Above all, clothe yourselves with love,
which binds everything together
in perfect harmony.

Colossians 3:14 NRSV
## Tentative Schedule

### Saturday, June 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4 p.m.</td>
<td>Prayer Walk</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Sunday, June 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 p.m.</td>
<td>District Check-In (North Hall Corridor)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Registration Team Available (Registration Services—North Concessions)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 p.m.</td>
<td>Annual Conference Member Orientation (East Hall 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Kids’ Camp Opens (Salons 3/4/5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 p.m.</td>
<td>Opening Celebration and Worship (North Hall)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Bishop Sharma D. Lewis Preaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 p.m.</td>
<td>Cafeteria Opens (East Hall 3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5:30 p.m.</td>
<td>ATEM Dinner (Salon 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 p.m.</td>
<td>Clergy Executive Session (East Hall 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Laity Session (North Hall)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Clergy Spouses Gathering (Salon 1A/B)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Monday, June 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Health Screenings Open (Salon 8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 a.m.</td>
<td>Registration Team Available (Registration Services)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>COSROW Breakfast (East Hall 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 a.m.</td>
<td>Kids’ Camp Opens (Salons 3/4/5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Plenary Session 1 (North Hall)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Teaching Session with Dr. Kevin M. Watson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Business and Ministry Testimonies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noon</td>
<td>Cafeteria Opens (East Hall 3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Laity Luncheon (East Hall 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Special Meal (Salon 1B)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 p.m.</td>
<td>Memorial Service (North Hall)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Rev. Roger Thompson Preaching (North Hall)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 p.m.</td>
<td>Plenary Session 2 (North Hall)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 p.m.</td>
<td>Cafeteria Opens (East Hall 3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ARMS Gathering (East Hall 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 p.m.</td>
<td>Service of Ordination, Commissioning, and Licensing (Trinity UMC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Bishop Debra Wallace-Padgett Preaching</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Tuesday, June 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Health Screenings Open (Salon 8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 a.m.</td>
<td>Registration Team Available (Registration Services)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 a.m.</td>
<td>Kids’ Camp Opens (Salons 3/4/5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Plenary Session 3 (North Hall)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Teaching Session with Dr. Kevin M. Watson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Business and Ministry Testimonies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noon</td>
<td>Cafeteria Opens (East Hall 3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 p.m.</td>
<td>Plenary Session 4 (North Hall)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Kids’ Camp Presentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Business and Ministry Testimonies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Setting of Appointments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Closing Worship with Bishop Sharma D. Lewis Preaching</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
North Hall Second Floor Salons
- Clergy Spouse Reception
- Cokesbury Book Store
- Health Screening
- Kids' Camp
- Special Meals
- Nursing Mothers Room

North Hall Second Floor Foyer
- Book Signing

North Hall First Floor
- Laity Session
- Plenary Sessions
- Worship Services

North Hall First Floor Foyer
- Mission Displays

North Hall First Floor Main Corridor
- Clergy Spouse Table
- Concessions
- District Check-In
- First Aid
- Mission Displays
- Prayer Chapel
- Registration Services

North Hall Second Floor Salons
- Open to Lower Level

East Hall 3
- Cafeteria

East Hall 2
- AC Members Orientation
- ARMS Dinner
- Clergy Executive Session
- COSROW Breakfast
- Laity Luncheon
The tentative program and reports to be presented to the Annual Conference of the North Alabama Conference of the United Methodist Church

June 3-5, 2018
Bishop Debra Wallace-Padgett
Resident Bishop of the Birmingham Area presiding
Dr. Dedric Cowser
Conference Secretary

Entrance of Methodism into Alabama through Matthew P. Sturdivant 1808
Alabama Conference, Methodist Protestant Church Organized 1829
Alabama Conference, Methodist Episcopal Church, South Organized 1846
Alabama Conference, Methodist Episcopal Church Organized 1867
North Alabama Conference, Methodist Episcopal Church, South Organized 1870
Central Alabama Conference, Methodist Episcopal Church Organized 1876
Uniting Conference, the Methodist Church 1939
Merger Conference, the United Methodist Church 1968

The One Hundred Forty-ninth Annual Session of the North Alabama Conference since organization in 1870.

The Forty-sixth Session of the North Alabama Conference since organization in 1972.
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Welcome
Resident Bishop
Debra Wallace-Padgett

Dear Friends,

It is with joy that I invite each of you to Huntsville on June 3-5 for the 2018 North Alabama Annual Conference. Thanks in advance to the Von Braun Center staff, Annual Conference planning team and Northeast District volunteers for their extraordinary hospitality.

Outstanding leaders and speakers for our 2018 North Alabama Annual Conference include Bishop Sharma Lewis from the Virginia Conference who will preach our opening and closing worship services and speak at the laity luncheon. In addition, Dr. Kevin Watson from Candler School of Theology will teach Monday and Tuesday mornings on developing spiritual leaders through small groups and bands.

This year our theme is “Singing God’s Song in Harmony” with an emphasis on Ethnic Ministries. Each church is invited to bring a special offering that will benefit ministry opportunities to strengthen and create ethnic minority local churches by way of leadership recruitment, internships and young adult ministries.

I look forward to a great 2018 Annual Conference in Huntsville. As always, it is a privilege to serve as your bishop.

Blessings,

Debra Wallace-Padgett
Resident Bishop, North Alabama Conference

The Reverend Dr. Debra Wallace-Padgett was elected a Bishop of the United Methodist Church at the 2012 Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference. At the time of her election, she was the lead pastor of St. Luke United Methodist Church in Lexington, Kentucky – an appointment she served for eight years. During her tenure, St. Luke grew in membership, strengthened its infrastructure, built a $4.5 million Ministry Life Center and launched a multi-cultural worship service.

Her previous service to the church includes six years as District Superintendent, three years as pastor of Paris First UMC and 11 years on staff at Lexington First UMC. She served in a variety of roles in the Kentucky Annual Conference, Southeastern Jurisdiction and General Conference. She is currently the chair of the standing Committee on Evangelism for the World Methodist Council (WCC), a member of the Council of Bishops’ Executive Committee and a member of the Commission on a Way Forward.

A graduate of Berea College (B.A. in Physical Education), Scarritt College and Graduate School (M.A. in Christian Education), Lexington Theological Seminary (M. Div.) and Asbury Theological Seminary (D.Min.), Bishop Wallace-Padgett is married to Rev. Lee Padgett, a deacon in the United Methodist Church. They are the parents of two young adult children, Leanndra and Andrew.
Dear Laity, Clergy and Guests of Annual Conference,

Welcome to the 2018 North Alabama United Methodist Church Annual Conference at the Von Braun Civic Center in Huntsville, Alabama. This is the third year for our Annual Conference to be held in Huntsville in current times. The Von Braun Center is an exciting venue for our Annual Conference as it is completely self-contained.

Bishop Debra Wallace-Padgett, now in her sixth year as the Resident Bishop of North Alabama, has brought a team process to the North Alabama Conference. This process is making a difference in the work of the Conference from the smallest to the largest local church. Undergirding this change are the principles of the United Methodist Church which are based on the Bible and the theology of Wesley. While at Conference this year, I hope you seize a glimpse of this change and receive blessings of being connected in common community.

The Annual Conference is composed of clergy and lay members from local churches throughout North Alabama. Voting members are mandated to attend, but all laity are welcome to attend. There is much information to take back to our local congregations. Please use the Lay Member Report Worksheet on pages 42-43 to take notes to help with your report to your congregation.

Please take time to study this Pre Conference Journal, reading and studying the various reports. This year there will be a new check-in process on Sunday. Members will check in at a table assigned to their District. More information is available on page 27. This year’s schedule includes a balance of worship, business, learning and fellowship. Remember to visit the Mission Displays which tell the stories of the ministries of our connected agencies and groups.

The Laity Session will be Sunday, June 3 at 7 p.m. and features Dr. Rica McRoy from Huntsville, who brings a powerful message. We welcome the free spirit for Christ Rica brings in her presentation. The Laity Luncheon will be Monday, June 4 at noon in the East Hall and our guest speaker will be Bishop Sharma Lewis from the Virginia Conference. This is the first time a bishop will address the Laity Luncheon.

Please remember to purchase your Laity Luncheon ticket and all other meal tickets by May 15 when you make your reservations for Annual Conference. See page 14. Thanks to all the Lay Members and other laity for giving your time to attend this year’s Annual Conference. The Lay Ministry Team hopes you gain knowledge that will make your local church stronger, fit and energized to do the work of God in recruiting new Christians and to continue the critical work of growing the worship attendance and membership of your local church.

Steve Lyles
Conference Lay Leader
slyles@umcna.org

Steve, a native of Kentucky, is a 49-year member of Alexander City First UMC. He has served many local church positions, including twenty-plus years as lay member to Annual Conference. In 2007, Steve became District Lay Leader of the Southeast District and served in this position until elected Conference Lay Leader in 2011. Steve served on the District Committee on Ministry in the Southeast District for eighteen years. He is Chair of the Conference Lay Ministry Team and is a member of the Episcopacy Committee, an ex-officio member of the Camp Sumatanga Board, the Council on Finance and Administration and the Methodist Homes for the Aging. Steve was President of the Board for the United Methodist Foundation of North Alabama for three years and served on the Board of Ordained Ministry for three quadrennia. In 2016, he led the North Alabama Delegation to General Conference. Currently, he is a member of the Southeast Jurisdiction Committee on Coordination and Accountability. He is also serving as President of the Southeast Jurisdictional Conference Lay Leaders Association for 2017-2018. Steve, a retired PGA Club Golf Professional, is married to Nancy. They reside in Alexander City and have two children and five grandchildren.
Welcome to the 149th Annual Session of the North Alabama Conference of The United Methodist Church. The theme of Annual Conference 2018 will be “Singing God’s Song in Harmony” and our focus will be on one of our conference priorities, Ethnic Ministries. We will gather at the Von Braun Center in Huntsville, Alabama, on June 3-5, 2018.

I am grateful for the prayerful and diligent work of our Annual Conference Planning Team in organizing an amazing schedule of worship, business and opportunities to grow and strengthen our connection. One of my favorite parts of Annual Conference is hearing powerful testimonies of what God is doing through the numerous congregations and ministries across North Alabama.

As we prepare our hearts and minds for holy conferencing, I hope that you will take some time to read the reports in this PreConference Journal and pray for each ministry and its leaders. One of the extraordinary things about The United Methodist Church, especially here in North Alabama, is our ability to join one another in God’s mission throughout the world.

I look forward to seeing you in Huntsville, as we celebrate what God has done and look forward to the future.

Grateful to serve,

Dr. Dedric A. Cowser
Conference Secretary
dedric.cowser@umcna.org

A native of Centre, Alabama, Dedric is an elder in the North Alabama Conference of The United Methodist Church. Prior to his appointment to New Beginnings UMC in Birmingham (www.newbeginningsbham.org), he served as the pastor of Sweet Home UMC in Gadsden.

Dedric earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Religion from Birmingham-Southern College, Birmingham, Alabama, a Master of Divinity degree and Doctor of Ministry degree from Candler School of Theology at Emory University, Atlanta, Georgia.

In addition to serving as the secretary for the North Alabama Conference, Dedric is the treasurer for the Southeastern Jurisdiction of Black Methodists for Church Renewal, Inc. Dedric is an avid pianist and vocalist and is often featured at workshops and meetings across the connection. All in all, he is a young man who has a great passion for reaching people for Jesus Christ.
Reservations
Reservations Process

Make Your Reservations by May 15!
Take action prior to Annual Conference to...
  • purchase meal tickets
  • request childcare for your child or grandchild
  • purchase annual conference T-shirts
  • request special accommodations for disabilities

Online Reservations:
1. Go to www.umcna.org/ac18reservations.
2. Click the box for the specific reservations/order you need to make.
3. Complete the online form. **Note:** The online reservation system allows you to make reservations for multiple people.
4. Submit your payment. Your reservations are not complete until payment is received.
   a. Pay online using a credit card, debit card or PayPal account.
   b. Mail a check by May 15, 2018, payable to "North Alabama Conference" to:
      Doris McCullers, Registrar
      North Alabama Conference
      898 Arkadelphia Road
      Birmingham, AL 35204

Reservations by mail:
1. Find the Reservation Form on page 139 in the back of this PreConference Book.
2. Complete the form.
3. Detach the form and mail it, along with a check payable to "North Alabama Conference" to:
   Doris McCullers, Registrar
   North Alabama Conference
   898 Arkadelphia Road
   Birmingham, AL 35204

Your reservations are not complete until payment is received.

When making reservations by May 15, 2018, your meal tickets will arrive in the mail prior to Annual Conference. Contact Registrar Doris McCullers at dmccullers@umcna.org, 205-226-7950 or 800-239-7950.
Meals
Annual Conference participants are encouraged to eat at the Von Braun Center for convenience, efficiency and the opportunity for more fellowship. To purchase your meal tickets go to www.umcna.org/ac18reservations, or mail the completed Reservation Form on page 139. **Reservation deadline is May 15, 2018.** Meal tickets are not available for purchase on-site and must be purchased in advance.

**Meal Tickets**
The Annual Conference Cafeteria is located in East Hall 3.

- Lunch $13 11:30 a.m.–2 p.m. Monday and Tuesday
- Dinner $13 5–7:30 p.m. Sunday and Monday

**Dietary Restrictions**
The cafeteria will feature menu options that adhere to a variety of dietary restrictions.

**Special Meals**
Several groups have scheduled catered meals during Annual Conference. To participate in one of these Special Meals, you must purchase a ticket (or RSVP to an invitation if indicated) for that specific meal. Due to price differences, regular meal tickets cannot be accepted for attendance at a Special Meal. Meal locations are listed on page 34.

**Sunday Dinner**
ATEM Dinner (by invitation only)—$16

**Monday Breakfast**
COSROW—$11

**Monday Lunch**
Laity Luncheon—$21
Asbury Theological Seminary—$16
BSC Pastoral Advisory Board (by invitation only)

**Monday Dinner**
ARMS Dinner (by invitation only)

**Offsite Special Meals**
Several groups have scheduled gatherings away from the Von Braun Center. To participate in one of these Special Meals please RSVP to the noted contact person.

**Monday Lunch**
Duke Divinity Alumni Luncheon—$8
Holmes Street UMC, 501 Holmes Ave NE, Huntsville AL 35801
Contact Dale Clem at dale.clem@umcna.org

Order of Deacons Luncheon—no cost, reservations required
Second Mile Development, 2710 Holmes Ave NW, Huntsville AL 35816
Contact John Bailey at john.bailey@umcna.org

**Monday Dinner**
Candler Club Dinner—Dutch treat, reservations required
Drake’s Huntsville, 4800 Whitesburg Dr, #14, Huntsville AL 35802
Contact Melissa Self Patrick at melissa.patrick@umcna.org
Hotels
Hotels listed below are offering special rates during Annual Conference 2018. To make a reservation, please contact the hotel directly. Identify yourself as a North Alabama Annual Conference attendee and request the "North Alabama Conference rate" when you make your reservation by phone. To make your reservation online go to www.umcna.org/ac18hotels and use the link and special code for the hotel of your choice.

Reservation Cut-off Date for hotels listed below: May 15, 2018.

Embassy Suites—Huntsville/VBC
800 Monroe St, Huntsville 35801 (Connected to Von Braun Center)
  • Single/Double Occupancy: $124
  Breakfast and Wi-Fi included
  Parking $6.72/day
  Reservations: online or 256-539-7373

SpringHill Suites by Marriott HSV
754 Constellation Dr, Huntsville 35801 (0.5 miles from Von Braun Center)
  • King/2 Queens: $104
  Breakfast included
  Parking complimentary
  Reservations: online or 256-512-0188

Homewood Suites by Hilton HSV
714 Gallatin St SW, Huntsville 35801 (0.8 miles from Von Braun Center)
  • King Bed Suites with Queen Sleeper Sofa: $99
  Breakfast included
  Parking complimentary
  Reservations: online or 256-539-1445

DoubleTree Suites HSV-South
6000 Memorial Parkway SW, Huntsville 35802 (5 miles from Von Braun Center)
  • 2-Room Suites: $104
  Breakfast included
  Parking complimentary
  Reservations: online or 256-882-9400

Rates do not include tax (13%) or the $1 city surcharge
Childcare at Annual Conference

Kids’ Camp

Kids’ Camp is a great opportunity to involve your children in Annual Conference. Children from birth through those who have completed sixth grade are welcome to participate if a parent, grandparent or legal guardian is in attendance at Annual Conference.

Annual Conference Kids’ Camp is staffed by professional children’s ministers, as well as volunteer staff. All staff and volunteers are trained in Safe Sanctuaries policies and have up-to-date background checks.

Kids’ Camp Hours:
- Sunday 3:30-8:30 p.m.
- Monday 8 a.m.-5 p.m.
- Tuesday 8 a.m.-5 p.m.

Kids’ Camp Registration

You must register online at www.umcna.org/ac18kidscamp by May 15, 2018. The cost is $60 per child and includes meals, snacks and a T-shirt. Please note that your registration is not complete until payment is received in full. If you must register late or on-site, the cost is $70 and may not include a T-shirt.

After you complete online registration, a confirmation email will provide a link to the necessary forms. Please open this link, print and complete the forms and bring them with you to Kids’ Camp. Also, please save the confirmation email in case you need to edit your Kids’ Camp registration before arrival.

Check-In/Check-Out

Kids’ Camp Registration and check-in is located on the second floor of North Hall near Salons 3, 4 and 5. Stairs and an elevator to the second floor are conveniently located in the North Hall Foyer and provide stroller access to the check-in site.

Children must be checked in and out each day by a parent, grandparent or legal guardian. Photo identification may be required.

Childcare for Worship Services

The Children’s Ministry Team is offering childcare for $5 per child per service during Opening Worship, Memorial Service and Closing Worship. Childcare is located upstairs in the North Hall in Salons 3/4/5. Preregistration is required. Please register by May 15, 2018, at www.umcna.org/ac18kidscamp. If you registered and paid for Kids’ Camp there is no need to pay an additional $5.

If you do not pre-register your child for childcare, you must complete paperwork on-site. Children cannot be allowed to stay in childcare unless the necessary paperwork is completed by a parent, grandparent or legal guardian.

You must be on site at the Von Braun Center in order to leave your children in childcare.
- Opening Worship: Sunday, June 3 at 4 p.m.
- Memorial Service: Monday, June 4 at 2 p.m.
- Closing Worship: Tuesday, June 5 during the afternoon session

Childcare for Ordination, Commissioning and Licensing Service

Childcare is available during the Service of Ordination, Commissioning and Licensing at Trinity UMC on the evening of June 4. Make reservations online by May 15, 2018 at www.umcna.org/ac18kidscamp.
Venue
The Von Braun Center

The Von Braun Center is a multi-purpose indoor arena, meeting and performing arts complex located in the heart of historic downtown Huntsville. The Von Braun Center is convenient to area hotels, restaurants and attractions.

The activities of the 2018 North Alabama Conference are taking place in the North Hall and East Hall areas of the complex. See maps of the Von Braun Center venues on the back cover and a full facility map on the inside back cover.

Directions To The Von Braun Center

From I-65 (North or South):
Take Exit 340 to Huntsville I-565 headed East.
Travel approximately 19 miles on I-565 East to exit 19-C to Washington Street.
Turn right on Washington Street, cross over the bridge to the first traffic light (Monroe Street).
Turn right onto Monroe Street and travel to the third traffic light (Clinton Avenue).
Various parking areas are available along Monroe Street and Clinton Avenue.

From US-72 ALT East (from Decatur):
Follow US-72 ALT East to I-565 East
Travel approximately 19 miles on I-565 East to exit 19-C to Washington Street.
Turn right on Washington Street, cross over the bridge to the first traffic light (Monroe Street).
Turn right onto Monroe Street and travel to the third traffic light (Clinton Avenue).
Various parking areas are available along Monroe Street and Clinton Avenue.

From 72 West (from Scottsboro):
Take exit 19-A to Jefferson Street after Highway 72 West merges into I-565.
Follow Jefferson Street to the first traffic light at Monroe Street, and turn right.
Stay on Monroe until you come to the Clinton Avenue traffic light.
Various parking areas are available along Monroe Street and Clinton Avenue.

From 431 (from Guntersville):
Highway 431 West becomes Governors Drive.
Follow Governors Drive across California Street and past Huntsville Hospital on your right.
Turn right at the traffic light at Monroe Street.
Go through the light at St. Clair, and turn left at the next light to stay on Monroe Street.
Various parking areas are available along Monroe Street and Clinton Avenue.
Parking and Shuttle Service

There is ample parking surrounding the Von Braun Center. Prices are listed below. If paid parking creates a hardship for you, contact your District Office for assistance.

Parking Lots and Decks

- P1 is designated as Handicapped Parking. Vehicles must have proper Handicap Parking Credentials (tag or hangtag) to park in this lot. First-come, first-served.
- P2 is a parking deck belonging to the Von Braun Center: $10 per day.
- P4 (City Parking Garage): $0.50 per hour / maximum of $4 per day.
- P5 (Former Meadow Gold Lot): $5 per day.
- Meter Rates in the City of Huntsville are $0.50 per hour and enforced Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.

Please be a considerate guest and do not park in areas designated for Von Braun Center staff.

Hotel Parking

Two hotels are within walking distance to the Von Braun Center.

Embassy Suites parking for hotel guests is $6 per day. The hotel has an indoor connector to the Von Braun Center.

SpringHill Suites, located at 754 Constellation Drive, offers its guests complimentary parking. This hotel is a 10-minute walk from the Von Braun Center.

Shuttles

From Embassy Suites to North Hall

If you find the distance from Embassy Suites to North Hall using the indoor connector too far to walk, Embassy Suites provides shuttles for its guests from the lobby of the hotel to the front door of North Hall. Please arrange shuttle service directly with the hotel.

Ordination, Commissioning and Licensing Service (Monday evening)

On Monday evening, June 4, the Service of Ordination, Commissioning and Licensing is at Trinity United Methodist Church, 607 Airport Road, Huntsville AL 35802. A shuttle service is available.

- Beginning at 6 p.m., a shuttle to Trinity UMC runs every 10-15 minutes. The shuttles leave the Von Braun Center North Hall foyer parking lot (P1). The last shuttle leaves at 6:45 p.m.
- After the service, shuttles to the Von Braun Center run every 10-15 minutes. The shuttles leave the Trinity UMC parking lot in front of the sanctuary beginning 10 minutes after the close of service. The last shuttle leaves at 9 p.m.
NORTH ALABAMA ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2018

Venue Map:
- Clinton Avenue
- North Hall
- East Hall
- P5, P1, P2, P4
- Former Meadow Gold Lot
- Pollard Street
- Monroe Street
- Entrance/Exit
- Handicapped Parking
- Big Spring Park
- Williams Avenue
- City Parking Garage
- Memorial Parkway
- Downtown Huntsville

VENUE
Places of Note
See maps of the Von Braun Center venues on back cover and a full facility map on inside back cover.

North Hall First Floor
North Hall 1-3  Plenary Sessions
Worship Services
Laity Session
Foyer/Corridor  Mission Displays

North Hall First Floor Main Corridor
Corridor  District Check-In (Sunday)
Mission Displays (Monday-Tuesday)
Clergy Spouse Table
North Concessions  Registration Services
South Concessions  Concessions
Coat Check North  Prayer Chapel
Coat Check South  First Aid

North Hall Second Floor
Stairs and elevator to the second floor are located off the North Hall Foyer.
Salon 1 A / B  Clergy Spouse Reception
Salon 1 A  BSC Pastoral Advisory Board Lunch
Salon 1 B  Asbury Theological Seminary Lunch
Salon 2  ATEM Gathering and Dinner
Salons 3 / 4 / 5  Kids’ Camp
Salon 8  Health Screening
Salon 9  Nursing Mothers’ Room
Salon 10  Cokesbury
Foyer  Book Signing

East Hall
East Hall 3  Cafeteria
East Hall 2  Annual Conference Member Orientation
ARMS Dinner
Clergy Executive Session
COSROW Breakfast
Laity Luncheon
Conference Guide
PreConference Meetings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Central</td>
<td>April 29</td>
<td>3 p.m.</td>
<td>Gardendale-Mt. Vernon UMC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cheaha</td>
<td>May 6</td>
<td>2 p.m.</td>
<td>The Beacon at Pell City First UMC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mountain Lakes</td>
<td>April 29</td>
<td>4 p.m.</td>
<td>Springville First UMC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northeast</td>
<td>May 6</td>
<td>3 p.m.</td>
<td>DesignLab, Huntsville</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northwest</td>
<td>May 6</td>
<td>3 p.m.</td>
<td>Disaster Warehouse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Central</td>
<td>April 29</td>
<td>2 p.m.</td>
<td>Pleasant Hill UMC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southeast</td>
<td>May 6</td>
<td>2:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Flint Hill UMC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southwest</td>
<td>May 6</td>
<td>3 p.m.</td>
<td>Fayette First UMC</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Registering Your Attendance

All Annual Conference members should make sure their attendance is recorded. Register your attendance by signing and turning in the registration card included with your nametag in this mailing.

It is the duty of every member, all provisional members and local pastors of the Annual Conference to attend its sessions (¶602.8, 2016 Book of Discipline). Clergy members who cannot attend any business session of the Annual Conference must report by letter or email to the Conference Secretary and copy your District Superintendent stating the reason for the absence:

Dr. Dedric Cowser
898 Arkadelphia Road
Birmingham AL 35204
dedric.cowser@umcna.org

District Check-In

On Sunday, clergy and lay members can turn in their registration card at the District Check-In tables in the North Hall First Floor Corridor. Your District is noted on your nametag. District Staff will be at the tables so you will see a familiar friendly face.

- District Check-In is open Sunday, 2-6 p.m.
- Clergy and lay members should turn in their registration card at the table labeled for their District.
- For other registration needs, go to Registration Services also in the North Hall First Floor Corridor.

Registration Services

The Registration Team is available to assist Reserve Members who need credentials to take the place of a lay member (see page 137), to help those who need to be added to the Annual Conference membership roll and to replace lost nametags and registration cards.

Members of the Registration Team will be available at Registration Services located in the North Hall First Floor Corridor during the following times:

- Sunday: 2-8 p.m.
- Monday: 7 a.m.-5 p.m.
- Tuesday: 7 a.m.-noon
Reserve Members
In the event that a Lay Member from a local charge cannot participate in a session of the Annual Conference, a Reserve Lay Member may officially take the member’s place. The Reserve Member should complete the form on page 137, have it signed by the Reserve Member’s District Superintendent and present it to the Conference Registrar to receive credentials to participate in the business of Annual Conference.

During Plenary sessions, District Superintendents sit at tables near the front of North Hall and the Conference Registrar is at Registration Services in the North Hall First Floor Corridor.

Visitors
Visitors are welcome at Annual Conference. There are exciting opportunities for worship and learning during this time of Christian conferencing. All North Alabama United Methodists are invited to attend Annual Conference.

All visitors should remember these guidelines:
- Visitors are to sit in the seating reserved for visitors. See seating chart on page 23.
- Visitors are ineligible to vote on matters of business or speak from the floor during times of discussion.
- Visitors may purchase meal tickets to eat in the cafeteria or participate in Special Meals. Tickets are available in advance. No meal tickets are sold on site. See page 14 for pricing and additional information.

Clergy Spouses
Upon arriving at Annual Conference, all Clergy Spouses are invited to check-in at the Clergy Spouse Table in the North Hall First Floor Corridor. Information will be available regarding an array of activities with other clergy spouses.

On Sunday evening, June 3, there will be a reception for Clergy Spouses during the 7 p.m. hour in North Hall Salon 1. There will be miniature desserts, fruit and iced tea. No reservations required.

Disability Accommodations
In an effort to better follow the example of Jesus, we want members and visitors with disabilities to know they are welcome at the North Alabama Annual Conference. The planning team works in cooperation with the Conference Disability Ministries Team to offer accommodations when possible. Accommodations include accessible parking, a sign language interpreter, hearing assistance devices, wheelchair accessible shuttle buses and extra large print handouts.

Designated handicap seating is available during plenary sessions and worship services in North Hall. See the seating chart on page 23.

Embassy Suites provides shuttles from the lobby of the hotel to the front door of North Hall for hotel guests. Please arrange shuttle service directly with the hotel.

If you or a visitor attending Annual Conference need accommodations, please indicate your special needs through the reservation process at www.umcna.org/ac18reservations or by completing and returning the Reservation Form on page 139. Requests for special accommodations must be received by May 15.
Tips for First Time Annual Conference Members

Prior to Annual Conference

- Read this PreConference Book. This is the best way to prepare for the important role you are about to play in the life of the church.
- Attend your District’s PreConference Meeting. See page 27 for date, time and location.
- Order your meal tickets or make reservations to be part of Special Meals by May 15 (see page 14).
- If you are from outside the Huntsville area and need accommodations, make reservations at a hotel (see page 15). The special Annual Conference block rates expire May 15, so don’t delay.

Arriving at Annual Conference

- Bring this PreConference Book, your registration card and any meal tickets you received in advance.
- Visit District Check-In to turn in your signed registration card and pick up a holder for your nametag. This is how you officially register your attendance at Annual Conference 2018.
- Read through the additional materials passed out by the ushers. The handouts labeled with a letter are a part of the official business and voting of the Conference.
- On Sunday afternoon, attend Annual Conference Member Orientation (see below).

During Annual Conference

- Wear your nametag to each session – this allows you to sit in the bar of the Conference.
- There’s a bar at Annual Conference? The bar is what we call the sections inside North Hall where voting members sit. You are to sit in one of these designated sections to participate in Annual Conference business (see Seating Chart on page 23).
- Annual Conference often includes a summer rain shower, a powerful air conditioner and lots of walking. Bring an umbrella, a sweater or light jacket and wear comfortable shoes!
- As a courtesy to others, please silence your cell phone during business sessions and worship services. If you receive an urgent call, please step outside North Hall to answer.
- If you have questions during Annual Conference, look for one of the volunteer hosts or visit the Information Table inside North Hall.

Annual Conference Member Orientation

Anyone attending Annual Conference for the first time—or for the first time in a long while—is invited to join Linda Holland, Director of Connectional Ministries and Leadership Development, for a brief orientation on Sunday, June 3 at 3 p.m. in East Hall 2. Attendees have an opportunity to ask questions regarding their role and responsibilities.

For more information, please contact Linda Holland at lholland@umcna.org or 205-226-7954.
Guest Speakers
Bishop Sharma D. Lewis

Bishop Sharma D. Lewis, resident bishop of the Richmond episcopal area, became the first African-American woman to be elected bishop in the Southeastern Jurisdiction of The United Methodist Church in 2016.

Prior to her episcopal assignment, she held a distinguished record of service in the North Georgia Conference including her appointment as district superintendent of the Atlanta-Decatur-Oxford District in 2010.

She is currently a board member and vice-chair of the Standing Committee on Evangelism for the World Methodist Council (WCC) of The United Methodist Church, a member of the Black Clergywomen and Black Methodists for Church Renewal (BMCR) of The United Methodist Church. Bishop Lewis has also been appointed as liaison to the Interagency Sexual Ethics Task Force (IASET), a taskforce of the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women.

Bishop Lewis serves on the Board of Governors for Wesley Theological Seminary and as ex-officio of the six United Methodist colleges in the Virginia Conference. She is also a member of the Southeastern Jurisdiction (SEJ) Committee on Coordination and Accountability (CCA) and a member of the (SEJ) Intentional Growth Center (IGC).

Bishop Lewis was born and raised in Statesboro, Georgia, in a loving Methodist family where individuals have answered God’s call to serve the church and to minister to God’s people.

A graduate of Mercer University (B.S., Biology, 1985), the University of West Georgia (M.S., Biology, 1988) and Gammon Theological Seminary at the Interdenominational Theological Center (M.Div., 1999), Bishop Lewis worked as a research biologist and chemist prior to surrendering to God’s call upon her life.

She has led mission experiences to Jamaica, Kenya and the Philippines. Bishop Lewis is a member of the Atlanta Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority. She has received the Delta Sigma Theta Pinnacle Award and the Torch Award, and she is the recipient of the 2014 Gammon Theological Seminary Distinguished Alumna Award.
Dr. Kevin M. Watson

Kevin M. Watson is Assistant Professor of Wesleyan and Methodist Studies at Candler School of Theology, Emory University.

His research interests focus on Christian formation and discipleship from a Wesleyan perspective, particularly communal formation, Wesleyan/Methodist Christianity, the history of early Methodism, American Methodism, common misunderstandings of the Wesleyan tradition and current events in The United Methodist Church.

In addition to writing articles for both scholarly and popular publications, Watson is the author of three books: Pursuing Social Holiness: The Band Meeting in Wesley’s Thought and Popular Methodist Practice (Oxford, 2014); The Class Meeting: Reclaiming a Forgotten (and Essential) Small Group Experience (Seedbed, 2014); and A Blueprint for Discipleship: Wesley’s General Rules as a Model for Christian Living (Discipleship Resources, 2009). He is the co-author of The Band Meeting: Rediscovering Relational Discipleship in Transformational Community (Seedbed, 2017). He is currently working on a history of the development and fragmentation of American Methodism as a theological tradition.

Kevin lives with his wife Melissa and three children Bethany, James and Eden in Lilburn, Georgia. When he isn't teaching or writing he enjoys playing with his kids, reading, managing his fantasy football team and playing guitar.

Cokesbury is hosting a book signing by Dr. Kevin Watson in the Second Floor Foyer (outside the Cokesbury Store) on Monday at noon. Dr. Watson’s books are among the featured resources available at Cokesbury during Annual Conference.

Laity Session Speaker

Dr. Rica McRoy

Rica McRoy was born in her grandfather’s small clay house nestled in the hill country of Kheonjhar, Orissa, India. After immigrating to America as a toddler, she was raised in a loving and devoutly Hindu home.

Rica had a head-on collision with the grace of Christ when she was in her late twenties and her life has never been the same.

She is married to Spike and together they have the joy of raising three uniquely beautiful teenage children—Rily, Parker and Sophie. Rica is a practicing optometrist whose white-hot passion is “helping people of every nation, tongue and tribe see” the unrivaled splendor of Jesus and the hope of their calling in Him.
Worship
This year’s Annual Conference will be a 48-hour worship experience during which participants hear reports, conduct business, experience times of learning and share testimonies of ministry. Here are some special acts of worship the Conference will experience together.

Opening Celebration and Worship
Sunday, June 3, 2018
4 p.m.
North Hall
Bishop Sharma D. Lewis, preaching

Memorial Service
Monday, June 4, 2018
2 p.m.
North Hall
Rev. Roger Thompson, preaching

Service of Ordination, Commissioning and Licensing
Monday, June 4, 2018
7 p.m.
Trinity United Methodist Church
Bishop Debra Wallace-Padgett, preaching

Directions to Trinity UMC—607 Airport Road, Huntsville AL 35802
Trinity UMC is located on Airport Road between Memorial Parkway and Whitesburg Drive.
From the Von Braun Center:
• Travel southeast on Clinton Avenue West for 0.5 miles.
• Turn left onto US-431S/US-231S.
• Continue on US-231 South for 2 miles.
• Take the Airport Road Exit.
• Turn left onto Airport Road, and continue for 1 mile.
• Trinity UMC is on the right.
Shuttle Service is available to travel to and from this service (see page 20).

Closing and Sending Forth Service
Tuesday, June 5, 2018
2 p.m.
North Hall
Bishop Sharma D. Lewis, preaching
Special Offering

Ethnic Ministries
offering to be received
Sunday, June 3
during Opening Worship of Annual Conference

Ethnic Ministries is one of the four North Alabama Conference priorities. The Operational Team leading this priority works to grow ethnic spiritual leaders and equip ethnic local congregations to grow in worship attendance, membership, baptisms and professions of faith.

The team’s work has included the Black Church Summit, working with leverage churches to develop ministry plans to reach their community, encouraging young spiritual leaders to grow through Youth Harambee, "Know to Grow" Workshops which provide resources for local congregations to grow their ministries by utilizing the gifts of both clergy and laity, and supporting out of the box ministries to reach new people for Christ through the Ethnic Ministries Ministry grant.

This year’s Annual Conference special offering is being used to continue and expand this work by funding ministry opportunities to strengthen and create healthier ethnic minority local churches by way of leadership recruitment, internships and young adult ministries. Local congregations are invited to send their contributions to this ministry with their Annual Conference member.

North Alabama Annual Conference SPECIAL OFFERING 2018

each church is asked to give $1 per person
## Meals and Gatherings

*See page 14 for meal ticket information.*

### Saturday, June 2, 2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Contact Info</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4 p.m.</td>
<td>Prayer Walk</td>
<td>East Hall 2</td>
<td>Lyn Cosby</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:lcosby@umcna.org">lcosby@umcna.org</a></td>
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### Sunday, June 3, 2018

<table>
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<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Contact Info</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3 p.m.</td>
<td>Members' Orientation</td>
<td>East Hall 2</td>
<td>Linda Holland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>205-226-7954</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>lb <a href="mailto:holland@umcna.org">holland@umcna.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 p.m.</td>
<td>Cafeteria opens for dinner</td>
<td>East Hall 3</td>
<td>Laura Belding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:lara.belding@umcna.org">lara.belding@umcna.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5:30 p.m.</td>
<td>ATEM Gathering/Dinner (Invitation only)</td>
<td>Salon 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 p.m.</td>
<td>Clergy Spouses Reception</td>
<td>Salon 1A/B</td>
<td>Deborah Thompson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:deborahwthompson@charter.net">deborahwthompson@charter.net</a></td>
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### Monday, June 4, 2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
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<th>Location</th>
<th>Contact Info</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7 a.m.</td>
<td>COSROW Breakfast</td>
<td>East Hall 2</td>
<td>Kelsey Grissom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:kelsey.grissom@umcna.org">kelsey.grissom@umcna.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Cafeteria opens for lunch</td>
<td>East Hall 3</td>
<td>Steve Lyles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:slyles@umcna.org">slyles@umcna.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noon</td>
<td>Laity Luncheon</td>
<td>East Hall 2</td>
<td>Lyle Holland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:lyle.holland@umcna.org">lyle.holland@umcna.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noon</td>
<td>Asbury Seminary Alumni Luncheon</td>
<td>Salon 1B</td>
<td>Quinten Lochmann</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Reservations required)</td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:qmvanben@bsc.edu">qmvanben@bsc.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noon</td>
<td>BSC Pastoral Advisory Board Luncheon (Invitation only)</td>
<td>Salon 1A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noon</td>
<td>Duke Divinity Alumni Luncheon</td>
<td>Holmes Street UMC 501 Holmes Ave NE Huntsville AL 35801</td>
<td>Dale Clem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Reservations required)</td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:dale.clem@umcna.org">dale.clem@umcna.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noon</td>
<td>Order of Deacons Luncheon</td>
<td>Second Mile Development 2710 Holmes Ave NW Huntsville AL 35816</td>
<td>John Bailey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Reservations required)</td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:john.bailey@umcna.org">john.bailey@umcna.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 p.m.</td>
<td>McCoy Adult Day Care Fundraiser</td>
<td>Panera Bread</td>
<td>Judy Poole</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4800 Whitesburg Dr S Huntsville AL 35802</td>
<td><a href="mailto:poole44@att.net">poole44@att.net</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Cafeteria opens for dinner</td>
<td>East Hall 3</td>
<td>Donna Baccus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>205-226-7968</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:donna.baccus@umcna.org">donna.baccus@umcna.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 p.m.</td>
<td>ARMS Dinner (Invitation only)</td>
<td>East Hall 2</td>
<td>Melissa Self Patrick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:melissa.patrick@umcna.org">melissa.patrick@umcna.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 p.m.</td>
<td>Candler Club Dinner (Reservations required)</td>
<td>Drake’s 4800 Whitesburg Drive #14 Huntsville AL 35802</td>
<td></td>
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### Tuesday, June 5, 2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Contact Info</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Cafeteria opens for Lunch</td>
<td>East Hall 3</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Special Meal: Laity Luncheon

The Laity Luncheon is a long-standing tradition of the North Alabama Conference and a great way to celebrate the connection. The North Alabama Conference Lay Ministry Team invites everyone—laity and clergy—to attend this annual event.

The Luncheon is at noon on Monday, June 4 in East Hall 2, immediately following the morning plenary session. Tickets are $21 and must be purchased through online reservations at www.umcna.org/ac18reservations or by returning the Reservation Form on page 139 along with your payment by May 15. No tickets to this meal are available on site.

Laity Luncheon Guest Speaker

Bishop Sharma D. Lewis

Bishop Sharma D. Lewis, resident bishop of the Richmond episcopal area, will speak at the Laity Luncheon. To read her full bio, please see page 30.

Special Meal: COSROW Breakfast

In 1990 the Louise Branscomb Barrier Breaker Award was established as a way for the Conference to annually recognize a United Methodist willing to take risks and stand up for the rights of women and ethnic minority persons. The Conference Commission on the Status and Role of Women (COSROW) continues to recognize these "barrier breakers" through this award.

At Annual Conference each year, COSROW hosts a breakfast featuring a guest speaker and the recognition of the current year’s Branscomb Barrier Breaker Award recipient. This year’s COSROW Breakfast is on Monday, June 4 at 7 a.m. in East Hall 2. Tickets are $11 and must be purchased through online reservations at www.umcna.org/ac18reservations or by returning the Reservation Form on page 139 along with your payment by May 15.

COSROW Breakfast Guest Speaker

Rev. Dr. Adlene Kufarimai

Rev. Dr. Adlene Kufarimai is appointed as the North Alabama Conference Coordinator for Ministry with the Poor, Director for Missions and Advocacy and as pastor of Haven United Methodist Church in Anniston, Alabama. Adlene is a native of Zimbabwe in Southern Africa. She moved to the United States in the year 2000. Adlene holds a Master of Arts in Christian Education and a Master of Divinity with a concentration in Psychology of Religion and Pastoral Care and Counseling from the Interdenominational Theological Center in Atlanta, Georgia. She earned a Doctor of Ministry in Spiritual Leadership from the Beeson Divinity School at Samford University in Birmingham, Alabama.

She is married to Rev. Dr. Tiwirai Kufarimai, pastor of New Life UMC in Anniston, Alabama. They have two children, Precious Tatenda and Tendaishe Michael. Adlene is a contributor, “We Are God's Family” (Galatians 3:28), in Dr. Anne E. Streaty Wimberly’s book Children’s Sermons: Just in Time!
Wi-Fi
Complimentary Wi-Fi (wireless internet access) is available in the Von Braun Center for all Annual Conference participants. To access the Wi-Fi network, please use the following credentials:

   **Network Name:** AC2018  
   **Password:** umcna2018

Prayer
The North Alabama Prayer Team is active throughout Annual Conference. Volunteers are praying during all sessions, and prayer request cards are available in strategic locations around the Von Braun Center. In addition, prayer requests can be emailed to prayer@umcna.org or shared on social media using the hashtag #umcna18prayer.

The Prayer Team also provides experiential prayer activities for Annual Conference attendees in the Prayer Chapel located in the North Hall First Floor Corridor. Annual Conference participants are encouraged to visit the Prayer Chapel for a time of individual prayer or to request a Prayer Team member intercede on your behalf.

Spiritual Direction
The Adult Discipleship Team is offering a new opportunity for attendees of this year’s Annual Conference. Visit the Spiritual Direction Room to get information about spiritual direction, spiritual friends and spiritual companions. Meet a spiritual director, talk with a spiritual companion, or engage in a spiritual direction session.

Persons gifted and skilled in spiritual direction will be available on a schedule posted at the Spiritual Direction Room, located near the elevator on the first floor of North Hall.

Concessions
The Concession Stand, located in the North Hall First Floor Corridor, is open during all Annual Conference sessions as an alternative meal and/or snack option. The Concession Stand accepts cash or card for purchases.

Mission Displays
Mission Displays are located in the North Hall Foyer. They feature different groups of North Alabama Conference Advance Specials, institutions, ministries and affiliated seminaries. These displays offer an opportunity to learn more about education and mission connections for your local church. Annual Conference participants are encouraged to visit the Mission Displays each day to connect with these ministries.

Information / Lost and Found
Volunteer hosts and ushers are available to help guide Annual Conference participants through the Von Braun Center. An Information Table is located inside North Hall. Stop at the table to ask for assistance at any time during Annual Conference. The Information Table also serves as the Lost and Found. If you find an item, please leave it with a Conference Host or Usher. If you lose an item, please check the Information Table to reclaim it.
Items to Purchase

T-shirts
Purchasing a 2018 Annual Conference T-shirt helps support this year’s Annual Conference Mission Focus—Ethnic Ministries. A portion of each T-shirt purchase benefits this Conference priority.

T-shirts are available for $15 if ordered by May 15, 2018. Order a shirt through the online reservations process at www.umcna.org/ac18reservations, or complete and return the Reservation Form on page 139. Pre-ordered T-shirts may be picked up during Annual Conference.

A limited number of T-shirts are available to purchase at Annual Conference at Registration Services for $20 on a first-come, first-served basis.

2018 Journal
The 2018 Journal is published in two volumes. Journal Volume I is this book, the PreConference Book. Journal Volume II, to be published this fall, is the record of information required by ¶606.3 of the 2016 Book of Discipline.

Order your Journal before July 15. Use the Order Form on page 135 or visit www.umcna.org/journalorders.
- Volumes I-II of the Journal are available for download free of charge on the Conference website.
- Volumes I-II of the Journal are available on one CD for $15.
- Additional printed copies of Volume I of the Journal (PreConference Book) are available for $15 each.
- Printed copies of Volume II of the Journal are available for $35 each.

Order and payment must be received by July 15, 2018.

Clergy Directory
A printed directory of clergy and surviving spouse contact information is also available for purchase. Printed clergy directories are available for $15 each. Use the Order Form on page 135 or visit www.umcna.org/journalorders.

Order and payment must be received by July 15, 2018.

Attention Clergy: Make plans now. The North Alabama Conference will produce a clergy pictorial directory during the 2019 Annual Conference. The 2019 North Alabama Conference will elect delegates to the 2020 General Conference. Election years historically have higher than average Annual Conference attendance and will provide an opportunity to have maximum participation.

DVDs, CDs and MP3s
Video and sound recordings of the Worship Services and presentations are available for purchase from the Office of Communication. You may place an order online at www.umcna.org/ac18recordings. Recordings will be available in July.
Health Screening for *HealthFlex* Participants

The North Alabama Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits will offer Quest Diagnostics *Blueprint for Wellness* Health Screening on Monday and Tuesday, June 4-5, from 6:30-9:30 a.m., as part of the 2018 *HealthFlex* healthy living incentive program. Earn $100 PulseCash* and get a snapshot of key health measures for diabetes, heart disease, metabolic syndrome and more. The screening is open to participants and spouses enrolled in *HealthFlex*.

Health screenings will be held in Salon 8 in North Hall. Preregistration is required. Individuals should fast for a minimum of eight hours (except water) before the screening.

*Must be enrolled in the Virgin Pulse activity program at time of screening to earn PulseCash.*

Cokesbury

The Cokesbury Christian Bookstore is located in Salon 10 on the second floor of North Hall. Mary Cook, the North Alabama area Cokesbury Resource Consultant, is available to help you find the latest book releases, United Methodist curriculum and other items to support your congregation’s ministry.

Cokesbury is the retail division of The United Methodist Publishing House. Founded in 1789, The United Methodist Publishing House is a publisher and distributor to The United Methodist Church and the greater Christian community.

Book Signing

Cokesbury is hosting a book signing by Dr. Kevin Watson in the Second Floor Foyer (outside the Cokesbury Store) on Monday at noon. Dr. Watson’s books are among the featured resources available at Cokesbury during Annual Conference.
Stay Connected

The Daily eVoice
The Daily eVoice is emailed to Annual Conference members and subscribers during Annual Conference 2018. To make sure you are on the email list:

- Go to www.umcna.org/subscribe
- Enter your name and correct email address and click submit.
- Choose the enewsletter you wish to receive. For Annual Conference news, choose "Annual Conference Updates (Daily eVoice)."
- If you have active email subscriptions, the website reflects your email address has been found, and you will receive an email with a link to complete your subscription.

Conference Web Site
You can stay connected with the North Alabama Conference throughout the year through the Conference web site. It provides the latest news, resources and other ministry information to help your congregation discover, develop and deploy spiritual leaders. Bookmark the site and visit often: www.umcna.org.

Facebook
Find the North Alabama Conference on Facebook at www.facebook.com/umcna.

Twitter
Follow the North Alabama Conference on Twitter at www.twitter.com/umcna.

If you plan to tweet from Annual Conference 2018, we invite you to use the hashtag #umcna18.

Photography Notice
The North Alabama Conference of the United Methodist Church has designated representatives to photograph and/or videotape during this session of Annual Conference, dated June 3-5, 2018. As a participant, your likeness and/or voice may be utilized by the North Alabama Conference for information sharing and ministry purposes. Unless we receive a written request from you to not use your voice or likeness, we will assume that your presence is consent.

Office of Communication staff and designated volunteers will act as Annual Conference photographers. GNTV will act as Annual Conference videographers and sound recorders. Since this is a public event, media coverage may also occur.

This consent will remain in effect until such time as you give written notice of your removal of your release of information to the North Alabama Conference of the United Methodist Church.

If you have any questions, contact Director of Communication Danette Clifton at dclifton@umcna.org or 205-226-7973.
Frequently Asked Questions

Why did I get this PreConference Book in the mail?
You received this book because you are a member, reserve member or invited guest of the 2018 North Alabama Annual Conference.

Why do I need to register online?
It’s probably best to think of the online process as “reservations” instead of “registration.” The online reservations process allows you to order meal tickets, request special assistance for disabilities, register your child for Kids’ Camp or childcare and purchase items such as Annual Conference T-shirts. You can also make these reservations by mail using the Reservation Form on page 139 of this book. Remember, your reservations must be received, either online or by mail, by May 15, 2018. Your reservation is not complete until payment is received.

What if I miss the May 15 reservations deadline?
In order to provide accurate numbers to the Von Braun Center food services, all meal reservations must be made by May 15. There are no meal tickets available on-site. However, there are restaurants and food trucks within walking distance of the Von Braun Center. Also, a Concession Stand is open in the North Hall First Floor Corridor throughout Annual Conference as a snack option.

What should I bring to Annual Conference?
Bring this PreConference Book, including the carrier sheet which includes your name tag and registration card. When you arrive at Annual Conference, turn in your signed registration card and pick up a holder for your nametag at District Check-In on Sunday or Registration Services. Wear your nametag at all times so you can participate in the business sessions of Annual Conference. You may also want to bring an umbrella and a sweater or light jacket. Make sure you wear comfortable shoes! If you are planning to bring a laptop or mobile device, complimentary Wi-Fi is available (see page 36).

Who are the voting members of the Annual Conference?
The voting membership (clergy and lay) of the North Alabama Annual Conference is established by the 2016 Book of Discipline (see ¶602) and the North Alabama Conference Standing Rules (see pages 47-57). The roll of Clergy Members of the North Alabama Conference is kept up-to-date by the Office of Ordained Ministry. The roll of lay members is developed as each charge reports its lay member(s) through the charge conference process in the fall. The equalization process, laid out in the 2016 Book of Discipline and Conference Standing Rules, is followed to include additional laity as needed.

Why do some congregations have multiple lay members and some congregations have none?
The United Methodist Book of Discipline determines the rules for Annual Conference membership (see 2016 Book of Discipline ¶602). For this, the 2016 Book of Discipline thinks in terms of charges and clergy appointments, not local congregations. The membership rules in the 2016 Book of Discipline allot one lay member per clergy appointed to a charge. A charge can be made up of a single congregation or multiple congregations. Those charges that have one clergy under appointment are allotted one lay member, those with multiple clergy are allotted an equal number of lay members as they have clergy members under appointment. If a charge is being served by a supply pastor, who is not a voting clergy member of the Annual Conference, that charge is allotted one lay member so they are represented.

I registered online. Why am I not on the membership roll?
The online registration process is actually best thought of as “reservations.” It is a way everyone who attends Conference – members and guests alike – may purchase meal tickets, request accommodations, etc. The Annual Conference membership roll is formed independently from the reservation process. The roll is developed based on the rules laid out by the 2016 Book of Discipline and the North Alabama Conference Standing Rules. Local churches submit the names of their lay members in the fall through Charge Conference reporting.
What if I am a reserve lay member taking the place of my church's lay member?
Please see the Reserve Lay Member Form on page 137. If you are called upon to replace the sitting lay member for your charge, you need to have your District Superintendent sign the form and present it to the Conference Registrar at Registration Services in the North Hall First Floor Corridor during Annual Conference sessions.

Why can't I purchase breakfast meal tickets?
Based on the low number of breakfast meal tickets sold in the past, the Annual Conference Planning Team eliminated a full breakfast on site. However, breakfast is available at hotels offering a special rate to Annual Conference participants (see hotel list on page 15). Also, the concessions stand outside of North Hall has a few breakfast snacks available for purchase. On Monday, COSROW is hosting a Special Meal breakfast and all Annual Conference participants are invited to purchase a ticket to attend this annual event.

Where should I sit during plenary sessions?
See the seating chart on page 23. The Bar of the Conference is reserved for voting members of the Annual Conference. The four middle sections of North Hall plus the stage, A/V table, Communication table and Connectional Ministries table are designated as the Bar. The two outside sections are designated for visitors. Please sit in the proper area when business is conducted.

How do I share with my congregation about Annual Conference?
Members to Annual Conference, both clergy and laity, have key roles in informing their congregations about what happens at the Annual Conference meeting, as well as sharing important information throughout the year to help the congregation maintain a strong connection to the ministries and opportunities provided by the North Alabama Conference. *The United Methodist Book of Discipline* says "...it shall be the duty of the lay member to report to the local church on actions of the annual conference." (¶602.7). Lay members are encouraged to use pages 42-44 to take notes and record reflections that will help them prepare a report. Lay members then work with their pastors to determine the best time and method to present the report to the congregation.

What do I do if I can't find the car keys/cell phone/glasses/wallet/purse I brought to Annual Conference? Or what if I find an item lost by someone else?
The Information Table, located inside North Hall, also serves as the Lost and Found. This is where Annual Conference hosts, tellers and ushers collect items found during Annual Conference. Check with the volunteer at this table to see if your lost item has been found. If you find a "lost" item, please leave it with a volunteer at the Information Table.

Who plans Annual Conference?
The Annual Conference Planning Team works year-round to make Annual Conference happen. Members of the Team include the following:
**Executive Team:** Mike Arnold, Rev. Andy Curtis, Emily Nelms Chastain, Danette Clifton, Rev. Dedric Cowser, John Fleischauer, Rev. Lonna Lynn Higgs, Linda Holland, Steve Lyles, Doris McCullers, Rev. Ron Schultz, Kiki Wood Terry

Thank you to all the members of the Planning Team and to the many Annual Conference volunteers!
Lay Member Report Worksheet

"...it shall be the duty of the lay member to report to the local church on actions of the annual conference." 2016 United Methodist Book of Discipline ¶602.7

Lay members are encouraged to use the following three pages to take notes and make reflections throughout Annual Conference then use them to prepare a report to your local church.

Sunday
Opening Worship • Bishop Sharma D. Lewis preaching

Laity Session with Dr. Rica McRoy

Monday
Teaching by Dr. Kevin M. Watson

Business and Ministry Testimonies

Tuesday
Teaching by Dr. Kevin M. Watson

Business and Ministry Testimonies
The focus of the 2018 Annual Conference is Ethnic Ministries.
The following suggestions / examples / insights could be applied in my local church.

Notes about North Alabama Conference Priorities
New Faith Communities

Healthy Congregations

Ethnic Ministries

Ministry with the Poor

Key Business
Use this space for notes about important business such as Conference Budget, Resolutions, votes taken, etc.

Personal Reflections
The moment that inspired me most was....

I laughed when....

I felt closest to God when....

The most surprising thing I learned...

Best Quote...

The one thing I want everyone in my congregation to know about the North Alabama Conference is....
Notes
Standing Rules
North Alabama Conference Ministry Rationale

Vision

*Spiritual leaders empowering life-giving congregations to transform the world.*

The North Alabama Conference will be led by lay and clergy growing in an ever-deepening relationship with Jesus Christ. These leaders will guide the church in transforming the world through making committed disciples, through supporting vital congregations and through developing critical conference missions and ministries to impact people around the world.

Mission

*Discover, Develop and Deploy Spiritual Leaders to make Disciples of Jesus Christ for the Transformation of the World.*

Values

- Working together to create a kingdom-like environment which transforms lives and communities with urgency
- Movement of the Holy Spirit produces personal and social holiness
- Centered in Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God
- The Bible as the inspired word of God which guides our work together
- Integrity—what we say, what we do and what we desire are aligned

What does the North Alabama Way mean?

- Team matters.
- Respond, not react.
- What we do is of critical importance. How we do it is of equal importance.
- The higher the expectations, the greater the outcome.
- Move as quickly as we can and as slowly as we need to, for as long as it takes.
- Following the process and honoring integrity at all levels of the system.

Conference Priorities

- New Faith Communities, Worship Services, Ministries to reach new persons
- Healthy Congregations
- Ethnic Ministries
- Ministry with the Poor

Structure

Teams of servant leaders will be formed to accomplish our mission in accordance with the current *Book of Discipline* along with input from the Bishop and Cabinet.

Conference teams currently serving include:

- Administrative Review Board
- Adult Discipleship Team
- Advocacy for Social Justice Team
- Annual Conference Meeting Team
- Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministry
- Board of Ordained Ministry
- Board of Pension and Health Benefits
- Board of Superannuate Homes
- Cabinet
- Children’s Discipleship or the Children’s Connexion
- Church Health Team
- Commission on Archives and History
- Commission on Equitable Compensation
- Commission on the Status and Role of Women
Standing Rules

1 Annual Conference Ministry Teams

1.1 Leadership Formation. Teams of servant leaders will be formed to accomplish our mission in accordance with the current *Book of Discipline* with input from the Bishop and Cabinet.

a. The Conference Lay Ministry Team is composed of the Conference Lay Leader, who is the team leader, the Conference Director of Lay Servant Ministries, the District Lay Leaders, the Bishop and the Director of Connectional Ministries. The Lay Ministry Team carries out the mission described in the 2016 *Book of Discipline*, ¶631, in connection with the General Board of Discipleship.

b. The Conference Lay Leader is elected by the Annual Conference upon the nomination of the Conference Nominations Team (2016 *Book of Discipline*, ¶603.9). The tenure of office for the Conference Lay Leader is no less than four years. Should a vacancy occur prior to the completion of the term, the Lay Ministry Team selects a Conference Lay Leader to serve until the next meeting of the Annual Conference.

c. The District Lay Leaders are elected annually by the Annual Conference on nomination by the members of the District Conference or, if no District Conference is held, by the members of the District Leadership Team (or equivalent body). Any vacancy that occurs in the Office of the District Lay Leader between regular meetings of the Annual Conference shall be filled by action of members of the District Conference or the District Leadership Team (or equivalent body). At their discretion, districts may elect additional assistant or associate lay leaders as needed.

d. The Board of United Counseling provides direct counseling services to clergy and laity, training programs in pastoral counseling and training in congregational health. Its fifteen member Board is nominated by the
Conference Nominations Team in consultation with the Executive Director.

e. The Committee on Ministerial Integrity develops policies and provides training for professional church workers in upholding the church's commitment to high standards of professional conduct and the elimination of sexual harassment. This committee is composed of five to twelve members who are appointed by the Bishop and is under administrative purview of the Board of Ordained Ministry and the Executive Director of the Board of Ordained Ministry.

1.2 Missions Team. In accordance with the *Book of Discipline*, our structure functionally reflects the General Board of Global Ministries and the General Board of Church and Society and includes the roles and responsibilities of the Conference Boards of Church and Society and Global Ministries and are as follows:

a. The Missions Team is nominated by the Conference Nominations Team and elected by the Annual Conference. These leaders, along with Conference staff assigned to this Team, invite others to join this Team as it carries out the mission of encouraging persons to be involved in servant ministries, as described in the *2016 Book of Discipline*, ¶633. Anyone who serves on the General Board of Global Ministries is a member of the Conference Missions Team.

b. The United Methodist Women encourage and support Spiritual Growth, Missionary Outreach and Christian Social Action as described in the *2016 Book of Discipline*, ¶647.


d. The Mission Congregation Team is appointed by the Bishop and includes Cabinet members with mission congregations within their districts and a representative from the Commission on Equitable Compensation. The Mission Congregation Team encourages the ministry of congregations that are in special missional situations.

e. The United Methodist Volunteers in Mission Team, along with Conference staff assigned to this Team, invites others to join this Team as it carries out the mission of recruiting and resourcing UMVIM teams at home and around the world.

f. The Mission Resource Team, along with Conference staff assigned to the Team, invites others to join this Team as it carries out the Conference's ongoing connection with the General Board of Global Ministries and the following ministries:

(1) Hispanic Ministries;
(2) United Methodist Committee on Relief;
(3) Disaster Relief;
(4) Advance Specials;
(5) Kairos Prison Ministry;
(6) Society of Saint Andrew

g. The Mission Education and Communication Team shall coordinate the Mission Education Programs of the Conference and promote hands-on mission for local churches through special events and training.

h. The Mission Personnel Team shall be responsible for the recruitment and interview process for prospective missionaries.

1.3 Ministry Administration. The Ministry Administration Team is composed of the Conference Treasurer/Director of Administrative Services and the staff and volunteers who support the work of that office, which is described in the *2016 Book of Discipline*, ¶619.

a. The apportionments for the Conference Unified Budget to the pastoral charges are prepared by the Conference Treasurer/Director of Administrative Services, according to an equitable formula adopted by the Annual Conference and delivered to pastors and/or District Superintendents on or before August 1.

b. The IT Team, supervised by the Conference Treasurer/Director of Administrative Services, is composed of staff persons who carry out the day-to-day operation of the Conference computers, plus any volunteers that may support this ministry.

c. The Conference Finance Team is composed of the Bishop, the Conference Treasurer/Director of Administrative Services, a member of the Cabinet chosen by the Bishop, the Conference Lay Leader, the Conference Director of Connectional Ministries, the Director of the North Alabama Conference United
Methodist Foundation and 12 to 14 persons nominated by the Conference Nominations Team and elected by the Annual Conference. The duties of the Conference Finance Team are:

(1) To provide for the functions of the ministry of finance and administration;

(2) To work with the various leadership and ministry teams to develop a budgeting process and annual budgets that reflect the Conference vision and mission goals, in accordance with the 2016 Book of Discipline, ¶¶611-614;

(3) To recommend a unified budget to the Annual Conference each year to underwrite the accomplishment of the Conference vision and mission goals, in accordance with the 2016 Book of Discipline, ¶614;

(4) To supervise the receipt and disbursement of the Conference funds;

(5) To provide for an annual audit of the accounts of the Conference Treasurer / Director of Administrative Services within six months after the close of the fiscal year by a certified public accountant; a copy of such audits is furnished to the chairperson of the Finance Team and to the Bishop;

(6) To verify that the accounts of all other treasurers handling Conference funds are audited and reported in a similar manner.

d. Conference funds are invested by the Conference Treasurer / Director of Administrative Services under the supervision of a Conference Investments Committee. This Committee is composed of six persons: the chairperson of the Finance Team plus five persons with financial management skills and experience who are appointed by the Bishop.

e. The Board of Pension and Health Benefits is composed of 30 persons nominated by the Conference Nominations Team and elected by the Annual Conference, to carry out the mission described in the 2016 Book of Discipline, ¶639, in cooperation with the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits. Consideration will be given to have one board member from each district.

f. The Conference Board of Trustees is composed of 12 persons nominated by the Conference Nominations Team and elected by the Annual Conference, to carry out the mission described in the 2016 Book of Discipline, ¶2512.1-7.

2 The Annual Conference Meeting

2.1 The Annual Conference Meeting Team. The Annual Conference Meeting Team plans and coordinates the session of the Annual Conference. The Annual Conference Meeting Team is convened by the Director of Connectional Ministries and includes the Bishop, the Secretary of the Conference, four District Superintendents chosen by the Bishop, the Conference Lay Leader, a member of the Administrative Services Team and others named by the Bishop or the Director of Connectional Ministries.

The Conference Secretary and the Statistician of the Conference are elected quadrennially at the session of the Annual Conference immediately preceding the regular session of the General Conference. Assistants are elected annually on nomination by the Secretary and Statistician respectively. The Conference Secretary makes sure accurate minutes of the proceedings are recorded.

2.2 Rules of Order and Parliamentary Procedure. All sessions of the Conference are governed:

a. First, by the Book of Discipline in effect at the time of the Annual Conference;

b. Second, by the Standing Rules of the Conference;

c. Third, by the Rules of Order of the General Conference adopted by the most recent General Conference;

d. Finally, any situation not covered by the above shall be governed by the current edition of Robert’s Rules of Order.

2.3 Presiding Officer. The Resident Bishop, or the presiding officer designated to preside in the bishop’s temporary absence, shall be the chair of the conference. The chair shall decide on points of order raised by the members.

2.4 Voting at Annual Conference.

a. Voting Area of the Conference (also known as the "bar of the Annual Conference"). The annual conference shall fix the voting area of the conference at the opening business session and voting on all annual conference matters must take place within the prescribed area.

b. Identification. Members of the conference and others entitled to be seated within the voting areas of the conference shall be furnished identification badges. During balloting, ballots will be distributed to and collected from only those persons wearing proper identification badges.
c. Rules for Debate are contained in Appendix A of the Standing Rules of the Conference.

d. All reports not contained in the published PreConference Book/Journal Volume I are typewritten and presented in duplicate and are placed on the Conference Calendar in the order in which they are filed with the Conference Secretary. The reports (except that of the Annual Conference Meeting Team) lie on the Conference Secretary's desk at least one business session before being acted upon by the Conference.

2.5 Procedures, Petitions and Resolutions. The Committee on Procedures and Petitions is composed of a chair and five other members nominated by the Conference Nominations Team and elected by the Annual Conference. Total board voting membership will stand at eight including the Assistant to the Bishop and one Cabinet representative, appointed by the Bishop. The Annual Conference Secretary is an ex-officio non-voting member.

a. Petitions and resolutions to be presented to the Annual Conference must be in the hands of the Conference Secretary no later than February 1 of the calendar year preceding the Annual Conference to which it is submitted.

b. With the exception of those approved by agencies, boards, commissions and committees, councils, task forces, teams, or other conference entities for inclusion in the PreConference Book/Journal Volume I, the Conference Secretary shall promptly deliver a copy of each petition and resolution to the Convenor of the Committee on Procedures and Petitions.

c. The Committee on Procedures and Petitions shall review each such petition and resolution for conformity with applicable rules (including provisions of the United Methodist Book of Discipline) and shall then refer each such petition and resolution to the conference agency, board, commission, committee, council, task force, team, or other conference entity (the “receiving entity”), if any, whose mission is related to the subject matter of such petition or resolution.

d. Petitions and resolutions dealing with the rules or procedures of the Annual Conference or procedural matters shall be referred to the Committee on Procedures and Petitions for handling.

e. Upon receiving such petitions and resolutions, the receiving entity will conduct such study and consultation as it deems appropriate for a thorough and prayerful consideration of the petition or resolution and shall make a recommendation on each.

f. The Committee on Procedures and Petitions and the receiving entity shall each have the authority to amend petitions and resolutions prior to making recommendations to the conference. Recommendations from the Committee on Procedures and Petitions and from the receiving entities shall be forwarded to the Conference Director of Connectional Ministries at least 10 business days prior to the opening of Annual Conference for duplication and distribution to all members of the Conference prior to the first business session of the Conference.

g. All motions to amend any resolution or petition, including motions to amend by substitution, shall be submitted to the Conference Secretary within 30 days of the publication of such resolution or petition in the PreConference Book/Journal Volume I or the conference web site. Such motions shall be handled in accordance with the procedures set out in the paragraphs (2.5 c-f) above.

h. In order to provide opportunity for Christian conferencing concerning resolutions and petitions to be brought before the Annual Conference, all persons and entities submitting any resolution or petition pursuant to paragraphs (2.5 c-f) shall cooperate with the Committee on Procedures and Petitions and the District Superintendents in making resources available to the members prior to the Annual Conference. This may entail participating in presentations or workshops in connection with the PreConference district meetings, or otherwise assisting the district superintendents in providing forums in which such resolutions and petitions can be discussed and considered prayerfully by members in advance of the Annual Conference. The Convenor of the Committee on Procedures and Petitions shall coordinate such efforts with the district superintendents and other interested parties.

2.6 Reports.

a. PreConference Book/Journal Volume I. Conference organizations submitting reports of substance to the Annual Conference send such reports as directed by the Conference Secretary. The Secretary edits and publishes a Journal of these reports, a copy to be distributed to each Member (Clergy, Lay and Reserve) of the Annual Conference and to the spouse of a deceased clergy upon request, in a reasonable time prior to the

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convening of Conference, the expense of which is paid from Annual Conference Meeting Expense Funds. This PreConference book serves as Volume I of the Annual Conference Journal. Only reports of Conference-level organizations are published. Amendments to or changes of Journal reports are duplicated by the organization involved and made available to members of the Conference.

b. Consent Agenda. In order to expedite the business of the Conference, the Consent Agenda Committee, composed of the Secretary of the Annual Conference and the Director of Connectional Ministries, in consultation with organizations or individuals presenting reports, recommendations or resolutions, may present in the PreConference Book/Journal Volume I a written list of items which shall be considered as adopted by consent of the Annual Conference unless they are removed from this list at a time set aside for this purpose on the second business session of the Conference.

(1) Individual items may be removed from the Consent Agenda to be placed on the regular agenda by a motion requesting it, supported by at least one additional member of the Annual Conference.

(2) When a matter has been removed from the Consent Agenda, it is placed on the regular agenda at an appropriate time as determined by the Secretary of the Annual Conference.

2.7 Lay Members of Annual Conference. Each Lay Member and Reserve Lay Member serves for the ensuing Calendar Year. District Superintendents provide the Conference Secretary with lists of these, including addresses, by February 1 of each year. The Conference Registrar on behalf of the Conference Secretary delivers reservation blanks to all Conference Members at least twenty days prior to the convening of Annual Conference.

a. Reserves. Reserves may be seated in place of regular members upon written notice to the Secretary.

b. Young Adult Members. Each year, each District will select one young person between the ages of twelve and seventeen and one young person between the ages of eighteen and thirty as members of the Annual Conference (2016 Book of Discipline, ¶32).

c. Equalizing Members.

(1) In addition to the provisions for lay members of the Annual Conference as set out in the 2016 Book of Discipline, ¶32, the following persons constitute members of the Annual Conference to the extent required to equalize lay membership with ministerial membership and in the following priority:

(a) Lay Team Leaders of Conference Ministry Teams;
(b) Lay persons serving on boards and agencies of the General Conference;
(c) Full-time lay employees of the Conference Staff;
(d) Former Conference Lay Leaders;
(e) District Presidents of United Methodist Women;
(f) District Presidents of United Methodist Men;
(g) Lay Chairpersons of District Councils (or equivalent body);
(h) Lay District Directors of Lay Servant Ministries;
(i) A student representative from each Wesley Foundation (or United Methodist Campus Ministry Unit);
(j) Former Conference Presidents of United Methodist Women;
(k) Former Conference Presidents of United Methodist Men;
(l) Others as needed, named and prioritized by the leadership and ministry teams of the Annual Conference.

(2) If the number of additional lay persons needed to equalize with the ministerial members does not require all persons in each of the above categories, the following method of selection for persons in ¶2.7(c) (1) is used:

(a) Persons will be selected from the following categories:
   - Lay Team Leaders of Conference Ministries Teams
   - Lay persons serving on boards and agencies of the General Conference
   - Lay Chairpersons of District Councils (or equivalent bodies)
(b) The Lay Ministry Team determines the order of persons selected in:
   - Former Conference Lay Leaders
   - Lay District Directors of Lay Servant Ministries
(c) The Executive Committee of the Conference United Methodist Women determines the order of persons in:
   - District Presidents of United Methodist Women
   - Former Conference Presidents of United Methodist Women

(d) The Executive Committee of the Conference United Methodist Men determines the order of persons selected in categories (f) and (k):
   - District Presidents of United Methodist Men
   - Former Conference Presidents of United Methodist Men

(e) Full-time lay employees of the Conference Staff are selected according to seniority as determined by the Conference Director of Connectional Ministries.

3. The number of lay members of the Annual Conference is the number equal to the number of ministerial members of the Annual Conference as reported in answer to the North Alabama Conference Journal Business of Annual Conference (also known as the “Condensed Minutes”) question 57. This number shall be balanced by the number of pastoral charges plus the number of associate pastors as listed in the current appointments in the Journal.

2.8 PreConference Meetings. Each year the District Superintendent and District Lay Leader convene a meeting of all Annual Conference Members and Reserves within the District prior to the Conference sessions after the PreConference Book/Journal Volume I is in the hands of the members for the purpose of considering proposals and programs which are to be presented to the Conference.

2.9 Conference Journal.
   a. The Conference Journal is produced by the Communication Team of the Annual Conference in cooperation with the Conference Secretary.
   b. The Communication Team may edit reports for brevity, provided that no essential material is omitted. The Conference Treasurer/Director of Administrative Services of the North Alabama Conference shall provide a copy of the annual audits of the accounts of the Conference groups for publication in the Conference Journal. All materials for the Journal must be submitted by email to acreports@umcna.org by the tenth day following the adjournment of the Annual Conference.
   c. The duties of the Journal Committee are:
      (1) To determine the number of Journals to be published and, prior to the meeting of the Annual Conference, contract for the printing and mailing of the Journal, with a mailing date no later than October 1. All expenses involved in editing, printing and mailing the Journal are paid from the Annual Conference Meeting Expense Fund.
      (2) To publish in the Journal the report of the Conference Statistician. Calendar-year reports are filed by each pastor by January 15.

2.10 Election of Delegates to General and Jurisdictional Conference.
   a. Delegates to General and Jurisdictional Conferences are elected according to the provisions of the 2016 Book of Discipline, ¶¶34-36, 502. After General Conference delegates are elected, voting begins for Jurisdictional Conference delegates. The first three clergy and the first three lay delegates elected to Jurisdictional Conference will serve as reserve delegates to General Conference in the order of their election. After the balloting for Jurisdictional Conference is complete, three clergy and three lay reserve delegates are elected to the Jurisdictional Conference.
   b. Procedures for self-nomination of clergy delegate candidates.
      (1) In order to ensure that all clergy have access to information about those who wish to be considered as delegates, clergy will have the opportunity to nominate themselves for election as clergy delegates.
      (2) The provisions of the 2016 Book of Discipline, ¶35, ensure that “The clergy delegates to the General Conference and to the jurisdictional or central conference shall be elected from the clergy members in full connection and shall be elected by the clergy members of the annual conference or provisional annual conference who are deacons and elders in full connection, associate members and those provisional members who have completed all of their educational requirements and local pastors who have completed course of study or an M.Div. degree and have served a minimum of two consecutive
years under appointment immediately preceding the election.” Therefore, this self-nomination process shall in no way limit the voting to those clergy who nominate themselves.

(3) Those nominating themselves for consideration as delegates are asked to commit to the following expectations:
   (a) Attend both General Conference and the Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference.
   (b) Attend the meetings of the North Alabama Delegation.
   (c) Commit the time needed to read and study the issues.
   (d) Pray for God’s guidance in decision-making.

(4) Those wishing to be considered for election shall complete the Conference Clergy Delegation Nomination Form and provide a photograph by the deadline set by the Conference Secretary.

(5) Nominees’ statements and pictures shall be included in the PreConference Book/Journal Volume I, which shall be distributed to all clergy members of Annual Conference.

c. Procedures for self-nomination of lay delegate candidates.
   (1) Those nominating themselves for consideration as delegates are asked to commit to the following expectations:
      (a) Attend both General Conference and the Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference.
      (b) Attend the meetings of the North Alabama Delegation.
      (c) Commit the time needed to read and study the issues.
      (d) Meet the qualifications of the 2016 Book of Discipline, ¶36, Article V.
      (e) Pray for God’s guidance in decision-making.

   (2) Those wishing to be considered for election shall complete the Conference Lay Delegation Nomination Form and provide a photograph and a short paragraph sharing why they feel called to be a delegate by the deadline set by the Conference Lay Leader.

d. Procedures for Balloting.
   (1) Only eligible clergy and lay members of Annual Conference may vote for delegates. In order to vote, members must be seated in the designated section of the bar of the conference and show appropriate credentials.

   (2) The bishop may call for a ballot at any time and members of the Annual Conference should be available to cast a ballot at all times while the Annual Conference is in session.

   (3) Persons are elected when they receive a simple majority of the votes (50% +1) as determined by the electronic vote counter.

2.11 Suspension of Rules. Organizational Rules contained herein (including the rules for Debate contained in Appendix A) may be suspended by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting, providing such suspension is not contrary to the provisions of the Book of Discipline.

2.12 Change or Amendment of Rules. The Standing Rules of the North Alabama Conference may be amended by a two-thirds vote of members present and voting on the next day after the amendment has been presented in writing. Editorial changes may be made by the Committee on Procedures and Petitions to reflect Book of Discipline references and to reflect the addition or deletion of various teams mentioned in the Standing Rules.

2.13 Nominations. The Conference Nominations Team nominates persons for leadership in the Annual Conference.
   a. The Conference Nominations Team is composed of the Bishop, the Conference Lay Leader, the Conference Secretary, the District Superintendents, the District Lay Leaders and two additional persons, one lay member and one clergy member, from each district nominated by the District Superintendent and approved by the District Conference or the District Council on Ministries. The Conference Director of Connectional Ministries serves as secretary of the Team.

   b. The Conference Nominations Team is responsible for the creation and circulation of a nomination form which invites persons to indicate their gifts, interests and ministry passions. This form should be completed by those persons who feel called to serve on Annual Conference commissions, committees, boards, task forces and teams. The form should be returned to the Conference Nominations Team, to the attention of the
Conference Director of Connectional Ministries.

c. The Conference Nominations Team prayerfully reviews the applications of those who have offered themselves for service and nominates a slate of servants for all offices and entities mandated by the General Conference as described in the Book of Discipline and in the Conference Standing Rules.

d. No one is elected to more than one quadrennial organization of the Conference, as defined in the Journal, except that this rule does not apply to ex-officio members of the Lay Ministry Team or the Committee on Episcopacy. As defined herein, the quadrennial organizations of the Annual Conference are: The Board of Ordained Ministry, The Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministry, The Council on Finance and Administration, The Board of Pension and Health Benefits, The Commission on Equitable Compensation, The Committee on Episcopacy, The Lay Ministry Team, The Personnel Team and The Investments Committee.

e. No staff member of an institution, agency or special ministry under the authority of, or receiving funds from, an agency, board, commission, committee, council, task force, team or organization of the Annual Conference is a voting member of such organization, provided that he or she may be invited to participate as a non-voting member.

f. Any person from the Annual Conference holding membership on any General Church or Southeastern Jurisdiction agency, board, commission, committee, council, task force, team, or organization is also a member of the comparable Annual Conference organization. Membership includes all rights granted at-large members of the constituted Annual Conference agency, board, commission, committee, council, task force, team, or organization.

g. Except as otherwise provided by the Book of Discipline, no one is elected for more than two consecutive full quadrennia to a quadrennial organization, as defined in the Journal, provided that any period of time of two years or less served in a quadrennium shall not be considered as a full quadrennium and that any time in excess of two years served in any quadrennium shall be considered as a full quadrennium and provided further that officers of such organizations may serve until their successors are elected. Unless otherwise stated in the Book of Discipline or the Standing Rules, no one shall serve more than two quadrennia on an Annual Conference Ministry Team, as listed in the North Alabama Conference Ministry Rationale.

h. No one is elected as a trustee or director of more than one college or other institution under the supervision of the North Alabama Conference, including the Annual Conference Trustees, except that this does not apply to ex-officio trustee ships. The institutions of the Annual Conference are: Birmingham-Southern College, Huntingdon College, Sumatanga, United Methodist Homes for the Aging, United Methodist Children’s Home, United Counseling, North Alabama Conference Trustees, United Methodist Foundation, The Board of Superannuate Homes, The Boards of Directors of Wesley Foundations.

i. Participation in other ministry teams of the Conference does not disqualify someone from serving on a quadrennial organization or as a Trustee or Director of a Conference institution.

2.14 Conference Personnel. The Conference Personnel Team is responsible for the establishment of employment policies related to personnel at the United Methodist Center whose salaries are fully funded by the Conference. The Committee is available for consultation in all personnel matters.

a. The Conference Personnel Team consists of nine members who are independent of Conference funded offices (Office of Administrative Services, Office of Connectional Ministries, Office of Ordained Ministry) or tenants in the United Methodist Center.

b. The Conference Personnel Team is nominated by the Conference Nominations Team and elected by the Annual Conference for a term of three years.

c. The Conference Personnel Team will meet annually with the Bishop, the Conference Treasurer / Director of Administrative Services, the Director of Connectional Ministries and the Executive Director of the Office of Ordained Ministry, to review and update the salary ranges for each level of employment at the United Methodist Center. Any salary included in a funding request submitted shall be within the applicable salary range.

3 Other Conference Ministries

3.1 The Administrative Review Board carries out the mission described in the 2016 Book of Discipline, ¶362.
3.2 The Commission on Archives and History carries out the mission described in the 2016 Book of Discipline, ¶641, in cooperation with the General Commission on Archives and History.

3.3 The Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministry is composed of 16 persons nominated by the Conference Nominations Team and elected by the Annual Conference. The Chair of this Board shall be supplied by the Conference Nominations Team. These leaders, along with Conference staff assigned to this Team, invite others to join this Team as it carries out the mission described in the 2016 Book of Discipline, ¶634.

3.4 The North Alabama United Methodist Foundation carries out the mission described in the 2016 Book of Discipline, ¶2513. The Foundation’s Board of Directors is elected by the Annual Conference in accordance with their bylaws.

3.5 External and connectional organizations of the Annual Conference are under the purview of respective Boards of Trustees and are to be elected by the Annual Conference in accordance with their bylaws. To be presented for election, each of the following organizations list of Board members for the year shall be submitted to the Conference Director of Connectional Ministries at least 30 days prior to Annual Conference.
   a. Camp Sumatanga Board of Trustees, which oversees the ministry of Camp Sumatanga;
   b. North Alabama Conference Board of Superannuate Homes, which provides housing for retired clergy and their spouses who meet eligibility requirements;
   c. The Board of Trustees for the United Methodist Children’s Home, which provides programs and services for family preservation and foster children in Alabama and West Florida;
   d. The Board of Trustees of United Methodist Homes for the Aging, which provide housing and care for senior adults in Alabama and West Florida;
   e. The Board of Trustees for Birmingham-Southern College in Birmingham, Alabama, which oversee and provide direction for the College and its administration;
   f. The Board of Trustees for Huntingdon College in Montgomery, Alabama, which oversee and provide direction for the College and its administration;

4 Districts

4.1 There shall be no more than eight Districts in this Annual Conference.

4.2 The District Superintendent will annually convene a District Conference for the purpose of approving a district budget, issuing certificates of candidacy for ordained ministry and electing the district leadership team and other district teams. The membership of a District Conference shall be composed of all pastors, lay members of the Annual Conference and the district Leadership Team. (2016 Book of Discipline, ¶658)

4.3 Each district shall have a District Leadership Team (or equivalent body) that carries out the mission of equipping local churches to grow more disciples of Jesus Christ. (2016 Book of Discipline, ¶124 and ¶140 give inclusiveness guidelines)

Appendix: Rules of Debate

1. Securing the Floor. Anyone desiring to speak to the conference shall move to the nearest microphone and wait to be recognized by the presiding officer.
   a. Unless raising a point of order or parliamentary inquiry, the member shall not speak until given the floor.
   b. The member shall first announce her or his name and the name of the church represented.
   c. No member who has the floor may be interrupted except for a point of order, a parliamentary inquiry, or a point of information.

2. Limits on speaking. No member shall speak:
   a. More than once on the same question if any member who has not spoken desires the floor;
   b. More than twice on the same subject under the same motion;
   c. Any longer than three minutes, unless the three minute rule is extended by a two-thirds vote of the conference.

3. Except for a non-debatable motion (rule 8), a report may be debated only after the motion is made, seconded and restated by the presiding officer. No report shall be adopted or question related to the same decided without
opportunity having been given for at least two speeches for and two against the said proposal.

4. Any member who moves the previous question (that is, that the vote be now taken on the motion or motions pending) shall also indicate to what it is intended to apply, if any secondary motion or motions are also pending.
   a. If said member does not so indicate, it shall be regarded as applying only to the immediately pending question. This motion shall be taken without debate and shall require a two-thirds vote for its adoption.
   b. If it is adopted, the vote shall be taken by the motion or motions to which it applies without further debate.
   c. After three speeches for and three against provided no secondary motions come before the floor, the questions shall be put to the conference automatically. However, the presenter shall be entitled to speak before the vote is taken.

5. Alteration of Motions. When a motion is made and seconded or a resolution is introduced and seconded; it shall be deemed to be in the possession of the conference and may not be altered except by the action of the conference.
   a. No motion to amend or to amend by substitution may be made to resolutions or petitions appearing in the PreConference Book/Journal Volume I unless such motion has been previously submitted in accord with paragraph 2.5.
   b. No motions to amend by substitution shall be permitted with respect to resolutions and petitions that do not appear in the PreConference Book/Journal Volume I.

6. Rights of the main question. The main question may be opened to debate under the following motions: to adopt, to reject or refer, to postpone and to reconsider. No new motion, resolutions or subject shall be entertained until the one under consideration shall have been disposed of.

7. Precedence of Secondary Motions. If any one or more of the following motions shall be made when one or more other motions are pending the order of precedence in relation to one another shall be:
   a. to fix the time the conference will adjourn
   b. to adjourn
   c. to take a recess
   d. to lay on the table
   e. to order the previous question (see rules 4 and 8)
   f. to limit or extend the limits of debate
   g. to postpone to a given time
   h. to refer
   i. to amend other than by substitution
   j. to amend by substitution
   k. to postpone indefinitely

8. Non-debatable motions
   a. to adjourn, when unqualified, except for final adjournment
   b. to suspend the rules
   c. to lay on the table.
      (1) No motion which adheres to another motion or has another motion adhering to it can be laid on the table by itself. Such motions, if laid on the table, carry with them the motions to which they adhere or which adhere to them.
      (2) Items laid on the table will be discussed in the next business session.
      (3) This motion cannot be used to kill a motion.
   d. to take from the table
   e. to call for the previous questions, when in order
   f. to reconsider a non-debatable motion
   g. to take time for prayerful discernment at the immediate moment

NOTE: Additional Annual Conference materials are available for download from the North Alabama Conference website. To download the material, go to www.umcna.org/ac18virtualbag
Operational Teams

Conference Leadership Operational Team
Leader: Bishop Debra Wallace-Padgett

Church Health Operational Team
Leader: Rev. Bob Alford

New Church Operational Team
Leader: Rev. Richard Hunter

Ethnic Ministries Operational Team
Leader: Rev. Clinton Hubbard Jr.

Ministry With the Poor Operational Team
Leader: Rev. Lewis Archer

Connectional Ministries Operational Team
Leader: Linda Holland

Leadership Development Operational Team
Leader: Emily Nelms Chastain

Ordained Ministry Operational Team
Leader: Rev. Ron Schultz

Sumatanga Operational Team
Leader: Rev. Mike Densmore

Central District Operational Team
Leader: Rev. Rick Owen

Cheaha District Operational Team
Leader: Rev. Clinton Hubbard Jr.

Mountain Lakes District Operational Team
Leader: Rev. Robin Scott

Northeast District Operational Team
Leader: Rev. Tom Parrish

Northwest District Operational Team
Leader: Rev. Kelly Clem

South Central District Operational Team
Leader: Rev. Bill Morgan

Southeast District Operational Team
Leader: Rev. Lewis Archer

Southwest District Operational Team
Leader: Rev. Roger Thompson
Conference Priority: New Faith Communities

The Office of New Church Development has the joy of leading this annual conference in starting and growing new communities of faith. We define a new community as new worship services and satellites of existing churches, new church settings, storefront or coffee house churches, house churches, Celebrate Recovery ministries (since they are worship and discipleship focused), restarts of closed churches and ongoing worship services started in parks, centers for the aging and on our college campuses. We now have more than 60 Celebrate Recovery ministries in the churches of the North Alabama Conference!

In 2017, the North Alabama Conference started 55 new communities as described above. These new faith communities average 6,507 persons per week in worship and have had dozens of professions of faith and baptisms of new disciples of Jesus Christ.

We have made an intentional effort to reach the growing ethnic populations in our conference. This has led to starting Latino missions at Trinity-Huntsville, St. Paul’s-Huntsville, Cullman First, Austinville-Decatur, Bessemer, Albertville, The Gathering Place-Moody and Druid Hills-Tuscaloosa. We start these new Latino communities with ESL classes and Bible studies. When the core group reaches 30 people, we seek to appoint a part-time Latino pastor and plan for the launch of a Spanish-speaking worship service.

Christian Cheairs is working with Trinity (Homewood) to start a multi-cultural worship community. This will begin as a mid-week worship service that could lead to a new church plant. Sam Wilson is starting The Way UMC, a new African American church in northwest Huntsville. Many of our Celebrate Recovery ministries are multi-cultural.

We strongly believe that the renewal and growth of our United Methodist movement is rooted in new faith communities and Fresh Expressions. EVERY church can be the host of a new place or fresh expression of church where people not yet following Jesus can experience new life and real community in Him. Contact us to learn how we can help your church reach new people and make highly-committed disciples of Jesus Christ in your community.

Dr. Richard A. Hunter, Executive Director • richard.hunter@umcna.org

Conference Priority: Healthy Congregations

The goal of Healthy Congregations has been to resource churches through lay and clergy of the North Alabama Conference. We have provided numerous tools for assisting those seeking to develop strategic ministry and church health. We have provided training sessions for the conference, districts and local churches in a myriad of ways including assessments, demographic evaluations, outreach, profession of faiths, Fresh Expressions, ministry decisions directed by context and church leadership structures for nimble decision making.

I particularly want to acknowledge those who have served on our Operational and Evangelism teams this past conference year. They have been a tremendous resource of collective insights and wisdom and their volunteer time is deeply appreciated.

Finally, it is my hope and prayers that all in the North Alabama Conference will continue to take advantage of the resources Healthy Congregations provide. Our goal is to continue as faithful conduits for Kingdom building. We invite all to use our services and skills more in the future.

Rev. Bob Alford, Executive Director • balford@umcna.org

Conference Priority: Ethnic Ministries

Our ministry for the past year has been very fruitful! We have been intentional in our efforts to Discover, Develop and Deploy Spiritual Leaders to make Disciples of Jesus Christ for the Transformation of the World.

Last year’s statistician report was alarming and captured our attention. Black membership in the Annual Conference is about five percent. To this end, we held a Black Church Summit in February 2017 at Lakeside UMC to celebrate, encourage and challenge us to grow healthy and healthier black congregations in the North Alabama Conference. Approximately 290 persons attended this event led by Dr. Cheryl L. Walker from Discipleship Ministries. Each church
was given their church’s metrics along with the metrics of churches in their district. Church members spoke about how they felt about seeing their reported average worship attendance, professions of faith, and baptisms over a three-year period. Some were shocked and surprised and some were happy with their numbers; while most were disappointed. We wanted to make the churches aware of their current situation, and see how we can encourage and help them grow.

From the summit, we selected seven churches to leverage. At an event on November 11, 2017 at Lakeside UMC. Dr. Walker challenged each of the churches to develop a Ministry Plan for ways to reach the churched and unchurched in their communities. Participants left the Leveraging Event with a renewed sense of hope and optimism.

We continue our efforts to discover youth spiritual leaders as we support their participation in Youth Harambee. Last year it was held in June, at Claflin University in Orangeburg, South Carolina. Youth Harambee, sponsored by the Southeast Jurisdiction Black Methodists for Church Renewal, Inc., is a community of persons coming together to experience relationships in a diverse group of youth and adults, and to proclaim the wonder and beauty of God through song, dance, scripture, lectures, workshops and recreation. Thirty-six youth and adults, led by Mrs. Kathy Stallworth from King’s Memorial UMC in Decatur, attended.

We continue to develop Know to Grow Workshops in an effort to provide local churches with resources to leverage their ministries for growth. These workshops utilized the gifts of both clergy and laity to create an environment of learning and fellowship. We hosted workshops at Haven UMC in Anniston on September 9, 2017, and at Lakeside UMC in Huntsville on September 23, 2017. Between both locations there were ten presenters and 150 church leaders attending workshops on Safe Sanctuaries, worship, student ministries and financial stewardship. Rev. Bob Alford, Executive Director of Church Health, led a session on developing a Ministry Action Plan.

We are working with New Church Development to grow our Latino ministries and helping to support a new Latino associate pastor at Albertville First.

Ethnic Ministries continues to challenge church ministry leaders to think creatively about developing outside-the-box ministry programs and community outreach to engage the community and meet needs identified by the leaders. In the Fall of 2017 we were able to provide grants for ten churches and Ethnic Ministry team members were assigned a church to support its ministry leaders. Team members are available to be called upon as churches launch their ministry programs. A brief overview of approved grants provided are as follows:

- Lakeside: Alabama A&M Wesley Foundation—supporting engaging ministry activities on campus
- Church of the Reconciler: Community Development for Recovery—assistance for training, study and worship materials and recovery meetings
- New Beginnings: Student Ministries Technology and Design Training Workshops—engaging in hands-on desktop and web applications, digital tools and identifying United Methodist support systems for local churches
- Haven: Worship-Music grant to increase their ability to provide inspirational praise music during services
- Haven Memorial: N.O.W. Ministry for community engagement and outreach
- Carrollton: Wonderful Wednesday Outreach—community outreach that serves spiritual and physical food to the community
- New Life: New Life Summer Enrichment Camp—8-week community summer camp focusing on Math and Reading enrichment and activities
- Cullman First: New Hispanic Worship community – Ministry outreach for Hispanics to be able to easily join in the service and learn about eating and preparing healthy foods
- St. Paul, Huntsville: New/Future Growth Projects—Kingdom Blend and Latino service
- East Lake: New/Future Growth Project—Step Up After School Program provides tutoring in reading, writing and homework as well as a healthy meal served three days a week.

The ministry events from 2017 renewed our commitment to explore creative ways to grow our ethnic churches. As our churches become healthier, we will see an increase in average worship attendance, professions of faith and baptisms.

Dr. Clinton Hubbard Jr., Executive Director • clinton.hubbard@umcna.org
Conference Priority: Ministry with the Poor

For I was hungry, and you fed me. I was thirsty, and you gave me a drink. I was a stranger, and you invited me into your home. I was naked, and you gave me clothing. I was sick, and you cared for me. I was in prison, and you visited me.

—Matthew 25:35-36 (NLT)

Our vision in the North Alabama Annual Conference is that: every church engage in Christian Community Development with a community of need.

Mission: Build effective ministries with the poor embedded with a path to discipleship.

We live the gospel by being ambassadors of Jesus Christ; carrying the Good News to God’s people for the transformation of the world. As a conference we have been able to carry God’s mission by engaging in ministry with the poor.

Many churches, districts, organizations, agencies and individuals throughout the conference have engaged in doing ministry with communities of need. We are thankful for this great work in our conference.

Ministry Highlights

Exploration Internship: A wonderful group of young adult interns worked with Birmingham-area ministries and shared a community house for ten weeks. The shared stories, laughter, challenges and glory sightings have made a difference in the lives of many who were served by these young people. The 2017 group included Micah Johnson, Anna May, Kennedy Martin, Tatiana Harrison and Christina Schmitt.

We are thankful to East Lake United Methodist Church, Restoration Mission and Community Church without Walls for providing the needed worksites, accommodations, lunches and support to this great ministry.

This ministry internship was made possible by the generosity of the North Alabama Annual Conference, local churches and individuals. More than $41,000 was given to the 2017 Annual Conference Special Offering to support this initiative.

Immersion: It is a week-long training covering the eight principles of Christian Community Development Association (CCDA). Participants have the opportunity to be certified as CCDA practitioners. On June 25-30, 2017, 15 participants from across the conference gathered at Camp Sumatanga for the Immersion learning experience. This was a wonderful experience for many.

Poverty Simulations: Poverty simulations have been a source of learning about the experience of those living in poverty. Many churches and districts have been involved.

QuadW Missional Internship Partnership: The Ministry with the Poor Team is now looking forward to the 2018 summer internships. We have developed a partnership with QuadW Missional Internship which provides life-changing mission experience to college-age (19-25) young adults. In 2018 sites will be Anniston and Birmingham.

Immerse: This is CCDA’s online eleven weeks course for churches/small groups covering the eight principles. If your church wants to learn more visit www.ccda.org.

Dr. Adlene Kufarimai, Coordinator • akufarimai@umcna.org
Adult Discipleship

The Adult Discipleship Team has continued its work over the last year of providing individuals and congregations varied opportunities to develop as spiritual leaders, as well as providing tools to further develop spiritual leadership. During the year, we have trained more churches on leading effective small groups, trained laity and clergy to serve as spiritual directors and helped others experience spiritual formation practices that will transform individuals and their congregations. We have provided scholarships so that people within our conference can participate in ministries that might otherwise be unfeasible.

We continue to utilize surveys received during Annual Conference 2017 about discipleship in our conference to observe areas of need. Many of these expressed needs were being addressed through other teams in our conference structure, such as leadership development. Some of our ongoing work will be helping people connect with the discipleship resources already in existence and finding ways to communicate the message to different audiences. We are developing new opportunities and programs to help develop spiritual leaders in discipleship, including a plan to create a format where the entire conference can experience the entirety of scripture in a year.

Creative Teaching (Sharpen)

The building blocks of Christian growth include learners who meet and work together regularly to become devoted followers of Jesus. Vibrant classes and groups depend on leaders who know the Bible, care about their class members and stay up-to-date in effective teaching and facilitation techniques. To help churches develop strong teachers and facilitators, the Adult Discipleship Team has designed Sharpen: A Creative Teaching Workshop. This interactive workshop focuses on helping Sunday School and small group leaders sharpen their skills in four areas:

- Understanding how to develop class goals to move forward
- Building a toolkit of teaching and facilitation techniques
- Creating a warm and accepting environment
- Building stronger relationships

In 2017 we held Sharpen Workshops at Arab First UMC (Northeast District), at Faith UMC (Cheaha District) and at Vestavia Hills UMC (Central District). The Adult Discipleship Team provided the presenter and participant tools. Host churches printed participant handouts, provided snacks and prepared the room set-up. The Adult Discipleship Team designed personalized church flyers each group could utilize to invite additional participants. Next steps involve training more presenters and conducting follow-up with churches to see if additional clarification, motivation or support is needed.

Churches, Districts or other Conference teams may contact Lyn Cosby at lcosby@umcna.org to schedule a Sharpen Creative Teaching Workshop.

Spiritual Formation

The Spiritual Formation Team, guided by its mission, "to explore and teach spiritual practices leading all to grow in God’s vision for humanity," continues to work to fulfil its carefully-discerned vision, which is Disciples being fully formed, Spirit-filled, giving glory to God and exhibiting the fruits of the Spirit. Team members trust that working to fulfill its mission and vision will aid the North Alabama Conference in accomplishing its vision of Spiritual leaders empowering life-giving congregations to transform the world.

During 2017 the Spiritual Formation Team worked to accomplish four priorities.

- **To conduct two one-day retreats emphasizing Christian spirituality and spiritual practices at Camp Lee in Anniston.** With Rev. Dale Clem’s leadership, the January and November retreats aided the formation of more than 100 participants.

- **To provide resources and encouragement for spiritual direction ministries in the North Alabama Conference.** With Rev. Mike Densmore and Rev. Denise Mullaney leading, spiritual direction training was completed at Camp Sumatanga. Faculty from Perkins School of Theology led 13 participants in the training. Some of those were added to a directory of Spiritual Directors in North Alabama. The Spiritual Formation Team makes use of the directory when inquiries about spiritual directors arise.
To support silent retreat ministries in the North Alabama Conference. Each year, silent retreats are scheduled at Sacred Heart Monastery in Cullman and Camp Sumatanga. Rev. Susie Knedlik and Deanna Shotts lead the retreats at Sacred Heart Monastery, and Rev. Judy Shepherd leads those conducted at Camp Sumatanga. Participants at all silent retreats gave thanks and praise for the spiritual growth they experienced.

To invite and provide resources for clergy retreats. Rev. Steve West and Dan Miller continue their work to provide resources for clergy one-day retreats at Camp Sumatanga. Any United Methodist clergyperson may schedule an overnight retreat quarterly at no charge. The priority of providing a spiritual formation library, models for one-day self-guided clergy retreats, and spiritual direction for overnight clergy is an ongoing project of the Spiritual Formation Team.

The Spiritual Formation Team helped with a number of other ministries, including conducting contemplative worship during the Moving Pastors Retreat, assisting the Adult Discipleship Team in producing and staffing its display during Annual Conference, and assisting in planning the Bishops’ Day of Prayer. The team accepts requests for assistance from local churches and Conference teams. Contact Rev. Roger Short at roger.short@umcna.org.


Rev. Peter von Herrmann, Chairperson • peter.vonherrmann@umcna.org

Advocacy for Social Justice Ministries

The Advocacy for Social Justice Ministries Team has continued in its work to “discover, develop and deploy spiritual leaders to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world” by assisting other leaders in missions and ministries especially those focused on justice issues.

In 2017 we continued our partnership with Alabama Arise by a financial contribution and had representation at the annual meeting in Montgomery on Saturday, September 16 at Aldersgate United Methodist Church for the selection of their annual priorities. Those priorities include tax reform, adequate state budgets, payday and title lending reform, Housing Trust Fund revenue, death penalty reform, public transportation and criminal justice debt.

Prior to the 2017 Annual Conference, our team reviewed and approved two resolutions. The first was a “Ban the Box” campaign requesting the removal of questions concerning the criminal history of a potential employee from the initial job application. Our team also approved a $500 grant request by Greater Birmingham Ministries for the campaign. The other resolution reviewed and approved for Annual Conference was a call to train clergy and staff of local churches about domestic violence and abuse.

On November 17, we participated in a conference call concerning the upcoming revision of our Social Principles through the Board of Church and Society. A draft document will be made available in May or June and we will invite those interested to host conversations around the revision of our Social Principles.

We have been in conversation with Rev. Dr. Adlene Kufarimai of Ministry with the Poor and Mission and Advocacy teams, concerning the responsibilities and outreach of our team and how she might assist and be an advocate for our work.

We were asked to be a part of the recommendation of two of our young pastors for the Young Clergy Leadership Forum held January 28-31, 2018 in Washington, D.C. We were excited to have Rev. Joe Riddle and Rev. Holly Woodall as our representatives from North Alabama.

As always, our team is available for conversation and assistance on any issue concerning social justice issues. We would love to hear from you!

Rev. Russell S. Hestley, Chairperson • russell.hestley@umcna.org
Archives and History

In close cooperation with the Rev. J. Pete West, chairperson of the Conference Historical Society, and Conference Archivist Guy Hubbs, the Commission addresses the goal of the annual conference regarding spiritual leadership and the theme of Annual Conference: "Singing God’s Song in Harmony." Specifically addressing Ethnic Minority concerns, Guy Hubbs continues to provide updates on William E. Nicholas’s book *Desegregating the North Alabama Conference*.

During the 2017-2018 conference year, the Historical Society presented programs in Huntsville and Tuscaloosa. William W. Herrin Jr. presented a paper on "Methodism in Madison County" and explained how Huntsville First UMC was originally a member of the Flint Circuit, making it one of North Alabama’s oldest churches. Dr. Wylheme Ragland also made a presentation on "The John Robinson Family: Free Black Members of the First ME Church, Huntsville, from circa 1828-1866." The 2018 Spring Meeting of NACHS was at Tuscaloosa First UMC in recognition of their Bicentennial Celebration and its establishment under the leadership of Ebenezer Hearn.

In addition to information in this report, recognitions will be made during Annual Conference of the newest Class of 50-Year Elders, the Wheeler Award recipient, and local churches which have qualified as Charter Churches.

Our conference Commission on Archives and History is represented annually in Jurisdictional meetings and related activities. At the 2017 SEJ Heritage and History Workshop held at Lake Junaluska, our conference chairperson served as a resource person and portrayed Francis Asbury.

In addition to combined and continuing efforts to make the history of North Alabama Methodism "come alive," the Commission endeavors to address current and future trends in ministry and social issues by applying timely and timeless leadership principles gleaned from our rich heritage.

George W. Cobb D.D., Chairperson • george.cobb@umcna.org

Birmingham-Southern College

Chaplain Report

2017 was a year of transition for Religious Life at Birmingham-Southern College. Our office assistant of seven years moved to a new job, and our beloved Laura Sisson retired after 22 years of service to the college. At the end of June, we welcomed Kathryn Davis as our new office assistant. In August, Quinten Lochmann joined our office as the new associate director of Religious Life. Quinten works primarily with our United Methodist churches and students, focusing on the distribution and management of the various United Methodist scholarships. Kathryn and Quinten have already been hard at work and have created an online application form for United Methodist scholarships at BSC! In addition, Quinten has moved into the role of BSC Wesley Fellowship director. I previously served in that role, but now direct the Pre-Ministry Covenant Group which consists of a dozen students each year who meet weekly to participate in conversations, study and prayer meant to help them in their ministry discernment process.

We are currently working on new initiatives to expand our current programming including partnering with local UM congregations to host a retreat each semester for Wesley Fellowship students and developing new means of funding Wesley Fellowship and the Pre-Ministry Covenant Group. Wesley Fellowship now requires sustaining funding as well as resources to host special learning, retreat and service events. The Pre-Ministry Covenant Group requires funding for existing learning activities. In addition, we are seeking to provide our pre-elder track students with the opportunity to attend General Conference each time it meets so they are more connected with and aware of the circumstances and the processes of the world-wide UMC.

As always, I am thankful for the opportunity to serve the UMC and Birmingham-Southern College. Our staff team greatly appreciates all the churches and individuals who support our ministry with their prayers, presence, gifts, service and witness.

Enrollment

After welcoming 375 new students in the fall of 2017 including 349 first-years and 26 transfers, Birmingham-Southern College expects to grow enrollment with the tuition reset announced in the fall of 2017, which takes effect for the
class entering in the fall of 2018. To read more about the tuition reset visit www.bsc.edu/lowertuition/index.html. This past year admissions personnel visited more than 715 high schools and attended more than 450 college fairs during recruitment travel.

Reaction to the Tuition Reset has been overwhelmingly positive. Recruiters report that reactions from prospective parents and students has been very positive and we are seeing an impact with increases to both first-year and transfer applications. We have heard many references to "we had crossed you off our list because of price" or "now I can look at you." Recapturing this audience was a primary focus of the tuition reset and recruiters saw significantly more student and parent traffic at college fairs and High School Visits.

The tuition reset is having its desired impact in attracting more student and family interest in BSC from across the state and beyond. Early indications are positive with more applications and admitted students at the time of this writing. More information will be shared in the future once our enrollment is determined for next year, but the current trends are very exciting.

Bridge to the Future Strategic Planning

In addition to the reset, the College’s faculty and staff have engaged in some significant strategic visioning work for the future of BSC. Among ideas being explored are the creation of an innovative first-year seminar, which will both enhance new students’ ability to be successful at BSC and help connect them to the community in which they live and study. Changes to how faculty advise students and the deep integration of experiential learning experiences for all students, like internships and student research, are on the horizon.

Numerous new programs and collaborations were added during the current academic year. They include new academic majors in Creative and Applied Computing, Architectural Studies and Academic Distinctions in Poverty Studies and Public Health Studies. Additionally partnerships with peer institutions, such as the dual-degree nursing program with UAB and a 3-3 law program with Cumberland School of Law and many articulation agreements developed with community colleges in the region have been added this year.

As always, you are invited to bring students to events and receptions on campus and in your area. Your continued support through participating directly in recruitment activities, reaching out to prospective students or simply referring them to us is deeply appreciated. Feel free to contact us or the Admission office for the event schedule or to meet the recruiter for your area.

Linda Flaherty-Goldsmith, President; Rev. Julie B Holly, Chaplain; Quinten Lochmann, Associate Director, Religious Life
Sara H. Newhouse, Vice President for Admission and Financial Planning
David M. Eberhardt, Jr., Ed.D., Vice-President for Student Development

Children’s Ministry

Exit 456 is a retreat designed to aid local churches in ministry to tweens. It serves as a retreat for confirmands or simply as a tween retreat. The worship and teaching times are designed so that fourth through sixth graders can attend for three years and enjoy a new, exciting experience each year. More than 350 students from 21 different churches across our conference and the Alabama-West Florida Conference attended Exit 456 at Camp Sumatanga in 2017.

A team consisting of Mike Arnold (Cullman UMC), Skip and Lesley Bondur (Revolt Ministries), Amy Sizemore (Gardendale-Mt. Vernon UMC), Allyson Lewis (Mountain Chapel UMC), Jay and Melissa Betts (Cullman First UMC), Andy Yarnell (Southside UMC), Liz Bowlin (St. James UMC) and Lora Parker (Cullman First UMC) worked alongside churches in our conference to host this retreat.

Students were prayed for by name prior to the event and throughout the weekend. The theme was "More," which challenged all to Share More, Do More, Give More, Serve More and Love More. The speakers were Rev. Andy Yarnell, Kristi Edwards (Pell City UMC), Skip Bondur, Jeff Moore (Helena UMC) and Linda Holland from the Office of Connectional Ministries.
The theme for 2018 was "Identity" and focused on finding our identity in Christ and not the world. We broke all records with 471 in attendance from 34 churches.

Save the Date: Exit 456-2019 will be held at Camp Sumatanga on March 15-16. If you would like to serve on the team or as a speaker please contact Mike Arnold, Itweenleader@gmail.com.

Mike Arnold, Chair • Itweenleader@gmail.com

Connectional Ministries and Leadership Development
North Alabama’s Connectional Ministries staff exists to assist our conference, districts and local churches discover, develop and deploy spiritual leaders. By providing resources in children’s, youth, young adult ministries and missions and advocacy and focusing specifically on the development of laity spiritual leaders, we work to encourage and equip our local churches as they make disciples for the transformation of the world.

Our staff and their areas of responsibility are listed below. Please contact us if we can be of service to you, your district or your local church.

**Linda Holland,** Director of Connectional Ministries and Leadership Development
lholland@umcna.org • 205-226-7954
- Alignment of ministries and funds to Conference Vision
- Oversight of program ministries and staff
- Annual Conference event coordination
- Ministry Action Plan coaching
- Small group facilitation coaching
- Creative communication
- Brainstorming
- Mentoring for leadership
- Jurisdictional and General Church relationships and resources

**Emily Nelms Chastain,** Leadership Development Specialist
echastain@umcna.org • 205-226-7933
- Logistics and day-to-day operations for Annual Conference event
- Development and management of leadership program for laity
- Transition leaders to next appropriate area throughout life stages
- Developing and mentoring shepherding teams in the leadership development process
- Ministry Directional Team coaching

**Rev. Dr. Adlene Kufarimai,** Coordinator for Ministry with the Poor and Director of Missions and Advocacy
akufarimai@umcna.org • 256-404-9995
- Lead Ministry with the Poor Conference Team
- Resource and encourage churches in their efforts to be in ministry with the poor
- Resource for churches to become engaged locally or internationally
- Representative to Global Ministries
- VIM coordinator and leader trainings
- Servants Like Jesus grants
- Disaster response
- Conference mission priorities
- Missionary partnerships
- Advocacy and social justice resource
John Fleischauer, Leadership Development Administrator
john.fleischauer@umcna.org • 205-226-7963
- Conference Safe Sanctuaries coordinator, including trainer training and advice on policy development
- Second-level support for background checks
- Resource for Conference-level nominations
- Resource for Conference-level online trainings
- Select events including Encounter

Kiki Wood Terry, Leadership Development Assistant
kiki.terry@umcna.org • 205-226-7953
- Point of contact for all Connectional Ministries events and programs
- Basic bookkeeping questions, including check requests and remittances
- Point of contact for Mission (Servants Like Jesus) Grants
- Database maintenance
- Background checks

As part of the Connectional Ministries and Leadership Development work, we have established the following age-level task teams to help facilitate ideation of events and programming.

**Children’s Ministry Leadership Team**
Emily Nelms Chastain (Facilitator), Mike Arnold, Alexia Claborn, Rev. Stanley Davidson, Hannah Davitz, Berta Ford, Mason Freeman, Michelle Ibsen, Stacie Johnson, Kelli Morton, Tammy Palmer, Amy Thigpen, Linda Thorne, Tammy Wendling, Selena Wright

*For a report on Exit456, the annual retreat for tweens, see the Children’s Ministry report on page 68.*

**Youth Ministry Leadership Team**

*For a report on Encounter 2018, the annual youth retreat, see the Youth Ministry report on page 131.*

**Young Adult Ministry Leadership Team**
Emily Nelms Chastain (Facilitator), Tony Akers, Megan Barber, Rev. Alex Beaube, Rev. Joe DeWitte, Rev. Kelsey Grissom, Rev. Zac Head, Precious Kufarimai, Gray Miller, Micah Shelton, Tyler Smoot, Rev. Reid Turner

For a report on Youth/Young Adult members of Annual Conference, see the report on page 131.

*Linda Holland, Director*
COSROW: Commission on the Status and Role of Women

The Commission on the Status and Role of Women (COSROW) advocates for the full participation of women in the total life of The United Methodist Church. In that capacity, COSROW supports the work of our conference in Discovering, Developing and Deploying Spiritual Leaders, ensuring that both women and men are included in the life of the church and our conference.

At the 2017 Annual Conference, COSROW hosted an annual breakfast that included the presentation of the Louise Branscomb Barrier Breaker Award. The award was presented to Allison Dearing, a member of Birmingham First UMC and creator of One Place Metro Alabama Family Justice Center. Rev. Kelly Clem spoke about God’s ability to work through difficult situations for our good.

Also in 2017, #HerTruth received national attention in addition to the impact it made in our own conference. #HerTruth is COSROW’s video about the stories of harassment and discrimination that women in our Annual Conference have experienced. COSROW also continued its work to make videos of the surviving past recipients of the Louise Branscomb Barrier Breaker Award, so that their work can be archived and accessible to inspire future generations.

Finally, COSROW helped to compile an internal study on male/female clergy salary disparities and presented that data to the Cabinet at the Bishop’s request. In response to what we learned from this study, COSROW members authored a resolution to begin to address some of these disparities, to be presented at the 2018 Annual Conference.

Rev. Kelsey Grissom, Interim Chair • kelsey.grissom@umcna.org

Deaconess and Home Missioner

"I serve neither for gratitude nor reward but from gratitude and love; my reward is that I may serve."—The Motto of United Methodist Deaconesses and Home Missioners

The Office of Deaconess and Home Missioner is for laity who feel called by God to make a lifetime commitment to full-time cutting-edge ministries of love, justice and service. There is also an opportunity to become part of a covenant community and join a movement.

Do you feel God calling but struggle for a direction? Maybe this calling is for you!

Through the Office of Deaconess (laywomen) and Home Missioner (laymen) the laity of our church can work side-by-side with our clergy to alleviate suffering, eradicate causes of injustice, facilitate the development of full human potential and be a prophetic voice in the name of Jesus Christ. Those called to serve the North Alabama Conference in ministries of love, justice and service are:

- Joanne Finley, Deaconess—JoanneFinley@msn.com
  Appointment: Missional Specialist, Ministry with the Poor and Ethnic Ministries, Strengthening the Black Church
- Judy Poole, Deaconess—poole44@att.net
  Appointment: McCoy Adult Day Care: UM Center for Senior Citizens Executive Director
- Dorothy Barbour, Retired Deaconess

We need the members of this Annual Conference to continue to spread the word to those feeling a call to ministry in the areas of love, justice and service.

For more information, contact one of those serving above or visit www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/dhm. There you will find a video telling more about those called to serve as Deaconesses or Home Missioners.

Judy Poole, Deaconess • poole44@att.net
Disaster Warehouse

The Disaster Warehouse was in full swing all year long! With several hurricanes, many tornadoes, floods, fires and some more local disasters the warehouse was an incredible gift to many around the country and around the globe. The disaster warehouse is located outside Decatur, Alabama, but is an extension of the whole conference. It is run by retired UM Pastor Ray Crump and a group of dedicated, servant hearted, selfless volunteers. The warehouse collects supplies, medical equipment and shoeboxes to be shipped literally all over the world. We are also the first response in local disasters. In 2017 the Warehouse shipped 12,695 shoe boxes to Methodist Missionaries in nine different countries. Countless cleaning buckets (formerly flood buckets), tornado buckets, layette kits, birthing kits, bedding sheets for hospitals, school kits, sewing kits and other medical equipment and supplies were shipped all over the world. One of the most important ministries performed by the Warehouse is hosting groups who come from all over the Southeast to assemble items that need to be ready to go in a moments notice. Thank you for bringing supplies, for collecting items, for volunteering and for sending money to perform these much needed tasks. The Disaster Warehouse values your support and getting the word out to your congregations. It could not be done without YOU!

We thank you for placing this mission in your local church budget. We asked for $10 per month to help keep the doors open year-round and you provided. Please keep this mission in your budget to help us continue to respond after disasters. When will the United Methodist Disaster Relief Warehouse respond again?

David Tubbs, Board of Directors • david.tubbs@umcna.org

Equitable Compensation

Report No. 1

Those persons who have responded to the call of God, fulfilled the educational requirements and have offered themselves to serve where they are appointed as pastors in the United Methodist Church should receive a reasonable and adequate level of financial compensation and benefits from the congregations that they serve. The Commission on Equitable Compensation sets these minimum compensation levels and other minimum levels associated with pastoral compensation with the hope that congregations will do their best to exceed these minimums. The unfortunate reality is that many of our congregations with full time pastors cannot afford to pay their pastors the minimum level of compensation that has been set by our annual conference. In these congregations, when proper application is made and requirements met, the Commission on Equitable Compensation will provide compensation assistance to the church for the pastor.

The Commission on Equitable Compensation is pleased with the minimum levels of compensation that have been set by the North Alabama Annual Conference for pastors. We are sensitive to the fact that any increase in the level of compensation places a greater financial burden on local congregations struggling to contribute their Conference fair share and clergy benefits and support their pastor without the assistance of the Annual Conference.

The Commission on Equitable Compensation defines "charge compensation" as that amount set by the Charge Conference and reported to the Annual Conference. Charge compensation is composed of the following: (a) base salary; (b) professional expenses (primarily travel); (c) utility allowance; (d) dependent health insurance premiums paid by the charge for the pastor’s dependents; and (e) supplements from district funds, Conference benevolent funds, or any other church source granting supplements.

The Commission on Equitable Compensation urges each local church to establish an accountable reimbursement policy for its pastor. Under an accountable reimbursement policy, professional expenses paid on a reimbursement basis are not taxable to the pastor. We also remind churches that when giving percentage compensation increases for pastors, the percentage should be based on the pastor's total compensation (base salary, professional expenses, utility allowance, and dependent health insurance). The cost of dependent health insurance is set by the Annual Conference.
Report No. 2: 2019 Minimum Charge Compensation Scale

The Commission on Equitable Compensation recommends the following minimum charge compensation scale in 2019 for each category shown:

1. Full Elders  $38,700
   Associate Members  $38,700
2. Provisional Elders  $36,700
3. Full-Time Local Pastors  $33,500

Report No. 3: Requirements and Qualifications for Compensation Grants

Section 3.1: Categories of Grants

Grants shall be approved as per qualification as established in the 2016 Book of Discipline and with the additional guidelines as adopted by the Commission on Equitable Compensation.

"It is the purpose of the Commission on Equitable Compensation to support full-time clergy serving as pastors in the charges of the annual conference…. And….once the base compensation supplementation has been paid by the annual conference, the annual conference shall have no further obligation or responsibility to the pastor, the charge, or anyone else regarding the pastor’s compensation."

The following guidelines shall apply to all equitable compensation grants:

1. Equitable Compensation grants shall only be provided for full-time pastors.
2. Equitable Compensation grants shall not exceed 25% of the minimum compensation for that classification and only for the first year in that appointment. After the first year, the maximum grant for subsequent years in said appointment shall decrease at a rate of 20% of the original grant per year terminating at the beginning of the 6th year.
3. Equitable Compensation grants will be reduced dollar for dollar by the amount of a pastor’s compensation that exceeds the applicable minimum compensation so that no pastor receiving an equitable compensation grant shall receive compensation in excess of the applicable minimum compensation.

Grants are given to churches that cannot meet the minimum compensation scale for the salary of pastors that are serving in one or more of the following categories:

a. Seminary students (certified by their school registrar at the beginning of each term as attending school for three quarters or two semesters of the school year)

b. Pastors in full-connection, not retired

c. Full-time local pastors, not retired

Section 3.2: Application Process

Each pastor who expects to receive a grant from this Commission shall:

a. Complete the application form (including written explanation of need) secured from the District Superintendent

b. Submit it to the Pastor-Parish Relations Committee and Charge Conference for approval and appropriate signatures

c. Present to the District Superintendent for review and signature

d. District Superintendent forwards the application to the Chairperson of the Commission on Equitable Compensation at least 30 days prior to the effective day of the grant requested.

Section 3.3: Recommendation on Use of Funds

Based upon the explanation of need, the Commission will work with the Cabinet to prioritize each grant request. Grant requests will be approved subject to the established priority and annual budget limitations. Recognizing the Commission’s obligation to provide minimum salary support per the 2016 Book of Discipline; we encourage the Cabinet to be judicious in the use of these funds, with the goal being to minimize the use of these funds for minimum salary support.
Report No. 4: Guidelines for Vacation Time

Pastors in all classifications (including those receiving Equitable Compensation grants) shall receive annual paid vacation with the charge responsible for pulpit supply. Time devoted to continuing education shall not be considered as vacation time.

Section 4.1: Full-Time Pastors

Full-time Pastors in all classifications shall receive the following annual paid vacation with the charge responsible for pulpit supply:

- 0-4 years: 2 weeks, including 2 Sundays
- 5-10 years: 4 weeks, including 4 Sundays (New 2018)
- 11 years and above: 5 weeks, including 5 Sundays (New 2018)

All years of service in the North Alabama Conference and in other annual conferences shall be included in the total years of service.

Section 4.2: Part-Time Pastors

Part-Time Pastors in all classifications shall receive 2 weeks of annual paid vacation (including 2 Sundays), with the charge responsible for pulpit supply.

Report No. 5: Moving Expenses

The District Superintendent will notify charges/churches in his/her district that it is the conference policy for receiving churches to pay moving expenses for their new pastor up to $3,000 by voucher; however, all receiving churches are encouraged to pay the full moving cost, if reasonable. This policy shall also apply to the district(s) receiving (a) new superintendent(s), and it shall be the responsibility of the Conference Treasurer to advise each District Treasurer of this policy. Pastors shall make every effort to keep moving expenses to a minimum.

Please Note: Effective January 1, 2018, the reimbursement of moving expenses or payments made directly to provide moving arrangements for a pastor is taxable compensation to the pastor and should be reported as income on the pastor's Form W2. The "Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017" repealed the provision allowing the exclusion of moving expenses thus rendering employer provided moving expense (whether reimbursed to the employee or paid in lieu) as a taxable benefit to the employee. The Act also repealed the use of qualified moving expenses as an itemized deduction for Federal tax purposes. The Commission highly recommends moving clergy to seek the advice of a tax professional to discuss the effect this change might have in their particular situation.

Report No. 6: Pastor’s Parsonage

Section 6.1: Eligibility

Each pastor serving full-time shall be entitled to either a furnished parsonage or a housing allowance provided in lieu of a parsonage. A housing allowance shall not be considered as part of the pastor's total compensation for minimum salary purposes. The housing allowance shall be consistent with the rental cost of housing that meets the minimum requirements of Section 6.4 a.-n. and within the community served by the church.

Section 6.2: Responsibility

The charge shall be responsible for upkeep, maintenance, and repairs of the parsonage. An annual report shall be made of the needs of the parsonage. Each pastoral charge shall include funding in the annual budget for needs of the parsonage. The Trustees or Parsonage Committee shall furnish to the pastor a complete inventory of all furnishings and equipment provided by the charge. When there is a change of pastors, the Trustees or Parsonage Committee shall acquaint the new pastor with information regarding operation and service of furnishings and equipment along with maintenance and repair procedures.

Section 6.3: Location

Before a new parsonage is constructed or purchased, the District Board of Church Location and Building must approve the location and floor plan.
Section 6.4: Arrangement, Furnishings, and Equipment

A newly constructed or purchased parsonage shall contain this minimum and an existing parsonage should contain a minimum of:

a. No fewer than 7 rooms including at least 3 bedrooms
b. At least 2 full bathrooms (not included in the above total of 7 rooms)
c. Den or family great room
d. Dining area
e. Study with door to the outside if study is not provided in the church
f. Kitchen, with stove and ventilation hood, microwave oven, refrigerator-freezer, dishwasher, cabinets, and adequate counter (minimum 10 cu. ft. freezer...optional).
g. Laundry room with washer, dryer, and cabinet space
h. Double carport or garage
i. Central heating and air conditioning
j. Complete furniture for bedrooms, den or family great room, dining area, kitchen and study (see “e”)
k. Draperies and curtains
l. Insulated (double-pane) or storm windows and doors
m. Adequate storage space either in house or in separate out buildings
n. Smoke alarms and fire extinguisher
o. Vacuum cleaner
p. Lawn mower or lawn service
q. Shrubbery and plantings
r. Adequate front, rear and side yards - with fencing as needed
s. Adequate grounded electrical outlets that allow for the operation of modern equipment such as computers, monitors and medical devices requiring grounded electrical outlets. Compatible outlets shall be provided in multiple rooms.

Any parsonage purchased or built by a charge must have on the ground-floor level:

a. One room that can be used as a bedroom by a person with a disability
b. One fully accessible bathroom
c. One fully accessible laundry facility

Any parsonage purchased without the accessible features for persons with disabilities specified above shall be remodeled within one year’s time so that it does have those features (2016 Book of Discipline ¶¶2544.4.b, 2544.5.c(3) and 2544.5.d).

All parsonages in the North Alabama Conference shall be smoke free.

Section 6.5: Items Provided by the Pastor

The Pastor shall provide:

a. Linens, quilts, blankets
b. Dishes, china, crystal, silverware
c. Cooking utensils
d. Small appliances
e. Televisions, radios, entertainment equipment
f. Personal items
g. Insurance on personal property
Section 6.6: Parsonage Cleaning before Moving

When there is a change in pastors, the outgoing pastor is responsible for leaving the parsonage in a clean condition. The charge shall be responsible for costs of heavy cleaning and repairs such as cleaning carpets and draperies, washing of windows, painting, repairs, maintenance of shrubbery and cleaning of grounds, and removal of trash. Utilities shall be in the name of the church. If utilities are paid by the pastor, utilities shall not be billed using the “average billing” option offered by some utility companies. Utility costs shall be paid as accrued and accounts settled before transition. If utilities are paid by the church, the church may choose the “average billing” option if desired.

Section 6.7: District and Conference Parsonages

The policies and standards described above shall apply to housing furnished by the Annual Conference or the various districts. The District or Annual Conference Trustees shall be responsible for implementation.

Report No. 7: Workload for Pastors and Demands for Compensation Supplements

In order to deploy the pastors of the Conference efficiently and responsibly, there must be both adequate financial support and an adequate workload for each pastor. It is not faithful Christian stewardship for the conference to supplement the salary of a pastor who is carrying less than what is considered a full-time workload. Therefore, we recommend that the minimum workload for a full-time pastor be defined as:

a. One church with 150 or more members
b. Two churches with 100 or more members
c. Three or more churches, regardless of membership

Report No. 8: Publication of Compensation

The word "equitable" is a relative term. In order to plan wisely and responsibly, churches often find it useful to compare their total compensation for their pastor to that of other churches. Therefore, the Commission on Equitable Compensation recommends that the total compensation of charges and appointed Conference staff positions be printed in the North Alabama Conference Journal each year.

Report No. 9: Request to Carry Balance Forward

The Commission on Equitable Compensation, with the concurrence of the Council on Finance, requests to carry forward any Equitable Compensation fund balances less any required reimbursements to Conference reserve funds at the end of a fiscal year into the next year. Such approval will enable the Commission to pay salary supplements by January 25th each year and carry any unexpended fund balances forward to provide a cushion in years of increased requests for salary supplements.

Report No. 10: Operational Expenses

The Commission is authorized to spend up to $2,000 for operational expenses and participation in training events on a national and/or regional level.

Report No. 11: Sustentation Fund

The Commission is authorized to appropriate $5,000 for a Sustentation Fund as provided for in the 2016 Book of Discipline.

Report No. 12: Career Development Program

NOTE: The Career Development Program previously reported has been superseded by the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits "Voluntary Transition Program." The Commission on Equitable Compensation is no longer obligated to provide partial salary or benefits for North Alabama clergy leaving ministry under the General Board's Voluntary Transition Program.
Report 13: Equitable Compensation Payments for 2017

The names of pastors and charges that received funds during 2017 from the Commission on Equitable Compensation and the amounts received are listed below.

The Commission on Equitable Compensation
Report No. 13

The names of ministers and charges receiving monies from the Commission on Equitable Compensation and the amounts received during the 2017 fiscal year are as follows:

### 2017 Grants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Minister</th>
<th>Charge #</th>
<th>Charge Name</th>
<th>Amount (Unaudited)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Butler</td>
<td>Mike</td>
<td>5038 Green Hill</td>
<td>4,999.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deerman</td>
<td>Nedra</td>
<td>2038 Goshen</td>
<td>4,359.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gibbs</td>
<td>Lloyd</td>
<td>2014 / 2094 Centerpoint / Brownsville</td>
<td>4,488.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haseldon</td>
<td>Zeno</td>
<td>4018 / 4074 Cotaco / Somerville</td>
<td>6,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hillard</td>
<td>Paul</td>
<td>8009 Big Sandy</td>
<td>9,300.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karr</td>
<td>Ryan</td>
<td>4018 Cotaco</td>
<td>5,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muhomba</td>
<td>Thomas</td>
<td>4042 Lakeside</td>
<td>10,896.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raper</td>
<td>Randall</td>
<td>8092 / 8075 Sulligent / Pine Springs</td>
<td>12,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russell</td>
<td>John</td>
<td>4095 / 4025 Falkville / Gandy's Cove</td>
<td>4,503.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samuels</td>
<td>Mike</td>
<td>5039 / 5069 Green's Chapel / Milners Chapel</td>
<td>5,199.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scott</td>
<td>Rabeka</td>
<td>7003 Equality</td>
<td>1,600.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smith</td>
<td>John</td>
<td>4018 Cotaco</td>
<td>5,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stryker</td>
<td>Richard</td>
<td>8018 River of Living Water</td>
<td>20,000.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wright</td>
<td>Donald</td>
<td>3019 Cedar Bluff</td>
<td>6,499.98</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SUMMARY**

- Full Connection $65,083.94
- Provisional Member $10,900.02
- Seminary Students
- Special Situations
- Associate Member $4,503.96
- Full Time Local Pastor $16,359.96
- Cooperative Ministries

**CRSP DC & DB 13,558.70**

**Total Equitable Compensation $110,406.58**
Report 14: Conference Mission Church Fund Payments for 2017

The names of pastors and designated mission charges that received funds during 2017 from the Annual Conference budget fund designated to support clergy serving in mission charges and the amounts received are listed below. The Commission on Equitable Compensation includes this report as a courtesy and for full disclosure. The Commission is not responsible for the designation of mission charges or the distribution of funding from the Annual Conference budget for support.

Missional Church Fund
Report No. 14

The names of ministers and charges receiving monies from the Mission Church Salary Supplement fund of the Annual Conference and the amounts received during the 2017 fiscal year are as follows:

### 2017 Grants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Minister</th>
<th>Charge #</th>
<th>Charge Name</th>
<th>Amount (Unaudited)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Burns</td>
<td>Adam</td>
<td>6017 Reconciler</td>
<td>39,999.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harper</td>
<td>Caitlin</td>
<td>6060 Community Church Without Walls</td>
<td>30,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harper</td>
<td>Garrett</td>
<td>6060 Community Church Without Walls</td>
<td>30,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higgs</td>
<td>Kevin</td>
<td>2095 / 2096 Sylvan Springs / Village Falls</td>
<td>12,576.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kufarimai</td>
<td>Tiwirai</td>
<td>2037 New Life (Glen Addie Mission)</td>
<td>30,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kufarimai</td>
<td>Adlene</td>
<td>2037 New Life (Glen Addie Mission)</td>
<td>14,731.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lacey</td>
<td>Matt</td>
<td>6017 Reconciler</td>
<td>15,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lewis</td>
<td>Robert A.L.</td>
<td>6047 Restoration Mission</td>
<td>37,500.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walker</td>
<td>Hilda</td>
<td>1007 Bangor Mission</td>
<td>12,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woodin</td>
<td>Woody</td>
<td>ATEM Upper Sand Mountain Parish</td>
<td>9,999.96</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$ 231,807.90

**SUMMARY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Missional Church salary support</td>
<td>231,807.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRSP DC &amp; DB</td>
<td>32,453.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Missional Church salary &amp; benefits support</td>
<td>$ 264,261.01</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Matthew Laird, (Acting) Chairperson*
# Council on Finance and Administration

## Report No. 1: 2019 Conference Budget

### NORTH ALABAMA CONFERENCE - UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

#### 2019 CONFERENCE BUDGET (EXCLUDING CLERGY BENEFITS)

#### SCHEDULE OF INDIVIDUAL FUNDS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FUND NO.</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
<th>2019 (pro formas)</th>
<th>2018 (DECREASE)</th>
<th>$ INCREASE</th>
<th>% CHANGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>116</td>
<td>New Church Development</td>
<td>1,010,000</td>
<td>991,000</td>
<td>19,000</td>
<td>1.92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>122</td>
<td>Equitable Compensation</td>
<td>85,030</td>
<td>85,030</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>126</td>
<td>Mission Churches</td>
<td>220,000</td>
<td>240,302</td>
<td>(20,302)</td>
<td>-8.45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>132</td>
<td>Higher Education</td>
<td>275,000</td>
<td>277,271</td>
<td>(2,271)</td>
<td>-0.82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>140</td>
<td>District Superintendents</td>
<td>1,080,000</td>
<td>1,065,000</td>
<td>15,000</td>
<td>1.41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>144</td>
<td>Board of Ordained Ministry</td>
<td>290,000</td>
<td>285,000</td>
<td>5,000</td>
<td>1.75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>150</td>
<td>GCFA - Episcopal Fund</td>
<td>509,268</td>
<td>519,819</td>
<td>(10,551)</td>
<td>-2.03%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>154</td>
<td>NAC - Episcopal Housing Fund</td>
<td>7,394</td>
<td>7,394</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>196</td>
<td>Funding Reserve - Section A</td>
<td>766,000</td>
<td>690,000</td>
<td>76,000</td>
<td>11.01%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL - SECTION A</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>4,242,692</strong></td>
<td><strong>4,160,816</strong></td>
<td><strong>81,876</strong></td>
<td><strong>1.97%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### SECTION B - WORLD SERVICE (56.20%) AND CONFERENCE BENEVOLENCES (43.80%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FUND NO.</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
<th>2019 (pro formas)</th>
<th>2018 (DECREASE)</th>
<th>$ INCREASE</th>
<th>% CHANGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>202</td>
<td>GCFA - World Service Fund</td>
<td>1,719,682</td>
<td>1,755,310</td>
<td>(35,628)</td>
<td>-2.03%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>204</td>
<td>Congregational Development</td>
<td>340,120</td>
<td>340,120</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>212</td>
<td>Higher Education</td>
<td>40,000</td>
<td>55,907</td>
<td>(15,907)</td>
<td>-28.45%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### NORTH ALABAMA CONFERENCE - UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

#### 2019 CONFERENCE BUDGET (EXCLUDING CLERGY BENEFITS)

#### SCHEDULE OF INDIVIDUAL FUNDS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FUND NO.</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
<th>2019 (pro forma)</th>
<th>2018 (pro forma)</th>
<th>$ INCREASE (DECREASE)</th>
<th>% CHANGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

#### SECTION A - MINISTERIAL SUPPORT

| 116 | New Church Development | 1,010,000 | 991,000 | 19,000 | 1.92% |
| 122 | Equitable Compensation | 85,030 | 85,030 | 0 | 0.00% |
| 126 | Mission Churches | 220,000 | 240,302 | (20,302) | -8.45% |
| 132 | Higher Education | 275,000 | 277,271 | (2,271) | -0.82% |
| 140 | District Superintendents | 1,080,000 | 1,065,000 | 15,000 | 1.41% |
| 144 | Board of Ordained Ministry | 290,000 | 285,000 | 5,000 | 1.75% |
| 150 | GCFA - Episcopal Fund | 509,268 | 519,819 | (10,551) | -2.03% |
| 154 | NAC - Episcopal Housing Fund | 7,394 | 7,394 | 0 | 0.00% |
| 196 | Funding Reserve - Section A | 766,000 | 690,000 | 76,000 | 11.01% |
| **TOTAL - SECTION A** | **4,242,692** | **4,160,816** | **81,876** | **1.97%** |

#### SECTION B - WORLD SERVICE (56.20%) AND CONFERENCE BENEVOLENCES (43.80%)

| 202 | GCFA - World Service Fund | 1,719,682 | 1,755,310 | (35,628) | -2.03% |
| 204 | Congregational Development | 340,120 | 340,120 | 0 | 0.00% |
| 212 | Higher Education | 40,000 | 55,907 | (15,907) | -28.45% |
## SCHEDULE OF INDIVIDUAL FUNDS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FUND NO.</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
<th>2019 (pro forma)</th>
<th>2018 (pro forma)</th>
<th>$ INCREASE (DECREASE)</th>
<th>% CHANGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>222</td>
<td>Adult Discipleship</td>
<td>4,500</td>
<td>4,500</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>232</td>
<td>Prophetic Ministries/Status and Role of Women</td>
<td>2,500</td>
<td>5,500</td>
<td>(3,000)</td>
<td>-54.55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>236</td>
<td>Ministry with the Poor</td>
<td>70,000</td>
<td>70,000</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>250</td>
<td>Ethnic Ministries (African-American, Hispanic, Korean, and others)</td>
<td>116,870</td>
<td>116,870</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>256</td>
<td>Lay Ministry</td>
<td>9,704</td>
<td>9,704</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>260</td>
<td>Church Health</td>
<td>50,000</td>
<td>165,000</td>
<td>(115,000)</td>
<td>-69.70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>272</td>
<td>Pastoral Care and Counseling</td>
<td>69,318</td>
<td>69,318</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>276</td>
<td>Connectional Ministries - Programming</td>
<td>32,000</td>
<td>36,970</td>
<td>(4,970)</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>280</td>
<td>Connectional Ministries - Operations</td>
<td>40,000</td>
<td>38,818</td>
<td>1,182</td>
<td>3.04%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>290</td>
<td>Connectional Ministries - Personnel</td>
<td>225,000</td>
<td>221,816</td>
<td>3,184</td>
<td>1.44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>296</td>
<td>Funding Reserve - Section B</td>
<td>340,000</td>
<td>298,000</td>
<td>42,000</td>
<td>14.09%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL - SECTION B</strong></td>
<td><strong>3,059,694</strong></td>
<td><strong>3,187,833</strong></td>
<td><strong>(128,139)</strong></td>
<td><strong>-4.02%</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### NORTH ALABAMA CONFERENCE - UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
#### 2019 CONFERENCE BUDGET (EXCLUDING CLERGY BENEFITS)

**SCHEDULE OF INDIVIDUAL FUNDS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FUND NO.</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>2018 (pro forma)</th>
<th>$ INCREASE (DECREASE)</th>
<th>% CHANGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>308</td>
<td>Superannuate Homes</td>
<td>18,485</td>
<td>18,485</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>312</td>
<td>Annual Conference Meeting</td>
<td>113,000</td>
<td>106,287</td>
<td>6,713</td>
<td>6.32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>316</td>
<td>Treasurer's Office/Administrative Services</td>
<td>323,000</td>
<td>316,089</td>
<td>6,911</td>
<td>2.19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>320</td>
<td>Computer Services</td>
<td>99,415</td>
<td>97,045</td>
<td>2,370</td>
<td>2.44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>324</td>
<td>Public Relations and Communications</td>
<td>194,200</td>
<td>194,000</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>0.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>336</td>
<td>NAC - Episcopal Fund</td>
<td>7,394</td>
<td>7,394</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>340</td>
<td>Episcopal Initiatives</td>
<td>12,000</td>
<td>12,000</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>350</td>
<td>United Methodist Center</td>
<td>101,666</td>
<td>101,666</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>356</td>
<td>Archives and History</td>
<td>22,625</td>
<td>22,182</td>
<td>443</td>
<td>2.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>360</td>
<td>GCFA - General Administration Fund</td>
<td>204,198</td>
<td>208,429</td>
<td>(4,231)</td>
<td>-2.03%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>364</td>
<td>GCFA - Interdenominational Cooperation Fund</td>
<td>45,425</td>
<td>46,366</td>
<td>(941)</td>
<td>-2.03%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>390</td>
<td>Contingency and Miscellaneous</td>
<td>90,000</td>
<td>75,732</td>
<td>14,268</td>
<td>18.84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>396</td>
<td>Funding Reserve - Section C</td>
<td>300,000</td>
<td>261,563</td>
<td>38,437</td>
<td>14.70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>TOTAL - SECTION C</strong></td>
<td>1,531,408</td>
<td>1,467,238</td>
<td>64,170</td>
<td>4.37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>TOTAL - UNIFIED BUDGET</strong></td>
<td>8,833,794</td>
<td>8,815,887</td>
<td>17,907</td>
<td>0.20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## NORTH ALABAMA CONFERENCE - UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
2019 CONFERENCE BUDGET (EXCLUDING CLERGY BENEFITS)

### SCHEDULE OF INDIVIDUAL FUNDS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FUND NO.</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>2018 (pro forma)</th>
<th>$ INCREASE (DECREASE)</th>
<th>% CHANGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>401</td>
<td>GCFA - Ministerial Education Fund</td>
<td>580,829</td>
<td>592,862</td>
<td>(12,033)</td>
<td>-2.03%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>402</td>
<td>GCFA - Black College Fund</td>
<td>231,687</td>
<td>236,487</td>
<td>(4,800)</td>
<td>-2.03%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>403</td>
<td>GCFA - Africa University Fund</td>
<td>51,851</td>
<td>52,925</td>
<td>(1,074)</td>
<td>-2.03%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>430</td>
<td>SEJ - Mission and Ministry Fund</td>
<td>27,556</td>
<td>27,556</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>450</td>
<td>Birmingham-Southern College and Huntingdon College Scholarship Fund ($50,000 to Huntingdon)</td>
<td>350,000</td>
<td>350,000</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>454</td>
<td>Methodist Homes for the Aging</td>
<td>20,000</td>
<td>20,000</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>456</td>
<td>United Methodist Children's Home</td>
<td>20,000</td>
<td>20,000</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>458</td>
<td>North Alabama United Methodist Foundation</td>
<td>20,000</td>
<td>20,000</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>460</td>
<td>Sumatanga</td>
<td>20,000</td>
<td>20,000</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL - SECTION D</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>1,321,923</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,339,830</strong></td>
<td><strong>(17,907)</strong></td>
<td><strong>-1.34%</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL BUDGET</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>$10,155,717</strong></td>
<td><strong>$10,155,717</strong></td>
<td><strong>$0</strong></td>
<td><strong>0.00%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Report No. 2: 2019 Conference Budget Funding Model

The Council on Finance recommends the 2019 North Alabama Conference budget be funded by local churches using a proportional giving based funding model. The goal of the proportional giving based funding model is for each local church to remit a minimum of 10% (a tithe) of its unrestricted receipts on a monthly basis in support of the Conference budget and the local church’s district budget. Local churches are not to be asked to remit separate or additional amounts for district budgets.

Unrestricted receipts are defined as those receipts reported in Lines 52 a, b, and c of Table 3 in the annual Local Church Report. Lines 52 a, b, and c are defined as follows:

- Line 52 a—Amounts Received through Pledges
- Line 52 b—Amounts Received from Non-Pledging, but Identified Givers
- Line 52 c—Amounts Received from Unidentified Givers

The data reported by local churches in their annual Local Church Reports is included in the Conference Journal each year. The 2018 Conference Journal will include the calendar year 2017 Local Church Report data for each church. Local churches may find this information helpful as they plan their giving for 2019.

Some churches have found the proportional giving based funding model asks them to contribute more in their connectional giving than the historical apportionment model which was used prior to 2017, while other churches have found the proportional giving based funding model asks them to contribute less than the historical apportionment model. Creating faithfulness to Biblical stewardship is a primary objective of the proportional giving based funding model. Churches not able to remit 10% of their unrestricted receipts in 2019 are asked to discuss their plan for moving to the 10% proportional giving based model with their district superintendent.

Report Number 3: Compensation

The Council on Finance recommends the following compensation amounts for the period January 1, 2019 through December 31, 2019:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POSITION</th>
<th>BASE SALARY</th>
<th>UTILITIES</th>
<th>PROF. EXP. (PRIMARILY TRAVEL)</th>
<th>DEPENDENT HEALTH INSURANCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>District Superintendents and Director of Connectional Ministries(\text{\textsuperscript{1,2}})</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>$5,940(\text{\textsuperscript{3}})</td>
<td>$12,650(\text{\textsuperscript{3}})</td>
<td>TBD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chief Financial Officer, Conference Treasurer, and Benefits Officer</td>
<td>(6)</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>TBD</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NOTES:  
(1) Housing arrangements are provided for each district superintendent and the Connectional Ministries director.  
(2) Funding for the base salaries of district superintendents and the Director of Connectional Ministries is included in the 2019 Conference budget. Base salaries for District Superintendents and Director of Connectional Ministries are determined by the Bishop and the minimum annual base salary for these positions is $60,000.  
(3) Budgeted amounts for utility allowances and professional expenses shall be paid to each district office in the form of a grant from the Annual Conference.  
(4) The Council on Finance recommends that the Conference and the districts, as applicable, provide for the cost of dependent health insurance.  
(5) Payable by voucher (reimbursement only) for the Connectional Ministries director.  
(6) The total salary for this position is $145,869 in 2018, which includes a benefits officer salary of $56,830 provided by the North Alabama Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits. The Council on Finance will determine the 2019 total salary for this position in December, 2018.
Report Number 4: General Rules and Procedures

1) The Conference Treasurer shall disburse budget items on a monthly basis, as applicable.
2) The amount budgeted for Fund No. 390 - Contingency and Miscellaneous shall not exceed 10 percent of the total of Section C – Ministry Administration. The Council on Finance is authorized to make emergency allocations from Fund No. 390 - Contingency and Miscellaneous by a majority vote of the members.
3) The Council on Finance is authorized to make changes in amounts budgeted for individual funds during the budget year, provided the applicable funds are used for purposes consistent with the Conference's Vision, Mission, and Priorities and the total for all budgeted funds does not change. In addition, the Council on Finance is authorized to establish proration of budget funds when appropriate based on current economic factors.
4) All unexpended Conference budget funds at the end of the year shall be transferred to the applicable reserve account, except those funds authorized to carry a balance forward to the next year.
5) The principal amount in the Conference operating account shall not be less than $250,000.
6) Moving expenses of retiring pastors shall be paid by voucher, according to the following schedule:
   - 1-5 years of full-time ministry up to $750
   - 5-10 years of full-time ministry up to $1,500
   - 10-15 years of full-time ministry up to $2,250
   - 15+ years of full-time ministry up to $3,000
   Pastors are asked to make every effort to keep moving expenses to a minimum cost.
7) The Conference’s annual Schedule of Revenues, Expenditures, Transfers, and Changes in Fund Balance shall be audited by a Certified Public Accountant firm approved by the Council on Finance.

Report Number 5: Local Churches and Conference Agencies

1) Funds remitted by local churches for the Conference annual budget and the district operating fund shall be deposited by the district office in the Conference operating account on a weekly basis.
2) Conference agencies shall include all Conference boards, committees, commissions, councils, and other related institutions. Local churches shall be permitted to make direct gifts to Conference agencies without any Conference budget restrictions.
3) All Conference agencies shall use the Conference Treasurer as fiscal agent unless authorized to operate their own treasury.
4) Any Conference agency authorized to operate its own treasury shall provide the Conference Treasurer with evidence of proper bonding and a copy of the entity’s annual audited financial statements for the most recent fiscal period ending on or prior to December 31, 2018. Such reports shall be provided no later than May 1, 2019 as required by ¶617.2 in the 2016 Book of Discipline. Upon instructions of the Council on Finance, the Conference Treasurer may be required to withhold funds, beginning May 1, 2019, of any board, commission, committee or council not complying with this requirement of the 2016 Book of Discipline.
5) No Conference agency receiving funds from the Conference budget shall pay mileage at a rate in excess of 40% of the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) standard mileage rate rounded to the nearest cent for those attending Conference activities. Full time Conference-employed staff persons and the Conference Lay Leader may be paid at the IRS standard mileage rate.
6) No Conference agency, local church, individual, or any other interest shall attempt to raise funds for any purpose on a Conference-wide basis without approval being given by the Annual Conference or between sessions of the Annual Conference by a two-thirds vote of the Bishop’s Operational Team and the Council on Finance acting jointly.

Report Number 6: Distribution of Interest

Interest earned and market gains or losses in 2019 on funds belonging to the Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits shall be applied to these funds. Interest earned on all other funds shall be used to offset bank analysis charges. Any interest not belonging to the Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits and in excess of bank analysis charges shall be applied to the Conference's permanent stabilization reserve fund.
Report Number 7: Special Sundays

The Council on Finance urges continued support for the special ministries listed below. These ministries are supported by voluntary contributions, not apportionments, and are worthy of our continued generous support:

- Human Relations Day January 20, 2019
- UMCOR Sunday March 31, 2019
- Native American Awareness Sunday May 5, 2019
- Peace with Justice Sunday June 16, 2019
- Sumatanga Sunday August 11, 2019
- Volunteers in Mission Sunday TBD
- World Communion Sunday October 6, 2019
- United Methodist Student Sunday November 24, 2019

In addition, at the request of the General Commission on United Methodist Men, all local churches in the North Alabama Conference are asked to recognize Scout Sunday, February 10, 2019. Scouting in the United Methodist Church includes Boy Scouts of America, Camp Fire Boys and Girls, 4-H, and Girl Scouts of the U.S.A. Churches are encouraged to have a special offering for scouting ministries. Receipts from the offering shall be sent to the Conference Treasurer, who will retain 25% for scouting ministries in the annual conference and remit 75% to the General Commission on United Methodist Men for scouting ministries across the United States and around the world.

Audit Report

In compliance with ¶617.1 in the 2016 Book of Discipline and ¶1.3(c)(5) of the North Alabama Conference Standing Rules, the 2017 North Alabama Conference Schedule of Revenues, Expenditures, Transfers, and Changes in Fund Balances is currently being audited by a Certified Public Accountant firm. This schedule will be available on the Conference website prior to Annual Conference and will be distributed at Annual Conference on Sunday, June 3, 2018.
Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministry

The Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministry (BHECM) had a great 2017-2018 annual conference year. We are uniquely positioned to reach students with the good news of Jesus Christ during a formative season of their lives. Much of our work lies heavily in the “discover and develop” components of our annual conference’s mission, but the end goal is always to deploy spiritual leaders to serve Jesus in the Church and the world.

The following story comes from Linda Williamson, director of the UNA Wesley Foundation, and it showcases why we do what we do:

A few years ago, UNA Wesley hosted one of our campus-wide outreach events. One of our leadership team members invited a young classmate to this event. He came to see what Wesley was all about. He made new friends that night and found a place where he felt loved and welcomed. He was raised in a home in which they did not believe in Jesus, nor were they allowed even to speak His name. Over time, he became an active participant at Wesley and accepted Jesus as his Savior. He was baptized and continued to blossom, serving on the leadership team until his recent graduation.

There are many more stories like this happening at our campus ministries. Our team continues to see students come to faith in Jesus Christ and be baptized. We see people grow in their walk with Christ, in servant leadership and in identifying God’s purpose for their lives. It is a joy to watch the Holy Spirit at work in our midst. We are grateful to God and to the members of the annual conference for helping make this possible.

Our conference currently has seven campus ministries serving the student body of Athens State University, Birmingham-Southern College, Central Alabama Community College, Jacksonville State University, The University of Alabama, The University of Alabama Birmingham and The University of North Alabama. This year we welcomed Josh Howard to our team at Athens State. Josh has worked not only to reach students at Athens State, but has started a regional Wesley Foundation for commuter students of different schools. We have had the privilege of approving our first ministry grant that has funded new student leaders and multiplied the ministry at JSU. We changed our board structure and have been exploring potential new campus ministry ventures at institutions without an official United Methodist presence on campus. We have emphasized diversifying funding resources for our campus ministries.

As we prayerfully look to what God has in store for the future, we aim to be good stewards of the resources we have and to explore possibilities of doing new things wisely and sustainably. If you are sending students to our campuses, we’d love to talk with them. If you or your church wants to do something at a nearby campus, we’d love to talk with you. Pray that God would use us to fulfill his mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world, and that God would provide new resources and people for this beautiful work.

Rev. Stephen Fincher, Chair • stephen.fincher@umcna.org

Wesley Foundation at Jacksonville State University

The Wesley Foundation at Jacksonville State University is an alternative community for students to hang out, to study, to explore their spirituality, to ask questions, to serve God and others and to belong. Our facility is open every day for students to gather, to study, to use our internet connection and public computers, to eat and to hang out. With 20 students in residence in our student dorm, we quite literally have students in our facility around the clock.

Our student ministry seems always to be in flux as the world of young adults continues to change at a rapid pace. Every year we embrace change and try new approaches and strategies. We see ourselves in a missional context of ministry, trying to understand and speak to the “native” culture of millennials.

The core of our ministry at Wesley is developing and mentoring student leadership. We are constantly seeking new ways to move from an “attraction” based model of ministry, where the primary goal is to get students to “come” and “participate,” to a “relational-missional” model of ministry based on student-led small groups that are learning to lead, grow and serve together.

While the typical student might be apathetic towards organized religious events and organizations, they still have a strong desire to be in relationship. For us, the most effective way to engage students and to share Christ is through intentional relationships. The intentional part is the key.
In the past year, we have been even more intentional in our relationship building with non-religious students embracing this challenge as a major focus of our ministry. Many of our students come to us looking for a “Jesus club” with which they can be a part. While we certainly understand the desire for students to be around those they perceive to be like-minded people, we know that when we allow that attitude to dominate, we become an inner-focused, closed community—the opposite of the outreach-oriented, missional community we feel called to be. Non-religious students are at a very different place than the students who have ongoing positive experiences with the church. Polar opposites it seems at times. We understand how challenging it is to have a faith community that is open and loving to students of diverse backgrounds and experiences.

We organize our ministry in small groups which comprise Teams, Groups, and Huddles. A Team is generally a short-term group focused on a particular task or goal. A Group is more relationally oriented in both learning and fellowship and thus engages in a longer process. A Huddle is a leadership and discipleship formation group and has the highest commitment level. Huddles are recruited and coached by the campus minister and the graduate assistant working with the group ministry. Staff create Huddles, Huddles create Groups, and Groups create Teams. At every point, we are engaging students in leadership and allowing opportunities for practical experience in ministry and deeper understanding of vocation and call. Our weekly worship is also focused on the development of our small groups and ministry teams. We highlight different groups each week and coach and mentor this relational model. Each small group and team is also an opportunity for outreach, and we expect every group to give evidence of this. So, we discourage a group of friends who already hang out together to form a group together. We must model an intentionality to include others. That’s how we define leadership—as intentionally serving and including others.

We are knee deep in an ongoing culture change toward an outreach-oriented, missional community. We are encouraged in this challenge as students are stepping into missional leading roles. For example, African-American students comprise over a third of our active community, which is a direct outcome of individual student leaders stepping into intentional missional relationships. We embrace many non-believing and questioning students in the community, as well as, many deeply committed students. We understand and celebrate that missional community embraces diversity in as many forms and as many ways as it can.

JSU Wesley is blessed with a dedicated Board of Directors:
Class of 2018: Jeremy Clayton, Mike Hindman (Chair), Kim Stevens
Class of 2019: Dr. David Cunningham, Matt Headley, Julie Talley
Class of 2020: Karen Gregg, Dr. Jerry Kiser, Jason Wright

Rev. Jay Robinson, Director • jay.robinson@umcna.org

Wesley Foundation at the University of Alabama at Birmingham

The Wesley Foundation at UAB has experienced a powerful resurrection in the last few years. During this time, we’ve worked diligently to reconnect with the United Methodist churches in the greater Birmingham area. In doing so, we are looking to create a partnership in developing powerful witnesses and disciples of Christ from the very diverse student population.

With the help of local churches and volunteer teams, we have completely renovated the inside of the UAB Wesley campus house located at 1408 13th Ave South in Birmingham. The house is a vital place for Wesley students looking for spiritual guidance and formation. The house provides rental opportunities in addition to hosting our weekly Thursday lunch prepared by local churches. We host numerous special events at the house such as a Maundy Thursday service, pumpkin carving, Friendsgiving, and Christmas events.

UAB Wesley hosts a weekly worship service on the third floor of the Hill Student Center on Thursday nights. The service has served as an opportunity for local pastors and student leaders to connect their churches to the ministry. Our goal is to connect students to life changing relationships with the Wesley staff and local church members as well. Please contact us if you have interest in sponsoring a lunch or leading a service.

UAB Wesley has restarted yearly retreats at Camp Sumatanga and has a more driven focus on missional activities. This summer, some of our students will go to Houston to help with Hurricane Harvey clean-up. We have begun working with Children’s Harbor, Highlands UMC soup kitchen and outreach within the UAB community. Fellowship activities
such as tailgates at Blazer sporting events, Birmingham Barons games, quarterly bike and devotional rides have helped to grow the bond within our ministry.

UAB Wesley’s main goal is to share the gospel of truth and grace on the most diverse campus in our state. We seek to provide students with a strong spiritual understanding of who they are in Christ while discerning what His call is upon their lives. We seek to create a place where all students feel safe and loved while being connected with the many resources our UMC structure has to offer. If you would like to know more, please find UAB Wesley on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Search #GetConnectedWithWesley for more ways to become involved.

Tyler Cantrell, Campus Minister • uabwesley@gmail.com

Wesley Foundation at the University of North Alabama

The UNA Wesley Foundation offers students a safe place to come and feel welcome, to make new friends and to get involved with various activities such as worship, Bible studies, mission projects, campus outreach, retreats, accountability groups and our free Tuesday meals provided by local churches. Our mission at the UNA Wesley Foundation is to be the catalyst for a relationship with God for these students so that He may work through them to make Disciples of Jesus Christ.

Events, Fundraisers and Blessings

• Welcome week cookout served approximately 250 Freshman students.
• Monday nights are Men's and Women's Bible studies at Wesley.
• On Tuesdays during fall and spring semesters we offer a free meal to all students at UNA. These meals are provided by our local churches, UMW, UMM and SS classes. Mary Wallace, one of our Wesley angels, a Wesley Board Member and member at Rogersville UMC, sets up all our meals.
• On Wednesday evenings during the fall and spring semesters we join Florence First for their Wednesday Alive Meal.
• Thursday evenings are our Unity Meal. It was such a great success this past year; we are continuing again this semester. We begin with a time of praise and worship, food and fellowship. Following is co-ed Bible study.
• Fridays are usually movie night, game night or just hanging out at Wesley with friends.
• Twice each semester our student leaders organize Sundown Coffee, providing an outlet for students to express their artistic creativity and leadership skills via open mic night.
• We host a Fueling for Finals Study Day breakfast night each semester to ensure that our students are fed, prepared and prayed for, in preparation for final exam week.
• Our second annual golf tournament was held at Joe Wheeler State Park. We are planning another tournament in September 2018. If you know anyone who would like to participate by getting a team together, sponsorship, or donate door surprises, please contact us at the UNA Wesley Foundation.
• In March 2017, we traveled to Camp Sumatanga during spring break for our Service Project Retreat. As a team, we cleaned and removed old floor tile, moved out furniture, cleaned windows, blew leaves from the gutters and walked the campgrounds picking up small tree limbs. That evening, we gathered around the campfire for worship.
• We joined the youth of Florence First UMC at the Christian Conference "Strength to Stand" in the Smokies. What an awesome spiritual weekend for the college students!
• We partnered with Florence First UMC by offering time during our Tuesday free meal to discuss the book Ask: Faith Questions in a Skeptical Age. We are excited to see how God is working through this open discussion.
• We participated at Tuscumbia First UMC’s Global Missions Event as one of their supported missions. If you are in the Northwest District, please give us the opportunity to share with your congregation the different ways we reach the students at UNA for Christ.
• We held the First Annual UNA Wesley Foundation Fund Raising Dinner at Florence First UMC. Our guest speaker was Dr. Kenneth Kitts, President of the University of North Alabama. We hope to grow this event bigger every year.
Throughout the year Wesley students volunteer their time helping our local churches host the following community mission outreach events: the Shepherds Table, Room in the Inn, Soup Kitchens and Meals for Thanksgiving. We are always looking for ways to help in our community. If we can help with any mission project event, please contact us.

We would like to thank everyone who has been involved with the ministry at the Wesley Foundation at UNA. All donations, proceeds, prayers, love and support given throughout the year have immensely impacted the students here at UNA Wesley.

We would like to specifically thank our board members for all that they do:

**Officers:** Rev. Kelly Clem, Northwest District Superintendent; Frank Patterson, Chair; James Atkinson, Vice Chair; Terry Patrick, Secretary; Sherri Hester, Finance

**Committee Chairs:** Larry McCoy, Sustaining Membership; Andy Betterton, Fundraising Events; Bill Watson and Robert Lancaster, Golf Tournament; Mary Wallace, Meals; Ron Morrison, Buildings and Grounds

**Class of 2015-2018:** Etta Mask, Frank Patterson, Susan Patterson, Rob Tyree, Mary Wallace, Bill Watson

**Class of 2016-2019:** Tom Barnett, Scott Coats, Sherri Hester, Debbie Johnson, Ron Morrison, Terry Patrick

**Class of 2018-2020:** James Atkinson, John Hardeman, Lisa Keys-Matthews, Bob Torbert

**Ex Officio Members:** Dennis Griffith, District Lay Leader; Jennie Turney, District UMW President; Nora Gibson, Representative UMW; John Hardeman District UMM President

Rev. Linda Williamson, Campus Pastor/Director • lindawilliamson22@gmail.com

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**General Board of Higher Education and Ministry**

GBHEM launched a new mission and vision in August 2017. The updated mission and vision simplify GBHEM’s role as the primary leadership development agency for The United Methodist Church.

**Mission:** Build capacity for United Methodist lay and clergy leaders to discover, claim and flourish in Christ’s calling in their lives, by creating connections and providing resources to aid in recruitment, education, professional development and spiritual formation.

**Vision:** Generations of thriving, diverse and compassionate Christian leaders for The United Methodist Church and the world.

The Office of Discernment and Enlistment at GBHEM hosted Exploration, a biennial event for young adults ages 18-26 to hear, discern and respond to God’s call to ordained ministry as a United Methodist deacon or elder. More than 350 attended the event in Portland, Oregon in November 2017.

The Young Clergy Initiative (YCI) funded 34 innovative projects across the church in 2017 to attract young people to ordained ministry. Since its inception, more than 80 projects have been funded through YCI.

GBHEM works with the Commission on Central Conference Theological Education (CCTE) to distribute grants for the theological education of pastoral leaders in the Central Conferences. In 2017, the CCTE awarded 67 grants totaling more than $1 million to the seven Central Conferences of The United Methodist Church.

The Publishing Ministry, established to engage, nurture and advocate for the intellectual life of The United Methodist Church, released 13 books in 2017, reaching more than 10,000 people.

In 2017, GBHEM’s Office of Loans and Scholarships awarded 2,000+ students with $4.1 million in scholarships and 350 students with $1.4 million in loans. More than $1.66 million was awarded to 206 recipients of the Excellence in Clergy Leadership Scholarship, which helps United Methodist clergy avoid excessive educational loan debt, minimize financial stress and build financial acumen.

To aid pastors in their ministry journey, GBHEM’s Candidacy Office introduced EM360. A formation guide to help pastors and congregations meet mission and ministry goals, EM30360 is a tool to help clergy leaders identify and gauge pastoral effectiveness.
Clergy Lifelong Learning led African-American, United Methodist pastors who lead predominantly white churches in cross-cultural diversity training in South Korea in 2017 to share best practices. Continuing education and coaching opportunities are available through the innovative, multilingual platform, UMC Cyber Campus.

In partnership with Discipleship Ministries, GBHEM provides e-readers to theological schools in remote areas of Africa and Asia, offering access to the latest textbooks and reference books. The E-Reader Project distributed 667 e-readers in 2017 and nearly 2,500 devices to 22 theological seminaries since the program inception in 2013.

In 2017, GBHEM and the Association of United Methodist Theological Schools (AUMTS) hosted two academic theological colloquies. Initiated in service to the intellectual life of the church, the colloquies are intended to be a resource for the church. The first colloquy (March 2017) focused on human sexuality and church unity, the second (Nov. 2017) reflected on the practice of Missio Dei. Both events produced a study guide and book.

Beth Neil, Communications Specialist • bneil@bghem.org

Hinton Rural Life Center

2017 was a year of exciting growth for Hinton Rural Life Center, which increased staff, built a new facility and added key new services. Hinton Center is a mission agency of the Southeastern Jurisdiction of The United Methodist Church, located just outside the small town of Hayesville in Western North Carolina on the Northeast Georgia border. Hinton Center also serves as a Christian retreat and conference center, where guests come to retreat, reflect and renew.

One of two important positions Hinton Center added in 2017 was a community engagement coordinator who works with community leaders to address practical issues raised by our recent quality of life study of the area, including substance use, housing and children’s issues. Hinton Center also brought on a community volunteer coordinator to establish and oversee a Volunteer Center that serves a three-county area. The Volunteer Center, which launched in January 2018, manages volunteer opportunities for non-profits, schools, churches and other qualifying organizations.

An Easter sunrise service marked Hinton Center’s first official event in our new Outdoor Worship Center, which sits on the shore of beautiful Lake Chatuge. Construction of the Outdoor Worship Center, which can hold up to 100 guests, was completed in Fall 2017 and funded by a grant from The Duke Endowment.

Additionally, Hinton Center began offering Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) training in the fall. MHFA gives skills needed to reach out and provide initial help and support to someone who may be having a mental health crisis or developing a substance use problem. While Hinton Center’s newest elements created exciting new opportunities for ministry, many of our well-established outreach programs enjoyed promising expansion of their own. Hinton Center volunteers contributed a total of 23,837 hours to our ministries in 2017.

Christmas Care of Clay County received a record outpouring of support from the community in 2017, as Hinton Center helped provide needed clothing for 406 area children. Likewise, demand for our firewood ministry increased from a year earlier, and our volunteers distributed 166 loads of wood to residents who still depend on it to heat their homes in winter.

Finally, home repair remains a central element of our missions work. While this ministry is most active in the summer, we offer opportunities year-round. Our theme for 2018, “Cultivate Hope,” is based on Jesus’ parable of the sower from Luke 8:4-8. How can we, as followers of Christ, live into the hope found through a relationship with Jesus, as individuals and as faith communities? How can we extend that hope to others, not only by helping to meet the needs of our neighbors, but also by valuing their strengths and gifts?

Inspired by Jesus Christ, Hinton Rural Life Center’s purpose is to engage individuals, congregations and communities in transformation through retreat ministry and missional outreach. Whether you want a weekend sabbatical on Lake Chatuge, or to help build a wheelchair ramp in the community, Hinton Center offers something for everyone. Come see for yourself! Learn more at www.HintonCenter.org, or contact us at 828-389-8336.

Jacqueline Gottlieb
Dawn Livingston
**Huntingdon College**

Huntingdon College Campus Ministries has experienced another fruitful year of participation, discipleship and vocational discernment. Rev. Rhett Butler ’13 began his first appointment as Chaplain in Summer 2017. He has continued the visionary ministry of The Reverend Woods Lisenby ’11 during his three years at Huntingdon. "Surely the presence of the Lord is in this place!"

The worshipping community grew steadily for the three years that Chaplain Lisenby served the College, and the growth trend has continued. Campus Ministries reached an all-time high attendance for weekly worship of 186 students at one of its Fall Semester 2017 Tuesday Night Worship (TNW) services. The Campus Ministries student leadership goal for TNW in 2017-18 was to reach 100 students in worship each week, a goal that has been surpassed 12 times as of February, 2018.

Campus Ministries offers two weekly worship services that are open to all members of the Huntingdon community. Huntingdon College is committed to worship formed by the deep traditions of The United Methodist Church. The main worship service is Tuesday Night Worship. This is a high-energy student led service with an emphasis on creating a space that is inviting for non-Christians. Huntingdon students have begun fondly referring to TNW as "Church for people who hate Church." By that, they mean significant numbers of new attendees are previously unchurched students who feel welcome to "Come to Church," many for the first time in their lives!

Campus Ministries also offers a weekly Eucharist which is celebrated every Wednesday during the school year. This liturgical service provides a mid-day time of reflective worship ending with Holy Communion. In addition to these two regular worship services, a variety of small groups are available to the student body. Small group attendance averages more than 60 weekly.

Chaplain Butler works closely with Department of Religion faculty in assisting Huntingdon students in the discernment of ministerial vocation. The Chaplain led seminary trips to Asbury, Duke and Emory during Fall 2017. These on-campus visits are immensely beneficial for Huntingdon students in discerning calls to ordained ministry and in making decisions about seminary attendance. Huntingdon continues to be committed to raising up ordained ministers in the North Alabama Conference.

The College is entering into its third year of sponsoring the Huntingdon Leadership Academy (HLA). HLA is a weeklong residential camp for high school students designed to mentor students in discerning God’s call for their lives. HLA is directed by Rev. Macon Armistead ’14. The Huntingdon College Chaplain, Religion faculty, local United Methodist clergy and community leaders in Montgomery gather as speakers and small group leaders to make this week a foundational moment in the faith journey of high school students.

As I conclude my 39th year as a United Methodist Elder in Full Connection, and my 15th year as President of Huntingdon College, I give thanks for the hallowed ministry of Christian higher education at Huntingdon. "To God Be the Glory!"

Rev. J. Cameron West, President • camwest@hawks.huntingdon.edu

**Kairos Prison Ministry**

**A North Alabama Conference Advance Special**

The mission of Kairos Prison Ministry International is to share the transforming love and forgiveness of Jesus Christ to impact the hearts and lives of incarcerated men, women and youth, as well as their families to become loving and productive citizens of their communities. This mission directly relates to and supports the North Alabama Conference mission to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the Transformation of the world.

The Kairos slogan is Changing Hearts… Transforming Lives… Impacting the World. This is done through renewal weekends which provide a short course in Christianity, and then follow-up with ongoing programs for sharing, witnessing, accountability and prayer.

The Kairos Inside program is a three-day weekend conducted inside the correctional facility by an inter-denominational, diverse team of volunteers made up of clergy and laity. Up to 42 inmates are selected by the prison
chaplain to participate. In 2017, Kairos Inside of Alabama served in 14 facilities, two of which are federal institutions.

The Kairos Outside program offers a two-day renewal weekend for women aged 20 and over whose lives have been impacted through their own incarceration or the incarceration of loved ones. In 2017, Kairos Outside of North Alabama welcomed 42 women as our guests. The guests were served by a diverse group of clergy and laity volunteers. A second Kairos Outside Community serving the South Alabama area was formed in 2016 and will host their first weekend April 6-8, 2018.

Kairos Inside is an excellent way to provide a spiritual experience in the correctional facility, while Kairos Outside is designed to build up and encourage the loved ones who support those who are incarcerated.

Kairos Outside truly appreciates being included as a partner of the North Alabama Conference. Kairos Outside especially supports the conference mission through its intentional attention to diversity on the teams. All former guests can serve on weekend teams, become weekend leaders and serve in leadership at the local, state and international levels.

Kairos Prison Ministry offers United Methodist volunteers the opportunity to share Christ’s love and grow more disciples. Our connectional system has benefitted Kairos Prison Ministry in Alabama through the support of local churches which provide volunteers as well as financial support. Both Kairos Inside and Kairos Outside are totally funded through donations. Both programs need gender specific clergy and musicians as well as cook teams made up of male and female volunteers. Most importantly, both programs need volunteers who have the desire to be the hands and feet of Christ.

For additional information or to volunteer, contact Lynn Carmichael at commkona@gmail.com or visit www.kairos-al.org.

Lynn Carmichael, Kairos Outside Advisory Council • commkona@gmail.com

**Lay Ministry Team**

The Lay Ministry Team feels they are not alone serving the United Methodist Church and you are not alone doing God’s work in your local church and community.

The Lay Ministry Team encourages all North Alabama congregations to support the mission agencies of our Annual Conference that offer outreach to hurting people in our communities. During Charge Conferences, local congregations tell their stories of ministry and offer testimonies of lives changed. Each year we learn that much is done through our connection to help hurting people.

The Lay Ministry team is comprised of the Conference Lay Leader, the District Lay Leaders, the District Associate Lay Leaders, the Conference Director of Lay Servant Ministries and the Conference Associate Director of Lay Servant Ministries. The District Lay Leaders work in partnership with the District Superintendents. The Lay Ministry Team works to discover, develop and deploy lay spiritual leaders.

**2018 North Alabama Conference Lay Ministry Team**

Steve Lyles—Conference Lay Leader
Anne Jolly—Central District Lay Leader
Mike Galloway—Cheaha District Lay Leader
Gail Hiett—Mountain Lakes District Lay Leader
Joey Amberson—Mountain Lakes District Associate Lay Leader
Betty Zoller—Northeast District Lay Leader
Dennis Griffith—Northwest District Lay Leader
Donald Johnson—South Central District Associate Lay Leader
Jesse Cleveland—Southeast District Lay Leader
Ray Alexander—Southwest District Lay Leader
Becky Walker—Conference Director of Lay Servant Ministries
Tina Hardy—Conference Associate Director of Lay Servant Ministries

Contact information for the Lay Ministry Team can be found at www.umcna.org/layleadershipdirectory.
In the fall of 2013, the Bishop’s Operational Team produced a document noting the minimum requirements of all Conference leadership teams, including the Lay Ministry Team. At that time, a job description for District Lay Leaders was created. This job description was passed unanimously by the Cabinet and by the Lay Ministry Team at the 2013 December Lay Ministry meeting. It is hoped it will become the model for local church lay leaders.

**Job Description for North Alabama Conference District Lay Leader**

*Includes non-negotiable, minimum requirements for any conference, district and local church leadership position in the North Alabama Conference*

- Have a personal faith in Christ and be committed to Christ as Savior and Lord.
- Nurture and cultivate spiritual disciplines and patterns of holiness.
- Teach and model generous Christian giving with a focus on tithing as God’s standard of giving.
- Acknowledge a call by God to completely give themselves to ministry, following Jesus’ pattern of love and service.
- Communicate persuasively the Christian faith in both oral and written form.
- Make a commitment to lead the whole Church in loving service to humankind.
- Give evidence of God’s gifts for ministry, evidence of God’s grace in their lives and promise of future usefulness in the mission of the Church.
- Be persons in whom the community can place trust and confidence.
- Accept that Scripture contains all things necessary for salvation through faith in God through Jesus Christ; be competent in the disciplines of Scripture, theology, church history, and Church polity; possess the skills essential to the practice of ministry; and lead in making disciples for Jesus Christ.
- Be accountable to The United Methodist Church, accept its Doctrinal Standards and Discipline and authority, accept the supervision appropriate to this ministry, and be prepared to live in the covenant.
- Complete dedication of themselves to the highest ideals of the Christian life. To this end, they agree to exercise responsible self-control by personal habits conducive to bodily health; mental and emotional maturity; integrity in all personal relationships; fidelity in marriage and celibacy in singleness; social responsibility; and growth in grace and in the knowledge and love of God.

The District Lay Leader requirements shall include all references and duties assigned to “District Lay Leader” as cited in the *2016 Book of Discipline*.

**Additional Requirements**

- Be a resident of the District in which the Lay Leader lives and a member of a church in the District.
- Represent the laity of all churches in the District.
- Serve as the District Superintendent’s laity counterpart in promoting District and Conference programs.
- Serve as an active member on the primary programs of the District, and serve as an honorary member on any other committees the District Superintendent may identify and assign.
- Serve on the District Planning and Program Committee, Nominating Committee and Budget Committee.
- Represent the District on the Conference Lay Ministry Team, which is a Directional Team of the Conference.
- Serve as liaison between the District Lay Servant Committee and the District.
- Attend as many functions as possible that are District and Conference related.
- Develop relationships between the District office and local church lay leaders.
- Develop Associate Lay Leaders to assist the District Lay Leader in all duties that *2016 Book of Discipline* defines.
- District Lay Leaders are required to attend a minimum of two Conference Lay Ministry Team meetings in a calendar year and to attend Annual Conference.

Recognizing that all Districts are unique, any additional requirements of a District Lay Leader’s job description will be added at the discretion of the District Superintendent and the District Lay Leader subject to review as needed.

*Steve Lyles, Conference Lay Leader • slyles@umcna.org*
Lay Servant Ministries

The Lay Servant Ministries (LSM) Team has worked diligently and deliberately to "Discover, Develop and Deploy Spiritual Leaders to make Disciples of Jesus Christ for the Transformation of the World." There are approximately 400 Certified Lay Servants in our eight districts, with many others in the process of becoming certified. More than 250 LSM classes were offered throughout North Alabama in 2017. Online resources through [www.beadisciple.com](http://www.beadisciple.com) enable anyone with basic computer skills to participate in training for topics ranging from ways to establish recycling centers in local churches, to leading public prayer, to understanding United Methodist Polity. Through the efforts of David Vaughn, Charlie Carlton, Jack Hinnen and Tina Hardy, our Basic Lay Servant Class has been recorded and a leader guide will be developed for remote churches to offer LSM training facilitated by the church pastor. Launching of this endeavor is expected in 2018. The LSM Team meets regularly to streamline processes, improve communication and increase the quality of and opportunities for training. Participation at the Jurisdictional level has increased, as the annual meeting of the Directors of Lay Servant Ministries for the Southeastern Jurisdiction was hosted by the North Alabama Conference, involving many of our Lay Servants. The NAC is now represented on the Team which, in cooperation with Discipleship Ministries in Nashville, develops and approves new courses for LSM credit. LSM is working with the Conference Board of Ordained Ministry to establish the modules and instruction methods required by the [2016 Book of Discipline](http://www.umcna.org/lsm) for Certified Lay Ministers. This should be available by the end of 2018.

Why are we working to provide such a rich variety of materials to educate and equip the laity? We want to discover, develop and deploy spiritual leaders in the North Alabama Conference. Today, NAC Lay Servants are engaged in a host of ministries for making disciples to transform the world. Some of these ministries include teaching, preaching, leading Bible studies, working in soup kitchens, making prayer shawls, helping in drug rehabilitation centers, leading mission trips for disaster relief, serving on boards for community service organizations, establishing food pantries, working in prison ministries, helping with bereavement care, aiding with back-pack ministries and engaging in sustainable urban gardening opportunities. The possibilities for service and growth are endless! Lay Servant Ministry is vibrant, challenging and fulfilling. Explore our webpage [www.umcna.org/lsm](http://www.umcna.org/lsm) or contact your District Director for more details.

Central—Tina Hardy
Cheaha—Pat Motley
Mountain Lakes—Gail Hiett
Northeast—Kay West
Northwest—Adam Kolmetz
South Central—Charlie Carlton
Southeast—Anna McCain
Southwest—Ray Alexander

*
Becky Walker, Director • bwalker5129@outlook.com
McCoy Adult Day Care Center
A North Alabama Conference Advance Special

We have a great opportunity for you this year! On Monday night of Annual Conference, if you purchase dinner at Panera Bread right across the street from Trinity UMC, McCoy Adult Day Care will receive a portion of your ticket price. What a great way to have a convenient place to eat dinner before ordination and help one of your Advanced Special Agencies. For us to receive the donation, you must present a flyer when you order. These flyers are available at our mission booth, located in the foyer of the Von Braun Center. Thank you in advance for your support of this vital ministry that allows frail and fragile adults and their caregivers to have a better quality of life!

The McCoy Adult Day Care continues to be the premier provider of adult day care services in the Birmingham area in the name of Christ and the United Methodist Church. As we celebrate 33 years of ministry, this agency is approaching middle age. In an effort to help position the Center to continue to be viable and in the center of God’s will for the next 30 years, the Board of Directors has been busy with a Board Development process last year and beginning a new Strategic Planning process this year.

Vivian Story, our Day Care Director, brings her skills as a Social Worker to enhance the operations and quality care of the clients. She has worked with the staff with additional training (most are CPR certified now) and adding additional programs for the clients.

We covet your prayers for this ministry, the staff, clients and caregivers and your support. I hope to see you at Panera Bread on Monday, June 4, between 4-8 pm!

Judy Poole, Deaconess, Executive Director • poole44@att.net • www.McCoyAdultDayCare.com

Methodist Homes of Alabama and Northwest Florida
A North Alabama Conference Advance Special

Singing God’s Song in Harmony with Older Adults

Psalm 71 is the song of an old man. The man talks about his struggles, troubles, triumphs, and God’s help and faithfulness through it all. He pleads twice with God to not forget him in his old age. Although American society tends to marginalize the contributions of its older citizens, that is not the case in the North Alabama Conference. Embracing the vision of Conference leaders more than 56 years ago, our Methodist Homes continue to thrive as places where older adults are respected and revered, in harmony with God’s song.

Improvements are in the works for our affordable housing communities in the Conference, which are Wesley Acres, Wesley Acres II and Wesley Glen in Decatur, and Wesley Apartments and Wesley Park Apartments in Anniston. We have enjoyed providing safe, affordable apartment homes for people with low income since 1981, and each of these properties will see substantial capital improvements in 2018.

A new day dawned for Fair Haven in Birmingham in 2017. Our 21-month campus-wide redevelopment project was completed in November, and deeply affected the culture of the retirement community at every level: independent living, assisted living, specialty care (memory care) assisted living, short-term rehabilitation and long-term nursing care. As impressive as the physical transformations at Fair Haven are, the new buildings and comprehensive renovations merely provide the backdrop for a transformed culture which changes the way older adults are treated in a community life setting. The creation of households and neighborhoods at Fair Haven brings family-like warmth and engagement in daily life as never before. The focus on resident-directed care empowers resident choice in daily care and services, restoring privacy and dignity to the community setting as never before. I imagine that our aged psalmist would be pleased.

Kept separate from the campus redevelopment, but no less important, was the renovation of Fair Haven’s iconic Chapel. The Chapel is the faith centerpiece at Fair Haven. Through the generosity of friends, residents, associates, former resident families and others, the Chapel received new carpeting and flooring, new paint, updated lighting, new seating and all-new stained glass windows. Some of you fill the pulpit on Sundays or Wednesdays and we can’t thank you enough for the impact you have on those who live at Fair Haven. We invite you to come see the Good Shepherd Chapel.
As always, I want to thank you for your support of the Fountain of Love Fund, and ask that you continue to remember the Fountain of Love in your churches. Each special offering, missions grant, and missions budget item, as well as apportionment giving, helps make it possible for us to take care of residents who find they are no longer able to pay for their entire monthly care. In fact, no resident has ever been asked to leave a Methodist Home due to their inability to pay. Thank you for your faithful support and prayers for Fair Haven, the Fountain of Love and all our Methodist Homes in the Conference.

**Board Of Trustees**

**Class of 2021**
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*Christopher Tomlin, President & CEO • ctomlin@methodisthomes.org*

**Mission and Advocacy**

*During the night Paul had a vision of a man of Macedonia standing and begging him, “Come over to Macedonia and help us.”—Acts: 16:9 (NIV)*

Many districts, churches, groups and individuals in our conference have been called to Macedonia for God’s mission and have been answering, "yes." We are thankful for all the mission and advocacy work that everyone has been involved in whether nationally or internationally.

There have been many opportunities for us as a conference to participate in mission advocacy work, disaster relief through UMCOR, mission trips to far and near mission fields, financial contributions and ministries that raise awareness of different social issues that affect the welfare of humanity.

We were able to partner with thirty-five ministries through Servants Like Jesus Mission Grants. It is our hope that districts, local churches and individuals will continue to financially support missions. Your financial support will help continue mission grants for the work of the kingdom.

When it came to the work of advocating for different issues, our conference has been part of making a difference for the oppressed and the marginalized. Payday Lending is one of those issues the conference is working on. Local churches and districts have been on the front lines fighting for justice in different life aspects of God’s people.

We will continue to answer God’s call through our work in mission and advocacy and to be God’s ambassadors in His mission field.

*Rev. Adlene Kufarimai, Director • akufarimai@umcna.org*
Nominations Team

Spiritual Leadership Report 2018

Administrative Review Board*
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Three Clergy in Full Connection: Rev. Alan Head, Rev. Angela Martin, Rev. Melissa Patrick
Two Alternate Clergy in Full Connection: Rev. Amy Howard, Rev. Randy Kelley

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Chairperson: Rev. Russell Hestley
Staff Representative: Rev. Adlene Kufarimai
Rev. Dale Capron, Lynn Douglas, Rev. Mike Harper, Betty Likis, Chuck Vedane

Annual Conference Meeting Team
Executive Team: Mike Arnold, Rev. Andy Curtis, Emily Nelms Chastain, Danette Clifton, Rev. Dedric Cowser, Rev. John Fleischauer, Rev. Lonna Lynn Higgs, Linda Holland, Steve Lyles, Doris McCullers, Rev. Ron Schultz, Rev. Kiki Terry, Bishop Debra Wallace-Padgett

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Director of Connectional Ministries: Linda Holland
Conference Director of Campus Ministry: Rev. Wade Langer
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ARMS Representative: Rev. Lynn Dimon

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Vice Chairperson: Cristin Dedmon
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Training Team: Emily Nelms Chastain, Rev. Monica Harbarger, Rev. Brandon Harris, Rev. John Carl Hastings, Rev. Tiwirai Kufarimal, Rev. Ricky Smith, Rev. Byron Vance, Ramona Yarbrough
Support Team: Ellen Harris, Terry McElheney (Conference Attorney)
Victim Phone Contact: Jan Conway
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Bishop: Debra Wallace-Padgett
SEJ Representatives: Rev. Robin Scott, Steve Lyles
Episcopal Residence Representative: Sandy Reynolds (12)
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Rev. Bill Brunson (13), John Hardeman (16)

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Lay Members: Dr. Leigh Murphy, Elizabeth Riddle
Alternate Lay Members: Kathy Clements, Jane Daniel

Committee on Procedures and Petitions
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Assistant Director: Lyn Cosby
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Conference Treasurer: Scott Selman
Clark Collier, John Howell, Brad Osborne, James Tingle
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Chairperson: Bishop Debra Wallace-Padgett
Secretary: Director of Connectional Ministries, Linda Holland
Conference Lay Leader: Steve Lyles
Conference Secretary: Rev. Dedric Cowser
COSROW Representative: Rev. Rachel Gonia

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District Lay Leaders
Religion and Race Representative
District Representatives:
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Cheaha: Rev. Alex Oberneder, Bill Prestridge
Mountain Lakes: Marvin Barron, Rev. Lee Bryant
Northeast: Rev. Todd Owen, Carol Toney
Northwest: John Hardeman, Rev. David Teel
South Central: Rev. Dale Cohen, Dawn Wolfe
Southeast: Rev. James Haskins, Johnnie Tankersley
Southwest: Bobby Boothe, Rev. Mike Spivey

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Executive Director of Ordained Ministry: Rev. Ron Schultz
Bishop: Debra Wallace-Padgett
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Term Ending in 2020: Mike Galloway (17), Mike Gibbs (17), Arden Pathak (17)
Term Ending in 2019: Bill Jordan (17), Rev. Kevin Thomas (16)

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Rev. Mike Densmore, Rev. Nathan Carden, Jan Thompson, LaVone Warren

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Conference Lay Leader: Steve Lyles
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Cheaha: Joy Burgess
Mountain Lakes: Kim Woodin
Northeast: Rhonda Ritter
Northwest: TBD
South Central: TBD
Southeast: Dr. Rose Wood
Southwest: Rev. Joyce Snyder
Members-at-Large: Flossie Cromwell, Judy Weismann

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Early Response Training, Conference Disaster Response & Recovery Team Coordinator: Rev. Randy Burbank
Cabinet Representative: Rev. Kelly Clem
District Disaster Response Coordinators:

  Central: TBD
  Cheaha: Bill Prestridge Sr., Buddy Williams
  Mountain Lakes: Rev. Ron Howard
  Northeast: Rev. David Tubbs
  Northwest: TBD
  South Central: Jeff Thrower
  Southeast: Rev. David Bailey
  Southwest: Rev. Tim Alexander
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**Finance Designate:** Scott Selman  
Angela Alford, Marvin McKinley, Dianne Morgan, Nancy Richey, Deborah Thompson, Dawn Wolfe

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Hispanic Ministries Team
**Chairperson:** Rev. Charles Calhoun  

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**Associate Director of Lay Servant Ministries:** Tina Hardy  
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**Director of Connectional Ministries:** Linda Holland  
**District Lay Leaders:**  
- **Central:** Anne Jolly  
- **Cheaha:** Mike Galloway  
- **Mountain Lakes:** Gail Hiett, Joey Amberson  
- **Northeast:** Betty Zoller  
- **Northwest:** Dennis Griffith  
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**South Central:** TBD  
**Southeast:** TBD  
**Southwest:** Rev. Jeff Armbrester, Rev. Mike Holland

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Missions Personnel Team
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Rev. Kelly Clem, Rev. Patrick Friday, Rev. Matt Lacey

Native American Ministries Team
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Rev. David Commer, Judy Engelhart, Brian Watson, Rev. Woody Woodin

New and Renewing Churches Team
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*Consultants

Religion and Race Team
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Spiritual Guide: Rev. Clauzell Williams
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Cheaha: Maudine Holloway, Rev. Tiwirai Kufarimai
Mountain Lakes: Angela Jackson
Northeast: TBD
Northwest: Rev. James Rice, Rev. Rod Stallworth
South Central: Genice Mahand
Southeast: Joanne Finley
Southwest: Rev. Matt Reed, Rev. Dwight Geist

† Quadrennial team (elected every four years in accordance with the 2016 Book of Discipline and the Standing Rules of the North Alabama Conference)

*Teams are appointed by the Bishop and listed in this report for informational purposes only.

Years are listed after members' names for teams whose terms are limited by the 2016 Book of Discipline and/or the Standing Rules of the North Alabama Conference. The year listed indicates the year the member began serving.

Changes to these rosters may occur prior to Annual Conference due to appointment changes and other factors. Any changes will be distributed at Annual Conference.

For teams whose officers are not provided by the Nominations Team, officers will be elected at the team's first meeting following Annual Conference. Where officers are listed as ‘TBD’, the officer(s) will be provided by the Nominations Team and announced at Annual Conference.
Ordained Ministry

The North Alabama Conference Board of Ordained Ministry (BOM) faithfully fulfills its role in accordance with ¶635.2 of the 2016 Book of Discipline. We also embrace the vision of our conference to Discover, Develop and Deploy Spiritual Leaders to make Disciples for Jesus Christ for the Transformation of the World. To see this vision become a reality we take seriously our role to discover and develop clergy leadership for the future.

The BOM works diligently to fulfill its role in credentialing of our clergy through the hard work of the District Boards of Ordained Ministry, the Conference Board and the various committees and teams within the board. These dedicated teams provide leadership in our candidacy programs and retreats, our licensing schools, conference relations teams, our executive committee and staff. They are devoted to the ministry of the Gospel and to the growth and development of the clergy of the North Alabama Conference.

Our annual candidacy retreat continues to grow and shape those candidates early in the process. Additionally, in partnership with the Bishop and the cabinet, our regular visits to our seminaries both support our students already attending and provide exciting possibilities to recruit outstanding graduates to our conference. The Ministerial Education Fund (MEF) Committee provided by the faithful giving of our local churches through apportioned funds and the benefits of a generous donation supports our seminary students in their educational and spiritual journey. The Life Long Learning plan is already making an impact for our clergy. The 2018 Ordinands will meet and work on 5-year learning and professional growth plans. We thank the clergy and lay members of our district boards for their faithful work. I want to say a special thanks to the lay and clergy members of our Conference Board. Their prayerful, faithful and thoughtful work plays a vital role in helping to provide effective clergy leadership for the future of the North Alabama Conference.

Our board also wants to offer a special word of gratitude to the Office of Ordained Ministry. We thank Ron Schultz for his innovation and thoughtful leadership. Sherri Ferguson’s invaluable work continues to positively impact our clergy and local churches as does the work of Laura Belding in Support Staff and Administration. The Operational Team will continue to explore new and improved avenues of recruiting, training and deploying our clergy. The Board of Ordained Ministry empowered by the Spirit looks forward to being a vital part of Discovering and Developing spiritual leaders to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Rev. Sherry Harris, Chair • sherry.harris@umcna.org

Pension and Health Benefits

Report Number 1: Clergy Retirement Security Program

Clergy Retirement Security Program (CRSP) is a retirement program for eligible clergy that offers defined benefit income and a defined contributions account.

Effective January 1, 2014:

- CRSP includes a defined benefit component (1.00% of Denominational Average Compensation per year of service), a defined contribution non-matching component (2% of participant plan compensation), and a defined contribution matching component (100% of a participant’s United Methodist Personal Investment Plan contribution not exceeding 1% of participant plan compensation).
- CRSP provides benefits to clergy serving full-time appointments. In addition, the North Alabama Conference has elected to provide benefits under CRSP to clergy serving three-quarters time and half-time appointments.
- Clergy serving less than half-time appointments are not eligible for CRSP benefits. However, churches that provide a United Methodist Personal Investment Plan employer contribution of up to 2% (3% if clergyperson makes a personal contribution up to 1%) for pastors serving a less than half-time appointment are eligible for reimbursement of this expense on an annual basis from the Conference.

The cost for the defined benefit component of CRSP is actuarially determined by Wespath Benefits and Investments. In any year, the total cost of CRSP may also include required funding amounts for pre-1982 service and certain Ministerial Pension Plan (MPP) annuities. MPP provides pension benefits for service rendered during the period 1982-2006.
Allocation of CRSP Funding to Local Churches

The Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits (the Board) studied alternative methods for allocating pension cost to local churches for several years prior to 2014. The formula used to allocate pension cost from 2007 through 2013 was primarily based on a local church's financial strength. Thus, larger churches paid proportionally more for pension benefits and smaller churches received a proportionally lower cost, without regard to a specific pastor's true pension cost for a given year.

The following changes to the historical formula for allocating pension cost to local churches were approved by Annual Conference in 2014, effective January 1, 2015:

- 50% of pension funding will be allocated to local churches using a formula based on local church membership (25%) and local church expenditures for compensation, program, and operations (75%), and
- 50% of pension funding will be allocated to local churches based on the average cost per full-time equivalent (FTE) clergy serving each local church, with no minimum FTE requirement for each local church.
- The effect of increases in local church pension allocations due to the formula change will be phased in ratably over a period of ten years, from 2015 through 2024.
- Churches will be responsible for an additional 10% of any increase related to the change in the pension funding formula each year beginning in 2015 and continuing through 2024, when churches will be responsible for 100% of their pension funding allocation.
- The decreasing reductions in pension funding will be paid by pension reserve funds each year through 2024. The funding provided by pension reserve funds was $426,682, $387,647, $333,587, and $257,727 in 2015, 2016, 2017, and 2018, respectively.

Report Number 2: Retiree Access to Health Insurance in 2019

Clergypersons and spouses under age 65 at the time of retirement may each remain in HealthFlex (the Conference's regular group health insurance plan) until the 1st day of the month he or she turns age 65, provided that he or she has at least 15 years of eligible full-time service in the North Alabama Conference prior to retirement, and the spouse has been married to the retired clergyperson for at least 15 years during the retiree's eligible full-time service in North Alabama, respectively.

At age 65, a retired clergyperson's participation in HealthFlex terminates and he or she is given the opportunity to enroll in BlueCross BlueShield of Alabama's C Plus, a Medicare supplemental group insurance plan. The retired clergyperson's spouse may remain in HealthFlex until the 1st day of the month he or she turns age 65, at which time he or she will also have the option of enrolling in C Plus.

To qualify for C Plus, a person must be eligible and enrolled in both Part A and Part B of Medicare. A person may enroll in Medicare beginning three months before the month in which he or she turns age 65. (Medicare enrollees should look for two effective dates on their red, white, and blue Medicare health insurance card, one for Part A and one for Part B. If there are not two effective dates of coverage listed, the enrollee should contact the local Social Security office before applying for C Plus.)

Persons may obtain a C Plus application from the Health Insurance Benefits Coordinator in the Conference Treasurer’s Office. This form should be completed and returned as soon as he or she receives a Medicare health insurance card.

Retired clergypersons and their spouses are responsible for the entire cost of HealthFlex or C Plus premiums. The Conference Treasurer’s Office will notify the Wespath Benefits and Investments to withhold the applicable health insurance premium from the retiree's monthly pension annuity.
Report Number 3: 2019 Rental/Housing Allowance Resolution

Resolution to Designate Rental/Housing Allowances for Retired or Disabled Ministers of the North Alabama Conference

WHEREAS, the religious denomination known as The United Methodist Church has and functions through Ministers of the Gospel who are duly ordained or licensed; and

WHEREAS, the practice of the United Methodist Church is to provide a parsonage or a rental/housing allowance as part of the gross compensation for each of its active ordained or licensed ministers; and

WHEREAS, pension and disability payments to retired and disabled ordained or licensed ministers of The United Methodist Church are considered deferred compensation and are paid to said retired and disabled ordained or licensed ministers in consideration of previous, active service; and

WHEREAS, the Internal Revenue Service has recognized that the North Alabama Conference is the appropriate organization to designate a rental/housing allowance for retired and disabled ordained licensed ministers who are members of the Conference;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED;

1. An amount equal to 100% of the pension or disability payments received during 2019 be and is hereby designated as a rental/housing allowance for each retired and disabled ordained or licensed minister of The United Methodist Church who is or was a member of the North Alabama Conference at the time of his or her retirement or disability.

2. This rental/housing allowance shall apply to each retired and disabled ordained or licensed minister who has been granted the retired relation or placed on disability leave by the North Alabama Conference and whose name and relationship to the Conference is recorded in the Journal of the North Alabama Conference and in other appropriate records maintained by the Conference.

3. The pension or disability payment to which this rental/housing allowance applies shall be the pension or disability payment resulting from all service of such retired and disabled ordained or licensed minister from all employment by any local church, Annual Conference, General Agency, or institution of The United Methodist Church or any former denomination that is now a part of The United Methodist Church, or from any other employer who employed the minister to perform services related to the ministry and who elected to make contributions to the pension and disability funds of The United Methodist Church for such retired or disabled minister’s pension.

NOTE: The rental/housing allowance which may be excluded from a minister’s gross income is limited to the lesser of (1) the amount of the rental/housing allowance designated by the minister’s employer or other appropriate body, (2) the amount actually expended by the minister to provide his or her housing, or (3) the legally-determined fair rental value of the parsonage or other housing provided. As specified in Rev. Rul. 71-290, C.B. 92, “the only amount that will qualify for exclusion under section 107(2) of the Code as a "rental allowance" is an amount equal to the fair rental value of the home, including furnishings and appurtenances such as a garage, plus the cost of utilities.”

Report Number 4: 2019 Comprehensive Benefit Funding Plan

The 2016 Book of Discipline (¶1506.6) requires each annual conference to develop, adopt, and implement a formal Comprehensive Benefit Funding Plan (CBFP) for all of its benefit obligations. The CBFP is submitted annually to Wespath Benefits and Investments (Wespath) for review, and is approved by the Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits following the receipt and inclusion of a favorable written opinion from Wespath. A copy of the approved 2019 CBFP is available from the Conference Treasurer’s Office.
Report Number 5: 2019 Disability/Death Benefits
Disability/death benefits are provided to eligible clergy and their surviving spouses and children by the Comprehensive Protection Plan.

Disability Benefits
The disability benefit is 70% of plan compensation, not to exceed 200% of the 2019 Denominational Average Compensation of $71,361, reduced dollar-for-dollar by any disability benefits received from the Social Security Administration.

Death Benefits
For active participants, the following death benefits are effective January 1, 2019:
- Active Clergy Death Benefit $50,000
- Spouse Death Benefit $14,272
- Child Death Benefit $7,136

For participants that retired before January 1, 2013, the following death benefits are effective January 1, 2019:
- Retired Clergy Death Benefit $21,408
- Spouse Death Benefit $14,272
- Child Death Benefit $7,136
- Surviving Spouse Death Benefit $10,704
- Surviving Child’s Benefit
  - Under age 18 $7,136
  - Age 18-25 $14,272
  (enrolled in secondary school or beyond)

For participants that retired January 1, 2013 or later, the following death benefits are effective January 1, 2019:
- Retired Clergy Death Benefit $20,400
- Spouse Death Benefit $15,300
- Child Death Benefit $8,160
- Surviving Spouse Death Benefit $10,200
- Surviving Child’s Benefit
  - Under age 18 $7,136
  - Age 18-25 $14,272
  (enrolled in secondary school or beyond)

The Comprehensive Protection Plan (CPP) provides disability/death benefits to eligible pastors. The Conference’s cost for benefits provided by CPP is based on 3.0% of a participant’s plan compensation not to exceed 200% of the Denominational Average Compensation.

The Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits (the Board) is pleased to recommend no increase in the CPP local church premium rate in 2019. The recommended rate in 2019 is $50 per month, or $600 per year, for each participant. The rate of $50 per month in 2019, 2018, and 2017, is a reduction from the previous rate of $174 per month, or $2,088 per year, during the period 2009-2016. The excess of the cost of CPP benefits over premiums paid by local churches will be funded by the Board’s reserve funds. The Board anticipates the rate may increase in years after 2019.

Report Number 7: 2019 Past Service Rates for Pre-1982 Service
Effective January 1, 2019, the annuity rates for service years rendered prior to January 1, 1982 shall be as follows:
- $734.00 per full-time service year of eligible clergy.
- $513.80 per full-time service year for surviving spouses of eligible clergy.
- $183.50 per full-time service year for surviving dependent children of eligible clergy.
Report Number 8: 2019 Supplemental Retiree Grants

In 2019, retired clergypersons age 65 or older, with at least 15 years of eligible full-time service, shall receive a grant in the amount of $70.00 per month to provide supplemental funding for retiree living expenses. A second supplemental grant in the amount of $70.00 per month shall be paid to retired clergypersons in 2019 on behalf of his or her spouse (or to a clergyperson’s surviving spouse) if the spouse is age 65 or older and was married to the retired clergyperson for at least 15 years of the retiree’s eligible full-time service.

The supplemental retiree grants are authorized for 2019 only and may not be provided in future years. Accordingly, these grants are subject to being discontinued. Funding for the 2019 grants will be provided by the North Alabama Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits’ (the Board’s) reserve funds. The Board’s reserve funds may not be able to provide funding for these grants in whole or part in years after 2019. Accordingly, in years after 2019, the supplemental grants, if authorized, may require funding in whole or part by the North Alabama Conference’s annual budget.

The supplemental retiree grants are disbursed by Wespath Benefits and Investments and subject to its administrative practices, unless the retiree or surviving spouse has requested the grant be applied to the cost of BlueCross BlueShield of Alabama’s C Plus, a Medicare supplemental group insurance plan. Retirees should consult with their tax advisor concerning the taxability of the supplemental retiree grants.

Report Number 10: HealthFlex Exchange in 2019

The North Alabama Conference became a plan sponsor in HealthFlex Exchange, effective January 1, 2016.

Understanding HealthFlex Exchange

HealthFlex Exchange is a plan selection model offering HealthFlex participants a choice of six HealthFlex medical plans, each coupled with one of five pharmacy plans. The Exchange provides participants improved engagement, consumerism, and accountability.

Participants receive a defined contribution credit toward the cost of the plan selected by the participant. Defined contribution amounts provided by the Conference which exceed the total cost of the plan selected will be credited to a participant health reimbursement account (HRA) or health savings account (HSA), depending on the plan selected. Defined contributions are funded by health insurance premiums paid by local churches and the health insurance reserve fund.

HealthFlex Exchange provides the Conference an opportunity to stabilize health insurance costs while providing participants with the same carriers, networks, wellness programs, and incentives available in all six HealthFlex plans. In addition, the Exchange offers coverage to participants that best fits their individual health needs and personal risk tolerance for unplanned expenses, and continues to provide the same underlying risk management and premium rating methodology, customer service, and administrative support unique to HealthFlex.

As part of the HealthFlex group plan, HealthFlex Exchange limits disruption to participants compared with other alternatives such as individual insurance through the private market or the Federal health insurance exchange established under the Affordable Care Act. HealthFlex Exchange is offered exclusively to United Methodist Church plan sponsors and participants.

HealthFlex Exchange Plan Designs

Participants may select from six plans, including three gold plans (more generous) and two silver plans (less generous), and one bronze plan (least generous) as follows:

- **Gold. Preferred Provider (PPO) B1000** medical plan with a $1,000/$2,000 individual/family deductible, coinsurance of 80%/20%, and some co-payments. **P1 pharmacy plan** with co-payments and co-insurance. Combined out-of-pocket maximum. This is the most generous plan offered by HealthFlex.

- **Gold. Consumer Driven Health Plan (CDHP) C2000** medical plan with a $1,000/$2,000 individual/family HRA, a $2,000/$4,000 individual/family deductible, and co-insurance of 80%/20%. **P2 pharmacy plan** with co-payments and co-insurance. Combined out-of-pocket maximum.
• Gold. High Deductible Health Plan (HDHP) H1500 medical plan with a $750/$1,500 individual/family HSA, a $1,500/$3,000 individual/family deductible, and co-insurance of 80%/20%. P3 pharmacy plan with $1,500 deductible combined with medical. Combined out-of-pocket maximum. After deductible, P3 pharmacy plan is similar to P2.

• Silver. High Deductible Health Plan (HDHP) H2000 medical plan with a $500/$1,000 individual/family HSA, a $2,000/$4,000 individual/family deductible, and co-insurance of 70%/30%. P4 pharmacy plan with $2,000 deductible combined with medical. Combined out-of-pocket maximum. After deductible, P4 pharmacy plan is similar to P2.

• Silver. Consumer Driven Health Plan (CDHP) C3000 medical plan with a $250/$500 individual/family HRA, a $3,000/$6,000 individual/family deductible, and co-insurance of 50%/50%. P2 pharmacy plan. Combined out-of-pocket maximum.

• Bronze. High Deductible Health Plan (HDHP) H3000 medical plan with HSA (no plan funding), a $3,000/$6,000 individual/family deductible, and co-insurance of 40%/60%. P5 pharmacy plan.

Each major medical plan provides participants an opportunity to choose from three dental plans and two vision plans.

**HealthFlex Exchange Defined Contributions**

The defined contribution is a key component of HealthFlex Exchange. A defined contribution is a fixed amount the Conference provides as a credit toward the cost of the plan selected. The defined contribution amounts for 2019 will be as follows:

- $744/month (8,928/year) for participants with individual coverage.
- $1,504/month (18,048/year) for participants with one dependent.
- $1,907/month (22,804/year) for participants with two or more dependents.

The defined contribution amounts exceed the HealthFlex cost of coverage for the B1000 medical plan (with P1 pharmacy and traditional dental) by $50/month ($600/year) regardless of coverage selected, including individual coverage, participants with one dependent, and participants with two or more dependents.

For any participant who selects a plan other than the B1000 plan (with P1 pharmacy and traditional dental), the excess defined contribution for individual coverage increases from $50/month to $219/month for individual coverage, $406/month for participants with one dependent, and $500/month for participants with two or more dependents in the bronze HDHP H3000 plan. Excess defined contribution amounts will be applied to an HRA or HSA, depending on the plan selected.

The Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits anticipates using $481,000 from the health insurance reserve fund to cover plan costs in excess of local church health insurance premiums in 2019.

**Report Number 11: 2019 Health Insurance Premiums**

Local church health insurance premiums for clergy will not change in 2019. Accordingly, effective January 1, 2019, health insurance premiums will be as follows:

- $740/month for individual coverage. Individual coverage is mandatory for full-time clergy.
- $740/month for dependent coverage.
- $1,480/month for family (individual and dependent) coverage.

**Additional Reports**

The following reports will be available on the Conference website prior to Annual Conference and will be distributed on Sunday, June 3, 2018:

- HealthFlex in 2017
- 2019 Budget
Procedures and Petitions

Per the North Alabama Annual Conference Standing Rules, "All motions to amend any resolution or petition, including motions to amend by substitution, shall be submitted to the Conference Secretary within 30 days of the publication of such resolution or petition in the PreConference Book/Journal Volume I or the conference website." This year’s deadline is May 16, 2018. For the complete Standing Rules regarding Procedures, Petitions and Resolutions please see page 51.

A Petition Concerning Clergy Appointment to Home Church

2016 Book of Discipline, Part VI, Chapter III, Section VIII, ¶425 reads as follows:

Responsibility—1. Clergy shall be appointed by the bishop, who is empowered to make and fix all appointments in the episcopal area of which the annual conference is a part. Appointments are to be made with consideration of the gifts and evidence of God’s grace of those appointed, to the needs, characteristics, and opportunities of congregations and institutions, and with faithfulness to the commitment to an open itineracy. Open itineracy means appointments are made without regard to race, ethnic origin, gender, color, disability, marital status, or age, except for the provisions of mandatory retirement. Annual conferences shall, in their training of staff-parish relations committees, emphasize the open nature of itineracy and prepare congregations to receive the gifts and graces of appointed clergy without regard to race, ethnic origin, gender, color, disability, marital status, or age. The concept of itineracy is important, and sensitive attention should be given in appointing clergy with physical challenges to responsibilities and duties that meet their gifts and graces. Through appointment-making, the connectional nature of the United Methodist system is made visible.\(^\text{16}\)

2. Appointment-making across conference lines shall be encouraged as a way of creating mobility and open itineracy. The jurisdictional committee on ordained ministry will cooperate with bishops and cabinets in providing information on supply and demand within the jurisdiction.

3. The United Methodist Church promotes and holds in high esteem the opportunity of an inclusive church (¶4, Article IV) with the formation of open itineracy (¶425.1).

4. Cross-racial and cross-cultural appointments are made as a creative response to increasing racial and ethnic diversity in the church and in its leadership. Cross-racial and cross-cultural appointments are appointments of clergypersons to congregations in which the majority of their constituencies are different from the clergyperson’s own racial / ethnic and cultural background. Annual conferences shall prepare clergy and congregations for cross-racial and cross-cultural appointments. When such appointments are made, bishops, cabinets, and boards of ordained ministry shall provide specific training for the clergypersons so appointed and for their congregations.

At the end of Paragraph 425, Number 4; add the following:

5. Clergy who have been members of United Methodist churches shall not be appointed to those churches.

\(^{16}\text{See Judicial Council Decision 492.}\)

Submitted by Byron Keith Barton, Member and Former Senior Pastor (Part-Time Local), Woodstock United Methodist Church, Woodstock, Alabama. keith.barton@umcna.org

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Committee Vote: 0 Concurrence 7 Non-concurrence

The Committee voted Non-concurrence and encourages the Annual Conference not to support this resolution.
A Resolution Supporting Childcare Licensing and Inspection

WHEREAS, the United Methodist Social Principles (¶162C) state, “… children are now acknowledged to be full human beings in their own right, but beings to whom adults and society in general have special obligations…” This Social Principle calls us to take responsibility for meeting the needs of children, including education and protection. Additionally, it calls us to meet the needs of not just our children but all children.

WHEREAS, in the United Methodist Church 2016 Book of Resolutions with regard to childcare it states that Congregations should strive to meet and surpass licensing standards in their state. The regulations of basic health and safety conditions in a building/program that serves children are the appropriate responsibility of the state and do not interfere with the free exercise of religion. Congregations should seek to be actively informed about such licensing procedures and requirements and should work to reform such regulations when they do not mandate standards that serve the best interests of children.

WHEREAS, in the United Methodist Church 2016 Book of Resolutions it calls upon fellow United Methodists to be advocates for quality childcare, going beyond the congregation, United Methodists should be diligent advocates for childcare nationwide. That United Methodists should stay informed about childcare conditions existing today and the issues involved in the design of an adequate public policy for childcare. The appropriate councils and agencies of the church should monitor public policy at federal, state and local levels of government. Become involved in church conferences and meetings, and in the larger arena of childcare through the Children’s Defense Fund, the National Association for the Education of Young Children and other research-based advocates of quality childcare. Call upon staff at the General Board of Church and Society to monitor, serve as an advocate for, raise issues concerning, and bring the voice of the Church to bear on childcare policy development.

WHEREAS, every child deserves basic health and safety protections while spending time in childcare. Nearly half of all center-based childcare in Alabama is operating license exempt and uninspected meaning they are not required to have criminal background checks on all staff, meet appropriate staff-to-child ratio or be trained and certified in CPR.

WHEREAS, Alabama remains 1 of only 7 states that allow broad-based exemptions from licensure and inspection.

WHEREAS, currently in Alabama nearly half of center-based childcare and nearly one-third of all childcare is operating uninspected which means no accountability to a third-party.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the North Alabama Conference of the United Methodist Church hereby endorses and supports legislation requiring that all childcare facilities and child daycare facilities, including preschools, be subject to licensing and inspection by the Department of Human Resources.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Conference supports legislation requiring criminal history background checks be conducted on all workers employed at any childcare facility, child daycare facility, or pre-school facility.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the North Alabama Conference of the United Methodist Church requests that the Alabama Legislature and Governor Kay Ivey consider this legislation at the next legislative session.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, a copy of this Resolution shall be provided to the Governor and each member of the Alabama Legislature.

Submitted by Kim Cochran, Member of Vestavia Hills United Methodist Church (kbcocrhnan@att.net)

Committee Vote:  7 Concurrence   0 Non-concurrence

The Committee voted Concurrence and encourages the Annual Conference to support this resolution.
A Resolution Concerning HealthFlex Insurance Plan

WHEREAS, the General Board contracts with Blue Cross to manage the day to day administration of a health insurance plan known as HealthFlex but does not buy insurance from Blue Cross (commonly referred to as being self-insured),

WHEREAS, the North Alabama Conference is the owner of a for profit health insurance company and requires that all actively serving pastors obtain their health insurance though the North Alabama Conference health insurance plan,

WHEREAS, the North Alabama Conference has stated in writing that individual coverage is paid by local churches,

WHEREAS, the HealthFlex premiums paid to the General Board by local churches in 2016 were $3,801,024 and the claims paid the plan were $2,625,160,

WHEREAS, the health insurance reserve fund had a balance in December 31, 2016 of $3,919,674 and was primarily invested by the General Board resulting in a unrealized gain of $202,264 or a total reserve fund balance going into 2018 of $4,121,938,

WHEREAS, the General Board anticipates using $390,000 from the reserve fund to cover costs in excess of local churches in 2018, if this is the case, it appears that the Board has an adequate reserve fund for insuring purposes and is drawing down reserve funds to maintain a profit margin,

WHEREAS, the Conference received HealthFlex performance dividend of $1,180,976 in March of 2016 for having an underwriting surplus contribution for the two year period January 1, 2014-December 31, 2015,

WHEREAS, the conference stated in the 2016 Annual report that churches with “any unpaid premiums since 2007 remain due and payable by local churches” and raised local church 2018 premiums from $8,784 to $8,880,

WHEREAS, with all considerations of costs to the conference’s health insurance company the conference realized a cash profit of $1,180,976

WHEREAS, this $1,180,976 profit could not be realized without local churches premium dollars,

WHEREAS, the local churches are struggling to meet their conference and local financial obligations,

WHEREAS, the goal of the General Board and the North Alabama Conference should be to supply active pastors with health insurance without profiting off of local churches willingness to pay their local church pastors health insurance premium,

THEREFORE BE IT RESLOVED, that the North Alabama Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits immediately rescind its 2018 HealthFlex Premium increase, return the $1,180,976 profit to the local churches and adjust its business model from profiting off local churches to a Conference that serves as a conduit for local churches to assist their pastors in obtaining health insurance.

Submitted by: William H. Coleman MD. PhD., Member Scottsboro First United Methodist Church, wcoleman@charter.net
Response to Resolution Concerning HealthFlex Insurance Plan

Per section 2.5 of the Conference Standing Rules, the Committee on Procedures and Petitions referred this resolution to the Board of Pension and Health Benefits. Below is the Board’s recommendation.

We strongly recommend non-concurrence with the petition submitted by William H. Coleman, and offer the following observations:

- HealthFlex is a self-funded church plan administered by Wespath Benefits and Investments (Wespath). The North Alabama Conference is a plan sponsor of HealthFlex. Wespath operates exclusively for religious and charitable purposes and is exempt from federal income taxes under IRC Section 501(c)(3). HealthFlex is not a “North Alabama Conference Wholly Owned For Profit Health Insurance Plan” as stated by the petitioner.

- Premiums for HealthFlex individual health insurance coverage are paid by local churches, as noted by the petitioner. However, the premiums charged to local churches in 2018 will not cover the full cost of the health insurance plan provided to our clergy. The Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits (the Board) anticipates using approximately $390,000 from the health insurance reserve fund to cover plan costs in excess of local church health insurance premiums collected in 2018, and rejects any effort to rescind the 2018 health insurance premium increase.

- The health insurance reserve fund balance of $3,919,674 at December 31, 2016 is the reserve fund balance “going into” 2017, rather than 2018 as noted by the petitioner.

- The Board maintains a fiscally responsible health insurance reserve fund balance to ensure funds are available to meet the costs of administering the health insurance program. The reserve fund must consider anticipated plan costs, risk tolerance for adverse (unplanned) claims experience, the collection rate for payment of local church health insurance premiums, economic conditions, and societal issues affecting financial support of the United Methodist Church. The Board does not maintain a “profit margin” in determining a minimum reserve fund balance as indicated by the petitioner.

- A target goal for the health insurance reserve fund balance is 75% of the estimated cost of the health insurance program in the current year. In 2018, the estimated cost of the health insurance program is $4,448,304, including excess defined contributions provided to participants. The estimated health insurance premium revenue payable by local churches in 2018 is $4,058,160. As noted earlier, approximately $390,000 will be required from the reserve fund to cover the estimated costs in 2018. The target goal for the health insurance reserve fund balance in 2018 is $3,336,228, or 75% of $4,448,304, an amount which compares favorably with the actual health insurance reserve fund balance on January 1, 2018 of $3,490,187 (unaudited). Accordingly, the Board has an appropriate health insurance reserve fund balance on January 1, 2018.

- In consideration of the HealthFlex performance dividend of $1,180,976 received in 2016, and the health insurance reserve fund balance of $3,437,453 on February 29, 2016, the Board paid a health insurance special distribution to eligible plan participants and local churches in July, 2016, totaling $805,456. Rather than experience a “cash profit” from the performance dividend as stated by the petitioner, the Board distributed 68.2% of the dividend back to participants and local churches, and was able to hold the 2017 local church insurance premiums at the same level for the seventh consecutive year. No additional special distribution of the 2016 performance dividend is recommended.

- Intrinsic in the Board’s work is a commitment to provide our clergy an affordable health insurance program with the best possible benefits, subject to reasonable personal healthcare stewardship. At no time has the Board’s business model ever engaged in “profiting off” local churches as asserted by the petitioner.

Response submitted by Brant Sanders, Chair, Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits
Scott Selman, Conference CFO, Treasurer, and Benefits Officer

Committee vote: 1 Concurrence 6 Non-concurrence

The Committee voted Non-concurrence and encourages the Annual Conference not to support this resolution.
A Resolution Concerning Parity in Appointments

WHEREAS, in the 2017-2018 appointive year, there were 308 clergy under full-time appointment in North Alabama, of whom 53 (17%) were women; and

WHEREAS, the annual base compensation of 104 NAC clergy equaled or exceeded $70,000 in 2017-2018, of whom 4% were women (4 women); and

WHEREAS, the annual base compensation of 46 NAC clergy equaled or exceeded $100,000 in 2017-2018, of whom 2% were women (1 woman); and

WHEREAS, the Cabinet of the North Alabama Conference and the Commission on the Status and Role of Women have undertaken a collaborative study of the salaries of women under appointment in North Alabama, which has revealed these and other disparities; and

WHEREAS, our Social Principles affirm "all persons as equally valuable in the sight of God" and also "affirm the right of women to equal treatment in employment, responsibility, promotion, and compensation;" and

WHEREAS, we in the North Alabama Conference uphold and confirm these beliefs about the equal value of women and men, and so find the present extreme underrepresentation of women in higher-paying appointments to be unacceptable;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that at both the Conference and Local Church levels, laity and clergy in our various roles affirm our responsibility and opportunity to increase appreciation and receptivity for women in lead pastoral appointments; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the North Alabama Conference of The United Methodist Church urges its Cabinet to continue to strengthen its diligent efforts to dismantle gender discrimination in the making of appointments, considering female pastors for the same appointments and on the same standards as their male colleagues; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Conference strongly urges its Cabinet to take steps to narrow this disparity by the 2020 appointment cycle, bringing the percentage of women among the highest-earning clergy to be equal to the representation in the general pool of clergy under appointment (for example, at current numbers, 17% - approximately 17 women, with 8 above $100,000); and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Conference strongly urges the Conference Commission on the Status and Role of Women to evaluate the appointment and salary data reported in 2020 for evidence of improvements in gender parity in the appointive process and submit their findings to the Cabinet and to the 2021 session of the North Alabama Annual Conference.

Authors: Rev. Kelsey Grissom and Rev. Henry Gibson


Committee Vote: 7 Concurrence 0 Non-concurrence

The Committee voted Concurrence and encourages the Annual Conference to support this resolution.
A Resolution Concerning Unity

WHEREAS, the Council of Bishops of the United Methodist Church has called a special General Conference for February 23-26, 2019 to deal with issues concerning human sexuality; and

WHEREAS, the Council of Bishops has formed the Commission on a Way Forward to assist the Council in discerning a way forward that will maintain unity of the United Methodist Church; and

WHEREAS, holiness, in the Wesleyan tradition, is faith working through love, and at its core, holiness is the love of God and neighbor, and having the mind of Christ; and

WHEREAS, the United Methodist Church is the embodiment of God’s love and holiness as it participates in the transformation of the world; and

WHEREAS, John Wesley said: “To separate ourselves from a body of living Christians, with whom we were before united, is a grievous breach of the law of love. It is the nature of love to unite us together; and the greater the love, the stricter the union. And while this continues in its strength, nothing can divide those whom love has united. It is only when our love grows cold, that we can think of separating from our brethren.” (Sermon 75 – “On Schism”); and

WHEREAS, staying united is the embodiment of God’s love; and

WHEREAS, the United Methodist Church strives to demonstrate the grace to remain united in ministry while acknowledging our differences;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the North Alabama Annual Conference urges the General Conference to affirm unity in our diversity, challenge in love all that divides, and offer to all people God’s saving grace through Jesus Christ that transforms the world; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the North Alabama Conference urges the General Conference to include all people in full fellowship in all ways in the United Methodist Church; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the North Alabama Annual Conference urges the General Conference to resist schism and express openness to diverse perspectives in matters of sexual identity and practice.

Submitted by Rev. Charles Alexander, Clergy
Mike Galloway, Lay
Sandra Gerhardt, Lay
Rev. Ava Rozelle, Clergy
Jim Starnes, Lay

Committee voted: 6 Concurrence 1 Non-concurrence

The Committee voted Concurrence and encourages the Annual Conference to support this resolution.
Seminary Reports
Boston University School of Theology
Greetings from Boston University School of Theology (BUSTH) as we travel together in this journey of discipleship!

Breaking News

- Students: Our entering students were the most diverse in our history, creating remarkable opportunities for in-depth exchange and fruitful collaboration.
- Faculty: We welcomed three amazing faculty this year: Rebecca Copeland in Theology (focus on environmental theology); Theodore Hickman-Maynard in Black Church Studies; and Cornell William Brooks as Visiting Professor of Social Ethics, Law and Justice Movements. Thanks to loyal alums, we also endowed the Harrell Beck Professorship in Hebrew Scripture and installed Kathe Darr as the first Beck Professor.
- Congregations: The Lilly Endowment awarded the Center for Practical Theology $1.5 million to create an innovation hub, which will foster creative vocational reflection in congregations and a sharing of the congregations’ wisdom.
- Doctor of Ministry: The DMin in Transformational Leadership is soaring with lively student cohorts that are broadly ecumenical, culturally diverse and global. The model includes intensives, online courses and faculty mentoring.
- Scholarships: We continue our offer of free tuition to UMC registered candidates for ordained ministry, and we continue to build student scholarships and housing as a central campaign priority. New scholarships include the Dale Andrews Scholarship in Practical Theology and Race, Korean Student scholarship and the Bishop John H. Adams and Dr. Dolly D. Adams Scholarship for candidates for ordained ministry in the AME, AMEZ and CME churches.
- Arts Initiatives: Recent exhibits and events include “Symbols and Art of China, Korea and Japan” and “Bridging Divided Communities through the Arts”

Partnering for Ministry and Transformation

Preparing students for ministry means meaningful partnerships with the local spiritual community.

- Congregational courses: Courses in congregations with church leaders and students learning together.
- Religion and Conflict Transformation Clinic: Internships and workshops that foster justice and reconciliation.
- Travel seminars: Courses engaging local communities on Arizona-Mexican border, Israel and Palestine, India, spiritual life centers and Serbia and Croatia (with focus on interreligious dialogue).
- Ecumenical partnerships: Continuing close work with UMC, AME and other Wesleyan denominations, while launching robust Communities of Learning with the Episcopal Church and United Church of Christ.
- Partnership with Hebrew College: Joint courses and public events, plus co-sponsoring The Journal of Interreligious Studies. The focus is on enriching theological education with interreligious learning and leadership opportunities.

Taking Action Globally and Locally

- Campus action: Work to improve accessibility and sustainability. BUSTH is the first certified Green School in BU, and is active in the Green Seminary Initiative. It has also been named as one of the “Seminaries that Change the World.”
- Internships in global service and peacemaking: Student-initiated internships for service with communities across the world, and for just peacemaking projects with international organizations.

Commitment to Justice

Celebrating differences while joining in action.

- Faculty and students have led and participated in service for victims of hurricanes and fires, protests on behalf of Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, protests of white supremacist movements, protests and services on behalf of immigrants and DACA young people and ecumenical and interreligious witnesses for justice in the city of Boston.
- The community (often student-led) has had deep conversations on issues that divide (including theological issues). We seek to foster respectful listening that builds community life and communal action.
Other Notable News

- Celebration of the 40th anniversary of the Anna Howard Shaw Center

As BUSTH looks back on 2017, it celebrates transformational leaders who keep the word of Jesus Christ alive. Their living legacy and perceptive witness gives us hope and courage for the future.

Mary Elizabeth Moore, Dean

Candler School of Theology

For more than 100 years, Candler School of Theology at Emory University has prepared real people to make a real difference in the real world. Since our founding in 1914, more than 10,000 students have graduated from Candler, where they have been shaped as thoughtful, principled, and courageous Christian leaders dedicated to transforming the world in the name of Jesus Christ.

One of 13 official seminaries of The United Methodist Church, Candler has been included on a list of “Seminaries that Change the World” for five years running, and was recently named a “Bright Spot in Theological Education” by Auburn Seminary.

Candler is also one of seven graduate professional schools of Emory University, a top-tier research institution offering extensive resources and a demonstrated commitment to service. Our location in Atlanta provides a hands-on learning environment rich with opportunity: The General Board of Global Ministries is headquartered here, as are numerous public health, international development and social service organizations. Simply put, there is no better place to prepare for ministry that engages our major denominational priorities: developing leaders, starting and growing churches, ministry with the poor and improving global health.

In order to keep pace with the needs of the church and the world, Candler offers 16 degrees: six single degrees and ten dual degrees pairing theology with bioethics, business, international development, law, public health or social work. One of our newest degrees is a Doctor of Ministry that is 90 percent online, so students can remain in their places of ministry as they study and immediately apply to their context what they learn in class. Our Teaching Parish program allows eligible United Methodist students to serve as pastors in local churches while they are enrolled—they earn a salary as they earn course credit and pastoral experience, plus they are mentored by an experienced United Methodist elder.

Candler’s student body continues to reflect the diversity and breadth of the Christian faithful, with an enrollment of 455, reflecting 49 percent women, 35 percent people of color (U.S.), and a median age of 30. Students represent 39 denominations, with half coming from the Methodist family. 82 percent of students are seeking a degree to prepare them as ministry professionals.

Candler has a deep commitment to alleviating student debt and employs a multi-pronged approach to tackle this issue. In 2017-2018, we awarded $5.3 million in Candler scholarships, with 97 percent of MDiv students receiving aid and the average scholarship covering 75 percent of tuition. Plus, our comprehensive “Faith and Finance” program teaches money management skills that serve our students now and will continue to serve them—and the churches they lead—well into the future.

Half of Candler’s faculty is United Methodist and 58 percent come from traditions within the larger Methodist family. This year, we welcomed fellow United Methodist Helen Jin Kim to the faculty as Assistant Professor of American Religious History, and we sent best wishes along with our colleague Mary Lou Greenwood Boice as she retired after 25 years of remarkable service to Candler.

Candler draws considerable strength and inspiration from its relationship with The United Methodist Church. Our ability to fulfill our mission of educating faithful and creative leaders for the church’s ministries throughout the world depends upon your support, gifts, and prayers. Thank you for the countless ways you advance this vital ministry in the life of our denomination. Visit us in person in Atlanta or online at candler.emory.edu to see firsthand how Candler prepares real people to make a real difference in the real world.

Jan Love, Dean and Professor of Christianity and World Politics • jlove3@emory.edu
Memphis Theological Seminary

Memphis Theological Seminary is pleased to report that theological education for United Methodist students continues to remain vibrant and forward-looking.

The Seminary continues to offer a robust selection of classes in Wesleyan Studies. Dr. Michael Turner (Associate Professor of the History of Christianity and Wesleyan Studies) continues to teach all the required UMC courses for ordination in Methodist History, Doctrine and Polity each academic year. Dr. Turner, along with his colleagues Dr. Lee Ramsey (Marlon and Sheila Foster Professor of Pastoral Theology and Homiletics), Dr. Carmichael Crutchfield (Associate Professor of Christian Education, Spiritual Formation and Youth Ministry / General Secretary of the Department of Christian Education for the CME Church) and Rev. Billy Vaughan (Director for the Formation for Ministry Program) offer a number of electives in the field of Wesleyan Studies. Recent offerings include Pastoral Care in the Wesleyan Tradition, John Wesley’s Practical Theology, The Prophetic Rhetoric of Henry McNeal Turner, and Covenant Discipleship Groups. Students who take a minimum of five courses in Wesleyan studies electives have the opportunity to earn the Certificate in Wesleyan Studies.

The Methodist House of Studies at MTS continues to provide opportunities for Wesleyan formation for both students at the Seminary and pastors within the surrounding Annual Conferences. Dr. Turner (Western North Carolina Annual Conference), Dr. Ramsey (Memphis Annual Conference), and Dr. Crutchfield (CME Church) serve as the Directors and Associate Directors of the Methodist House of Studies. The Methodist House provides support for all of our UMC students by regular gatherings for fellowship and mutual learning. Recent gatherings have focused on topics that include hospital chaplaincy, clergy taxes and the ordination process in the UMC. The faculty members associated with the MHOS also provide academic and vocational advising to all UMC, CME, and AME students.

Additionally, the MHOS has sponsored training for clergy covenant group leaders in the Tennessee and Memphis Annual Conferences during the past year, co-sponsored Molding Christian Conversation in a Polarized Society: Beginning the Conversation about Same Sex Marriage and the UMC with the Turner Center for Church Leadership, and co-sponsored retreats on At Table: United Methodists Seeking a Way Forward with the Turner Center for Church Leadership and the Tennessee and Memphis Annual Conferences. Dr. Turner has led various workshops on Methodist heritage at congregations in the greater Memphis area.

Currently, faculty members at the MHOS are developing a Continuing Education Certificate in Wesleyan Studies in partnership with the Mississippi Annual Conference, a council designed to facilitate dialogue between the various Pan-Methodist traditions. We are assisting planning a Methodist-focused day at the Civil Rights Museum. In May of 2019, Dr. Turner will be leading a Wesleyan Pilgrimage to England. The trip will be open to students, alumni and interested Methodists from the annual conferences we serve.

In addition to the work of the MHOS, Memphis Theological Seminary has received a $1 million grant from Lilly Endowment Inc. to establish a Center for Pastoral Formation, Imagination and Leadership. This Center will provide resources to better equip pastoral leaders in the field as well as students preparing for ministry to lead the church and thrive in the twenty-first century. As with our Formation for Ministry program we are committed to fostering an imagination and accountability for the challenges pastoral leaders are facing.

In September the Seminary broke ground on the freestanding Hamilton Chapel, a 300-seat facility which will likely be complete by Easter of 2019. The chapel was made possible in part by a $3 million gift from Barbara Hamilton and the late Dr. Ralph Hamilton prominent members of Germantown United Methodist Church.

We are grateful for the support of the North Alabama Annual Conference and for the many fine students who have attended MTS from North Alabama over the years. We appreciate the confidence that the Conference places in MTS for preparation of United Methodist women and men for Christian ministry. We welcome your ongoing involvement and prayers. For ongoing information about the Methodist House of Studies, we invite you to visit us at www.MethodistHouse.org.

Dr. Michael K. Turner, Director • mtturner@MemphisSeminary.edu
United Theological Seminary

United Theological Seminary in Dayton, Ohio, celebrated a 77 percent increase in new students for the fall of 2017. While 71 new students enrolled in September 2016, 126 new students enrolled in September 2017. This was made possible by increasing student aid opportunities and empowering faculty members, trustees and administrators to personally recommend candidates for a $5,000 grant toward tuition. United experienced God’s provision, trusting what God said through St. Paul: “[God] is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine” (Ephesians 3:20).

Many of the seminary’s new students are current pastors who want to become more effective leaders for the Church through a Doctor of Ministry degree. United’s Doctor of Ministry program has 170 students enrolled this year from 29 states, two non-US countries and 27 Christian denominations. The average number of doctoral students in all Association of Theological Schools (ATS) is 60 students, making United one of the largest Doctor of Ministry programs among ATS member schools.

The Doctor of Ministry program provides academic rigor, peer group support, spiritual growth and practical application. Pastors identify a need within their community and, with the support of a peer group, mentor and United faculty, they develop a model of ministry that will resolve the challenge in their congregations or communities.

Rev. Rudy Rasmus, pastor of the 9,000-member St. John’s United Methodist Church in downtown Houston is a current doctoral student, who says he has been both challenged and supported in the DMin program. “The program is rigorous,” Rev. Rasmus says. “It is contextual, it is intentional and the professors and staff are at the top of the form.”

United has 212 students enrolled in the Master of Divinity degree program who usually seek to serve as pastors in local congregations. 88 percent of entering students are ordained or seeking ordination to serve a local congregation compared to 56 percent in other ATS member schools. United also provides a two-year Master of Arts in Christian Ministries degree, which many persons serving as Directors of Christian Education or other local church positions pursue.

United provides flexible course options: 90 percent of students take at least one course online, and courses are also available as traditional on-campus courses, week-long on-campus intensive classes and virtual courses that meet simultaneously on campus and in the cloud via webcast. If you are interested in pursuing further seminary education, contact United’s Office of Admissions at admissions@united.edu or call 800-322-5817.

Dr. Kent Millard, President – kmillard@united.edu
Society of St. Andrew
A North Alabama Conference Advance Special

The vision of The Society of St. Andrew (SoSA) is a world in which physical and spiritual hungers are met through food for the body, God’s word for the Spirit, community of love for the heart and opportunity for those who desire action. We are a faith based organization that provides for anyone who is hungry regardless of their beliefs. Since our founding in 1979, the Society of St. Andrew has worked to fulfill the mandate of the Gospel in our lives by striving to adhere to the words of 1 John 3:18: *Let us love not only in words, but in deed and in truth.*

The Society of St. Andrew’s ministry strives to be the hands and feet of Jesus. The mission of the North Alabama Conference of Discover, Develop and Deploy Spiritual Disciples of Jesus Christ for the Transformation of the World is what we do.

- **Discover:** SoSA finds the abundant harvest that God provides and the hunger-relief agencies feeding the food insecure in their communities. We discover the caring hearts of our volunteers as they discover the awesome bounty God has given for us and our needy neighbors.
- **Develop:** SoSA develops a community of relationships by gleaning farms excess fruits and vegetables and distributing to anyone who is hungry. Working together we develop a community of love and hope for those that need it the most. Educating churches and individuals develops awareness and action to “Love your neighbor as yourself.”
- **Deploy Spiritual Disciples:** Part of our mission is to provide an opportunity for those who desire action. Meeting basic needs, showing love and compassion and teaching God’s word transforms individuals that transform a community to love God and help others.

As we work to meet the physical and spiritual needs of our neighbors, our love and belief in Jesus Christ will be shown in our actions. Like Sammy and Nichole, who lost their jobs and found themselves homeless, SoSA provided fresh food for them through a community soup kitchen. They were embarrassed that they could not support themselves and they did not want to ask for help. But they did. Now they are employed and helping others by telling their story of receiving food for the body and spiritual food for the soul.

SoSA partners with all ethnic groups to provide and distribute fresh fruits and vegetables to anyone who is hungry. We are all children of God and wherever God leads us we are to show we are Christians by our love. Working in harmony with God’s abundance of a variety of harvest and a variety of people is following what Jesus Christ did when He was physically here transforming the world.

*Suzanne Wright, Regional Director • sosaal@endhunger.org*

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Sumatanga Camp and Conference Center
A North Alabama Conference Advance Special

Our staff team is thankful for another year of service at Sumatanga. In 2017, Sumatanga welcomed more than 1,800 campers who were invited to “Branch Out” with us and discover new ways to connect with others and God through Christ. We helped campers learn that their actions can be transformative to others; we taught them that in the choices that we make, our brokenness strengthens us and binds us to one another in God’s love; we discussed how to accept God’s forgiveness and grace, and gave them tools to help them continue the experience of camp in their everyday lives. Seven weeks of camp included opportunities for day campers both on site at Sumatanga and off site; Elementary, Mid High and Senior High residential camps; specialty camps, and Intergenerational camps where parents and grandparents experience camp right alongside our youngest campers. We are grateful to be able to continue to offer such a powerful ministry and for all the churches and families that support and encourage kids to come to camp.

During the 2017 retreat season, we welcomed 479 events, representing 223 unique groups. We were able to impact thousands of people with our mission of creating an environment dedicated to Christian transformation. School groups, Teams, Youth Groups, Adult Groups and Colleges all find their place here at Sumatanga. We are grateful for the opportunity to customize events for every groups’ needs. And we pray the Holy Spirit continues to make its presence known among all who walk our sacred ground.
Once again, we were blessed with hundreds of volunteers that put their time into helping make Sumatanga a place for everyone. From NOMADs to church groups, to youth groups and volunteers within our summer camping program, we are grateful to all those who give selflessly of their time. Thank you for loving Sumatanga by sharing your talents!

2018 is off to an amazing start as we prepare to welcome our new Executive Director, Gene Joiner and his family. Gene comes to Sumatanga from Krislund Camp in Pennsylvania, and brings with him decades of experience in Camp and Retreat Ministry, visioning and management. We pray that God continues to open doors at Sumatanga, continues to push us further toward excellence in ministry and partnerships with local churches, and leads us deep into ministry that is relational, relevant and real. We can't wait to welcome you to Sumatanga this year!

**Sumatanga Board of Trustees**

**2018-2019 Officers**
- **President:** Allan Robertson
- **Vice President:** Rev. Richard Hunter
- **Treasurer:** Johnny Frazier
- **Secretary:** Teresa Harris
- **Past President:** Rev. Mike Densmore

**Class of 2018-2019**
- Teresa Harris, Laura Sisson, Ryan Baty, Amy Morgan, Rev. Mike Densmore

**Class of 2019-2020**
- Chip Sligh, Judi Arnold, Allan Robertson, Bruce Rogers, Rev. Andy Wolfe, Rev. Richard Hunter

**Class of 2020-2021**
- Joe Gosa, Lauren Roden, David Grizzard, Johnny Frazier, Rev. Robin Scott

**Honorary Member**
- Nina Reeves

**Ex-Officio Members**
- **Conference Lay Leader** (With Vote): Steve Lyles
- **Cabinet Representative** (With Vote): Rev. Robin Scott
- **Bishop:** Debra Wallace-Padgett
- **Camp Sumatanga Executive Director:** Gene Joiner
- **Director of Connectional Ministries:** Linda Holland
- **Alabama Emmaus Community:** Ted Hagler
- **United Methodist Women:** Myrna Wood

*Daphne Orr, Manager of Camp Operations • daphne@sumatanga.org*

**Superannuate Homes**

**Report No. 1**

The Board of Superannuate Homes began at the 1901 annual conference of the former North Alabama Conference (M.E. Church, South), with the first “cottage” for clergy widows and orphans donated in 1902. In those days, when a pastor became disabled or died, their families were dependent on other family, church members or friends to help with housing needs.

The Board currently manages 118 homes located throughout North Alabama. These include 62 single family homes, 24 duplex units, and 32 apartment units. To be eligible for a Superannuate home, a retired clergy must have at least 15 years of full-time service in the North Alabama Conference. A move to an existing home requires a move-in fee of $7500, which is used to defray some of the costs of refurbishing and updating the unit. Residents are responsible for routine maintenance. The Superannuate Board is responsible for the roof, the foundation, the termite bond and insurance on the structure.
Since 1972, over 150 homes have been built with income from the Annie Sue Kelly Humphrey Memorial Trust, the result of a $3 million gift to honor the memory of Annie Sue Kelley Humphrey. In 2017, two new Humphrey homes were built: one in Florence for Rev. Tom Moye and wife Myung Hee, and one in Northport for Gary Heathcock and wife Rita. The Humphrey Trust is administered by Regions Bank. The retiree must provide a suitable lot that is approved by the Superannuate Board and Regions Bank. An application must be made to the Superannuate Board at least 18 months in advance, and it is best to make application two years in advance. The Trust stipulates that a new home is limited to a pastor in the year that he or she retires. There was no request for a new Humphrey Home to be built in 2018.

When the Humphrey Trust was established in 1972, the Humphrey family expected that the Trust might be able to build 30 or so homes. Through a strong investment market and the prudent use of funds to build modest houses, the Superannuate Board has built five times the number of homes that were originally expected.

The number of new Humphrey home builds has decreased in recent years for several reasons: 1) the Conference has fewer clergy; 2) clergy salaries are higher; 3) more clergy purchase their own home for retirement; 4) low interest rates have reduced income from the Humphrey Trust; and 5) the cost of home building has increased over time.

The Board of Superannuate Homes believes that for the foreseeable future, we will be able to continue to provide housing for retired clergy. The Board has begun an important strategic planning process to secure the long-term viability of Superannuate Homes.

The Board expresses its gratitude to Regina Ergle, who retired January 31, 2018 after eleven years of outstanding service as Administrative Assistant for the Board of Superannuate Homes since January 1, 2007. Regina will continue to reside in Jasper with her husband, Tex Ergle, a retired pastor.

The Board welcomes Donna Baccus as our new Administrative Assistant. She is a resident of Gardendale, where her husband Steve serves as senior pastor of Gardendale-Mount Vernon UMC. Donna brings to her new position 23 years of banking experience. Contact Donna at 205-226-7968 or donna.baccus@umcna.org.

The Board can provide a speaker to talk with any individual or group about ways persons can support this ministry through a monetary financial gift or through the gift of appreciated assets such as stocks or real estate.

Report No. 2
In 2017, the following assignments were made to existing homes: to Rev. Nancy Cole and husband Steve at Leeds, Rev. Patsy Carlberg and husband Rev. Forrest Long at Huffman, Rev. Kiki Terry at Gardendale and Rev. Paul Hillard and wife Carolyn at Gardendale.

Duplexes were sold at Heflin and Decatur. A Gardendale home and a Florence home were sold. Proceeds were deposited to the maintenance and operating account.

Report No. 3
Superannuate Home Care, a fund that assists any retired clergy living in their own home or a Board owned home, continues to provide a ministry to those with financial need. This fund enables the Board to respond to critical needs of those requesting assistance with costly home repairs and maintenance. Your financial support for this fund is greatly appreciated and encouraged. If you would like to know more about ways you can contribute to this important ministry or request assistance, please contact Donna Baccus in the Office of Superannuate Homes at 205-226-7968 or 800-239-7950.

Report No. 4
The Board received gifts during this year from Rev. and Mrs. Ralph Bates, Rev. Maynard Fetner, Suzy Maples Rutledge, Rev. and Mrs. Franklin Phillips, Dot Maples and family, and Rev. and Mrs. Joe Gamble.

Jerry S. Swafford, Chairperson • bswafford9@aol.com
Conference Trustees

This report is provided in accordance with ¶2512.6 in the 2016 Book of Discipline.

Funds maintained by the Board of Trustees had the following activity and fund balances (unaudited) for the year ended December 31, 2017:

**Fund 350—United Methodist Center (Operations)**
- Balance Forward, January 1, 2017: $142,435.33
- Revenues (Receipts): 199,641.48
- Expenditures (Disbursements): (208,789.16)
- Fund Balance, December 31, 2017: $133,287.65

**Fund 758 – Episcopal Office—Housing**
- Balance Forward, January 1, 2017: $20,944.86
- Revenues (Receipts): 26,225.49
- Expenditures (Disbursements): (37,638.12)
- Fund Balance, December 31, 2017: 9,532.23

**Fund 924—New United Methodist Center**
- Balance Forward, January 1, 2017: (164,675.94)
- Revenues (Receipts): 0.00
- Expenditures (Disbursements): 0.00
- Transfers: 25,000.00
- Fund Balance, December 31, 2017: (139,675.94)

The outstanding internal indebtedness on the United Methodist Center building was $139,675.94 and $164,675.94 at December 31, 2017 and December 31, 2016, respectively.

All property of the Conference, including the United Methodist Center building and the Episcopal residence, is in good condition and adequately insured.

_Harlan Prater IV, President_

**United Counseling**

**A North Alabama Conference Advance Special**

*A ministry of the United Methodist Church providing counseling, coaching and consultation for more than 45 years.*

At United Counseling, we take seriously aligning our organization with the priorities of the North Alabama United Methodist Church. Our mission statement is to support the people of the North Alabama Conference and their communities with coaching, counseling and mental health services. We believe it is our way of living out the Conference Mission to _Discover, Develop and Deploy Spiritual Leaders to make Disciples of Jesus Christ for the Transformation of the World_.

United Counseling has a long and rich history. Over 45 years ago it was created in order to meet the spiritual and emotional needs of the clergy of the North Alabama United Methodist Church. Through the years it has grown under wonderful leadership and developed into a rich resource passionate about naming and claiming the stores of hope of not only clergy and clergy families, but of individuals who reside within the communities of Central and North Alabama. It is seen as a source of encouragement, a place of respite and refuge to those whose life’s journey has been difficult and cumbersome at times. We have offices in Birmingham, McCalla, Shelby County and in the Harvest and Huntsville area.

In 2017, we were privileged to host 1,675 sessions and welcome 232 new clients over our five locations. We strive to provide quality, professional services that allow clients to rediscover hope and restoration in their lives and we can only do this through the support of the local church. Thank you for your referrals, your questions and your prayers. We
truly feel partnered in ministry when we join together in the work of healing and support. As we think about the years to come, the possibilities seem endless. We are dreaming and we invite you to dream alongside us.

To learn more about United Counseling, please visit www.unitedcounseling.org. You can also follow us on Facebook, Instagram, and Pinterest.

Rev. Monica Harbarger, Executive Director • office@unitedcounseling.org

United Methodist Children’s Home (UMCH)
A North Alabama Conference Advance Special

For the past 128 years The United Methodist Children’s Home has been caring for orphaned and vulnerable children as a witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Through group homes, higher education homes, transitional living homes, foster homes (regular, therapeutic and enhanced), adoption services and family preservation, UMCH extends the ministry of its supporting congregations in the North Alabama and Alabama-West Florida Conferences of the United Methodist Church. In this brief report I will highlight the vital statistics of our work in 2017, as well as summarize the programmatic highlights and developments.

Board Update

• Glenda Allred, a member of First United Methodist Church of Montgomery, provided excellent leadership in her first year as UMCH’s board president. UMCH’s 2017 board consisted of 20 clergy and lay persons from across the Alabama-West Florida and North Alabama conferences.

• In 2017, UMCH welcomed the following board members:
  - Jeannie Dodson, Canterbury United Methodist Church, Birmingham
  - Bishop David Graves, Alabama-West Florida Conference
  - Andrea McCain, First United Methodist Church, Montgomery
  - Jerry Maygarden, First United Methodist Church, Pensacola
  - Warren Matthews, First United Methodist Church, Greenville
  - Kim Stagner, Florida board; Gulf Breeze United Methodist Church
  - Steve Umphrey, Mountain Chapel United Methodist Church, Birmingham
  - Kirby Williams, Florida board; Good News United Methodist Church, Santa Rosa Beach

• UMCH’s clergy advisory board, led by Dr. Patrick Quinn of Frazer Memorial United Methodist Church of Montgomery, continued bi-annual meetings to provide UMCH with sustained feedback and counsel regarding the ministry’s strategic direction. Clergy from both conferences are represented on the clergy advisory board.

Program/Ministries Update

• In 2017, UMCH served 76 youth through our group homes, higher education homes, and transitional living homes. In addition, UMCH served 160 children through our foster care ministries in Alabama and Northwest Florida, a 32 percent increase over 2016.

• All in all, UMCH made a difference in the lives of 1,307 individuals (a 27% increase over 2016) through our various ministries in 2017.

• 100% of UMCH’s eligible high school seniors (6) graduated in 2017.

• At the end of summer 2017, UMCH completed its fourth academic year of the residential higher education program with homes in Tuscaloosa and Florence. This program served 23 young men and women, with the first graduate of the program completing a degree in finance from the University of North Alabama with a 3.6 GPA.

• UMCH is continuing to provide service and learning opportunities for our youth which they would not otherwise experience. UMCH sent a team of 20 youth and 10 staff to the Woodlawn Community of Chicago June 11-17 for a week of learning and serving through Sunshine Gospel Ministries. In addition, UMCH also held its Fifth Annual Awards Weekend at Camp Beckwith in Fairhope, Alabama. We value this time to celebrate our kids and youth.

• UMCH served 226 families through our Family Preservation Ministry in South Alabama and Northwest Florida, which represented caring contact with 884 individuals. This 38 percent increase in families served over
2016 was primarily due to expanding the program into Northwest Florida. This ministry has a greater than 90 percent success rate in preventing family dissolution due to child neglect. UMCH also served 28 families through its adoption services ministry.

- The Florida Foster Care Ministry experienced continued growth in 2017. After seeing a 19 percent increase in children served in 2016, this ministry served 109 children in 2017 (a 16 percent increase over 2016) and delivered an average of approximately 245 days of care to each of these children. In all, the program provided 15,598 days of care for children in 2017 (an 18 percent increase over 2016).

**Congregational Outreach**

- In 2017 various UMCH staff visited our United Methodist Congregations on 88 different occasions to share testimony about the transformational ministry of UMCH to children, youth and at-risk families.
- UMCH’s President/CEO visited 17 different United Methodist congregations on 14 Sundays in 2017, preaching in 9 services and delivering 14 ministry moments/award presentations.

**Congregational Response**

- Annual fund gifts from all churches, individuals and foundations totaled $1,981,007 in 2017, a 5 percent increase over 2016 and a 6 percent increase over the previous 3-year average.* Gifts from churches of the North Alabama conference totaled $384,242 for 2017, down 6 percent from 2016 and up 4 percent from the previous three-year average.

*Annual fund giving only. Does not include estate gifts or ongoing contributions from trusts.

**Future**

- UMCH and Glenwood Inc. of Birmingham have entered into an agreement to operate a collaborative ministry through UMCH’s home on Overton Road in Birmingham. The Overton Road home was recently renovated to house adolescents with Autism Spectrum Disorders who, for whatever reason, are unable to live with their parents. The Overton Road home will house up to eight youth beginning in the late spring of 2018, operated by Glenwood in collaboration with UMCH.
- After intense planning and study, UMCH has decided to create a new non-profit organization and brand from UMCH’s existing programs and ministries in the Florida Panhandle. Although it will operate under a different, yet-to-be-determined name from UMCH, the new organization and brand will be a wholly owned subsidiary of UMCH and will continue to be an extension of the ministry of the Alabama-West Florida Conference’s churches. This effort will coincide with an increased UMCH emphasis on marketing and development activity in the Florida Panhandle.

The United Methodist Children’s Home is a ministry of the Alabama-West Florida and North Alabama Conferences of the United Methodist Church to the hurting and forgotten children of Alabama and Northwest Florida. With God’s help and the support of our United Methodist churches, we are developing new and creative ways to fulfill the greatest and most ageless mission an organization could hope to have: "To follow the example of Christ by embracing all God’s children...one child, one family at a time."

God bless you, churches and believers of this great annual conference, for seeing the great needs of our children and responding so faithfully!

*K. Blake Horne, Ph.D., President/CEO • Blake.Horne@umch.net • www.UMCH.net*
United Methodist Foundation

The North Alabama United Methodist Foundation realized some exciting changes in 2017. In October, the Foundation relocated its offices, returning to the United Methodist Center on the campus of Birmingham-Southern College. We are delighted to be back with “family” and invite everyone to drop by our offices. Mike O’Kelley joined the Foundation as its new Executive Director. Mike has a long career in finance and business management in the Birmingham area. Since 2015, he has worked with the North Alabama Conference in the Offices of New Church Development and Ordained Ministry. Jean Sandefur continues as Office Manager, and Dana Aycox continues as Controller.

The Foundation is uniquely positioned to provide wealth management and disbursement between churches, charities and individual supporters of United Methodist ministries. The focus for 2018 is to bring attention to the services provided by the Foundation. Please contact us to learn more about investing, stock gifting, legacy giving, stewardship awareness and other financial ministries that provide for the future of your church.

Board of Directors

Class of 2018: Rev. Bill Bostick, Laura Hardeman, William Hocutt, Sonya Holcomb, Rev. Dorothy Ann Webster, Ralph Yeilding
Class of 2019: Rev. Mike Holly, Gloria Hubbard, Rev. Terri Milstead, Jeff O’Neal, Jeff Wallace, Dawn Wolfe
Class of 2020: Rev. Bill Brunson, Gina Johnson, Garey Morrison, Roger Steur, Betty W. Zoller
Cabinet Representative: Rev. Bill Morgan
Ex-Officio: Debra Wallace-Padgett, Resident Bishop; Steve Lyles, Conference Lay Leader
Executive Director: Mike O’Kelley

United Methodist Women

The North Alabama Conference United Methodist Women welcomed 2017 with a call to do good and spread the good news to all that “You are Somebody,” our Special Emphasis giving theme for the next two years. This program provides needed financial support to women, youth and children throughout the world. On April 8, our Refresh and Retreat Event, was a spiritual enrichment experience for over 100 attendees. Mission u, Children’s One Day Mission Day and Children’s Mission Camp were held in July. The spiritual growth study was “Living as A Covenant Community.” This study examined major covenants throughout the Bible and what they reveal about God’s character and eternal love for us. The geographical study was ”Missionary Conferences of the United Methodist Church in the United States.” This study provided an understanding of mission and ministries of the three US missionary conferences of the United Methodist Church: Alaska, Red Bird and Oklahoma Indian Missionary Conferences. After Mission u, we were blessed to have five members go on a mission trip to Red Bird Missionary Conference.

In the North Alabama Conference there are more than 9,000 women who are members of United Methodist Women. We live in eight districts where there are approximately 370 separate units. We make up the largest group or organization in the United Methodist Church in the North Alabama Conference. We have different interests but work to attain the one goal of being in mission to women, children and youth. We give voice to the unheard, raise up women leaders through education and leadership development and perform many acts of service.

During the past several years, we have worked with UMCOR to provide layette and school supply kits; items for the United Community Center (Riley Center), which is the National Mission Institute in our Conference; United Methodist Children’s Home; Babies First; Upper Sand Mountain Mission; Tennessee Valley Family Services; and The Wellhouse. Our dimes for Sumatanga have purchased chairs for the Joe Green Auditorium in the Women’s Lodge and beds for the North Wing at Sumatanga Camp and Conference Center.

We continue to keep our minds alert to issues prevalent in our world today through our annual leadership training
workshops for all conference and district/local officers. We are working hard to help the women of the North Alabama Conference become all they can be. We want each woman to continue to be the kind, generous, giving woman who will help with the food pantry, clothes closet, work on various committees, stand up against human trafficking, and provide layettes for UMCOR. That person is a unique, many faceted treasured United Methodist Woman from the North Alabama Conference.

As our 150th anniversary approaches in 2019, we are standing strong in our legacy of personal engagement with God that is deeply entwined with mission service, passionate advocacy and mutual relationships with our sisters here and around the world.

Our VISION is turning faith, hope and love into action on behalf of women, children and youth around the world.

Our goal in LIVING THE VISION is

- We provide opportunities and resources to grow spiritually, become more deeply rooted in Christ and put faith into action.
- We are organized for growth, with flexible structures leading to effective witness and action.
- We equip women and girls around the world to be leaders in communities, agencies, workplaces, governments and churches.
- We work for justice through compassionate service and advocacy to change unfair policies and systems.
- We provide educational experiences that lead to personal change in order to transform the world.

Olene H. McGowen, President • OleneMcGowen@hotmail.com

Upper Sand Mountain Parish

For forty-nine years the Upper Sand Mountain Parish has been ministering to persons in need in both Jackson and DeKalb counties of northeast Alabama. And thanks to mission partners like you who respond to God’s call, we are able to continue to offer the love of Christ Jesus our Lord to so many under-resourced residents of the upper Sand Mountain plateau.

In 2017, because of the gracious gifts of our mission partners, we were able to offer emergency resources such as food, clothing, water and heating oil to over 11,000 needy souls who live in our 1,000 square mile rural ministry area. In addition to our Mercy Ministries, we also have been able to offer full-time and part-time employment opportunities to some of the residents of Sand Mountain including some adults with special needs in our Safe Sanctuary Workshop, Better Way Shoppes, warehouse and sorting rooms.

Once again the Lord has called us to broaden our ministry scope in the last year while being faithful to our calling to be in ministry with the poor. Working with DeKalb county public school leadership, we have established a program that helps high school juniors and seniors who are not candidates for traditional higher education to be better prepared to seek employment and enter the workforce following graduation. This program is another exciting way the Lord is empowering us to break the cycle of generational poverty in our area.

The support of our mission partners such as yourself, offered and received in the Name of our Lord and Savior Jesus the Christ, is the only way we can continue in our Kingdom work here on the mountain. I hope and pray with righteous expectation that God Almighty will continue to bless you as you are a blessing to so many here at the Upper Sand Mountain Parish.

On behalf of our staff and countless volunteers, I again thank you for your contributions of prayers, financial gifts and sweat equity of the teams that have come to the Parish to work alongside our team. I pray you will continue supporting the Upper Sand Mountain Parish in the coming year.

Let me also offer myself as your missionary, to come and speak to you and your church or organization to show in a more tangible way just how much your gifts have meant to the under-resourced persons of northeast Alabama. Be sure to also check out our new website, www.uppersandmountainparish.com.

Rev. James Woodin, Executive Director • Office 256-638-2126 • Cell 256-404-8274 • woody.woodin@umcna.org
Urban Ministry

For 40 years Urban Ministry has been a witness to the truth that a single act of compassion today can lead to healing and wholeness tomorrow. Urban Ministry has deep roots within the North Alabama Conference as an organization founded by United Methodists in 1978. As the organization celebrates its 40th Anniversary this year, we are embracing the North Alabama Conference mission to Discover, Develop and Deploy Spiritual Leaders to make Disciples of Jesus Christ for the Transformation of the World.

In 2017...

- Our Urban Kids Summer Learning students scored a +8 month gain in reading and math this summer.
- WE Community Café is now open every Wednesday and Thursday and serves more than 250 customers each week.
- We helped move 55 individuals from insecure housing or homelessness to permanent housing.
- We painted and repaired more than 50 homes in western Birmingham through the Joe Rush Center for Urban Missions.
- We hired two more young adults from the West End community into our Workforce and Life Skills program.
- We increased the revenue generated from our social enterprise programs from $140,000 in 2016 to $160,000 in 2017. The more revenue generated, the more young adults we are able to hire and train, and the more sustainable our work becomes.

In 2018...

- We ask for continued prayer as we seek to build and expand programs that affirm the dignity of all West End residents as precious children of God.
- We ask for your prayers as we continue to take steps toward who God has called us to be as we embrace and implement the values of Christian Community Development and Justice Enterprises.
- We ask for your prayers and financial support as we launch and execute our 40th Anniversary Campaign to help us expand our community development programs and become more sustainable in the future.
- We seek prayer as we expand our Workforce and Life Skills program allowing us to hire and train more young people in the West End community.
- We desire more opportunity to work with the West End community and more partners to join in our mission.
- We seek prayer for all of our Urban Kids participants and programs.
- We ask prayer for the continued effectiveness of the missions of the Joe Rush Center for Urban Missions to include expanding services.

Hill Carmichael, Executive Director • hill@urban-ministry.org
Youth Ministry

More than 200 youth from across North Alabama attended Encounter 2018, held in Gatlinburg, Tennessee, February 16-18. Our theme this year was "Chosen," and over the course of the weekend students heard about how God has called them to be leaders wherever they are. This year’s speaker was Rev. Troy Benton from St. John’s United Methodist Church in Edwardsville, Illinois. Worship was led once again by the Asbury Worship Collective from Asbury University.

Special thanks to the Encounter planning team including Rev. Andy Curtis, Mike Arnold, and Sonia Gallimore, as well as Koneisha Timmons who served as emcee for the weekend. The Encounter team is already hard at work making plans for 2019 and hopes your church will be able to join us! For more details, visit www.umcna.org/encounter.

As part of our Connectional Ministries and Leadership Development work, we have established the following age-level task team to help facilitate ideation of events and programming.


**Emily Nelms Chastain • echastain@umcna.org**

Youth and Young Adult Members of Annual Conference

Young Adult Members

The group of Young Adult Members to Annual Conference is comprised of 18-30 year old lay members from each district, Wesley Foundation/Fellowship students from North Alabama Campus Ministries and a young adult clergy member and is under the guidance of Emily Nelms Chastain, Rev. Clay Farrington and Rev. Arthur Harrison. The group met several times prior to Annual Conference via Zoom and convened on the Saturday before Annual Conference to discuss constitutional amendments and upcoming resolutions. Last year’s members offered a conference-wide BINGO game and Table Talks during a mealtime. In 2017, members Marian Royston (Southeast) and Micah Shelton (Central) presented a young adults address to help debunk the stigma that their peers were not in church because they were uninterested. They proposed that young adults are awaiting an invitation to be at the table and to learn how to lead.

The following young adults and Wesley Foundation/Fellowship students are slated for participation in 2018: Megan Barber (Northwest), Tyler Blevins (UNA), Bryant Bowlin (UA), Griffin Cope (South Central), Kristi Edwards (Cheaha), Allie Houle (Northeast), AJ King (Central), Rhett Pendley (UAB), Ashley Riddle (Northwest), Thomas Roane (BSC), Marian Royston (Southeast), Eben Sanders (JSU), Micah Shelton (Central), Tyler Smoot (Southwest), James Thompson (JSU), and Emily Waldrop (Athens State).

**Emily Nelms Chastain • echastain@umcna.org**

Youth Members

Youth Members to Annual Conference met throughout the weekend at Annual Conference to discuss the business and its ramifications, as well as discovering possible outcomes for their local churches. Youth members are aged 12-18 and represent each district of the Annual Conference. The following youth are representing their districts at the 2018 Annual Conference: Christopher Brewster (Central), Abby Coats (Northwest), Lydia Coltrane (Central), Emily Kate Hayes (Northwest), Jamey James (Mountain Lakes), Josiah Karr (Southwest), Gavin McCormick (Southeast), Jagger Nance (Mountain Lakes), and Katie-Grace Ziak (Northeast). The group facilitators are Rev. Amy Howard and Rev. Andy Yarnell.

**Emily Nelms Chastain • echastain@umcna.org**
Additional North Alabama Conference Teams

- Black Methodists for Church Renewal
- Communication
- Disability Ministries
- Disaster Response and Recovery
- Episcopacy Committee
- Episcopal Residence Team
- Evangelism
- Hispanic Ministries
- Investments Team
- Native American Ministries
- Personnel Team
- Religion and Race Team
- Stewardship Team
- United Methodist Men
- United Methodist Volunteers in Mission (UMVIM)

Additional North Alabama Advance Specials

- Alabama Honduras Medical Educational Network (AHMEN)
- Christian Place Mission (Nauvoo UMC)
- Community Enabler Developer Inc.
- Dream Garden After School Enrichment
- Epiphany Ministry Inc. of Alabama
- Fayette County Cooperative Ministry
- Greater Birmingham Ministries
- New Life UMC
- Noah’s Art Club
- P.E.E.R., Inc.
- Reaching Accessibility for Methodist Persons (RAMP)
- Restoration Mission
- Safe Harbor Inc.
- Servants in Faith and Technology (SIFAT)
- UAB Department of Pastoral Care
- United Community Center
Forms
2018 Journal/Directory Order Form

Deadline to order is July 15, 2018. Online orders must be paid online. If you use this form, payment should be included when you mail it to us. Your order is not complete until payment is received.

The North Alabama Conference Journal is available in three formats.

Journal Online
The 2018 Journal will be available on the North Alabama Conference website at www.umcna.org/journallibrary at no cost.

Journal on CD
A CD version of the 2018 Journal may be ordered for $15 each. CDs include both Journal Volume I and Journal Volume II.

Printed Journal
The 2018 Journal will be published in two volumes. Journal Volume I is also known as the PreConference Book. Journal Volume II is published following the Annual Conference meeting and will be mailed in the Fall of 2018.

Clergy Directory
Printed 2018 Clergy Directory is available for purchase and will be mailed in the Fall of 2018.

Personal Information

Name: _____________________________________________________________________________

Address: __________________________________________________________________________

City: _____________________________________ State: ___________ Zip: _____________________

District: _________________________ Church: __________________________________________

Email Address: __________________________________ Phone: ______________________

Choose Journal Type

☐ Printed/Bound - Volume I - $15 each Quantity: _______ Amount: _______

☐ Printed/Bound - Volume II - $35 each Quantity: _______ Amount: _______

☐ CD (Vols. I-II on one CD) - $15/each Quantity: _______ Amount: _______

☐ Clergy Directory - $15 each Quantity: _______ Amount: _______

TOTAL: ___________

Mail Form and check payable to North Alabama Conference to:

Journal of the North Alabama Conference
Attn: Mary Simpson
898 Arkadelphia Road
Birmingham, AL 35204
2018 Reserve Lay Member Form

Dear Reserve Lay Member:

You have received this workbook to prepare yourself in the event you are seated in a session of the Annual Conference. If you are seated in any session of the 2018 Annual Conference, please complete the following form, ask your District Superintendent to sign the form and present the signed form to the Conference Registrar at Registration Services off the main corridor of North Hall.

This is the official record of your attendance.

Rev. Dedric A. Cowser
Conference Secretary

Complete and Present to Conference Registrar

To: Conference Registrar

The following reserve member will be seated for one or more sessions of the 2018 North Alabama Annual Conference meeting:

Name: ____________________________________________________________

Address: __________________________________________________________

City: __________________________ State: _________ Zip: ________________

District: _____________________________________________________________________

Charge/Church Name: __________________________________________________________

The reserve member is seated in the place of: ______________________________________ Name of Lay Member

Signature of Reserve Member: ________________________________________________

Signature of District Superintendent: ____________________________________________

Please remove this page from your workbook and present to the Conference Registrar when being seated in place of the lay member from your church.
2018 Mail-In Reservation Form

Deadline May 15

Name: ____________________________________________________________

Address: ____________________________________________________________

City, State, Zip: _______________________________________________________

Phone Numbers: _______________________________________________________

I am a □ Lay Member  □ Clergy Member  □ Visitor

Church: ____________________________ District: ____________________________

Meals:

Sunday Dinner
- Meal Ticket—$13  
- ATEM Dinner*—$16

Monday Breakfast
- COSROW—$11

Monday Lunch
- Meal Ticket—$13  
- Asbury Seminary Alumni—$16  
- BSC Advisory Board*  
- Laity Luncheon—$21

Monday Dinner
- Meal Ticket—$13  
- ARMS Dinner*

Tuesday Lunch
- Meal Ticket—$12

*Dietary Restrictions
Meals that meet certain dietary restrictions will be available during Annual Conference.

T-Shirts:

- Adult Small—$15  
- Adult Medium—$15  
- Adult Large—$15  
- Adult XL—$15  
- Adult XXL—$15

Special Needs Assistance:

Are you a person with disabilities?  □ YES  □ NO

If yes, what is your diagnosed disability? ___________________________________________

Please indicate the assistance options you need. (Select all that apply)

- Accessible Parking (tag / decal required)  
- Assistive Listening Device  
- Large Print  
- Sign Language Interpreter

Detach this page and mail it, along with a check payable to "North Alabama Conference" to:

Doris McCullers, Registrar
North Alabama Conference
898 Arkadelphia Road
Birmingham, AL 35204

Your reservation is not complete until payment is received.