



colleague

GENERAL BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION & MINISTRY

Preparing a New Generation of Christian Leaders

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General Conference Wrap-Up

Preparing Clergy Leaders for a Global Church

MARY ANN MOMAN

IT HAS BEEN SEVERAL MONTHS SINCE the 2008 General Conference delegates finished their work, and they, agency staff, and observers have gone home.

As I write this, the Midwest is still watching the Mississippi and other rivers overflow their banks. The political situation in Zimbabwe continues to be precarious. Soldiers and civilians are continuing to be injured and killed in Iraq and Afghanistan. High school and college graduates are celebrating the hopes and dreams of thousands of young people in this country and around the world.

As we wait to see all of the legislation compiled into the new *Book of Discipline*, it is certainly easy to ponder how the decisions of the General Conference will affect how the church will respond to the needs of the Midwest, our sisters and brothers in Zimbabwe, and to those who are affected by the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Young people—those in the church and those not affiliated with any faith community—want to know how they can make a difference

in this world. At the 2008 General Conference, the voices of youth and young adults were a vital part of the decision making.

In this issue of *Colleague*, you will find articles about changes to the process for entering ordained and licensed ministry. The call was to shorten the process so that candidates can move more quickly into relationship with the annual conference. The staff of the Division of Ordained Ministry will be working with Boards of Ordained Ministry to help them understand and implement these changes. The questions that still must be addressed are related to the ways that these young people are responding to the call to ordained and licensed ministry.

Many young people want to live out their calling in structures other than a church congregation. Will our Boards of Ordained Ministry be creative in their responses to them? Will we continue to require that the probationary period be served in a congregational setting? How is the church going to



embrace the Order of Deacons in the life of the church?

Not everyone called to set-apart ministry will understand that their call will be lived out in leadership in a congregation. Many will find their call and their gifts taking them into ministry in public places like schools, hospitals and other medical settings, the courts, living with the poor. Some of these persons will be deacons and some of them elders.

The General Conference has again approved a study of ministry. The study will address these questions and many others in order to bring further clarity to The United Methodist Church regarding the ordering of ministry. It will be important for this group to discuss the *Disciplinary* change that bishops can give deacons sacramental authority in their primary appointment in the absence of an elder.

In addition, our colleagues in Central Conferences are asking the whole church to think more globally regarding resources for education. The General Conference has endorsed the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry's plan to establish Ministerial Education Funds in the Central Conferences. These funds will be used to educate persons for licensed and ordained ministry.

GBHEM has also committed \$1.4 million to strengthen theological education in Africa. Well-educated and trained leadership has been the mission of GBHEM from its beginning. The goal of all of this work is that more and more people will hear the Good News and respond to God's redeeming love in Jesus Christ.

This General Conference was also concerned about the local as well as the global. The church adopted the Four Foci that were presented by the general agencies and the Council of Bishops. The Four Foci are:

- Developing principled Christian leaders for the church and the world.

- Creating new places for new people and revitalizing existing congregations.
- Combating the diseases of poverty by improving health globally.
- Engaging in ministry with the poor.

So as I write this article in the midst of turmoil around the world, it is clear that The United Methodist Church is putting in place the needed resources—both people and money—to identify and equip a new generation of Christian leaders to proclaim the gospel and to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. The gospel that we proclaim brings salvation to broken people and to broken communities.

It is my hope that this issue of *Colleague* will provoke your thinking and will move you to work toward identifying, supporting, and developing principled Christian leadership in your place of ministry. Who are the leaders who will be able to respond to the crises of our world with a loving, generous presence and the resources of a generous denomination? How will you be part of the process of identifying and supporting those leaders?

The staff and directors of the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry will continue our work on these important questions as we support the annual conferences and congregations of our denomination.

Moman is the associate general secretary of GBHEM's Division of Ordained Ministry.

General Conference Shortens Candidacy Process

VICKI BROWN

The candidacy process for ordained ministry in The United Methodist Church will be shortened by two years

beginning in January 2009, under legislation approved by the 2008 General Conference.

"Steps were taken to shorten and expedite the process and make it more accessible," said the Rev. Sharon Rubey, director of Candidacy and Conference Relations in the Division of Ordained Ministry.

"The effect of these changes reduces the possible years from entry into candidacy to ordination by two years, plus makes the process less prescriptive, therefore making it more accessible to more candidates."

General Conference delegates affirmed legislation allowing a candidate to begin the ordination process with a minimum one-year membership in a church, campus ministry, or other United Methodist ministry setting. The previous requirement was two years.

Other legislation made changes in probationary membership, including reducing the requirement from a minimum of three years to a minimum of two years and changing the name to *provisional* instead of *probationary* membership.

Probationary/provisional members still will be required to follow a residency curriculum of theological education, take part in covenant groups, and undergo mentoring with evaluation by their district superintendent and Board of Ordained Ministry.

The result will be more intense work for the candidates and the annual conferences, said the Rev. Anita Wood, GBHEM's director of Professional Ministry Development.

However, since the legislation requires a minimum of two years, Wood said annual conferences still have the option of a longer probationary/provisional period.

Complaints From Young Adults

Efforts to streamline and shorten the process without weakening it were in



Seminary students could face a shorter candidacy process in The United Methodist Church under legislation approved by the 2008 General Conference.

response to complaints from young adults that the process takes too long, according to the Rev. Rodney Steele. He was part of a group of delegates from the South Central Jurisdiction who drafted the legislation out of concern that the process is discouraging young ministry candidates.

“By the time people articulate that they are feeling called to ordained ministry, they’ve answered a lot of the questions that are part of the current process,” said Steele, a member of GBHEM’s elected directors.

The addition of campus ministry and mission churches as fulfilling that two-year membership requirement is particularly important, he said.

“We are seeing college students who get involved in campus ministry and decide to seek ordination. This legislation will let that time in campus ministry count as church membership,” he said.

Approved legislation also provides new language to be more accessible to other cultural, racial-ethnic, and non-English-speaking candidates. The petition passed by a sizeable majority in the legislative committee and was approved by the entire assembly on the consent calendar.

In addition to campus ministry, membership in a United Methodist faith community or mission church that is not yet an established church will fulfill the one-year requirement.

The candidate, along with a candidacy mentor, will study resources determined by the conference Board of Ordained Ministry based on the candidate’s statement of call, Wesley’s historic questions found in ¶310 of the *Book of Discipline*, and questions about formative experiences, the role of the church, Christian beliefs, and personal gifts for ministry, which are listed in ¶311.3.b and c.

This means there is no prescribed *Candidacy Guidebook*. However, the petition states that candidates are “encouraged to use resources recommended by the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry.” Rubey said recommendations will be offered as the process is implemented in January 2009.

Cultural and Racial/Ethnic Realities

The required completion and release of psychological assessment reports, criminal background, and credit checks remain in the process. However, the new paragraph states that district committees “shall seek ways to consider cultural and ethnic-racial realities in meeting these requirements.”

Following one year as a certified candidate—if half the educational requirements have been met—the candidate is eligible to be commissioned and become a probationary/provisional member. Petition numbers 80310, 80313, and 81450 also were approved on the consent calendar.

The language was changed to state that probationary/provisional members will be appointed by a bishop to serve a minimum of two years (reduced from three) following the completion of all educational requirements. Language also was added to make it clear that those in probationary/provisional membership “may be appointed to attend school, to extension ministry, or in appointments beyond the local church.”

Steele noted that this is permissive legislation and believes some conferences, including his own, will keep the three-year probationary/provisional requirement. “It’s working well for us, so I think the shortening for us will come on the front end,” said Steele, a district superintendent in the Arkansas Annual Conference.

*Brown is associate editor and writer,
Office of Interpretation.*

Bishops Can Grant Sacramental Authority to Deacons in 2009

A petition that allows bishops to grant a deacon authority to administer the sacraments—Holy Communion and baptism—within their primary appointment in the absence of an elder was approved by General Conference delegates.

“This legislation is an effort to extend the mission and ministry of the church in extraordinary circumstances, when an elder is not present,” said the Rev. Mary Ann Moman, associate general secretary of the Division of Ordained Ministry. “The legislation is a reminder of the importance of the sacramental ministry in the church and the world. It is fair to ask why elders aren’t present in the places where the sacraments are needed.”

The General Board of Higher Education and Ministry presented legislation to the General Conference, through the Study of Ministry Commission, which proposed a continuation of the denominational conversation regarding ordination and sacramental authority for four more years. Although the General Conference voted to create a new commission to continue that conversation, it also approved this legislation allowing sacramental authority. The legislation as passed by General Conference has the potential to compromise the deacons’ ordination to Word and Service, Moman said.

The petition amends the *Book of Discipline* to add: “For the sake of extending the mission and ministry of the church, a pastor-in-charge or district superintendent may request that the bishop grant local sacramental authority to the deacon to administer

the sacraments in the absence of an elder, within a deacon’s primary appointment.” (§328)

Moman said GBHEM staff will confer with the Council of Bishops and work with them as they address the issues of implementation in determining exactly what situations would require this local authority for deacons.

The Rev. Anita Wood, DOM’s director of Professional Ministry Development, said GBHEM staff will get information out to deacons, chairs of orders, and annual conference Boards of Ordained Ministry when the information is available. The legislation, which takes effect in January 2009, was approved by 67 percent of the delegates voting.

The Rev. Sharon Rubey, director of Candidacy and Conference Relations said the legislation gives the authority to “extend the means of grace for the missional needs of the church, and not a means of convenience.”

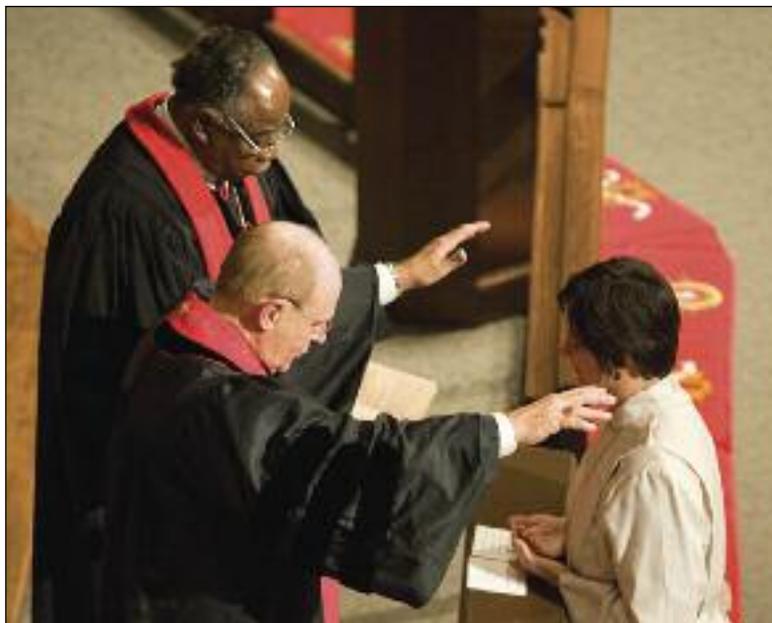
Wood said the heart of deacon ministry remains the call to connect the needs of the world to the ministries of the church.

“Deacons are called to the responsibility to serve in specialized ways that bridge ministries of the congregation with the needs of the community. Sometimes that may call for sacramental authority, and many times not,” she said.

Wood said articulating the connection between the ministries of the deacon and offering the means of grace through sacramental authority will be important and will require much discussion and discernment about how to implement this new authorization.

“Informal conversations have already begun,” Wood said, adding that she and other staff at GBHEM will be happy to guide this discussion toward implementation with input from deacons who were present at General Conference.

—Vicki Brown



Mitie DuBose/UMCom

A petition that allows bishops to grant a deacon authority to administer the sacraments – Holy Communion and baptism – within their primary appointment in the absence of an elder was approved by General Conference delegates. Bishops William Morris, left, and Dick Wills ordain Laura Kirkpatrick as a deacon.

Want to Read More?

For more information about General Conference 2008, visit our home page at www.gbhem.org, and click on the **General Conference Wrap-Up** graphic.

Constitutional Amendment Would Allow Voting Rights for Local Pastors

The 2008 United Methodist General Conference approved a constitutional amendment giving local pastors, probationary/provisional members, and associate members voting rights to elect clergy delegates to General Conference and jurisdictional conferences.

In 2005, nearly 15 percent—or 6,660 of the total clergy membership of annual conferences—were full- or part-time local pastors. Of these, approximately 4,000 local pastors will be able to vote for delegates to the 2012 legislative meetings, should the amendment be approved during the 2009 annual conference sessions. In 2005, there were 2,492 probationary/provisional members, and 2,065 associate and affiliate members.

To go into effect, the amendment must be approved by two-thirds of the aggregate vote of all clergy and lay delegates voting in the 2009 annual conferences, said DOM staffer, Bob Kohler.

“Previously, only ordained deacons and elders in full connection could vote on clergy delegates, so this represents a significant change,” Kohler said.

If approved, local pastors would be able to vote for delegates if the local pastors have completed the United Methodist Course of Study or have a master of divinity degree and have served under appointment for two consecutive years immediately preceding an election.

Kohler estimates that at least half of all local pastors have completed the Course of Study. Only ordained members in full connection with an annual conference may be delegates.

The Course of Study includes basic and advanced programs. The basic program is a five-year curriculum with four courses offered annually at regional Course of Study schools at eight United Methodist seminaries. Most courses are



Delegates consider legislation during the 2008 United Methodist General Conference in Fort Worth, Tex.

offered in a two-week module during the summer to allow both full-time and part-time local pastors to attend. Many of the regional schools have extension centers at different annual conferences specifically for part-time local pastors and offer courses in a two- or three-weekend format to accommodate participants' work and family schedules.

The advanced course enables a local pastor to meet the educational requirements for probationary/provisional membership, full conference membership, and ordination as an elder in The United Methodist Church. It consists of 32 semester hours of graduate theological study or its equivalent as determined by GBHEM and includes study in the areas of evangelism, United Methodist history, doctrine, and polity.

“In some conferences, local pastors represent more than 50 percent of the clergy appointed to local churches,” Kohler said.

General Conference Action

The provision that local pastors who have a master of divinity degree could vote was added on the floor of General Conference, and Kohler said that provision is a cause for concern.

“There is no guarantee that the M.Div. will be from an accredited or University Senate-approved seminary,” Kohler said. He called the General Conference action problematic because many M.Div. programs do not require United Methodist history, doctrine, polity, or other basic graduate theological studies required for annual conference members.

The University Senate is a 25-member body of professionals in higher education who determine how institutions are related to The United Methodist Church. The body supports development of institutions with programs that reflect significant educational, cultural, societal, and human issues in a manner reflecting the values shared by the institutions and The United Methodist Church.

“We evaluate the M.Div. credentials of candidates and persons transferring in from other denominations, and many of them do not meet the requirements of the *Book of Discipline* for conference membership,” Kohler said.

—Vicki Brown

General Conference Sets Guidelines on Clergy Effectiveness

Delegates to the United Methodist General Conference approved a petition dealing with clergy effectiveness and annual appointment, and also outlined conditions under which a pastor's appointment may be terminated.

The delegates, following the recommendations of the ministry and higher education legislative committee, voted 696-24 to amend and approve a petition related to ¶334 of the denomination's *Book of Discipline* giving bishops who question an elder's effectiveness procedures for corrective action or termination of the pastor's appointment.

The *Book of Discipline* specifies responsibilities that an elder in The United Methodist Church must fulfill. Those responsibilities, outlined in ¶340, are derived from authority given by ordination, according to the *Discipline*. Elders are responsible for the "ministry of Word, Sacrament, Order, and Service" within the church and serve in the church and the world.

The delegates voted on the process for a continued annual appointment and what would occur if an elder did not fulfill expected responsibilities. The basis for an elder's continued eligibility for appointment includes availability; annual participation in an evaluation process with a pastor-parish relations committee or comparable authority; annual evaluation with a district superintendent; professional growth through continuing education and formation; and willingness to supervise or mentor.

The delegates gave bishops an evaluative process to complete when an elder's effectiveness is being considered. The approved petition allows bishops to identify the concern, engage in conversations with the elder and design

a corrective plan of action, and set a realistic expectation of future effectiveness.

After evaluation, if an elder has not increased competency or effectiveness as defined by the conference board of ordained ministry or cabinet, "and/or does not accept the appointment determined by the bishop, then an appointment may be forfeited and the provisions of ¶362 (of the *Book of Discipline*) may be invoked."

Paragraph 362 deals with complaint procedures, the supervisory response and due process, and remedial action.

The delegates rejected petitions requesting that bishops appoint a pastor to less than full-time service. The petition involving clergy evaluations would have allowed a district superintendent to initiate changing a pastor's

conference relationship if three evaluations found the pastor to be ineffective and not likely to become effective through training and counseling.

—Linda Green
United Methodist News Service

Delegates Continue Study of Ministry Commission

A commission studying the ordering of ministry in The United Methodist Church is being continued for four more years.

Delegates to the 2008 General Conference voted to continue the commission authorized by the 2004 legislative assembly to study the

(continued on page 8)



Ronny Perry/UMNS

Higher Education Night

A 120-member student choir, college presidents, and delegates attending the 2008 General Conference celebrated United Methodist higher education and church-related schools for their "open hearts, open minds, and open doors." More than 1,000 delegates and visitors attended the banquet and program celebrating higher education on April 28 at the Fort Worth Convention Center, site of the 2008 General Conference. The event was sponsored by GBHEM, NASCUMC, and the Council of Bishops.

Clergy Effectiveness Study Will Enhance Training, Help Annual Conferences

THE RESULTS OF A JOB ANALYSIS OF WHAT MAKES AN effective pastor in a local church will enhance training provided this summer to district superintendents, Boards of Ordained Ministry, and others who work with candidates and clergy in annual conferences.

“The breadth of tasks performed by local church pastors, coupled with the rapid switching between tasks and roles prevalent in this job is unique,” said Dr. Richard P. DeShon, who did the study using focus groups. “It is remarkable how complex this job is.” DeShon is a psychology professor at Michigan State University in East Lansing, Mich.

The Rev. Sharon Rubey, the Division of Ordained Ministry’s director of Candidacy and Conference Relations, said the results from this study of what makes an effective pastor provide useful information for those who work with candidates for ministry, assign pastors to churches, and do clergy supervision.

“Now that we have this national research about pastors, the next step is to develop a widely distributed survey using the underlying behaviors associated with effective ministry to learn more about the amount of time and the value that is given to each behavior,” Rubey said.

“Along with that we hope to survey congregations as well to find out the kinds of knowledge, skills, abilities, and personal characteristics are desired in pastoral leadership. Together, these studies will offer guidelines that can be helpful in matching pastors with congregations,” she said.

The study, completed in December 2007, was conducted using focus groups of pastors who were identified by Boards of Ordained Ministry and district superintendents as effective. Since the purpose of the study was to determine the meaning of effective performance, conference representatives were not given a definition of effective. Instead, they were asked to name individuals whom they considered high performing pastors.

The 20 pastors chosen for the focus groups were diverse in gender, racial-ethnic backgrounds, and age, as well as coming from a variety of ministry settings and different sizes of churches.

A set of 13 clusters or groups of tasks that contribute to effective performance emerged from the discussions. Those are: administration, caregiving, rituals and sacraments, facility construction, communication, relationship building, evangelism, fellowship, management, preaching and public worship, self-development, United Methodist connectional service, and other development (performing activities to teach, train or mentor individuals and groups to improve their knowledge and skills).

“Every pastor is not going to be able to perform all these tasks well,” DeShon said. But, he added, “The people who are effective at very big churches could out-compete CEOs of Fortune 500 companies. The problem is there aren’t that many of them.”

The Rev. Dr. Tom Pace, senior pastor of St. Luke’s United Methodist Church in Houston, Tex., believes there is one crucial element an effective pastor must have.

“You have to know how to learn, and you have to like doing it,” said Pace, one of the pastors who took part in the focus groups. Pace said that effective pastors must always be willing to learn a new way to do something.

“I also think pastors have to be self-assured enough that they can be psychologically grounded,” Pace said.

Pace said when he came to St. Luke’s—a church with about 2,000 weekly attendance at worship—some people left simply because he wasn’t the former pastor, and they did not like him as much. Pace said that can be hard.

The Rev. Sara Thompson-Tweedy, pastor of The Federated Church of Kerhonkson in Kerhonkson, N.Y., said she was stunned at the scope of the tasks identified by the focus groups.

“But really, it’s the work of the church. It falls on clergy to do it or see that it gets done, but there is no way one person could do everything,” said Thompson-Tweedy. The church she pastors has about 100 members in a community of 2,000.

Both she and Pace said churches teach their pastor things they need to know.

“When I went into ministry, I would have thought caregiving was my strength,” she said. But now, she believes her particular strengths are preaching and public worship. “I feel so alive when I preach, teach, and lead worship.”

Tweedy-Thompson said good pastors must learn to delegate and be willing to let people fail gracefully.

DeShon said all of the pastors in the focus groups talked about the importance of a strong call and also about finding a balance between life and being clergy.

In addition to call, DeShon said it was pretty clear that good pastors have to be adaptable, intelligent, and have good social skills. “You must have a strong sense of call and nothing can substitute for that,” he said. “A lot of other things you can work on.”

To read the study, go to www.gbhem.org/site/c.lskSL3POLvF/b.3712721/.

—Vicki Brown

theological, ecclesial, and practical groundings of its system of lay, licensed, and ordained ministry.

That commission was to bring clarity to the church's understanding of its ministry orders and make recommendations to the 2008 General Conference. However, after four years, the group found more questions and asked for more time—either by the current commission or a new one.

Delegates directed the United Methodist Council of Bishops—in consultation with the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry, the General Board of Discipleship, and the Commission on Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns—to establish a 28-member Study of Ministry Commission for 2009-2012. The delegates also authorized \$150,000 for its work.

The bishops and the three agencies are to create a guide for ongoing study and dialogue, based on the former commission's suggestions. The guide is to foster conversations on the issues among lay members, ordained deacons and elders, licensed local pastors, bishops and cabinets, Boards of Ordained Ministry, ethnic constituencies, and the Central Conferences.

The next commission is to present the 2012 General Conference with legislation that addresses the ordering of ministry, the separation of ordination and conference membership, and the streamlining of the ordained ministry candidacy process.

—Linda Green
United Methodist News Service

Delegates Reinvest in Africa University

Africa University is a uniting, connective dream come true. That's the message delegates to the denomination's legislative assembly received during a report from the General Board of Higher

Education and Ministry and Africa University about the nearly 16-year-old pan-African institution.

In a report about the UM-related school in Old Mutare, Zimbabwe, associate vice chancellor of institutional development James Salley said the 2008 General Conference's theme of "A Future With Hope" directly parallels the school's mission of educating future leaders for Africa in a Christian environment.

Africa University "is bringing about a continental and global change in the name of Jesus Christ," Salley said.

The report, introduced by Salley, included the Africa University Choir, the school's chancellor, interim vice chancellor, a graduate, and a DVD about how some of the university's 2,953 graduates are making an impact in 28 countries on the continent.

The Rev. Betty Nasau Kazadi, a 2005 graduate of the university's faculty of theology, wears three hats: She is the director of conference communications for the North Katanga Conference in Congo, an associate pastor in Kamina-Center, and assistant manager of the microfinance program UMCOR NGO in Kamina.

"I am all of these things and more because of the exceptional training I received from the professors and staff at Africa University," she said.

The training provided by Africa University was evident at the 2008 General Conference. Twenty-four graduates provided leadership at the conference—nine were delegates, and 15 provided translating services to the General Conference delegates.

"When we analyze the leadership these young people are providing, we think this is an excellent return on the investment you have made in supporting Africa University," Salley said. "Your investment is paying off in significant ways."

Africa Will Be Saved

The General Conference again affirmed

AU Mozambique Campus Holds Online Class Registration

Registration and orientation for distance-learning classes offered by Africa University's first satellite campus in Maputo, Mozambique, were held July 12.

The Mozambique Distance Learning Project is housed in the offices of the Mozambique Annual Conference. The classroom has 20 new computers, with plans for future expansion. Classes from Africa University will be beamed to the Maputo site via VSAT (Very Small Aperture Terminal), a two-way satellite ground station with a dish antenna.

The project is a collaborative effort with the Methodist University of São Paulo, Brazil, and GBHEM. Funding comes from the Methodist Global Education Fund for Leadership Development.

The first degree program being offered is an executive MBA in the faculty of management and administration. Seven applicants have been accepted to the program. The program coordinator is Gabrielle Clemente, who was on site in Maputo on July 12 with a team from Africa University. Once the program is underway with this first class, Clemente will begin intensive student recruitment.

its investment in Africa University and made it a priority by voting to allocate \$20 million over a four-year period—\$10 million in apportionments and \$10 million to be raised through the World Service Special Gifts—to continue developing the school and its programs.



Africa University Awards Degrees to 354 Students

On June 7, more than 350 students from 16 African countries received their degree certificates at United Methodist-related Africa University's fourteenth graduation ceremony in Old Mutare, Zimbabwe. Africa University now has 2,953 alumni/ae at work as agriculturalists, pastors, educators, business people, health workers, and other professionals in communities across sub-Saharan Africa.

Andra Stevens/Africa University

"Thank you, General Conference, for your continued support," said Fanuel Tagwira, AU's interim vice chancellor. "Your contributions are helping make a difference on the African continent. The fire shall continue to burn, and it shall never be put out."

Your Investment Is Secure

Delegates were told that while Zimbabwe has an inflation rate of 200,000 percent—the highest in the world—the university, with a few challenges, continues to operate and fulfill its mission of educating its 1,400 students from 24 African countries.

"Your investment is secure," Tagwira said. "Both government and opposition politicians have great admiration for what Africa University has achieved. We remain open and following our normal calendar," he said.

*—Linda Green
United Methodist News Service*

Agencies Commit \$2 Million to Strengthen Theological Education in Africa

Theological education in Africa is set to get a \$2 million boost thanks to General Conference 2008 and three of the denomination's agencies that have agreed to share in the funding of the initiative.

The assembly's 992 clergy and lay delegates from across the globe voted to expand and strengthen theological facilities beyond Africa University, as well as library development, scholarships, publications, and logistical support of theological education during the next four years.

Funding will come from the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry (\$1.4 million), the General Board of Global Ministries (\$400,000), and United Methodist Communications (\$200,000).

Petition 81160—approved 565-353 by delegates—noted that there is a significant need for the church to support theological education across the continent because Africa represents nearly 26 percent of all United Methodists worldwide, or 3 million people. Leading these millions are 3,616 ordained elders in full connection, who represent 9.4 percent of all fully ordained United Methodist elders around the globe.

"Many times we are not aware of the realities in Africa," said Ilunga Kandolo of the North Katanga Conference, in the Democratic Republic of Congo. "When you look at the incredible growth of the church in Africa, we forget that the church growth is the result of the gifted clergy we have."

Tshibang Kasap Owan, president of Katanga Methodist University in North-west Katanga, agreed, but added that because the continent is so vast, Zimbabwe-based Africa University is not enough. "All of our students do not have the opportunity to go to Africa University, so we need to support other facilities in Africa," he said.

Before the delegates passed the measure, the Rev. Charles Boayue, a delegate from the Detroit Conference, expressed support of the initiative because Africa is a fast-growing part of the denomination.

*—Linda Green
United Methodist News Service*

Delegates Create Faith and Order Committee

Creation of a study committee that will provide leadership in faith and order for The United Methodist Church was authorized by General Conference 2008.

The Committee on Faith and Order was authorized by a vote of 454-360. It will reflect on matters of faith, doctrinal teaching, order, and discipline. It will

have three broad responsibilities:

- to lead and coordinate studies commissioned by the General Conference about matters of faith, doctrine, order and discipline of the church.
- to support and provide resources for the Council of Bishops.
- to prepare resources and study materials for the church upon request from General Conference, the Council of Bishops, or the Connectional Table.

The committee will function independently but fall under the staffing, budgeting, and financial affairs of the Commission on Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns.

Sustained Theological Reflection

The Rev. Darren Cushman-Wood, a delegate from South Indiana, was among those supporting creation of the committee. “We need sustained theological reflection on issues that divide us—issues General Conference has been confused about,” he said.

The committee will have 24 members, at least three of whom shall be clergy actively serving full time in a local church, and three shall be laity. The entire slate of members will be approved and elected by the Council of Bishops at its fall meeting every four years after General Conference.

Members will include six bishops and six seminary faculty members nominated by the Association of United Methodist Theological Schools.

The remaining 12 members—who shall not be bishops—will be chosen by the Council of Bishops upon nomination by the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry and the Commission on Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns. Six of the 12 shall come from the nominations of GBHEM, and six shall be chosen from those nominated by GCCUIC. Three of the

members nominated by GBHEM will be from the faculties of United Methodist-affiliated seminaries in the Central Conferences.

—Deborah White
United Methodist News Service

Church Agency Leaders Continue Work on Four Areas of Focus

In their first meeting since General Conference, leaders of the denomination’s general agencies continued cementing partnerships and planning their work on Four Areas of Focus.

The agencies’ top executives, or general secretaries, met June 24-26 in Washington, D.C., two months after General Conference delegates affirmed the Areas of Focus as the emphases of the church.

According to Neil Alexander, chairperson of the General Secretaries Table and president of the United Methodist Publishing House, agency leaders reiterated “shared strong commitment for investing staff and other resources to support ministries initiated and implemented across The United Methodist Church.”

The group is fashioning ways to learn from local churches and annual conferences from every corner of the connection, and it is exploring innovative partnerships that will integrate those learnings and share them broadly, Alexander said.

“The general secretaries understand the Four Areas of Focus express the vision and yearnings of the people of The United Methodist Church. We are eager to continue work in place and also innovate by adopting new methods that will increase effectiveness and make a dramatic difference,” Alexander said.

The agency executives met with Bishop Gregory Palmer, president of the Council of Bishops, and Bishop John Hopkins, president of the Connectional Table, as they began concentrated work in joint planning and action strategies.

The four areas focus on:

- Developing principled Christian leaders for the church and the world.
- Creating new places for new people and revitalizing existing congregations.
- Combating the diseases of poverty by improving health globally.
- Engaging in ministry with the poor.

The General Secretaries Table comprises leaders of the General Council



Mike DuBose/UMCom

United Methodist agency leaders celebrate following their address on the four new areas of focus for the denomination during the 2008 General Conference. Standing (from left) are the Rev. Jerome King Del Pino, GBHEM; the Rev. Karen Greenwaldt, GBOD; Bishop Felton May, GBGM; and the Rev. Larry Hollon, UMCom.

on Finance and Administration, General Board of Church and Society, General Board of Discipleship, General Board of Global Ministries, General Board of Higher Education and Ministry, General Board of Pension and Health Benefits, Commission on Archives and History, Commission on Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns, Commission on Religion and Race, Commission on the Status and Role of Women, Commission on United Methodist Men, United Methodist Communications, and the United Methodist Publishing House.

—United Methodist News Service

Student Forum Wrestles With the Political System

More than 400 United Methodist students, campus ministers and chaplains, and young adult seminarians scattered across the U.S. capital during Student Forum 2008 to learn how they could use their voices to fight for just public policies.

From a panel on the racism of mascots held at the National Museum of the American Indian to an Anacostia River boat tour focusing on the environment, the students met with lobbyists, legislative aides, United Methodist agency officials, and a tenants group that works for equitable housing.

Student Forum is an annual leadership development event for United Methodist college students sponsored by the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry and organized by the United Methodist Student Movement.

Students attending the May 22-25 Forum said 11 immersion trips included in this year's event were eye opening.

"I didn't even know what the terms that are used for mascots really meant," said Heather Haauk, who attended the



Vicki Brown/GBHEM

Members of the United Methodist Student Movement Steering Committee prepare an altar for worship at Student Forum 2008 in Washington, D.C.

panel discussion about legal efforts to cancel the trademark registration of the Washington Redskins National Football League team.

The panelists told the students that the word *redskin* refers to the red blood on the skins or scalps collected by bounty hunters, not skin color.

"These images are doing emotional violence to our people. We are not going to be polite about it," said Suzan Shown Harjo of the Cheyenne and Hodulgee Muscogee tribe, who was one of the plaintiffs in the original lawsuit.

The United Methodist Church has declared the use of Native American names and symbols for sports teams dehumanizing and racist.

Harjo said more than two-thirds of the Native American mascots have been eliminated in U.S. sports teams. "There are about 900 left, but there were more than 3,000 when we started this work," she said.

Immersion Experiences

Besides the "Racism of Mascots" trip, students attended immersion experiences on poverty and homelessness, immigration, HIV/AIDS, gentrification, the environment, faith and politics, civil

rights, children's rights and public education, women's rights, and health care and the living wage. Campus ministers and chaplains attended a separate immersion trip aimed at engaging student leaders in change.

While Student Forum is held in a different location each spring, holding this year's event in the U.S. capital provided the opportunity for a new and different kind of leadership development experience, according to Jen Heald, the new chairperson of the United Methodist Student Movement Steering Committee.

Heald praised the General Board of Church and Society, the Washington-based social advocacy agency of The United Methodist Church, for organizing the trips and called the experiences a gift "difficult to measure."

"We are not often able to focus on changing the system that is responsible for putting people in unjust situations," said Heald, a graduate of the University of Maryland who is entering Emory University this fall.

Student Courtnika Hudson of Paine College said a highlight for her was the environmental immersion experience. She said the boat tour of the polluted

Anacostia River, the visit to the Sierra Club, and touring the green building of the Friends Commission on National Legislation gave students a chance “to actually see what’s going on.”

Hudson was especially impressed with Christina Yagjian of the Sierra Club’s presentation. “She really pushed us to listen and to think about things we should do,” she said.

John Opoku-Aush, a student at the University of Hawaii, said the tour of the U-Street Corridor, where much

property was burned during riots in the 1960s, was informative. “Now the subway has come in and there has been an influx of well-to-do people, so the prices of houses are going up,” he said.

Craig Stephenson of the University of Missouri was particularly interested in the presentation on rural schools in South Carolina, along with a presentation by Jill Morningstar, education policy adviser to the U.S. House Committee on Education and Labor. “She talked about what to

expect in No Child Left Behind,” Stephenson said of the embattled 2001 U.S. education law. “I’m a political science major, and education is my passion.”

Prominent Speakers

The Rev. Meg Lassiat, GBHEM’s director of Student Ministries, Vocation, and Enlistment, said many prominent people made an effort to take part in the immersion trips because they felt strongly about speaking to young leaders of the church.

“We wanted to take advantage of the location to provide a different kind of leadership development experience, and the work of others in the United Methodist connection allowed us to do that,” Lassiat said. “We are so grateful to all the church board and agency staff who put in so much time organizing the trips and working directly with the students.”

The immersion experiences included participants from other denominations, as well as United Methodist agency staff such as Jim Winkler, top executive of the General Board of Church and Society, and Suanne Ware-Diaz, a staff executive of the Commission on Religion and Race. Staff from the Women’s Division, the General Board of Global Ministries, Bread for the World, the Presbyterian Church (USA), the Children’s Defense Fund, and many more organizations took part.

“Our hope is that every seminar will lead to some action,” said Susan Burton, director for seminar design at the General Board of Church and Society. “We try to encourage critical thinking about how these issues can be resolved. One of the most exciting things is to see young people use their voices, to equip them with the tools to move deeper, to work on changing the systems.”

The students did take action by writing nearly 200 letters to Washington Redskins owner Daniel Snyder asking him to change the team’s mascot.

—Vicki Brown

Committee Member Plaintiff in Mascots Lawsuit, Working to Preserve Native Languages

WHEN MARCUS BRIGGS-CLOUD FIRST MOVED TO OKLAHOMA, HE WAS STUNNED to find that no one spoke his native language.

Briggs-Cloud, a member of the Miccosukee Tribe of the Muskoke Nation, is a descendent of a woman who escaped the forced removal of Indians from Florida and ran home to hide out in the swamps.

“My great-great-great-great grandmother was 14 years old when she ran all the way back to Florida,” Briggs-Cloud said.

Briggs-Cloud, who is an affiliate member of Norman First United Methodist Church, attended Student Forum 2007 and was invited to serve on the steering committee which directed this year’s national leadership development event.

“A social-justice speaker didn’t show up, and I ended up talking about my life,” Briggs-Cloud said. “I’m Catholic, but mostly I practice my own native spiritual beliefs, and The United Methodist Church allows for worship with native traditions.”

Briggs-Cloud, 24, who will attend Harvard Divinity School in the fall, is a plaintiff in the lawsuit which contends the Redskins trademark is disparaging to Native Americans and that the registration should be cancelled under the Lanham Act, a law that prohibits trademarks that bring a group into contempt or disrepute.

“When Suzan Shown Harjo called and asked me if I would be a plaintiff, I really had to think and pray about it,” Briggs-Cloud said. But he said the term is so offensive to Native Americans that he agreed.

“This is an issue we tend to overlook. A lot of our people say we have more important things to work on,” Briggs-Cloud said. “But the negative stereotypes have a psychological effect on children.”

Briggs-Cloud also leads a group in language preservation.

“We only have 40 speakers of Muskoke. There are 155 unique native languages that are still spoken, and 132 of them are in danger,” Briggs-Cloud said. One concern about the loss of language is that it will be followed by the loss of the ceremonies of indigenous people. “We believe that when our last ceremonial ground goes down, our people will perish,” Briggs-Cloud said.

Campus Ministers, Chaplains Attend Workshops, Immersion Trip

Some 60 United Methodist campus ministers and chaplains attending Student Forum 2008 had their own immersion trip, heard presentations about campus ministry, and met with the general secretary of the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry.

One of the organizers of the event said it was aimed at filling a niche in campus ministry by providing education and fellowship.

“The response was overwhelmingly positive,” said the Rev. Michael McCord, campus minister at Mercer University in Macon, Ga. “What people really liked were the small groups, which were structured discussions about particular areas of campus ministry.”

He said participants were talking about things their annual conferences are doing to support their ministry. “We spent a lot of time at the end talking about the possibilities for campus ministry.”

McCord said the group also liked holding the event during Student Forum, the national college leadership development event, because that allowed campus ministers and campus chaplains to worship with their students and spend time with them at the same time they were getting a chance to network with their peers.

The group also met with Jerome King Del Pino, general secretary of the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry, which sponsored both Campus Ministry at Forum and Student Forum.

“Campus ministry is the linchpin for sustainable renewal of The United Methodist Church,” Del Pino said. “So many of our annual conferences have blind spots regarding the need to continue financial support of these specialized ministries in difficult economic times.”

But Del Pino said campus ministers



Vicki Brown/GBHEM

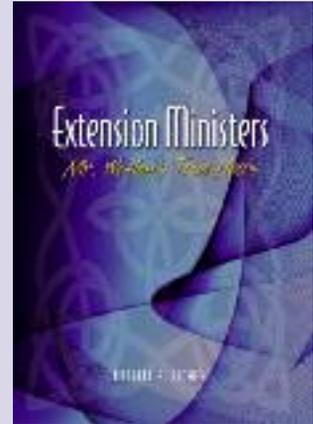
The Rev. Jerome King Del Pino, GBHEM general secretary, discusses the importance of campus ministry for the future of the church with UM campus ministers and chaplains attending Campus Ministry at Forum.

must be intentional about developing leaders for the twenty-first century, and added that The United Methodist Church still has the most significant campus presence of any denomination.

On Friday, some campus ministers accompanied students on 11 immersion trips, while others when to St. Mark's Episcopal Church for an immersion experience about engaging student leaders. They heard presentations from Susan Burton, director of the seminar program for the General Board of Church and Society; Glen Sears, legislative assistant and deputy communications director for U.S. Congressman Dennis Moore; Tyler Edgar, assistant director of the National Council of Churches in Christ; and Pan-ravee Vongjaroenrat, director of legal services for Justice for Our Neighbors, United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR).

McCord said the campus ministers' immersion trip was focused on opportunities for getting students involved in the work The United Methodist Church does in the legislative and political arena.

On Saturday Bruce Birch, academic dean of Wesley Theological Seminary,



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presented a Bible study on the theme of exile and told participants they must be fruitful where they are.

“There’s a part of me that wishes we could have the student movements that were happening back in the 1960s, but that’s not the way it is now,” Birch said.

"We've got to build houses and live in them where we are."

He said we are living in a broken and uncertain world that has seen the attack on the World Trade Center and the war in Iraq. "We have not made as much attempt to transform the church of exile as we might have," he said. "In the North American context, we tend to think only in terms of geography, but we have failed to see that exile is more than geography."

He said exile calls into question centers of meaning and that the centers do not hold when things the previous generations thought they could count on to give meaning are no longer there.

Psalm 137:4 asks: "How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?" Birch said. "The implied answer is that we can't, there is no singing in this world to which we've gone. I want to suggest that the vocation of the community of faith may be to give singing lessons, to provide bold voices that sing of hope when many are settling for survival."

Mark Your Calendars

World Communion Sunday

October 5, 2008

Student Day Sunday

November 30, 2008

Native American Ministries Sunday

April 26, 2009

Student Forum

May 21-24, 2009

EXPLORATION

November 13-15, 2009

Today, God is working in interfaith places, and that is something campus ministers have more experience with than the rest of the church, Birch said. "You can keep us on track."

The Rev. Malcolm Frazier, campus minister at Howard University, said Birch also talked about a Doctor of Ministry degree for campus ministry and other curriculum that Wesley Theological Seminary is developing.

Frazier said Shaun Casey, professor of Christian ethics at Wesley, gave a presentation about the faith of the millennial generation.

"Dr. Casey reminded us that we have the opportunity to undergird our students theologically as they engage in the work of social justice," Frazier said.

—Vicki Brown

Online Classes Make Theological Studies More Accessible

Course of Study

The first online Course of Study classes for local pastors began August 1, 2008. The online course offerings, which are eventually expected to replace the correspondence course that local pastors take now, is a joint effort of GBHEM and United Methodist Communications.

"It will be a much more friendly environment than the correspondence course," said Bob Kohler, Division of Ordained Ministry. "Students will be able to get much more immediate feedback."

With the correspondence course, students complete all the work and mail it in, while the online classes will allow professors to give feedback as course work is completed, said Cheryl A. Hemmerle, a technical training specialist for UCom. She said registration will still be handled by GBHEM. Hemmerle said there are also future plans for online discussions groups among Course of Study students.

In 2007, 121 people applied for the five-year Basic Course of Study correspondence program. The classes can also be taken on campus at regional Course of Study schools at eight United Methodist seminaries or at 15 extension Course of Study schools.

For more information, contact Lynn Daye at ldaye@gbhem.org or 615-340-7416. Visit our Web site at www.gbhem.org.

Distance Education in Europe

Online theological classes are expected to be available in Europe in German and English in the fall of this year.

Much of the theological education available in Europe is at state-run universities, so it does not include classes related to Methodist history, doctrine, and polity, said the Rev. Mary Ann Moman, Division of Ordained Ministry.

The fall classes are the first piece in a three-year plan for distance theological education for clergy candidates in Europe.

Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington, D.C. worked with representatives of the United Methodist Theological Schools in Europe to videotape lectures at the Oxford Institute for the classes. Students will be able to view those lectures online in German and English.

Beth Luton Joins GBHEM

The Rev. Beth Luton has joined the Division of Ordained Ministry as assistant general secretary. Her appointment was effective June 16.

Luton will develop international systems of theological education to provide clergy leaders in all annual/central conferences and emerging churches. She will consult with the Council of Bishops, Order of Elders, and Boards of Ordained Ministry to



help interpret the need for an educated clergy, facilitate *Disciplinary* process questions, and aid in the development of the Order of Elders.

Luton will report to the Rev. Mary Ann Moman in the Division of Ordained Ministry. She will be working with the Rev. Bob Kohler, the current assistant general secretary, who will retire in December 2008.

For the past 10 years, Luton was a senior staff program administrator at Candler School of Theology. She was the director of the Office of Church Ministries Education, including the Course of Study for local pastors and continuing education for clergy and laity. Her duties at GBHEM will include managing the ongoing development of the Course of Study program in cooperation with the Course of Study directors and the Division of Ordained Ministry, reviewing the United Methodist Studies program, and supporting and training teachers to maintain the quality of United Methodist Studies programs in non-United Methodist seminaries.

In addition, she will have assignments related to the implementation of the GBHEM Strategic Plan, especially aligning and strengthening the relationship of UM-related seminaries and theological schools to the Course of Study to address the need for

improvement of the educational rigor-ousness of the Course of Study program across the denomination.

Within the Regional Course of Study, Luton was responsible for five extension centers for part-time local pastors throughout the Southeast during her tenure at Candler. In the area of continuing education, she directed the Lay Theology Institute and developed various other programs including Covenant Colleagues, March Preaching Fellowship, and the Holy Land Pilgrimage for Spiritual Formation. She worked with the Council of Course of Study directors to strengthen the educational program of the church.

She has served on both the conference board and district Committee on Ordained Ministry.

Luton received an M.Div. from Candler School of Theology. She also has certification in Spiritual Formation from the Academy of Spiritual Formation, certification in Christian Education from Candler, and certification as a Veriditas Labyrinth Facilitator.



Zawdie Abiade Joins GBHEM

The Rev. Dr. Zawdie Abiade has joined the Division of Ordained Ministry as director of Educational Administration and Coordination. The appointment was effective July 1.

Abiade, who will report to the Rev. Mary Ann Moman, will assist Moman in administering the work of the Commission on Theological Education and work with the commission to increase the effectiveness of partnerships with non-United Methodist seminaries.

He will manage the certification program for specialized ministry and develop relationships with seminaries and Boards of Ordained Ministry to establish and maintain standards for certification, review the educational credentials for those seeking certification, and make recommendations to annual conferences regarding fulfillment of requirements. He will work with bishops to establish a partnership with GBHEM, seminaries, and the Council of Bishops regarding educational processes in order to provide consistent and effective leadership for Boards of Ordained Ministry in their work of assessing qualifications for ordained and licensed ministry.

Abiade will participate in national organizations related to certification/approval processes and build networks of support and interpretation. He will also have assignments related to the implementation of GBHEM's Strategic Plan.

For the past six years, Abiade has served as district superintendent in the West Michigan Conference. Prior to his tenure as district superintendent, he pastored several United Methodist churches. He also served as adjunct faculty at Bethel College, Western Michigan University, Jordan College, and Mason Bible College.

He received a B.S. from Wayne State University in 1991, and an M.Div. from Interdenominational Theological Center in 1995. He also holds doctorates in ministry from both Chicago Theological Seminary and Trinity College and Seminary.

The BCF Lina H. McCord Ambassadors

The Lina H. McCord interns and ambassadors are representatives of the Black College Fund and the 11 UM-related historically Black colleges and universities. They are chosen by their college chaplains and professors, endorsed by their president, and must meet



strict standards of academic excellence and character. They are brought to Nashville for four days of training and orientation, and then they travel to annual conferences during the summer. Shown, front row, seated, from left: Taler Jefferson, Bennett College for Women; Jasmine Johnson and George K. Johnson, Dillard University; Second row, standing, from left: Donta Brown, Claflin University; Jennifer Hill, Clark Atlanta University; Jarrett Lemieux, Dillard University; Tatenda Mujeni, Bennett College for Women; Phyllis Adams, consultant;

Audrey Moorehead, Huston–Tillotson University; Chastic Steele and Braque Talley, Rust College. Third row, standing, from left: Shawntelle Rollins, Wiley College; Crystal Banks, BCF coordinator; Eboni Lemon, Clark Atlanta University; Cynthia Bond Hopson, BCF assistant general secretary; and Courtneika Hudson, Paine College. Not shown: Simeon Udunka, Meharry Medical College.



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