

2019 UNYUMC Annual Conference Daily Notes

Wednesday, June 5, 2019

- The Rev. Bill Mudge blessed the space, reminding attendees that God has not come to take sides, God has come to take over.
- In Opening Worship, Upper New York Area Resident Bishop Mark J. Webb zeroed in on the 2019 Annual Conference theme, “Together in Prayer: Moving Beyond our Comfort Zones.” He expressed the importance of stepping outside of our boats the way Peter did. Throughout his sermon, six different times, Bishop Webb reiterated the words of the prophet Isaiah, “Behold, the former things have come to pass, now I declare new things; before they spring forth I proclaim them to you.” Each time Bishop Webb recited this passage, he asked attendees what their response will be. Bishop Webb emphasized the importance of not staying put, for choosing to leap forward into the new thing God desires us to do. The offering collected during this service will go to the UNY Mission Central HUB.
- Toward the start of Laity Session, Bishop Webb thanked all lay members for attending AC session and for their service. Carmen Vianese, president of UNY’s United Methodist Women, gave a history of mission, focusing on UMW. Conference Council on Youth Ministries co-chair Rachel John gave a brief update on CCYM, discussing their theme of “Love: Digging Deep and Branching Out.” The Helping Hands offering was collected, followed by Neil Law and Sharon Bassett relate how they are working together in the Oneonta District to use community building to bring about change and to make good things happen in the district. Young Adults Ministry co-chair Elyse Murder and J.J. Warren delivered an update on their ministry and previewed Saturday’s Young Adult Worship. Conference Lay Leader Susan Hardy wrapped up the session with an update on how she has “moved” as lay leader, reading the Conference Lay Leaders’ Statement — New Unity and Peace, and introducing people seeking to be lay delegates to General Conference.
- Opening plenary began with the Organizational Motion. An amendment made by the Rev. Jeff Childs, of Penn Yan United Methodist Church, to change how Conference members secure the floor was defeated. Paul Sweet, of North Gouverneur United Methodist Church, raised a question about whether the proper process to educate Conference members on how to become General Conference delegates was followed. Assistant to the Bishop and Director of Connectional Ministries the Rev. Bill Gottschalk-Fielding on behalf of the Rules Committee explained that the rule was followed but perhaps not the spirit of it and more communication can be offered. The Organizational Motion passed as originally presented.
- With the addition of a report on Special Sundays giving report, the Consent Calendar was approved.
- Kevin Slough, of Trinity United Methodist Church Grand Island, made a motion to amend the Annual Conference Agenda to remove all petitions regarding human sexuality. Ian Urriola, of First Asbury in Rochester, made a motion to postpone voting on this amendment. The motion to postpone the amendment passed. The Annual Conference Agenda as originally presented was supported.
- The Rev. Dr. Prince G. Singh, Eighth Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Rochester, and the Rev. Peter M. Cook, Executive Director of the New York State Council of Churches, delivered greetings to the Upper New York, wishing the Conference good luck and expressing gratitude for its work.
- The Conference practiced voting a few times and received clarification on the voting process and functionality of the devices. Discussion pushed the first votes of the 2019 AC session for clergy and laity delegates until after dinner.
- For the first time, the UNY Conference hosted an awards dinner during AC session to honor recipients in six categories, including the Golden Bucket Award given to the Crossroads District and the Harry Denman Evangelism Award presented to Rev. Dr. Stephen Cady II for clergy and Mike Block for laity.
- During the evening plenary, Stephen J. Hustedt, UNY Conference Director of Communications, instructed attendees on how to use the voting devices through a video created by the UNY Conference Communications Department and then led a practice vote using the example of favorite band of all time. Laity and clergy then successfully began voting for clergy and lay delegates.
- The Commission on Equitable Compensation brought forth four amendments to the floor. All four amendments were supported.

- The Rev. Bill Allen presented the 2019 Delegation report, discussing his experience at the 2019 Special Session of General Conference. He invited the Rev. Beckie Sweet, Marthelyn Sweet, and Ian Urriola to share their thoughts on Special Session as well.
- Carmen Vianese was elected as a lay delegate with 382 votes, and J.J. Warren was also elected as a lay delegate with 282 votes.
- Jeff Hodge, Upper New York Conference Secretary, announced the offerings received throughout the day — during Opening Worship \$1,048 was collected for Mission Central HUB; during Clergy Session \$4,048.48 was collected for the Clergy Care Fund; and during Laity Session \$3,026.08 was collected for the Helping Hands Fund.

To see more coverage of the 2019 Annual Conference session, visit <https://tinyurl.com/AC19news>.