - as they build relationships with people from their city neighborhood.

Sharon Schwab: Churches are engaging in coffee house ministries and campus ministry, and creatively finding ways for CLMs (Certified lay Ministers) to be in ministry. Some congregations are thriving by means of Mutual ministry: where laity are raised up to serve their own congregations which in turn frees dollars for more ministry.

Frank Sherman: One of our churches held an outdoor, five day, spiritual renewal event featuring preaching, drama, Christian rock band, Southern gospel group, etc. which drew 250-300 persons every evening. Another group of six churches together hired a youth director to reach out to the community at-large.

George Porter: A church and its sister churches in the cluster have created a Boaz Field which is one acre of ground planted with vegetables to be given to the food banks in the area. They are holding weed and feed nights on Fridays with Christian entertainment for those who come to care for the garden.

Eric Park: On the Washington District, the newly-formed District Board of Laity will conduct a comprehensive summer Vacation Bible School for children and families at the Washington City Mission. This creative new ministry will be an opportunity for several people on the district to build redemptive relationships with precious souls who find themselves living in our society's margins and who desperately need a fresh revelation of the tangible love of Jesus Christ.

Chuck Fowler: Many congregations across the conference are growing in their cooperative spirit - both those explicitly linked and those that work together in response to community needs.

William B. Meekins, Jr.: The vision of the WPA UMC is to ignite and sustain a passionate spiritual connection with Christ among all people in WPA. In order for that vision to become a reality - us living into God's reality - we are called to break through

whatever boundary that might hold us back and to move to the margins. We are called to move to the margins where people are hurting, and needy and hopeless. We are called to not only see the ones in the margins, but to stand with them, to share their pain, and to offer them hope. We move to the margins because we believe in the extravagant dimensions of God's love for us in Jesus Christ our Lord.

The report concluded with Eric Park singing "One in the Margins"
"The One in the Margins"

*Abandoned and jobless, and four months with child
Shunned by a mother who calls her "defiled"
Desperate and lonely, she prays for salvation
But a cold flow of shame is her only libation*

*There is another whose story I hear
She hides from her husband whose temper she fears
She never knows when the next blow will come
But refuses to leave because he owns a gun*

*Chorus:
Help me to see the one in the margins
Help me to know her journey's design
Help me to be the one in the margins
Standing with her whose pain is now mine*

*Homeless and cold in the heart of the city
A man sits alone, and he's hoping for pity
His begging's a blemish, at least that's what they say
One dollar more, and he'll call it a day*

*There is another whose story I hear
Who just lost his job after twenty three years
"Thanks for your work, but we need some revising"
Such is the whimsy of corporate downsizing*

*Chorus:
Help me to see the one in the margins
Help me to know his journey's design
Help me to be the one in the margins
Standing with him whose pain is now mine*

*I worship with passion
I pray with desire
I come to the altar
With heart set afire*

But there's a temple outside

*That I often ignore
It's a temple with margins
With a wide open door*

*A child in Zimbabwe will die before long
He's crying for food as I sing you this song
I am not he, having grown up in wealth
So why am I burdened by an African's health?*

*There is another who's sitting quite near
In the pew next to mine, her eyes filling with tears
I do not know her--should I keep it that way?
A quick "Hey, good morning!" and "Have a nice day."*

*Chorus:
Help me to see the one in the margins
Help me to know his journey's design
Help me to be the one in the margins
Standing with her whose pain is now mine*

*Final Chorus:
Help me to see the Christ in the margins
Help me to know his journey's design
Help me to be with Christ in the margins
Standing with him whose love is now mine*

BELIEVE AGAIN – Members of the *Believe Again!* Implementation Team presented the report summarizing the accomplishments of the *Believe Again!* initiative since 2005. Bishop Bickerton thanked the members of the team and presented them with tokens of appreciation in recognition of their work. Special thanks was offered to Tracy Merrick for his undying service and leadership to the annual conference in implementing the *Believe Again!* program.

RETHINK CHURCH – Gregg Cox, representing United Methodist Communications presented *Rethink Church*, challenging us to consider not what the church is but what the church can be. In part, *Rethink Church* seeks to change the word “Open” in “Our hearts, our minds, our doors, are always open” from an adjective to a verb moving the church from a static to an active organization, challenging the church to think about where it is, not where it has been, and to build social networks through one on one relationships.

UNITED METHODIST WITNESS IN PENNSYLVANIA – Steve Druchler, representing United Methodist Witness in Pennsylvania urged members of the conference to act against the further spread video poker and other forms of gambling in Pennsylvania. To register opposition people can contact their legislators by email and the governor by phone at 717-787-2500.

SAVING LIVES IN SIERRA LEONE – Kevin Armshaw, representing the Global Health Initiative, highlighted the five ways churches can participate in Saving Lives for Sierra Leone: Consider your congregations participation; Determine your potential human impact goal; Raise funds to blanket Sierra Leone in bed nets; Send cash and pledges to UMC; and Continue efforts to eliminate malaria in Africa.

HEALTH & WHOLENESS – Joy Conti, representing Health and Wholeness emphasized the need to refurbish the temple of the Holy Spirit and gave details as to how to win the Golden Sneaker award which will be presented on Saturday evening to the district with the most points for health promoting activities at this annual conference. The charge of Health & Wholeness is to improve the wholistic health of clergy and their families, staff, laity, and their neighbors.

RECESS – After a relaxation meditation led by Julia Morgan, Erin Modliszewski, and Bethany Outrakis, the conference was in recess at 12:16 PM.

AFTERNOON SESSION

ORDER – 1:37 PM

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – On motion of Richard Shields the minutes of the Thursday sessions of the annual conference were approved.

PRIVILEGE – Bishop Bickerton introduced his father Jim Bickerton. Jim described how he took wood from a scrap pile and made a staff for the bishop that is of great “value” and symbolizes important events in his life. Jim encouraged the conference to be looking for those people in the world who are on the “scrap pile” and of great value to God and all.

CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS – At the request of Bishop Bickerton the conference voted to extend the time for discussion and voting on the constitutional amendments from thirty minutes to eighty-five minutes. After members of the General Conference delegation presented the constitutional amendments to the conference the ballot was cast. Bishop Bickerton declared the ballot closed at 3:31 PM.

Motion: by Scott McCormick to limit debate to two speeches for and two speeches against on each of the constitutional amendments. Approved.

Motion: by John Seth to allow a minimum of thirty minutes of debate on Group 3 and a minimum of five speeches for and five speeches against. Not approved.

2009 Western Pennsylvania Conference

Amendment Numbers in Pre-Conference Journal and Delegation document	Pre-Conference Journal Page	Amendment Numbers on Ballot	
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2009 Ballot results for the Western Pennsylvania Conference.

Number of ballots cast = 1064 Number of valid ballots = 1062

one invalid ballot was blank/one used pink felt tip pen

			Yes	No
I	342	24	385	668
II	342	26	229	817
III	343	5	358	698
IV	344	1	345	711
V	344	6	357	703
VI	345	27	535	514
VII	347	7	358	701
VIII	347	28	913	148
IX	348	29	915	142
X	349	2	363	690
XI	350	8	378	679
XII	350	9	373	685
XIII	351	10	355	703
XIV	352	11	357	699
XV	354	30	718	338
XVI	355	12	357	699
XVII	356	31	717	339
XVIII	357	13	356	701
XIX	358	25	905	155
XX	359	14	356	701
XXI	360	15	375	678
XXII	361	32	955	104
XXIII	362	3	346	713
XXIV	362	16	357	701
XXV	363	17	376	678
XXVI	364	4	351	707
XXVII	365	18	358	697
XXVIII	366	19	378	679
XXIX	367	20	358	697
XXX	368	21	359	694
XXXI	368	22	378	674
XXXII	369	23	370	683

Editor's Note: The only amendments that received the minimum (67%) necessary for approval by WPA Conference: add Bermuda (90%); add jurisdictional minimum (87%); add gender (86%); add associate members, provisional members and local pastors to General Conference (85%); add laity of committee on investigation (68%); and allow General Conference to define clergy (68%). Of course, all the totals will be combined with all the other annual conferences to determine if a constitutional amendment was approved by the necessary majority.

RECOGNITION OF RETIRING CLASS – After a short break the conference reconvened to recognize the 2009 Class of Retiring Clergy. Robert A. Wilson, Chairperson of Retired Relations for the Board of the Ordained Ministry, introduced the retirees. Each retiree was greeted by Bishop and Sally Bickerton and presented with a retirement pin while accompanying spouses were given a corsage or boutonniere. The retirees were given the opportunity to share words of celebration and thanksgiving for their ministries.

RECESS – The conference was in recess at the conclusion of the recognition of the retirees.

EVENING SESSION

MISSIONS NIGHT – The conference gathered at 7:00 PM for Missions Night, a time to celebrate our mission partnerships. Participating in the service were Bishop Bickerton, Kenneth Haines, Judy Richard, Joel Garrett, and the Praise Team from Ingomar United Methodist Church. The preacher was Morais G. Quissico, Executive Secretary for the Office of the General Board of Global Ministries.

RECESS – The conference was in recess at the conclusion of the Mission Night service. Many stayed to watch the championship game on the big screen in the plenary hall as the Pittsburgh Penguins won the 2009 Stanley Cup.

THIRD DAY

Saturday, June 13, 2009

MORNING SESSION

BIBLE STUDY – Lisa A. Grant led the morning Bible study continuing on the theme of Elijah. Lisa focused on listening as important to our spiritual journey pointing out that God listens to us, God initiates conversation, and our hearing is critical to establishing the relationship with God and others. God speaks to us through prayer, scripture, people, nature, story, history, our thoughts, contemplation and holy conferencing. Lisa concluded the study by referencing Douglas Steer's categories of listening taken from *Listening to Another*: 1. Vulnerability 2. Acceptance 3. Anticipation 4. Patience. Listen another into the presence of the eternal listener.

PRIVILEGE - Bishop Bickerton, with pride, introduced Nick and Ian, his and Sally's other two children.

PRAYER – Eric Park led in prayer for John Hickman, Zainaby Kamara, and Devin Brown.

PRAYER – Jonathon Bell stood before the conference representing all military chaplains while Jim Tubbs, prayed for chaplains and all engaged in military service.

ANNOUNCEMENTS – OFFERINGS – Floor Manager announced the totals for the Thursday and Friday offerings received: The Bishop's Offering - \$5,400; Global Health Initiative Offering: \$11,914.

BLACK COLLEGE FUND – Donna Burkhart introduced Jasimine Johnson, a student at Dillard University and member of Windsor Village United Methodist Church, who spoke about and urged support of the Black College Fund

RECOGNITION – NEW DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENTS – Bishop Bickerton thanked William Meekins for his covering of the needs of the Washington District during the last six months of 2008.

Bishop Bickerton introduced Eric and Tara Park. Eric is the new Washington District Superintendent.

The Bishop introduced George and Kathleen Porter. George will be appointed as the new Franklin District Superintendent.

PRESENTATION – PATRICIA MORRIS, CONFERENCE TREASURER – Patricia Morris, Conference Treasurer, presented Bishop Bickerton, on behalf of all church treasurers, a check for \$5,000 for the Global Health Initiative Fund.

CONSENT CALENDAR – Assistant Floor Manager, Luann Patterson introduced Kellie Wild who presented the corrected Corporate and Legislation Consent Calendars, calling attention to items removed for debate, and moved approval of the Consent Calendars. They were approved as amended.

MINUTES – APPROVAL – On motion of Richard Shields, the minutes of the Friday session of the conference were approved as corrected. On motion of Richard Shields the conference granted permission for the Conference Secretary to make corrections and approve the minutes for the Saturday and Sunday sessions of the conference.

LAITY REPORT – Harry Barbus, Conference Lay Leader, presented the Laity report. Harry thanked the leaders and teachers of the Lay Academy and recognized the success of the program and credited their hard work for the success. An upcoming one day Laity event will be held on Nov 14, 2009, featuring Gil Rendel, with the location to be determined. Harry posed the question to the conference, "What are you afraid of?"

What are you afraid of? I mean other than the obvious, a bank robber with a gun, an out of control truck approaching you as a pedestrian? What fears hide inside you?

Most of you are aware that I have been newly married now for 1½ years, actually 19 months, 11 days and ...but who is counting? It has been glorious and if we can get our schedules to match, I hope all of you can get to meet my wonderful wife. Not long after we were married, early one morning I heard this bloodcurdling scream from the bathroom, I fly over to ask what was the matter, to find a book wielding wife "scared to death" of a little spider. Now I am not making fun, her fear was and is still real, but I am learning to deal with it. I have two fears, one is standing in front of people talking, the other is needles. Obviously God has helped me overcome the first, the second, He and I are still working on.

I had a total hip replacement operation six weeks ago, and during the pre-op instruction I was given a booklet and a DVD on Lovenox which is an injection for the prevention of blood clots. After going over the material I asked, "So a nurse is going to come to my house and give me these injections?" The physician's assistant said, "Did you not read the material?" I said, "Yes, but they must have made a mistake, it says I will have to do this myself" "No," she said, "The information is correct." I said, "No, you do not understand, I can have someone else give me a shot if I prepare myself and close my eyes, I cannot give myself an injection. She said, "Sure you can." I said, "You mean with all today's technology, advances in medicine and all that, no one has invented a pill I can take that will do the same thing?" Well most of you know the answer, "No!" So, I said, "Ok." I was still four weeks away from the operation and maybe a scientist would have a break though before that! So I dismissed it. The operation went successfully thanks to a lot of prayers. Two days after the surgery, as I was preparing to go home, the nurse came in with this big box and said this was mine to take home, the dreaded Lovenox. So much for research. So my wonderful Father-in-law said, "Don't worry Harry, I can come over and help you if you want." He had learned to do it after having knee surgery. Well, I could not have my Father-in-law think I was afraid of something so I told him I could do it. I prayed so hard that day and night and the next day, and with God's guidance, I was able to give myself the injections. After every one I told Marsha how many more I had left to do and was totally happy when they were completed. So, what are you afraid of? In Luke 12:4-12 it says: God gave the Holy Spirit so we would not be afraid, and when we are afraid, the Holy Spirit is there to comfort, guide, and protect us. The Holy Spirit will give us the words or thoughts we need to get through whatever situation we face.

What if we have to go through some trials along the way, does not Peter advise us of what to expect. One of my favorite passages is 1 Peter 4:12-17: So, what is stopping you, what are you afraid of? Are we all so comfortable inside the four walls of our little churches that we think we do not need to get outside the walls? Are you afraid someone will reject what you tell them about God? It is not for us to judge what they do, only to go out and give them the good news! We are to pray to soften the hearts of those who do not know God.

We need to ignite a passion in ourselves and our churches, to reach out to the communities, the people in the church already know the good news, we need to make disciples of those outside the four walls.

What are you afraid of? Someone will say no thanks? Move on to the next one, plant the seed of knowledge, someone else will harvest the fruit, or it will burn up, like the chaff in the field!

People, our churches are not growing and it is our fault. That's right, we the people in the churches are not doing what we are called to do. We are chosen by God we did not choose Him, He chose us, to be His disciples and go into the world to make disciples of all people. God didn't say we should only go to people like us who we are comfortable around. God did not say just the people that have money, God said all people, the downtrodden, the jobless, those struggling, the homeless. We should not be afraid to go places that we may not normally go because the Holy Spirit will give us the power and words to address those we are approaching.

Those of us who have started to reach out need to continue to stretch out our hand to the lost, to listen to people's concerns, to help those who stumble. Those of us who have started to reach out need to help other churches around us do the same, teach them what to know, share what works in a community; if that means hanging literature on homes and knocking on doors to tell about a Bible school program or a Sunday School program, then do it. McDonalds, Sheetz, Subway; these businesses did not grow by doing the same thing that doesn't work. They are constantly seeing what works and sharing with other franchises. The United Methodist Church works on the same principle, if we do not share what works we will go out of business, period!

Change. Yes that dreaded word, but we will have to do it or we will not survive. Please, do not let these be just empty words, I know you have all heard them before, but we have to change or our church will not be here when our youth start to have families. Take these words back with you to your churches, do something with them, find a program that works, and do it! Ignite the spirit within and keep burning for Christ with every waking day. Amen

PRESENTATION BY ORDERS – Kathy Mikesell, speaking on behalf of the Fellowship of Local Pastors, the Order of Deacons, and the Order of Elders, introduced a video addressing the question, “*Is God calling me into ordained ministry?*”

LEADERSHIP AND NOMINATIONS REPORT – J-LaVon Kincaid, Chair of the Leadership and Recruitment Team presented the report and moved its approval. It was approved.

RS 515 HEALTH INSURANCE PROGRAM – Gary L. Grau, representing Section Three moved to table RS515 by action of the section 39-32-0. After prayer the conference approved the motion to table.

REPORT OF SECTION THREE – Rita Platt Anderson, representing Section Three reported on the legislative actions of the section which were approved on the Consent Calendar.

RS 202 RULES ARTICLE 2 ELECTION OF GENERAL AND JURISDICTIONAL DELEGATES – Steve Cordle, representing Section Two, moved

concurrence as amended by the section 77-0-0. RS 202 was approved as amended by the section, Faith Geer, Lisa A. Grant, and Roseann Smith.

Motions:

Faith Geer: Page 191, lines 12 and 51 following the words “alphabetical order” insert “and a photo of the nominee.” Approved.

Faith Geer: Page 191, lines 17 and 55, before “permitted” add “not”.

Lisa A. Grant moved to substitute by deleting lines 17 and 55. Approved.

Roseann Smith: Page 191, lines 12-13 add, “This information shall be distributed to all Annual Conference (lay) members after the nominee approves the completed and edited entry to be published with the Pre-Conference booklet.” And, on lines 50-51 add, “This information shall be distributed to all Annual Conference (clergy) members after the nominee approves the completed and edited entry to be published with the Pre-Conference booklet.” Approved.

YOUTH - Youth Ministry Team is youth leading youth mentored by adults. President, Steve Deyarmin, addressed the conference regarding the activities and goals of YMT to see and follow Jesus.

Rebecca Lanz presented the Pineapple Award to Emma Smith who received the award with graciousness, and told the conference that our youth are not our future, they are our present.

Andy Heasley spoke about how I Corinthians 9:35 has been a theme verse this week for the youth caucus.

Molly Winters spoke on Mission of Peace and announced that Molly Patterson will be traveling for mission to Nicaragua in December, 2009.

Renye Hoffman presented the Volunteer Youth Worker Award to Kathy Dinger, who she describes as “dedicated to her students and joy encompasses her world.” The Professional Youth Worker Award was presented to Amanda Gilligan by her pastor, Eric Deter.

Bishop Bickerton was given 3,134 hours of prayer pledged to Africa. Evan Snyder presented a Buzzkill T-shirt to Bishop Bickerton which was signed by all the youth. Shane Fasnaught reminded the conference of the importance of “Tray Day” and the youth as a group performed a song they prepared “Every Tray I Take”

AFTERNOON SESSION

PRAYER – Chuck Fowler led in prayer for the family of Jim Bray due to the recent death of his wife Lola, and for Linda Harrison.

RS 401 FUNDING FOR MINISTRY FOR 2010- Annette Bolds, representing Section Four moved concurrence as amended by the section 74-2-1. It was approved.

Motions:

Duane L. Morford: “That the 2010 budget be no greater than 90% of the 2009 budget.” (This would be approximately a 10% cut in the proposed 2010 budget.) Not approved.

BOARD OF PENSIONS REPORT – Frank Kelly and Terry Lyon representing the Conference Board of Pensions presented the report detailing 2008 information about the pension plan and future possibilities for the health insurance program.

FRANCIS ASBURY AWARD – Bishop Bickerton presented the Francis Asbury Award to Eric Deter on behalf of the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry, for his work in fostering higher education and ministry.

REPORT OF SECTION SIX – Lila Bachalier, representing Section Six, reported on the legislative actions of the section.

REPORT OF SECTION EIGHT – Rex Wasser, representing Section Eight, reported on the legislative actions of the section with special attention called to RS 803 and the forming of a Partner to Partner Relationship with Zimbabwe.

RS 702 UNITED METHODIST STUDY OF HOMOSEXUALITY – Jeff Sterling, representing Section Seven, moved non-concurrence by action of the section 39-45-3. On a sustained call for the previous question by Patricia Morris and after prayer the conference supported the motion of non-concurrence.

P 74 ON EVOLUTION AND INTELLIGENT DESIGN – Jeff Sterling moved concurrence by action of the section 67-20-3. After prayer the motion of concurrence was not approved.

REPORT OF SECTION NINE – Sue Hutchins, representing Section Nine, reported on the legislative actions of the section.

RS 1002 CLERGY HOUSING STUDY – Mark Stewart, representing Section Ten, moved concurrence as amended by the section 66-6-2. After prayer it was approved as amended by the section, Roger Saunders, and Paul Richey

Motions:

Seth McPherson: Page 334, delete lines 27 and 30. Not approved.

Roger Saunders: Page 337, line 24, delete item 1.

Page 337, line 25, add “The pastor will have two days per week for self, family and sabbath.” And then renumber the items. Approved

Paul Richey: Page 332, line 27, after TV add “or satellite service.” Approved.

REPORT OF SECTION ELEVEN – Beverly Roscoe, representing Section Eleven reported on the legislative actions of the section.

RS 103 WELCOME THE SOJOURNER – Cyndi Bloise, representing Section One, moved concurrence as amended by the section 48-28-1. After prayer it was approved.

RS 104 HUMANE IMMIGRATION REFORM – Harold Yannayon, representing Section One, moved concurrence by action of the section 53-24-5. After prayer it was approved.

PRIVILEGE – Bishop Bickerton and Joan Reasinger thanked Greg Spencer and Guinevere Gregory for their work in training and leading new Legislative Section Leaders this year.

MOTION TO CONTINUE CLERGY HOUSING OPTIONS STUDY – The conference approved a motion by Ronald Hoellein for Bishop Bickerton to appoint a team to continue to study clergy housing options mentioned in the first whereas of RS 1002.

NEW WEBSITE – Mark Rehn, Conference Director of Communication, made a presentation offering information concerning the new conference website.

MISSIONARY RECOGNITION – Bishop Bickerton recognized Bruce Griffith and Tina Whitehead, missionaries from our conference who have been present throughout the sessions.

WALKING FOR NETS – Bishop Bickerton announced funds raised through the Walking for Nets during conference will be used to purchase nets to be distributed in Sierra Leone.

CONFERENCE SESSIONS – Mark Goswick in closing remarks recognized and thanked the Conference Session Ministry Team for their efforts and support to ready the facilities for this Annual Conference. DVD's of this year's worship services will be available by use of order forms provided at the conference.

RECESS – After reminding members of the conference that conference is not over until after worship on Sunday the conference was in recess at 4:06 PM.

EVENING SESSION

MINISTRY NIGHT – At 7:00 PM the conference entered into a celebration of Ministry Night –The District Lay Leaders and the laity from each district were recognized and affirmed. Receiving Certificates for Specialized Ministries were: Ellen L. Bullock and Gregory Stierheim. Recognized as Certified Lay Ministers were: Patti Boring, Calvin Cook, Carol Friend, Dean Lyons, Janice McLay, Janet Sill, Terry Williams, Harold Brunner, Duane Graham, Cub Jones, Paul Morelli, Sherry Mosely, Pat Winterhawk, Doug Wolfe, Sharon Waltenbaugh, Faith Bryan, Nelson Boone, Ben Williamson, Louise Patterson, Patty Burns. The 2009 Class of Retirees was formally recognized. After being examined through the “Historical Questions” the 2009 Class of Probationary/Provisional Members and Full Members were received into membership in the annual conference. In the Passing of the Mantle ceremony James Hamilton represented the Retirees and Steve Tiffany represented the Elders. Bishop Bickerton led

in worship and Bishop William Willimon was the preacher. Assisting in the service were: Judy Winston, Erica Oshlick, Sung Chung, Patricia Morris, the District Superintendents, Harry Barbus, Penny Lyon, Patricia Nelson, the Ingomar Praise Team, the Conference Choir, the Conference Child Care Choir.

FOURTH DAY

Sunday, June 14, 2009

CELEBRATING GOD'S GRACE AND PRESENCE IN A SERVICE OF WORD AND TABLE AS THE BODY OF CHRIST, THE CHURCH, RECEIVES, COMMISSIONS, ORDAINS AND APPOINTS TO CHRISTIAN MINISTRY - The conference gathered at 9:00 AM to celebrate God's grace and presence in a Service of Word & Table as the Body of Christ, the Church, Receives, Commissions, & Ordains to Christian Ministry. Bishop Bickerton was celebrant and Bishop William Willamon was the preacher.

Received into Associate Membership: Roger P. Howard.

Received into Probationary Membership and Commissioned as Minister: Elizabeth Agnew Cochran, Donna B. Gabler, Debra L. Hills, Wade R. Berkey, Brett M. Dinger, Scott L. Gallagher, Linda G. Harrison (was not present due to illness and will be commissioned at a later date), Matthew G. Johnson, Justin R. Judy, Brian R. Keller, Tina G. Keller, Laurajane C. LaVerde, D. Ronald Libengood, Christopher A. Morgan, Thomas J. Parkinson, Rebecca W. Patterson, Corben M. Russell, Kelley M. Schanely, Jason E. Schweinberg, Joseph B. Short, , Kellie D. Wild.

Received as a Full Member: Duk Hee Han.

Received as Full Members and Ordained as Elders: Cynthia G. Bloise, Kimberly B. Greway, Sharon M. Hamley, William E. Hastings, Austin P. Hornyak, Steven M. Lamb, Linda D. Landers, Lois F. Swestyn, Paul D. Taylor, Stephen A. Tiffany, Amy R. Wagner.

After the Sacrament of Holy Communion the District Superintendents read the names of those receiving new appointments and Bishop Bickerton fixed all the appointments for the coming conference year. Worship concluded with a Covenant Service in the Wesleyan Tradition.

ADJOURNMENT - The conference was adjourned at the conclusion of the service.

CERTIFICATION OF MINUTES

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Thomas J. Bickerton". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small cross at the beginning.

Bishop Thomas J. Bickerton
President

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "John R. Wilson". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Rev. John R. Wilson
Secretary

CERTIFICATE OF COMISSIONING

This is to certify that on Sunday, June 14, 2009 at Grove City College, Grove City, Pennsylvania, I Received as Probationary Members and Commissioned as Ministers:

Elizabeth Agnew Cochran, Donna B. Gabler, Debra L. Hills, Wade R. Berkey, Brett M. Dinger, Scott L. Gallagher, Matthew G. Johnson, Justin R. Judy, Brian R. Keller, Tina G. Keller, Laurajane C. LaVerde, D. Ronald Libengood, Christopher A. Morgan, Thomas J. Parkinson, Rebecca W. Patterson, Corben M. Russell, Kelley M. Schanely, Jason E. Schweinberg, Joseph B. Short, , Kellie D. Wild

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Thomas J. Bickerton". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small cross at the beginning.

Bishop Thomas J. Bickerton
Resident Bishop

CERTIFICATE OF MEMBERSHIP

This is to certify that on Sunday, June 14, 2009 at Grove City College, Grove City, Pennsylvania, I received into membership:

Receiving Associate Membership

Roger P. Howard

Receiving Full Membership and recognized Orders were:

Duk Hee Han

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Thomas J. Bickerton". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small cross at the beginning of the first name.

Bishop Thomas J. Bickerton
Resident Bishop

CERTIFICATE OF ORDINATION

This is to certify that on Sunday, June 14, 2009 at Grove City College, Grove City, Pennsylvania, I ordained as ELDERS:

Receiving Full Membership and Elder's Orders were:

Cynthia G. Bloise, Kimberly B. Greway, Sharon M. Hamley, William E. Hastings, Austin P. Hornyak, Steven M. Lamb, Linda D. Landers, Lois F. Swestyn, Paul D. Taylor, Stephen A. Tiffany, Amy R. Wagner

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Thomas J. Bickerton". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small cross symbol at the beginning.

Bishop Thomas J. Bickerton
Resident Bishop

MEMBERS CLASS OF 2009



Cynthia Bloise



Kimberly Greway



Sharon Hamley



William Hastings



Austin Hornyak



Steven Lamb



Linda Landers



Lois Swestyn



Paul Taylor



Stephen Tiffany



Amy Wagner



Duk Hee Han

Receiving
Full
Membership



Roger Howard

Receiving
Associate
Membership

COMMISSIONED AND PROBATIONARY MEMBERS



Probationary Members & Commissioned Ministers: (Left to Right)
back row – Corben M. Russell, Brett M. Dinger, Brian R. Keller, Christopher A. Morgan, Matthew G. Johnson, Justin R. Judy
middle row – Kellie D. Wild, Thomas J. Parkinson, Kelley M. Schanely, Tina Grossman Keller, Wade R. Berkey, Laurajane C. LaVerde, Jason E. Schweinberg;
front row- Donna Byrd Gabler, Scott L. Gallagher, Rebecca W. Patterson, D. Ronald Libengood, Joseph B. Short, Deborah L. Hills, Elizabeth Agnew Cochran;

Graduates of the Course of Study



2009 class of local pastors completing a Course of Study are:
Dan Myers, Richard N. Carlson, Ruth Moore, Larry Dunn

Retiring Class 2009



The 2009 retiring clergy class was honored by the annual conference on June 12. Among those in attendance were, from left: Martha Mattner, Phyllis Gramling, Terry Hurlbutt, F. Lee Thompson, James Rank, James Hamilton, Frank Garlathy, Robert Dornan, Patricia Comini-Miller, J.D. Hilliard and Roger C. Saunders

Permission and praise for photos should be sent to unlink@wpaumc.org or 1-800-886-3382 x 227

Incoming District Superintendents

Photos by Olin Mills



Eric S. Park, Washington District



George E. Porter Franklin District