

Annual Conference Report

June 15-19, 2011

Roanoke, VA

The annual Conference in Roanoke was most inspirational. Although this conference was a day longer than normal due to balloting (and balloting consumed much of the time), the special services, music, and sermons helped to develop a feeling of spiritual fellowship. Highlights of the special services include the Thursday evening Mission Worship Service; three sermons by Dr. Sam Wells, Dean of Duke Chapel; music by the Lake Junaluska Singers; a service of ordination; Saturday morning Bible study by Thomas Kemper, General Secretary of the General Board of Global Ministries; a Service of Remembrance and Holy Communion with more than 3,000 people; and a Sunday morning worship service that was simulcast to congregations throughout the state. The Thursday evening Mission service included visiting children from Brazil, children from the Henry Fork Service Center near Roanoke, and inspirational introductions to the many missions of the church. Forty-three new conference "Mission Mentors" were commissioned and will be available to speak at churches on missions of the UMC.

Due to the illness of Bishop Charlene Kammerer, the conference was presided over by Florida Bishop Tim Whitaker, who did a most able job of keeping the business on track. Balloting for representatives to General and Jurisdictional Conference was done by Roman Ballot, which required frequent distribution and collection of ballots with an election on each ballot of only those who drew a majority vote. The process was quite involved, and the balloting rules were changed by resolution on Sunday morning to elect representatives with the highest number of votes on the last ballot. Had this not been done, I don't doubt we would still be voting. A list of those elected as delegates is attached to this report.

There were a number of resolutions considered, some of which were withdrawn or defeated. Highlights of the resolutions include the following: a call to fast and pray, the priority of proclaiming Christ, support of "20/20: Visioning an AIDS-Free World," supporting peace-making efforts between Palestinians and Israelis, and honoring the 50th anniversary of the founding of Virginia Wesleyan College. The conference narrowly defeated a resolution of affirmation of the retired bishops' "Statement of Counsel to the Church," which urges a change in the Book of Discipline in regard to views on homosexuality and ordination of gays and lesbians.

Several items presented by the Council on Finance and Administration were of interest. The conference approved a recommendation to change the apportionment formula to use only the most recent year of statistics in the apportionment calculation beginning with the 2012 apportionment calculation. Currently the formula calls for using the average of the last three years of statistics. The Active Clergy Health Care Apportionment calculation was also changed to a two-tier calculation as follows:

Tier one: A flat amount set by the Council on Finance and Administration (\$5,000.00 for 2012) per health care plan eligible clergy based upon the preceding July 1st appointment list.

Tier two: The remaining active clergy healthcare costs (Total cost less the tier one reimbursement), regardless of classification or eligibility, paid by church divided by the total clergy compensation paid by all of the conference churches.

The other financial controversy related to the 1.5 million dollar increase in apportionments to cover the unfunded liability for the pre 1982 pension assessment. With cuts in other areas to offset this increase, the total increase in apportionments for 2012 will be 2.62%. It is expected that the pre 1982 pension costs will continue to rise for the next several years.

Other items of interest include the appointment of a new director at VUMAC and appointment of a new Executive Director for the Virginia United Methodist Foundation.

For additional information on items of interest, I invite you to visit the following website:

<http://www.vaumc.org/Page.aspx?pid=1963>

Thank you for this opportunity to represent the Church at the Annual Conference and experience the many spiritual aspects of large group worship.

Respectfully submitted:

Richard Pulliam
2011 Conference Delegate

Virginia Conference Delegation

Thirteen lay delegates and 13 clergy delegates were elected to General Conference. An additional 13 lay delegates and 13 clergy delegates were elected to Jurisdictional Conference. Another 10 clergy and 10 lay were elected as reserve delegates.

General Conference Elected Clergy:

1. Tom Berlin
2. Beth C. Downs
3. Clarence R. Brown
4. J. Denise Honeycutt
5. Rhonda VanDyke Colby
6. Peter M. Moon
7. Tammy Estep
8. Marc D. Brown
9. Theodore Smith
10. Amanda Garber
11. G. Kirk Nave
12. Young Jin Cho
13. Brenda J. Biler

SEJ Conference Elected Clergy:

1. Ileana Rosario
2. Keith D. Boyette
3. Youtha C. Hardman-Cromwell
4. Larry Jent
5. Lorenzo D. Hill
6. Phyllis R. Earley
7. Paulo Cesar Da Silva
8. Ernest "Tommy" Herndon Jr.
9. Stephen C. Hundley
10. Kristin Marie Holbrook
11. F. Elizabeth Givens
12. Jeffrey P. Mickle
13. Mary Beth Blinn

Clergy Alternates:

1. David V. Ford
2. Mark V. Ogren
3. Steven R. Jones
4. George H. Freeman
5. Daniel Edward Elmore
6. Alexander B. Joyner
7. Mark A. Miller
8. Susan S. Garrett
9. Frances T. Cooper
10. Kenneth J. Jackson

General Conference Elected Laity:

1. Shirley Cauffman
2. Darlene Amon
3. Ron Hardman
4. Jim Branscome
5. Nathaniel L. Bishop
6. Marshall Bailey
7. Martha E. Stokes
8. David Brown
9. Susie Wolf
10. Carol A. Gaston
11. Dorothy C. Ivey
12. Larry Burian
13. Gene Mims

SEJ Conference Elected Laity:

1. Miran Kim
2. Rachel Hundley
3. Olivia Hinton
4. Ana Maria Lopez
5. Andrew Ware
6. Neill Caldwell
7. Andrew DiAntonio
8. Jacob Stephen Paysour
9. Willard H. Douglas Jr.
10. Janet Bracey
11. Larry Tubbs
12. Robert Orcutt
13. Sandra W. Baker

Laity Alternates:

1. Rose Teague
2. Adam Jenkins
3. Carol Sanger
4. Kevin M. Sabo
5. Kenneth Bosley
6. Carl Moravitz
7. Louise Landis Miller
8. Cecelia Short
9. Iris Smith
10. Jonathan Greer