

## **Task Force on Special Sunday Giving**

At the 2017 annual conference session, the body voted to increase efforts to raise participation in each of the six Special Advance offerings required by Discipline (§263, 2016 BoD) to at least 30% across the Conference. Having analyzed the giving reports for 2018 – the first full year since that vote – I have good news and bad.

The good news:

- Conference-wide participation rates increased for three of the Special Sundays (Human Relations, Native American Ministries, and World Communion)
- 58 churches participated in at least one of the Special Sunday offerings for the first time since I began tracking
- One of those newly participating congregations took all six offerings!
- In total, 54 churches took all six Special Sunday offerings
- Looking at individual districts, three were able to reach, or exceed, the 30% participation in four of the six offerings

Unfortunately, as a Conference, we failed to reach 30% for any of these special offerings. Even more disappointing is that 81 churches went from at least some participation in 2017 to zero in 2018. I realize that financial situations change all the time, however even a loose-change offering should yield the \$1.00 it takes to be counted in the participation rate. I'm afraid that pastors are not presenting these giving opportunities or that church committees are holding congregations back from Connectional obligations.

Conference-wide giving percentages:

	<b>Human Relations</b>	<b>UMCOR (1GHS)</b>	<b>Native American</b>	<b>Peace w/Justice</b>	<b>World Communion</b>	<b>UM Student</b>
<b>2017</b>	20	23	21	26	16	26
<b>2018</b>	21	18	26	22	25	18

Remember these offerings support real ministries – locally, nationally, and globally!

- Human Relations – supports the work of General Board of Church & Society as they promote social change to care marginalized populations
- UMCOR – goes to General Board of Global Ministries to cover administrative costs so that 100% of disaster collections go directly to the cause
- Native American Ministries – 50% stays in Upper NY to support conference programs
- Peace with Justice – 50% stays in Upper NY and can be accessed by congregations through the Peace with Justice grant process
- World Communion – provides financial support for individuals answering God's call in their lives
- United Methodist Student – funds college scholarships for undergraduates, many of which are awarded to students right here in Upper NY

Please contact me with questions or to be connected with someone who could speak at your church or district event about one or more of these ministry opportunities.

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