

Conference Workbook



**22nd Session
of the Dakotas Conference
of The United Methodist Church
Fargo, North Dakota
June 4-6, 2015**

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SECTION 1--LEGISLATION

Organizational Resolutions for Dakotas Annual Conference 22nd Session

1. The printed agenda becomes the official agenda, with adjustments as necessary. All requests for additional items to be placed on the agenda shall be given to the agenda coordinator.
2. There will be seating assigned on the conference floor for clergy and lay members of Annual Conference.
3. The boundaries of the Annual Conference shall be the round tables marked for clergy and lay members. Voting members only are to be seated in this area. During Plenary Sessions all non-voting persons, including spouses of clergy and lay members, are to be seated in the area designated for visitors.
4. The District Superintendents shall receive and relay to the presiding officer all requests of members to be excused from the Annual Conference Session. Those names will be printed in the journal.
5. Requests for personal points of privilege shall be submitted to agenda coordinator.
6. The following persons shall be given the privilege of voice and vote on the Conference floor:
 - Clergy persons related to other annual conferences or denominations but who serve United Methodist Churches or who are affiliate members of the Dakotas Conference. Such clergy shall be granted the same rights and privileges as Associate Members of the annual conference.
 - United Methodist Churches or who are affiliate members of the Dakotas Conference.
 - Associate Members of the annual conference.
7. Persons in the following categories shall have privilege of the floor without vote:
 - Retired clergypersons who have served churches of the Dakotas Conference but who are members of other annual conferences.
8. Announcements shall be written legibly and submitted to registration desk.
9. Conference agencies are responsible to distribute printed reports prior to the plenary session in which they are used. Advance permission must be secured from the Agenda Coordinator before any other printed materials may be distributed. Every agency is responsible for their items.
10. The consent calendar shall be those items listed on the consent calendar Section 2 of the Conference Workbook. Written request to lift an item from the consent calendar must be submitted to the Conference Secretary by noon on Friday.
11. Lay and clergy members shall confirm directory information for journal records. Any changes in directory information for laity, clergy or church should be reviewed at the registration desk by the end of Annual Conference.
12. We recommend using the strikethrough feature for removing information from conference policies and underline new items that are being placed in conference policies. This should be done for items being considered by the Annual Conference.
13. During debate to be recognized to speak you must select the card that represents your position on the item being considered.
 - Green card is an affirmative position
 - Red card is a negative position.
 - White card is a question.
 - When recognized state your name, church, and clergy or laity.

2016 PROPOSED BUDGET

	<u>2015 Budget</u>	<u>2016 Request</u>	<u>Change</u>
Developing Missional Leaders	748,484	745,543	-2,941
Equipping Missional Congregations	370,399	413,610	+43,211
Extending Missional Impact	1,224,000	1,173,019	-50,981
Generating Missional Resources	95,233	91,500	-3,733
Support Services	1,149,884	1,206,810	+56,926
Cabinet	670,000	734,518	+64,518
<i>Subtotal</i>	<u>4,258,000</u>	<u>4,365,000</u>	<u>+107,000</u>
Pension & Insurance	103,731	92,000	-11,731
Direct Bills to Churches	2,573,702	2,569,664	-4,038
<i>Subtotal</i>	<u>2,677,433</u>	<u>2,661,664</u>	<u>-15,769</u>
Total	<u>6,935,433</u>	<u>7,026,664</u>	<u>+91,231</u>

Developing Missional Leaders - \$745,543

- One of our most important investments we make is in the next generation of leaders. **Camping & Youth Ministries** is one of the primary ways we have invested in the next generation. Close to \$1.5 million is annually invested into these ministries for Storm Mountain, Lake Poinsett, Wesley Acres, our youth events and mission trips, and the new Leadership Incubator. Of this amount, **\$397,411** is provided through apportionments.
- Providing churches with excellent **Clergy Leadership** is the responsibility of the Conference. Consider the affect a pastor has on the vitality of a church. When you have an excellent pastor, it's easy to truly believe your church's best days are still to come. We will invest at least \$100,000 in seminary scholarships and grants for Coarse of Study each year. The Board of Ordained Ministry will increase their investment in recruiting clergy and providing internship and training opportunities. Of the \$250,000 invested in clergy leadership, **\$160,632** is provided through apportionments.
- Another way we invest in the next generation of leaders is through **College & Higher-Education Ministry**. Approximately \$160,000 will be invested this way in 2016. About half of the amount will go to Dakota Wesleyan University. The other half is given as grants to help churches engage in college ministry. Giving grants to churches instead of ecumenical groups was a big change that has seen some positive results. **\$141,500** of this amount is provided through apportionments.
- The vast majority of our leaders are our **Lay Leadership** serving in various roles throughout the church. While much of the development of lay leadership happens in the church, the Conference provides training opportunities for laity. The Certified Lay Ministry program is seeing positive results. **\$27,850** is provided through apportionments.
- The remaining **\$18,150** of this budget includes Safe & Sacred Places and the work of the Link and Nominations Committee.

2016 PROPOSED BUDGET

Equipping Missional Congregations - \$413,610

- For 2016, we plan to invest over \$500,000 in establishing **New Congregations**. As populations have shifted, there are many people and communities in our territory that are “ripe for harvest,” but they don’t have enough vital churches able to make disciples of Jesus Christ. New Congregations in Fargo, Mitchell, Watford City, Sioux Falls, Watertown are being established. Almost \$300,000 of this amount will be invested directly in these new congregations. About \$200,000 will be invested into the Thrive Campaign which will provide a way for individuals, churches, and other organizations to financially support this great work. We are also investing in training clergy who will be establishing these new congregations. **\$210,360** will be provided through apportionments.
- **Equipping Existing Congregations** remains a high priority. The Missional Church Consultation Initiative is in its second year and seems to be successful. While this focuses on larger churches, Journey Renewal will be a similar program for smaller churches. Churches that are strongly convicted to become more and are accepted into these programs will go through a proven process to determine their next steps should be and excellent coaching in taking those next steps. Of the \$201,100 invested in our existing congregations, **\$176,100** will be provided through apportionments.
- The remaining **\$27,150** of this budget provides for the work of the Link and the Office of the Director of Ministries.

Extending Missional Impact - \$1,173,019

- While our work in the Dakotas is our greatest responsibility, we also are committed to the global work of the United Methodist denomination. **General Apportionments** provide for missionaries around the world, the work of our bishops, Africa University, and a host of other ministries. **\$873,352** is our commitment and will be provided for through apportionments.
- The Dakotas is known for the strength of our own mission work, especially in Native American communities and in Haiti. We invest close to \$750,000 annually into these works through the Conference. It costs about \$300,000 each to operate Haiti Solar Oven Project and Spirit Lake Ministry Center. We also provide grants to ministries with a strong connection to the Dakotas Conference such as Tree of Life and Pierre Southeast Community Center. **\$296,667** of this is provided through apportionments.
- The remaining **\$3,000** of this budget provides for the work of the Link.

Generating Missional Resources - \$91,500

- While **Equitable Compensation** is mandated in the Book of Discipline, the Dakotas uses this program better than most conferences. We provide short-term assistance to either help churches grow through new clergy leadership or buy time while we discern if a change needs to be made in how clergy leadership is provided. **\$50,000** is provided through apportionments.
- The remaining \$41,500 provides for the work of the Council on Finance & Administration, the Finance Office, and insurance.

2016 PROPOSED BUDGET

Support Services - \$1,206,810

- We hope to have **Conference Staff** that is called and equipped for this great work. We have budgeted for 2016 staffing for Camping & Youth (2 positions), Laity Equipping (1/4), Clergy Leadership Development (2), Ministries Office (2), Finance Office (3), and Communications (2). In the future, we would like to add a position for Congregational Development. **\$827,810** is apportioned for this.
- We have a large investment in properties that must be cared for by our **Trustees**. We plan on spending over \$200,000 on insurance (liability, auto, and property), leadership housing, and the Conference Center. **\$160,000** will be provided through apportionments.
- We have invested greatly in **Communications**. We are so spread out geographically, that this investment is considered necessary in order to efficiently and effectively equip churches/pastors/laity or allow leaders to more conveniently meet. A large part of this is our investment into DAVID which has now expanded into Minnesota. **\$80,000** will be provided through apportionments.
- Holding the **Annual Conference Session** isn't cheap but it has become an uplifting experience where important decisions are made and, more importantly, we become more united in our mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ. It has been estimated that it costs \$300,000 to pay for members to attend and to put everything together. **\$51,800** will be provided through apportionments.
- Caring for our **Historical Records** is cared for through sharing an archivist with Dakota Wesleyan University and renting space in the McGovern Library. In addition, an updated history of the Dakotas Conference is being written and will be published in the near future. **\$42,700** will be provided through apportionments.
- The remaining **\$44,500** provides for the work of the Common Table, Conference Secretary, Chancellors, Episcopacy Committee, and Human Resources Committee.

Cabinet - \$734,518

- **\$567,518** will be provided through apportionments for the compensation, travel, and office expenses for our four **District Superintendents**. The cost is going up a little as we will no longer have DS's that are also serving a church.
- **\$133,000** will be provided through apportionments for the **Moving Fund** and **Introductions**. This amount pays for almost all the cost of moving pastors to new appointments.
- **\$25,000** will be provided through apportionments for the **Contingency Fund**. This fund is used by the Cabinet to help churches and pastors in difficult circumstances.
- The remaining **\$9,000** provides for work of our Presiding Elders, Response Teams, and District Committees.

Pension & Insurance - \$92,000

While providing excellent pension and health benefits does not directly increase the leadership ability of our pastors or the vitality of our churches, providing poor benefits would make it more difficult to recruit and retain excellent clergy. We also are committed to those that have served us faithfully for a lifetime and are now retired.

2016 PROPOSED BUDGET

- We provide **Health Benefits** to approximately 120 active pastors and their families and over 200 retirees (pastors and spouses). This costs approximately \$2.5 million. **\$80,000** is provided through apportionments. \$1.4 million is paid through direct bills to the churches. \$468,156 is paid through salary withholdings from the pastors. The remaining \$578,732 is paid for through our Retiree Fund/Lynch Trust Fund.
- We make **Pension Contributions** for the approximately 140 full- and part-time pastors. The cost is \$1.27 million. **\$2,000** is provided through apportionments. \$1,165,196 is paid through direct bills to the churches. The remaining amount comes from other sources.
- The Benefits Office coordinates all this work. In addition, we provide medical and premium grants and put on benefit training events. This is expected to cost \$160,000 which will be paid from endowment earnings.
- **\$10,000** is provided by apportionments for the work of the **Board of Pension**.

2016 PROPOSED BUDGET

Detailed Budget

While the commentary will help most people understand the plan for matching financial resources to further the mission, the numbers also say a lot.

Description	2013 Actual	2014 Actual	2015 Budget	2016 Budget
DEVELOPING MISSIONAL LEADERS				
Missional Leaders Link	2,456	1,377	7,300	7,300
Safe & Sacred Places	4,689	2,001	6,000	8,850
Leadership Incubator	0	0	24,000	24,000
Resource Library	1,598	2,236	4,000	0
Clergy Leadership Development	19,622	22,705	15,913	15,913
Travel	14,683	20,070	8,500	8,500
Office Expenses	4,374	2,135	6,413	6,413
Association Dues	565	500	1,000	1,000
Equipping Lay Servant Ministry	11,476	9,449	29,100	24,850
Travel	181	998	2,000	6,500
Office Expenses	914	494	2,600	2,750
Association Dues	100	200	300	300
Equipping Expenses	10,281	7,757	24,200	15,300
Nominations Committee	679	2,030	1,700	2,000
Conference Lay Leader	450	576	3,100	3,000
Board of Ordained Ministry	53,030	63,703	94,800	105,500
Preparing New Clergy	25,828	26,027	33,000	41,000
Training Existing Clergy/Annual Conf	6,366	5,710	12,500	10,000
Recruiting/Grants for Internships	3,000	6,000	20,000	23,000
Board Expenses	17,835	25,966	29,300	31,500
Ministerial Education Fund	33,387	32,964	40,018	39,219
Seminary Scholarships	60,000	68,770		
Loan/Grants	22,680	18,977		
Debt Reduction Grants	11,000	12,000		
Renewal Leave Grants	11,362	-710		
Continuing Education Grants	4,639	2,600		
Training Expenses	15,094	12,182		
Gain/(Loss) on Operations	6,871	34,055		
Endowment Income	-30,566	-58,374		
Farm Income	-14,766	-14,498		
Investment Returns	-20,427	-7,457		
Donations	-32,500	-34,581		
College-Age Ministries & Higher Education	161,069	121,735	141,500	141,500
Transfer from Investments	-40,610	-9,093	-20,000	-20,000
Meeting Expenses	0	0	5,000	5,000
Grants for Campus Ministry	105,000	54,330	75,000	75,000
Events/Seminars	0	0	5,000	5,000
Campus Ministry Property	20,179	-2	0	0
Grant to DWU	76,500	76,500	76,500	76,500

2016 PROPOSED BUDGET

Description	2013 Actual	2014 Actual	2015 Budget	2016 Budget
Camping & Youth Office	22,725	22,363	34,053	31,500
Travel	16,610	15,882	19,965	17,500
Office Expenses	6,116	6,481	14,088	14,000
Camping & Retreat Ministries	144,900	130,410	138,000	128,000
Operations	1,053,228	1,046,544	1,083,468	
Gain/(Loss) on Operations	-64,246	-99,886	-47,867	
Summer Camp Registrations	-293,475	-290,239	-304,000	
Church/3rd-Party User Fees	-463,324	-444,439	-486,000	
Donations	-28,063	-23,154	-39,500	
Other Income	-59,220	-58,416	-68,101	
Camping Capital Improvements	138,667	132,318	139,000	140,000
Capital Improvements	188,942	185,293	207,000	115,000
Property Taxes	18,666	24,318	24,000	25,000
Adding to/(Drawing from) Reserves	94,768	100,720	0	
Donations	-152,895	-147,674	-75,000	
Endowment Income	-10,814	-16,925	-17,000	
Transfers from Investments	0	-13,414		
Council on Youth Ministries	49,328	82,787	70,000	73,911
Youth Events	20,054	66,090	40,300	46,711
Youth Leader Training	4,868	4,902	6,000	5,000
Committee/Volunteer Expenses	13,706	7,869	14,500	14,000
Office/Promotional Expenses	10,699	3,926	9,200	8,200
Retired Leadership Programs	6,319	5,017	0	0
DEVELOPING MISSIONAL LEADERS TOTAL	650,393	631,669	748,484	745,543
EQUIPPING MISSIONAL CONGREGATIONS				
Director Of Ministries Office	25,534	25,003	23,399	24,150
Travel	21,200	20,677	16,000	18,000
Office Expenses	4,334	4,326	7,399	6,150
Missional Congregations Link	10	778	3,000	3,000
New Churches	169,800	163,889	188,000	185,360
Donations	-75	-20,000	0	0
Transfer from Investments	-42,032	-299,278	0	-155,000
Sale of Capital Asset	0	0	-140,000	0
New Congregations	119,800	426,850	100,200	271,000
Supporting Existing Congregations	92,107	53,278	189,000	31,610
Training/Resources	0	2,764	13,800	12,750
Bakken Planting Zone Coordinator	0	275	25,000	25,000
Thrive Campaign	0	46,033	25,000	25,000
Donations	0	0	-185,000	-185,000
Consultant	0	45,249	60,000	60,000
Compensation & Benefits	0	0	90,000	90,000
Travel	0	0	10,000	10,000
Office/Campaign Expenses	0	784	50,000	50,000
Missional Church Consultation Initiative	0	32,601	97,000	91,000
Journey Renewal	0	0	0	36,000

2016 PROPOSED BUDGET

Description	2013 Actual	2014 Actual	2015 Budget	2016 Budget
Tools & Training for Congregations	68,571	17,613	34,000	49,100
Donations - Thrive	0	0	0	-25,000
Internships	0	0	5,000	50,000
Mission Insite/Readiness 360	8,976	5,145	8,000	8,000
Training Events/Resources	56,226	9,503	16,000	11,600
Bishop's Clergy/Spouse Gathering	3,369	2,966	5,000	4,500
EQUIPPING MISSIONAL CONGREGATIONS				
TOTAL	263,914	285,917	370,399	413,610
EXTENDING MISSIONAL IMPACT				
General Apportionments	732,510	764,867	880,524	873,352
Director of Missional Impact	0	20,000	20,000	0
Missional Impact Link	3,899	146	2,700	3,000
Connectional Missions	94,288	94,789	120,680	120,680
Grant to Tree of Life	60,000	60,000	60,000	60,000
Grant to Pierre Southeast Community Center	27,000	27,000	27,500	27,500
Grants to Mission Congregations	0	0	20,000	20,000
Local Church Mission Grant/Incentive	0	0	2,000	2,000
UMVIM Scholarships	4,600	-350	3,800	3,800
Mission Events	1,118	2,307	4,500	4,500
Other Expenses	1,570	5,832	2,880	2,880
Haiti Solar Oven Project	73,582	64,338	66,537	59,386
Compensation & Benefits	62,454	79,032	82,000	
Travel	7,910	7,134	8,000	
Project Expenses	238,765	230,811	231,037	
Gain/(Loss) on Operations	13,756	5,200	0	
Donations	-179,120	-191,670	-190,000	
Advance Special	-67,702	-43,754	-50,000	
VIM Teams	-2,340	-15,713	-10,000	
Endowments	-142	-6,703	-4,500	
Spirit Lake Ministry Center	132,373	129,215	133,559	116,601
Compensation & Benefits	100,630	101,349	105,359	
Travel	11,642	11,068	10,250	
Ministry Expenses	118,863	98,331	117,450	
Sidewalk Sunday School	22,917	17,376	25,000	
Children of the Harvest	19,346	31,119	30,000	
Capital Expenses	520	5,709	10,000	
Gain/(Loss) on Operations	-10,637	45,829	0	
Donations	-50,172	-81,720	-70,000	
VIM Teams	-80,595	-94,143	-90,000	
Endowments	-142	-5,703	-4,500	
IMPACT TOTAL	1,036,653	1,073,354	1,224,000	1,173,019

2016 PROPOSED BUDGET

Description	2013 Actual	2014 Actual	2015 Budget	2016 Budget
GENERATING MISSIONAL RESOURCES				
Finance Office	26,980	29,253	31,733	32,500
Travel	3,428	5,358	5,500	5,500
Office Expenses	7,504	9,066	9,233	10,000
Audit	16,048	14,829	17,000	17,000
Builders Club	1,612	1,227	2,000	0
Missional Resources Link	292	18	0	0
D&O; Worker's Comp	6,176	4,623	7,500	5,000
Equitable Compensation Grants	40,950	42,400	50,000	50,000
Foundation Support	12,500	0	0	0
Commission on Finance & Administration	2,303	318	4,000	4,000
Conference Reserves	33,526	0	0	0
GENERATING MISSIONAL RESOURCES TOTAL	124,340	77,840	95,233	91,500
DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENCY				
District Operations	540,212	533,663	529,415	567,518
Compensation & Benefits	381,068	379,995	385,705	410,718
Travel Expenses	93,902	95,620	95,000	100,000
Office Expenses	16,939	17,387	19,700	16,000
Office Rent	3,600	3,600	3,600	4,800
Resources	5,881	1,958	13,500	8,000
Common Exp/New DS	5,387	3,422	6,910	7,000
Equipment Purchase	2,456	1,681	5,000	5,000
Seminary Visitation	0	0	0	4,000
Administrative Assistance	30,978	30,000	0	12,000
Presiding Elders	2,126	2,462	6,000	4,000
Contingency Fund	23,990	30,200	20,000	25,000
Introductory Meetings	5,200	7,414	8,000	8,000
Moving Fund	118,727	160,592	100,585	125,000
District Superintendency Committee	834	404	1,000	1,000
District Church Building & Location	20	0	1,000	1,000
Response Teams	21	0	4,000	3,000
DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENCY TOTAL	691,130	734,734	670,000	734,518
SUPPORT SERVICES				
Common Table	6,754	22,511	20,000	20,000
Winds of the Spirit	25,000	0	0	0

2016 PROPOSED BUDGET

Description	2013 Actual	2014 Actual	2015 Budget	2016 Budget
Conference Center Operations	688,553	707,975	773,662	827,810
Camping/Youth Office Staff	140,543	142,790	144,947	142,975
Laity Equipping Staff	1,774	21,530	24,730	22,885
Clergy Leadership Development Staff	152,646	85,667	120,839	140,302
Congregational Development Staff	0	0	0	0
Ministries Office Staff	119,623	113,254	160,601	140,308
Finance Office Staff	199,383	208,977	208,767	206,000
Communications Staff	48,846	110,242	85,778	147,340
Shared Services	25,738	25,515	28,000	28,000
Annual Conference Session	28,472	53,073	38,500	51,800
Conference Secretary/Journal	5,160	4,409	9,000	9,000
Communications	35,198	29,819	26,222	35,000
Travel	14,163	10,141	10,500	12,000
Office Expenses	3,050	3,435	2,700	5,000
Communication Tools/Services	17,986	16,243	13,022	18,000
DAVID	31,877	63,321	31,000	45,000
Trustees	176,327	180,944	194,000	160,000
Leadership Housing	103,540	89,611	98,500	108,500
Property/Liability Insurance	52,947	45,711	57,000	45,000
Conference Center Operations	28,998	34,399	30,000	35,000
Major Repairs or Replacement	35,007	14,147	8,000	10,000
Administrative Expenses	2,418	2,152	3,500	3,500
Investment/Other Income	-46,583	-5,076	-3,000	-42,000
Chancellors	4,883	8,384	10,000	10,000
Human Resources	47	1,553	1,500	1,500
Episcopacy Committee	3,329	1,947	4,000	4,000
Archives & History	38,278	38,531	42,000	42,700
Visioning Link	0	0	0	0
SUPPORT SERVICES TOTAL	1,043,878	1,112,466	1,149,884	1,206,810
APPORTIONED TOTAL EXPENSES	3,810,308	3,915,981	4,258,000	4,365,000
APPORTIONMENTS RECEIVED	-3,820,153	-3,821,759	-4,258,000	-4,365,000
NET (INCOME)/LOSS	-9,845	94,222	0	0

2016 PROPOSED BUDGET

Description	2013 Actual	2014 Actual	2015 Budget	2016 Budget
HEALTH BENEFITS				
HealthFlex Premiums - Actives	1,855,710	1,857,304	1,880,688	1,872,624
Retiree HRA Contributions	415,283	439,889	539,098	578,732
Extend Health Admin Expenses	8,518	9,379	9,000	10,000
Medicare Part B	49,039	50,195	55,000	55,000
Disability Claims	20,843	0	0	0
Allowance for Uncollected (1%)			32,000	15,000
HealthFlex Expenses	2,349,393	2,356,767	2,515,786	2,531,356
Apportionments	-159,592	-74,409	-93,731	-80,000
Direct Bill Churches	-1,245,505	-1,373,654	-1,410,516	-1,404,468
Direct Bill Participants	-488,797	-455,106	-470,172	-468,156
Retiree Health Fund Transfer	-415,283	-439,889	-539,098	-578,732
Investment Earnings - Deposit Acct	-1,787	-604		
Wellness Rebate / Performance Dividend	0	-178,348	0	0
Medicare Part D Rebate	-19,239	-1,994	n/a	n/a
HealthFlex Offsets	-2,330,203	-2,524,005	-2,513,517	-2,531,356
Expenses Less Offsets	19,190	-167,238	2,269	0
PENSION BENEFITS				
Pension Program Premiums				
CPP	218,677	220,163	230,431	229,054
CRSP-DC	238,651	232,750	249,206	249,807
CRSP-DB	1,002,257	774,094	797,959	781,935
CRSP-DB Direct Bill Transition Grants	0	0	0	0
Allowance for Uncollected (1%)			25,000	12,000
Pension Expenses	1,459,585	1,227,007	1,302,596	1,272,796
Apportionments	-1,450,903	-16,105	0	-2,000
Direct Bill Churches	0	-1,136,805	-1,163,186	-1,165,196
Transfers from Pension Reserve		-52,288	-75,000	-50,000
Conference Budgets	-45,531	-39,948	-39,410	-45,600
Endowment / Investment Earnings	-2,753	-9,543	-9,000	-10,000
Pension Offsets	-1,499,187	-1,254,688	-1,286,596	-1,272,796
Expenses Less Offsets	-39,602	-27,681	16,000	0

2016 PROPOSED BUDGET

Description	2013 Actual	2014 Actual	2015 Budget	2016 Budget
BENEFITS OFFICE / GRANTS				
Benefit Grants	13,224	20,400	50,000	50,000
Program, Seminars, Stipends, Etc	3,479	5,339	10,000	10,000
Benefits Office	58,010	66,475	93,000	100,000
Administration Expenses	74,713	92,214	153,000	160,000
Transfer from Endowment	-74,713	-92,214	-153,000	-160,000
Expenses Less Offsets	0	0	0	0
RETIREE HEALTH FUNDING				
Retiree Health	36,220	55,085	56,420	56,179
Active Participant Contribution - 3%	-36,207	-55,085	-56,420	-56,179
Apportionments	-13	0	0	0
Expenses Less Offsets	0	0	0	0
BOARD OF PENSIONS				
Board Expenses	621	2,305	10,000	10,000
Apportionments	-5,819	-8,614	-10,000	-10,000
Expenses Less Offsets	-5,198	-6,309	0	0
<hr/>				
Total Pension & Insurance Expenses	3,920,532	3,733,379	4,037,802	4,030,331
Total Offsets	-3,946,142	-3,934,607	-4,019,533	-4,030,331
Balance	-25,610	-201,228	18,269	0
Appportionments	1,616,327	99,128	103,731	92,000
Direct Bill to Churches	1,245,505	1,373,654	2,573,702	2,569,664
Total to Churches	2,861,832	1,472,782	2,677,433	2,661,664
HealthFlex Participant's Share	525,004	510,192	526,592	524,335

SECTION 2--CONSENT CALENDAR

2.1 Vacation and Time Off Policy DRAFT

Adopted: 2015 (proposed)

Vacation

Vacation is a vital and important part of human health and renewal. The Charge will pay for the pulpit supply for vacation Sundays. In order to ensure the health of our Spirit-led missional leaders, the Dakotas conference mandates that each charge shall grant full time appointed clergy at least, but not limited to the following amount of paid vacation during each appointment year.

- Four (4) weeks, including four Sundays, for a total of 28 days. Parishes may choose to grant more than four weeks considering years of service in ministry, family needs, or other variables. All such agreements shall be agreed to in writing between the pastor and pastor/staff parish relations committee.
- Clergy with a less than a full time appointment shall be granted at least the number of vacation:
 - Quarter Time appointed clergy shall receive one (1) week including four Sundays for a total of 10 days.
 - Half Time appointed clergy shall receive two (2) weeks including four Sundays for a total of 16 days.
 - Three-quarter Time appointed clergy shall receive three (3) weeks including four Sundays for a total of 22 days.

Continuing Education

Continuing Education is a vital and important part of leadership development for Spirit-led missional leaders. Continuing Education time is not to be confused with vacation. Vacation is for rest and recharging. Continuing Education is for professional and spiritual development. Each Charge will grant its appointed clergy (full or part-time) two weeks, including one Sunday, for a total of 11 days for the purpose of continuing education and professional improvement during each appointment year. The Charge will pay for the pulpit supply for the continuing education Sunday.

Annual Conference

All clergy are expected to attend all sessions of the Annual Conference. The Sunday immediately after Annual Conference is a travel/rest day and is not vacation or continuing education time. The Charge will pay the travel, registration and per diem expense for its clergy and lay members attending Annual Conference. The Charge will pay for the pulpit supply for Conference Sunday.

Connectional Responsibilities

Clergy, as members of the Annual Conference will have connectional responsibilities (e.g. meetings of the Annual, Jurisdictional or General Conference Boards and agencies, Conference Camps, etc.). Time spent on these responsibilities will not be counted as vacation time or continuing education. Clergy will inform the Pastor/Staff Parish Relations Committee of time needed for these responsibilities.

Weekly Days Off

Clergy are expected to take holidays and at least one day off each week. Up to five days of "compensation time" may be accumulated to be taken at another time, not to include a Sunday. Clergy will inform the Pastor/Staff Parish Relations Committee when "compensation time" is taken.

Additional Time Away

Any additional time for personal reasons or for educational purposes will be negotiated with the Clergy, the Pastor/Staff Parish Relations Committee, in consultation with the District Superintendent. It is recommended a written agreement be developed and signed for purpose of clarity and understanding.

The vacation and time off policy applies to the Conference leadership clergy as well as the clergy serving local church charges.

2.2 Dakotas Cabinet Resolutions 2015

1. Whereas the following congregations have voted to recommend dissolution as a United Methodist congregation; Therefore, be it resolved that these congregations be recognized with thanks to God for their faithful service, and that they be officially discontinued under the provisions of The Book of Discipline, paragraph 2549 by the Dakotas Annual Conference:

Eastern Sunrise

Fargo Edgewood

Florence

Glacial Lakes

Scotland

Prairie Hills

None

Sakakawea

Dunseith

2. That July 1, 2014 is designated as the beginning of all new appointments for 2014-2015, unless prior arrangements have been made. The moving pastor's current charge shall pay the compensation, health, pension and other benefits through June 30, 2015.
3. That the moving schedule be flexible enough to consider the need of the pastors and families, and that the parish would have sufficient time to prepare the parsonage for the arrival of the incoming pastor. Moves shall be scheduled to occur between June 15 and July 15. If a move is scheduled to happen prior to the last Sunday in June, compensation shall still be paid by the current charge through the end of the month.
4. That both congregations and pastors be sensitive and respectful as to the transition of pastoral leadership in a charge. Negotiations between the Staff-Parish Relations chair, and the incoming and outgoing pastor as to first Sunday and care for priestly functions shall be done on a case-by-case basis. July 1 shall be the start date for all incoming pastors unless other arrangements have been made.

That consideration be given by the congregation to the incoming pastor to have his/her first Sunday serve as a welcoming Sunday, and that formal preaching and worship leadership responsibilities begin the following Sunday.

2.3 Equitable Compensation Policy

The purpose of Equitable Compensation is to work with the District Superintendents in the effort to support congregations as they strive to become viable (Rule 1.4). This is done by A)providing salary support grants to Churches/Charges served by a full-time United Methodist pastor and B)making an annual recommendation of the minimum compensation needed by a pastor to allow them to focus their efforts on the ministry instead of seeking secondary employment.

ANNUAL RECOMMENDATION OF MINIMUM COMPENSATION

- 1) The Base Cash Salary for each year: *65% of the Conference Average Compensation for Full Connection Clergy; 62% of the Conference Average Compensation for Less than Full Connection Clergy*
- 2) The Base Cash Salary for both clergy groups listed in paragraph #1 shall include any personal tax deferred annuities, personal IRA's paid by the local church, or personal pension plan in addition to the recommended contribution to the Pension program (UMPIP) in No. 3.
- 3) The pastor shall receive the following in addition to minimum compensation. A) Pension Program Contribution (UMPIP) equal to 3% of the Denominational Average Compensation; B)Continuing Education allowance (minimum of \$150); C)Travel Allowance by voucher at the current IRS rate; D)Utilities paid in full (minimum of heat, electricity, local phone service, water, garbage service, and internet); Accountable Reimbursement Plan (minimum of \$500).

SALARY SUPPORT GRANTS

- 1) The following requests will be considered by the Commission:
 - a. Strategic Appointment Grant – Available when a new appointment results in significantly increased costs to the Church/Charge. These increased costs will be so burdensome that it is unlikely that the Church/Charge will have adequate resources available to take the necessary steps to becoming viable without outside assistance. The purpose of this grant is to assist the Church/Charge in its transition to being able to fully support the newly appointed pastor. The Church/Charge shall provide monthly written status reports to the District Superintendent and Conference Treasurer. Status reports shall at a minimum report progress towards benchmarks.
 - b. Discernment Grant – Available when a Church/Charge has declined in its ability to support a full-time United Methodist pastor to the point where it is unlikely to be able to provide the recommended minimum compensation. The purpose of this grant is to provide time for the Church/Charge and District Superintendent to evaluate the viability of the congregation and decide upon a ministry plan that is appropriate for the Church/Charge. The District Superintendent shall provide a report on the viability and the ministry plan at the next Equitable Compensation meeting. Depending on the ministry plan adopted by the District Superintendent and the Church/Charge, it may be appropriate for the Church/Charge to provide monthly written status reports to the District Superintendent and Conference Treasurer.
 - c. Emergency Grant – Available when a Church/Charge provides evidence that they will not be able to provide their full-time United Methodist pastor with the recommended minimum compensation. The purpose of this grant is to ensure that the pastor is properly cared for.
- 2) Churches/Charges shall pay their apportionments in full during the years they receive salary support grant payments. Churches/Charges that do not comply with this shall not be considered for a Salary Support Grant the following year with the exception of Emergency Grants.
- 3) The maximum amount to be paid for Strategic Appointment Grants and Discernment Grants shall be \$5,400 annually. Grant payments to Churches/Charges shall be made monthly. A Church/Charge shall not receive Salary Support Grant payments for more than 36 consecutive months.
- 4) Salary Support Grant requests shall be submitted in writing to the District Superintendent and the Conference Treasurer. In order for Salary Support Grant payments to continue into a new calendar year, the written request must be updated and resubmitted.
- 5) The Churches/Charges receiving support will be listed in the Conference Journal.

Equitable Compensation Calculation: *The Commission calculates the Equitable Compensation amount based on the Conference Average Compensation. See calculations below:*

Year	Full Connection Clergy	Less than Full Connection Clergy
2015	61,169 x 65% = 39,760	61,169 x 62% = 37,925
2015	59,970 x 65% = 38,981	59,970 x 62% = 37,181
2014	58,094 x 65% = 37,761	58,094 x 62% = 36,018
2013	58,724 x 65% = 38,171	58,724 x 62% = 36,409
2012	57,158 x 65% = 37,153	57,158 x 62% = 35,438

The charges which received Equitable Compensation support in 2014 were:

Belle Fourche, Beresford Zion, Edgeley/Ashley, Eureka, Faulkton, Hazen/Beulah, Langdon, Mandan, Martin/Drake, Mohall/Bowbells/Sherwood, Pierre Southeast, Wall/Wasta, Webster/Bristol-Butler, and White River/Mission

2.4 Resolutions Relating to Rental/Housing Allowances for Active, Retired, Disabled, or Former Clergypersons of the Dakotas Conference

The Dakotas Conference (the "Conference") adopts the following resolutions relating to rental/housing allowances for active, retired, terminated, 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 Clergypersons in consideration of previous active service; and

WHEREAS, the Internal Revenue Service has recognized the Conference (or its predecessors) as an 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, severance, 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 calendar year 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 designation applies will be any pension, severance, 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, a terminated, 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 an active, a retired, a terminated, or a disabled Clergyperson's pension, severance, or disability plan benefit 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 (and, in most cases, state) income tax purposes is limited under Internal Revenue Code section 107(2), and regulations thereunder, to the least of: (a) 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; (b) the amount actually expended by the Clergyperson to rent or provide a home in such year; or (c) the fair rental value of the home, including

furnishings and appurtenances (such as a garage), plus the cost of utilities in such year. Each clergy person or former clergy person is urged to consult with his or her own tax advisor to determine what deferred compensation is eligible to be claimed as a housing allowance exclusion.

2.5 Housing/Parsonage Allowance for Ordained Conference Staff and District Superintendents

WHEREAS, section 107 of the Internal Revenue Code permits a minister of the gospel to exclude from gross income the rental value of a parsonage furnished to the minister;

WHEREAS, a minister is also allowed to exclude from gross income the amount paid to him/her as a properly designated parsonage allowance to the extent used for actual expenses incurred in maintaining a parsonage;

WHEREAS, a minister is also allowed to exclude from gross income the amount paid to him/her in lieu of a parsonage when properly designated as a housing allowance to the extent used for actual housing expenses not to exceed the fair rental value of the home (including furnishing and appurtenances such as a garage, plus the cost of utilities);

WHEREAS the Dakotas Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church is the qualified organization for the designation of housing and parsonage allowances for all ordained persons who serve as District Superintendents, as paid officers of the conference or as members of the conference staff;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that of the cash salary paid to the following persons the following parsonage allowances are hereby designated for the calendar year 2016 and for all future years unless otherwise provided:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| • Randolph Cross - \$7,000 | • Michael Flowers - \$7,000 |
| • Arlene Jackson - \$7,000 (7/1/15) | • Kevin Kloster - \$8,800 (7/1/15) |
| • Jim Konsor - \$7,000 | • Matt Morrison - \$7,000 (7/1/15) |
| • Keith Nelson - \$8,800 | • Alyssa Quade - \$7,000 (7/1/15) |
| • Roger Spahr - \$30,000 (7/1/15) | • Rebecca Trefz - \$17,000 in 2016 |

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that in addition to cash salary, the following person(s) will be paid the following amount instead of being furnished a parsonage in which to live, and this additional amount is hereby designated as a housing allowance for the calendar year 2016 and all future years unless otherwise provided:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| • Randolph Cross - \$18,000 | • Arlene Jackson - \$18,000 |
| • Roger Spahr - \$18,000 | • Rebecca Trefz - \$18,000 |

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that, during the interim between meetings, the Dakotas Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church authorizes the Conference Human Resources Committee to designate housing and parsonage allowances in accordance with section 107 of the Internal Revenue Code. Such designations are to be recorded in the official minutes of that Committee.

2.6 Board of Pensions Recommended Actions of the 2015 Annual Conference

2.6.1 The Budget:

The Board recommends that the 2016 Board of Pensions Budget be adopted as proposed (detail outlined in the budget section of the JOURNAL) with the total apportionment request of \$92,000.

2.6.2 Clergy Medical Leave:

Glen Saylor and James Waisanen are approved to continue on medical leave and to receive CPP Disability Benefits for the conference year of July 1, 2015-June 30, 2016.

2.6.3 The Pre-82 (Past Service) Annuity Rate:

The Board recommends that the 2016 Past Service Annuity Rate (effective 1/1/2016) be set at \$667.50 for each year of pre-82 service in the Dakotas Conference. This is a 3.5% increase over 2015.

2.6.4 HealthFlex Issues:

For 2016, the annual Direct Bill for premiums to “active” participants will be 28% of the total active HealthFlex premium. Of this 28%, 25% will be used to offset the current premium while 3% will be deposited into an account for our retiree health funding plan. This 25% portion will be Direct Billed to the active participants in two parts:

- a. A stated amount of \$1,065 for participant+1 coverage and \$1,543 for family coverage, plus
- b. An amount determined by the ratio of the previous year’s participant’s total compensation in their current place of work and ministry to the total compensation paid to all active participants in the Conference. (See Active Participant Premium Table) This “participant’s share” calculation applies to the position, not to the individual occupying the position, as long as the position’s compensation is within plus or minus five (5) percent (%) range of the previous compensation, for the purpose of calculating the amount to be paid after a move/change in personnel.

The actual amount to be paid directly by active participants in 2016 is approximately \$468,156. Eligibility to participate will be as specified in the HealthFlex Plan Documents and Conference Policy. Premiums will be paid in accordance with Conference policies regarding such payments (see Policy section of this Journal).

2.6.5 Pensions and Health Benefits Guidelines:

The Board of Pension and Health Benefits affirms the Pension and Health Benefits Guidelines found in the 2014 Journal. (page 211)

Conference Health Benefits Plan Eligibility to Participate for Retirees, Spouses & Survivors (clergy or lay):

2.6.5 Any retiree not participating in Social Security, ie., who has opted out of Social Security, and thereby not covered by Medicare Part A and enrolled in Medicare Part B, will not be eligible to participate in the health plan of this Conference through HealthFlex, One Exchange or otherwise, in retirement. This does not prohibit a retiree’s spouse from participating if the spouse has NOT opted out of Social Security and is covered by Medicare Part A and enrolled in Medicare Part B.

2.6.6 Administration of all plans and work of the Board:

The Board recommends that the following be authorized to sign necessary documents relative to the Dakotas Board of Pensions for 2015-2016: The Board Chair, the Conference Benefits Officer and the Treasurer of the Board.

2.6.7 Regarding Corpus Amounts:

Endowment and Trust Fund:

The corpus was established at \$1,000,000 for the merged Dakotas Conference as of 1/1/1994. Additions since merger total \$84,646.59. The Corpus of the Endowment is \$1,084,646.59, as of 12/31/14. The Corpus is not viewed as a “target balance”. It is the “foundation” of all Dakotas Pension and Health Plans and cannot be expended for any reason.

The Board of Pensions has adopted a strategy of “reserve savings” with accompanying policies endorsed by the Conference Council on Finance and Administration which will enable the Dakotas Conference to “weather” large increases in health insurance premiums; secure the Ministerial Pension Plan and the Pre-82 Plan; and provide funding for CRSP liabilities. Reports of the amount of this “Reserve Savings” and its use will be reported to the Annual Conference upon request.

2.6.8 Regarding Lynch Trust Funds:

The Board of Pensions has adopted a policy regarding Lynch funds as the successor to the Conference Claimants Fund and therefore the entity responsible for administering funds today that are dedicated to the same purpose as the “Conference Claimant Fund” of the Methodist Episcopal Church [and the Methodist Church] as outlined in the will of Frank Lynch. See the pension report for full details.

2.5.9 RESOLUTIONS RELATING TO RENTAL/HOUSING ALLOWANCES FOR RETIRED AND DISABLED CLERGYPERSONS have been proposed by the Conference Council on Finance and Administration. The Board recommends adoption of allowances for calendar year 2016.

SECTION 3--ELECTED LEADERSHIP

3.1 Nominations Report

Please contact the Rev. Bill Hoffman, Chair of the Nominations Committee with changes;
605-840-1801 or revwilly3@gmail.com

The Common Table(CT)

Chairperson: Ray Baker

Class of 2016: Steve Behrens

Class of 2017: _____, *Cody Warns*

Class of 2018: Ray Baker, *Sheila Dailie*

Class of 2019: Jessica Ford

Ex officio members (with vote):

Conference Council on Finance and Administration: Karl Kroger

District Superintendent: Rebecca Trefz

Conference Lay Leader or Associate: *Blaine Wilson / Jerry Bottger*

Ex officio members (without vote):

Bishop: Bruce Ough

Director of Ministries: Rebecca Trefz

Conference Chancellors

North Dakota: *Tim Ottmar*

South Dakota: *Nancy Oviatt*

The Extended Cabinet

Bishop: Bruce Ough

Director of Ministries: Rebecca Trefz

Eastern Sunrise Co-DS: Randy Cross

Glacial Lakes DS: Roger Spahr

Prairie Hills DS: Kevin Kloster

Sakakawea DS: Keith Nelson

Director of Camping/Youth Ministries: _____

Equipper of Laity: Steve Trefz

Director of Leadership Development: _____

Executive Director, Dakotas UM Foundation: *Sheri Meister*

Director of Financial & Administration: *Jeff Pospisil*

Associate Director of Communications: *Doreen Gosmire*

Conference Lay Leader: *Blaine Wilson*

DEVELOPING MISSIONAL LEADERS

Missional Leaders Link

Chair: Kori Lehrkamp

Class of 2016: *Sally Wickware-Thompson 13*, Gwen Mader 10

Class of 2017: *Peggy Stempson 14*, Kori Lehrkamp 14, Sara McManus 13

Class of 2018: *Steve Schlasner 14*, *Molly McCaskell 14*, *Taylor Johnson 14*

Class of 2019: *Charlie Moore 15*, *Becky Holzkamm 15*

Standing Committees (membership with vote):

Chair of Board of Ordained Ministry: Jenny Hallenbeck

Coordinator for CCYM: Kris Mutzenberger

Chair from Camping: Nancy Trefz

Chair of Nominations: Bill Hoffman

Ex officio (without vote):

Director of Ministries: Rebecca Trefz

Equipper of Lay Servant Ministries: Steve Trefz

Director of Camping: *Becky Holten*
District Superintendent: Randy Cross
Conference Lay Leader: Blaine Wilson

Standing Committees under Missional Leaders Link

Board of Ordained Ministry (BOM) (*Nominated by the Bishop*)

Chair: Jenny Hallenbeck
Vice Chair: *Judy Christy*
Secretary: Bill Gran
Registrar: Theta Miller
Registrar/Local Pastors/Associate Members: Kris Larson
Conference Relations Chair: Gary Ball-Kilbourne
Continuing Education Coordinator: Lori Broschat
Mentoring Coordinator: Dan Bader
Director of Leadership Development:
Retired Liaison: Howard Grinager
Local Licensed Pastor Liaison: Kris Larson
Deacon Liaison: Michelle Brennan
Extension Ministries Liaison: Bill Gran
Eastern Sunrise Committee Chair: Howard Baird
Glacial Lakes Committee Chair: Jan Gross
Prairie Hills Committee Chair: Mark Phillips
Sakakawea Committee Chair: Lori Broschat
2004: Bill Gran
2008: Gary Ball-Kilbourne, Dean Trapp, Jan Gross
2009: Theta Miller
2010: Jenny Hallenbeck, Dan Bader, Mina Hall, Michelle Brennan, Kris Larson
2011: *Ernie Wight, Judy Christy*
2012: Chang Yi, Lori Broschat, Brandon Vetter, Kathy Hartgraves, *Janelle Jones; Doug Erickson*
2013: Howard Grinager
2014: Sharla McCaskell, Howard Baird, Val Reinhiller, Mark Phillips, Kelly Drake
2015: Sara Nelson
Ex Officio (with vote):
District Superintendent: Randy Cross
Ex Officio (without vote):
Coordinator of Clergy Services: Doug Diehl

School of Ministry

(Subsidiary of Board of Ordained Ministry-not a conference agency)
Chair: Russell Stewart
Registrar: Tim Vorlage
Secretary: Jeff Adel
2015: Tim Vorlage
2016: Lou Whitmer, Jeff Adel
2017: Kenrad Pederson, Jeri Burns, Russell Stewart
BOM Representative: Kathy Hartgraves

Committee on Nominations

Chairperson: Bill Hoffman 10
Sakakawea District: Dave Birkeland 13,
Eastern Sunrise District: *Fern Bailey 10, Pat Siefken 11, Sandra Marquardt 14*
Glacial Lakes District: *Sarah Hock 13, Nancy Hallenbeck 15, Dave Severtson 15*
Prairie Hills District: Bill Hoffman 10, Linda Baldock 10, Val Rush 10

Ex officio members (without vote):

Conference Lay Leader: *Blaine Wilson*
Conference Secretary: *Mark Ellingson*
Director of Ministries: *Rebecca Trefz*
Equipper of Lay Servant Ministries: *Steve Trefz*
Director of Leadership Development: _____

Non-Permanent Standing Committees under Missional Leaders

Board of Camping and Retreat Ministries (BCRM)

Chairperson: *Nancy Trefz*
Secretary: *(Rotated among board membership)*
2016: *Lyall Workman 12, Marty Warns 12, Jeff Nelson 14*
2017: *Mark Johnsen 12 LPC, Clay Lundberg 14, LuAnn Kemp 15*
2018: *Theresa Whetsel 14, Sean Binder 14, Nancy Trefz 14*
2019: *Kerry Hilton 14, Russell Stewart 12, Jackie Owen 15,*

Ex Officio:

Director of Camping & Retreat Ministries:
Director of Finance and Administration: *Jeff Pospisil*
District Superintendent: *Randy Cross*

Auxiliary/Invited (without vote):

Site Directors/Assistant Directors: Lake Poinsett: *Kyle Sachs*; Storm Mountain: *Scott Jensen*;
Wesley Acres: *Christy Heflin 6*

Conference Council of Youth Ministries (CCYM)

Conference Coordinator of Youth Ministries: *Kris Mutzenberger 04*
Chair: *Layne Droppers 13*
Vice-Chair: *Stephanie Anderson 13*

District Coordinators:

Eastern Sunrise: *Matt Richards 08*
Glacial Lakes: *Diane Kisch 08*
Prairie Hills: *Brenda Swanson 04*
Sakakawea: *Lisa Rhodes 06*
Adults elected At Large: *Jeff Lathrop 14, John Britt 14, Brenda Lint 10; Wade Miller 11; Virg Whetsel 10;*

District Youth Representatives:

Prairie Hills: *Shelby Stotz; Nathan Bader; Samantha Nash*
Glacial Lakes: *Alison Uecker; Madeline Gould; Alleysia Ugofsky*
Sakakawea: *Rydel Samuelson; Katie Clark; Robby Samuelson*
Eastern Sunrise: *Jessica Higgins; Danielle Schinkel*

At Large Youth Representatives:

Alyssa Jensen; Natalie Hilton; Emily Warns; Allison Jensen

Ex-Officio:

Director of Camping and Youth Ministries:

**Task Force for Missional Appointments
(from 2012 General Conference)**

Named by Conference Lay Leader: *Janelle Jones, Kay Becker, Howard Grinager, Carol Knodle*
Named by Board of Ordained Ministry: *Gary Ball-Kilbourne, Dan Bader, Mina Hall*
District Superintendent: *Marilyn Spurrell*

EQUIPPING MISSIONAL CONGREGATIONS

Missional Congregations Link

Chair: Scott McKirdy

Class of 2016: Adam Weber 12, Dan Freed 12, *Greg Ewing-Lee 12, Connie Maxwell 10*

Class of 2017: *John Srstka 10*, Thom Bowsher 11, Jenene Earl 10

Class of 2018: *Rebecca Zabel 14*

Class of 2019: Joel Higgins 10, Scott McKirdy 10

Ex officio (without vote):

Bishop: Bruce Ough

Director of Ministries: Rebecca Trefz

Eastern Sunrise DS: Randy Cross

Glacial Lakes DS: Roger Spahr

Prairie Hills DS: Kevin Kloster

Sakakawea DS: Keith Nelson

EXTENDING MISSIONAL IMPACT

Missional Impact Link

Chair: Lou Whitmer

Class of 2016: Gail Arnold 14 , Ron Olson 12, Lou Whitmer 12

Class of 2017: Marty Toepke-Floyd 14, *Jerilyn Hansen 13*

Class of 2018: *Cindy Nelson 10, Sheila Freed 12, Cherise Bronson 14*

Class of 2019: Barb Nash 15, Jen Tyler 12, Karl Kroger 13

Standing Committees (membership with vote):

United Methodist Women: *Bonnie Ostenson*

United Methodist Men: _____

Ex Officio (with vote):

Conference Secretary of Global Ministries: *Bobbi Larson*

UMW Mission Coordinator for Social Action: *Shirley Wiese*

UMW Mission Coordinator for Education & Interpretation: *Sue Chaplin*

Ex officio members (without vote):

Director of Ministries: Rebecca Trefz

District Superintendent: Keith Nelson

Standing Committees under Missional Impact

Conference Disaster Response

Leadership (appointed by the Bishop):

Planning:

Consultants:

Logistics: Mike Flowers

Operations:

Administration and Communication: *Jeff Pospisil, Doreen Gosmire,*

United Methodist Women (UMW)

President: *Bonnie Ostenson*

Vice President: *Colleen McKirdy*

Secretary: *LaVina Kleese*

Treasurer: *Irma DeSmet*

Social Action: *Shirley Wiese*

Membership, Nurture and Outreach: *Mary Lee Nielson*

Education and Interpretation: *Sue Chaplin*

Spiritual Growth: *Connie Smith*

Secretary of Program Resources: *Marsha Timm*
Communications Coordinator: *Janet Madsen*
Committee on Nominations: *Kay Harr, Chair, Robyn Nadvornik, Betty Brosz*
Bobbi Larson, Marsha Martin

United Methodist Men (UMM)

President:
Vice President:
Treasurer: *Robert Schultz*
Prayer Advocate:

GENERATING MISSIONAL RESOURCES

Missional Resources Link

Chairperson: *Bruce Nearhood*
Class of 2016: *Laurie Langland 10,*
Class of 2017: *Kent Thompson 14, Pat Mersch 13*
Class of 2018: *Terry Nebelsick 10, Kip Roozen 10*
Class of 2019: *Richard Craig 11, Steve Eliason 13, Bruce Nearhood 14*
Board of Pensions and Health Benefits: *Elaine Roberts*
Board of Trustees: *Ron McLean*
Human Resources Committee: *Barry Whipkey*
CCFA Representative: *Bob Duemig*
Ex officio members (without vote):
Director of Financial and Administrative Services: *Jeff Pospisil*
Executive Director of Dakotas UM Foundation: *Sheri Meister*
District Superintendent: *Roy Caudill* **Standing Committees under Missional Resources Link**

Conference Council on Finance & Administration (CCFA)

Chair: *Bob Ruedebusch*
Vice Chair:
Secretary: *Jeff Adel*
Judy Banwart 06, Rod Buck 06, Perry Schnabel 09, Warren Wenzel 09, Kyle McManus 15
Jeff Adel 09, Arlyn Coalter 10, Robert Ruedebusch 12, Dave Page 13, Ruth Barrett 13, Ross Reinhiller 15
Ex Officio (without vote)
Bishop: *Bruce Ough*
Director of Ministries: *Rebecca Trefz*
Director of Finance and Administration: *Jeff Pospisil*
Executive Director of Dakotas UM Foundation: *Sheri Meister*
Board of Pensions Representative: *Eric Walth*
District Superintendent: *Randy Cross*

Board of Pensions and Health Benefits (BOPHB)

Chair: *Elaine Roberts 11*
Vice Chair: *Peary Wilson 07*
Recording Secretary: *Eric Walth 11*
Frank McKeehan 03, Marilyn Perry 03, Dennis Evenson 04,
Elmer Brinkman 07, Joanne Ottmar 07, Peary Wilson 07, Don Armstrong 09,
Elaine Roberts 11, Richard Wahlstrom 11, Eric Walth 11, Anne Osborne 12
Al Roll 14, Jack Erickson 14, Alona Burtz 14, Joy Tracy 14
ND Registered Agent: *Joanne Ottmar*
SD Registered Agent: *Jeff Pospisil*

Ex officio (without vote)

Executive Secretary/Conference Benefits Officer: *Leana Stunes*
Board Treasurer: *Jeff Pospisil*
Assistant Board Treasurer: *JoAnn Schlimgen*
BOM Representative:
CCFA Representative: *Bob Ruedebusch*
CCFA President: *Bob Ruedebusch*
District Superintendent: *Roy Caudill*

Board of Trustees (BOT)

Chair: *Ron McLean*
Vice Chair:
Secretary: *Rita Greer*
Class of 2016: *Deb Mack 12, Marvin Winstryg 12, Mark Stearns 12*
Class of 2017: *Merril Knodle 09, Boyd Blumer 13*
Class of 2018: *Rita Greer 06, Ron McLean 06, Alan Thornberg 10*
Class of 2019: *Bob Cappel 08,*

Ex Officio (without vote):

Director Finance and Administrative Services: *Jeff Pospisil*
Conference Chancellors: *Tim Ottmar, Nancy Oviatt*
District Superintendent: *Randy Cross*

Human Resources Committee (HRC)

Chair: *Barry Whipkey*
Lay: *Nancy Bohlen 13, Dulci Stewart 13*
Clergy: *Barry Whipkey 10, Jan Price 10*
Director of Ministries: *Rebecca Trefz*
Missional Leaders representative: *Kori Lehrkamp*
Missional Congregations representative: *Scott McKirdy*
Missional Impact representative: *Lou Whitmer*
Missional Resources representative: *Laura Borman*
Common Table representative: *Ray Baker*

Ex Officio (without vote):

Bishop: *Bruce Ough*
Director of Finance and Administration: *Jeff Pospisil*
District Superintendent: *Randy Cross*

Dakotas United Methodist Foundation Board

President: *Mike Goos*
Vice President: *Howard Grinager*
Secretary: *Kay Werremeyer*
Executive Director: *Sheri Meister*
Treasurer: *Jeff Pospisil*
Class of 2016: *Mike Goos 08, Sharla McCaskell 12, Les Strege 13, Don Bradley 12*
Class of 2017: *Nancy Wahlstrom 13, Jeff Heesch 13, Ron Laqua 13, Scott Jones 13*
Class of 2018: *Jodi Bass 13, Kay Werremeyer 06, David Nash 09, Howard Grinager 10*
Class of 2019: *Mark Ehrmantraut 12, Richard Platt 11, Tom Dravland 07, Kathy Roll 11, Don Caine 09*

Support Services

Commission on Archives and History (CAH)

Chair: Duane Coates

Vice-Chair: *Cheryl Finney*

Secretary: *Betty Testerman 13*

Class of 2016: *Betty Testerman 12*

Class of 2017: *Sheri Fadley 14, Steve Trefz 12*

Class of 2018: *Cheryl Finney 06, Duane Coates 06*

Class of 2019: *Hazel Behrens 12, Tom Thaden 09*

Ex Officio (with vote):

Conference Historian: Charles Finney

Ex Officio (without vote):

Archivist: *Laurie Langland*

Archivist emeritus: *Pat Breidenbach*

Historical Society Chair: Darwin Kopfmann

Annual Conference Sessions Committee

(Appointed by the Bishop)

Chairperson: Greg Kroger

Bishop: Bruce Ough

Director of Ministries: Rebecca Trefz

Associate Conference Lay Leader: *Jerry Bottger*

Host Superintendent: Roger Spahr

Host Pastor/Lay Person: _____

Conference Office Staff: *Bea Stucke*

Worship Coordinator: Amy Atkins

Communications Coordinator: *Doreen Gosmire*

Agenda Coordinator: Duane Coates

Site Coordinator: Dayne Zachrison

Administrative Review Committee (2013-2016) – Clergy

(Nominated by the Bishop)

Clergy: Stephen Perry-Chair, Peg Zerface, Gary Rae

Alternate Clergy: Jeff Adel, Jerry Bass

Committee on Episcopacy (COE)

Chair: *Jennifer Larsen*

Vice Chair: / Secretary: *Blaine Wilson*

Lay Members: *Jennifer Larsen 10, Janet Madsen 11*

Clergy Members: *Kris Larson 10, Mark Holland, 14*

Conference Lay Leader: *Blaine Wilson*

Members appointed by Bishop: *Cody Schuler 12*

Members from Jurisdictional Committee on the Episcopacy: *Rebecca Trefz, Janelle Jones*

Records, Rules and Procedures Committee

Director of Ministries: Rebecca Trefz

Members: Duane Coates, Mark Ellingson

Conference Disaster Response

Leadership (appointed by the Bishop):

Planning: Debra Ball-Kilbourne, Bob Lower

Consultants: TBD
Logistics: Mike Flowers
Operations: *TBD*
Administration and Communication: *Jeff Pospisil, Doreen Gosmire,*

DISTRICT NOMINATIONS

Glacial Lakes District

District Lay Leader: *Nancy Hallenbeck*

Glacial Lakes District Committee on Ordained Ministry

Clergy: Jan Gross – Chair: Dean Trapp, Kris Mutzenberger,
Bob Ruedebusch, Barry Whipkey, Nancy Manning

Laity: *Troy Hansen, Dave Holzwarth, Connie Smith*

District Superintendent: Roger Spahr

Glacial Lakes Committee on Building and Location

Clergy: Gary Rae, Barry Whipkey, Roy Caudill

Laity: *John Claggett, Cortland Carnes, Beth Niemeyer*

District Superintendent: Roger Spahr

Glacial Lakes District Superintendency Committee

District Lay Leaders: Nancy Hallenbeck

Lay Women: *Diane Kisch*

Lay Men: *Charles Schnabel, Kim Callies*

Clergy: Kathy Hartgraves-chr

Members at Large:

Glacial Lakes District Committee on Nominations

Sara Hock, Mary Lee Lint, Russell Stewart

Ministry Team Presiding Elders/Lay Servant Ministry Coordinators

Brookings: John Price / *Don Nash (Brookings)*

Huron: Mark Holland / *Laura Hemenway (Huron)*

Sioux Falls: Kyle Reinhiller / *Nancy Olsen (Sioux Falls First)*

Mitchell: Nancy Manning / *Betty Janke (Olivet)*

Yankton: Steve Ziebarth / *Dave Stephenson (Wakonda)10*

Eastern Sunrise District

District Lay Leader: *Steve Schlasner*

Eastern Sunrise District Committee on Ordained Ministry

Clergy: Howard Baird- Chair: Val Reinhiller

Marilyn Spurrell, Steve Olson, Jerry Bass, Amy Atkins, Kevin Kloster

Laity: *Don Larson, Gerald Fields*

District Superintendent: Randy Cross

Eastern Sunrise District Building and Location Committee

Clergy: Mina Hall, Mark Ellingson, Marilyn Spurrell

Laity: Roger Parkinson (Chair), Neil Jordheim, Barb Pharis

District Superintendent: Randy Cross

Eastern Sunrise District Superintendency Committee

Laity: *Kay Braun, Jerry Nankival, Katherine Tweed, Melanie Reiners, Clark Moeckly, Sheri Fadley*

Clergy: Dave Motta, _____, _____,

Eastern Sunrise Committee on Nominations

Fern Bailey, Pat Siefken, Sandra Marquardt

Ministry Team Presiding Elders/ Lay Servant Ministry Coordinators

Aberdeen: Ross Reinhiller (Aberdeen First) / *Pat Siefken (Conde)*

Watertown: Sara Nelson (Watertown First) / *Jason Kettwig (Milbank)*

Wahpeton: Steven Olson (Oakes)/ *Mike Beeson* (Wahpeton)

Fargo: _____ / *Kay Braun* (Fargo)

Upper Valley: _____ / *Kevin Wold* (Hatten)

Sakakawea District

District Lay Leader: *Louise Broten*

Sakakawea District Committee on Ordained Ministry

Clergy: Chair: *Lori Broschat, Michelle Brennan, David Birkland,*

Laity: *Dave Reeves, Ike Aichele, Janet Thielman*

District Superintendent: *Keith Nelson*

Sakakawea District Building and Location Committee

Clergy: *Rick Craig, Steve Behrens, Perry Schnable, Art Scanson*

Laity: *Rick Ennen, Cliff Jacobson*

District Superintendent: *Keith Nelson*

Sakakawea District Superintendency Committee

Clergy: _____

Laity: *Ken McDougal, Roger Caine, Barb Winger, Iva Wenzel (District Lay Leader)*

Sakakawea Committee on Nominations

Hazel Behrens, David Birkeland

Ministry Team Presiding Elders/ Lay Servant Ministry Coordinators

Jamestown: *Dayne Zachrison (Valley City) /Barb Owen (Valley City)*

Spirit Lake: *Judy Banwart (Langdon) /Sharon Duval (New Rockford)*

Dickinson: *Paul Lint (Hettinger)/Holly Seifert (Dickinson)*

Minot: *Ray Baker (Minot Vincent)/Lisa Luft (Minot Vincent)*

Bismarck: *Bruce Adams (Mandan) / Jim Jenness (Bismarck)*

Prairie Hills District

District Lay Leader *Bob Wik*

Prairie Hills District Committee on Ordained Ministry

Clergy: *Scott McKirdy and Mark Phillips –Co-Chair: Linda Baldock, Mary Ann Sheldon*

Laity: *Bob Drabek, Larry Madsen*

District Superintendent: *Kevin Kloster*

Prairie Hills District Committee on Building and Locations

Clergy: *Sharla McCaskell, Gordon Higgins, Jeff Adel, Darwin Kopfmann*

Laity: *Robert Puffer, David Bonde, Eileen Wilson*

District Superintendent: *Kevin Kloster*

Prairie Hills District Superintendency Committee

District Lay Leader: *Bob Wik*

D.S. Appointment: *Dan Bader, Jerry Laird*

Lay Women: *Ashley Alsup, Geniece Gebhart*

Lay Men: *Everett Follette, Larry Madsen*

Clergy: *Jenene Earl, Val Rush*

Members at Large: *John McKnight, Bonnie Ping*

Prairie Hills Committee on Nominations

Bill Hoffman, Linda Baldock, Val Rush

Ministry Team Presiding Elders/Lay Servant Ministry Coordinators

Prairie Harvesters: *Julie Nygaard / Nancy Trefz (Tolstoy)*

Northern Hills: *Scott McKirdy / Jim Hoff (Lead)*

Winner: *Val Rush / Tim Hakin (Winner)*

Pierre: *Linda Baldock / Cathy Kerr (Highmore)*

Rushmore: *Darwin Kopfmann / Vernal Trove (RC S Maple)*

RELATED AGENCIES

Wesley Center of Religion

President: *Rex Huss*

Vice President: Deb Glennen

Secretary: *Judy Christy*

Treasurer and Bishop's Representative: *Jeff Pospisil*

Class of 2015: Howie Baird, *Deb Glennen*

Class of 2016: Rex Huss, *(to be filled by board)*

Class of 2017: *Judy Christy*

Annual Conference Representatives: Raenelle Sorenson, Jerry Bass

Tree of Life Ministry

President: *Tom Gilmore*

Vice President: Linda Baldock

Secretary: Sheila Richards

Treasurer: *Jeff Pospisil*

Executive Director: Linda Garriott

Members: Linda Baldock, *Jeannine Carpenter, Tom Gilmore, David Hansen, Allen Herrboldt, Fred Egleston, Jo Watkins, John Stearns, Peary Wilson*

Ex Officio:

Bishop: Bruce Ough

Prairie Hills District Superintendent: Kevin Kloster

Open Door Community Center Board of Directors

Chairs: *Marvia Boettcher*

Secretary: Treasurer: *Derrick Hobein*

Trustee Representative: *Jerry Suko*

Director: *Jolene Stading Puhalla*

Members: Jennifer Hallenbeck, *Carol Desper, Carroll Burchinal, Phil Sjursen, Perry Schnabel, Jim Udenholz, Myrna Petermann, Carol Nelson, Kenneth Hogue, Steve Van Dyke, Marilyn Smith*

Ex Officio:

District Superintendent: Keith Nelson

Jolene Puhalla

Solar Oven Partners Advisory Board

Eastern Sunrise District: *Gene Bethke*, President

Glacial Lakes: Phil Lint

Prairie Hills District: *Larry Burkhead*

Sakakawea District: *Dave Silbernagel*

At Large Member: Phil Lint

Expertise: *Karen Workman*, Gifts Processing

Conference At Large Member: *Gloria Borgman*

Missionary and Director: *Rick Jost*

Associate Director: *Cathy Hoss*

Spirit Lake Ministry Center Advisory Board

President: Jerry Bass

Members: Kathy Hammond, *Tom Hall, Jim Dustin, Gary Osborn, Jake Roemmich*

Ex Officio:

Mike Flowers, *Libby Flowers*

SECTION 4--REPORTS

4.1 Common Table

The Common Table and the Conference staff have had a busy year. I appreciate the dedication of both groups and the tremendous effort they have given since the last Annual Conference Session.

Program Audit-The Common Table contracted with the Novak Group to do an audit of conference programming. The purpose of this audit was to help conference leadership better align our budget with the priorities of the Annual Conference and our Journey Toward Vitality. The report, presented to the Extended Cabinet and the Common Table, showed that Leader Development and Congregational Vitality work are top perceived priorities and yet, this doesn't necessarily align with our staffing and financial resources deployment, especially in the area of leadership development. These results have «teed-up» many conversations about how we can best steward our financial and human resources as a Conference moving into the future.

Feasibility Study-the 2014 Annual Conference approved moving forward to do a Feasibility Study for Congregational Development. They authorized the leadership teams of the Common Table, CCF&A, the Equipping Missional Congregations Link and the Extended Cabinet to receive the report and act as they saw fit on behalf of the Annual Conference. The Tyler Associates surveyed over 450 clergy and laity through personal interviews and online questionnaires. In January, they met with the leadership teams in Watertown and presented their findings. Their results indicated that 92% believed it was important to implement an intentional plan for congregational development and 99% of those believed we need to do a capital campaign in order to secure the funding necessary to fulfill this plan. The group voted unanimously to move forward with a Capital Campaign.

Leadership Event-In September of 2014, the Common Table hosted the second annual gathering for conference leadership in Fargo, ND "Onward: Fearless, Spirit-Led Churches. Bishop Robert Schnase from the Missouri Conference led the event, teaching from his book, *Seven Levers: Missional Strategies for Conferences*. Groups also met to discuss how their Link or Committee plays a role in implementing these strategies and moving us forward in our Journey Toward Vitality. The Common Table will hold another leadership event on September 17-18 in Mitchell, SD.

Submitted by Rev. Ray Baker, Chair and written by Rev. Rebecca Trefz, Dir. of Ministries

4.2 Commission on Archives and History

Many local United Methodist churches are recapturing the missionary zeal with which they were founded. As churches recapture that missionary zeal, they are called to remember. They remember why they were founded. They remember their motivating spirit. As they do so, they find people surrounding them discovering what the first Methodists realized in 18th century England – that urbanizing industrialization doesn't save us. Technological advances may make our lives easier, but they don't necessarily make us better people. We still need repentance. We still need salvation, and the world still needs a people, motivated by the gospel, to transform the world. In short, the world still needs what our churches were founded to provide.

Unfortunately, too many churches have almost lost the memory of their founding missionary zeal to meet that need. Therefore, with concern for our disciple-making, world-transforming mission, General Conference has provided that every annual conference elect and fund a Commission on Archives and History to provide that ministry of memory. As a Commission, our ministry is to support the annual conference's mission by helping local churches and the conference preserve and access its memory of missionary zeal. We also exist to provide a connection beyond the local church.

Your CAH, which comprises seven voting and three non-voting members, met three times in the past year (twice by phone and once in person) in pursuit of our 12 mandated Disciplinary provisions. (§1641). At each meeting, CAH takes a tithe of its scheduled meeting time to pray, and relate our work to the general United Methodist devotional rule of staying in love with God.

Our highest temporal priority, and more than 92.3% our 2014 expenditures, is supporting the archives space, its personnel and program costs that we are honored to share with Dakota Wesleyan University. (CAH's 2016 budget request envisions those items representing 85.6% of the budget.) Archivist Laurie Langland holds an earned doctorate and has a dual role as Dakota Wesleyan University staff and non-teaching faculty. We share half of her time with the university. Her conference time is busy with research requests and processing donations of materials, including records from an ever-growing list of closed churches. Compiling memoirs for annual conference and the journal, according to policies, is another regular task.

Langland also stands ready to assist local churches as they develop their own history committees or conduct the ministry of memory at the local level. Furthermore, those looking for guidelines on what to save, may go to the conference website at http://www.dakotasumc.org/media/files/Doreen/Guidelines_1_page_May_2010.pdf for a summary of some of the more common records. For a more extensive listing, see http://s3.amazonaws.com/gcah.org/Resources/Guidelines_Publications/ConfRetSched.2013.pdf

In pursuit of the mission to equip local churches, your CAH initiated a number of new measures in the past year. For instance, you may remember a questionnaire at annual conference session last year about important events in your local church. This year, with the help of our colleagues in the Ohio conferences, we have expanded that questionnaire into a form we made available on the resource flash drives given at this year's session. This is meant to be a dynamic document that each local church will complete and update as needed or as more complete information becomes available. This way, the conference can assist in preserving your history at the local level. We imagine there will be questions. Therefore, we urge you to reach out to any commission member for any assistance you may need in completing that form.

Also, this year, you have made funds available for us to administer grants in memory of our late long-term member Warren Kuhler. Local churches that elect a local church historian are eligible to apply for matching conference grant money to assist in preserving and/or making accessible your local-church history. Applications for these grants are available from any commission member.

Another priority is attendance at the annual meeting of the North Central Jurisdictional Convocation on Archives and History, the site of which rotates throughout this jurisdiction's episcopal areas. In 2014, the convocation was held in Petoskey, Michigan. Commission member Betty Testerman attended along with her husband, Wayne. Our conference makes annual reports to this group, which elects members to the General Commission on Archives and History. Our conference delegates then hear reports back from that general agency, as well as from other conference commissions throughout the jurisdiction. Thus, attendance serves the conference's purpose of "providing a connection for ministry beyond the local church" (§1601). I serve as vice president of this group, which is scheduled to meet this year in Evanston, Ill., on the campus of our Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary. We are looking forward to hosting this group in Bismarck in 2017.

The CAH is preparing for the publication of an update to our conference history, slated to come out in 2017. This project is being researched and written by our own Dakotas clergy Rev. Dr. Stephen Perry, who has headed this project since 2004. He updates your CAH annually.

The CAH is responsible for recognizing jubilee clergy. The CAH annually re-examines the published service records of retired clergy and makes appropriate changes in our records. We then collect short essays from these recipients describing their lives and ministries since retirement. We submit these for publication in the conference journal.

Furthermore, the CAH buys the grave markers presented by the Cabinet to the families of our clergy members at the clergy's individual memorial services.

All of this work is conducted with a portion of your connectional-mission giving (apportionments). So, we thank you for prioritizing the equipping of this ministry of memory.

Sincerely, Rev. R. Duane Coates, Chairman

4.3 Director of Ministries

Recently, Steve and I have found ourselves doing what many clergy will do in the coming months—packing and unpacking. We should be pros by now. But the challenge this time was moving into a house with a different layout than we'd ever had before. It required us to sort through things with a whole new set of eyes—determining what needed to stay, to be let go of, and to be used differently or in a different room.

Ironically, this has been what the last year of ministry has been like for me. Some of that has come with being in a completely different kind of ministry position. And some of it has come as I have joined with staff and conference leadership in looking at our conference ministries with a whole new set of eyes. In the same way it is with my current unpacking endeavors, this year has been filled with excitement as well as challenges.

In our Journey Toward Vitality, I am so pleased with and encouraged by the work done in the first pathway—Developing Missional Leaders. The Board of Ordained Ministry approved a Clergy Effectiveness Document that will no doubt guide the programs, assessments and learning environments that we create to help all clergy continue to grow as leaders. Our Camping Board and leadership have embraced the mission to make disciples and develop missional leaders by not only offering excellent camping programs, but also through partnering with local churches to ensure that the camping experience undergirds local church disciple-making. Sixty-one laity went through workshops to help them discern their callings and become better equipped as servant leaders and 240 youth and adults will be heading to Youth 15 in Florida—an experience that will no doubt fuel God's work in their lives. In addition, each of these groups, as well as the Link, have continued to ask tough questions and wrestle with what it means to develop leaders of all ages in the 21st Century.

In the area of Equipping Missional Congregations, I was privileged to be a part of the consultation team for the Sioux Falls First and Spearfish UMC MCCI weekends. I'm excited that we were able to share a vital piece of the MCCI training—the Breakthrough Prayer Initiative—at two-conference-wide training opportunities in January and will share another—Telling Your God Story—as a pre-conference workshop. We held a Church Planter Assessment workshop to help begin to identify people with gifts to start new churches. Our new church efforts will also be multiplied as we launch new churches in Watford City and Sioux Falls in the coming year. Finally, all of these efforts will be highlighted as we share the vision and launch our Capital Campaign for Congregational Development—THRIVE: Strength for Today, Hope for Tomorrow.

Even as it is the theme of this year's annual conference, our efforts in Extending Missional Impact continue to grow and evolve. With the expansion of the Solar Oven Partners associate director to full-time, the hiring of a new Executive Director at Tree of Life Ministries, the beginning of small discipleship groups at Spirit Lake Ministry Center and the expanding reach and impact of the Bakken Oil Region ministries in Watford City and Williston, God's vision has already become our mission! The conference staff and leadership have also been working with these ministries through leadership changes and through training and equipping their Boards and Advisory teams to function as partners in leadership and ministry.

Finally, one thing I've been especially reminded of this past year—something that is true in all ministry settings—is that these missional efforts are only possible if we are intentional about Generating Missional Resources

Missional Resources and being good stewards of those resources. A program audit this past fall has helped "tee up" some important conversations and has prompted us to continue focusing on alignment across areas, including alignment of our missional resources with our overall mission. One of our greatest missional re-

sources is our staff. We've undergone several staff changes and realignments in the past year and there is still more to come. As with most changes, these shifts bring anxiety as well as hope and possibility. But God has been faithful through it all and we trust that God will continue to provide the staffing leadership needed to move forward.

Hopefully, Steve and I will have finished the unpacking/sorting/arranging process by the time this report is published. But I know the process of continuing to "unpack" this role and see God's calling and opportunities for ministry in our Conference with new eyes, will be an ongoing adventure. Thanks be to God!

Rev. Rebecca Trefz, Director of Ministries

4.4 Communications

The stories of transformation and discipleship continue to flourish across the Dakotas Conference. Communications is blessed to tell the story in many ways. The need for digital and video storytelling is constantly increasing as the vitality of the churches across the conference is expanding. Resources and tools have been put in place to help tell the story of the local churches.

David Stucke was hired in August 2015 as the Communications Associate. Dave brings skills in video production. He was a longtime member of Canyon Lake United Methodist Church in Rapid City, South Dakota. Most recently he worked with technology and video in Spokane, Washington. Dave has enhanced the video quality and produced several videos including Bishop's Christmas and Easter message, the Conference weekly Lenten videos, and videos for conference missionaries.

The use of the DAVID video conferencing systems continues to grow. DAVID is now being utilized in the Minnesota Conference. There have been upgrades in equipment, software and new sites added. Here is a list of DAVID sites:

North Dakota sites: Bismarck McCabe UMC, Fargo First UMC, Grand Forks Wesley, Jamestown First UMC, Minot Vincent UMC, Williston Faith UMC.

South Dakota sites: Aberdeen First UMC, Lake Poinsett, Mitchell Conference Office, Pierre First UMC, Rapid City First UMC, Sioux Falls Asbury UMC, and Watertown First UMC.

Minnesota sites: Grand Rapids UMC, Minnesota Conference Office, Redwood Falls UMC, Rochester Evangel UMC, and Sartell St. Cloud Regional UMC.

Other communication tools and resources continue to increase in usage including the website, e-newsletters including Mondays @ Dakotas and Pastors @ Dakotas. Other communication efforts include live production at events such as the Fall Leadership Gathering and Annual Conference.

Communications has also worked with several groups on branding their messages, events or ministries. Specific marketing and branding efforts include the Thrive Campaign and continual work on the Bakken Oil Rush Ministry.

Other efforts that Dakotas Conference Communications has been involved with include creating the Mission Report, press releases to major news outlets for conference wide ministries and events, creating bulletin inserts, videos and other media for the Thanksgiving Appeal, Lent, Fall Mission events and much more.

We look forward to continuing to tell the stories of vitality and how churches are reaching out beyond their doors.

Doreen Gosmire, Associate Director of Communications

4.5 Developing Missional Leaders Link

We are living in an exciting time in the Dakota's Conference! Whether it is amongst laity or clergy, the Spirit is moving and beckoning us to continue to be fearless spirit-led leaders. The function of the Developing Missional Leaders Link is to equip the local church by working with the conference leadership to provide encouragement, assessment, training and resources. All of the many facets of this particular link have taken this call seriously over the last year and worked hard towards living into journeying towards vitality and aligning themselves with the vision pathways of our conference. As a link we have explored the areas in which we are successfully living into our call:

- The Board of Ordained Ministry
 - Implemented seminarian retreat prior to annual conference in 2014 and is continuing this great relationship-building event.
 - Produced a clergy effectiveness document to help strengthen the leadership of current and future clergy.
- Camping and Retreat Ministries.
 - Working toward a self-sustained, apportionment neutral operation model.
 - Implementing camping outcomes for the 2015 camping season.
- Lay Ministries
 - Working hard to identify laity who are our most essential leaders.
 - 700 laity in the last 13 years have taken servant ministry courses.
 - 280 have attended a discernment event in the last 3 years.
 - 44 youth/young adults who took Lay Speaking at LTC from 2007-2012.
- Conference Council on Youth Ministry
 - Taking 235 youth and leaders headed to Orlando this summer for Youth 15.
 - Strategically planned follow-up events and connecting points to keep these people engaged, growing in discipleship and leadership.
- Young Adult and Campus Ministry
 - Gave eight grants totaling \$58,200 to implement ministries to reach a new and different demographic.
 - Grant Recipients were: Wesley UMC (Edgley, ND), United Campus Ministry of School of Mines, Beresford UMC, First underground -Sioux Falls First, The Bridge – Fargo Faith and NDSU, Embrace-Summit Ave, Rapid City South Maple, Spearfish UMC

We also looked seriously at the areas in which there may be gaps or room for improvement in our discipleship of leaders within our conference clergy and laity alike. We are asking tough questions about how we, as a link and as conference leadership, can help:

- Lower the age at which we begin to intentionally disciple and train leaders.
- Equip pastors to better recognize and raise up leadership from within our congregations.
- Better identify points of entry into faith and ways to move someone deeper into discipleship, towards Christlikeness.
- Shift the cultural understanding to help people see that it isn't just the paid pastor who does ministry.
- Continue work on clergy effectiveness while empowering people to see discipleship as more than just a Sunday morning thing.
- Ensure that hope and joy stay central because otherwise Christianity isn't attractive.
- Make disciples instead of just church members; develop people who lead people to Christ.
- Identify gifts in people and then plug them into where their gifts are best lived out, rather than just fill slots.

It is the hope and prayer of this link that as we carry out this work we really are developing missional leaders who create new disciples of Jesus to transform the world.

Rev. Kori Lehrkamp, Missional Leaders Link Chair

4.5.1 Board of Ordained Ministry Report 2015

As your Dakotas Conference Board of Ordained Ministry, we are blessed and challenged with (though not limited to) the following tasks: *nurturing people through the candidacy and ordination process, training new clergy and lay leaders in the Dakotas, creating and maintaining standards for clergy effectiveness throughout a clergy member's life of service, and honoring the service of our clergy members at pivotal transition points.* Over the last several years, we on the Board have worked hard at better focusing this work in light of our mission as United Methodists to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world; our Board is made up of clergy and laity who take seriously our own part in this Gospel imperative.

Two pieces of our work that are before this Annual Conference are a **Clergy Effectiveness document** and an updated **Vacation Policy**. (The Clergy Effectiveness document and the Vacation Policy will be including in the *Journal*.) Other events and opportunities we offer to fulfill our tasks are:

Licensing and Certified Lay Ministry school;

- a pre-Conference gathering for seminary students and young adult members of Conference;
- on-site, in-person interviews for commissioning and ordination candidates;
- training events for District Committees on Ministry and mentors (candidacy and clergy mentors);
- facilitating a group to attend the bi-annual, denominational Explo event and coordinating the ELISHA internship project (both Explo and ELISHA are designed for young people exploring ministry).

We on the Dakotas Board of Ordained Ministry are also seeking to **expand our culture of call** and to **grow the relationships of those already in our candidacy and ordination process**. Our Dakotas clergy and laity are our best resources when it comes to calling and supporting new people into clergy leadership: please have open eyes and hearts for those in our midst God might be calling to be bold, missional leaders for Jesus Christ in The United Methodist Church of the Dakotas. We need leaders with a sense of creativity who are aware of shifting cultural dynamics and who are willing to step out in faith to connect people to Jesus in new and different ways. Once we have these leaders on track, each of us must work to stay connected with them and with each other so that we are sufficiently encouraged and supported in this high and holy calling.

Your prayers for this work are coveted and much appreciated.

Peace in Christ, Jenny Hallenbeck, Chair, Dakotas Board of Ordained Ministry

4.5.2 Camping Ministries

With the aid of consultant Jody Oates of Kaleidoscope, Inc. the Board of Camping and Retreat Ministries and the camping staff have been involved in an in-depth evaluation process of the entire camping ministry. Historical and current data were reviewed within the context of the Dakotas Conference Journey to Vitality. A copy of that report dated February 2015 is included on the next pages. The statistical data and supporting documentation that accompanied the summary are available upon request from the camping office.

As we worked with the consultant a task force consisting of board members and staff also began the challenging work of defining the shared outcomes of the camping ministry. After much conversation and discernment the Camping Ministry has affirmed the following statement and outcomes: Campers will claim and become their best self, claiming God's call on their life. Camp will grow Christian leaders who:

- Articulate faith
- Love and accept everyone
- Serve others
- Trust God

Work is well underway with a small group of deans to intentionally provide age appropriate camping experiences this summer that will allow campers to claim their best self and God's call in their lives while growing in their ability to articulate their faith, love and accept everyone, serve others and trust God. We are in the process of identifying indicators that will help us measure growth in these areas with follow up conversation scheduled in the local churches this fall and winter to determine if this growth is being demonstrated in the local churches. Outcomes work and measurement will continue to be tweaked as we learn and grow with the goal of providing these intentional, age appropriate camping experiences for all campers in 2016. The camping ministry will also intentionally reach out to partner with local churches to foster continued growth in discipleship and leadership year round

Becky Holten, Director of Camping and Youth Ministries

Living into a Sustainable Operating Model

Dakotas United Methodist Camps

The United Methodist Church
Dakotas Conference
February 2015



KALEIDOSCOPE inc.



DAKOTAS
ANNUAL CONFERENCE
of the United Methodist Church



The creation of a Sustainable Operating Model for Dakotas United Methodist Camps was completed to provide a path for the future ministry and operation that can be vital and viable. The consultation was completed by Kaleidoscope based on research, analysis and workshops with the Board of Camps and staff.

This plan was completed by:

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Specializing in planning and consulting services for camps, retreat and outdoor centers to help them thrive.

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CONTEXT

As the Dakotas Annual Conference seeks to equip vital congregations these pathways are guiding the present and future formation of the organization:

1. Developing bold, spiritual, missional leaders,
2. Equipping vital, missional congregations,
3. Extending the missional impact throughout the communities and the world, and
4. Generating new missional resources.

In 2013/2014 Kaleidoscope completed a comprehensive assessment and strategic directions plan. This work identified five key initiatives for the long term health of the ministry:

1. Develop shared outcomes for the camping ministry across the Conference
2. Create a staffing model to enact initiatives
3. Focus the operating model and niche of each site
4. Construct a financial model to fund all areas of ministry
5. Empower a policy governance board with strategic leaders

The current work of Kaleidoscope is to define the next steps to live into the key initiatives and define a sustainable operation and ministry for the long term. Key areas were defined to be addressed:

1. Outcomes for camp and retreat ministry per age categories
2. Communications plan for constituents
3. Narrative and financial model, with applicable timeline and implications, for financial viability into the future
4. Defined roles and responsibilities of the diffuse organizational model of Dakotas Camps

Evolving Process and Focused Challenge

During the consultation, camp and retreat ministry was challenged to become apportionment neutral by 2021, initially in the area of operating funds from conference apportionments that support the ministry, \$138,000 in 2015. The challenge also included a vision for becoming apportionment neutral in the area of capital funds, currently \$115,000 in 2015. This goal was shared to be a second step after the first goal is reached.

While this clearly focused goal created a new urgency and many questions, it didn't change the nature of the consultation to create a pathway for Dakotas Camps to live into a sustainable future ministry operation.

Note about Report:

A task force of the Board was assigned to develop the ministry outcomes. This work is critical to defining how camp and retreat ministry is a relevant ministry for United Methodists in the Dakotas Conference. Part one of this report will focus on the operating model, while part two will delineate the ministry outcome part of the consultation.

SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

In the 2014 consultation report, the consultant provided a comprehensive review of the ministry operation, including review of guest use at each property, financial operations, organizational structure, marketing and properties.

Below is a summary review and additional information about apportionment history and conference membership.

Guest use & involvement at ministry locations

Kaleidoscope conducted a use analysis of the guests who used each site for the past three complete years. The camping office also had user day records for the previous four years. The use is broken down into units, or user days (1 overnight and 3 meals), to provide comparable information within the analysis and within the industry.

All three camps are considered to be relatively small operations. Many denominational centers will range from 5,000 to 15,000 user days (some larger). Typically, the consultant would expect to see a “mom and pop” style of operation operate around 5,000-6,000 user days. A site with less than 5,000 user days is challenged to have a viable operation into the future.

Of the three sites, Storm Mountain is the largest center in regard to use and typically is able to show a gain in their operating budget. Lake Poinsett (including Living Waters Retreat Center) has hovered around 5,000 user days, while Wesley Acres is a smaller site requiring higher subsidy to meet basic operational needs. Note in 2014, Lake Poinsett experienced a significant decline in use, Storm Mountain recovered to similar use as in 2012 and Wesley Acres also declined.

User Days from 2008-2014

	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>2014</u>
Lake Poinsett	4,194	2,940	2,873	3,185	3,702	3,307	3,121
Living Waters	1,688	1,960	1,559	1,597	1,406	1,099	438
Lake Poinsett TOTAL	5,882	4,900	4,432	4,782	5,108	4,406	3,559
Storm Mountain Ctr	6,556	7,299	6,600	7,276	6,697	5,462	6,717
Wesley Acres	3,029	2,718	2,947	2,711	3,021	2,913	2,595
Central Office	2,071	1,177	586	706	709	805	961
TOTAL ALL SITES	17,538	16,094	14,565	15,475	15,535	13,586	13,832

Operating Budget – Financial History

The five year history from 2009-2013 shows the erratic nature of the operations. With smaller sites, operating budgets will fluctuate from year to year as staff conserve expenses as much as possible one year, but have increased expenditures the following year. The longer view shows the challenge of operating very small centers.

The figures for 2014 are preliminary end of year balances. Note the 2015 budget is written as a loss, but reflects the reality of the past several years of operation.

<u>Site</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>2014</u> <u>initial</u>	<u>2015</u> <u>budget</u>
Central Office	\$23,263	\$15,739	\$15,688	\$25	\$2,266	\$30,902	\$(4,403)
Lake Poinsett	\$(1,515)	\$(31,210)	\$(31,616)	\$(1,662)	\$(11,520)	\$(116,449)	\$(42,396)
Storm Mtn	\$94,005	\$33,765	\$11,141	\$34,890	\$3,147	\$32,722	\$32,974
Wesley Acres	\$(58,180)	\$(76,267)	\$(26,563)	\$(23,806)	\$(58,138)	\$(68,345)	\$(29,035)
TOTAL	\$57,573	\$(57,973)	\$(31,350)	\$9,447	\$(64,245)	\$(121,170)	\$(42,860)

Note: 2014 includes a total of \$38k in past wages distributed by all three sites

Insights:

- Lake Poinsett was close to breaking even twice in the past seven years, -\$30k others. Use has hovered around 5,000 user days. When the use fell below 5,000 user days, the operation saw a large deficit.
- Storm Mountain has financially supported the other two sites (including gifts and in kind work). Use has been 6,500+ user days. A decline in 2013 resulted in financially breaking even.
- Wesley Acres has had a deficit of roughly \$25,000 twice in past 7 years. In other years the loss was \$60-75k. User days have been very consistent at 3,000 user days. Wesley Acres is a very small operation and will be challenged to generate the necessary income for viability. This ministry would need to nearly double present use to become a break even operation. The limited population base in this area will make this amount of growth unlikely. Dakotas Camps will need to continue to provide a greater level of subsidy for this ministry operation.
- The Central Office income and expenses are offset by program income, with positive balances some years.

Apportionment History

Apportionment funding is provided in five different funds for the ministry of camps and retreats. These areas include:

1. Operations – funds which are used for marketing, other shared expenses and general support for each site’s operating budget
2. Capital – funds from the Conference Board of Trustees budget that are used for major maintenance expenses at the three sites each year
3. Conference camp staff and office – provides salary support and benefits and office space for two staff members in the Conference office who support camp ministry
4. Property Taxes – funds to pay for property taxes at the three properties
5. Insurance – liability and property insurance. The camp properties and liability insurance are a part of the larger conference policy, therefore unable to be separated as an individual expense.

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Operations	\$138,070	\$138,000	\$138,000	\$144,900	\$130,410	\$138,000
Capital	\$88,337	\$117,500	\$120,000	\$120,000	\$108,000	\$115,000
Office & Staff	\$157,541	\$154,634	\$162,717	\$163,268	\$174,101	\$179,000
Property Taxes	\$15,630	\$15,597	\$19,229	\$18,666	\$20,000	\$24,000
Insurance	Not available	Not available	Not available	Not available	Not available	Not available
TOTAL	\$399,578	\$425,731	\$439,946	\$446,834	\$432,511	\$456,000

The operations apportionment is the amount the Board has committed to eliminating in the next five years. The capital funds are the secondary area the Board will begin to work on in with the goal of being apportionment neutral. At the current rate, apportionments would still account for \$203,000 (plus insurance premiums paid as part of the full conference insurance policy) of income toward the camping ministry.

Conference Statistics in Relation to Camp User Days

The information below was taken from conference journals to give an understanding of the statistics of United Methodism in the Dakotas in relation to camp use. The United Methodist Church is declining and aging.

Year	Members	Attendance	Baptized	Children Grp	Youth Grp	SS Att	Camp User Days
2009	38,594	20,086	755	4,747	2,744	6,289	16,094
2010	37,409	19,415	788	4,964	3,014	6,163	14,565
2011	36,732	20,112	812	5,290	3,150	6,117	15,475
2012	36,512	20,391	786	5,575	3,118	5,998	15,535
2013	36,430	20,901	554	5,413	2,891	5,624	13,586
% change 2009-2013	-5.61%	4.06%	-26.62%	14.03%	5.36%	-10.57%	-15.58%

DIRECTIONS TOWARD SUSTAINABILITY

Annual Conference Messages

As a part of the Dakotas Conference ministry, camps and retreats are an integral part of the work to equip local congregations and be a tool for making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. As the Annual Conference seeks to move to align all of the conference initiatives and resources, camp leaders are also called to strategize on how to most effectively provide ministry for the future.

The vision and call for a clear focus of ministry for the Annual Conference as a whole is exciting and challenging. It calls for ministries to review, focus and potentially shift the ministry deliverables presently offered. With intense review and discernment since 2014, the Board of Camps have been seeking directions to continue as a strong partner in the conference for the long term.

1. Dakotas Camps has a renewed clarity of our ministry work with a clear focus on specific outcomes.

Supporting of local churches in making disciples with a focus on spiritual leadership development – we will enable our campers to claim and become their best self, claiming God’s call on their life. Camp and retreat ministry has a long history and does extremely well at Developing Missional Leaders.

To provide greater structure, focus and clarity to this critical work the board has identified the following values of a Christian leader. Camp and Retreat Ministry will excel at teaching that intentionally grows leaders who:

- Articulate Faith
- Love and Accept Everyone
- Serve Others
- Trust God

2. With clarity of focus and quality delivery of our product of ministry, we will seek to serve more campers, most critically by increasing summer camp registrations and secondly as a place apart for retreats offered and hosted throughout the year.

3. Dakotas Camps are committed to becoming apportionment neutral in the funding of the operational apportionment by 2021. (The operational apportionment for camps in 2015 is \$138,000). This funding initiative includes operating within a balanced budget with the fee and gift income available. Additionally, the board is committed to developing financial models that reduce the capital apportionment of \$115,000 to zero. After addressing the operating apportionment, this will be the next area to be self-funded with beginning reducing the amount in 2021.

The Board of Camps is grateful for the \$200,000+ in additional apportioned funds the Annual Conference provides for staff, office and other support annually. The Conference apportioned funds provide for significant income each year to support

camping ministry. In the past five years, apportionments have funded around \$450,000 annually.

In addition, the camping ministry has had expenses in excess of income (apportionment and fee income) on average of \$53,000 each year for the past five years. The Board of Camps believes sustainability requires a balanced operating budget as well.

In regard to becoming apportionment neutral with the operational apportionment funds, the board will immediately develop an annual fund campaign to provide support to operate the budget of our three camps. A comprehensive resource development plan is being implemented to seek long-term sustainability. This plan includes increased revenue from fees, creation of an annual fund program, developing partnerships with similar missional organizations, reviewing operational models, etc.

With increased use and initiation of an annual fund, the apportionment request for 2016 will be \$128,000 in the operational apportionment (reduced from \$138,000 in 2015).

4. With specific financial goals in place for each year until 2021, the board is prepared to create a comprehensive marketing plan, seek partners and guests who are aligned with our mission, review fee structures, align staff with skillsets needed for the newly focused efforts and continue to explore best practices.

5. While these initial steps are critical, the board will also be exploring additional areas of the ministry to assure long-term viability for future generations. Areas to be explored may include, but not limited to:

- Different operating models (such as less than year round operations)
- Creating partnerships and collaborations with other organizations
- Realigning property and facility oversight
- Reducing the number of sites operated

6. The board will annually report to the Annual Conference the progress over the next five years to reach these goals of apportionment neutrality. Specific next steps and new, revised steps will be reported and acted upon as necessary.

7. In three years, mid way through the process, in 2018, the board will conduct a comprehensive review and assessment of all aspects of the ministry and the progress on the initiatives. The results of the assessment will re-focus the next steps to live into sustainability and apportionment neutrality in the two aforementioned apportioned funds. The Board of Camps will bring a report of the review to the 2018 Annual Conference session.

8. We seek your feedback, prayers, insights and wisdom for the ministry we share together. As our culture changes, our churches change, our opportunities are new each day, the Board of Camps believes the ministry we offer is life-changing and vital to a healthy church and society. We also know we must be good stewards and operate in ways that are sustainable. We seek to be vital and viable in serving you and the world.

COMPREHENSIVE RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

To achieve apportionment neutrality AND long term sustainability, each category is defined with parameters of what will be necessary for income.

Operating Budget Viability – Goals and Parameters

1. Lake Poinsett Center must grow the amount of users in summer camp and in retreat season toward 6,000 user days. With excellent program and marketing resulting in growth of users to 2008 levels, LPC needs to break even in the 2017 fiscal year (including apportionment income support, currently at \$46,000 in 2015).
 - a. The average annual loss over the past six years (removing the high and low outliers) has been \$19,000.
2. Storm Mountain Center needs to have an operating budget gain of \$8,000-\$10,000 annually, not including apportioned fund income.
 - a. Storm Mountain Center has had an average annual gain of \$8,200 over the past six years (removing the high and low outliers) without the \$25,000 apportioned amount included.
3. Wesley Acres annual loss of no more than \$30,000 by maintaining 3,000 user days, expanding income by welcoming outside groups and possibly reducing expenses with operational changes. This loss includes apportionment support (currently at \$46,000 in 2015).
 - a. The average annual loss over the past six years (removing the high and low outliers) has been \$52,806.
4. General office budget break even, including apportionment support (\$46,000 in 2015).

Annual Fundraising for Operating Budget

Establish an annual fund to support the operating budget. Increased use will create a healthier bottom line for the operating budget, but to become apportionment neutral, the Board of Camps will need to establish a significant, ongoing annual fund campaign.

Goals and Parameters for Annual Fund

2016: \$ 27,750
2017: \$ 50,000
2018: \$ 65,000
2019: \$ 85,000
2020: \$120,000
2021: \$153,000

Apportionment Funding for Operations

2016: \$128,000
2017: \$ 99,500
2018: \$ 84,500
2019: \$ 68,500
2020: \$ 33,000
2021: \$ 0

Note: a spreadsheet projecting end of year financial standing, necessary annual funding and apportionment funding for operations is included in the supporting information.

Additional Areas to Explore

- Grant funding for operating fund, program development, capital improvements
- Endowed gifts for major maintenance and possibly scholarships – using interest income

Indicators to Measure

The basic indicators to measure effectiveness toward becoming apportionment neutral will include:

1. Total income and end of year balance
2. Number of donors and gifts
3. Average individual giving of donors
4. Annual recidivism rate of donors

CRITICAL GROWTH INITIATIVES 2015-2018

Fall 2015

- Contact former retreat groups (especially at LPC and WAC) and invite them back.
- Consolidate summer camp events at each site to fill as many beds as possible each week. Seek partners who will offer a summer camp program during the newly opened weeks.
- Review reservations for retreat use in winter 2016 into spring. Review cost effectiveness of hosting few guests. Consider closing areas of each property to allow focus on other projects/areas AND reducing expenses. Note, these may be short-term decisions. If demand or opportunity arises in the future to sustainably operate an area year round, allow flexibility to make a new decision.
- Establish process for annual fund campaign (communication, staffing, database of potential donors).
- End of year annual review (likely completed in first quarter 2016)

2016

- Launch annual fund campaign.
- Seek partner for a long-term lease for late fall/winter season – recreation, hunters. (Note: review tax implications for unrelated business income)
- Fully integrate outcomes into summer program (marketing, training, measuring, etc).
- Develop marketing/communication plan to increase retention of summer campers from 2015 – multiple, personal contacts.
- Explore grant potential for new program models and potentially capital projects (such as new recreation areas, new furnishings, sustainable maintenance)
- Explore potential sale partners who might purchase property and lease back to Dakotas Camps as needed
- Review fee structure in relation to expenses, competition and guests' expectations (perceived value)

- Seek other faith communities (who do not own a camp property) to partner, use properties
- Create feedback loop for input from constituents
- End of year annual review (likely completed in first quarter 2017)

2017

- Grow annual fund campaign
- Reach out to additional partner groups to fully fill summer use and increase utilization rate of retreats
- Review paid staffing model and roles (at sites and conference office) to seek best efficiency

2018

- Early 2018 - full review of ministry to be presented at 2018 Annual Conference

FUTURE: Additional Areas of Growth for Board and Staff

1. Continue to define the connection of camping ministry to the local church.
2. Define a discipleship model for young people that includes camping ministry (camping take the lead as faith formation experts).
3. Create a culture of call at camps that connects with local churches and Board of Ordained Ministry.

CONSULTANT OBSERVATIONS / QUESTIONS

- All sites MUST increase income, especially in summer camp events when most use is possible.
- The financial model is built on the assumption Storm Mountain would NOT receive apportioned funds for operation AND would generate a positive income to help cover losses at the other two sites. How does the board encourage the SMC Director to continue this operating model? The board should also create a succession plan for a change in the SMC Director (as may be necessary in the future), as the present Director has deep experience and connections that help enable him to secure resources.
- The financial model assumes significant growth in income for Lake Poinsett in 2016 and 2017. It also assumes sustained use and growth at Wesley Acres. The consultant believes the efforts of staff (paid and volunteer) providing consistent, quality ministry, based on the identified outcomes, will allow for growth in the ministry.
 - Lack of growth in income at any of these sites will necessitate the board to review other operating models for the ministry as a whole (and for the Annual Conference) to be sustainable in the long term.
- Developing an ongoing, supported annual fund can take time to establish and grow. The goals for annual fund support needed are significant.
- The consultant believes the exploration of operating Wesley Acres seasonally needs to be more fully explored. What would be the cost to upgrade the infrastructure to winterize all facilities?
- Also, the Board may need to explore owning less property and creating new ways of transporting campers and/or offering outdoor programming in other

facilities close to the population. It is important to focus and seek to live into the outlined plan, but the challenge of operating three locations in a Conference area that is serving less than 250 churches will be significant.

- Questions:
 - What are the boundaries of fundraising for the board in relation to the Conference?
 - What outreach does camping need to do beyond the UMC to be sustainable?
 - What is an acceptable ratio level of serving UMC members and others outside the UMC?
 - Can an operating model be created that provides apportioned funds to support fees for UMC guests but charges non-UMC guests the actual cost?

BOARD GOVERNANCE

The consultant's observation is that the Dakotas camp ministry needs to clarify roles for the board, staff and other oversight bodies of the annual conference connection. Secondly, once roles are clarified, the board needs to seek accountability of others who share the roles of governance and operation. The organizational structure of the Dakotas Annual Conference in relation to camps includes many bodies with varying responsibilities, including the Board of Camps, the Conference Board of Trustees, the Conference Council on Finance and Administration, the Conference Nominations Committee, the Director of Ministry (as the supervisor of the Director of Camping) and any personnel committee. With such diffuse roles, maintaining the quality of each area can be challenging, at least.

In a diffuse organization it is critical to be clear who is fulfilling each role for operating this ministry and overseeing its future and its current assets. Reviewing the Ten Basic Responsibilities of Nonprofit Board published by BoardSource, currently the roles are dispersed:

1. Determine the organization's mission and purpose.
 - Articulated by the UMC, the Dakotas Conference and given application by the Board of Camps.
2. Relate to the professional staff as a partner in ministry.
 - Staff is hired, supervised and evaluated by the Conference staff, specifically the Director of Ministry. The Director of Ministry should confer with the Director of Camps and the Board of Camp leaders regarding their perceptions of performance and the setting of annual goals.
3. Provide proper financial oversight. Assist in developing the annual budget to reflect the ministry priorities; ensure that proper financial controls are in place.

- Board of Camp assures that the annual budget reflects the priorities for the camp to thrive, based on its mission and purpose.
 - Conference finance leaders establish and enforce fiscal policies that assure financial viability and integrity, consistent with denominational policies and practices.
 - A communication link needs to be established between those with fiduciary responsibility for the conference (CFA) and those allocating funds for operations (Board of Camps) so that expectations of spending limits are clearly defined.
4. Ensure adequate resources for the organization to fulfill its mission.
 - Conference finance leaders define funds available from apportioned funds for camp ministry
 - Board of Camps secure additional gift funding necessary to achieve the annual and special fund raising goals.
 5. Ensure legal and ethical integrity and maintain accountability.
 - CFA and the Conference Board of Trustees need to set and communicate expectations for the Board of Camps and the staff. An annual review of policies and procedures is advised.
 6. Ensure effective organizational planning; assist in implementing and monitoring the plan's goals.
 - The Board of Camps is responsible for long range planning in relation to the Conference overall initiatives.
 7. Recruit and orient new members of the leadership body (for appointment or election, depending on the system); regularly assess the body's performance.
 - Securing new Board of Camp members is a function of the Conference Nominating Committee. The Board of Camps needs to work closely with the Nominating Committee and communicate expectations of members to ensure new leaders are the best possible members.
 - The Board of Camps needs to develop an orientation model for new members and create an assessment tool for ongoing (at least annual) review of the work of the board.
 8. Enhance the organization's public standing.
 - The Board of Camps must be able to articulate the mission, purpose and core values to the public, create key messages that are used by leaders to communicate the current status of the camp vision and goals, and take initiative to solicit support in a variety of forms within the sphere of influence of the members.
 9. Determine, monitor, and strengthen the effectiveness of the organization's programs and services.
 - This is the role of the Board of Camps to establish a system and criteria for evaluating the effectiveness of the programs and conduct the assessment.

10. Support the professional staff and assess or provide feedback related to his or her performance.

- The Board of Camps identify the person/committee who communicates to the supervisor (Conference Director of Ministry) the expectations of the Board of Camps for the lead staff person. The board also can provide feedback to the Director of Ministry (supervisor) related to the accomplishment of goals and outcomes established for the professional staff.



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4.5.3 Conference Council on Youth Ministry

Change is the only thing that is constant.

The Dakotas Conference Council on Youth Ministry (CCYM) has been constantly re-evaluating and making changes to the youth ministry program.

- Our efforts to create a brand new event resulted in 100 participants at the first ever **Dak Youth** event in Brookings in July of 2014. Though a successful event in faith development, our hope of 300 participants left our budget in the red for the first time in a decade. We have since evaluated that event, analyzed our budget and have shifted that event to a different location and time during the year.
- Training, supporting and equipping the paid and volunteer youth workers across our conference is a recognized and valuable part of our ministry.
 - **Youthworker Academy** – A training event was held May 1-3 at Lake Poinsett with Andrew Root presenting on Relationships: The Care and Discipleship of Youth.
- CCYM election process continues to be tweaked as our CCYM schedule changes.
- **Sanctuary Senior High Retreat** was held at Storm Mountain and Wesley Acres with a theme focused on dealing with stress and how faith can assist and help us focus on priorities.
- **Winter Connection** was expanded to include Middle School students. Winter Connection is an overnight event held simultaneously at 3 regional locations (this year: First UMC in Rapid City, Bismarck McCabe UMC, and Sioux Falls First UMC). Fun, fellowship, prayer stations, mission projects and worship were the body of this event in 2015.
- **Leadership Training Camp** continues to be a place in which the youth leaders elected to the CCYM practice leadership. Staffed by CCYM adults and other conference leaders, the youth in attendance select classes to attend daily, learn about, plan, and lead worship, enjoy fun and fellowship, build lasting friendships and study biblical themes each day in large and small groups.
- We continue to promote our events through the Mondays at Dakotas Email list, paper mailings and continual revisions and additions to our website: www.dakyouth.com
- The CCYM continues to be an important area in which young leaders discern a call to the ordained ministry. As leaders, we take this responsibility seriously, as well as the responsibility to educate and nurture leaders for the future of the church. As we continue to work more closely with the Board of Ordained Ministry, we hope to strengthen their process of encouraging and connecting with those discerning a call into ministry, both as laypersons and as clergy.

Rev. Kris Mutzenberger, Conference Youth Coordinator

4.5.4 Laity Report

Greetings to the laity of the Dakotas Conference! We are seeing the fruits of our hard work. Worship attendance has increased once again, which reflects greatly upon the intentional leadership of the laity!

Our work in the mission field continues to grow. From the Bakken to the Dominican Republic to Haiti and Haiti Solar Ovens to Imagine No Malaria to The Marketplace to our support of a wide variety of local mission efforts, we in the Dakotas Conference are leading the way through our efforts. Speaking of mission work, we congratulate John Lushbough of Vermillion UMC on receiving the inaugural McGovern South Dakota Hun-

ger Ambassador Award. Lushbough is the founder and coordinator of the Vermillion Welcome Table, a free weekly meal for the underprivileged, and heads the Vermillion Weekend Backpack Program.

We continue to make significant strides forward in the area of Leadership Development. In addition to the Basic and Advanced Lay Servant courses held throughout the Conference, several new things are being piloted. The Basic course and Module 1 of the Certified Lay Minister (CLM) have been combined into a Ministry Discernment Retreat, and initial reports indicate this has been very successful. A pilot course for CLM credentialing is going on at the time of this writing involving coursework over 3 weekends instead of the week-long in-house course. Finally, scheduling for future Lay Servant Ministry (LSM) courses has been moved to the Conference level, and we already have the 2015-16 sites and courses set up!

As always, I am grateful for the opportunity to serve the laity of the Dakotas Conference and ask for your prayers as we continue to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Blaine Wilson, Conference Lay Leader, Dakotas UMC

4.5.5 Young Adult and Campus Ministries

Young Adult and Campus Ministries continues to work to support the local ministries in churches and on campus that help to create younger Missional Leaders. The Link reviewed and accepted eight grant applications for ministries involved with Young Adults and Campuses. Those grants include great ministry:

- Beresford Zion UMC is creating space for young adults and especially young parents to fill leadership roles in the new AWANA program. This has continued with an increase of young people attending and leading.
- United Campus Ministries at South Dakota School of Mines and Technology is doing ministry through Bible studies and weekly meals. The UCM team has developed projects to spread God's love through a "Spread the Love" campaign and through service projects in Rapid City.
- Embrace Church launched a 3rd campus at Sioux Falls Seminary called the Summit Ave Campus. Embrace is working to spread God's love through worship and small groups.
- The Journey, a new service from Wesley UMC in Edgeley, ND meets every other week and works to develop leaders through worship.
- The Bridge, a ministry of Faith UMC on the campus of NDSU, is reaching out in ministry through Bible Study and leadership development in its core team.
- 1st underground is a ministry of First UMC in Sioux Falls, SD. 1st underground is an offsite worship and bible study experience calling forth young leaders through worship and small group leadership.
- Spearfish UMC and Rapid City South Maple also received grants.

The Missional Leaders link and the Young Adult and Campus Ministry team is working to ensure that the grants continue to be used in fruitful and powerful ways. The Young Adult and Campus Ministry Team are also working with the Board of Ordained Ministry to help connect the young adult lay members to Annual Conference and also those who are candidates for ministry.

Rev. Sara McManus, Young Adult and Campus Ministries

4.6 Equipping Missional Congregations

The second pathway in our Journey Toward Vitality is Equipping Missional Congregations. As a part of this pathway, we are working toward the outcomes of:

- Strengthening existing congregations by having 10-20 congregations each year assessed and taking the next steps toward vitality.
- Creating “New places for new people” (i.e. new churches, worship services, outreach ministries, etc.).
- Working with the Missional Leaders Link to provide effective leadership for new ministries and/or new life cycles of ministry.

In the area of **Strengthening Existing Congregations**, the Missional Church Consultation Initiative (MCCI) continues to be one of our key strategies as five churches (Fargo 1st, SF 1st, Pierre 1st, Huron 1st and Spearfish) have completed their monthly group coaching and consultation weekends and are engaged in their prescriptions with the help of additional coaches. We are seeing this process bear fruit as these pastors feel better equipped to lead their churches to do ministry in the 21st Century and as congregations are re-inspired to make disciples. In the past year, five churches were invited to be a part of the second cohort—Grand Forks Wesley, Valley City Epworth, Watertown First UMC, Madison, and Rapid City First UMC.

We are finalizing our plans for Journey Renewal, a similar process in which the conference will partner with smaller churches to launch a new life cycle. Through honest self-assessment, leadership training of clergy and laity, and coaching guidance we hope to see these smaller churches that may be “stuck”, starting to decline, or seeing signs of life but in need of direction become vital ministry centers. We hope to launch a pilot cohort this fall.

As a way of sharing a key piece of the MCCI experience, two Breakthrough Prayer Workshops were offered this January—in Mitchell and in Jamestown. Over 100 people were equipped in leading Breakthrough Prayer initiatives in their local churches as the first and most important step in increasing vitality. Our efforts to create “**New Places for New People**” continue to gain momentum. In the past year, Embrace launched an additional campus (Summit Ave.) located on the campus of Sioux Falls Seminary. In addition to being an additional worship site, the Summit Ave campus is intentionally focusing on reaching out and discipling student from Augustana and USF. We will launch two more new churches in the Dakotas conference this summer. The first will be in Watford City to partner with the excellent work the Konsors are doing. The second will be in Sioux Falls—a campus of Grace Church (a multi-site UMC in Florida) that will have recovery ministry as a key component.

Our new churches around the conference continue to grow and change. Fusion (Mitchell) continues to grow in attendance and commitment as they become a vital part of the Mitchell and Dakota Wesleyan communities. After five months in a temporary location, Encounter (Watertown Cornerstone) has moved into a permanent site and is excited to see what God will do through this 24-7 location. The Gathering (Fargo) has moved to a bi-vocational model, with Cody Schuler serving as pastor as well as working as a program coordinator with the Fargo-Moorhead Coalition for the Homeless, as a means for better financial sustainability as they reach the challenging demographic of the “nones” and “dones”. The Embrace-Tea campus recently celebrated their 1st “birthday” and continues to attract people from the surrounding area and seeks to connect them with a church and with small discipling groups.

As we seek to provide **effective leadership** for new as well as existing churches, we held a Church Planter Assessment Workshop in March. A group of 12 current clergy and laity participated in a time of self-discovery, assessment and learning as a means of identifying leaders for new churches. However, the fruit of this gathering was not only the identification of potential planters but also an opportunity for further clarity and discernment of gifts and callings that will help these leaders to be more effective in whatever ministry setting they serve.

Probably the biggest effort toward furthering the work of Equipping Missional Congregations is the upcoming launch of our capital campaign for congregational development, “Thrive—Strength for Today, Hope for

Tomorrow.” As the Holy Spirit moves through the Dakotas Conference, we look expectantly to the ways in which God will not only work through the generosity of individuals and churches but also the ways in which God will use this entire initiative to inspire each of us and our churches to Thrive as world-transforming disciples of Jesus Christ.

Submitted by Rev. Scott McKirdy, Chair and written by Rev. Rebecca Trefz, Dir. of Ministries

4.7 Extending Missional Impact Link

This year the Missional Impact Link worked on our budget so that money can be released for local church missions. Therefore, we announce that the amount of \$22,000 is available to Dakotas United Methodist Churches and agencies. The purpose of these grants is to spark interest in, success in and opportunity for increased missional impact in communities. The application process is available on the Conference website. Peace and Justice ministries are part of the Missional Impact Link. We are greatly aware of the need for education Conference-wide as to what and why justice ministries are needed. Peace and Justice grants are available above and beyond the Missional Impact Grants previously mentioned.

Submitted by Rev. Lou Whitmer, Chair

4.7.1 Bakken Oil Rush Ministry—Watford City

The Bakken Oil Rush Ministry in Watford City continues to reach out to many that are coming to western North Dakota because of the oil industry. This past year we have served over 586 different families and given away 17,058 items. Here is a summary of activity for this past year.

- Small groups: Serve them supper, have a time of visiting and fellowship and then share a devotional designed to help folks deal with issues that arise from living in the Bakken. Topics include, Maintaining hope in tough times, How long do you want to live and how do you want to live, God’s grace is available to every one as a free gift, You are never alone...even when you may think you are. Attendance so far has been between 10 and 12.
- Fellowship events: Our goal in the fellowship events is to give people a sense of family and help them get to know us as well as to make new friends. We like to think that we foster the following statement: Helping people make Watford City home! Here are some of the events:
 - New Years Eve Event about 25 in attendances.
 - Spaghetti feeds...at least 3. Spaghetti feeds have progressed from around 125 to over 200.
 - Picnic in the Park., 200 plus in attendance.
 - Christmas service that included a new gift giveaway for kids. (95 in attendance, 53 kids)Super Nachos and game night.
- Mobile Thrift Store: We use the Mobile Thrift Center to meet peoples’ immediate needs and begin relationship. We also host larger giveaways in the First Presbyterian fellowship hall to help folks with clothing and other items that we cannot stock in a 29-foot camper. We’ve held 8 to 10 of these events. It gives people a opportunity to shop in a well stocked venue and gives us more time to visit with people and hear their story.
- Connecting people: We sometimes connect people in need with donors for beds or other furniture. We also directed people to jobs or housing.

We also look for opportunities to pray with people, give out Bibles and devotional materials and hand out prayer need cards for those reluctant to share their needs with us face to face.

Submitted by Jim and Kathie Konsor

4.7.2 Bakken Oil Rush Ministry—Out in Faith

Out in Faith is a ministry of Faith United Methodist Church in Williston, ND. Assistance is offered to God's children to meet the basic needs of life. Katie Peterson, Deaconess, Church and Community Worker with the General Board of Discipleship guides the ministry. The major activities of Out in Faith are:

G.I.F.T.—God in Faith Tonight a weekly meal and worship service where people come to enjoy fellowship and food. G.I.F.T. is a ministry of Faith UMC in Williston and Out in Faith. Bibles, coats, hats, gloves and other items are also distributed. There are an average of 40-50 people who attend each week.

Community visits and outreach—Two to three times each week visits are made to camper villages, city parks and other places where homeless people may be found. An invitation is extended to come to G.I.F.T. and also to come over to the church for assistance with documentation, housing applications, job applications, clothing and household items.

Submitted by Katie Peterson

4.7.3 Disaster Response

The Minot flood home reconstruction work was completed in October 2014. The city of Minot continued to purchase both flood damaged homes and homes affected by the flood that had been rebuilt or refurbished. These homes were located in the footprint of the new flood protection system. We have continued assisting the Minot community in the salvaging of home materials and appliances that could be reclaimed and provided to homeowners who remain in need of assistance. Some of these homes had all new appliances, cupboards, bathroom fixtures and doors. This ministry allows for another level of disaster ministry. We remain the prime contractor for this service. Since closing out the flood construction and VIM teams in October 2014, we have served Minot by reviewing 40 homes for salvaged items/materials.

In addition, the work on the Conference Disaster Warehouse has continued. All that remains are the electrical infrastructure in the 40' X 80' steel building located on the Spirit Lake Ministry Center. This is a joint UMCOR and Dakotas Conference project that will support the storage and accountability for trailers and equipment that the disaster ministry has accumulated in the past three years. Additionally, it will provide a depot maintenance facility to maximize the life of over \$100,000 of prime disaster equipment. I am currently completing an inventory of this equipment.

Finally, both the conference and UMCOR have supported the facilities and operation of the Lords Cupboard food pantry and the Welcome Table. This ministry has provided vital food services to those who are affected by poverty. During this period I assisted in the repurposing of the original \$200,000 UMCOR grant to allow the Lords Cupboard to lease a location for its operation for the next six years. I cannot say enough about the direct support received from UMCOR since the onset of the 2011 flood in Minot.

Submitted by Bob Lower

4.7.4 Solar Oven Partners 2014

2014 proved to be a productive year for Solar Oven Partners (SOP). We extend our gratitude to individuals and churches for their overwhelming support of our mission. Your endorsement fuels the excitement that drives our volunteers to continue this life-saving work among impoverished and underserved families.

Since the mission's beginning in 2000, nearly 9,500 solar ovens have been distributed in cities and remote villages across Haiti from Port-au-Prince to Les Cayes. It has long been our desire to gather information that would reveal the impact these ovens have had not only on individual families, but on the environment, as well. In July, for the third year in a row, a Survey Team of 4 individuals, funded by a grant from the Cora Foundation, traveled with SOP Director Rick Jost and our Haitian staff to finish their goal of interviewing another 300 solar oven cooks, for a grand total of 917 interviews since 2012. Reaching nearly 10% of our solar cooks, they gathered data that proved to be very exciting news indeed.

The survey data reveals that women use their solar ovens 50% of the time when preparing meals for their families. This translates into a 50% reduction in charcoal demand and use, as well as a 50% reduction in the carbon footprint per each solar oven user! Solar cooks are using their ovens to pasteurize water or milk for their families nearly 3 times each week, protecting them from deadly pathogens. On average, Haitian women cook for a family of 5, however, it is not uncommon for one solar cooked meal to feed up to 10-12 individuals that often include extended family members and friends. Money saved from purchasing expensive charcoal is going for more nutritious meals, medical care and sending children to school. And some ambitious women are starting their own enterprises selling baked goods from their solar ovens at the market to augment family income. The data demonstrates that solar ovens are making a significant difference in the lives of thousands of Haitian families and that they are definitely impacting/reducing charcoal use and subsequent air pollution. Amen!

Following a successful year of fundraising to secure the equivalent of one year's salary and benefits, Solar Oven Partners' Advisory Board interviewed and hired a new Associate Director to assist with fundraising, grant writing and administrative duties. Catherine Hoss joined our team in September and has hit the road running with fundraising campaigns, grant writing and getting a handle on finances and administrative responsibilities.

Another highlight in 2014 was the engagement of volunteers in a third workshop in Raymond, SD for the production of French bread pans. Gene and Wanda Bethke first experimented with making the bread pans in 2012 and those pans welcomed enthusiastically by our solar oven students. Their workshop, located on Main Street in Raymond, now produces the pans that are standard accessories to all of our solar oven kits. Along with Dave and Renae Silbernagel's workshop in Moffit, ND that produces the aluminum reflectors, the addition of this specialized workshop in Raymond greatly improves overall efficiency and production and streamlines the final process of manufacturing and packaging the remaining oven components at the Volga workshop.

With 3 workshops in production, our Associate Director compiled the data around the number of our amazing volunteers that make this mission possible. There are more than 304 different individuals who volunteer their time in the many and varied aspects of getting a shipping container of 1150 ovens ready for Haiti. In 2014, volunteers logged 4,900 hours towards the production of nearly 1,750 solar ovens. Using the 2014 National Volunteer Hour Value of \$22.55, this translates into \$110,495.00 in labor savings towards the value of these ovens! This mission could not exist without our many many partners who volunteer their time, talents and expertise in Christian service. We extend our deepest gratitude to all across the Conference and beyond who make this mission happen!

In addition to the Survey Team that traveled to Haiti in July, a second team followed on its heels to assist with erecting a shelter to build ovens under, as well as getting more than 100 built for distribution. Then in November, a third team traveled to an orphanage outside of Les Cayes where they built and helped distribute 248 ovens to eager trained students. Our mission to empower families with both the knowledge and the tools to fight hunger and poverty continues through the grace of Our Lord Jesus Christ and the many loving souls who come together to make it possible.

In Mission Together, Catherine Hoss, Associate Director

4.7.5 Spirit Lake Ministry / Children of the Harvest

The Children of the Harvest (COH) funds the food pantry at the Spirit Lake Ministry Center. The Spirit Lake Ministry Center food pantry operates all year and has regular set hours and acts as an emergency source of food. The food pantry distributes in excess of \$10,000 in food per year and met the needs of more than 600 people per month last year on and around the Spirit Lake Reservation. The food pantry depends on the funds from the Spirit Lake Ministry Center, donations from churches and individuals, and food drive items. Recipients of the food pantry receive more than just physical sustenance. They are given the opportunity to leave prayer requests and fellowship with the missionaries. This helps grow the faith community of The United Methodist Church on the reservation. Our goal for 2015 is to reach an additional 20 families each month. We have made contact with Tribal Social Services, the Red Cross, the Salvation Army and the Dakota Prairie Community Action Organization for referrals for persons in need.

The Children of the Harvest provided Shoebox Christmas Gifts for 6,535 children in poverty and need in 2014. The Shoebox Gifts were distributed to six reservations in the Dakotas Conference and the Red Lake Reservation in MN. The gifts provide the children with the story of Jesus' birth, warm hats, scarves, mittens/gloves and fun toys. The gifts share the love of Jesus Christ and plant seeds of faith with the children who receive them. Shoebox Christmas gifts are donated by churches from all over the country and within the Dakotas Conference. Some churches and individuals donate funds to help with the purchase of Shoebox "filler" and to provide for the printing costs of the story of Jesus birth. The program is outlined in emails, on Facebook, meetings, speaking engagements and the Mondays in the Dakotas. Children of the Harvest provides spiritual follow-up with the children. Last year the program costs exceeded \$3200.00.

The Community Children's Fund provided emergency clothing and temporary housing for 63 children affected by a life-changing events. The Community Children's Fund was used to purchase winter coats, hats, gloves, blankets, clothing, toys and other items lost in fires or any other major event that occurs in the child's life. We take items from the food pantry/clothing closet when available, but on occasion must purchase these types of items. The program depends on funds from the Spirit Lake Ministry Center, churches and individuals to help defray the cost of these items. Last year we spent in excess of \$3,000.

Sidewalk Sunday School provided \$500.00 grants to 10 Dakotas Conference churches. The churches used the funds to purchase material and snacks for their community children's outreach Vacation Bible School program.

The Sidewalk Sunday School program also provides the children of the Spirit Lake Reservation the opportunity to participate in a fast-paced Vacation Bible School program. In 2014, the trailer visited 5 different local communities on the reservation and shared the love of Jesus Christ with more than 300 children each week during a 10-week period. We were able to begin and reinforce basic spiritual learning to more than 1,000 children on the reservation. The success of this program can be seen in the interaction with the missionaries outside the program boundaries. The children see us in their local schools, on their playgrounds and in public areas on the reservation, greet us and ask questions about the program and some of the older children

seek spiritual advice. This program is a tremendous success and will continue to be a part of the Sidewalk Sunday School program in the upcoming years.

The Spirit Lake Ministry Center hosted more than 450 Volunteers in Mission in 2014. The volunteers from across the country built 10 wheel-chair ramps, 2 decks, roofed 5 houses, painted 2 houses, rehabbed 7 houses and provided spiritual fellowship to untold numbers of local residents. The focus of our teams is to build. We build relationships that are meant to last a lifetime. We are building a faith community that allows the local residents to regain trust in the church and to bridge the gap of cultural differences. We focus not on the difference, but on the similarities of our cultures. Those being our faith and trust in God. The Spirit Lake Ministry Center provides a place for children and adults alike to come and feel comfortable. We sponsored the annual Culture Camp, the Equine Diversion Program, Family Services Retreat and the Wellness Ride. These four programs brought more than 350 children and adults to the Ministry Center. We hosted a back-to-school bash for the children on the reservation. This free carnival had more than 25 youth and adult sponsors and 300 local children and their parents attend. It was a major success. The programs at the Spirit Lake Ministry Center continue to grow and are developing a faith community that will one day become a congregation.

The Spirit Lake Ministry Center began a monthly hot meal program in December with 67 adults and children in attendance. We also hosted a Pizza and Movie night with 30 children watching a movie and eating Pizza. These programs will continue on into 2015 with a new Bible Study, Conversions of Faith, beginning in January.

Submitted by Mike and Libby Flowers

4.7.6 Tree of Life Ministry

Tree of Life is a Relief Agency, serving several of the poorest counties in the United States in Mission, S.D. With 80% unemployment, the services provided through this extension ministry are much needed. After 10 years, Rev. Russell Masartis is stepping down as Executive Director, but work will continue under new leadership.

Our ministries include:

- * Building a bridge of respect and compassion between cultures.

Tree of Life has made great strides in developing respect and understanding between cultures, and breaking down racial prejudice and distrust. This is accomplished by providing cultural presents to volunteers, working together with tribal agencies, and being involved in meeting daily needs.

- * Feeding the Hungry.

Current census data shows that over 50% of the Lakota people live under the poverty level, and cannot afford basic necessities. Tree of Life distributes over 1,500,000 pounds of groceries each year, and provides about 52,000 free meals. One of the teachers at the local school told us that when families cannot drive to the food pantry at "The Tree" then the children have to skip meals because of the lack of groceries. The "Warm Welcome" food pantry serves over 200 families a day, four days a week.

- * Clothing those without the means to purchase new.

With an annual average household income of under \$8,000, and with many households numbering 10 or more family members living there, seldom can these families afford decent clothing. New and used clothing are provided in a "shopping experience" to avoid people having to beg for necessities. Tree of Life provides a "Thrift Shop Boutique" as well as sending free clothing to the leaders of each

Rosebud community.

* Providing safe, comfortable homes for impoverished families.

The need is so great that a family may have to have their name on a waiting list wait for 5 years before tribal housing can make general repairs to a home. Tree of Life makes free repairs to about 50 dwellings and community buildings each year. There are families that have not had water in their homes for years, and use a garden hose to bring in water from a neighbor. Building materials are expensive, and gifts and grants are a necessity to accomplish this ministry.

* Education

One of the important tasks undertaken by Tree of Life is to show Native Americans what Christians are really like. Teams working together cheerfully, showing Christ-like compassion, and offering respect and love to all people demonstrate our witness. Throughout the year, it is our task to educate the many volunteers that come to offer their services as 1-week missionaries. We believe that education and experience are the best ways to build respect and unity, destroy prejudice and distrust, and offer a base for the message of Jesus Christ.

Rev. Russell Masartis, Director Tree of Life

4.8 Generating Missional Resources Link

Our purpose is ensure that adequate resources are available for the mission of equipping local churches to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. In 2014, the Generating Missional Resources Link was changed so that it now only meets at the call of the Bishop. We will be called to meet when a situation of such complexity and magnitude needs special attention (e.g. changing the apportionment formula). Since this change, the link has not been called to meet.

Bruce Nearhood, Chairperson

4.8.1 Conference Council on Finance and Administration

The CCFA continues to be blessed with our Director of Finance, Jeff Pospisil assisted by JoAnne Schlimgen. Jeff continues to stay in touch with local congregations to help them understand our budgets, missions and apportionments as well as training for new treasurers.

Apportionments receipts from last year were better than expected after an end-of-year influx of receipts. Our churches for apportionments gave \$3,821,662. This is the highest amount of apportionments ever given by our churches to support the work of the Dakotas Conference and General Church. Of that amount \$939,893 was given after November 30th.

Our primary work is the budget. Now that we have completed our first full year with the new apportionment method, we have a benchmark to use for formulating the budget. Since we have affectively frozen the budget over the past few years and as we now have an idea of receipts from the new method, we decided on a budget increase of 2.5% this year which is reflected in the proposed budget.

General Conference apportionments paid is at 90%.

Audit Report statement will be available in the 2015 Journal

Bob Duemig, Chair Conference Council on Finance and Administration

4.8.2 Dakotas United Methodist Foundation

The Dakotas United Methodist Foundation continues to live out its mission of multiplying gifts for the Kingdom of God and to be faithful partners on the journey. This past year we have had a number of changes. Sheri Meister, Executive Director and Dulci Stewart, Administrative Assistant were both hired as new staff in August of 2014. At the end of December 2014, the total assets for the Foundation were \$18,503,761.82. A record amount! The Foundation grant programs continue to expand. The Ministry Development Grant deadline is August 1st and Bremer Family Mission Grants deadline is February 1st. For more grant information visit our website at dakotasumf.org.

A word from our new Executive Director Sheri Meister:

As I began my position as the new director of the Dakotas United Methodist Foundation, a new chapter of my life was about to begin. This opportunity came with a host of emotions - but excitement and faith rose to the top each time I thought about my upcoming responsibilities.

It's my faith in God and the presence of the Holy Spirit that gives me pleasure every morning as I begin my workday. Each day I see opportunities of how the Foundation is able to work together with clergy, laity, and the entire Conference staff to help our churches throughout the Conference become more vital. We are doing this in these ways:

Developing Missional Leaders through seminary scholarships assisting clergy to implement a plan to grow continually in leadership and discipleship abilities; nurturing our young people through camping and leadership groups;

Equipping Missional Congregations through Ministry Development Grants, which have assisted in equipping lay leaders to provide leadership and ministry in their local congregations, connected unchurched people with outreach programs, and provided electronic outreach to those unable to connect on a weekly basis;

Extending Missional Impact by supporting Dakotas missions – Tree of Life, Spirit Lake Ministry, Hope Center, Open Door, Haiti Solar Oven, and Bakken Oil Rush Ministry;

Generating Missional Resources through congregational stewardship training, endowment consultation, and investment support.

I could not be more excited to continue my ministry with the Foundation as we build financial programs, help churches to invest wisely, be good stewards of God's resources and continue our work of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Submitted by: Mike Goos, President, Board of Director and Sheri Meister, Executive Director
dakotasumf.org info@dakotasumf.org

4.8.3 Human Resources

This past year found the Human Relations committee focused on updating and revising the Dakota's Conference Employee Handbook. With the help of Cathy Druckrey, Jeff Pospisell, Rebecca Trefz, and Becky Holton the employee handbook was reviewed and revised to bring it into compliance with today's workplace. The handbook is available on the conference website for downloading and review. The Human Relations committee continues to work with conference leadership to assist in the transition of employees as we adjust our structure to meet the needs of the conference.

Submitted by, Barry Whipkey, Chairmen

4.8.4 Board of Pensions

Pensions
Board of Pensions of the Dakotas Annual Conference
of The United Methodist Church, Inc.
and
South Dakota Annual Conference
United Methodist Board of Pensions, Inc.

The Dakotas Conference Board of Pensions (Board or BOP) administers the pension, health care and other benefit programs available to clergy and lay employees of United Methodist institutions (local churches, annual conference, and other UM related entities).

The Board has adopted as our guide a purpose statement which reads: The purpose of the Board of Pensions of the Dakotas Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church is to wisely provide pension and health care benefits for its clergy, lay employees and their families so that they can more freely equip the local church to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. (See Para. 639.1 in the 2012 Book of Discipline).

Today, there is much uncertainty as to our nation and world's economic situation. Also, much is still unknown as to the future of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act and its implication for how health care benefits will be received. In the midst of these unknowns, the Dakotas Conference Board of Pensions with the guidance and support of the General Board of Pensions and Health Benefits and in partnership with the Dakotas Annual Conference, are committed to providing full funding for a pension plan, providing access to health benefits, and providing funding for all unfunded liabilities.

In order to keep the promises of our pension plan, the Dakotas Board of Pensions in partnership with the Dakotas Annual Conference has undertaken and will continue a program of long-term planning. We are working with actuaries from the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits (GBOPHB) to set target balances for each of our obligations that will ensure a sufficient cash flow for present and future needs and will provide a "cushion" for apportionment stabilization.

Benefit Programs administered by the Dakotas Conference Board of Pensions include:

- **Health Insurance:** The Board currently provides health insurance for eligible active clergy, retired clergy under the age of 65, lay employees, their families and surviving spouses through the "HealthFlex" plan offered by the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits. The Board recommended effective 1/1/2013, providing retirees with access to coverage through One Exchange which will be facilitated by the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits. This was voted on and approved at Annual Conference June 2012.
- **Comprehensive Protection Plan (CPP):** CPP provides several benefits for eligible active clergy, retired clergy, their families and survivors. These include:
 - Disability benefits for clergy who are not able to perform full-time work as clergy for medical or behavioral health reasons.
 - Death benefits of lump-sum payments upon the death of a clergy, spouse, surviving spouse, or dependent child, a basic annuity rate for surviving spouses, an annual surviving child benefit for children under the age of 18, and an educational benefit for surviving children enrolled in school and under age 25. According to the General Board, "Clergy who retire under the 20 year rule are not eligible for CPP death benefits."

Comprehensive Protection Plan (CPP) premiums for eligible active clergy serving less than full time under "Special Arrangements" will be required to be paid directly to the Dakotas Conference at a rate of 4.4% of the current year Denomination Average Compensation (DAC) by the clergy or the church/salary paying unit that the less than full time clergy is serving. The Dakotas Board of Pensions reviewed the latest CPP Adoption Agreement that was completed in 2008 after recommendation from our General Board Conference Liaison making the following revisions to a new CPP Adoption Agreement that went into effect 1/1/15.

Full and Associate Member appointed to Sabbatical Leave are now required participation.

Full & Associate Members appointed to Attend School are now required participation for a maximum period of 3 years. Provisional Member has optional participation for maximum of 3 years.

Full, Associate and Provisional Member appointed to Medical Leave has optional participation for a maximum of 1 year.

Full, Associate and Provisional Member appointed to Personal or Family Leave has optional participation for maximum of 5 years.

Full and Associate Member, Full Deacon appointed to Transitional Leave are required participation for maximum of 1 year. Provisional Member and Provisional Deacon has optional participation for maximum of 1 year.

Full, Associate and Provisional Member appointed to Involuntary Leave has optional participation for maximum of 1 year.

Full, Associate and Provisional Member appointed to Three Quarter Time are required participation. Full, Associate and Provisional Member appointment Half time or less has optional participation. Deacon appointed to less than Quarter time has optional participation.

Optional participation – Member is required to pay premium. Cost of the premium is 4.4% of the Denominational Average Compensation (DAC) in the year of the appointment. Optional participation premiums will need to be paid by the 30th of each month. To enroll in this benefit the clergy person must contact the Conference Benefits Officer within 30 days of appointment.

Effective 1/1/2013 for those who retire 1/1/13 or after (CPP) Participant (retiree, retiree's spouse, retiree's surviving spouse, retiree's child) Death Benefits will change to a flat dollar amount rather than a percentage of the Denomination Average Compensation in the year of death as was calculated previously. Death benefits for Active Participant will remain the same.

- **The Ministerial Reserve Pension Fund (Pre-1982 – MRPF):** This "Defined Benefit" plan offers a benefit for each year of service before 1982. The annuity (Past Service) rate is adjusted according to the CAC (Conference Average Compensation). The annuity rate has a Disciplinary minimum of no less than 0.8% of the CAC.
- **Ministerial Pension Plan (MPP):** A defined contribution plan for service between January 1, 1982 and December 31, 2006. Effective January 1, 2007, no further contributions are paid into this plan. However, the Annual Conference is still responsible to guarantee the annuity amounts paid from the Ministerial Pension Plan.
- **Clergy Retirement Security Program (CRSP):** Approved by the 2012 General Conference, CRSP provides two levels of benefits for clergy effective 1/1/2014: a) a "Defined Benefit" (DB) component equal to 1.00% of the Denominational Average Compensation (DAC) at retirement for each year of credited service (1.25% of credited service from 2007-2013) and b) a "Defined Contribution" (DC) equal to 2% of a clergy's plan compensation deposited into an investment account controlled by the clergyperson. In addition, the Church/salary paying unit will match participant contributions to the United Methodist Personal Investment Plan (UMPIP) up to 1% of compensation – and deposit those matching funds into participant CRSP DC accounts. Therefore, if a participant contributes at least 1% of compensation to UMPIP, his or her CRSP DC contributions will be 3% as was under the 2007-2013 CRSP plan. This plan change is effective January 1, 2014.
- **Pension and Benefit Plans for Lay Employees:** The Board of Pensions administers these plans; however, funding and enrollment for these plans are the responsibility of the employer (Annual Conference, UM related institution, or local church).
- **United Methodist Personal Investment Plan (UMPIP):** This voluntary plan is a 403(b) retirement savings and investment plan. If local churches, the annual conference, or UM related institutions are willing to become a plan sponsor, clergy and lay employees can make personal contributions to UMPIP without any "employer" contributions. The requirements to do this are very simple: complete the necessary application forms to be a PLAN SPONSOR, withhold an amount from the employee's wages, and submit it to the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits monthly on the employee's behalf. **However, if clergy want to make sure they continue to receive the full 3% into their CRSP DC account they will need to participate and make personal contribution of a minimum 1% of their compensation into their UMPIP account.**
- **Care and Concern Fund:** *Care and Concern funds are available to the cabinet on a case by case basis. The case shall be presented by the Cabinet for approval by the Executive Committee of the Board of Pensions as to the need for these funds. A report shall be given to the full Board of Pensions on any cases. These funds shall be of a last resort after all other options have been explored including the use of cabinet emergency funds. The purpose of this fund is to assist: A) pastors exiting from ministry and B) caring for extreme health and well-being issues. At the end of the calendar year any leftover cabinet emergency funds shall be transferred to replenish the Care and Concern fund. To date, the Care and Concern Fund has assisted in one exit transition and one health and well-being issue.*

FUNDING POLICIES

Retiree Health Liability

In 2012 the Board recommended providing retirees with access to coverage through One Exchange which will be facilitated by the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits. This decision also affects the Retiree Health Liability which, as of December 31 2008, had an unfunded obligation of \$17,434,158. Instead of paying a percent of the health insurance premiums for retirees, the Dakotas Conference will provide contributions to individual Health Reimbursement Accounts (HRAs). The annual total amount to be provided will be determined annually by the Board. As a result of this change, we will no longer have an unfunded obligation for retiree health. This was voted on and approved at Annual Conference 2012.

Lynch Trust Funds Policy

The Board of Pensions of the Dakotas Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church, Inc. is the entity within the Dakotas Conference structure that has “charge of the interests and work of providing for and contributing to the support, relief, assistance, and pensioning of clergy and their families, other church workers, and lay employees of the institutions, organizations, and agencies within” the Dakotas Annual Conference, (2012 Book of Discipline, ¶639). The Board of Pensions of the Dakotas Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church, Inc. is the successor of the Conference Claimants Fund and therefore is the entity responsible for administering funds today that are dedicated to the same purpose as the “Conference Claimants Fund” of the Methodist Episcopal Church [and the Methodist Church] as outlined in the will of Frank Lynch. As stated in the [will and codicil of Frank and Georgia Lynch], their intention in making their gift to the Conference Claimants Fund was to provide for the benefit and welfare of “worn out preachers.” Therefore, it is the policy of the Dakotas Annual Conference, that when the principals of the Frank Lynch Trust and the Georgia Lynch Trust are distributed, the Dakotas Conference Board of Pension & Health Benefits shall be the Conference entity to receive and exercise stewardship over both the principal and the existing and subsequent earnings of those Trusts.

On receipt of the disbursed Trusts’ assets, the Board of Pensions of the Dakotas Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church, Inc. shall deposit those assets in its accounts held on its behalf by the General Board of Pension & Health Benefits of The United Methodist Church. At the time of receipt, the Treasurer of the Board of Pensions of the Dakotas Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church, Inc. in consultation with the Board’s Executive Committee shall determine where in the General Board accounts to deposit the assets. Subsequent movement and investment of the assets shall be made in accordance with then-current policies and practices of the Board of Pensions of the Dakotas Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church, Inc.

On receipt of the assets, the Board of Pensions of the Dakotas Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church, Inc. as an endowment shall hold the initial principal amount. Release from endowment status of any funds shall be made only after consideration by and decision of the Board of Pensions of the Dakotas Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church, Inc. and consistently with the [will and codicil of Frank and Georgia Lynch].

All earnings generated by the Lynch Trusts Assets Endowment shall be allocated to the support, relief, assistance, and pensioning of clergy of the Dakotas Annual Conference as determined by decision of the Board of Pensions of the Dakotas Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church, Inc.

Earnings generated by the Lynch Trusts Assets Endowment that are included in the annual budget recommendation of the Board of Pensions of the Dakotas Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church, Inc. shall be expended consistently with the [will and codicil of Frank and Georgia Lynch] as recommended by the Board of Pensions of the Dakotas Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church, Inc., and adopted by the Dakotas Annual Conference.

UPDATES TO THE CPP PLAN

Due to updates in format and wording of CPP Adoption Agreements from the General Board the Dakotas Board of Pensions reviewed the latest CPP Adoption Agreement that was completed in 2008 and made the following revisions to a new CPP Adoption Agreement that went into effect 1/1/15.

Associate Member on Sabbatical Leave are now required participation.

Full & Associate Members appointed to Attend School are now required participation for a maximum period of 3 years. Provisional Member has optional participation for a maximum of 3 years.

Full, Associate and Provisional Member appointed to Medical Leave has optional participation for a maximum of 1 year.

Full, Associate and Provisional Member appointed to Personal or Family Leave has optional participation for a maximum of 5 years.

Full and Associate Member, Full Deacon appointed to Transitional Leave are required participation for a maximum of 1 year. Provisional Member and Provisional Deacon has optional participation for a maximum of 1 year.

Full, Associate and Provisional Member appointed to Involuntary Leave has optional participation for maximum of 1 year.

Full, Associate and Provisional Member appointed to Three Quarter Time are required participation. Full, Associate and Provisional Member appointment Half time or less has optional participation. Deacon appointed to less than Quarter time has optional participation.

Optional participation – Member is required to pay premium. Cost of the premium is 4.4% of the Denominational Average Compensation (DAC) in the year of the appointment.

UPDATES ON THE HEALTHFLEX PROGRAM:

HealthFlex is offered to Annual Conferences through the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits (GBOPHB). This plan is specifically designed for active and younger than age 65 retired United Methodist clergy and lay employees. Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois is the health insurance carrier which has been contracted to administer the plan and process claims.

The HealthFlex insurance plan has strict guidelines regarding payment of premiums. In order for the Conference to have some perspective on the actual health insurance bill for our participants, the following numbers are the actual cost for each category of participant enrolled in HealthFlex for 2016:

ACTIVES:

Single	\$ 8,484
Participant plus one	\$16,092
Family	\$20,352

UPDATES ON ONE EXCHANGE FOR RETIREES:

Because of the “roll-back” accounting set up originally in 2013 for participants by One Exchange it was difficult to calculate the percentage of our retirees that had all their premiums covered or had to pay no more than \$100 for 2014. The “roll-back” accounting has been discontinued for 2015 going forward. The average HRA to a participant for 2015 was \$2641.

UPDATE ON THE RETIREE HEALTH LIABILITY FUNDING PLAN AND NEW INFORMATION ON A RETIREE HEALTH FUNDING PLAN /(HEALTH REIMBURSEMENT ACCOUNTS)

To fund the Health Reimbursement Account contributions, the Board will use funds from three sources. It is the Board of Pensions hope that we will be able to increase the funding amount each year for our retirees:

1. Funds that had been accumulated for the Retiree Health Liability. As of December 31, 2014, the amount of these funds was \$1,239,890.
2. Earnings from the Frank Lynch Trust and Georgia Lynch Trust. In 2014, the trusts distributed a combined total of \$38,564. As of December 31, 2014, the balance of these trusts was \$13,403,307
3. On January 1, 2015, 3% will be added to the Active Participant Share in the “Salary Ratio” way that the Active Participant Share is currently calculated. The amount generated by the additional 3% will be directed to funding retiree health.

Pension Payments and Rental/Housing Allowance

This document has been updated for 2016 and can be found in the “Resolutions” section of this Journal.

Dakotas Annual Conference 2016 Comprehensive Benefit Funding Plan Opinion and Summary may be picked up at the Registration Desk.

Leana Stunes,, Conference Benefits Officer

4.8.5 Conference Board of Trustees

This report is being brought to the Conference, keeping in mind the three-fold ministry of the Conference Trustees to:

- Care for the property of the Conference, making it available for the agencies of the Conference.
- Maintain the parsonages owned by the Conference, keeping in mind the needs of the families that live in the homes, and
- Investing funds so that the proceeds can be used to fund several committee ministries.

Below is a report of the properties of the Dakotas Conference:

Property	Date Acquired	Cost	Insured Value	Responsible Party	2014 Maint*	Notes
Storm Mountain Center			4,136,300	Board of Camping	108,000	1 10
Lake Poinsett Camp	1946		4,741,800			
Wesley Acres Camp			2,172,850			
Prairie Hills Parsonage	5/15/1998	199,852	247,500	Board of Trustees	10,676	2
Sakakawea Parsonage	2/27/2009	289,032	218,700		1,271	
Eastern Sunrise Parsonage	3/2/2009	254,484	206,100		460	11
Dir of Camping Parsonage	5/1/1996	144,851	231,000		1,073	3
Dir of Finance Parsonage	7/15/1997	135,219	195,000		7,172	4
Dir of Ministries Parsonage	10/6/2008	357,714	277,900		1,733	5
Director of Leadership Parsonage	12/31/2001	176,589	204,300		2,465	6
Conference Center	2/23/1970	127,639	799,200		12,971	7
Fargo Campus Ministry	1960		472,500		0	8
Spirit Lake Nation	4/14/2006	311,409	878,030		SL Ministry	0
Southern Hills Parsonage	7/29/2010	202,917	273,600	Missional Cong Link	2,917	9

*Includes only the amount provided by Trustee Funds or Apportionments for maintenance.

1. \$27,000 is transferred to each camp. The Board of Camping holds \$27,000 in reserve for large and unexpected maintenance that require immediate attention.
2. The upper and lower decks had become warped and unstable. We received two bids to replace the decks and ended up replacing the decks for \$9,567. \$1,071 was spent for radon mitigation.
3. The net proceeds from the sale of the parsonage was \$189,684 and were deposited in the Trustees Fund. The investment earnings will be used to pay out a housing allowance.
4. The net proceeds from the sale of the parsonage was \$164,922 and were deposited in the Trustees Fund. The investment earnings will be used to pay out a housing allowance. \$7,172 was spent to prepare the parsonage for sale including radon mitigation, bat proofing, painting, and siding & trim repairs.
5. The net proceeds from the sale of the parsonage will be approximately \$366,000 and will be deposited in the Trustees Fund. The investment earnings will be used to pay out a housing allowance.
6. \$1,071 was spent on radon mitigation. Three of four parsonages in Mitchell required radon mitigation. This parsonage will be sold to Fusion Church before the end of 2015.
7. Carpet was replaced in the Camping, Foundation, Finance, and Benefits offices as it was worn through in

places (\$5,219). Several of the offices were also painted (\$2,056). The city replaced some sections of sidewalk (\$1,570). The remaining expenses were regular maintenance items.

8. This property was sold for a net of \$197,755. The net proceeds were split 50/50 between a Campus Ministry – Fargo and Trustees Repair Fund.
9. This parsonage will be sold to Sioux Falls Southern Hills UMC or on the open market in 2016. The proceeds will go to the Trustees Fund.
10. Lake Poinsett Camp owns and rents out farmland near the camp. The owner of the land directly south of the camp approached Lake Poinsett Camp across the road about entering into a land swap. The Trustees have been providing guidance and advice on this issue.
11. The net proceeds from the sale of the parsonage will be approximately \$280,000 and will be deposited in the Trustees Fund. The investment earnings will be used to pay out a housing allowance.

In addition to our work in caring for Conference Property, we also worked on:

- Updating our relationship agreements with institutions in the Dakotas that have a United Methodist heritage, creating a church loan fund;
- The creation of a Church Loan Fund to be administered in cooperation with the Dakotas United Methodist Foundation;
- Insurance recommendations for local churches;
- The sale of Fargo Edgewood UMC and Brothersfield UMC (discontinued churches); and
- Lagoon issues relating to Lake Poinsett Camp.

Ron McLean, Chair

SECTION 5 --UNIVERSITY, SEMINARY AND AGENCY REPORTS

5.1 AFRICA UNIVERSITY REPORT TO THE 2015 DAKOTAS ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Africa University is blessed and privileged to celebrate the 100% investment in the Africa University Fund (AUF) apportionment by the Dakotas Conference in 2014.

The Dakotas Conference was one of 31 annual conferences—the highest number to date—to invest 100% of their asking in the AUF. Africa University thanks the leaders and local churches of the Dakotas Conference for their dedication in pursuing this goal. Thank you for your prayers and for affirming the impact of its ministry by being consistent, faithful, and generous with your investment.

The Dakotas Conference has started a good work in Africa University, and nurtured it for more than two decades with second mile gifts for scholarships and other needs. Thank you for embracing and journeying with Africa University in transforming communities and bringing new people into relationship with Jesus Christ. As you gather for the 2015 Dakotas Annual Conference, the university urges you to remain steadfast in your efforts to invest 100% of the asking to the Africa University Fund, and to other shared ministries, for years to come.

2014 Highlights:

- **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. Under his leadership, the university has launched a vigorous review of its academic programs and service delivery, aimed at enhancing our 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. Angola, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Mozambique, Nigeria, and Zimbabwe accounted for the largest proportion of the students. Female students were a record 53.4% of the total enrollment in a context where women generally 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:** New academic initiatives include bachelor's degree programs in media studies and hospitality and tourism. 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 PhD program, which links issues of Peace, Leadership, Governance, and Development, and targets policymakers.
- **Leadership and Service:** Africa University graduates are helping communities to experience God's love and care through service as Global Mission Fellows and missionaries in Africa, Europe, and Latin America. Whether in government, private enterprise, community-based organizations or in the work of the church in the Africa Central Conferences, graduates of Africa University are key decision-makers who are making a difference.

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

Please continue to pray for Africa University.

Encourage your local church to become an annual scholarship donor.

Bring fellow leaders in your church or district together to explore the possibility of investing in an endowed scholarship which can support one student a year in perpetuity.

Remember to include Africa University in your will as you make your personal estate plans. And thank you, Dakotas Conference, for your amazing outpouring of love and support. May God bless and keep you always in abundance.

Submitted by: Mr. James H. Salley, Associate Vice Chancellor for Institutional Advancement, Africa University Development Office, P O Box 340007, Nashville, TN 37203-0007 www.support-africauniversity.org

5.2 Dakota Wesleyan University

The greatest impact Dakota Wesleyan University can have each year is to graduate students who have grown intellectually and spiritually during their college years. This year, we are proud of our newest alumni who will work in healthcare, education, ministry, business, finance and communications. Many will go on to graduate school, law school, medical school and seminary. Some will travel for mission work. All will have the tools to be leaders in their communities and churches.

In addition to Dakotas Annual Conference funding of \$76,000, Dakota Wesleyan's financial commitment to United Methodist higher education is strong.

- \$230,500 in annual scholarships were exclusively dedicated to supporting United Methodist student leaders;
- \$88,000 supports a full-time United Methodist faculty member in religion. This individual introduces all students to John Wesley through the general education program.
- \$36,000 supports campus ministry programming, including bringing national speakers to campus, supporting internship opportunities for students in ministry, and providing supplies for our justice ministries, bible studies, small groups, and mission trips.

The DWU Campus Ministry program represents a vibrant effort to inspire young people to lives of service on campus, in their churches, communities and the world. Over the past decade, average weekly worship attendance has grown to more than 150 students. This year, more than 200 students are involved in various campus ministry activities including small discipleship groups, mission trips, bible studies and worship. The Rev. Eric Van Meter, campus pastor, demonstrates a deep commitment to helping young adults discern a sense of vocational calling. He routinely conducts individual visits with about 40 students weekly, many of whom are discerning calls to become pastors and lay leaders within their respective churches. DWU has sent more than 15 students into seminary or ministry work both in United Methodist and other denominations in the past four years.

In collaboration with the Department of Student Life, campus ministry provides input and guidance to the DWU strengths-based curriculum, *Learn Strong, Lead Strong, Serve Strong*. Introduced to first-year students, this four-year curriculum encourages students to explore what makes the "best version of themselves." Students work with "strengths coaches" to actively understand how their strengths manifest themselves in their vocational calling. Over four years, students reflect and then become action ambassadors for change on campus, in our community and our world.

In his first year at DWU, the Rev. Van Meter and the Student Ministry Council have led a substantive effort to strengthen authentic community through small groups; participation soared to nearly 75 participants. Embedded within this growth has been an intentional effort to align conversations about God and life into a model of community in which each person brings her or his gifts to the community to become witnesses of Christ's love.

Moreover, as a United Methodist University, we boldly foster experiences for students that encourage them to use their gifts to transform the world. Examples include the involvement of all students in a service project on the first day of freshman orientation, as well as the courses in the McGovern Center that inspire discussion and action on issues of social justice. This year, students took action on issues of human trafficking, domestic violence, poverty and food security. They created community projects that not only promoted awareness but actually developed sustainable solutions to these issues. More than 400 students were involved in specific service-learning experiences in the local, regional and global community. DWU was also one of six universities that founded Presidents United to Solve World Hunger. Our efforts to address food security issues permeate campus ministry, academic programs, and the service projects led by our institution's clubs and teams.

Although not categorized as a local church, DWU serves as the de facto local congregation for many students. The close community at DWU means that staff, students and faculty have a chance to express God's love in tangible ways to people who might otherwise never come in contact with church. The Student Ministry Council operates under the constant reminder that programming is only a framework—it's people that matter. This year, dozens of unchurched and de-churched students have been drawn into ministry activities because they have been valued and cared for by authentic community.

DWU also offers students a chance to impact and experience the wider world. This summer, campus ministry will take 30 students to Peru to work in an orphanage in Trujillo. Other students plan to visit Africa to work with Christians in Uganda. Student ministry graduates will be serving across the globe, including working with Floating Doctors in Panama, working on sustainable agriculture in Hawaii, church planting in Sioux Falls, attending seminary in Denver, among other experiences.

Fusion UMC has been an integral part of helping DWU align with the Annual Conference vision. Though close connection with that congregation, we have been able to share resources and ideas for engaging our neighbors, both in Mitchell and beyond.

Our United Methodist heritage and continued commitment to the Church is evident in these numbers:

- 15 recent graduates in seminary or working in ministry-related work over the past four years
- 12 students discerning calls to ministry
- 200 students actively participating in campus ministry on a weekly basis
- 45 students participating in international mission work in 2014-2015
- 1,600 people attending on-campus speaking events promoting faith and justice
- Support of the growth and launch of the Fusion United Methodist Church community, which meets on campus. One-third of the Fusion congregation is comprised of DWU faculty, staff and students.

Regardless of the area of study chosen by our students, DWU graduates are given every opportunity to participate in activities and events that will lead them on a path of self-discovery, helping them to determine their place in the world and their responsibility to society. Dakota Wesleyan University is proud to help our students discern their calling through the lens of United Methodist higher education.

Submitted by Lori Essig, Vice President of University Relations, Dakota Wesleyan University

5.3 Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary

Greetings from Garrett-Evangelical!

Early in the calendar year, I met with various constituencies of Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, including alums, 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:

- 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 & 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:

- 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
- 52% of the study body is 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, academics 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 (expanding the number of new leadership scholarships from 80 to 100, renovating Sherman apartments, endowing several more faculty positions, 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

5.4 General Board of Higher Education and Ministry

Greetings from the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry! In 2014 and 2015, GBHEM staff has been busy with a number of initiatives assigned to the Board by the 2012 General Conference, including the **Young Clergy Initiative** and the **Central Conference Theological Education Fund**. Here are some of the ways GBHEM has been working to resource our church:

- GBHEM continues to train Group Candidacy Mentors, and Conference Board of Ordained Ministry (BOM) members, BOM staff, District Committee on Ministry members, and District Superintendents on ministry legislation and best practices for navigating the ordination process with new candidates.
- Work continues on the **Young Clergy Initiative (YCI)**. Forty-six YCI grants were awarded during the second round of applications in August 2014, bringing the total amount awarded to \$5.5 million. The grants support programs geared toward increasing the number of young clergy in the UMC and supporting young clergy already serving the denomination.
- The **Commission on Central Conference Theological Education** continues to distribute the \$5 million fund for theological education in Africa, Europe, and the Philippines. So far, the commission has awarded 130 grants to fund training for local pastors, faculty development, provision of e-readers, curriculum development, and libraries at theological schools across 22 countries.
- **Africa University** continues to graduate scholars who are changing the face of Africa. The \$50 million Endowment Campaign, a fundraising plan to ensure Africa University's financial independence, is well underway. Contribute online to Africa University at the new giving website, support-africauniversity.org.
- More than 680 college students, campus ministers, and chaplains attended **Imagine What's NEXT** last fall, an event which focused on helping students plan how they can be active in God's dreams for their communities and the world.
- For the 2014-2015 academic year, GBHEM's Office of **Loans and Scholarships** awarded 2,293 recipients a total of over \$5 million. Explore all scholarship opportunities within the UMC using the scholarship portal at scholarship.umc.org.
- Registration is open now for **Exploration 2015**, a three-day event where young adults ages 18-26 ages come to hear, discern, and respond to God's call to ordained ministry in The United Methodist Church. This year's event will be held in Orlando, FL, November 6–8. Read more or register at gbhem.org/exploration and follow @explorecalling on Twitter for updates.
- Technology enables us to make our training resources more readily available to the church. The **UMC**

Cyber Campus provides free video training sessions and lectures, as well as an online listing of continuing education courses, at umccybercampus.com.

- GBHEM and Discipleship Ministries continue to expand the **E-Reader Project**, a simple, sustainable, and cost-effective way for theology schools in remote areas of Africa and Asia to access current textbooks. Through financial support from annual conferences, local churches, universities, and individual donors like you, we're making theological education available to more people in more places than even before. Learn more or donate at umcreader.org.

5.5 Saint Paul School of Theology

www.spst.edu

Saint Paul School of Theology is a seminary of the United Methodist Church that educates leaders to make disciples for Jesus Christ, renew the Church, and transform the world. We are one institution with two campuses, in Oklahoma and Kansas.

In July 2014, Saint Paul welcomed a new President: Rev. H. Sharon Howell, who most recently served as the Executive Director of the Scarritt-Bennett Center in Nashville. In August, Dr. Elaine Robinson became the Interim Vice President of Academic Affairs and Dean for both campus locations. CFO Laura Snow was honored by the Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce as CFO of the year for a nonprofit. She has been a driving factor in getting the seminary debt free.

This past academic year, Saint Paul enrolled 231 students from 23 annual conferences and 5 countries on both campuses. The Course of Study School at Saint Paul served 237 students at the Kansas City, Missouri, Springfield, Missouri, and Oklahoma City, Oklahoma locations.

Saint Paul is pleased to announce the Saint Paul Fellows Program due to collaborations with the Oklahoma United Methodist Conference and United Methodist Church of the Resurrection. Saint Paul Fellows is a first-of-its-kind pastoral program designed to eliminate student loan debt, immerses students in varied church settings.

Four full-ride scholarships were given to seminary students commencing study in 2015. The three-year Fellows program offers a groundbreaking opportunity to equip candidates called to full-time ministry with excellent academic formation and real-life pastoral experience while reducing the need for student loans. The awards will cover tuition, books and fees for three years. Two Oklahoma Conference Fellows will receive a student appointment to pastor a small church, including a parsonage and salary to cover living expenses; the two Church of the Resurrection Fellows will receive a stipend to cover living expenses while serving at the 21,000-member congregation's suburban campus in Leawood, KS within the Great Plains Annual Conference.

Saint Paul introduced a new curriculum this year for its masters' degree programs. The Master of Divinity degree has been reduced to 79 credit hours and includes exciting new components to better prepare students for a lifetime of ministry. Each semester students take short courses called "practicums" that are taught by ministry practitioners. These offerings include such skill areas as "budgets and finance," "funerals" and "ministry with children." Students are also required to attend off-campus spiritual formation retreats which are intended to deepen their spirituality. Saint Paul continues to offer the core curriculum that is vital for ministry and emphasizes our long-standing model of action-reflection in which students learn to reflect theologically upon the practice of ministry.

The Native American Ministries Program hosted a group of Native American scholars, elders and clergy who have together written a book on Native Christian Theologies entitled, *Coming Full Circle*. Fortress Press will publish this book in August 2015 and proceeds will go toward funding Saint Paul's Native American Ministries Program.

Throughout the year we have connected with graduates and donors face to face at gatherings called Holy Conversations. We look forward to more in the upcoming year.

The trustees, faculty, staff, and students of Saint Paul thank you for your interest, prayers and support.

5.6 United Theological Seminary

www.united.edu

Is God calling you to the ministry of Jesus Christ? Come and check out amazing opportunities for study and spiritual growth in person or online at www.united.edu!

Why United?

- United offers an excellent, accredited M.Div. degree required for ordination in The United Methodist Church.
- United students participate in a community of deep faith and avid learning.
- Degree programs include traditional and/or online classes.
- United specializes in preparing persons for ordination and pastoral ministry.
- Join our graduates' long track record of successful service!
- United's focus on church renewal will prepare you to become an agent of new life and revitalization, Spirit led, a faithful leader in the mission of Jesus Christ!
- At United you can enroll in a hybrid UM Course of Study program.
- United's D.Min. program leads the nation through the faithful ministries of its pastoral graduates.
- United is committed to teaching the Bible and the historic Christian faith, cultivating spiritual formation for personal and social holiness, and renewing the Church for the mission of Jesus Christ in the world.

What could be more interesting, important or exciting?

In addition to expanding residential offerings in Dayton, Ohio, United continues to extend its service across the U.S. and the world. United's degree programs are accessible anywhere with Internet service in conjunction with periodic intensive weeks of class and community activities in Dayton.

Please let us know if you have questions about how United can best assist you.

If you would like to help make it possible for a future pastor to study at United, please let us hear from you.

We invite you to call or visit soon! For more information, please contact admissions@united.edu.

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

Wendy J. Deichmann, President

SECTION 6 --GENERAL CONFERENCE 2016 LAY DELEGATE CANDIDATE INFO.

6.1 Jodi L. Cataldo

Jodi Cataldo lives in Lehr, North Dakota. She is a member of Zion United Methodist Church in Lehr. Jodi joined Zion UMC in August of 2014, and previously was a member of Bowman UMC in Bowman, ND from 1993-1999 and Wishek UMC from 1990-1993. Jodi reestablished membership at Bowman UMC early on in 2010 and transferred to Lehr in 2014. Having been involved in the UMC for approx. 25 years, Jodi has led her local church as a Certified Lay Servant, Youth Sunday school teacher, liturgist, and choir.



At Conference and General levels of connection, Jodi currently serves as the Director of Laity in Leadership for the General Board of Discipleship of The UMC (staff); as Vice-Chair of the North Central Jurisdiction Mission Council (Chair-Elect); and works with all the jurisdictions, annual conferences, central conferences in the areas of Lay Servant Ministries, Lay Leaders, and Certified Lay Ministry. Up until Jodi's employment at GBOD, she served as a director on the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry Board of Directors beginning in the 2013-2016 quadrennium. She also currently serves on the NCJ Elections Committee and was elected as the 1st Reserve Delegate for the 2012 General Conference and a delegate to the 2012 NCJ Conference. In addition, she is on the NCJ Task Force related to the determining the viability of the jurisdiction and possible alternative structures.

Jodi states, "I have served the Lord in some kind of ministry since about 1970. God has led me on a journey that I never would have anticipated. I have been a missionary in two different countries, served on staff at Global Ministries of The UMC, served the Dakotas Conference as the Director of Leadership Development in the areas of lay ministry, board of ordained ministry and congregational development, and then moved to my current position with Discipleship Ministries of The UMC with a focus on the development of laity. I have a passion for the role of laity in the revitalization of The UMC and how significant a role they place in vital congregations. I am married to a retired elder in the Dakotas Conference, Chet Cataldo, and we have three grown children. Chet and I have shared a passion for mission and the Church all through our 40 years together."

What does it mean to be a worldwide church? What benefits and challenges come with that distinction?

A worldwide church means that all Christians are equal members at the table--equal voice, equal access to resources, equal power. It is a church for ALL God's people and not where one national church is the controller of all the "cookies." I think that Acts 2 is very reflective of who we should be as a worldwide church. The benefit is that no one is less than someone else, but the challenge will be truly grasping the concept of being a worldwide church when it means we must also loosen our grasp on the control of the money/resources so that they are available equally to the whole church. It also means making sure that resources reflect a wide variety of cultures and language groups so that persons of various contexts can participate equally.

What makes a Dakotas congregation vital, and how can our current efforts towards becoming vital congregations in the Dakotas influence the work of the global church?

A Dakotas congregation is vital when the congregation functions much as Wesley began. This is a congregation where the pastor is the equipper of the saints for ministry--in other words, when the pastor sees him or herself as God's servant to equip the lay people to be in ministry through discipleship (making disciples so they can make other disciples) and leadership development. A vital congregation in a Dakotas congregation, and in any congregation, would be living out the core process of discipleship found in par. 122 of the Book of Discipline--a congregation engaged in hospitality, personal spiritual development, equipping for ministry, and engagement in mission and outreach. The Dakotas have been a model of how when we make our mission of making disciples THE mission through the equipping of the local church for ministry that the tide of decline can be reversed. Today that focus is missional leaders, missional congregations, missional engagement and missional resources which when practiced well, it will not only create more vital congregations but will also move us closer to becoming the worldwide church we should be.

6.2 Marilyn Stroh

Marilyn Stroh lives in Sioux Fall, South Dakota. She is a member of Asbury United Methodist Church. Marilyn has been a life-long member of the UMC (50 years), and has served locally as the chair of the Asbury UMC (Sioux Falls) Administrative Council, member of the Adult Ministry Team, and as a lay delegate to the Dakotas Annual Conference. Certified as a Local Church Lay Servant, Marilyn also has previously served the Dakotas Conference as Associate Conference Lay Leader and as a member of the Transition Team following the Romans 12 task force's recommendations.

Marilyn was born Sioux Falls and raised on a farm just outside of town. She states, "I am the youngest of four children and the only girl. I loved riding horses and spending time outdoors as a child. My mother, Helen Shatter, is a long time member of Asbury UMC and very active in UMW. She has been a strong influence on my faith journey. I grew up at Asbury UMC, being baptized, confirmed and married. I was an active member of UMYF. I taught confirmation for a few years after college and was actively involved with our youth ministry having worked with Nycol (Beynon) Piekarski, Joel Higgins, Lance Holmes, Jason Bowker and Sarah Nelson. My husband joined me in serving the youth of Asbury after we were married in May of 1995. We moved to Lake Poinsett Camp in January 2003, where I was the Guest Services Coordinator and Tim worked as the Facilities Manager. In May of 2005, those positions were eliminated and we moved back to Sioux Falls. I have worked at the Good Samaritan Society for the past 10 years, however as March 31, my position with the Society came to an end. I am excited to see what God has in store for me in this next chapter of my life as it relates to work and ministry. God is good all the time and all the time God is good!"



What does it mean to be a worldwide church? What benefits and challenges come with that distinction?

Being a worldwide church means we are more than just the United States. It is not just our responsibility here in the U.S. to make disciples for the transformation of the world. We sometimes lose sight of that as we have so much to focus on right here at home. But we have brothers and sisters across the globe that joins us in this call. Logistically it can be difficult to gather us all together we tend to meet here in the U.S., which can often be a burden to those in other countries. But when we do come together we are mighty in numbers and that certainly makes a difference.

What makes a Dakotas congregation vital, and how can our current efforts towards becoming vital congregations in the Dakotas influence the work of the global church?

Vital congregations in the Dakotas are involved in ministries that enrich the lives of their communities. They offer opportunities for members to serve and grow in their spiritual journey. These congregations equip and empower members to go out and make disciples of Christ for the transformation of the world. I believe that as we learn more about being a connectional church we begin to understand the work of the global church. What we do here in the Dakotas does make an impact around the world. Our dollars, when combined with dollars from all the UM churches has the potential to be life changing. But not only do our dollars make this impact, as servants we can change lives as well.