

2017 UNYUMC Annual Conference Daily Notes Thursday, June 1, 2017

Thursday, June 3, 2017

- **Opening Worship**

Opening Worship began with music and videos showcasing the theme “Together in Prayer: Trusting that God is Enough.” Upper New York Area Bishop Mark J. Webb spoke about the importance of our Conference focusing on our “Why” more than our “What” or “How” as we move forward. He urged the crowd to “Trust that God is Enough” and used biblical examples of others who overcame hardships by trusting God is enough. He also explained the best way to discover our future is to make a commitment to be “Together in Prayer.” Holy Communion during Opening Worship included the opportunity to receive ashes as an outward and visible mark of repentance and posture of humility. The Opening Worship offering was for The United Methodist Center’s Mission Central HUB.

- **Laity Session**

The first afternoon of the 2017 Annual Conference session kicked off with the laity session, which took a different approach this year in a new location. In addition to an address by Conference Lay Leader Susan Hardy and a collection of the Helping Hands Fund offering, the session this year featured an AC session orientation, presentation by Mission of Peace youth, a presentation by and celebration of United Methodist Men, a presentation about equipping laity, and more.

- **Global Ministries**

The Rev. Russell Pierce, Interim Executive Director for Communications, The Advance & Fundraising at the General Board of Global Ministries gave an update on GBGM. He said that in 2016, Upper New York gave \$317,805 to the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR); \$390,449 in other Advance gifts; and \$78,761 in Advance support to missionaries. In fact, UNY supported 32 missionaries — more than any other Conference in the Northeastern Jurisdiction. To recognize the Conference’s “faithful partnership,” he presented Upper New York Area Resident Bishop Mark J. Webb with a plaque.

- **Organizational Motion**

Three amendments were presented to the Conference for the Organizational Motion.

1. The first amendment was related to motion 10; the amendment was to have the person securing the floor to also state their gender and racial/ethnic identity in addition to their name, church, and whether they are clergy or laity. It was not supported.
2. The next was to make an editorial change to motion 15, which has Vicky Putney listed instead of Vicky Swanson.
3. The third amendment was to change Organizational Motion 3 to “At any time during the proceedings, the bishop shall call for a moment of discernment and prayer before a vote is taken” instead of the current verbiage that says the bishop may call for a moment of discernment and prayer. This amendment was not supported.

- **Agenda**

An amendment was made to move Resolutions 9 and 12 to the beginning of the voting of resolutions. Bishop Webb noted Resolution 9 was withdrawn, so the amendment changed to moving Resolution 12. A substitution was brought forth to have Amendment 12 discussed at 3 p.m. June 2. The substitution was not supported. The amendment was supported.

- **Consent Calendar**

Pastor Nate Lang of the Cornerstone District made a motion to move the Budget Report to the Consent Calendar. His amendment was supported. There is a question as to whether or not this amendment is or is not in constitutional order, so Bishop Webb committed to researching it tonight and reporting back to the Conference today (June 2) as to whether or not it can be placed on the Consent Calendar. The Consent Calendar was approved.

- **Board of Pensions**

The Board recommended that the 2018 Past Service Annuity Rate for pension payment to retired clergy of Upper New York be set at \$638 per qualified service year prior to 1982. This is an increase of 2 percent over the 2017 rate in accordance with the Board’s long-term funding plan. The Board offered a second recommendation that comes each year as required by the IRS and the General Church. It is the Housing/Rental Allowance Resolution. This resolution allows retired and disabled clergy to claim their church pension or disability income as a housing exclusion. Both recommendations were supported.

- **Equitable Compensation**

Lauren Swanson, chair of the Conference Commission on Equitable Compensation, offered four recommendations in the afternoon plenary: A minimum-base salary guaranteed to pastors for 2018; to achieve an increment equal to 1 percent of minimum base salary of pastors for each credential level up to 23 years of full time equivalent service by 2020; to add \$500 for each additional church on the pastoral charge (over one), not adjusted for part-time appointments; for churches to increase clergy salaries by 1.8 percent or more. All recommendations were supported.

- **Offerings**

Offerings raised the following: Helping Hands Fund: \$4,323.64; Clergy Care Fund: \$4840.94; Mission Central: \$9,429.43.

To see more coverage of the 2017 Annual Conference session, visit <http://tinyurl.com/AC17news>.