



The United Methodist  
**NEWSCOPE**

Volume 32, No. 30/July 16, 2004

THE WEEKLY NEWSLETTER FOR UNITED METHODIST LEADERS

**With this issue, NEWSCOPE continues its coverage of annual conferences around the UMC. Numbers reported in NEWSCOPE are un-audited and are supplied by conference communications staff or other reporters.**

**Eastern Pennsylvania Annual Conference** met June 16–19 at Messiah College in Grantham, building on the General Conference theme “Water Washed, Spirit Born.” The conference opened with worship and a presentation by liturgical dance group Jireh from Iglesia Metodista Nuevo Nacimiento. The conference theme was brought to life in tender moments as Bishop Peter D. Weaver baptized one-year-old Alexandra Aileen Bart, daughter of Kerry and Melissa Bart. In his sermon, Weaver asked listeners to think about themselves and their churches, the world, and their own witness in his question, “Is this what Jesus had in mind?” The offering received at opening worship totaled \$121,896 for the Hope for the Children Initiative, bringing the total received to about \$30,000 over the original goal set four years ago of \$460,000 for children’s ministries in Africa and Eastern Pennsylvania. In an evening celebration, the conference honored the eight-year ministry of Bishop Weaver in Eastern Pennsylvania. Among the many gifts that Weaver received was a check for \$11,000 in his honor for Bethlehem Haven, a shelter for homeless women in Pittsburgh that he co-founded in 1981.

In one ballot, the conference formally nominated John Schol, senior pastor of West Chester UMC, for the episcopacy. Tom Boomershine, formerly dean of the Lumicon Institute of UMR Communications, led the Bible study on Friday morning. Churches in the conference contributed flood buckets, layette kits, health kits, and school kits for UM Committee on Relief emergency assistance, requiring four van loads to transport the items to Mission Central in Mechanicsburg, Pa. Conference attendees were offered the opportunity to attend one of eight lunchtime workshops, including ones on Christ Servant Ministry, stewardship, General Conference, and using fair-trade coffee.

In other business, the conference passed resolutions relating to: 1) the opposition to gambling and its expansion in Pennsylvania; 2) the accountability for attending Healing the Wounds of Racism training; 3) the prevention and elimination of underage drinking; and 4) Northeast Jurisdiction Korean-American Mission Sunday. The annual conference budget for 2005 was passed, amounting to \$3.5 million for ministries within the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference—reflecting a 2.3% increase—and \$2.5 million for general church ministries. Seven churches, one from each district, were honored for exemplary giving to connectional ministry. Forty clergy, clergy spouses, and missionaries who died in the last year were remembered in a memorial service. Nine retirees were honored, including William Staton, district superintendent for the Harry Hosier/Philadelphia/West District. During a service of ordination and commissioning, Bishop Weaver ordained ten elders and four deacons (two in probationary membership) and commissioned seven probationary members. Membership stands at 130,386, down 1,029 from the previous year. Worship attendance stands at 55,634, down 268. These figures are currently under review for accuracy. — *Suzy Keenan*

**Florida Annual Conference** met June 3–6 in Daytona Beach at UM-related Bethune-Cookman College. More than 2,000 clergy and laity gathered under the theme “A Light to the Nations.” This year, plenary sessions took place in the college’s new Performing Arts Center. A highlight of the

***A concise, late-deadline report compiled and edited by the staff  
of The United Methodist Publishing House***

gathering was the presence of Bishop Jose Quipungo (East Angola Area). An offering was collected to support ministry initiatives in the Eastern Angola Conference, including completing the reconstruction of Quessua UMC and providing community-based healthcare training for the conference. The offering total was \$64,258, with money still being collected.

Members approved the cabinet's Connecting for Transformation proposal, which will reduce the conference's districts from 14 to nine, encourage churches to be part of a cluster group of churches, and change the responsibilities of district superintendents. Each of the nine districts will be as equal as possible regarding the number of churches and missions, membership, finances, land size, and ease of transportation within the district, and each will have between 50 and 85 churches and missions. Each district will establish a leadership council that will replace the district conference and assist the superintendent in making major strategic decisions and function as the superintendency, finance and nominations committees, and board of trustees. Members also approved eliminating the conference council on ministries in favor of the Conference Equipping Network (CEN). The CEN will focus more on providing information, researching ministry trends and needs, developing ministries and equipping people for those ministries, and seeking and evaluating input and feedback to assist in future research.

More than 400 people took part in a mini-Celebrate Jesus mission as they canvassed the streets surrounding Daytona's Community and Stewart Memorial UMCs, praying with people and inviting them to a Family Fun Day held the next evening. Members approved increasing the salary of district superintendents to \$79,850, an increase of about \$5,000. Members approved the recommended budget of a little more than \$18.8 million. This is a \$124,091, or 0.7%, increase over the 2004 budget. William (Bill) Walker was elected lay leader. Walker served as director of connectional ministries from June 1999 to June 2003. The 2004 Grindheim-Sims Award was given to St. Clair Moore, pastor of Rogers Memorial UMC, Bradenton. The award is given to the pastor of a small-membership church who has distinguished him or herself through efforts in evangelism and church growth. The 2004 Denman Awards were presented to Jocelyn Jean Baptist Adhemar, pastor of St. Johns UM Haitian Mission, Boynton Beach, and Rafael Ortega, lay member of Village UMC, North Ft. Lauderdale. Thirty-six people were licensed as local pastors. Bishop Timothy W. Whitaker commissioned 19 probationary members (four, deacon track; 15, elder track) and ordained two deacons and 12 elders. One person was received as a probationary member from another denomination. Two deacons in full connection, seven elders, one associate member, and five local pastors retired. Membership was 329,018, a decline of 3,106. The average worship attendance was 161,375.

— *Janice Buchholz and Michael Wacht*

**Germany East Annual Conference** met May 12–16 at the Church of Peace in Chemnitz under the chair of Bishop Walter Klaiber. Thursday morning's theme was "Local Churches Share Their Social Welfare Projects." Thomas Gunther introduced the speakers, who presented the following local church social welfare projects. Annemarie Schramm described the "Lighthouse," a meeting point for people with social problems in Reichenbach/Vogtland. She shared photos of people serving meals, leisure and sport activities, and devotionals with children, youth, and adults. Andreas Wiederanders reported next on the participation of the Wilkau-Hasslau church at the Zwickau Table, a project that distributes groceries to the needy. He was able to use concrete examples to illustrate what "giving a place to be"

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**Publisher:** Neil M. Alexander  
NEWSCOPE, P.O. Box 801, Nashville, TN 37202; ISSN 1073-4910.  
For subscription concerns, call 1-800-672-1789.  
To place a Positions Available announcement, send the information via e-mail to: [umnewscope@umpublishing.org](mailto:umnewscope@umpublishing.org) or fax: 615-749-6512.  
For editorial matters, call: 615-749-6320; fax: 615-749-6512; e-mail: [umnewscope@umpublishing.org](mailto:umnewscope@umpublishing.org); web page: <http://www.umph.com>.

NEWSCOPE © 2004 (USPS 961-360) is supported by subscription income and published by The United Methodist Publishing House. It is issued weekly except for the third and fourth weeks of December.  
**Subscription:** \$22.00 (periodical class), \$28.00 (first class), \$38.00 (foreign), or \$16.00 (electronic mail) a year. Single copy: 50 cents.  
**Permission to quote** granted to newsletters and media of The United Methodist Church, with credit. Periodical postage paid at Nashville, Tenn.  
**POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to: United Methodist NEWSCOPE, P.O. Box 801, Nashville, TN 37202.

means: One of the weekly recipients requested him to excuse her for not being able to attend the next "distribution day." Finally, Joy Conti presented the Parish Nursing Scheme of her church in the Western Pennsylvania Conference, the partner conference of Germany East.

Following years of steady increase of income, the conference income stagnated once again. Economic circumstances in eastern Germany are at least one reason for this. Congregations were encouraged not only with regards to their own building funds but also in terms of their contributions and collections to make increased efforts. The conference also discussed an existing project to renovate and improve the Meeting and Learning Centre in Scheibenberg. More than 800,000 euros of church resources were to be required for this project. The conference decided against the project with a narrow majority vote. The work in Scheibenberg, however, should continue to be supported. The conference heard Holger Eschmann, president of the Theological Seminary in Reutlingen, stress the reduction in students graduating. He also reported on the international cooperation of the seminary (including a partnership with Africa University and an active exchange program of tutors and students of the theological faculty), as well as dealings with the Federal Education Department regarding full recognition of grades by the state. The conference also heard vivid sermons in the various church services. Dieter Straka of Berlin preached during the memorial service.

Bishop Klaiber ordained two pastors. Two were accepted as probationary members. A new lay preacher with stationing, two workers in congregational service, and a new pastoral lay assistant increased the number of those serving in full-time ministry within the conference. One church circuit will be without a pastor during the new conference year. Membership stands at 9,743 confessing members, 116 less than in the previous year, and 4,192 baptized members, 55 more than in the previous year. — *Friedbert Frohlich*

**Kansas East Annual Conference** met June 3–6 at Baker University in Baldwin City. Health of mind, body, and spirit was the thought behind the theme "Journey to Wholeness." Special offerings raised at least \$1,600 each for Hispanic ministries, Hope for the Children of Africa, the Russian Seminary, Peace with Justice Sunday, the Ministerial Education Fund, and the Youth Service Fund. Hands of Glory, a group from First UMC, Ottawa, offered praise in movement (sign language and dance steps). A children and youth worship service was held and included Bishop Fritz Mutti baptizing Elijah Thomas Bousson, son of H. Eduardo Bousson and Karen D. Jeffcoat, both pastors in the conference. Myron McCoy, president of Saint Paul School of Theology, preached during the closing worship service. The conference council on finance and administration presented a \$4 million budget, a decrease of 5.62%; however, funds were added on the floor for equitable compensation, campus ministries, and the reserve fund for General Conference delegation expenses. The total 2005 budget is now \$4.4 million. A petition for creation of one conference in Kansas, amended by the Kansas West Conference, was approved on the consent calendar. Therefore, there will be a "Day of Partnership" between now and the end of 2006 where both conferences will meet in the same location. The conference petitioned the South Central Jurisdiction for permission to unify—if both conferences should vote to do so—without waiting for approval from the 2008 jurisdictional conference.

The conference board of pensions and health benefits recommended a plan whereby full-time clergypersons would contribute to the cost of health insurance. Each full-time clergy member would receive a waiver of one month's clergy contribution with proof of an annual physical examination. A motion was passed to submit this proposal to the Judicial Council for approval, particularly in regard to whether the conference could mandate deductions from clergy salary. Several smaller churches had asked for the option of not carrying full replacement coverage on their facilities, as they believe they would not replace them if they were destroyed. This is now possible for churches with membership of fewer than 50 or in zip codes of fewer than 500 people, and several of the 116 churches eligible for this exception have used it. Churches with ancillary properties no

longer need to carry property insurance on those. A late petition that generated much discussion called for the conference to express its disagreement with the General Conference's position on homosexuality. That petition was approved by a vote of 206 to 199. Richard Swenson, a futurist and author, spoke on the conference theme. Two district superintendents presented resolutions to close Sycamore and Stephens UMCs. Four pastors, eight spouses, and four people related to the conference were honored in a memorial service. Retiring this year are ten pastors. Bishop Mutti commissioned 11 probationary members and ordained five elders. One person was received as a probationary member, and his orders were recognized. — *Julie Buzbee*

**Kentucky Annual Conference** met June 2–6 in Louisville. Building on Acts 3:1-10 and echoing the justice theme of this year's conference, "The Least of These," Bishop James R. King Jr. preached that our denomination was born from a movement known for reaching out to the poor and marginalized. Conference speakers included Al Gwinn, Kentucky Conference episcopal nominee; Pamela Couture, professor of pastoral care and counseling at Colgate Rochester Divinity School; and Michael Rynkiewicz, professor of anthropology at Asbury Theological Seminary. A mission night offering of \$51,739.51 was brought by congregations and designated for the East Africa Mission Initiative. The conference adopted an apportioned budget of \$9.5 million (representing an increase of 1.71%) and authorized the creation of a new staff position, director of ministerial services. Members approved instructing the committee on program and arrangements to review the current form of conferencing and to return with a report to the 2005 session as to how well conference members are being good stewards of time and financial resources and living out the purpose and goal of Christian conferencing. A motion that all administrators and faculty of UM schools in Kentucky be professing Christians failed; however, delegates later approved a statement expressing the desire of the conference that trustees and the administration of the three area UM colleges give policy preference to hiring professing Christians, particularly in the area of the social sciences.

The Denman Award was presented to Allison Shepherd and Ken Howard (laity), both from Elizabethtown Memorial UMC, and Eliseo Mejia (clergy), coordinator of Hispanic ministries for new church and congregational development. The evangelism award honoring the church with the most professions of faith was given to Centenary UMC, Lexington, for 58 first-time professions. The evangelism award for the best ratio of membership to professions of faith was presented to Asbury UMC, Owensboro District, for a ration of 2.2:1. Other presentations included the Francis Asbury Award, awarded to Kenneth Cummings, Wesley UMC, Lexington. Kevin Burney was honored with the 2004 Bishop's Award for Outstanding Leadership in Ecumenism for his work during his appointment to Maysville Trinity UMC. The Bishop's Award for Ecumenism for a local congregation went to Audubon Park UMC, Louisville, and the InterParish Christian Religious Education Partnership. A special Lifetime Recognition Award for Outstanding Leadership in Ecumenism was presented to William E. James for his work in both ecumenism and justice ministries in the former Louisville Conference.

The UM Publishing House/Cokesbury pension contribution was approved to be given to the Central Conference Pension Fund Initiative. Bishop King commissioned five probationary members and ordained two elders, two deacons in full connection, and two deacons in associate membership. The conference celebrated the retirement of nine elders, one deacon, and one associate member. Bishop King noted that for the first time since the uniting of the former Kentucky and Louisville Conferences, the Kentucky Annual Conference reported a membership growth. Membership stands at 151,887, up 509 from the previous year. Worship attendance decreased by 28 to 62,074. — *Harrison Zoercher*

**Nebraska Annual Conference** met June 10–12 in Lincoln. Bishop Rhymes H. Moncure Jr. offered the opening worship message. The bishop's task force recommendation to make evangelism the focus for the next quadrennium passed, with the laity and discipleship committee charged with

planning and leading an event for next year's conference and maintaining the effort through the next four years. The third recommendation resulted in the establishment of a core team to help with collaboration and communication across the ministry. The core team will include representatives from the council on ministries, council on finance and administration, board of ordained ministry, board of trustees, and board of pension and health benefits, as well as the bishop, lay leader, director of connectional ministries, treasurer, and the dean of the cabinet. An amendment expanded the original recommendation to include up to four more people at large in order to meet inclusiveness goals. The fourth recommendation was to downsize the conference to seven districts. The body voted down the recommendation and referred the restructuring to the new core team.

A resolution was passed supporting a variety of no-smoking policies across the conference and state and asking people to take an active role in ensuring smoke-free environments. The conference also approved the addition of a youth representative to the camping committee. The conference approved a resolution for a collective weight-loss goal for all clergy of 2,000 pounds by next year's annual conference. In an important courtesy presentation, Nebraska congressman and former University of Nebraska football coach Tom Osborne was featured in a video asking UMs to organize and to stand firm against expanded gambling in Nebraska, noting the high costs that result from an increase in social service needs and a decline in people's quality of life. The vote on expanded gambling comes before the populace in the November election. Jean Mohring, chairperson for the nominations committee, presented a full slate of candidates to fill more than 400 positions of leadership within the Nebraska Conference. Highlights of the committee's work included: 1) moving closer to one-third lay men, one-third lay women, one-third clergy in leadership positions; and 2) increasing ethnic representation from 30 persons (7%) in 2000 to 43 persons (10.5%) in 2004. Charlotte Abram was elected as the chairperson for the council on ministries, the first African American woman in the conference to hold the position.

John Plucknett, chair of the conference council on finance and administration, presented a revised budget to the conference, including the conference's first budget increase since 2000. The primary budget adjustments made by the conference were to support the World Service Fund. Approximately \$70,000 of the increase adds to the Nebraska dollars supporting ministry and mission work around the world. The approved budget total is \$6,630,919 for 2005, which is a 2.35% increase from last year. The 2005 conference will be held at the Holiday Inn and Convention Center in Omaha. Space needs dictated the choice, along with needs for breakout rooms and audio/visual requirements. The 2006 event will be held in Kearney. — *Kathryn Witte*

**Northwest Texas Annual Conference** met June 9–12 on the campus of McMurry University in Abilene, Texas. The theme of the conference was "The Family of God . . . Rooted and Grounded in Love." Steve Harper, vice president of Asbury Theological Seminary, Orlando Campus, was the conference preacher. A major action of the conference was to reduce the number of districts from six to four by 2005. This reduction would have the impact of increasing lay involvement in district and conference ministries by creating geographic or strategic ministry teams. A highlight of the conference was declaring Vernon and Viola Henderson Day by the conference board of pensions. Vernon Henderson, who is 101 years old, was present at the conference and addressed the conference about his years of ministry. Bishop D. Max Whitfield ordained two elders and two deacons (probationary members). The conference recognized the orders of two other persons. Bishop Whitfield also commissioned three probationary members (elder track). Twelve elders retired. Toni Bailey, pastor of White Deer UMC, received the Denman Evangelism award for clergy. Kris Dollar, a layperson from Hereford, First UMC, received the Denman Evangelism award for laity. Steve Harper received the Francis Asbury award for higher education. Maggie Rogers, 10-10-10 Missionary assigned as peace educator, received the Northwest Texas Conference Peacemaker award. Membership stands at 67,740, up 266 from the previous year. Worship attendance stands at 23,868, down 629. — *Eddie Allsup*

**Oregon-Idaho Annual Conference** met June 9–12 in Salem, Ore., at UM-related Willamette University under the theme “Come Live in the Light.” Bishop Edward W. Paup presided over the four-day event that was attended by more than 800 people. Tom and Corinne Tate, mission co-secretaries, reported that for eight years Oregon-Idaho has ranked in the top six conferences in the nation in per-capita giving to the Advance for Christ and His Church. This year’s mission emphasis was the Portland Seafarers Mission, for which 1,783 bags of supplies were collected. Two popular conference traditions were continued: the Ministry Fair and the Liturgical Art Show. Kirk A. Hurd, youth and young adult director, Salem First UMC, won the Harry Denman Award for Evangelism for the establishment of The Underground, a new service for young adults. The Jason Lee Award for Excellence in Communications Beyond the Local Church was presented to Rupert (Idaho) UMC (Keith Wise, pastor) and John Paul Johnson, station master, for development of Radio Station KUMC 93.3. Lila Hill was also honored for her many years of service as conference archivist in Idaho. A reception was held for Bishop Ed Paup and his wife, Carol, in honor of their eight years in the conference. A gift is being sent in their names to the Murewa High School in Zimbabwe.

Minerva Carcano and Steve Sprecher were both nominated as candidates for bishop. This is the first time Oregon-Idaho has ever nominated two episcopal candidates. In conference business, the board of pensions was given the green light to continue participation in HealthFlex and to adjust the budget for premium rate changes. The conference voted to forward the check from the UM Publishing House to the General Board of Pensions and Health Benefits for use in the Central Conference Pension Initiative. The budget was fixed at \$4,999,557, an increase of 5.2% over last year. Conference members voted to retain the apportioning of 10% of the healthcare premium for active clergy serving local congregations, thus adding \$195,000 to the budget recommended by the conference council on finance and administration, which contained only a 1.1% increase over 2004.

Conference members adopted action items to: 1) make a visible public witness against gun violence; 2) support community-based rehabilitation for those convicted of crimes; 3) oppose refurbishing the nuclear test site in Nevada and the Star Wars National Missile Defense System; 4) call for cuts in military spending and an end to the embargo of Cuba; 5) support socially responsible investing; and 6) work for a new foreign policy that promotes peace. Bishop Paup commissioned one probationary member (deacon track); three were ordained as elders, and three were ordained as deacons. Seven clergy retired. Membership stands at 35,247, down 915 from the previous year. Average attendance was 18,060, down 219. — *Linda Sullivan*

**Rio Grande Annual Conference** met June 10–12 at First UMC, Corpus Christi, Texas. At the memorial service, five clergy were remembered. Bishop Joel N. Martinez ordained one deacon, Mary Lou Adame, and three elders, Sandra Cabrera, Delia Pena Estrada, and Roberto Miguel Lopez. Five clergy retired. A plan for restructuring, which called for two districts instead of four, was tabled until next year. Membership stands at 14,927, down 212 from last year. Worship attendance stands at 5,338, down 52. — *Arturo Mariscal*

**South German Annual Conference** met June 23–27 in Reutlingen and Ulm, Germany, with Bishop Walter Klaiber presiding for the last time. The conference theme was “Coming Together—Acting Out of Faith.” For the second year in a row, the theme considered in the first part of its title, “Coming Together,” the unification of the Southwest German Conference and the South German Conference to form one new conference, called the (new) South German Conference. In keeping with the second half of the theme, “Acting Out of Faith,” work groups were introduced, and different social and church projects were discussed, with an eye towards encouraging churches throughout the conference to consider how they too could become “salt of the earth” in their own communities. In one of the plenary sessions, the planned revamping of the wording of the church constitution with respect to Baptism and church membership was discussed. It is proposed by a committee at the central conference level to distinguish between “confessing mem-

bers" and "baptized members" in the upcoming German-language constitution. This change would bring the church constitution in line with the *Book of Discipline*. For some of the conference delegates, this change would minimize the importance of a personal confession of faith. Discussion revolved around the possibility of alternative wordings that would stress the importance of a personal confession and whether such amendments are really necessary.

In other business, the conference nominated two pastors for the position of superintendent of the Nurnberg District. Of the two nominees, Wolfgang Rieker was appointed by the bishop to the position. The location of the superintendent's office will be moved from Ansbach to Nurnberg. The conference honored six retiring ministers this year, and Bishop Klaiber ordained five (one woman and four men). Membership (confessing members) of the newly formed conference stands at 18,576, down 338 members, or 1.79%. The number of baptized members in the new conference remained relatively stable at 15,337. — *Jonathan Whitlock*

**Western New York Annual Conference** met June 11–13 in Buffalo for its 195th session. Conference members celebrated the ministry of Bishop Violet L. Fisher with song, proclamation of the Word, and a gift of more than \$22,000 to help her respond to the needs of children in poverty. A significant portion of the annual conference session focused on providing information on education, poverty, substance abuse, justice, prison ministry, our global connection, child exploitation, children of war, and mission as related to the Bishops' Initiative on Children and Poverty. The gift, brought in by churches throughout the annual conference during a children's worship service, was presented to Bishop Fisher for her work in this area following a dinner in her honor. Action during this session included a vote to reduce the number of districts from five to four, to establish a Volunteers in Mission Awareness Day, and to move to a conference-wide insurance program. Eleanor Collinworth and Scott Johnson were elected conference co-lay leaders. The conference nominated three persons for the episcopacy: Robert Hill, Ramon Evangelista, and Sudarshana Devadhar. At the end of 2003, the total membership reported in the Western New York Conference was 58,592, reflecting a decline of 1,453 members. Average worship attendance was 22,587, a decline of 538. Baptisms and Sunday school attendance stayed at about the same level as 2002, at 1,000 and 10,453, respectively. — *Marilyn J. Kasperek*

**Yellowstone Annual Conference** met June 10–13 on the campus of Rocky Mountain College in Billings, Mont., under the theme "Healing." Bishop Warner H. Brown Jr. opened the session with a message entitled "The Healing Journey," based on Hebrews 12:1-2, 12-13, urging members to strengthen their knees for service and lift their hands up in love. The 86 clergy members and 106 lay members who participated as voting members welcomed a number of distinguished guests. Bishop Jose Quipungo and his wife, Laurinda Quipungo, came from the East Angola Area to celebrate the inter-conference partnership. Larry Hollon, general secretary of UM Communications, guided the conference in: 1) thinking more deeply about storytelling as a means of healing; 2) engaging the culture around us; and 3) responding appropriately to the "massive transformation in communication" now underway in the world. Abena Safiyah Fousa, from the General Board of Discipleship, and her husband, Kwasi Kena, staff person from UM Men, led the conference in worship. Bishop Brown presented Bishop's Awards for outstanding lay service to Christ to Ralph Zimmer and Amy Jacob, and the Circuit Rider Award to Val Colenso.

In legislative action, the conference unanimously approved a petition to make new church development a higher mission priority and supported a variety of structural changes designed to make the conference healthier, including the addition of a full-time director of connectional ministries position. Suggested additions to a list of guiding values were postponed for another year of consideration, while a petition to require full payment of World Service Fund and other denominational apportionments fell just short of the three-quarters majority required for passage. In offerings during the session and collections taken by member churches, Yellowstone celebrated the partnership

with East Angola Conference by collecting more than \$11,540 to provide water wells and other support. Several additional pledges of \$100 per month each served to “adopt” an Angolan pastor by paying his or her salary. The conference continued to use Christian Conferencing Circles as part of the members’ spiritual discernment process, and “academies” offered opportunities for learning on a variety of subjects. The conference nominated Rachel Lieder Simeon for the episcopacy. The conference also celebrated five retirements. Bishop Brown ordained one deacon (associate member) and one elder. Another elder was approved for ordination, but the ordination ceremony was postponed due to the imminent birth of the candidate’s first child. Membership stands at 17,120, down 150 from the previous year. Worship attendance stands at 8640, down 278. — *Waveland King*

## On the Record

“We retired ministers have an ongoing role to play in the conflicts, such as those on homosexuality, which threatened to split the church at the last General Conference. We are in constant dialogue with clergy and laity who are rightfully troubled by these issues. We can help hold the church together by reminding people to think comprehensively and holistically about these questions. . . . As retired ministers we are constantly in contact with members of the contemporary church, and hence we are part of its ongoing dialogue to maintain the unity of the church.”

— *Walter George Muelder, former dean of Boston University School of Theology, speaking to retirees at the New England Annual Conference three days before his death, June 12*

“Increasingly, I think that faithful decision of my annual conference to make me pastor of a church when I was beginning my sophomore year in college has set up a kind of dynamic that has gone throughout my life and is still very much present.”

— *Donald G. Shockley, retired clergy member of the North Alabama Conference*

## Short Takes

- The General Board of Global Ministries will commission 17 new missionaries in August. Pending orientation and final approval, the group, which includes eight young adults, will be the first in their service categories to be commissioned since a moratorium on new mission personnel was imposed at the end of 2002 because of financial shortfalls. The Aug. 22 service will take place at the Church of St. Paul & St. Andrew, a UMC in New York. “The new regular missionaries will fill emergency personnel needs,” said R. Randy Day, general secretary. The young adults will serve in the US-2 program for UM and ecumenical work within the United States. — *Elliott Wright, GBGM*
- This year’s presidential and vice-presidential campaign will feature three UMs in the leading spots. In addition to President George W. Bush and Vice President Dick Cheney being UMs on the Republican ticket, the presumptive Democratic presidential nominee Sen. John Kerry has chosen a UM, Sen. John Edwards, to join him on the Democratic ticket. Edwards is a member of Edenton Street UMC, Raleigh, N.C. While raised and baptized as a Southern Baptist, Edwards lost interest in the church during college. After his oldest son, Wade, died in a 1996 car accident, Edwards joined Edenton Street. Edwards has also served as co-chair of the U.S. Senate Prayer Breakfast.

## Positions Available

Director of connectional ministries (clergy or lay), Yellowstone Conference. Contact: Howard P. Hunter, Box 277, Fort Benton, MT 59442; phone and fax: 406-522-5517; e-mail: revhow@mtintouch.net..... Two positions: 1) full-time coordinator of ethnic ministries and 2) half-time coordinator of ministry area specialists. Contact: Jim Perry, Director of Ministries, Minnesota Conference, 122 West Franklin Ave, #400, Minneapolis, MN 55404; phone: 612-230-6124; fax: 612-870-1260; e-mail: jim.perry@mnumc.org..... Youth minister. Contact: First UMC, Hueytown, AL; daytime phone: 205-491-3421; evening phone: 205-491-8833; e-mail: hfumc@bellsouth.net..... Manager, payroll and benefits. Contact: Human Resources Office, UM Communications, P.O. Box 320, Nashville, TN 37203; phone: 615-742-5137; fax: 615-742-5248; Web site: www.umcom.org.