



*Thursday night's New Church Communities celebration was filled with interactive conversation for all ages, as participants were directed to experiment in getting to know each other by sharing personal stories under specific, brief time constraints. This technique is shaped by John Wesley's system of spreading scriptural holiness.*



## Go, Make Friends, and Plant Churches

According to a January 2019 report in *Psychology Today*, nearly half of all Americans report feeling alone, isolated, and left out. Loneliness is the fastest growing public health concern, according to the US Government's Health and Human Services website. Essentially due to our vocational mobility, lack of stability, and cultural stresses, making friends is a lost art.

The Rev. Greg Moore spent Thursday evening of Annual Conference focusing on how the people called Methodist were first and foremost, people who make friends. Planting new churches and renewing existing ones is more than "being friendly," it is actually about being friends with those who are missing from our communion.

The night was filled with interactive conversation, as participants experimented in an accelerated way with the ways creating holy friends should mold and shape us as disciples. This is not new; this is how John Wesley created the system that spread scriptural holiness across England and the emerging US colonies.

Those gathered were sent out to replicate making holy friends across the conference since, as Moore said, "Every Methodist is a church planter. Go, make friends, and plant churches."



*The office of New Faith Communities provided pocket-sized handbooks and table tents with gathering prayers to be used around dining tables to resource continued friend-making.*

## *Bible Study with Bishop Fairley:* **Living With A Spirit of Availability**

*"Every good gift, every perfect gift, comes from above. These gifts come down from the Father, the creator of the heavenly lights, in whose character there is no change at all." James 1:17*

God is a generous God: just watch in creation, said Bishop Leonard E. Fairley in his Bible study on Friday morning. He called the conference to imagine the God of the Universe who spoke into nothingness and created something. God used holy imagination to create life. God spoke to Abraham and blessed him so that he might be a blessing.

"Since God is generous," asked Bishop Fairley, "how could we be any different?" That is the part of the



*"It might be midnight in our world, and we may be struggling a little bit as a denomination," said Bishop Leonard Fairley. "We are part of an unshakable kingdom, we are part of a kingdom with a God who has a generous heart and a holy imagination just ready to pour out blessings upon us."*

generous God we should be like, he encouraged. Bishop Fairley challenged the conference to live into the mandate that "generosity is not an option for those of us who are water-washed and spirit-born." Baptism is an act of God's generosity: God's gift without price. During Holy Communion, Christ invites ALL who love him. We have no option other than to be generous. In 2 Corinthians 9:6, Paul reminds us whoever sows sparingly reaps sparingly and whoever sows generously reaps generously.

According to Robert Rodenman,

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## Not “Just” A Layperson! Called, Gifted Whole

All of us are called to ministry and mission by our baptism. In her presentation during the Laity Celebration, Harriett Jane Olson, CEO of the United Methodist Women, encouraged conference laity to find out the date of their baptism and write about their faith journey since that day.

She pointed out that laity often say, “I’m ‘just’ a layperson” when introducing themselves. Olson challenged laity to recognize the power of God’s call on *all* lives, not only those of clergy. She noted that, technically, Moses was “just” a lay person. Olson encouraged the laity not to let “just a layperson” be their self-description. She advocated for all to live as called, gifted, and whole persons.

UM Women know about being blessed and called. Eight women started the mission organization 150 years ago in Boston to meet the needs of the hungry, thirsty, needy and lonely. Today, the UMW is 800,000 women strong. UMW answered the call for the need for training of laity, and out of this came the offices of Deaconess and Home Missioner and other ways to support laity in their call (more at [unitedmethodistwomen.org/dhm](http://unitedmethodistwomen.org/dhm)).



*Ms. Harriett Jane Olson*

In the United States, UMW Mission Giving provides vital support for designated national mission institutions and other U.S. ministries as well as spiritual growth programs, membership nurture, and opportunities for leadership development, mission education and service and advocacy.

Olson celebrated that the NC Conference-based Partners in Ministry (PIM) in Laurinburg was recently designated as the first and only UMW National Mission Institution in the conference. PIM was founded by Dr. Melba McCallum, a UMC Deaconess, to address poverty and support marginalized families in Richmond, Scotland, and Robeson counties. PIM is focused on ministry for youth and children, housing repair, and improving the resources and referrals available in the area.

## *New Task Force on Ways to Care for the LGBTQIA+ Community Asked to Request Budget Supplement After Plan Developed*

The Council on Finance and Administration (CFA) met on Thursday, June 13, 2019, and received a referral for funding from a motion approved by Annual Conference requesting the Bishop appoint a task force to study the best way to offer pastoral care to our LGBTQIA+ community in North Carolina.

As the task force will meet over the next year and report back to the 2020 Annual Conference, there are no implications to the approved budget. After the task force is appointed and the scope of work determined, the task force will meet to develop their plan, which will drive their need for funding. A request from the task force reflecting that plan should be submitted to CFA for consideration as a supplemental appropriation.

**Correction:** The Rev. Laura Dunlap and the Rev. Christi Dye serve as Co-Chairs of The Commission on the Status and Role of Women (COSROW).

## A Spirit of Availability

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there are three types of giving: grudge giving, duty giving, and thanks giving. Bishop Fairley stated that “We have no other choice” than to give from a thank-full heart. Generosity grows through everything we say and is the path to transforming the world.

Fairley recalled reading a devotional written by Sue Monk Kidd in which she wrote: “I decided to take up availability as a discipline, as a form of spiritual practice, like meditation, prayer, or Scripture reading.”

Fairley asked, “What if we practiced receiving each person with our whole heart? Mindful availability means making ourselves available to God. He held up Samuel, Isaiah, and Mary as examples of those who said, “Here I am Lord, your servant.”

He told the story of when he served at a three-point charge in Sanford immediately after graduating from seminary. One of his parishioners was a dedicated prayer warrior. When Bishop Fairley called upon him to offer a prayer, the parishioner made himself fully-available to God, kneeling down and offering a traditional African-American prayer:

*“Here I am Lord,  
head bowed and knee bent  
like an empty vessel  
before a full fountain  
saying ‘fill me Lord  
until I’m full.’”*

Regardless of our station in life, we can be generous, Bishop Fairley noted. We can’t help but be generous for our resources cannot be exhausted. Keep going and do not grow weary.

“We are part of a kingdom with a God who has a generous heart and a holy imagination just ready to pour out blessings upon us,” said Bishop Fairley. “Open your hands to receive and give. Practice availability by just doing it. Let go of the stuff; too many lives hang in the balance. Fill me Lord ‘til I want no more!”

# Resolutions Report: 10 Resolutions Approved Including Combined Resolution Supporting Full Inclusion of LGBTQIA+ Persons

Friday's last plenary was extended by 45 minutes to accommodate the Resolutions Committee report. A total of 14 resolutions were submitted prior to annual conference. Five were submitted in response to the 2019 General Conference decisions. The report was presented by the Rev. Ben Wolf, chair of the Resolutions Committee, and the Rev. Laura Wittman, vice chair.

Resolutions 7, 10, 11, and 12 were all related to full inclusion of LGBTQIA+ persons. Thanks to a spirit of holy conferencing by their respective authors, the four resolutions were combined into Resolution 15: Supporting Full Inclusion of LGBTQIA+ Persons and Rejecting the Traditional Plan.

At the recommendation of the Resolutions Committee, conference members voted to suspend the Standing Rules of the Annual Conference. The suspension of the rules allowed Resolution 15 to be presented to the body after the stated submission deadline. After some amendments and lively debate, Resolution 15 passed by a significant margin.

Next, Charlie Hatch, conference Youth Legislative Affairs Person presented four resolutions from the 2018 Annual Conference Session for Youth (ACS). The youth who originally proposed each resolution were able to speak to the conference members. These resolutions addressed efficient church energy usage, called for diversity in youth events, advocated for churches to serve fair trade coffee, and encouraged churches to help address the pain caused by the opioid epidemic by hosting Narcotics Anonymous family support groups in every county. The body thanked the youth for their leadership and witness.

The remainder of the extended afternoon session approved continuing dialogue for full communion with The Episcopal Church, condemning solitary confinement in prisons, embracing immigrants, and addressing the age definition of "youth" within The United Methodist Church.

The session ended and thanks was offered to the Resolutions Committee for their work in facilitating discussion related to these difficult and sometimes controversial topics.

## Approved Resolutions:

- 1: Energy Efficiency in Churches
2. Family of Opioid Addict Anonymous
3. Diversification of Cultural Expressions in Youth Events
4. Serving of Fairtrade Coffee by United Methodist Churches
5. Care of Creation
6. Full Communion with The Episcopal Church
8. Seeking an End to the Torture of Solitary Confinement
13. Seeing Our Immigrant Neighbors and the Forces Affecting Them
14. The Age of Youth in The United Methodist Church
15. Supporting Full Inclusion of LGBTQIA+ Persons and Rejecting the Traditional Plan (This resolution combined points from Resolutions 7, 10, 11, 12)

## Annual Conference Communications Team

Derek Leek - Director

Ellen Beasley	Emanuel Lirag
Kenna Berg	Mary Frances McClure
Julie Brown	Harry Miller
Lydia Cauley	Greg Moore
Marty Cauley	Jill Murphy
Helen Coats	Steve Murphy
Suzanne Cobb	Amanda Packer
Freya Dahlgren	Dennis Peay
Chris Daniel	George Speake
Christine Dodson	Pam Strug
Para Drake	LeeAnne Thornton
Ally Fouts	Andrew Thrash
John Hall	Collin Thrash
Aaron Hayworth	Leah Wiebe-Smith
James Henderson	

## Reminders

- Please be sure to return your voting device to the lobby registration desk. Replacement cost for each device is \$75.
- The final reports and news from Annual Conference will be posted online at [nccumc.org/ac2019](http://nccumc.org/ac2019) and via the app: [nccumc.org/ac2019/app](http://nccumc.org/ac2019/app)
- If you missed a session or would like to re-watch one, the archived livestream links are offered at: [nccumc.org/ac2019](http://nccumc.org/ac2019) and [vimeo.com/nccumc](https://vimeo.com/nccumc).

## Friday's Special Offerings

Rotifunk Hospital *Sierra Leone* \$13,430.37

Laity Offering \$6,228.89

# 2020 NC Conference Delegation

General Conference delegates also participate in the 2020 Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference (SEJC).

The first five clergy and the first five laity elected to SEJC also serve as reserve/alternate delegates to 2020 General Conference and openings are filled in the order of election. Five additional alternates are elected for SEJC. A total of 21 clergy and 21 laity were elected at the 2019 Annual Conference.

## Elected Lay Delegates

### General Conference Delegates

1. Christine Dodson
2. Ellen Beasley
3. LaNella Smith
4. Steve Taylor
5. Emily Lain
6. Susan Graebe
7. Caleb Parker
8. Mark Schneider

### Jurisdictional Delegates

9. Jin Lee
10. Danny Peck
11. Claire Cox-Woodlief
12. Catherine Stallsmith
13. Cathy Thompson
14. Lee Rodio
15. Louise Mitchell
16. Miles Hunt

### Jurisdictional Alternates

17. Denise Baker
18. Phillip Jefferson
19. Lydia Cauley
20. Martha Caves
21. Mack Parker

## Elected Clergy Delegates

### General Conference Delegates

1. Belton Joyner
2. Lisa Yebuah
3. Edgardo Colón-Emeric
4. Amie Stewart
5. Edie Gleaves
6. Sara Beth Pannell
7. Liz Roberts
8. Ben Williams

### Jurisdictional Delegates

9. Kevin Baker
10. Ismael Ruiz-Millán
11. Laura Wacker Stern
12. Doug Lain
13. Chris Brady
14. Laura Wittman
15. Harriet "Tuck" Taylor
16. Tim Catlett

### Jurisdictional Alternates

17. Sangwoo Kim
18. Ben Roberts
19. Donna Banks
20. Nathan Arledge
21. David Beam