

Daily Summary Friday, June 19, 2009

Opening worship led by **Robb Jennings-Teats and Donna Van Maanen** on behalf of the **West Angola Partnership Team**, giving a powerful sermon outlining the history of the partnership and the willingness to continue. The Conference Offering was taken in support of the purchase of a John Deere tractor for the sustainable agriculture project in West Angola.

Bishop Brown introduced those seated on the platform: Paul Extrum-Fernandez, serving as Parliamentarian; Kristin Sachen, serving as Conference Secretary; Susan Hunn, serving as Agenda Chair, Jim Scott, assisting with recording of the business; and Burt Yin and Gayle Shearman, co-Lay Leaders of the Conference.

The Bishop clarified an issue from the previous night's work. He affirmed that should we (all the Annual Conferences) accept Constitutional Amendment 10, the effect would be that the General Conference in 2012 would need to adopt a plan that would make the US a Regional Conference. We would remain the same as we are now if we chose to, but we could allow the US church to make US decisions and allow others to make other decisions for themselves. Matters affecting the entire UM church would continue to be a General Church matter.

Announcement: Rev. Amos Cambric would like to have years of service recognized. He was unable to arrive in time for the Roll Call due to the late arrival of his train.

We have until 1:15 today to remove something from the **Consent Calendar**. Items 2, 12, 14 and 32 have been removed from the Consent Calendar. **Point of Personal Privilege** – Odette Lockwood- Stewart, moved by this morning's challenge to the work that has been going on in West Angola, wants to respond by giving 1% of her salary to the salaries/pensions of West Angola. There will be a sign-up at the Pages' table for those interested. In a **Point of Personal Privilege**, it was mentioned that the Board of Laity last quadrennium challenged themselves to make the partnership with West Angola a part of everything we do. They tithed their budget to provide support to the budget of West Angola. The Board of Laity continues to do this (by buying their own lunches). There was a clarification that Odette Lockwood-Stewart was asking for support of both pension and salary for West Angolan clergy.

Celebrate the Advance – David Malloy, from GBGM, the Annual Conference liaison for The Advance. UMs contributed over \$43 million in 2008 to second mile giving. That is 15% more than 2007. California-Nevada contributed \$639,593 in 2008. 100% of each gift goes to the project you choose. We can do this because the admin cost is covered by World Service Apportionment. Support for missionaries is this year's highlight priority. Only about 5% of churches have covenant relationships with missionaries. A covenant relationship is \$2500, or \$5 per church member per year. Our Mission Committee set a Conference goal to add 10 covenant churches each year for the quadrennium. Mr. Malloy introduced the Advance's effort to connect with a new generation. **Be One** is a 24-hour food basket event. Through the program, young persons can connect with lives of the poor. For information, go to www.Fasttodaychangetomorrow.org.

Appointments beyond the local church and other Conference relationships were fixed by the Bishop and Ted Virts. The Fixing of appointments for those supervised by Jerry Smith and by Renae Extrum-Fernandez was also accomplished.

The death of retired clergy Bob Clazie last night after surgery complications was announced with request for prayers for Lois Clazie. Damon Goforth of Campbell UMC announced that Sean Miller, 16 years old, was struck and killed by a light rail train in San Jose. Please hold Sean's family and young friends in prayer.

Philippines Solidarity Task Force report from Michael Yoshi and Ruth Cortez. The task force was established to look into extra-judicial killings in the Philippines in 2006 by sending a fact finding team in Feb 2007. A permanent task force was established by the Annual Conference in 2007. It provides relief and support for families as well as acts of solidarity and accompaniment in threatened areas. The team returned in June 2008. Carolyn Talmadge (The Edge, SFSU) and Jeffrey Laya (Valley Faith, Sunnyvale) spoke of their experiences of giving witness in the face of terrible suffering. A 2009 solidarity team is going at the end of July and Bishop Brown will be joining them.

Kathi McShane, chair of the **Board of Ordained Ministry**, introduced those to be commissioned and ordained at this Annual Conference Session.

Section A - Jim Taylor, chair. Worked with Items 1, 3, and 4, which are on consent calendar. Item 2 is before us, concerning the 2010 Past Service Pension Rate. It was pulled from Consent Calendar, having received a unanimous recommendation of 73-0. However, we all need to hear it so that further action can be taken. Item 2 was approved. Paul Extrum-Fernandez, president of Board of Pensions, requested a ruling of law regarding Item 2 to determine if Par. 1506.7 of the 2008 Book of Discipline permits the Annual Conference to adopt a Past-Service annuity rate for retired clergy which "remains the same" from one year to the next. His request was seconded. The Bishop responded that he will review the issue and has up to 30 days to make the ruling. It will then become part of the action of this Annual Conference. When the ruling is made, it will be referred to the Judicial Council for review.

Section E – Paul Extrum-Fernandez, chair. Worked with Items 5, 6, 7, and 8, all on Consent Calendar.

Section C – Donna Wood, chair. Worked with Items 9, 10, 11, and 12. Items 10 and 11 passed and are on the consent calendar. Item 12 was approved by the section. **Item 9**, a recommendation from Los Altos UMC, that the 4th Sunday of October be designated to celebrate the gifts and ministries of differently-abled persons. The section added the words "whether visible or not" to the concluding sentence. The matter was before us as amended by section. The vote was too close to call visually – a count vote was taken by the very able Pages. Results: 448 yes and 289 no, Item 9 passes as amended.

The Bishop thanked the body for the spirit in which they have had the conversation and came to a conclusion with the item.

Section D – Myra Geiser, chair. Worked on Items 13 and 15 and both are on consent calendar. Worked on Item 14 concerning the WCC Amman call, and amended it by reversing paragraphs 1 and 2. Archer

Summers offered an amendment to what is now Par 2 “and we also endorse that the issue of Palestinian and Jewish refugees should be decided as part of a negotiated peace agreement between the parties in the conflict.” The Amendment passed. The amended Item 14 was approved.

Item 16 – leveraging UM investments in support of positive change in Palestine - was approved in section with 34 yes and 14 no. The vote was taken, and Item 16 passed.

Presentation of the Bishop’s Award (initiated by Bishop Melvin Talbert, continued by Bishop Brown). Bishop Brown indicated there were several excellent candidates – he was looking for leadership that not only serves the local church but also beyond (community, Conference, General Conference) to demonstrate the ministry of the baptized of Jesus Christ. The recipients today were Jerry Gleason, Dr. Steve Carlson, and Susan Hunn.

Connie Hunter – President of the Conference UMW, spoke of all the ways United Methodist Women are in mission around the world. The youth delegation assisted with a rap.

Sue King facilitated the sending forth of the UMVIM mission teams, both those who were going this year, and those who had been last year. The Philippines Task Force was also lifted up. Bishop Brown spoke of the special relationship California-Nevada has with the South Pacific. He asked for prayers for the Methodist church in Fiji, as the country is experiencing unrest after a coup.

Treasurer's Report – Diane Knudsen. We are on the right track, doing the right things. But we don’t feel very grand, like a winning team. But we are. We are a part of a connectional system which is quite an inheritance. We are recommitting ourselves and focusing on our mission.

Endowment Board, Cory Parish, director. Portfolio is doing quite well due to its balance.

UM Foundation, Celeste Cron, director. The Foundation is helping take churches to a new level of stewardship.

Section E - Chuck Johnstone, chair. Worked on Items 17 and 20, both of which went on the consent calendar. The section added a friendly amendment to 17 to include Hyatt Santa Clara. Item 18, Witness to Conscience, passed in the section with 54 yes and 16 no. Item was before us. Substitute for original proposal is coming from section and the session affirmed the substitute. It is substituted. Item 18 as substituted passed.

Item 19 – amended by section. 50 yes, 15 no. Substitute in Section 2 iii – willingness to engage other belligerent parties where that can be productive. Seconded. Supported. The item as amended is approved.

Pat Stout presented the Budget for discussion and approval. Item B. It reflects our expectation of reduced apportionment collection for 2010. Reflects reduction of staff in terms of hours and positions, closing the office 1 Friday a month, and reduced number of District Superintendents. Don Cunningham moved to amend title of *Apportionment for Clergy Pensions* to *Active Clergy Pension Funding*. This item does not include any funds for current retirees. CFA accepted as a friendly amendment. The Item is

adopted. Bishop encouraged all to go to local church and enlist allies who understand importance of working in a cooperative spirit. Ask them to help you talk to the congregation about developing a strategy for funding your portion of mission giving through apportionments. The only apportionment that gets paid near 100% is what we expend for current costs of clergy – which is a local church expense. We haven't even begun to give to the Conference. Every congregation has to pay the cost of the ministry that they need and want. Many things have happened so that people will say the Bishop is too hard – but how do we keep the obligations we have when we don't receive the funding for those obligations? Church by church, person by person, we have to convince persons that we can't make commitments we can't keep.

Section F- Bruce Pettit. Items 22, 23, 24, and 33 were considered and placed on consent calendar.

Item 21 Standing Rule change, concerning travel expense reimbursement for members of Conference agencies, was recommended by the Section, 52 yes to 15 no. The item does not include a financial impact. Treasurer Diane Knudsen estimated a \$50,000 additional impact on the budget, which has been approved; therefore currently funded items would need to be reduced by that amount. Also, any amount above the IRS rate for travel reimbursement is taxable income, and could very well require additional 1099s to be prepared. The vote requires 2/3 yes for approval, the item is not supported.

The Evening Session provided a warm welcome to Bishop and Mrs. Brown.