

2016 UNYUMC Annual Conference Daily Notes

Thursday, June 2, 2016

- **Blessing of the Space**
Adirondack District Superintendent the Rev. Bill Mudge led the Blessing of the Space at the Oncenter. He then invited others to join in and bless Exhibit Hall A, where the business of Annual Conference is conducted.
- **Laity session**
Upper New York Area Resident Bishop Mark J. Webb greeted the crowd at the laity session at the 2016 Annual Conference session by reminding them, "With our movement as United Methodists, the laity has always led the way." Conference Lay Leader Dr. Scott Johnson then zeroed in on the importance of not taking the accomplishments of the Conference over the past seven years for granted. Go to <http://tinyurl.com/2016laitysession> to read the full story.
- **Opening Worship**
Opening Worship began with video, spoken word, and music, all demonstrating the theme, "The Table is Set." Bishop Webb spoke about the need for us to increase the capacity of Christ-following leaders. He reminds us that through Jesus Christ, we are chosen by God, and through Christ, we are also given power to fulfill God's plan.
- **Organizational Motion, agenda, Consent Calendar**
Pastor Nate Lange, serving at the First United Methodist in Ithaca, made his first of two attempts during this plenary to have business suspended for the day in favor of worship, prayer, and fellowship, but while the spirit was appreciated, the attempts were not supported. The Organizational Motion was approved, with an amendment to delete rule 16. The agenda was approved, and the Consent Calendar was approved, with the addition of Africa University – added post-publication of the *Journal* Vol. I – and removal of Sacred Sites, as amended.
- **Conference Board on Pension and Health Benefits Report**
The Conference Board on Pension and Health Benefits presented three recommendations for approval by the Annual Conference in their report. The first two were supported without further discussion. The third – which recommended a change in the Clergy Retirement Security Program eligibility to include only those appointed at 75 percent or more to local churches and Conference staff positions – was discussed and debated, but eventually supported. The entire report was received by the Annual Conference.
- **Commission on Equitable Compensation Report**
The Commission on Equitable Compensation presented five recommendations for approval by the Conference in their report. The fifth recommendation stirred discussion and debate. This recommendation dealt with the Continuing Clergy Education Fund of Upper New York churches. This final recommendation was supported, and the entire report was received.
- **Commission on Religion and Race Report**
Blenda Smith, chair of the Conference Commission on Race and Religion (CORR), presented the CORR report. During the report, Smith announced the Upper New York Conference's partnership with the Kaleidoscope Institute, which provides resources to equip church leaders to create sustainable churches and communities.
- **Petitions and resolutions**
The Conference also began voting on petitions and resolutions. Resolution UNYAC2016.2 – Change District Names was not supported, while UNYAC2016.3 – Restoration of Funding for Campus Ministries was supported.
- The evening ended with a Memorial Service to honor Upper New York clergy and clergy spouses who passed away.

To see more coverage of the 2016 Annual Conference session, visit <http://tinyurl.com/AC16news>. To see AC16 photos taken on June 2, visit <http://tinyurl.com/AC16-June2photos>.