

THE TEXAS ANNUAL CONFERENCE

BOUND FOR GREATER THINGS



**ENABLING CONGREGATIONS
TO MAKE DISCIPLES OF JESUS CHRIST**

**UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
BENEVOLENCES**

**THE FINANCIAL COMMITMENT
OF THE
TEXAS ANNUAL CONFERENCE**

**A STUDY OF THE APPORTIONMENTS,
FAIR SHARE GOALS,
AND SPECIAL DAY OFFERINGS
OF THE
TEXAS ANNUAL CONFERENCE
2007**

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THE FINANCIAL COMMITMENT OF THE TEXAS ANNUAL CONFERENCE.....

A MESSAGE FROM OUR BISHOP

“You will be enriched in every way for your great generosity.”

2Corinthians 9:11

Dear Friends,

In the Texas Annual Conference we have agreed that one of the core practices of vibrant, fruitful, growing congregations is extravagant generosity. By that we mean these churches preach, teach and practice proportional giving with a goal toward tithing. They encourage their church members to grow in the grace of giving as an essential practice of Christian discipleship. As a congregation they practice generosity by their extraordinary support for connectional giving, missions, and other organizations that change people's lives. They give joyously in ways that enrich the souls of their members and strengthen the ministries of the church.

Over the past three years, I have been privileged to witness extravagant generosity in many Texas Annual Conference congregations. None of us will soon forget the extraordinary nature of our response following hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Looking back, I doubt many of us would say that we “missed” the money and time and service we gave. Instead, we celebrate that the lives of people were improved and our own souls were enriched. As our Annual Conference continues to grow in discipleship, one of our challenges is to extend this “extraordinary” level of generosity to “ordinary” generosity.

Since the time of John Wesley, generosity has been a distinguishing mark of the people of The United Methodist Church. He believed that generosity was a necessary and indispensable aspect of discipleship, essential for the maturing of the soul and for the work of the church. Wesley taught Methodists to “Gain all you can, save all you can, and give all you can” (“The Use of Money,” 1744). He feared that the frugality of early Methodists would lead to levels of wealth that would distract them from their growth in faithful living. He encouraged Methodists to live simply, without opulence, avoiding the waste of money on unnecessary things. Generosity was rooted in Jesus' commandment to love God and neighbor.

This brochure is designed to show you how “ordinary” connectional giving, combined with the “ordinary” giving of other congregations enables our annual conference and general church to change the lives of people around the world and to strengthen the ministries of the church in “extraordinary” ways. We hope it will enable you to give confidently and joyously.

There is no end to what God's church can accomplish for the purposes of Christ in the world. I invite you to join with Bob and me in the extravagant giving of our lives and our resources to God through the connectional ministries of The United Methodist Church.

Grace and peace,
Bishop Janice Riggle Huie

Revitalizing Our Connectional Purpose

WE ARE A CONNECTIONAL CHURCH! Connectionalism in the United Methodist tradition is multi-leveled, global in scope, and local in thrust. Our connectionalism is not merely a linking of one charge conference to another. It is rather a vital web of interactive relationships. For a detailed description refer to **Section II, the Ministry of All Christians** in the 2004 **Book of Discipline, (pp. 89-90)**.

In John C. Bowmer's text, the *Pastor and People*, he describes the three principles upon which the connection was built: episcopacy, itinerancy, and mutual help. Regarding "mutual help," he places great emphasis on various funds and collections as ways Methodists shared resources. He saw this as "the strong helping the weak". I believe it is most profoundly demonstrated when we meet human needs of many descriptions.

It is most important always to recognize our common mission by which we actualize the work of Kingdom building. I believe that faithfulness to this connection is bona fide when we accept our participatory responsibility as a 'grace recipient'. Therefore, a gracious heart becomes our responsiveness.

HISTORICALLY: The various traditions that have constituted The United Methodist Church have shared in this unrelenting love for God and neighbor through apportionment giving. The Methodist Church has demonstrated faithfully its commitment to missionary work. As we live into the future that same faithfulness will call for a revitalizing of our commitment to this system.

APPORTIONMENT DESIGNATIONS: Seven Funds are apportioned to the Annual Conference by the General Conference:

- World Service
- Episcopal Fund
- Interdenominational Cooperative Fund
- General Administrative Fund
- Ministerial Education Fund
- Black College Fund
- Africa U. M. University

The Jurisdictional apportionment is from the Jurisdictional connection and includes the following:

- Jurisdictional Administration Fund
- Jurisdictional Ministries (Mt. Sequoyah, SMU Campus Ministry, Lydia Patterson Institute)

Other apportionments support unique ministries within the Texas Annual Conference. They are:

- Center for Congregational Excellence
- New Church Transformation Development
- Center for Clergy Excellence
- Center for Missional Excellence
- Center for Connectional Resources
- Pensions
- District Superintendents Fund
- Equitable Compensation
- Medical Benefits Program

On the next several pages are descriptions of each of these apportionments, plus information about Fair Share Goals and the General Church Special Sundays observed by the United Methodist Church.

When United Methodists think of apportionments as a privilege of ministry which brings new life for God's people and churches, excitement occurs. I pray that the laity and clergy of our congregations will continue to promote and stress the importance of our connectional church. We hope that this booklet is helpful in revitalizing enthusiasm and request your ideas toward the improvement of it.

Yours in Christ,

Elijah A. Stansell Jr.
Conference Treasurer

APPORTIONMENTS

To be part of a local United Methodist church is to join “a connectional society of persons who have professed their faith in Christ...” Par.203, The Book of Discipline 2004

The term “Connectional” refers to the points of connection among the various levels in the organizational structure of The United Methodist Church—i.e., the network of interdependent relationships among persons and groups on local, regional, national, and international levels of The United Methodist Church.

The United States is divided into five Jurisdictional Areas. These Jurisdictional Areas are then divided into Annual Conferences. The Texas Annual Conference is part of the South Central Jurisdiction. Each conference has a Bishop, District Superintendents, Cabinet, boards, and committees. A connectional church is a church that is accountable to each of these levels, as well as to the local level.

The Book of Discipline states the following: “The local church is a connectional society of persons who have been baptized, have professed their faith in Christ, and have assumed the vows of membership in the United Methodist Church. They gather in fellowship to hear the Word of God, receive the sacraments, praise and worship the triune God, and carry forward the work that Christ has committed to his church.”

Together with our connectional congregations, the United Methodist Church is able to accomplish what no single church, district or annual conference could ever hope to do. The United Methodist Church is able to improve the lives of families, reach out to disaster victims, and make Disciples of Jesus Christ locally and around the world.

Our apportionments make so many things possible for people in need—physically and spiritually. We are able to help through our apportionment giving. The general church allocates the apportioned funds based on its budget to the conferences. The conferences subsequently also allocates apportioned funds based on its budget to the local churches. This method of giving has become a strong generous commitment.

Promote benevolences in your church. Use the stories found in “COME, SHARE, REJOICE IN GIVING” from UMCOM (published three times a year), the articles in each issue of THE INTERPRETER, and the booklet SHARING GOD’S GIFTS.

THE BUDGET is approved by Annual Conference, which is composed of all clergy and delegates from local churches. The 2007 Budget was approved at the Annual Conference Session in Houston, Texas in May 2006. The 2008 budget will be presented for approval at the Annual Conference Session in The Woodlands, TX in May 2008.

THE CONFERENCE TREASURER is available to present the apportionments and/or budget of the Annual Conference to your Administrative Board/Council, or meet with your finance and/or stewardship committees. He can talk to you about stewardship programs that will work in your particular situation. He can work with your trustees in understanding their role in the church. He can also present to your church the importance of incorporation and liability insurance.

THE UNITED METHODIST FOUNDATION office is anxious to speak to your church about stewardship, wills and legacies, trusts, establishing endowments, the work of the trustees, and the importance of incorporation.

Call on us. We are here to help you.

Elijah A. Stansell Jr.
Conference Treasurer

C.J. Taylor
Foundation President

WORLD SERVICE
(Book of Discipline ¶812)

SHARING GOD'S GIFTS AROUND THE WORLD



\$3,059,510

World Service

When United Methodist congregations pay their apportioned askings they participate in God's work around the world...and right in their own parish. The World Service Fund is the heart of our church's ministry together. Through this fund you become a partner with the church's agencies to be in mission and ministry at home and around the world. The effects of World Service ministry are making a difference across the globe.

World Service is God's people reaching out in love and compassion in the name of Christ. It represents a call and a challenge to each United Methodist. The World Service Fund provides basic financial operating resources to four general program boards, four general commissions, and the General Council on Ministries. No congregation alone can do what we do together in World Service; sending missionaries across America and around the world, providing pension benefits for deaconesses, supporting United Methodist Communications, and funds for the General Council on Ministries. World Service provides literature and resources for the entire church.

World Service is the basic financial underpinning for most of our day-to-day denomination wide work. Through this fund United Methodist churches strengthen evangelism efforts, foster church growth, and nurture spiritual development. Our congregations have been enriched with worship, retreat, and camping resources, leadership training and stewardship development. The fund also supports specific work with children, youth, singles, students, persons who are physically challenged, adults and older persons. Mission workers and others who serve Christ and the UMC around the world are helped through this fund. Certification for our chaplains, Christian educators, communicators, and musicians is made possible through the monies raised for this fund. The fund has allowed the general church to create a United Methodist presence in mass media and make new communications technology accessible to the church. Through this fund we demonstrate our commitment to God's reign through ministries of peace and justice, and efforts to build a church and a society inclusive of all people.

Resources: GCFA Sharing God's Gifts
No Longer Strangers, a 24 minute video which celebrates the World Service Fund and the United Methodist Church as a World Church.
Available in Conference AV Library

MINISTERIAL EDUCATION FUND

(Book of Discipline ¶816)

\$1,052,807

The Ministerial Education Fund was established to enable the Church to unify and expand its program of financial support for the recruitment and education of ordained and diaconal ministers and to equip the annual conferences to meet increased demands in this area. The money funds theological schools and programs of ministerial recruitment, professional development, and continuing education, with 75 percent being administered by the general church and 25 percent by the annual conferences.

75% of the fund supports the United Methodist Seminaries:

Boston University School of Theology, Boston, Massachusetts
 Candler School of Theology, Atlanta, Georgia
 Claremont School of Theology, Claremont, California
 Drew University, the Theological School, Madison, New Jersey
 Duke University, the Divinity School, Durham, North Carolina
 Gammon Theological Seminary, Atlanta, Georgia
 Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, Evanston, Illinois
 Iliff School of Theology, Denver, Colorado
 Methodist Theological School in Ohio, Delaware, Ohio
 Perkins School of Theology, Dallas, Texas
 St. Paul School of Theology, Kansas City, Missouri
 United Theological Seminary, Dayton, Ohio
 Wesley Theological Seminary, Washington, D.C.



The remaining 25% is used within the Annual Conference to support:

The School for Local Pastors
 Course of Study Training for Diaconal and Ordained Ministry
 Pastor's Retreat
 Continuing Education
 Counseling
 Scholarships

Students in schools of Theology receive scholarships each semester.

There is a "Gathering" for the clergy of the Conference held at Lakeview each September.



BLACK COLLEGE FUND

(Book of Discipline ¶815)

\$419,223

“In response to a request from the Commission on the Black Colleges and the Council of Presidents of the Black Colleges, the 1972 General Conference established the Black College Fund as one of the apportioned General Church funds. The objective of the fund is to provide financial support for institutions of higher education which are related to the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry of the United Methodist Church and which have historically served primarily the educational needs of black students.” (The Financial Commitment of the United Methodist Church 1993-1996 p.20)

After the Civil War, the Methodist Episcopal Church organized the Freedmen’s Aid Society to help meet the educational needs of former slaves and their children establishing over 100 colleges. Eleven of those Colleges are now a part of the United Methodist Church and are supported by the Black College Fund:

Bennett College	Bethune-Cookman College
Clafin College	Clark Atlanta Universtiy
Dillard University	Huston-Tillotson College
Meharry Medical College	Paine College
Philander-Smith College	Rust College
Wiley College (in Marshall, Texas)	

These colleges attract students from diverse social, economic and educational backgrounds—students who receive inestimable affirmation and support in vibrant, academically challenging spiritual environments. Graduates of these Black colleges include significant numbers of ministers and bishops, teachers, doctors, judges, scientists, artists, entrepreneurs, and journalists. (Sharing God’s Gifts, United Methodists Communications, p32)

Resources: Videos “Black Ambassadors”
“The Story of One”

Available in the Conference AV Library

AFRICA UNITED METHODIST UNIVERSITY
(Book of Discipline ¶808)

\$92,577

This fund supports the only United Methodist, degree-granting university on the continent of Africa and the first private university in Zimbabwe. After more than 150 years of Methodist missions and church growth in Africa, the 1988 General Conference overwhelmingly accepted the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry's proposal for this institution. In March 1992, Africa UM University opened for business with 40 theological and agricultural students, 16 faculties. They met in renovated farm buildings for classrooms. In April, 1994 the University was officially opened, dedication services for several buildings were conducted, the Chancellor and Vice Chancellor were inaugurated, and a Cokesbury bookstore was opened.

As of 2000, there are 871 students (372 women, 499 men); 62 faculty members. There are four disciplines taught at Africa University: Education, Theology, Agriculture and Natural Resources, and Management and Administration.

The Zimbabwe Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church was the first contributor to Africa University with its gift of the site: the 1,545-acre Ngabi Estate in Old Mutare, 155 miles from Harare, the capital of Zimbabwe. Since that time more than 10,000 generous donors have forwarded monetary gifts to the endowment fund of Africa University, either through World Service Special Gifts or directly to Africa University. The success of each phase of the university's development was accomplished by the equally generous support of thousands of United Methodist churches that paid their Africa University Fund apportionments every year.

Africa's University's mission is "to provide a higher education of excellent quality, to nurture students in Christian values and to help the nations of Africa develop the leaders of the future."

Resources: Videos "Celebrating the Dream," a 25 minute video
"Challenge for the Future," a 10 minute video
"Africa University: Official Opening Highlights, a 6 minute video

Available in Conference AV Library

INTERDENOMINATIONAL COOPERATION FUND

(Book of Discipline ¶ 814)

\$81,512

The Interdenominational Cooperation Fund provides United Methodist's share of the basic support for the World and National Councils of Churches and the Consultation on Church Union.

The United Methodist Church is a charter member of the World Council of Churches. The primary function of the World Council is to "assure that relief goods get to their intended destinations to help people."

The National Council of Churches is best known for Church World Service through which it channels help to the victims of disaster and carries out development programs in more than 90 countries. Approximately 70% of the NCC Budget is spent in this ministry. The NCC holds the copyright to the Revised Standard Version of the Bible, and has published the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible.

The purposes of the NCC are:

- 1) to share resources for unity and mission
- 2) to act as responsible servants to people in need
- 3) to strive for peace and justice in the social, political, and economic orders
- 4) to nurture ecumenical life through educational efforts and relationships with all Christians seeking renewal and unity
- 5) to cultivate dialogue with persons of other faiths

The largest single unit of the NCC is Church World Service (CWS) related to the Division of Overseas Ministries. Through CWS, the NCC assists victims of disaster and maintains development programs in more than 50 countries. Over the years, CWS has distributed more than 5 billion pounds of food, clothing, and health supplies in emergency situations around the world. In the U.S., it has helped settle more than 320,000 refugees.

The Interdenominational Cooperation Fund allows us to be in mission with others witnessing to the world. This fund:

*enables United Methodists to have an effective presence in the activities of these ecumenical organizations.

*provides the United Methodist share of the basic budgets of those organizations which relate to the ecumenical responsibilities of the Council of Bishops and the General Commission on Christian Unity and Inter-religious Concerns

*pays for the travel expenses of United Methodist representatives to meetings of these organizations

Resources: Video "To Flourish and Grow"
Available in the Conference AV Library

THE GENERAL ADMINISTRATION FUND

(Book of Discipline ¶ 813)

\$264,599

The General Administration Fund

This fund supports those parts of the United Methodist Church that are largely administrative. The largest portion of this fund supports the General Conference and the production of the Book of Discipline.

Another part of this fund is for the Judicial Council, the final court of appeal and the Supreme Court for United Methodists.

The General Council on Finance and Administration (GCFA) is supported by this fund. GCFA is the bookkeeper and statistician for the denomination. It also maintains a legal staff to help conferences with specific questions of law, a risk-management department to help us prevent problems.

The General Administration also supports the Commission on Archives and History. Official United Methodist documents and historical artifacts are maintained. Historical landmarks, shrines and sites are designated.

Paragraph 813 of the 2004 Book of Discipline states the following:

1. The General Administration Fund shall provide for the expenses of the sessions of the General Conference, the Judicial Council, special commissions and committees constituted by the General Conference, and other administrative agencies and activities recommended for inclusion by the general administration budget by the General Council on Finance and Administration and approved by the General Conference. Any agency or institution requiring or desiring support from the General Administration Fund shall present its case to the council at a time and place indicated by council officers. The council, having heard such requests, shall report the same to the General Conference with recommendations for its action and determination.
2. The treasurer of the council shall disburse the General Administration Fund as authorized by the General Conference and as directed by the council. Where the General Conference has not allocated definite sums to agencies receiving money from the General Administration Fund, the council or its executive committee shall have authority to determine the amount to be allocated to each.
3. The expenses of the Judicial Council shall be paid from the General Administration Fund, within a budget submitted annually by the Judicial Council to the General Council on Finance and Administration for its approval and subject to the requirement of Paragraph 813.4.
4. The General Administration Fund, and all payments made from this fund, shall be subject to the financial, accounting, and auditing requirements of Paragraph 806.
5. The General Commission on Communication shall promote the General Administration Fund.

JURISDICTIONAL APPORTIONMENT

(Book of Discipline ¶ 511-539)

\$197,857

The Jurisdictional Administration Fund

This fund supports the Jurisdictional Conference which meets quadrennially to elect Bishops, elect trustees to the institutions owned by the Jurisdiction, to approve the program of the Jurisdictional Council on Ministries, to support the Jurisdictional Youth Ministry Organization, and operate the administrative offices of the Jurisdiction located in Dallas, Texas.

Typical events sponsored by the Jurisdictional Administration Fund, but funded from other sources are: retreats at Mt. Sequoyah, Bishop's Week, United Methodist Men's Congress, Scouting Coordinators Workshop, Archives and History Workshops, Camp Directors Workshop, Campus Ministers Workshop, Jurisdictional United Methodist Women's Meetings, Ethnic Minority Convocation, and the Communications Training Event.

Jurisdictional Ministries

Three ministries of the Jurisdiction are supported through this fund: Mt. Sequoyah, a Jurisdictional training center in Fayetteville, Arkansas; Lydia Patterson Institute, a secondary school for Hispanic students in El Paso, Texas; and the Southern Methodist University Campus Ministry.

Paragraph 527 of the Book of Discipline states the following:

The jurisdictional conference shall have the authority to appoint or elect such agencies as the General Conference may direct or as it deems necessary for its work. Insofar as possible, the membership on councils, boards, and agencies of the jurisdictional conference shall include one-third clergy, one-third laywomen, and one-third laymen in keeping with the policies for general Church agencies, except for the board of ordained ministry and the jurisdictional committee on episcopacy. Special attention shall be given to the inclusion of clergywomen, youth, young adults, older adults, single adults, persons with disabilities, persons from churches of small membership, and racial and ethnic persons.

Paragraph 528 of the Book of Discipline states the following:

In each jurisdiction of The United Methodist Church there may be a jurisdictional council on ministries or jurisdictional administrative council, or alternative structure, organized as the jurisdiction shall determine and with the authority to coordinate the programs of the general agencies within the jurisdiction.

CENTER FOR CONGREGATIONAL EXCELLENCE APPORTIONMENT

\$767,587

Two main priorities of the Center for Connectional Excellence are new church development and congregational transformation. The purpose of the Center for Congregational Excellence is to connect and equip local congregations and new church start leaders with tools and resources for congregational revitalization, transformation, and vitality in communities they serve through the following teams and ministries. These teams shall function as equivalent structures for the Board of Discipleship ministries.

Extravagant Generosity Ministries Team – to equip local congregations with tools and resources needed to engage in generous Christian stewardship in the communities they serve;

Passionate Worship Ministries Team - to equip local congregations with tools and resources needed to engage in passionate worship appropriate to the communities they serve;

Faith Forming Relationship and Spiritual Formation Ministry Team – to equip local congregations with tools and resources needed to engage in excellence in intentional faith development and spiritual formation;

Radical Hospitality and Evangelistic Ministries – to equip local congregation with tools and resources needed to engage in radical hospitality;

Age Level and Camping Ministries – to equip local congregations with tools and resources needed to help all ages within the church and community grow in faith and discipleship and to promote vital camping ministries;

Lay Leadership Development Ministries – to assist pastors, Districts and local congregation with tools to develop leadership among the laity;

Leadership Team – to develop strategies and organizational recommendations for congregational excellence including but not limited to:

- Vitality and demographic assessments
- Strategic planning
- Tracking of key indicators and activities
- Evaluation-measurable accountability
- Training
- Mentoring churches

*Note the budget of \$790,087 is composed of the following

Center for Congregational Excellence	\$ 621,837
Center for Congregational Excellence Ministries	\$ 145,750

NEW CHURCH TRANSFORMATION DEVELOPMENT APPORTIONMENT

\$1,500,000

New Church Transformation Development falls under the direction of The Center for Congregational Excellence. Its main purpose is to create new congregations and to transform existing congregations so that all of them are vital, healthy congregations where disciples of Jesus Christ are made for the transformation of the world. This apportionment pays for costs of starting new churches which include training new church start pastors for this special ministry, providing staff salary support for new church starts, providing equipment and programming costs for new church starts, and helping new church starts with land and facility payments. It also funds transformation training events and program expense for existing congregations seeking to move from maintenance to vital ministry.

There will be a strong linkage to the Center for Clergy Excellence to support appointment of effective clergy leadership meeting the diverse needs of our congregations.

Needs for church transformation and revitalization can be identified at any level of the connection, and approved at the District and Conference level for implementation using the Conference's established criteria. These teams shall function as equivalent structures for Board of Discipleship ministries.

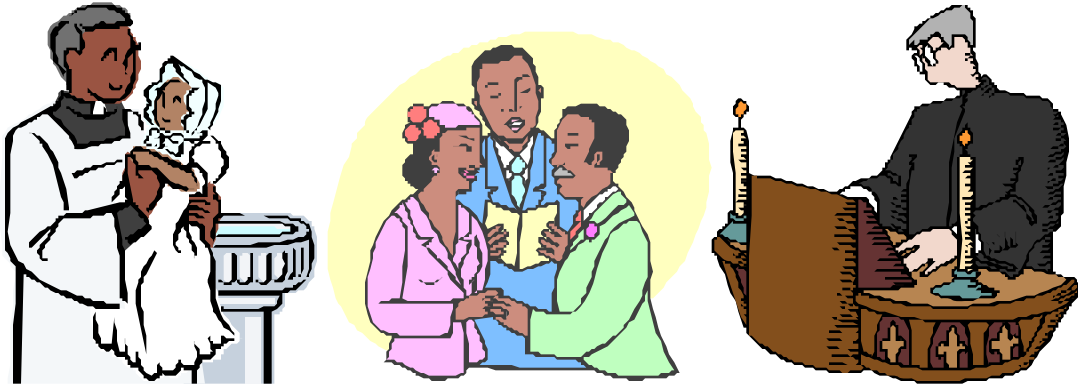
*Note the budget of \$1,500,000 is composed of the following:

New Church	\$1,250,000
Transformation	\$ 250,000



TRANSFORMING CONGREGATIONS

CENTER FOR CLERGY EXCELLENCE APPORTIONMENT



\$588,980

The Center for Clergy Excellence's purpose is to create an environment of support and accountability that continuously moves the clergy of the Annual Conference toward excellence. The end result will be spirit-led, faithful, and fruitful pastoral leaders for both congregations and ministries of transformation beyond the local church. The following ministries fall in this category:

1. Clergy Accountability Ministries-to set standards for quality of pastoral leadership for local congregations in the Annual Conference
2. Clergy Recruitment Ministries-to equip local congregations to identify and encourage persons with appropriate gifts and graces and a clear sense of call to commit to pastoral ministry
3. Clergy Development and Spiritual Formation-to develop clergy who are growing in their theological understanding, in their leadership, and in their physical and spiritual well-being
4. Clergy Support Ministries-to coordinate pension, health benefits, equitable compensation, and joint committee on incapacity

There will be a strong linkage to the Center for Congregational Excellence to support the appointment of appropriate clergy leadership.

*Note the budget of \$ 588,980 is composed of the following:

Office of Clergy Excellence	\$464,280
Committee on Investigations	\$ 1,000
Board of Ordained Ministry	\$ 98,300
Board of Pensions	\$ 23,000
Committee on Equitable Compensation	\$ 2,400

CENTER FOR MISSIONAL EXCELLENCE APPORTIONMENT

\$2,693,904

The purpose of the Center for Missional Excellence is to provide and equip leaders, clergy and lay who carry forth ministries of mercy, justice, and wholeness so that all persons, inside and outside the church, experience mercy, justice, and wholeness: emotionally, physically, financially, and spiritually.

The following ministries fall in this category:

Social Principles Implementation Ministries - to pursue implementation of the social principles of the United Methodist Church, justice concerns, and other policy statements on Christian social concerns of the Texas Annual Conference of the UMC

Mercy Ministries - to represent the health and welfare related institutions: Methodist Mission Home Methodist Children's Home, Methodist Retirement Communities, Methodist Healthcare System, Parish and Community Development, Health and Welfare/Golden Cross, Substance Abuse, Healthcare Issues, and Society of St. Stephen and to train and equip clergy, laity, and local churches of the conference to do these ministries in the parishes and districts.



Higher Education and Campus Ministries - to increase fruitfulness, to set measurable standards for effective campus ministries, to increase awareness of call to ordained ministry and church vocations and to comprehensively identify and propose remedies to systematic issues hindering access to and successful pursuit of higher education

Sending Ministries - to connect and equip congregations for outreach ministry in the local communities in the Annual Conference, and around the world and to work with disaster response inside and outside our Annual Conference

Restorative Justice Ministries - to serve as an advocate for change by connecting and equipping churches and individuals to minister to those incarcerated, their families, justice workers, and victims while working to improve re-entry ministries for offenders and their families

Missional Excellence Leadership Team – to develop strategies and organizational recommendations which facilitate the work of the Center for Missional Excellence, including but not limited to:

- Criteria
- Assessment
- Tracking Indicators and activities
- Setting objectives
- Measurable accountability
- Equipping local congregations for risk-taking ministry and service

CENTER FOR MISSIONAL EXCELLENCE APPORTIONMENT Continued

Also, under the Center for Missional Excellence falls the Nomination Committee. The Nominations Committee's purpose is to identify and enlist vision-oriented leadership reflecting the diversity of the Conference for all Conference ministries. The Core Leadership Team is charged with developing a new nominations process to be presented to the 2007 Annual Conference Session.

There will be a strong linkage to the Center for Congregational Excellence and the Center for Clergy Excellence to support the mission of the Annual Conference for the transformation of the world.

*Note the budget of \$2,693,904 is composed of the following:

Assistant to the Bishop	\$ 484,258
Social Principles Implementation Team	\$ 505,646
Campus Ministry	\$1,658,000
Texas Conference of Churches	\$ 23,500
Hispanic Ministries	\$ 22,500

CENTER FOR CONNECTIONAL RESOURCES APPORTIONMENT

\$2,882,885



The purpose of the Center for Connectional Resources is to provide fiscal oversight, property management, and archives and records to under-gird the mission and ministry of the Texas Annual Conference. Our expectation is that the Conference will pay 100% of its apportionments and provide adequate financial and physical resources and archival records to ensure fruitful mission and ministry.

The following committees are in this center:

Conference Council on Finance and Administration – purpose as noted in the Book of Discipline, Paragraph 610

Conference Board of Trustees – purpose as noted in the Book of Discipline, Paragraph 2512

Note: All property concerns within the Conference (including those associated with Lakeview, Lon Morris College and the Cramer Center) are under the jurisdiction of the Board of Trustees. It is recommended that all capital projects and capital budgets for entities listed above be approved by the Conference Board of Trustees.

Conference Commission on Archives and History-purpose as noted in the Book of Discipline, Paragraph 639 and Paragraph 2512 is to record and preserve the history of the Conference to connect with the visions and missions of our heritage as the ground of our present ministries and future vision.

Committee on Communications- purpose as noted in the Book of Discipline, Paragraph 645 is to work with the Communications Officer in developing an effective and coordinated Conference communications program. Composition: four members who are specialists in communications and marketing.

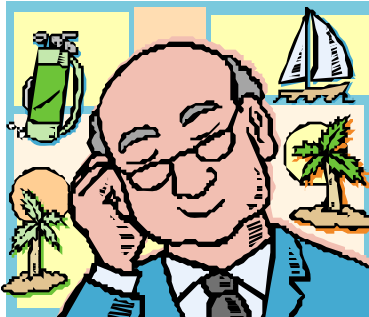
Conference Services:

The Conference Service Center's purpose is to provide effective operation and maintenance of the Conference Service Center

Safe Sanctuary's purpose is to implement and monitor Conference-wide safe sanctuary programs.

Additional teams and committees are the committee on Episcopacy, and the Episcopal Residence. Gulfside Assembly, McMahan's Chapel, Lakeview, Happy Harbor, Lydia Patterson, Wiley College, and Perkins are included in this center's budget.

PENSIONS



\$1,400,000

Clergy with years of service prior to 1982 have pension claims from the old Conference Claimants Fund (The Ministerial Reserve Pension Fund). Up to 96.5% of the apportionment is deposited in the General Board of Pensions which now administrates this fund for the Annual Conference. Beginning January 1, 2008, the Past Service Rate will be \$736.00. From January, 1982 through December, 2006 the Annual Conference participated in the Ministerial Pension Plan of the General Board of Pensions and all years from 1982 to 2006 were covered through church (MPP) and individual contributions (PIP) to the General Board of Pensions.

The Pensions apportionment grew from \$750,000 in 1972 to \$1,500,000 in 1990. In 1991, it was reduced to \$1,425,000 where it remained until 1998 when it was reduced to \$1,400,000. In 2005, the Apportionment for Conference Claimants was raised with the additional \$100,000 to be retained for local congregation arrearages on MPP and CPP payments. In 2008, the Apportionment has been reduced to \$900,000 with 3.5% to be retained by the Conference Board of Pensions for administrative and meeting expenses; the balance of the apportionment \$850,000, be remitted monthly to the General Board of Pensions and Health Benefits.

We affirm the action taken at 2006 session of the Texas Annual Conference which placed the church contribution for each clergy participant to the Clergy Retirement Security Program (CRSP) Funding Plan beginning January 1, 2007. CRSP is a retirement program providing lifetime income and account flexibility designed for those who serve God as clergy of The United Methodist Church. Think of CRSP as two retirement plans for service.

- 1) A defined benefit (DB) plan, providing retirement income as long as you and, if you are married, your spouse live; and
- 2) A defined contribution (DC) plan, providing an account balance you can access as your retirement needs require.

Information about Pensions can be received through:

The Center for Clergy Excellence
 5215 Main Street
 Houston, Texas 77002
 713-521-9383

DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENTS FUND
(Book of Discipline ¶ 614.3)

\$1,753,073

It is the responsibility of the Annual Conference to provide the salary support, travel, continuing education and cabinet expenses of the District Superintendents.

The Texas Annual Conference covers 71 counties from Northeast to Southeast Texas.

There are nine districts in the Texas Annual Conference. They are: Central North, Central South, East, North, Northwest, South, Southeast, Southwest, and West.

Through the District Apportionment, each District pays for its housing, office, and staff expenses.

EPISCOPAL FUND
(Book of Discipline ¶ 817)

\$786,662

The Bishop's leadership role according to the Book of Discipline 2004 (¶414) is the following: "to lead and oversee the spiritual and temporal affairs of the United Methodist Church which confesses Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, and particularly to lead the Church in its mission of witness and service in the world."

Life for those whom this mantle is thrust is never the same as before. They bear the responsibility of ordering the life of the church.

The episcopal fund

- pays salaries of bishops
- pays episcopal office expenses, subject to approval by the General Council on Finance and Administration
- covers costs of bishops' professional travel and moving expenses
- provides pension coverage for bishops and their spouses and disability coverage for bishops
- pays 67% of the costs for episcopal residences or bishop's housing allowances.

EQUITABLE COMPENSATION FUND

\$275,000

The Book of Discipline 2004 ¶624 underscores the nature of the United Methodist Connection. Clergy are to supply the churches, and are to be supported by the churches. In every Annual Conference there are small congregations and circuits which cannot pay an equitable salary as determined by the Annual Conference. The Equitable Compensation Fund provides supplemental income for clergy in such situations.

There are two categories: those who render full-time service to the church and those who render less than full-time service to the church.

Many of our congregations are served by students and local pastors.

Charges must qualify for equitable compensation for their pastors by paying these apportionments in full:

- World Service and Conference Benevolences
- The Texas Conference Fund
- Conference Claimants Fund
- The Episcopal Fund
- The District Superintendents Fund
- Equitable Compensation Fund
- Ministerial Education Fund
- Medical Benefits Fund

Failure to pay these in full will result in a pro-rata reduction in equitable compensation.

Also, Equitable Compensation charges must pay 74% of the equitable salary determined by the Annual Conference.

Guidelines for the administration of this fund are found in the Conference Journal.

MEDICAL BENEFITS PROGRAM**\$3,726,918**

In recent years, the employees of the Texas Annual Conference have experienced excellent medical coverage from our Group Health Benefits program. Most all of the clergy, laity, retirees, and surviving spouses are protected under either the fully insured HMO plan (UNICARE) or the self-funded PPO plan (Boon-Chapman).

Funds are received from an apportionment to the churches, and laity, clergy, retirees and surviving spouse's contributions also make it possible for adequate coverage.

This program began in the '40's. Costs were much lower then, and treatment much less sophisticated. In those days each ministerial family in the Annual Conference sent in \$3 per month, and the "Brotherhood" committee was able to pay medical costs for those families.

Across several decades, as medical care has improved, as costs have risen, and as Annual Conference has grown, the need for a more sophisticated medical coverage has developed.

The Group Health Benefits committee continues to meet its challenges of ongoing high medical cost and provides the excellent protection the employees have come to appreciate. Benefits also include prescriptions as well as life insurance coverage.

A skilled staff in the Group Health Benefits Office at the United Methodist Center in Houston, with the assistance of Unicare, Boon-Chapman, Script Care, and American United Life provide services which assure each employee good medical attention when needed.

For more information, write or call:

Group Health Benefits Office
5215 Main Street
Houston, Texas 77002
713-521-9383
800-606-0350
713-521-7516 fax

FAIR SHARE GOALS

At each session of the Annual Conference, Fair Share Goals are adopted for the next budget.

Presently we have these goals

Rio Grande Conference
 Oklahoma Indian Mission
 Conference Advance Special (changes from year to year)
 Lon Morris College
 Partners in Missions
 Lakeview Summer Camp Scholarships
 Texas Methodist College Scholarships

Rio Grande Conference

\$25,000

This Fair Share Goal is meant for salary support for ministers in the Rio Grande Conference. This non-geographical Annual Conference is made up of Hispanic congregations, many of whom are poor. Our assistance helps fund clergy salaries in the conference.

Oklahoma Indian Mission

\$12,000

The Oklahoma Indian Missionary Conference is another small conference with limited resources. In order to carry on the ministries among these Native American people, the conferences of the Jurisdiction assist in the financial support of these ministries.

Conference Advance Special

\$100,000

The Board of Global Ministries of the Texas Annual Conference determines each year what the Advance will be for the next year. We have supported the Hispanic Ministries, the Haitian Central Conference, Africa UM University, the Russian Initiative, UM work of Unalaska, UM Army and Medical Bridges, Mercy Ships—New Steps and Bering Omega. The Conference Advance Special for 2007 is for the Texas Conference Endowment for Missions. This

Conference Advance Special (Cont'd)

project is part of the match by Moody Foundation whereby Moody matches dollar for dollar funds raised in this challenge. The money will go into an account for supplies, special projects (for example, the aids orphanage home in Kenya. It will not be used for salary.

Lon Morris College

\$240,000

From 1996 through 2000, Lon Morris College was included in the Conference budget as an apportionment for \$240,000 to assist the college through a difficult time. In 2001, it became a fair share goal. While the college has greatly reduced its debt and is no longer on an accreditation alert, the buildings have not received adequate maintenance attention. The Fair Share goal is to assist the college with debt and building maintenance.

Partners in Missions

\$100,000

For many years the Texas Annual Conference has been a denominational leader in short-term mission work. Beginning in Haiti and Mexico, this work has expanded to include several countries including Belize, Costa Rica, Russia, and others. The Fair Share money is used to assist in the purchase of materials for the teams that travel from congregations within the Texas Annual Conference.

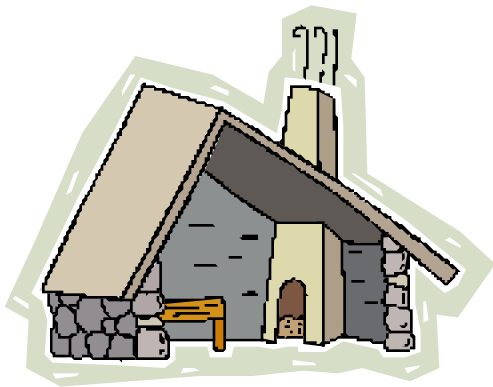
FAIR SHARE GOALS

Lakeview Summer Camp Scholarships \$50,000

Lakeview Methodist Conference Center is owned and operated by the Texas Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church. It is dedicated to the unique purposes of providing programs and comprehensive settings for participants to receive more understanding of God's involvement in their lives.

The camping, retreat, and conference ministries provide varied locations and experiences for worship beyond just the chapel setting. Through these, the Christian commitment of persons of all ages can be confirmed and expanded, empowering them to live the truth of the gospel daily.

Lakeview's mission is "Providing a Unique Environment for Experiencing God's Love." Participation in Lakeview's many programs is the same for all persons without regard to race, color, religion, age, sex, disability, national origin or political belief. The Fair Share goal is to assist young people who could not otherwise pay for their summer camp.



Texas Methodist College Scholarships \$300,000

The Texas United Methodist College Association, which consists of the seven United Methodist Colleges and Universities in Texas, was founded in 1948 by the colleges to serve as a bridge between the colleges and the church. The Association serves as a central agency for the distribution of funds received from the churches in the five patronizing annual conferences in Texas. The Association seeks to articulate and communicate the role, mission, and distinctiveness of the seven institutions to the church, and to assist in the enrollment of more United Methodists in those institutions. The Association seeks to serve the colleges in every way possible, most importantly by communicating the value of our seven institutions as educational resources to United Methodist youth and adults. Scholarships are distributed to following schools:

Lon Morris College, Jacksonville, Texas
 McMurray University, Abilene, Texas
 Southern Methodist University, Dallas, Texas
 Southwestern University, Georgetown, Texas
 Texas Wesleyan University, Ft. Worth, Texas

United Methodist-related Colleges receiving funds from the Black College Fund are:

Wiley College, Marshall, Texas
 Huston-Tillotson College, Austin, Texas

GENERAL CHURCH SPECIAL DAY OFFERINGS

(Book of Discipline ¶822)

The United Methodist Church recognized six special Sundays with offerings. They are:

Human Relations Day	Sunday before Dr. M.L. King Jr.'s birthday
One Great Hour of Sharing	Fourth Sunday of Lent
Native American Ministries Sunday	Third Sunday of Easter
Peace with Justice Sunday	Second Sunday of Pentecost
World Communion Sunday	First Sunday in October
United Methodist Student Day	Last Sunday in November

In addition the Texas Annual Conference recommends the following Sunday offerings:

Wesley Community Center	Third Sunday in February
Golden Cross Sunday	First Sunday in May
Methodist Retirement Services	Second Sunday in May
Christian Education Sunday	Fourth Sunday in August

RESOURCES:

*Come, Share, Rejoice in United Methodist Special Days, 6 segments, (16-18 minutes each) one for each featured day

*Come, Share Rejoice, A Videotape Overview of United Methodist Giving (10:35 minutes total)

*Available in Conference AV Library

HUMAN RELATIONS DAY

(Book of Discipline ¶822.1)

There are people trapped in the margins of life. People who have grown up in violent homes, people who have been abused, people who are refugees—these are people who are victimized by violence, poverty, and unemployment. Such people often live on the streets with no home, no work, no one to give them the emotional support they need to understand themselves as human beings. Often they are in legal trouble, and many are familiar with jails and prisons.

Jesus asks: “When did you see me sick, in prison, hungry, naked . . . and come to me?”

The Human Relations Day offering taken on the Sunday before the national observance of Martin Luther King’s birthday, is for projects of a reconciliatory nature. The greatest portion of this offering goes to the General Board of Global Ministries to support the Community Developers Program and the United Methodist Voluntary Services Program. The rest is delivered to the Youth Offender Rehabilitation Program through the General Board of Church and Society.

RESOURCES:

[*Come, Share, Rejoice in United Methodist Special Days](#) (Video 16:30 min)

*Available in the Conference AV Library

ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING

(Book of Discipline ¶822.2)

The United Methodist Committee on Relief was established in 1940 in response to the disasters caused by World War II. UMCOR now serves in 80 countries and spends in excess of \$12 million annually. UMCOR continues to provide a channel through which United Methodists may express their Christian compassion for people around the globe. UMCOR reaches out to those who are undergoing hardship and suffering as a result of natural catastrophes or civil disruption--often to people who are already among the poorest in society.

UMCOR's mandate can be found in the United Methodist Book of Discipline: "The United Methodist Committee on Relief shall have as its purpose assisting churches in direct ministry to persons in need, through programs of relief, rehabilitation, and service: to refugees, to those suffering from root causes of hunger and their consequences, and to those caught in other distress situations. These ministries shall be administered in the spirit of Jesus Christ, shall advance the dignity of persons without regard to religion, race, nationality, or sex, and shall seek to enhance the quality of life in the human community." (Book of Discipline, Paragraph 1459)

UMCOR's assistance may be in the form of financial grants and/or the provision of material and human resources to local organizations doing relief and recovery work. Whether resourcing a conference or agency in a recovery operation or providing direct relief, UMCOR personnel can offer:

- Donated goods and distribution management
- Assessment of repair costs
- Housing repair and rebuilding, including architectural engineering
- Management of volunteers
- Public and press relations
- Spiritual and emotional care for victims and caregivers
- Trained personnel to help children recover from disaster trauma
- Casework and casework supervision

When disaster strikes in your town, the United Methodist Church becomes one of the centers to provide help and hope to you and your neighbors.
To learn more about UMCOR:



RESOURCES:

**Behold, I Make All Things New* (video)

**Something Really Different* (filmstrip)

**Come, Share, Rejoice in United Methodist Special Days* (video –

16:06 min)

*available in Conference Audio/Visual Library

The "One Great Hour of Sharing" offering supports UMCOR. Administrative costs are absorbed by the Board of Global Ministries, so that all One Great Hour contributions are utilized for disaster relief.

NATIVE AMERICAN MINISTRIES SUNDAY

(Book of Discipline ¶822.6)



Native American Ministries Sunday is the first church wide special day with an offering that focuses on Native Americans. The offering is used to strengthen Native American ministries in annual conferences, support the Native American Urban Initiative in targeted cities, and provide scholarships to Native Americans attending United Methodist schools of theology.

Fifty percent of the special-day offering provides scholarships for Native Americans preparing for ordained ministry in the United States.

The other half of the offering is either retained by the Annual Conference to fund its ministries with Native Americans or is used by the General Board of Global Ministries to fund such ministries as its Urban Ministries initiative.

“The day after Easter, 1990, the Rev. Marvin Abrams began to walk from Santa Barbara southward. Five days later he arrived at the California Heights Church in Long Beach. After driving to San Diego he set out again to walk back to his own Los Angeles congregation. He is pastor of the Native American Church, Norwalk, California, one of four Native American faith centers in Southern California.

After 12 days of walking and visiting United Methodist churches—often joined by other walkers, including his bishop—Rev. Abrams was welcomed home by the congregation. His “Seventh Generation Walk” was a witness to his faith and an opportunity to proclaim the faith and presence of Native Americans in Southern California. Several Native American tribes take into consideration what impact their actions have upon the future to the seventh generation, Rev. Abrams said.

Rev. Abrams looks to the future as he labors for Christ, but there is a personal dimension to his vision of the future: his daughter, Cynthia, a Native American seminary scholarship recipient. She completed her theological education at the School of Theology at Claremont in spring 1993 and was appointed associate pastor of First Church, Whittier, California. Rev. Cynthia Abrams was very active in her college years serving as youth director, United Methodist Women president, holding district offices, and teaching church school. Later she served in the California-Pacific Annual conference on the Ethnic Ministries Committee, the Communications Committee, and the Conference Board of Discipleship. She taught at the school of Christian mission and was a delegate to the Western Jurisdiction Conference.”

“One mission of the Church is to expand the ministry of the church. In the United States there are over 200 different Indian languages. Each tribe represents a different and unique culture. Native Americans have an abundance of resources and gifts to share. Although the Native American constituency may appear to be small and may not be clearly understood, the people’s spirituality and unity has carried them through many years and into the life of the Church.” (The Interpreter, Feb/Mar 1994)

RESOURCES:

[*Come, Share, Rejoice in United Methodist Special Days](#) (video – 16:30 min)

*Available in Conference AV Library

PEACE WITH JUSTICE SUNDAY

(Book of Discipline ¶822.5)

There are issues before the church that are issues before the whole world: racism, war, hunger, pollution, nuclear waste, and others. Each of these strikes chord in many hearts. Congregations of the United Methodist Church act to end violence, bring peace to warring people, bring equality to people of all nationalities, clean up the environment, provide food for God's children everywhere.

These are important missions. Across United Methodism there are people who care and who act. We recognize that we have an even more important mission: teaching people to be responsible for themselves and for their world.

Peace with Justice Sunday focuses on this need as well as on the issues that reveal the poverty of our world, spiritual as well as economic and political poverty.

Peace with Justice is an expression of the ancient biblical concept of shalom, where peace is understood to be much more than the absence of war. Shalom encompasses the ideas of harmony, wholeness, health, and well being within God's creation.

As United Methodists and as stewards of creation, it is our responsibility to work toward, and to achieve shalom in our troubled world.

We recognize that...

- ...where hunger exists, there is no shalom.
- ...where hostility exists, there is no shalom
- ...where inadequate health care exists, there is no shalom
- ...where environmental destruction exists, there is no shalom
- ...where there is injustice and oppression, there is no shalom

The 1996 General Conference of the United Methodist Church reaffirmed Peace with Justice as a special program under the General Board of Church and Society to help church members address the need for greater economic, social, ecological, and racial peace and justice in their community, nation, and world.

Peace with Justice Sunday is to be observed the second Sunday after Pentecost, or Trinity Sunday. This special offering is sent to the Conference Treasurer who remits 50% of it to the General Board of Church and Society for peace with justice ministries. The other half remains in the Annual Conference for the support of Peace with Justice Ministries within the conference bounds.

RESOURCES:

[*Come, Share, Rejoice in United Methodist Special Days](#) (video, 17:18 min)

*Available in Conference AV Library

WORLD COMMUNION SUNDAY

(Book of Discipline ¶822.4)

World Communion Sunday, celebrated the first Sunday in October, reminds us that as we join hands around the altar in Holy Communion, the circle is extended throughout the Christian world. We celebrate the sacrificial offering that Christ made for the whole Church.

On World Communion Sunday we express that joy through a Special Sunday offering which provides Crusade Scholarships, Ethnic Minority In-Service Training, and Ethnic Minority Scholarships to deserving students here and overseas who lack the resources but not the desire to serve.

Recently, the treasurer's office received a very special letter from the "Iglesia Evangelica Metodista en Bolivia" (the Evangelical Methodist Church of Bolivia). Dr. Carlos Intipampa thanked the Conference for a monetary gift that would help their seminary students continue their studies.

Also, the Fredericksburg (Texas) Church celebrated World Communion Sunday with a colorful and inspirational service highlighting the international scope of the church. Members of their congregation dressed in traditional clothing from faraway places such as Japan, China, Bavaria, Mexico, and South America. Hymns were sung in different languages. The scripture lessons were also multilingual, read in English, German, Spanish, and Laotian. The communion made use of breads from different cultures—tortillas from Mexico, dark bread from Germany, and bread native to India. The service was very inspirational, and they plan to repeat it again.

A worship service for World Communion Sunday is included in the booklet *Special Sundays for United Methodists* by Elaine Strawn and Christine Nees (IN2-391687); available from Cokesbury.

The Book of Worship also contains suggested liturgy in the "Special Sundays and Other Special Days" section (page 422).

RESOURCES:

[*Come, Share, Rejoice in United Methodist Special Days](#) (Video 16:30 Min)

*Available in the Conference A/V Library.



UNITED METHODIST STUDENT DAY

(Book of Discipline ¶822.3)

United Methodist Student Day calls the Church to support students as they prepare for life in uniting faith with knowledge. The United Methodist Student Day offering. . . shall be received for the support of the *United Methodist Scholarships* and the *United Methodist Student Loan Fund*. Net receipts from the offering, after payment of the expenses of promotion, shall be remitted by the treasurer of the General Council on Finance and Administration to the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry, to be administered by that Board.

The Story

“For some, like the apostle Paul, the call to Christian service comes in a moment of blinding revelation. For others, the call follows intense soul-searching. Such was the case for Patricia Elaine Ciampa of Server, Pa.

Active in youth concerns in her local church, district and annual conference, she considered full-time professional ministry but did not feel the “call.”

After marrying an ordained minister, Ms. Ciampa trained church schoolteachers. In 1986, she said, ‘I was struggling over whether to continue teaching a junior-high Sunday school class. I was also praying that God would guide me.’

A friend suggested Ms. Ciampa read 2 Timothy 2:1-13. Reading that passage, she became convinced God was calling her to become a Christian educator. With help from scholarships funded by the United Methodist Student Day offering, she began her seminary journey toward consecration as a diaconal minister in Christian education.” (*Come, Share, Rejoice in Giving, Sept. 1993*)

RESOURCES:

[*Come, Share, Rejoice in United Methodist Special Days](#) (video, 17:05 min)

*Available in the Conference AV Library



Texas Annual Conference Sunday Offerings

Wesley Community Center

Wesley Community Center located in Houston, Texas is an agency related to the General Board of Global Ministries and the Texas Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church. Wesley provides programs for children, youth, adults, and senior adults. It has a quality childcare program for low-income families with only a single parent, or where both parents work or are in training. Over 150 preschool children per day are in the program. Wesley provides supervised care after-school and holidays. Tutoring, assistance with homework are provided in this After-School Latch Key program. Youth activities are provided for inner-city youth including pre-employment training, volunteer opportunities, drug prevention, team sports, Scouting. These programs help provide youth with tools to become more productive adults and to prepare to be tomorrow's leaders. Wesley also provides services for adults and senior adults. Adults receive training, housing, parenting skills workshops, information, referrals, and assistance. Senior adults are provided with weekend food every Friday, along with programs offering recreational activities, field trips, monthly birthday parties, daily hot lunches, dances, civic events, special seminars, physical fitness, and fellowship for 100 seniors a day. A technology lab gives the community residents access to computers, word processing, educational software and the Internet. Classes are taught to children, students, their families, and adults. Also, office space is provided for the Houston Police Department who provides community outreach programs and quick access to HPD. The Texas Annual Conference As set the third Sunday in February as a special day offering for the Wesley Community Center.



Golden Cross Sunday

Golden Cross a healing ministry was started in 1921 to assist United Methodists with medical needs that have little or no financial resources. Because of the donations received from churches in the Texas Conference, thousands have received medical treatment that might otherwise have gone without attention. Golden Cross works closely with doctors and hospitals to provide assistance as economically as possible. Many have generously given their time and talent. Through these donations and discounts, Golden Cross is able to continue to provide this healing ministry. The procedure to request help is: 1) the person or friend should inform the pastor of the need, 2) the pastor then presents the request to the administrator of Golden Cross for evaluation and a determination of how to best solve the problem, and 3) Golden Cross works with doctor and hospitals to insure that the patient is helped in the most appropriate and cost effective way. The accomplishments of this healing ministry have been made possible through a compassionate alliance between church, hospital, doctor and you. The Texas Annual Conference observes the first Sunday in May as Golden Cross Sunday. Some churches have chosen another time for observing this offering. Your church is encouraged to set a Communion Offering sometime during the year for the support of this healing ministry.

Texas Annual Conference Sunday Offerings

Methodist Retirement Services

Methodist Retirement Services provides senior housing and retirement services in East Texas. Methodist Retirement Services began its service to senior adults when it opened its first independent living facility—Moody House—in Galveston in 1962. The facility had been a gift to the Methodist Church from the Moody Foundation in memory of Mr. W.L. Moody, Jr. Today the Methodist Retirement Community network includes five campuses throughout East Texas and along the Gulf Coast: Cornerstone in Texarkana; Crestview in Bryan; Edgewater in Galveston; Town Creek in Huntsville; and Pine Crest in Lufkin. Although each campus is unique in its own way, all MRC communities are full-service retirement complexes that provide a wide array of amenities and housing options for senior adults. Methodist Retirement Communities welcomes residents of all faiths. At Methodist Retirement Communities their purpose is to offer services and programs that minister to all their resident needs: psychological, physical, spiritual, and social. Their mission statement adopted in July 31, 1999 states the following: Methodist Retirement Communities is dedicated to providing a continuum of quality care to senior adults in a Christian environment. The Special Day Church offering for the Methodist Retirement Community Services is the Second Sunday in May.

Christian Education Sunday

Christian Education Sunday has been set by the Texas Annual Conference to be observed on the fourth Sunday in August. Every church is encouraged to celebrate the importance of Christian Education by emphasizing Christian Education Week and observing the celebration on the following Sunday. Through Christian education, people and communities of faith are invited to be transformed as they are inspired and challenged: know and experience God through Jesus Christ, claim and live God's promises, and grow and serve as Christian disciples. During the week, congregations are afforded the opportunity to:

- *develop a restored commitment to learning from and about the Bible
- *refashion understandings of old traditions for current and new realities
- *reestablish, in positive ways, the value of personal testimony in individual lives
- *examine the importance of intellectual discourse as we theologize together

The offering is designated for the support of the ministry of the Conference AudioVisual Library and Resource Center.



THE TEXAS AUDIOVISUAL LIBRARY is provided to assist and equip you and your church for ministry. We loan videos, audiocassettes, slides, filmstrips, and equipment. Reservations are encouraged. We are located at the United Methodist Center, 5215 Main, Houston, TX 77002; (713) 521-9383; Fax. (713) 521-3724; E-MAIL: avlib@methodists.net

The following are a small selection of videos on stewardship and apportionments. Several others are also available for you to use.

ADVANCE IN ALASKA: UMCCom, 1995, 17 minutes, leader's guide. Through 15 Advance projects, we can share Christ's love with our brothers and sisters in Alaska. The Parish Partner Program celebrates the mission and ministry of the Alaska Missionary Conference in interviews with United Methodists in our 49th state. Beautiful scenery cannot offset the fact that drugs, alcohol and rugged living conditions put great stress on families, especially children. Gifts to Parish Partners (Code No. 931027-4) help the conference strengthen local church ministries and develop and nurture leaders.

BLACK COLLEGE FUND, "Supporting Leadership for Life: UMCCom, 4 segments, 60-80 min.: including 4 60-90 min. vignettes. 2001, 10 min., Guide. Helps tell of the vital ministry of UM's 11 historically Black colleges and universities. Since 1972, United Methodists have expanded the vision of the church by planting seeds of hope for a lifetime of leaders. These institutions have educated and trained models of hope, justice, discipleship and ministry through the support of the Black College Fund apportionment. This video shares a powerful testimony of students, graduates and college presidents, whose messages echo John Wesley and the founders of these institutions. They believed in quality education for all God's children. Use it in a variety of settings, including worship.

* **CONNECTIONAL GIVING: Sharing God's Gifts,** UMCCom, 2001, Guide. Tells the unique story of United Methodist connectional giving: conference benevolences, apportioned funds, and six special offering Sundays. Gives an overview of our connectional ministries and includes four short segments suitable for worship or devotional moments. Showcases connectional ministries in education, worship/nurture, outreach and administration.

FACES OF THE ADVANCE, UMCCom, 1989, 18 min, Y-A, Guide, booklet & brochure. This tape illustrates outreach in Brazil, Guatemala, and the United States supported by United Methodist gifts to the Advance. It focuses on seven of the eight Advance priorities for 1989-92. International and National Persons in Mission, Partner Churches in Crisis, World Division Missionaries, National Division Missionaries, Parish Partners, Partners in Congregational Development and World Hunger/Poverty. This is an excellent way to introduce people of all ages to the diverse ministries made possible by UM support of more than 2,000 Advance projects around the world.

FAITH THAT ENDURES; Oklahoma Indian Missionary Conference: UMCCom, 1994, 13 min, Adult, guide. This video celebrates the past, present and future of the Oklahoma Indian Missionary Conference. One of 4 "Parish Partners" conferences receiving support from the Advance for Christ and His Church. Advance gifts to the Parish Partners program help nurture vital ministries of evangelism, church growth and mission outreach. The Advance is "designated" giving because congregations can choose specific projects or specific places to which they wish to contribute. Includes more than 1,600 projects in dozens of countries. Projects featured in this video are Parish Partners (Code No. 583634-4) and Church Extension (Code No. 583633-3).

NO LONGER STRANGERS: UMCCom, 1987, 24 min. World Service is the basic benevolence fund of The United Methodist Church. This video presents the story of one ministry supported by the World Service Fund. Learn about a ministry to English-speaking United Methodists in West Germany, as you meet Bishop Hermann L. Sticher, the Rev. William D. "Dan" Franks, and German and American families who participate in this church-home-away-from-home program.

PARTNERS IN MINISTRY; The Rio Grande Conference: UMCCom, 1995, 12 minutes, guide. For more than a century, the Rio Grande Annual Conference (or its predecessors) has served in ministry with Hispanics in Texas and New Mexico. Its work has been supported primarily and significantly by the Parish Partners program of the Advance. Today nearly 50 ministries extend Christ's love across the conference. In this video you will meet pastors and church workers from a dozen congregations and communities where the United Methodist Church is making a difference. The Leader Guide gives Code numbers for these Advance projects.

Apportionments

Decimal Formula:

The decimal formula that we had been using is based half on membership and half on financial strength of the local church, excluding payments on indebtedness, capital construction, apportionment payments and other benevolent giving.

New Formula- Expenditure Based Formula:

$$A = E \times (P + i)$$

where E is the local church's net expenditures

P is the base percentage

i is based upon the local church's observed economic constraints

Implementation of New Apportionment Formula:

The proposed apportionment formula replaces the existing apportionment formula over a four-year period. Churches are placed in two groups based upon the difference in 2002 between the two apportionment formulae.

- 1) Churches receiving increases- a 3 year transition period
- 2) Churches receiving decreases- their decreases delayed one year

What is recommended here is simply a delay in apportionment reductions.

New Churches in the Texas Annual Conference are apportioned after two years. Under the New Apportionment Formula, the following graduated increases for new churches will be used:

*1 - 2 years	No Apportionments
*3rd year	25% Apportioned
*4th year	50% Apportioned
*5th year	75% Apportioned
*6th year	100% Apportioned

The Council of Finance and Administration recommended the new apportionment formula based upon the formula recently adopted by the 2000 General Conference. The proposed formula specifically accounts for differences in a local church's ability to pay apportionments. A transition period of 4 years was proposed whereby each year apportionments would be determined by both our existing formula and the proposed formula. Over these transition years more and more funds would be apportioned with the proposed apportioned formula.

During the transition years, two thirds of our churches will receive a decrease in apportionments with the introduction of the proposed formula. These decreases will be delayed one year as a means of over-apportioning. Funds will be over-apportioned about 2%, which will improve the overall payouts over these years. In 2005, the formula alone was used except for new churches that are still in transition.