



**TEXAS ANNUAL CONFERENCE
of the UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
2007 Journal**

E

Daily Proceedings
Texas Annual Conference
May 27 – May 31

Sunday, May 27, 2007, 7:30 p.m.
Opening Session and A Service of Remembrance
The Woodlands United Methodist Church

The 38th session for the Texas Annual Conference began Sunday, May 27 with “A Service of Remembrance and Thanksgiving,” led by the combined choirs of Jones Memorial, Covenant Glen and Blueridge United Methodist Churches. The Theme for the worship service was “Encounter the Holy.” The service included the reading of the deceased and Holy Communion.

Bishop Janice Riggle Huie called the 38th session of the Texas Annual Conference to order. Dr. Gail Harrelson, Conference Secretary, called the roll of the Texas Annual which will be based upon registration of the lay and clergy delegates.

The guest preacher was Dr. Julius Scott. The music and preaching of this worship service led all who attended into an “Encounter With the Holy.”

Clergy Session
Monday, May 28, 2007, 9:00 a.m.
The Woodlands United Methodist Church

Rev. Rick Goodrich opened the clergy session on behalf of Bishop Janice Riggle Huie who was attending the opening of the Laity Session. Rev. Everett Schrum began the session with prayer.

Rev. Goodrich welcomed the clergy, informing them that the Bishop was beginning the morning at the Laity Session and helping with a vote. He asked that all cell phones be turned off during all sessions and worship services.

He informed the clergy of the “Nothing but Nets” program. He asked the delegates to please be sure and pick up information for “Nothing but Nets” at their display. Rev. Goodrich then turned the session over to Dr. Chuck Simmons, Chair of the Board of Ordained Ministry. Dr. Simmons spoke of our sacred trust and that the Texas Conference had one of the best Connectional Ministries programs in any annual conference. The Triad system for new clergy is one of the best. He then recognized Dr. Hooper Haygood as director of the Triad system and thanked him for his service after retirement in this special ministry. Dr. Haygood is now 80 years old.

Rev. Suzy Reedstrom, Rev. Greg Oberg, Rev. Lorraine Brown, and Rev. Kimberly Meyers, were called forward to present Dr. Haygood with tokens of their appreciation for his work. Dr. Haygood received floaties for life in the fishbowl, a goldfish bowl with 2 fish, a book of remembrances, and 2 gift cards for restaurants. Dr. Haygood then expressed his appreciation to the conference for the opportunity to develop the program. He stated that his first appointment was as a supply pastor in 1944. He went on to say there were three reasons he enjoyed this ministry;

1. Hungry to work with younger colleagues.
2. I haven’t had to deal with one hesitant Administrative Board
3. I haven’t had to deal with one hostile Pastor-parish Relations Committee.

Dr. Simmons then recognized Susan Keirn-Kester. She encouraged everyone to visit the Dove Room and see the new Dove System. It is an unparalleled system and other conferences are interested in this system. We will be able to franchise the system.

Dr. Chap Temple called attention to the BOM resolution for Disciplinary Recommendations to the 2008 General Conference. It will be presented later in the week. It is an attempt to shorten the ordination process.

Dr. Chuck Simmons talked about a Candidacy Seminar to be conducted bi-annually to gather all people entering the candidacy together.

The Clergy were then asked to review the Board of Ministry report found on the pews. The last page is a corrections page. You may make corrections and turn them into Dick White, Registrar for the BOM and he will accept them as friendly amendments to the report.

Dr. Keith Whitaker recognized Rick and Judy Anderson's ministry. The Anderson Family asked to attend our session. Judy is fighting cancer and the family is leaving to return to Nacogdoches. The clergy recognized the Anderson family with a standing ovation.

Dr. Simmons then presented the items that could be discussed in Bishop Huie's absence.

Question 17. Are all the clergy members of the conference blameless in their life and official administration (§§604.4, 605.6)? Answer YES.

Rick Goodrich presented question 18. Who constitute:

- a) The Committee on Investigations (§2703.2)? (v)

Members

Clergy

Allison Cambre

Jim Ross

Francis Guidry

Barbara Robberson

Cynthia Harvey

Greg Megill

Alternates

Suzan Carter

Dan Hannon

Kenneth Green

Kathleen Kershaw

Lay Observers

Bob Bradfield

Billy Wayne Flannigan

Lay Alternate

Jerry Massey

- b) The Administrative Review Committee (§635)? (v)

Members

Bobbie Maltas

Bill Jones

Darnell Walker

Alternates

Jack Albright

Sandra Smith

Rev. Dale Chance referenced the information in Questions 20-23. Rev. Goodrich stated that the questions are before the clergy session and asked that all who will accept this report please indicate by saying yes. Questions 20 – 23 were accepted.

Rev. Rick Goodrich presented question 24.

24. What ordained ministers from other Annual Conferences or Methodist denominations are approved for appointment in the Annual Conference while retaining their conference or denominational membership (§§331.8, 346.1)? (List alphabetically; indicate Annual Conference or denomination where membership is held. Indicate credential.)

Name

Douglas Baker (FE)

Nolan Donald (FE)

Martin Michael Dunbar (FE)

Leroy Elder (PE)

Ray Hughes (FE)

Do Ung Lee

Jeong Soo Lee

James Thomas Martin (FE)

Annual Conference

Louisiana

Alabama-West Florida

Central Texas

North Texas

Florida

Korean Methodist

Western North Carolina

- c) By withdrawal under complaints or charges (§§361.3, .4; 2719.2)? (v)

<u>Name</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Credential</u>
Richard Diamond	12/31/2006	FD
Louis N. Murray	02/28/2007	FE

52. Deceased (List alphabetically in the spaces provided)

- c) What elders in full connection have died during the year?

Effective:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Date of Birth</u>	<u>Date of Death</u>
John Thomas King	12/12/1945	04/19/2007

Retired:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Date of Birth</u>	<u>Date of Death</u>
William Darwin Andrus	12/29/1910	10/23/2006
Jefferson H. Campbell	01/19/1931	06/30/2006
John Monroe Cheney, Jr	06/11/1931	11/03/2006
Richard Franklin Crosson	02/15/1928	11/17/2006
Thomas C. Davis	03/17/1921	07/05/2006
Robert E. Jones Felder	01/10/1938	06/13/2006
L. Durwood Fleming	08/09/1914	01/22/2007
J. Wayne Harberson	04/15/1936	11/02/2006
Cecil D. Harper, Jr.	05/30/1929	08/31/2006
Ralph Gerald Hasten	6/18/1926	05/20/ 2007
James Earl McCullar	08/12/1934	09/01/2006
William W. Robinson, Jr.	11/13/1928	01/01/2007
Robert B. Stewart, Jr.	03/23/1921	11/27/2006
William Clayton Webb, Jr.	03/11/1923	01/19/2007

- e) What local pastors have died during the year?

Retired:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Date of Birth</u>	<u>Date of Death</u>
James Ray Johnson	12/23/1932	06/30/2006
Eugene Jones	02/19/1928	03/17/2007
Harold Jones		05/25/2007
James W. Poore	07/20/1915	04/07/2007
Neal Anthony Seymour	03/28/1940	12/14/2006
Donald W. Scott	03/30/1939	07/24/2006

56. Who are granted sabbatical leave (§352)? (v) (Give date when this relation became effective; indicate credential.)

<u>Name</u>	<u>Effective Date</u>
Eugene H. Lovering, Jr. (FE)	06/01/2007 – 05/31/2008

57. What actions have been taken concerning disabled members (§358)? (Indicate credential.)

- a) Who were granted incapacity leave since the last annual conference session (§358.2)? (Give effective dates)

<u>Name</u>	<u>Effective Date</u>
Wayne Middleton	05/01/2007

Bishop Janice Huie joined the Clergy Session after opening the Lay Session. Dr. Simmons continued the Board of Ordained Ministry Report returning to questions 28 and 29. Both require the Bishop's presence to be acted upon.

28. Who are elected as probationary members? (under ¶¶322, 324, 325)

a) Probationary Deacons:

- (1) Under the provisions of ¶¶ 324.4a, c? (v)
 - Lorna Kay Bradley
 - Carolyn Jane Davis
- (2) Under the provisions of ¶324.5? (v)
 - NONE

b) Probationary Elders:

- (1) Under the provisions of ¶¶ 324.4a, b? (v)
 - Richard Dale Anderson
 - Rhett Michael Ansley
 - Patricia M. Bergfield
 - Develous Alfred Bright
 - Taylor Meador Fuerst
 - William Preston Greenwaldt
 - Jennifer Ann Jackson
 - Janice Cross Kerlee
 - Jack Alwin McMahon
 - Bartley S. Reddoch
 - Matthew N. Stone
 - Benjamin David Trammell
 - Virginia Queen Wall
 - Matthew Stephen Weaver
 - Marilyn Marie White
- (2) Under the provisions of ¶324.6? (v)
 - NONE
- (3) Under the provisions of ¶322.4? (v 3/4)
 - NONE

33. Who are elected as members in full connection?

a) Deacons

Kathryn Allen Eason
Amy Renay Hodge
Vivian Young Kinnear

b) Elders

Daniel Ray Barrett
Minnie Laverne Baxter
Paula J. Behrens-Lopez
Emily Lorraine Brown
William Earnest Denham, III
Stephanie Marie Fournier Hughes
Conrell Joseph Lockett, III
Kimberly Ann Meyers
Gregory James Oberg
Jeffrey Todd Olive
Carlos Randle Phillips
Suzanne Cox Reedstrom
Polly Doreen Standing
Terry Wick Stuckey
Lisa Beth White
Helen Michelle Williams

34. Who are elected for ordination as deacons in full connection: (List alphabetically—see note preceding Question 27)

b) After probationary membership (¶330)? (v 2/3)

Kathryn Allen Eason
 Amy Renay Hodge
 Vivian Young Kinnear

35. Who are elected for ordination as elders?
- b) After probationary membership under the 1996 Discipline (§335)? (v 2/3)
- Minnie Laverne Baxter
 Paula J. Behrens-Lopez
 Emily Lorraine Brown
 William Earnest Denham, III
 Stephanie Marie Fournier Hughes
 Conrell Joseph Lockett, III
 Kimberly Ann Meyers
 Gregory James Oberg
 Jeffrey Todd Olive
 Carlos Randle Phillips
 Suzanne Cox Reedstrom
 Polly Doreen Standing
 Terry Wick Stuckey
 Lisa Beth White
 Helen Michelle Williams
- c) Transfer from deacon in full connection? (§ 309.3) (v 2/3)
- Nancy Jo Cobbs

Bishop Huie addressed the ordinands by asking elders the historic questions. The Bishop then asked the Deacons the historic questions. The Bishop then called for a vote to accept those before the Clergy Session for ordination as Elders and Deacons in Full Connection. Will you affirm them and their ordination – Yes, with none opposed. The ordinands were then welcomed with a resounding and warm welcome into the covenant community of faith.

Pam Besser then presented question 66

66. Who are the candidates in process for certification in specialized ministry?
- Glynden Bode – Spiritual Formation
 Edmonia Everett – Christian Education
 Judith Gober – Christian Education

The report of the Board of Ordained Ministry was placed before the clergy session with amendments.

The Bishop called for a vote. The clergy voted yes, with no dissenting vote

Bishop's Remarks: Bishop Huie affirmed the excellent work of the members of the Board of Ordained Ministry. She then began the balloting process by reading from one of Paul's letters. She spoke to the spirit of the election process and informed the clergy members that a prayer would be offered prior to each ballot.

Bishop Huie asked Rev. Bill Gandin, head teller, to explain the voting process. Rev. Gandin asked everyone to turn to page 93 and explained that names and numbers of individuals could be found there for easy access. He also explained that to vote you must use a #2 pencil. The scanners do not pick up ink. When marking the ballot it must be within the range or it will invalidate the ballot. Everyone will stand to receive a ballot then be seated for a time of prayer. When ballot is complete, pass it to the center aisle or hold it up and a teller will take it. You may erase but be sure it is clean or the ballot will be invalidated. Write in votes may be cast by coloring in #899 and then writing the name of the person or persons on the back of the ballot. If you write in names on a ballot, be sure and designate Sr. or Jr. in a name. Be as specific as possible for write-ins and please clearly print the names. You must vote for only the number of candidates called for at the time of the ballot. Voting for too few or too many will invalidate a ballot. Rev. Gandin reminded the clergy that ordained elders and ordained deacons in full connection were eligible to vote and to be elected.

Bishop Huie then explained that the number of votes required to elect a delegate was 50% plus 1 of the eligible ballots cast. The Bar of the Conference will be the floor with the Clergy to the Bishop's right and the Laity to the Bishop's left. The Bishop asked if there were any questions. Wineva Hankamer moved that an exception be made for those clergy who would have to sit near the sign language area. The motion was seconded and the Bishop called for a vote. The motion carried and the exception was made for clergy. The Bishop called for inclusiveness of racial and ethnic diversity in our voting. The first ballot was handed out at 10:42 a.m., a prayer was given and ballots were marked at 10:50 a.m. Bishop Huie announced that the first ballot was closed at 10:58 a.m. The meeting was adjourned for lunch.

Lay Session
Monday May 28, 2007, 9:00 a.m.
Marriott Waterway Hotel

Pre-Session congregational praise singing was led by the Celebration Singers of 1st UMC, Pearland.

Our welcome was given by Ms. Leah Taylor, Texas Annual Conference Lay Leader. The Opening Prayer was the Prayer of Ignatius of Loyola The Opening Hymn: "Here I Am Lord"

Bishop Janice R. Huie gave welcome to the lay delegation. She expressed her excitement at the beginning of the 38th session of the Texas Annual Conference which began with a great evening and anticipates a wonderful week. She offered appreciation of understanding and patience as we work through all the changes that are being implemented this week to help move the process forward so that our work will be completed by Thursday.

Bishop shared words from Paul from Romans 12, "Do not conform to this world but be transformed and to discern the will of God..." She then shared thoughts and a statement of inclusiveness presented by the Commission on Religion and Race. It is important that our representation be a true reflection of the conference. She then shared Paul's words of what marks a true Christian.

She explained how the balloting process will occur. Ballots will be distributed, followed by a time of silence and prayer.

Dr. Don House offered an explanation of the logistics of the balloting process. A further explanation explained what is required for an individual to be elected by acquiring 50% plus 1 vote of the number of votes cast.

Bishop Huie asked the body to accept those persons present who are not yet received their voting credentials. There was indication of 6-7 persons who had not yet registered. The consensus was to allow those persons to participate in the vote.

Ballot #1 was declared opened at 9:20 a.m. The ballot was closed at 9:44 a.m.

Ms. Taylor made a presentation regarding the commitment and dedication required by those elected to the delegation. The General Conference is set for April 23 – May 2, 2008 in Fort Worth, Texas. The Jurisdictional Conference will be held July 15 - July 19, 2008 in Dallas. Ms. Taylor presented each District Lay Leader as well as a brief introduction.

Jim deMasi – Central North
 Corky Fowler – Central South
 Johnny Bear – East
 Martha Scott – North
 Stephanie Griffin – Northwest
 Reginald Clemons – South
 Morris McCall – Southeast
 William Mosely – Southwest
 Don House – West

Ruth Palmer presented candidates approved for Certification.

Judith Gober – Christian Education
Glynden Bode – Spiritual Formation
Edmonia Everett – Christian Education

Ms. Jennifer Sample, Executive Director of the Methodist Mission Home, shared good news of the work in San Antonio, Texas and the world. The MMH is *Giving God's Children, a Faith, a Family, a Future*.

A Memorial Day observance was led by Jim deMasi. Announcements were made and the closing hymn, "Because He Lives" was offered by Reggie Clemons.

Respectfully submitted:

Donna Alexander, Associate Lay Secretary, TAC

Afternoon Business Session **Monday, May 28, 2007, 1:00 p.m.**

The afternoon session began with a contemporary solo of "You are Holy" with interpretive dance. The music was followed by the banner procession from each district. The congregation sang, "Holy, Holy, Holy."

Bishop Huie led the opening litany, which was followed by the congregational hymn, "And Are We Yet Alive." Bishop Huie welcomed the delegates to the 2007 Texas Annual Conference and gave her Episcopal address.

Bishop Janice Riggle Huie's Address: Moving into God's Future

Dear friends, greetings in the name of our Resurrected Savior Jesus Christ.

I want to talk today about the people of the Texas Annual Conference and indeed the whole United Methodist Church as a movement of God. Kindly underline the word "move."

Two years ago, I stood in this place and invited us to begin moving out on a journey. The vision of God's kingdom would be our pillar of fire. Making disciples of Jesus Christ would be our mission. We would recognize our changing context for ministry. We would re-invest in congregations. We would move with nimbleness and agility. Like the Israelites setting out for the Promised Land, we would carry our historic treasures with us.

In a Special Session later that year, the Texas Annual Conference stepped out in faith and claimed our mission: "to equip local churches to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world." With a second step you named our vision: "vibrant, growing congregations changing lives and re-shaping futures for Jesus Christ."

We kept moving. Key drivers: Spirit-led, excellence, fruitfulness, accountability. Core congregational practices: radical hospitality, passionate worship, faith-forming relationships, risk taking mission, extravagant generosity, fervent prayer and study of Scripture and connectional ministry.

At last year's Annual Conference, we picked up the pace. We agreed on a new way to order our common life: a core leadership team and four centers of excellence. We shifted conference resources and energy into congregational excellence to start new congregations and to transform existing congregations. We shifted resources and energy into clergy excellence to support and equip our current pastors and to identify and recruit gifted, young, diverse pastors. Some of us began to imagine an even wider global mission. The Conference staff, Superintendents and this Bishop broke into a sprint when you mandated that these goals be developed into an action plan and implemented no later than September 1, 2006. That was a 90 day start up period. It was done. Exciting happenings are all around us.

Two years ago I said that this conference needs to start at least 100 new churches in the next decade: 10 new faith communities per year. Privately, I prayed hard that we could reach ten per year by 2008. Today I am pleased to announce to you that the Texas Annual Conference will plant 13 new faith com-

munities in 2007. We are dancing in the light of God.

Two hundred twenty-four existing congregations are participating in the transformation process. This year they are focusing on making their congregations more welcoming—in their facility and in their hospitality. The vast majority of the response has been positive.

Churches in several districts have been linked into “clusters.” The purpose is to strengthen congregations through clergy and lay networks. Pastors and laity learn from each other and support one another as they engage the mission field in their own backyards.

Two new cooperative parishes were created this year. One is rural. One is urban. Both are located where we have a critical need to reach the mission field. Each is composed of one larger congregation and several smaller congregations. Instead of a solo pastor for each congregation, a team of pastors will work together on behalf of the whole parish. An experienced pastor will provide oversight and leadership.

Two years ago I pointed to our need for many more gifted, young, diverse pastors. As of June 1, the average age in our entering probationary class will drop from 47 to 42. As of June 1, the number of clergy under the age of 30 will triple. In the interest of full disclosure, I will quickly add that this means the number of under-thirty clergy will move from three to nine. We’ve got a ways to go, but every journey starts with the first step.

This summer ten college age persons will explore God’s call on their life by participating in ten week pastoral internships. They will serve in ministry in six different congregations across the conference. Thank you to Moody Permanent Endowment for funding this initiative.

Equipping events have been held all over the conference, and they are open to every pastor and layperson. We are now ready to connect all our pastors through five different kinds of clergy peer groups. Over one hundred pastors attended the DeSobe workshop on “Dealing with Difficult Parishioners.” The clergy assessment tool has been reduced from eight pages to two pages.

These examples are only highlights of new initiatives aimed at expanding our capacity to make disciples of Jesus Christ. We’ve also been adding capacity in a variety of continuing ministries as well: Rita Recovery, mission trips within the United States and around the world, mercy and justice ministries, institutional ministries, lay leadership expansion, communication enhancement and much more.

All around us are signs of movement. Energy building. Capacity expanding. Muscles stretching out. Glimpses of the reign of God emerging in our congregations. Lives changed. Futures re-shaped. Sightings of the kingdom of God in our neighborhoods. Signs of the Holy Spirit in our world. The wind of the Spirit stirring among us.

Let me be candid here. Traveling this road has not been easy. Change is hard. These changes have not been made without difficulty and sacrifice. We’ve made some mistakes, and we are correcting them as quickly as possible. We’ve experienced some resistance, and we are trying to learn from it. We believe some of you may be experiencing a little “change fatigue,” and we want to be sensitive to those concerns this next year.

Some days in this process have reminded me of the birth of our children, Matt and David. For Bob and me, our children were the most wonderful changes of our lives. They were also the most difficult. Like many young parents, we thought we had created the perfect plan to enjoy our new children and change our own lives as little as possible.

We did not fully anticipate the sleepless nights, the throwing up, the temper tantrums, PTA fundraisers, our own parenting mistakes, and the number of pairs of basketball shoes an adolescent boy could wear out in a year. You get the picture. Let’s just say that the transformation of the Huie family was harder than we anticipated. Nevertheless, nevertheless, the joy and wonder and blessing and delight and even gratefulness to God in heartbreak was far beyond our wildest dreams.

Our journey of transformation as an annual conference and denomination may be something like the birth of a child. It is not easy. We have to learn lots of new skills. Changes require hard work and sacrifice. We make mistakes—almost always unintentionally. And we mature and do better. “Going on to perfection” is what Wesley called it. Nevertheless, nevertheless, glimpses of new life, hope, and signs of the reign of God are emerging in our midst. They fill us with joy and wonder and delight.

Let’s turn now to next steps on our journey. One of the privileges of serving as President of the Council of Bishops is the opportunity to learn where and how other Annual Conferences are being led by the Spirit. I’m witnessing many conferences especially outside the United States, and some confer-

ences here in the United States, step forward in new ways to embody our mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

The Cote d'Ivoire Annual Conference, located in West Africa, is now the largest annual conference in The United Methodist Church. Together, the Texas Annual Conference and Cote d'Ivoire Annual Conference are composed of over one million United Methodists. That's 1/13 of the whole denomination. Last November Bishop Boni invited a team from the Texas Annual Conference to visit Cote d'Ivoire. There were nine clergy and laity. Our purpose was to identify how our two conferences might work together to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Our conversations focused on starting new churches, leadership development, health care, education, evangelism, communications, micro-finance and much more. We visited various places where making disciples of Jesus Christ was taking place.

It was as though that conference was carried along by the "rush of a mighty wind." It was as though that whole conference was walking, jogging, running, dancing into the reign of God. Everyone on our team was so excited.

Reverend Todd Jordan, the only one of us who spoke a little French, had inquired of several shopkeepers along the way, "What do you know about the United Methodists?" Not a single person said, "Who are they?" Every person had something to say. "They help people," said one. "They build hospitals and schools," said another. "They care for people," said a third. Todd reported that ordinary people on the street connect the UMC with "the people of United Methodist Church do good." John Wesley would be proud. Reverend Velosia Kibe felt that "If worship were an art form, the people of Cote d'Ivoire would be among the most gifted. Worship includes their whole being: body, mind and spirit. Praise comes from their pores. Their dancing, singing and exaltation of God is beautiful to watch and to join with. Their joy in the Lord is evident. Their excitement is contagious. The lives of many persons in that country will be saved."

I myself was most touched by a testimony from Mr. Gaston Kadio. He is the Chief Treasurer of the country. In Cote d'Ivoire, that job would make Mr. Kadio financially well-off, but not extremely wealthy by U. S. standards. He is a very humble man and a devoted United Methodist disciple of Jesus Christ.

Two years ago he was severely injured in an accident at home. At first, it was questionable where he would live. Then it appeared that he would not walk again. Many United Methodists prayed for him. Bishop Boni prayed with him. Slowly, slowly Mr. Kadio recovered.

Thanks be to God, Mr. Kadio is back at home, back at work, back in church. He walks slowly. His handshake is not strong. He has recovered far beyond human expectations.

He said, "I prayed a long time for God to show me a way to express my thanksgiving for his healing. I wanted other people to know the good news of Jesus Christ." Responding to the promptings of the Holy Spirit, and in conversation with Bishop Boni, Mr. Kadio felt God was calling him personally to build a new church.

He and Bishop Boni chose a site in Bongouanou. It has been an area of civil unrest since 1999. Various armed groups move in and out. People struggle for daily existence. Many people have left. It is a place where it is hard not to feel abandoned by God and everyone else. The United Methodist Church is not strong there.

Mr. Kadio said that he wants this new United Methodist church to be a sign of hope and new life for the people. He wants them to know that God still cares for them. He wants them to know the people of The United Methodist Church stand with them. He showed us a picture of the building. Its size is based on God's promise of peace and the expectation that people will return. The church will seat 2,500 people. It was dedicated last month. Dear friends, this is radical hospitality. We can count on it becoming a place of passionate worship.

I said to myself, "Janice Huie, you have been in the presence of a disciple of Jesus Christ transforming the world. You have been in the presence of a disciple putting hope into action. This humble man is living as though the kingdom of God has already broken into our world. My friends, rich and poor, sick and well, educated and uneducated, there are thousands more United Methodist disciples like him in Cote d'Ivoire. It is no wonder that it seems this whole annual conference is dancing into the reign of God.

Our team will be inviting you on Wednesday to affirm a new, rich partnership with the Cote d'Ivoire

Annual Conference. It is true that the Texas Annual Conference is far wealthier financially than Cote d'Ivoire Annual Conference. Their wealth lies in their vitality, depth of discipleship, love of Christ, and delight in being United Methodist Christians. I believe they can help us experience our faith in a new way. We can learn from one another. We can be blessed by one another. On Wednesday, you will be able to hear from our Texas Annual Conference team and Mr. Sam Koffi, assistant to Bishop Boni.

What is happening in Texas and Cote d'Ivoire is part of a much larger movement of God among the people of The United Methodist Church. In conference after conference, I see a UMC guided more by movement than stability. I see a UMC led more by clear vision and mission than static structure. That vision and mission, led by the Holy Spirit, unites people with very different points of view. It is generous enough to make a kingdom difference in the world. It offers a holistic understanding of salvation: body, mind and spirit. It offers a community of belonging rather than individualistic wandering. It offers meaning to people struggling with despair. It practices forgiveness over hate, peace over violence, a better life over poverty, health over sickness.

This kingdom vision starts with a few people. It grows through prayer, study of Scripture, worship, holy conversation, and practices of mercy and justice. This vision and mission connects more and more diverse people as disciples of Jesus Christ. Finally, by the power of the Holy Spirit, the body of Christ starts to move—together.

Isn't this exactly what Jesus did? Within his faith community, Jesus was born into a very strictly ordered world. There were chief priests and scribes and Pharisees. There were countless rules and regulations. People knew their place—like it or not. The Roman world was rigidly ordered, and Rome was brutal when that order was violated. People knew their place in the Roman world—whether they liked it or not.

Then along came Jesus. He was a carpenter's son. He preached, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." When he described the kingdom, it was as if he was turning the world upside down and inside out. "Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God. Blessed are you who are hungry now for you will be filled. Blessed are you who weep now, for you will laugh." You have heard it said, "Love your neighbor and hate your enemy. I say to you, love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you."

Jesus told stories about the kingdom. A landowner hired employees for his vineyard. At the end of the day, he paid those who started 30 minutes before quitting time exactly the same wage as those who had worked from dawn. He said, "The kingdom of God is like that."

In another story, Jesus said that a powerful man invited his close friends for great feast. When they didn't show up, he brought in the homeless, the drunks and the ex-offenders. Jesus said, the first shall be last and last shall be first." He said, "The kingdom is like that." I could go on and on but you already know all these stories and more.

Most importantly, Jesus said of himself, "I am the Way." Early Christians were known as "people of the Way." The very name "way" implies moving. By the power of the Holy Spirit, the people of the Way have spread a movement of the reign of God all over the globe.

A movement: that's how the Methodists began in Great Britain. In fact, it was quickly called "the Wesleyan movement." Here in the United States, Methodists were famous for their ability to move. They moved physically as circuit riders followed the wagon trains west and south. They transcended barriers of race and class and language. The Methodist movement empowered ordinary people to express their faith in Jesus Christ. Methodists were widely known as a church which "moved with the spirit."

This Annual Conference, the Cote d'Ivoire Annual Conference and many other conferences, are privileged to be a part of a renewed movement of United Methodists making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. Yes, we're still a little awkward in our steps, but all things are possible with God. God's spirit is leading us. We are people of the Way. Now I want to offer specific action items on our journey.

1. From the Ground Up

Friends, we know churches change lives. To sustain the congregations begun this year and start the next round of new congregations next year, this conference will need to raise \$1 million per year in addition to funds in the conference budget. We must also sustain the transformation initiatives begun this year. This challenge is called From the Ground Up. 60% goes to new

churches. 30% will be used for transformation of existing congregations. 10% stays in the district for mission. A share costs \$100 per year. We start today.

Bob and I are so committed to this endeavor that we decided to buy 50 shares of From the Ground Up. You will hear more about From the Ground Up in the report from Congregational Excellence.

2. **Nothing But Nets**

Our mission is to transform the world. Our vision is to re-shape futures for Jesus Christ. This conference has the capacity not only to change lives in Texas but also to change lives in another part of the world. We can do that by joining with others in the elimination of malaria. Malaria now kills more than one million children per year, most of them in Africa. It accounts for one half of all hospital admissions. Life near the equator—where Cote d'Ivoire is located—is an ideal environment for the mosquito that transmits malaria.

Here is the good news. Malaria is totally preventable with an insecticide treated bed net. Ten dollars will purchase a bed net, deliver it to a family and explain its use. A family of four can sleep under one net for up to four years. It is simple. Buy a net. Save a life.

Just imagine. Malaria has vanished from the United States. Globally, we've eliminated small pox. Polio has been reduced to fewer than 200 cases per year. Now is our moment to stamp out malaria for the sake of future generations. United Methodists all over the United States are joining with the United Nations Foundation, Sports Illustrated and the National Basketball Association to eliminate malaria around the world in our lifetime.

On Wednesday you will hear from Elizabeth McKee, a wonderful United Methodist lay woman formerly from Friendswood UMC who heads the malaria initiative for the United Nations Foundation.

The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation have agreed to match United Methodist contributions dollar for dollar. That means \$10 actually buys two nets. All of our nets will go to Cote d'Ivoire. They will be distributed in late 2008 primarily through United Methodist churches, hospitals, and schools.

Our part is to raise \$1 million over the next eighteen months—by the end of 2008. Children, youth, and adults can all join together in this one. We can have a lot of fun with nets.

Basketball games, volleyball games, any game.

Again, Bob and I are so committed to this endeavor that we decided to buy 500 nets. Nets can re-shape the future of a whole country.

Dear Friends, our beloved church is moving. I see it. I hear it. I feel it. It is moving in planting new congregations. It is moving in transformation of existing congregations. It is moving in mission globally. A new spirit is welling up from the grassroots, "Move on out, church. Let's get going."

Movements always leave behind the treasure of stories. In April, I spoke at the Large Church Initiative sponsored by General Board of Discipleship. It was held in Montgomery, Alabama, the home of the Civil Rights Movement. On Wednesday afternoon, participants visited the Rosa Parks Museum, Dexter Street Baptist Church and the Southern Poverty Law Center. Later that evening Dr. Kent Millard, who is currently pastor at St. Luke UMC in Indianapolis and who has been a leader in promoting "nothing but nets," shared his story about his first trip to Montgomery.

It was 1955, 42 years ago, that Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat on the city bus. Kent was a young seminary student at Boston University. Prompted by the Holy Spirit, he decided God was calling him to join a vision of the Reign of God that meant equal rights for African Americans. Kent and several other Boston University students traveled to Montgomery to support the bus boycott by joining the marches. At the time they didn't think of themselves as participants in what would be known as the civil rights movement.

Before the marches, everybody was trained in non-violence. Kent said their training consisted of the following three lessons:

Lesson number one: whatever happened—yelling, cursing, spitting—their job was to keep singing and keep walking. Every evening the group practiced in the basement of the church. Some in the group would march in a circle singing while others in the group spit on them,

cursed at them and yelled at them.

Lesson number two: if you get beaten, protect your head. You'll be hurt less by blows to your body. If someone gets knocked down, nearby marchers should fall on top of him/her so that each person will take a few blows rather than one person being severely beaten.

Lesson number three: Always march arm in arm with at least one person. It is much more difficult to pull two or more people out of the line than to pull out an isolated individual. Joined together, you can keep moving and singing.

Kent said to the group, "I must have looked a little shell-shocked because a large, middle-aged African American woman came up to me and said, "Sonny, you look scared." "Yes, ma'am," he said, "I am." "Take my arm," she said, "and you'll be all right." "And," said Kent, "I was." Sisters and brothers of the Texas Annual Conference, arm in arm, I'm inviting us to keep walking. Have fun. We might even sing a little. I'm inviting us to continue moving out in faith for the sake of "God's kingdom on earth as it is in heaven." Yes, it is hard. It will require sacrifice. We'll take some hits. God's Spirit will lead us. We are catching glimpses of it everywhere.

Joined together—arm in arm—led by the Spirit, the Texas Annual Conference can change lives and re-shape futures for Jesus Christ.

We are marching in the light of God....Siyahamba!!

Janice Riggle Huie

Roll Call: Bishop Huie recognized Dr. Gail Harrelson, Conference Secretary, for the roll call. Roll call will be based upon registration and closes at noon on Tuesday, May 29, 2007. Dr. Harrelson made the motion that the voting bar be the entire floor section of the Sanctuary. Bishop Huie received a second and the motion carried. The clergy will be seated in one half of the Sanctuary and the laity in the other half. With the exception of those clergy who need to be seated near the sign language area.

Dr. Ed Robb, Sr. Pastor of The Woodlands United Methodist Church offered a greeting and words of appreciation to the Conference staff for their work in organizing the Conference.

Rev. Richard Laster presented an autographed baseball from the Houston Astros to the Annual Conference for a silent Auction item to benefit "Nothing but Nets." It was the baseball Bishop Huie threw out at the April 27, 2007 Astros game.

Bishop called on Rev. Jim Foster and Dr. Don House for the "Resolution of Episcopal Endorsement" from the Texas Annual Conference delegation to General Conference.

Bishop Huie asked the clergy and lay delegates to move to their designated seating areas at 2:15 p.m. and gave a few minutes recess to allow the delegates to move.

Ballot #1: After everyone had moved to the appropriate areas Bishop Huie read the first Lay Ballot at 2:27 p.m. The number of delegates to elect was 11. There were 715 ballots received; number of invalid ballots; 9 voted for too many, 36 voted for too few, 3 were marked out of the bounds, for a total of 48 invalid ballots. The total number of ballots taken on the first vote was 667. Votes needed to elect, 50% + 1, was 334. The laity elected 2 delegates on the first ballot: Dr. Donald R. House with 451 votes and Gil Hanke with 367 votes.

Bishop Huie then read the names and numbers of those who received votes on the first ballot.

The Bishop then turned to Clergy Ballot #1. There were 403 ballots cast. Total number of invalid ballots was;

4 had too many votes, 10 had too few votes, for a total of 14 invalid ballots. Total number of valid ballots was 389. Votes needed to elect a delegate were 195. Elected on the first ballot was Jim Welch with 213 votes.

Bishop Huie then read the names and numbers of the clergy who received at least one vote.

Ballot #2: Bishop Huie called for Ballot #2 at 3:05 p.m. She asked Keith Swatzel to lead in prayer. Bishop Huie closed the clergy ballot at 3:20 p.m. and the lay ballot at 3:21 p.m. She then called for a brief recess.

Call to Order: Bishop Huie called the house to order at 3:35 p.m. She asked Dr. Chuck Simmons to

present the candidates for ordination to the conference. Dr. Simmons explained that, the candidates had been voted upon during the clergy session and called for the candidates to come forward. Bishop Huie asked the Annual Conference to welcome the candidates with applause.

Disciplinary recommendations to the 2008 General Conference:

Dr. Chuck Simmons referenced the resolution submitted by the Board of Ministry to the General Conference.

DISCIPLINARY RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE 2008 GENERAL CONFERENCE

Be it resolved by the 2007 Texas Annual Conference that the following petitions be submitted through the Conference Board of Ordained Ministry regarding Disciplinary changes by the 2008 General Conference.

1. Resolution Regarding Ordination Status of Probationary Members

The Texas Annual Conference petitions that the current practice and terminology of “commissioning” be dropped in favor of moving the rite of ordination to the beginning of the trial period for deacons and elders, following the full completion of their educational requirements.

Rationale: The change supports the initial recommendation of the Ministry Study Commission sponsored by the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry intended to clarify the status of those entering into full-time ministry vis-à-vis the historic and ecumenical understandings of ordination and sacramental authority. The change will bring the United Methodist Church closer to the practices of other communions within the broader Christian community and will heighten the long-time distinction between ordination as a rite of the church and election to full membership as a responsibility of the clergy.

2. Resolution Regarding Change in Language of Probationary Members

The Texas Annual Conference petitions that the current Disciplinary language referring to “probationary membership” be replaced with language referring to the “residency” of pastors who have completed their educational requirements, been ordained, but are not yet in full connection with respect to conference membership

Rationale: The change eliminates the negative connotation of “probationary” language and recognizes the educational status of those beginning ministry, parallel to the progress of other professionals such as doctors who have completed medical school but still must serve in a residency period. This language is already in use across parts of the United Methodist Church, particularly in the Southeastern Jurisdiction.

3. Resolution Regarding the Reduction of Current Probationary Period

The Texas Annual Conference petitions that the current probationary period of three years following completion of educational requirements and commissioning/ordination be reduced to two years.

Rationale: The reduction in the trial or probationary period recognizes that candidates will already have completed seven years of educational training and two years of residency before admission into “full connection.” Shortening the time for admittance to full membership to two years returns to the practice of the church prior to more recent years and may also encourage the inclusion of younger candidates into the common life of the church.

4. Resolution Regarding Increased Opportunities for Meeting Educational Requirements Towards Ordination

The Texas Annual Conference petitions a change in the current practice of The University Senate of limiting the number of approved seminaries acceptable for training United Methodist pastors by allowing conference Boards of Ministry to allow students to attend any seminary accredited by the Association of Theological Schools which offers adequate course work in United Methodist history, doctrine, polity, and worship understandings.

Rationale: Prior to the last two decades, United Methodists were allowed to attend any school which

was accredited by the national Association of Theological Schools (ATS), provided that classes were offered in appropriate Methodist and Wesleyan studies. The petition would return to that practice, vesting ultimate authority in conference boards to determine the suitability of seminaries based upon the needs of particular areas. The current policies of the University Senate have limited the number of institutions to less than 65 across the nation, with the South Central Jurisdiction particularly underserved with only seven allowed seminaries in the region which comprises some 14% of the UMC. In addition, the current process of evaluating non-United Methodist seminaries by a group composed primarily of UM institutional representatives is one which is subject to undue politicization and conflict of interest, as shown in the lack of responsiveness by The University Senate over the past three years to even *consider* adding other regional seminaries to the approved list. This has created an undue hardship on many students who would like to be able to study closer to their homes but cannot do so.

5. Resolution Regarding Greater Accountability among All Candidates for Ministry
The Texas Annual Conference petitions that a provision be made requiring all candidates, irrespective of the seminary which they attend, to pass a national examination developed by the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry which will assess theological and ecclesiastical knowledge and readiness for ministry.

Rationale: Because the specific requirements for a M.Div. degree will vary across seminaries even on the approved University Senate list, students may come to conference boards with certain deficiencies in their training, particularly in the areas of doctrine and polity. Even attendance at one of the official UM seminaries does not insure that a candidate is well prepared, in fact, or able to articulate their understandings of our ecclesiology or theological perspectives. Similarly, the current practice of closely evaluating students via a triad means that only three individuals at the conference level will actually read the papers of candidates, with the possibility of divergent evaluations between candidates based upon the makeup of their individual triad. A national examination thus provides the opportunity for more consistency in making such evaluations, as well as shifting the focus from the *process* to the *product* of theological training. It will also place the burden of engaging in specific course work which can adequately prepare a candidate for the examination back upon the student, rather than simply fulfilling the requirements of a particular seminary for a degree. Dr. Simmons explained that the resolution recommended a change in the language in the ordination process.

Certification of Specialization:

Rev. Pam Besser announced the certification of the following persons;

Glynden Bode – Spiritual Formation; Edmonia Everett – Christian Education; Judith Gober – Christian Education.

Bishop Huie called upon Leah Taylor to give the Lay Leader’s Address.

Lay Leader Address:

Each and every one of us here today loves our own church and the United Methodist Church—we would not be here if that were not true. For the Lay people gathered here, I know that each of you is an active participant in your church, which is why your pastor and Lay Leadership Committee asked you to serve as a Lay Delegate to our Annual Conference. You serve on Trustees, Finance and Staff Parish. You teach Sunday school, belong to UMW and work in your church office. You are a leader—a role model for others at your church.

Each of us here today loves the sense of familiarity and security we feel as we walk through the doors of our churches. We crave the peace and spiritual feeding we experience in our well-loved Sunday morning worship and rituals. We feel loved and cared for as we exchange warm greetings and hugs with our friends and looking into the eyes of our pastors as we leave, knowing that they know us and care about our families. Two years ago, in this very room, we heard Bishop Huie speak eloquently about the state of our church. Because of this, we embraced the idea of change—not for the transformation of the world, to make disciples of Jesus Christ. Since then we have found that change is hard, but that God is calling us to change so that we may bring our love of the church, our sense of belonging, purpose and spiritual feeding, to the rest of the world.

Throughout 2005, the Strategic Mapping Team worked diligently charting a changed course for our Conference. Those sweeping changes were welcomed and endorsed by us in November of 2005 and again last year as we gathered in downtown Houston. Since then, we have all devoted our actions to implementing the many changes recommended and accepted at each point along this road. And it has been hard—because change is hard!

As a Conference, we took on the task of moving from twelve districts to nine. Many of us have struggled with the reorganization this decision required. We have had to let go of things that were comfortable; our past way of doing things; and it is hard!

Our District Superintendents have spent time looking at their jobs; seeing how they really spend their time as opposed to how they need to spend their time—to best serve God, their Districts and the Conference. They have had to rethink, retool, retrain, and it has been hard!

Our Districts have implemented District Leadership Teams made up of both Clergy and Laity. The teams have struggled with the questions of not only how they should be organized, but why should they even exist, what is it that they need to accomplish and how should they best accomplish it. Some districts are farther down the road than others; some districts were more dramatically impacted by the reorganization than others. But each district is in the process of change, and, it is hard.

The Core Leadership Team began its work shortly after Annual Conference 2006 and has met faithfully since then. The meetings are conducted in an attitude of devotion to God. The Team is working to understand what its job really is. We review the work of the Conference Centers for Excellence and hear from groups within the Conference working for change. Each member of the CLT is devoted to the process, to making the process work to produce the desired changes. The concept of the CLT is developing, growing, taking on an identity. We have learned that not only is change hard, it will take time.

Our Conference Centers for Excellence are completely new. You will hear and see more detailed information about each of them as our time together progresses. Each Center has spent a great deal of time looking at its mandate under “Bound for Greater Things” and each center is developing and implementing plans to live into their roles.

For the Laity of the Conference, the most visible of the Centers is the Center for Congregational Excellence. Many of us have had the opportunity to grow and enrich our congregations by attending workshops on Radical Hospitality, Passionate Worship, Lay Leadership and Extravagant Generosity—all organized and hosted by the Center for Congregational Excellence. The learning we carry back home from these training events offer the opportunity for change—for doing God’s work in new and exciting ways.

From the Center for Congregational Excellence we have also seen the Transformation process at work at home. Last year, as we voted for Transformation, it sounded great! Like a lofty and spirit-led opportunity for us to change for the better. For those of you working on Transformation, you know first-hand that change is hard. It was hard to have a stranger step into our beloved churches and point out inadequacies, shortcomings and barriers to our being welcoming to newcomers. For some of us, our first response was to push back and take offense at the delivery of the message. Because it is always hard to hear that we can do better. But you will hear how some of our churches have opened themselves completely to the transformation process, to the changes they need to make and about the wonderful results they are seeing!

A year ago we adopted the Measures of Fruitfulness set out in “Bound for Greater Things.” But change is hard and, as the Center for Connectional Resources has gone about putting in place the system for gathering the information needed to compile and report these measures, we have pushed back and resisted the very changes we adopted. Yet you will hear the results of the work that Center has done keeping us on track and accountable for the changed we agreed to make.

The Center for Clergy Excellence is working change in many areas—from recruitment of gifted, young clergy who are still in Seminary, to different ways to support and care for the experienced and talented clergy who are already a part of our Conference. Last November, my family and I traveled to Washington, D.C. to celebrate Thanksgiving with friends. While there, we met a young man who is serving as an associate pastor in the DC area while his wife is in graduate school. He asked for details about what is going on in the Texas Conference—they are hearing about us as far away as our Nation’s capital! This young man is hoping that when he is ready to move, there will be a place for him here, in

our Conference, because we are leading change in the United Methodist Church.

As a Lay person, I cannot emphasize enough that we pay close attention to the care of our clergy. While we are all called by God to go and make disciples, as Laity we look to our clergy for spiritual leadership. Just as we go to church each week to have our spirits nourished, so we must support our clergy as they find ways to be constantly rejuvenated in their walk with God. By building a strong partnership between the laity and the clergy of our local churches, districts and Conference, we will all grow, change and transform—not only ourselves but those in the church and the world around us.

As we prepare for the new quadrennium by election of delegates to General and Jurisdictional Conference this week, I pray that we will use all of our discussions as opportunities to be in holy conversation with each other. Although we do have differences of opinion among us, we have many more points of agreement. We are all, first and foremost, children of God, committed to making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world to the glory of God. We are all agents of change—in our conference, in our churches and in our world! As Jesus commanded us in John 13: 34&35, “Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”

One of the Core Beliefs we adopted as part of Bound for Greater Things is Passionate Worship, the theme for Conference this year. You have already seen that Passionate Worship is alive and well in our Conference. The real test is how we are going to make this a reality in our congregations. For many of us, worship is passionate if there is just one song that we can sing with our voice, heart and spirit. Others rely on the message brought to us by our pastor. But for many people who were not raised in the church or have left the church and are seeking a way to bring Christ back into their lives, church traditions can be more of a barrier than a comfort. In order to reach these folks, we must find new and different ways to worship. In his book “Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations,” Bishop Robert Schnase tells us that in starting new types of worship services “success depends upon the active support and encouragement of long-time members, musicians, and church leaders who never attend the new service and who have no taste for contemporary styles.” We have to embrace this change—and it will be hard.

In the last two years, our Conference has stepped out in new ways. We have embarked together down a road of change. Like the Israelites leaving Egypt, we believe that God has a great future planned for us. Like the Israelites wandering in the wilderness, we are not exactly sure how we are going to reach our destination. We have a plan, and, like any plan, some parts of it will proceed like clockwork. Other parts will need to be rethought as our journey continues. Like the Israelites in the desert, there will be times to celebrate—as we are doing together, here, this week. And, like the Israelites who spent 40 years on their journey to the Promised Land, the changes we are making will take time. Time to implement, time to assess and evaluate, time to accept and rejoice. Although we all recognize that change is hard, when we change because God calls us to do so, we can rejoice in the change because, as we are told in Jeremiah 29: 11, “For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.”

Thank you

Committee on Episcopacy Report:

Dr. Jim Moore and Dr. Jim Bankston gave the report. Dr. Moore asked Dr. Bob Huie to come forward and say a few words to the Conference.

Dr. Bankston explained the assessment for accountability for Bishop Huie. The assessment evaluated her work. Bishop Huie worked with Dr. Janice Virtue of Duke Divinity School in forming the Episcopal assessment tool. Bishop Huie’s rating was 4.4 on a scale of 1 to 5.

Chancellor’s Report:

Bishop Huie called upon Gib Walton for the Chancellor’s report. At the time of Annual Conference, there were no pending lawsuits or litigation against the Conference. On Tuesday, May 29, 2007, Rev. Susan Keim-Kester will present a sexual ethics policy for consideration.

Cokesbury:

Gorden Dillahunty mentioned two new books: Bishop William Willemon has a new book, titled: United Methodist Beliefs. The second book is the New Interpreter’s Bible Dictionary, Volume I. The

Dictionary is available at a 30% discount through subscription during Annual Conference. Mr. Dillahunt then presented Bishop Huie with a check in the amount of \$14,166.

Rev. Rick Goodrich made a motion to designate the gift to the Central Conference Pension Fund. Following a second, the motion passed.

Consent Calendar:

Rev. Rick Goodrich referred to the consent calendar on page 21 in the Pre-conference Journal. He asked if there were additions or deletions. There were none and Rev. Goodrich made a motion to adopt the consent calendar. Following a second, the motion carried.

Core Leadership Team Report:

Jack Steele stated there were four areas of focus:

New Churches; 2. Transforming Existing; 3. Recruitment of younger clergy; and 4. equipping clergy for new areas of ministry.

He noted that the 2006 Annual Conference voted for Episcopal visits to each District. The Strategic Mapping Team's model for ministries focused on fruitfulness. Since the 2006 Annual Conference, the following increases have occurred; (a) professions of faith have increased by 52 percent; (b) the number of churches with at least 1 profession of faith increased 4.6 percent; (c) membership increased by 7000; (d) Mission Work in the local church increased by 11 percent; and (e) Connectional Generosity continued with 100 percent of General Church apportionments were paid for the second year.

Mr. Steele reported that while membership increased, average worship attendance decreased by 2.2 percent with a loss of 4,212 members attending worship services.

Core Leadership Team Resolution:

Rev. Rick Goodrich presented three resolutions concerning Conference Rules, which are found in the Resolutions section of the Conference Journal.

He asked for questions. Rev. Vincent Harris asked if a workshop on the nomination process will be offered before the 2008 Annual Conference. Rev. Goodrich stated that a supplement will be available by September 1, 2007 so that workshops may be offered in the districts. The method for offering resolutions replaces the previous rule. The intent is to be able to take them to the districts. Rev. Cynthia Hinson questioned the assignment of a pre-determined speaker. Rev. Goodrich said that a pre-determined speaker gets it on the floor to begin dialogue.

Rev. Randy Smith asked "Does the resolution abolish the ability to suspend rules or amend resolutions?" Rev. Goodrich response was no, it does not change parliamentary procedures.

Alyce Christian asked, "How would the change from 180 to 150 affect the completion of the Pre-conference Journal? Rev. Goodrich answered by saying, it will not effect completion of the Pre-conference Journal. Faye Thomas voiced a concern as to how the conference could make an informed decision about the resolution to offer a workshop in the fall if we are to vote now. Bishop Huie asked if the conference was ready vote on the resolution. Bishop Huie called for a vote on the resolution. The resolution failed.

The amended resolution from the Core Leadership Team, found in the Resolutions section of the Conference Journal, was presented. It provides that the Chair of the Social Principles Implementation Team will be nominated and elected by chairs of the group. Jack Steele presented the amended Assessment Resolution, which was adopted and is found in the Resolutions section of the Conference Journal.

Reading of Ballot #2: At 5:00 p.m. Bishop Huie announced that Lay Ballot #2 was ready to be read to the Conference. A motion was brought to the floor asking that only the names of those receiving 10 votes or more be read. A second was received. An amendment to the motion was made by Shannon Martin to read only the names of those receiving 50 or more votes. A second was received. Thelma Williams voiced her opposition to the motion and amendment. She feels that all names that receive a vote should be read.

The amendment was passed. The Bishop will read the names and numbers of those who receive 50 votes or more both Lay and Clergy ballots.

Lay Ballot #2: Ballot #2 was read at 5:10 p.m. Total Ballots received were 745. Valid ballots received were 689. There were 56 invalid ballots; 48 voted for too few, 7 voted for too many, 35 voted for one already elected.

Ballots need to elect 345. There were 5 delegates elected; Andy K, Hernandez, 453; Gib Walton, 417; M. Samuel Daffin, 409; Ewing Werlein, Jr., 392; John Worsham, 389. The laity has elected six of the eleven delegates. The laity will be voting for five delegates on Ballot #3

Clergy Ballot #2: Bishop Huie then turned to Clergy Ballot #2 at 5:18 p.m. Total Ballots received were 433. There were 22 invalid ballots. Of the invalid ballots, 14 voted for too few, 2 voted for too many, and 6 voted for persons already elected. Total valid ballots were 411. Votes needed for election is 206. On Clergy Ballot #2 there was one election: Jim Foster with 233 votes.

Ballot #3: The Bishop called for Ballot #3 for Laity and Clergy at 5:23 p.m. Following a short prayer, Ballot #3 was taken. At 5:37 p.m. Bishop Huie closed Ballot #3. With voting concluded the Bishop recessed the Monday afternoon session.

Evening Worship Service Monday, May 28, 2007, 7:30 p.m.

The worship service is based on the story of the encounter of a crowd with Jesus in the multiplication of fishes and loaves – a witness on the story of the abundance of God’s blessings and our response through the visioning of the reign of God on earth. The preacher was Bishop William H. Willimon. Worship leaders are Dr. Marcia McFee, Beth McConnell, Paul Butts, Weston Ruths and Rosemary Ruths, and Rev. Morris Matthis. The service included the Sacrament of Holy Communion.

Morning Worship Tuesday, May 29 2007, 8:00 a.m.

Worship and Bible Study was taught by Rev. Justin K. Coleman. The liturgist and song leader was Frode Gundersen and Melissa Burnham.

Annual Conference Business Session Tuesday, May 29, 2007, 9:00 a.m.

Call to Order: Bishop Huie called the session to order at 9:05 a.m.. Rev. Rita Sims opened the session with prayer. Peter Cammerano, FUMC Brazoria, moved that the clergy names with 30 or more votes be read to allow for more equity since the clergy delegates are about half the number of the lay delegates. The motion carried. The Bishop read the results for ballot #3 at 9:15 a.m..

Lay Ballot # 3: Votes needed to elect: 312 votes. Two delegates were elected: Mary R. Reed with 366 votes and Leah Taylor with 337 votes.

Clergy Ballot #3 results: Total Ballots received: 351; Invalid 14; Valid 347; votes needed to elect: 169. Three were elected: Morris Mathis, 190 votes, Earl Bledsoe, 177 votes and Steve Wende, 170 votes. Then the Lay and Clergy Ballot #4 was taken at 9:25 a.m. The Bishop closed the balloting at 9:33 a.m.

Reports: All institutional reports were given on DVD and are filed in the Conference Library. Bishop Dan Solomon was introduced by Bishop Huie and the conference saw on video the report of the Texas United Methodist Colleges Association. The video encouraged the Texas Annual Conference to support the Fair Share goal for the TUMCA.

Center for Clergy Excellence: Rev. B.T. Williamson, Director of the Center of Clergy Excellence gave the report. He recognized people who helped developed their strategic plan for the center. The report was given as a mini-drama that lifted up clergy isolation, expectations, loneliness, and interruptions. Rev. Roy James presented the Clergy Covenant Group plan for clergy. He recognized those who had been trained as facilitators for the various groups. The report is found in the Reports section of the Conference Journal and the skits on DVD are filed in the Conference Library.

Rev. Carol Turner presented the report for pastoral effectiveness task force. Peter Cammerano presented the Birkman Assessment report. Rev. Turner presented The 360 Leadership tool for growth in ministry. For handling conflict, they recommend training for clergy and SPRC committees. For complaints, a standardized form is to be used by District Superintendents. The assessment process for clergy by SPRC has been revised. She then recognized those on the task force.

Dr. Chap Temple presented the Clergy recruitment program. He presented programs to introduce a “culture of calling” in our local churches. He also presented other programs the task force is working on: College Pastoral Intern project, Texas Conference Jr. Ambassadors, and Tuition Loan Repayment program.

Rev. Carol Bruse concluded the Center’s report by thanking the laity for their time and support of the clergy and for their work during this past year of change and development.

Equitable Compensation: Jay Jackson gave the report for Equitable Compensation, which is found in the Reports section of the Conference Journal.

Extension Ministry: Rev. Tom Daugherty gave the Extension Ministry report on video, which is filed in the Conference Library.

Sexual Ethics Report: Susan Keirn-Kester gave the Sexual Ethics committee report. She introduced the members of the committee to the conference. She presented the resolution in the pre-conference journal with the amendment that Clergy be required to be trained once a quadrennium. The annual conference then voted the task force to be renamed “Texas Annual Conference Committee on Sexual Ethics” and become a standing committee of the annual conference. Then the Policy and Procedure for Response Teams to aid congregations in response to clergy sexual misconduct was presented. The policy is found in the Resolutions and Reports section of the Conference Journal. Dr. Bettie Hightower presented the Response Team procedure, found in the Resolutions section of the Conference Journal. Following the motion to adopt the Sexual Ethics report, the conference adopted it by majority vote.

Pensions: The pension strategy was presented to the annual conference. The report is found in the Reports as Ordered by Annual Conference in the Conference Journal. The report was adopted.

Bishop Huie called for a brief recess at 10:50 a.m.. The Bishop called the conference back to order at 11:05 a.m.. She introduced Dr. Morris House who joined the Annual Conference in 1938 and has the longest current consecutive attendance record.

Rev. Judy Tefteller challenged the conference to be inclusive in our voting. The Bishop announced the results of Ballot # 4, which were read at 11:10 s.m..

Lay Ballot #4: Total ballots received 661; invalid 17; valid 644; needed to elect 323. There was no election.

Clergy Ballot #4: Total 323; invalid 14; valid 318; needed to elect 160. There was no election. Gary White offered prayer before Ballot #5.

Ballot #5 was then taken at 11:19 a.m. The bishop closed the ballot at 11:22 a.m.

Rick Goodrich referred two resolutions to the conference for consideration on Wednesday, May 30, 2007.

Honoring of Retirements

Dr. J.D. Phillips presented the retirement class for 2007. Jerry Anderson (FE), Roger Craiker (LP), David Diaz (FE), David Davidson (FE), Melissa Hinton (FD), Marvin Jiles (FE), V. William Servis (FE), Robert Dan Sherrill (PLP), Roy Taylor (FE), Terry Weber-Rodriguez (FE), Joe D. Whisenant (LP).

Following the Retirement service, the Bishop recessed the annual conference for lunch at 12:15 p.m.

Afternoon Session Tuesday, May 29, 2007, 2:00 p.m.

Call to Order: Bishop Huie convened the afternoon business session at 2:02 p.m.

Reading of Lay Ballot #5: Number of delegates to be elected: 2. Total ballots received 661; 14 invalid, 647 were valid, 324 votes are needed to elect. There were 2 elections: Tom Wussow, 400 and Ruth Palmer, 367. The Laity have completed their elections for General Conference.

Lay Ballot #6 was taken at 2:10 p.m. for Jurisdictional Conference delegates. Lay Ballot #6 was closed at 2:31 p.m.

Clergy Ballot #5 was read at 2:15 p.m. To be elected: 6. Total ballots 367; 21 invalid (10 too few, 1 too many, 10 already elected) 346 valid, and 174 are needed to elect. There were 2 elected: Elijah Stansell, 189 and Bettie Jo Hightower, 176.

Clergy ballot #6 was taken 2:20 p.m. Four persons were to be elected. Daniel Irving offered the prayer. Bishop Huie closed ballot #6 at 2:25 p.m.

Health Benefits Report was presented and can be found in the Reports section of the Conference Journal. The report was given by chair, David Eikner. He spoke to new disease management program for asthma, coronary artery disease, congestive heart failure, diabetes and high blood pressure. The Group Health Benefits package adopted was by the annual conference. The report was approved. This concludes the The Center for Clergy A

Faithful Worship: Bishop Huie introduced Bishop William Willimon, who gave a presentation on "Faithful Worship." Points included in Faithful Worship were:

1. Makes room somewhere in the service for mystery
2. Show hospitality to the stranger. Hospitality recovers sense of drama in worship.
3. Faithful worship offers eclectic, excellent music
4. Connects worship and local mission in all areas of the service
5. Relatively stable order of service
6. Strong charismatic, passionate worship leaders

Announcements: At 3:21 p.m. Bishop Huie introduced Five Practices of Fruitful Discipleship by Bishop Robert Schnase. Bishop Huie also introduced "Given", a DVD and CD to be used for Advent and Christmas, which is produced by the Woodlands UMC. Also DVD's of all worship services are available in the TWUMC Grace Point bookstore.

Reports: Bishop Huie called for the following reports:
Smiles Foundation – a 4 minute video at 3:25 p.m.
Lon Morris College Report – a DVD presentation

The Perkins School of Theology, Southern Methodist University Report - a DVD presentation.

All of the above DVD presentations are filed in the Conference Library.

Reading of Clergy Ballot #6: Bishop Huie presented the Clergy Ballot #6 results at 3:38 p.m. Total ballots received: 338 ballots; 12 invalid, 336 valid and 164 votes needed for election. There were no elections.

Bishop Huie announced that the Workshops will be delayed in their start and extended in their time.

Clergy Ballot #7: Clergy Ballot #7 ballots were distributed at 3:42 p.m. with instructions to elect 4 delegates. Bishop Huie offered the prayer prior to marking ballots. Clergy ballot #7 was closed at 3:46 p.m.

Reading of Lay Ballot #6 was read at 3:47 p.m. Total ballots received 654, invalid 78, total valid 576. Ballots needed to elect 289. The number of delegates to elect for Jurisdictional Conference is 11. There were 4 delegates elected: Bill Coons, 409, Donna Schlitt, 402, Sue Sullivan, 313, Dennis "Corky" Fowler, 302.

Lay Ballot #7 for Jurisdictional delegates handed out at 4:05 p.m. The number to elect is 7. A motion was made to read names of those who received 20 votes or higher. The motion was approved.

Bishop Huie asked Sarah Brown of Liberty to offer the prayer. Bishop Huie closed Lay Ballot #7 at 5:12 p.m.

Bishop Huie adjourned the session for afternoon workshops. Announcement was made that a ballot will be taken before worship this evening and possibly after worship.

Evening Worship Tuesday, May 29, 2007, 7:30 p.m.

Call to Order: Bishop Huie called the evening to order for the reading of clergy ballot #7 and the taking of clergy ballot #8.

Clergy Ballot #7: Delegates to elect is 4. Ballots received 323. Invalid ballots: 9. Total valid ballots: 314. Votes needed to elect a delegate: 158. Two delegates were elected: Frank Alegria, 174 votes and Jim Bankston, 160 votes.

Clergy Ballot #8: The Clergy need to elect 2 delegates. Bishop Huie offered the prayer. Ballot #8 was marked at 7:40 p.m. Bishop Huie closed the ballot at 7:42 p.m. She then invited the annual conference to join in worship.

Worship: The music was led by Matt Brouwer and his band, who are members of The Woodlands UMC. The participants in the reader's theater are member of The Loft Drama Team. The video segments were from a clip available from Sermonspice.com, "The Machine."

Worship and Bible Study Wednesday, May 30, 2007, 8:00 a.m.

The Bible study teacher was Rev. Justin Coleman, who serves as an associate pastor at University UMC in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. The liturgist and song leader was Dr. Elijah Stansell. Pianists

were Melissa Burnham and Frode Gundersen.

Morning Session Wednesday, May 30, 2007 – 9:00 A.M.

Call to Order: Bishop Huie called the session to order at 9:00 a.m. with prayer by Rev. Tommy Williams.

Courtesies: Rev. Rick Goodrich announced that Keith Whitakers sister, Nada Whitaker Balius, died. Jan Floro wishes to inform those churches receiving congregation plaques that they are ready to be picked up from the Igniting Ministries booth by noon on Wednesday.

Lay Ballot #7: Bishop read the results of Lay Ballot # 7 at 9:05 a.m.. Received 625ballots; 28 invalid; Valid 597; votes needed to elect 299. Three elected: William Luton, 327; Lee Carson, 306; and Virginia Ann Gill, 302.

Lay Ballot #8 was taken at 9:12 a.m.. Laity will be voting for four delegates.

Clergy Ballot #8: Bishop Huie called for the Clergy Ballot #8 at 9:13 a.m. with the reading of the results of Total ballots received 230; invalid 3; valid 227; Votes needed to elect 114; There was one election: Chap Temple 114.

Clergy Ballot #9 was taken at 9:17 a.m.. The clergy will vote for 1 person. Rev. Karen Williams led in prayer. Bishop Huie closed the Clergy Ballot at 9:25 a.m. and the Laity Ballot at 9:28 am.

Courtesy: Bishop Huie recognized Doris Knight for 55 years of attending Conference, 25 years as a Clergy Spouse and 30 years as a delegate.

Strategic Mapping Team Report: Mr. Jack Steele reported on results of the reports gathered this past year at District meetings: The points were accountability, new approaches, focus on future needs, communication, youth participation in process, more support for camping, more support for Lakeview, and small membership churches. Strategic Mapping Team will complete its work and will cease to exist at this Annual Conference. Mr. Steele spoke to six resolutions from the Strategic Mapping Team, which are found in the Resolutions section of the Conference Journal. The first resolution passed. The second resolution dealt with the youth division. Dr. Chap Temple made a substitute motion for SMT resolution #2: *Youth Ministry – (1) That the Model for Ministry be changes to expand the Conference Council on Youth Ministry from 9 members (one from each District) to 36 members (two youth and one adult from each District, plus 9 at-large positions.) Youth in each district shall elect two youth, plus one alternate. Each district Nominations Committee shall elect one adult. Following the election of district delegates, the Conference Nominations Committee will recommend 5 youth and four adults for at-large positions in order to ensure conference-wide inclusiveness and diversity; (2) that the expanded Conference Council on youth Ministry develop a new vision for conference youth ministry by the 2008 Annual Conference session.* . Steve Wende asked a question about a plan to authorize other youth ministry groups. Rev. Rich Goodrich states that the nominations committee worked to ensure diversity among youth to serve on conference committees. Rev. James Crabbe spoke for the amendment. Rev. Todd Jordan spoke against the amendment. Mr. Daniel Irving spoke for amendment. Rev. Stacy Pever Anzick spoke for the amendment. Sam Meyer (youth), Lakewood UMC, spoke for the amendment. The vote on the amendment passed. The main resolution from the Strategic Mapping Team with the amendment passed. The third resolution about the camping program passed. The fourth amended resolution dealt with Lakeview task force with long term vision. Discussion: Rev. Jim Foster spoke against the motion. Rev. Wineva Hankamer asked if camping for persons of disabilities will be included on the committee. Rev. Richard Heyduck will this meet the needs of Lakeview? Dr. Von Dawson spoke to the

question, and said Lakeview needed support from Annual Conference. Dr. Chap Temple asked if any youth were on the committee. Dr. Von Dawson spoke for the motion. Dr. Church Simmons offered a friendly amendment to include a representative from the special needs committee and a young person. Bishop Huie asked for discussion on the amendment and there was none. The amendment passed. Rev. Mike Fraley asked if any of the people were leaders in District Camps. Rev. Bert Bagley moved to add one other camp coordinator to the motion. The motion passed. The Main Resolution with amendments of adding three people was approved. Resolution six was about study feedback. Mr. Carl Sandlin made an amendment to use an in-house special review team instead of an outside. Mr. Steele said that we needed an objective person to do the work. Rev. Danny Wayman asked where consultant fees were located in the budget. Dottie Dumas asked for a clarification. One spoke against the amendment. Dr. Randy Smith called the question about the amendment. The amendment failed and the main resolution passed. All resolutions are found in the Resolutions section of the Conference Journal.

Question: Paul Kethley asked when the group would cease to exist? Mr. Steele answered with this report.

Clergy Ballot #9: Bishop Huie read the results of Clergy Ballot #9: Total ballots received 299; 5 invalid ballots; total valid ballots 294; votes needed to elect 148; there were no elections.

Clergy Ballot #10: Bishop Huie called on Rev. Brad Morgan to lead in prayer. Dr. Ed Robb withdrew his name from consideration. Bishop Huie declared the ballot # 10 closed at 10:26 a.m.

Center for Connectional Resources: Dr. Elijah Stansell began the report by asking the staff for the Center for Connection Resources to come forward to be greeted by the Conference. The report was presented by a DVD, which is filed in the Conference Library. The report may be found in the Reports section of the Conference Journal.

Council on Finance and Administration: Dr. Don House reported on Council on Finance and Administration. He reported that the Annual Conference had paid its General Church Apportionments for the second year in a row. Four Districts paid 100% of apportionments: East District, West District, Southeast District and Northwest District. There was a DVD speech from Sandra Lacklore from GCF&A. The report included slides of ministry of the Center for Connectional Resources: Conference Board of Trustees, Apportionments, Comparative giving of 2005 and 2006, General Church Apportionments, Conference Apportionments. Dr. House presents 2008 Conference Budget, which included an amendment for Lakeview. The amendment included a proposal for 100% of payment of Lakeview Fair share Goal. The amendment passed. The 2008 annual conference budget was passed and may be found in the Reports section of the Conference Journal.

Announcement: Dr. Ed Robb said that the Episcopal Address is available on DVD. Dr. Kirbyjohn Caldwell made motion that the elected delegation to General Conference submit a petition that will allow full time local pastors have the authority and power to vote for General and Jurisdictional delegates. The motion passed and will be sent to the delegation.

Courtesies: Bishop Huie gave a word of appreciation to the Signers for hearing impaired. Bishop Huie read a thank you from Rev. Kevin Young for the conference prayers for those young persons who were injured or killed in a car accident from Huntsville.

Methodist Mission Home report was given by DVD and is filed in the Conference Library.

Lay Ballot #8: Bishop Huie read the result of Laity Ballot #8: total ballots received 569; invalid ballots 31; 565 valid ballots; need 283 votes to elect; there were two elections: William E Brown, 311 and Beverly Deerhake, 301. . Lay Ballot #9 will elect 2 delegates.

Clergy Ballot #10: Total ballots received 317; 1 invalid; total valid ballots 316; need 159 votes to

elect; one election, Gail Ford Smith.

Clergy Ballot #11: Bishop Huie called upon Mr. Mosley to lead in prayer before taking the ballot. Bishop Huie declared the Laity Ballot closed at: 11:38 a.m. and the Clergy Ballot closed at: 11:42 a.m.

Nothing But Nets Presentation: The DVD that was shown can be shown in local churches. Ms. Elizabeth McKee, executive director for Nothing But Nets, reported the United Nations Foundation reached out to the United Methodist Church. Why Nothing But Nets? The female mosquito only bites at night. The insecticide treated Nets will last up to five years. \$10 literally saves a life. Where are we now, and where are we going? The total funds raised are \$6 million dollars to date. Only 6% of children in Africa are covered. There is a need for 300 million nets. 100% of received gifts will be applied to buying a net. The Gates Foundation grant matches gifts dollar for dollar. There was a loss of 25 lives in Africa in the five minutes she spoke. Monies may be given to Advance Special #982015.

Richard Laster announced that the Bishop's Baseball at this moment has the current bid for \$2,200. The silent auction closes at 1:45 p.m.

Announcements: Bishop Huie requested that the funds for Nothing But Nets be routed funds through the Annual Conference so that the money is designated to go to Cote d'Ivoire. Burt Bagley asked us to give money before we go to lunch and gave the first \$20. People came forward to place an offering in a large box! The Bishop led the Conference in singing the Doxology with deep emotion.

Methodist Hospital Report was shown by DVD, which is filed in the Conference Library. The written report is found in the Reports section of the Conference Journal.

RECESS: Bishop Huie closed the morning session of Conference at 12:14 p.m. with the singing of the Wesley Grace.

Afternoon Session Wednesday, May 30, 2007 – 2:00 P.M.

Call to Order: Bishop Huie called the session to order and asked Rev. Janice Gilbert-Williams to offer prayer.

Announcements: Rick Goodrich reminded everyone to pick up the Nothing But Nets package, t-shirt, net, DVD and poster.

Bishop Huie reported that the spontaneous offering taken before lunch was \$8351.16. The total amount of offerings received thus far is \$25844. This represents 2,584 nets to cover people and save the lives of children and the net-o-meter is still ticking.

Reading of Lay Ballot # 9: The number of candidates to elect is 2; total ballots received 588; invalid ballots 16; total valid ballots 572; need 287 votes to elect. There was no election.

Lay Ballot #10 was handed out at 2:20 p.m. Laity need to elect two.

Reading of Clergy Ballot #11: number of candidates to elect for Jurisdictional Conference is 11; ballots received 262; invalid ballots 16; total valid ballots 247; votes needed to elect 124; no election.

The Bishop recognized Kirbyjohn Caldwell who withdrew his name from consideration.

Clergy Ballot #12 distributed at 2:21 p.m. The Bishop called on Jim DiMasi to pray.

Lay Ballot #10 was closed at 2:27 p.m. and **Clergy Ballot #12** was closed at 2:30 p.m.

Reports from the Districts: The Bishop is skipping over district reports at this time. They are 6 minutes a piece and she anticipates the reports will be given later on Wednesday afternoon or on Thursday morning.

The Center For Missional Excellence Report was given by DVD, which is filed in the Conference Library. The report may be found in the Reports section of the Conference Journal. Rev. Richard Goodrich asked all who are involved in Missional Excellence to please stand.

Cote d'Ivoire report: Mr. Sam Koffi, assistant to Bishop Boni was introduced to the annual conference by Bishop Huie. He received a standing ovation. The mission team to Cote d'Ivoire came forward to participate in the report. Dr. Earl Bledsoe gave the report on the mission to Cote d'Ivoire

The team received royal greetings from the country's president all the way to the small children in school. Rev. Todd Jordan gave his reports as a risk taking mission part of the conference's model of ministry. Rev. Velosia Kibe gave her report on education in Cote d'Ivoire. Mr. Koffi made a few statements. He attended Georgia State University in Atlanta. He gave words of thanks for the prayers and support for the delegation from his country. He spoke with optimism of the General Conference decision of the Cote D'Ivoire Conference to join The United Methodist Church. In 1989 the church became autonomous and voted to become part of a global church. The Church in Cote d'Ivoire seeks to have a global impact. They now have missions in New Guinea, and in Cameroon. They seek to incorporate accountability and mutual respect in their relationships. They believe their partnership with the Texas Annual Conference will bring great results. They desire to share resources, because we are all one in Christ. They have no desire to become dependent. Lastly, he wanted to share a small gift from the culture of Cote d'Ivoire. In Cote d'Ivoire the hosts must give a gift to visitors as a reminder that we are brothers and sisters in mission. The women on the team received a dress and the men received shirts. Bishop Huie and the members of the team received the gifts with enthusiasm. Bishop Huie mentioned that she had traveled extensively in other countries, but the visit to Cote d'Ivoire was the first time the host country covered all of the team's expenses to signal a partner relationship. Bishop Huie then reciprocated with a token of appreciation from the Texas Annual Conference. She gave a box full of Texas Conference shirts to spread amongst the clergy and laity of the Cote d'Ivoire conference as we look forward to this partnership together. Again there was a standing ovation.

Bishop Huie then recognized Noelle Denison, Chapelwood UMC who presented from the congregation of Chapelwood a check in the amount of \$100,000 to purchase 10,000 nets for Cote d'Ivoire. Bishop Huie graciously accepted the check and announced that \$125,000 dollars was now recorded on the net-o-meter.

As a follow-up, Dr. Tom Pace of St. Luke's UMC stated that the Christmas Eve offering at St. Luke's this year would be designated for the Cote D'Ivoire Nothing But Nets. He stated that their goal would be \$100,000.50. Dr. Kirbyjon Caldwell then approached the microphone and stated that Windsor Village would commit to \$100,001. This offer was followed by Dr. Ed Robb, who pledged \$100,050 from The Woodlands UMC.

Richard Laster announced the results of The Baseball silent auction—time cut off at 1:45 pm with several people bidding. At the closing, two persons were bidding for the autographed baseball and the picture of Bishop Huie on the mound. The Pearland UMC bought the picture for \$6600. Rev. Laster called on Jerry Pennington, pastor FUMC Pearland to receive picture.

The Baseball was purchased for \$6,500 from Sue Carter and her family as a special gift. Bishop Huie reminded everyone that the Nets Project will be completed by December 2008, so there is still plenty of time for churches and individuals to contribute to a very worthy cause.

Rev. Richard Laster moved that the 2008 Conference Advance Special is to be to Nothing But Nets and Cote D'Ivoire. The motion passed.

Pat Sparks at FUMC of Longview pledged for \$25,000 and challenge other congregations to do the same.

Institutional Reports: The following reports were given by DVD and are in the Conference Library. **Methodist Children's Home; Hurricane Rita Relief; Mount Sequoyah**

Recess: Bishop Huie called for a 10 minute break at 3:42 p.m. with the announcement that she would read the results of the last ballot when the conference reconvened.

Call to Order: Bishop Huie called the conference to order at 4:00 p.m., following a ten minute recess.

Reading of Laity, Ballot 10: Total ballots received: 557; invalid: 7; total valid ballots: 550; need 276 votes to elect. There were two elections: Donnel King 293 and Ethelia "Thebe" Worden 276.

Motion: Bill Hataway moved the next top five vote getters on Lay Ballot #11 become the Alternates to Jurisdiction. The motion was seconded and approved by the laity of the Conference. Bishop Huie then read the ballot.

Reading of Clergy Ballot # 12: Number to elect: 11 delegates for Jurisdictional Conference. Total ballots received: 305; invalid: 24; total valid ballots: 281; need 141 votes to elect. There were 3 elections: Chuck Simmons 162; Nancy Kellond 157; and Matt Idom 149. Bishop Huie read the results of Clergy Ballot #12.

Question: Diane Rogers, lay delegate from St. Paul's UMC asked what it means to be an alternate delegate. Bishop Huie responded that if a delegate to General or Jurisdictional Conference is unable to attend a session, or if circumstances prevent the delegate from participating, then everyone on the delegation moves up one position and the last open position is filled with the first alternate elected. Rev. Jim Welch explained that the Texas Conference uses all of the alternates at General and Jurisdictional Conferences. The alternates are invited to all delegation meetings. The second question concerned whether the conference pays the expenses for alternates. The first alternate elected is also an alternate to the General Conference and that person's expenses are paid. Dr. Elijah Stansell, Conference Treasurer stated that the alternate delegate's home district pay the expenses.

Lay Ballot #11 and Clergy Ballot #13 were distributed. The Bishop restated the motion from the laity that was approved in which the persons with the 5 highest votes received will be the alternate delegates. Lay ballot #11 and clergy ballot #13 was distributed at 4:21 p.m. Lay ballot #11 closed at 4:28 p.m. and Clergy ballot #13 closed at 4:29 p.m.

RESOLUTIONS:

Church and Society Report on Resolutions: The report was brought by Glynden Bode. She referenced the 4 resolutions on the agenda that came through Church and Society. There were 4 workshops on each of the resolutions under consideration. The facilitators met to discuss process and the results of discussion. The following points are the summary of the workshops.

1. A lot of common ground, concern and compassion.
2. Some wording was good, others was scary
3. Though we use the same words not everybody agrees on their usage
4. Some liked the general wording
5. Others wanted more specific wording
6. The intent of the resolutions was to raise awareness, to get people thinking about the issue, to inform and get people to act and get involved.
7. The Committee believes these objectives were accomplished.
8. These issues prayerfully engaged in the local church and use the dialogue process.
9. Connect from intellectual to heartfelt issues.
10. Wesley would appreciate our "Catholic Spirit"
11. To gain respect and understanding
12. Bob Pierce at Memorial Drive will act as a resource for "Breath of Life" with tips on how to save up to 30% on energy.
13. Members of Church and Society urges continued discussion.

In light of the discussion, the Board of Church and Society wishes to withdraw the four resolutions. The report and withdrawal of the resolutions were approved and so ordered by the Bishop.

Resolution from Committee on Disability Concerns: Rev. Greg Edwards brought the report and a resolution for a Disability Awareness Sunday. Rev. Edwards shared the fact that 56 handicap parking places have been designated for handicap parking during annual conference and all have been full. He noted the videos with open caption for the hearing impaired. He recommends a workshop how to become aware in each local church. Rev. Edwards made a motion that the special Sundays observed by the annual conference include a Disability Awareness Sunday. A question was raised about the date. Rev. Edwards stated that a specific Sunday had not yet been designated but there had been discussion about the second Sunday of October. Following discussion, the resolution to establish a Disability Awareness Sunday was passed by the raising of hands. The resolution may be found in the Resolutions section of the Conference Journal.

Resolution to Add Persons to the Core Leadership Team. Rev. Steve Woody made the presentation as one of the makers of the resolution. Carolyn Davis from the Central South district offered an amendment to the resolution to add persons to the core leadership team. She moved the addition of one youth and one alternate youth to the CLT from the Conference Council on Youth Ministry. The motion was seconded and approved by hand vote. Minta Clark from Devers UMC spoke against the resolution. Sue Sullivan from the Red Water UMC served on Strategic Mapping Committee. She spoke against the resolution. Rev. Matt Idom spoke for the resolution. He pointed out that the issue is about communication and accountability. The resolution simply increases representation from 15 to 24 voting members. His argument was that only 15 people were given the authority to make decisions for the entire annual conference.

Rev. Carol Turner spoke against the resolution. Rev. Bert Bagley stated that he was struggling with understanding why there is such resistance to increasing the number of members on the Core Leadership Team from 15 to 24 plus one youth. Rev. Tommy Williams from Woodville pointed out that the CLT is only 12 months into the process and it's way too soon to over haul it. He spoke against the resolution. Curtis Troth from The Woodlands UMC called the question. Bishop Huie had previously recognized Dr. Kirbyjon Caldwell and allowed him to speak. Dr. Caldwell pointed out that the Core Leadership Team has not done an effective job in communication. However, he encouraged the conference to give the process a chance to make needed changes in the communication area. Give the team members a chance and give the Bishop a chance. Rev. Matt Idom spoke to the discussion and stated that the question is not do we trust the CLT. The question is not do we trust the Bishop. The question is about accountability and communication. Any change to the Model for Ministry requires a $\frac{3}{4}$ majority vote. The resolution did not carry.

Nominations report: Rick Goodrich reported on the nominations report that was distributed to the conference. The nominations presented are to complete the year. A new Nominations report will be given next annual conference.

Under the Youth Ministry section on page 3 of the Nominations report, Rev. Goodrich asked that the conference strike this entire section due to the resolution which was passed during the 2007 annual conference to allow the youth to nominate their own youth representatives. Rev. Goodrich asked that his name be removed from the Texas Methodist Foundation board, found on page 10. Add Elijah Stansell to the Methodist Retirement Communities board, page 9. Under the Lon Morris College Board, page 9, Nick Sholars district is Northwest, not the East District. The nominations report was passed by the raising of hands.

Question from the Conference Treasurer: Bishop Huie called on Dr. Stansell for a question. He spoke to the Disability Awareness Sunday resolution and stated the fiscal office needs to know the date that will be set for Disability Awareness Sunday. Rev. Greg Edwards said it was a voluntary contribution that local churches may receive. He suggested the second Sunday in October. Rev. Richard Laster reminded the conference that this Sunday falls the week after World Communion Sunday. Rev. Edwards then stated that this is not a mandated Sunday but one the local church may choose. Rev. Don Willis

moved that we study for one year the details of implementing the resolution for the date and a financial responsibility to the conference. The motion was seconded and the Bishop asked for discussion. Following discussion on the motion to study the issue for a year, the motion was defeated by hand vote. Dr. Ed Robb then made a motion that the cabinet make the decision for the Sunday to observe Disability Awareness Sunday. The motion received a second and was approved by hand vote.

Announcement: Bishop Huie stated that the Head Teller had signaled that the ballot is not ready. She apologized, but decided that it was necessary to take a clergy ballot at the evening worship service before the 7:30 p.m. processional. Following a brief discussion of ways to facilitate the vote, Bishop Huie advised all clergy delegates to sit in the section designated as the conference voting bar.

Recess: Bishop Huie declared the session in recess at 5:24 p.m.

The Order of Ordination of Deacons and Elders Wednesday, May 30, 2007, 7:30 p.m.

The evening began at 7:00 p.m. with pre-worship music by the Christ UMC Festival Choir in Sugar Land and the Marvin UMC Chancel Choir in Tyler. A few minutes before 7:30 p.m., a clergy ballot was taken. The service of ordination officially began with the Choral Introit. The preacher for the ordination service was Bishop Janice Riggle Huie. The liturgist was Martha Scott, member of First UMC in Atlanta and the lay leader of the North District. The choral conductors were Frode Gundersen, Director of Worship and fine Arts, Marvin UMC, Tyler and Lahonda Sharp, Director of Music and fine Arts, Christ UMC, Sugar Land. The organists were Judith P. York, Marvin UMC in Tyler and Beth McConnell, Christ UMC in Sugar Land. The instrumentalists were Dr. Daniel Shipman, trumpet; Grace Tice, oboe; and Sue Bugg, flute.

Dr. Charles "Chuck" Simmons and Mrs. Leah Taylor presented the candidates to Bishop Huie for ordination. Bishop Huie led the examination of the Deacons and Elders and the laying on of hands and prayer. Following the ordination service, a reception was given for the new deacons and elders in the Texas Annual Conference.

Morning Session Thursday, May 31, 2007, 9:00 a.m.

Call to Order: Bishop Huie called the session to order at 9:00 a.m. Rev. Kim Meyers opened with prayer.

Courtesies: Rev. Rick Goodrich announced that the Lon Morris College buses will stop running at 12:30 p.m., there are pictures on the bulletin board, and to please drop the name tags in the basket located at the back of the sanctuary before leaving the conference.

District Reports: Bishop Huie announced that the district reports on the ballot will be presented after all other reports are given. In the essence of time, only one district report on DVD will be shown. All other district DVD presentations will be available on the conference website.

Reading of Lay Ballot #11: The ballot results were read at 9:05 a.m., with the 5 highest elections as the alternate delegates. Total ballots received: 494; invalid ballots 26; total valid ballots 468. The elected alternates are: Carolyn Huntsman, 339; Jack Steele, 323; John W. Harrington, 313; Imsook Lee, 249; and Jill C. Krone, 244.

Reading of Clergy Ballot #13: The clergy have 8 delegates to elect. Total ballots received, 288; invalid ballots, 16; total valid ballots, 272; votes needed to elect, 137; there were two elections: Don R. Waddleton, 150 and Edmund W. Robb, 138.

Clergy Ballot #14 was distributed at 9:10 a.m. with instructions to vote for six people. Bishop Huie called Rev. Sara Barbaree to pray. The ballot was declared closed at 9:20 a.m.

Center for Congregational Excellence: Dr. Karen Dorris announced that her report was on a DVD, which is filed in the Conference Library. Dr. Dorris asked the members of the Congregational Excellence team to stand. She read the names of the Churches that were recognized as welcoming congregations. Dr. Dorris shared highlights from the Conference Share program to help raise more funds for the work of the Annual Conference. She explained that a share of \$100 can be paid in two payments. She asked the new start pastors to come forward for recognition.

Personal Privilege: Bishop Huie announced that the Council of Bishops has developed seven new pathways for the Church in an effort to encourage the whole denomination to become excited about new church starts.

The Historic Question was asked, Where shall we hold the next Annual Conference? Dr. Ed Robb invited the Annual Conference to return to The Woodlands United Methodist Church in 2008. The applause received was the affirmation to return in 2008 to The Woodlands UMC. Bishop Huie thanked Dr. Robb and the staff for their gracious hospitality, especially the media staff for the wonderful work they had done during the week.

Central South District: A DVD report was present, which will be on the conference website with the other 8 districts.

Announcements: Bishop Huie announced that Cokesbury will pack up the display after the last break of the morning session. The Bishop thanked the Annual Conference worship team for wonderful worship experiences. She extended words of appreciation to the Annual Conference planning team for a job well done.

Institutional Reports: Lydia Patterson Institute and Methodist Retirement Communities offered their reports by DVD, which may be found in the Conference Library.

Reading of Clergy Ballot #14: The ballot was read at 10:35 a.m. There were six delegates to elect. Total ballots received, 263; invalid ballots 17; votes needed to elect, 124; there were two elections: Kenneth Levingston, 132 and Jerry Neff, 125. There are four delegates that remain to be elected.

Clergy Ballot #15: The ballot was distributed at 10:38 a.m. The Bishop asked Dottie Dumas to lead in prayer. The ballot was declared closed at 10:47 am.

Announcement: There will be a General and Jurisdictional delegation meeting after the Annual Conference is adjourned. Bishop Huie thanked Rick Goodrich for his work in planning for the annual conference. Rev. Darnell Walker asked the conference to remember Gulfside Assembly and the great heritage of this historic institution. Bishop Huie called upon Rev. Jim Welch to lead in prayer, with a request to remember the family and friends of Bishop Lawson, who died this morning.

Adjourned: Bishop Huie declared the session adjourned at 10:54 a.m.

The Service of Commissioning and Sending Forth Thursday, May 31, 2007, 11:05 a.m.

The service of Commissioning was followed by the recognition of our varied gifts and ministries and the setting of appointments for 2007-2008. The leaders were Bishop Janice Riggle Huie, Rev. Carol Turner, Rev. Edward Jones and Rev. Kelly Sullivan. The song leader was Virginia Pevey, from First UMC, Gilmer. The organist was Paul Butts, The Woodlands UMC.

Extended Business Session for Clergy Delegates Thursday, May 31, 2007, 12:12 p.m.

Call to Order: Bishop Huie called the clergy delegates to order for the completion of electing clergy delegates to Jurisdictional Conference and for election of the 5 alternate delegates.

Reading of Clergy Ballot #15: Total ballots received 256; invalid ballots 15; valid ballots received 241; votes needed to elect 121; there were no elections. Following the reading of the ballot, Rev. Mopsy Andrews withdrew her name from consideration.

Motion: Rev. B.T. Williamson made a motion that on the next ballot the 4 highest votes be elected as the Jurisdictional delegates and the next 5 highest votes on the same ballot be elected as the alternates. Following questions for clarification as well as discussion, the motion failed.

Clergy Ballot #16: The motion was made that on ballot #16, the four highest votes would be elected for Jurisdictional Conference by plurality. The motion carried. There are 4 persons to elect on this ballot. Bishop Huie declared the ballot closed.

Reading of Clergy Ballot #16: The ballot was read at 1:26 p.m. Total ballots received 205; invalid ballots 1; total valid ballots 203; votes needed to elect 102; there were four elections: Christi Conway, Keith Whitaker, Charles Millikan, and Bill Taylor.

Clergy Ballot #17: The ballot was distributed at 1:30 p.m. The motion was made that the 5 highest votes would be elected as the alternates to Jurisdictional Conference. The motion carried. Bishop Huie called upon Rev. Jim Foster to pray before the ballot was cast. The ballot was closed at 1:37 p.m.

Session Closed and the 2007 Annual Conference is Adjourned: Bishop Huie gave the remaining delegates the option of waiting for the results of Ballot #17 or listing the results on the conference website and by email. The delegates votes unanimously to receive the results electronically. Bishop Huie issued an Episcopal blessing and sent the clergy forth at 1:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Dr. Gail Harrelson
Secretary, Texas Annual Conference