

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord,
 "plans to prosper you and not to harm you,
 plans to give you hope and a future."
 —Jeremiah 29:11



UMC Connection

Baltimore-Washington Conference of The United Methodist Church • Transformed lives, transform lives • www.bwcumc.org • Volume 31, Issue 1 • January 2020



(L-R:) Karis Arnold worships during Annual Conference; Sharon Milton peers through the border wall in Tijuana, Mexico; Marion Easterling participates in the Seeds of Security Golf Tournament; Daniel Kim works on a project at the Ministry Hatchery; and Andre Briscoe speaks at a BWC training for leaders.

2019: An historic year for BWC ministry



BY ERIK ALSGAARD
 UMConnection Staff

IN MANY WAYS, 2019 was an historic year in the life of the Baltimore-Washington Conference. The conference adopted a vision statement, "Transformed Lives, Transform Lives," and lived that out in the BWC's five areas of mission and ministry: Advocacy and Action; Leadership Development; Wellness and Mission; Young People's Ministry; and New Faith Expressions.

Amid that ministry, the BWC witnessed many firsts, including the ordination of two LGBTQ individuals. That ordination tops our news for 2019.

Bishop Easterling ordained the BWC's first self-avowed, practicing homosexuals into ministry.

The Baltimore-Washington Conference is one of the most diverse in the denomination and its 235th session, May 29-June 1, 2019, in Baltimore, held meaningful moments that illuminated the BWC's new vision statement: "Transformed Lives, Transform Lives." The week was packed with Holy Spirit moments.

One of the most notable of these moments centered around the clergy session endorsing and Bishop LaTrelle Easterling commissioning TC Morrow and ordaining Joey Heath-Mason. Both are in same-gender marriages.

The ordination stands in opposition to the Traditional Plan, adopted at the 2019 Special Session of General Conference, that

reinforced and strengthened the church's stance on homosexuality. It went into effect across the denomination Jan. 1.

"Christ is the ultimate alchemist. Christ is ultimately the one who brings us to transformation. But I also know, transformed lives transform lives," Bishop Easterling preached during the ordination service. The bishop also applauded all those being commissioned and ordained in the tumultuous aftermath of the 2019 General Conference.

"You felt the tectonic plates shift under The United Methodist Church's foundation and you have continued to say, 'yes,' anyhow," the bishop said. The "tectonic shift" the bishop referred to, was the **Special Session of General Conference.**

The global United Methodist Church met in St. Louis, Missouri, Feb. 23-26, 2019. General Conference delegates passed, by a 438-384 vote, the Traditional Plan, which retains restrictions against "self-avowed practicing homosexual" clergy and officiating at or hosting same-sex marriage ceremonies and requires stricter enforcement for violations of church law.

In light of all this, Bishop Easterling led the creation of a conference-wide curriculum, "Who Are We: A Journey from Head to Heart."

This three-part, 18-week Bible study was designed for people to examine the heart of their faith as the church moves through turbulent times. This study was developed so that "we might enter into a process of discernment and

wonder together," said the bishop. "It isn't meant to cater to one outcome or cajole participants into a certain line of thinking. Rather, receive this study as an invitation into communal dialogue chiefly interested in our common roots and the common interest we share as United Methodists within the universal body of Christ today."

The study's three parts address the question, "Who are we?" through three different lenses: Who are we as the people of God; who are we as the people called Methodists shaped by Wesleyan theology; and who are we as the members of the BWC? The study is available online at bwcumc.org.

In other ministry news from 2019:

- The office of Leadership Development designed a new way of instruction with Training Tuesdays, an online event that launched a new way of learning for local church leaders to inspire and equip them to connect more people with Jesus.
- The Rev. Bill Brown officially began his work leading New Faith Expressions. "Through New Faith Expressions, we hope to create new places and spaces for new people," said Brown, "in order to reach more new people, more young people, more diverse people who become more like Christ in the world."
- Retreat and Camping Ministry continued to transform lives by hosting thousands of campers, retreatants, volunteers, and leaders at its three sites.

Protocol of Reconciliation & Grace Through Separation
4-page supplement begins pg. 5



BY MANDY SAYERS

LEAD Pastor, Glen Mar UMC, Ellicott City

IN A NEW year, Wesley's words come to us, "do no harm." Seems easy enough. Like we could just eliminate "harm" the way some just don't "do carbs."

My plan would be to stay home and not move from our chairs, and we would be well on our way to holiness. Except Wesley says, "do no harm" by "avoiding evil of every kind, especially that which is most generally practiced."

Uh oh. If it is generally practiced, I'm pretty sure "do no harm" is going to be harder than it looks.

Then, Wesley helpfully gives us examples, including taking the name of God in vain, dishonoring the sabbath day, gossiping, quarrelling, fighting, brother going to law with brother, returning evil for evil, and generally "doing unto others as we would not have them do unto us." Well, ouch.

"Do no harm" by "avoiding evil of every kind" followed by such a common list invites us to see the ways we harm one another without even noticing. In that way, "do no harm" seems to be active, a call to engage and live with and love one another without hurting one

another or devaluing the image of God in each other. It sounds like discipleship, a call for who we are going to be each day, turning one's life, each day, a little more into the shape of a cross.

Do no harm asks us to be mindful and careful of the ways we harm one another, in our micro- and macro-aggressions, in our distractedness, in our assumptions about one another.

If we do not take the name of God in vain, that means we invoke God's name for good things. If we do not dishonor the sabbath, then we honor it, keeping holy rest and faith as part of our cycle of living and working.

If we do not gossip, quarrel, or fight, how are we to speak to one another? I guess we shall have to find ways to be reconciled together and speak peace to one another. I suppose we shall be forced to engage in some sort of "holy conferencing," as the silent treatment doesn't seem to be an option. If we will not return evil for evil, then I guess we are stuck with "overcoming evil with good."

New year, same old Jesus. Thanks be to God.

Ancient church mothers and fathers often greeted one another with the phrase, "Give me a word." This greeting led to the sharing of insights and wisdom. Today we continue this tradition with this monthly column. This year, the "WORD" will be taken from Ephesians 4:1-16.

BY DARYL WILLIAMS

Pastor, St. Paul UMC, Oxon Hill

IF YOU ARE anything like the rest of us, you have had a failed New Year's Resolution or two in your life. Yet, every year you wind up making the same resolutions all over again.

We all believe, or at least hope, that the turning of the calendar will help us become the people that we want to be as opposed to the people we have been for the last 365 days. What if, instead of doing what we have always done, we all tried something new this year?

DO NO HARM

This year instead of focusing on what we want, what if we started with John Wesley's first rule, "Do No Harm"?

If we made the decision to do no harm, it would radically change how we approached everything. If we decided to do no harm to

ourselves, we would have to make different choices about what we ate, how we lived, and with whom we interacted to ensure that we do ourselves no harm.

If we carried that over to how we treated others, we would have to choose our words wisely, select our actions differently, and monitor our responses to people to make sure we, in fact, "Do No Harm."

This year lets resolve to do no harm. If we follow this simple rule, it has the possibility to change all the things that we have all been trying to change for years.

So, before you do anything as the calendar turns to 2020, just consider: will this allow me to do no harm? Will this allow me to build as opposed to destroy? Will this help me make myself and others better?

With every choice and every action that we do no harm, we change ourselves and the world for the better. My invitation this year? Do No Harm.

EVENTS

Connect leadership summit

Inspiring & Equipping Churches to Connect More People to Jesus

At this one-day training opportunity, you'll hear from Daniel Im, author of "No Silver Bullets," who will help you lead, thrive, and create a culture of discipleship in your church.

Participants can dive deeply into one area of ministry by taking a track, which consists of two workshops. Or, they can explore ministry areas of particular interest to them in two workshops, chosen specifically for local church leaders in each region. Tracks and Workshops vary at each location and you are welcome to attend whichever location best suits your needs.

Tracks include:

Abundant Health Track
Deepening Discipleship Track
Generosity Generators Track
Next Level Leaders Track
New Faith Expressions Track
Young People's Ministry Track

March
07
Baltimore and
Washington Regions

March
14
Southern and
Western Regions

For more information on offerings for each region visit:

bwcumc.org/cls

UMConnection

Bishop LaTrelle Easterling
Melissa Lauber
Erik Alsgaard
Alison Burdett
Myca Jones

Resident Bishop
Director of Communications
Managing Editor
Multimedia Producer / Graphic Designer
Webmaster / Video Producer

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Advocacy & Action



Faithfully respond to God's call for justice, mercy and hope by collaborating with individuals and organizations to transform unjust and oppressive systems. bwcumc.org/ACT

Caring for God's creation

Earthkeepers address environmental justice

The BWC Creation Care team is building a movement, supporting the formation and strengthening of congregational Green Teams and interfaith coalitions, and advocating for urgent action at city, county, and state levels. They sound the clarion call that God's creation is in crisis and that the climate crisis is a moral crisis.

In November, new Earthkeepers were commissioned to begin to live out their call to environmental stewardship. They included: Liz Feighner; Mary Jo Fisher; Rev. Dellyne Hinton; Rev. Cary James; Sherie Koob; Dale Shillito; and Judy Smith.



Educational Trainings



- Opioid Addiction
- Immigration Town Hall
- Immigration 101 trainings to build capacity for Immigrant Advocacy in: Basic Human Rights in accordance with our Social Principles and Book of Resolutions
- Know Your Rights Trainings
- Legislative Advocacy 101
- reCall Summit 3.0 Social Justice [photos]
- Intercultural Competency Training
- Restorative Justice Forum w/Wesley Theological Seminary

Peace with Justice

Awards build God's Kingdom

Makiyah Wilson was 10 when she was murdered on July 15, 2018. A member of Hughes Memorial UMC's Community Anti-violence Project (C.A.P), Wilson "was killed when four hooded gunmen drove into her apartment complex and shot 70 rounds of ammunition with automatic assault weapons while she was outside playing in a courtyard located approximately 1,000 feet from our church," said the Rev. Paul Johnson.



In 2019, in honor of Makiyah and in recognition of the excellent work CAP was doing, the BWC awarded a Peace with Justice grant to the Community Anti-violence Project so that church members could continue their work helping at-risk children excel in school.

Additional Peace with Justice grants were given to the Loaves and Fishes Food Ministry at Mt. Olive UMC in Randallstown (photo 1, below); the Summer Arts Camp at the United Methodist Church of the Redeemer in Temple Hills (2); DC-MD Justice for our Neighbors (3); and Emory Grove UMC in Gaithersburg, which is working to empower single mothers in Ahuahapan, El Salvador (4).



For more information on Peace with Justice, visit: bwcumc.org/ministries/advocacy-action/peace-with-justice/

Inaugural Moral Courage Awards

Honoring faith in action

Moral Courage Awards encourage youth and adults to put their faith in action. These faithful actions are often broad yet deep in expressions and impactful in transforming lives. At right, MCA youth winner J'TA Freeman speaks at Annual Conference.

The adult Moral Courage Award winner was David Bonney for his work in Zimbabwe.

Youth Awards are presented at our Annual Youth ROCK Retreat in Ocean City, and Adult Awards are presented during our Annual Conference.

To learn more, please visit bwcumc.org/moral-courage-awards/.



Going deeper mission trips

El Amor No Conoce Fronteras

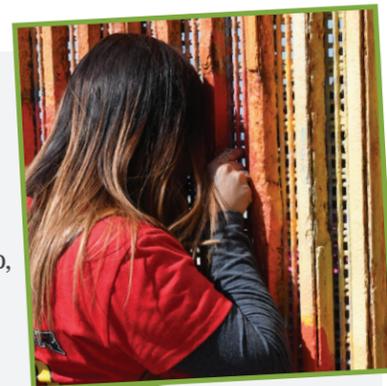
Late in 2018, area United Methodists joined other people of faith in a political action — "Love Knows No Borders" — in Tijuana, Mexico, which called on the U.S. to respect immigrants, and to end detention and deportation.

This moral call to migrant justice continued in 2019, when Emma Escobar, the BWC Hispanic Ministries Coordinator, and the Rev. Eliezer Valentin Castanon, led a diverse group of 24 people from the Conference, including several young people, on an Immersion trip to the border between San Diego, Calif., and Tijuana.

Along the way, they watched as families who had been torn apart met, fingertip-to-fingertip, through small holes in the Border Wall. They shared time with 200 immigrants living in a tent city inside a church in a Tijuana canyon.

In addition to the trip to the border there were:

- Exploratory Mission Trip to El Salvador with an additional focus on Women and Children's Economic Empowerment
- Alabama Civil Rights Immersion to Birmingham, Selma, and Montgomery



BWC Social Action Teams

The BWC has eight Social Action Teams that respond to needs as they unfold in our church and world. Leading these teams are:

- Creation/Environmental Justice – Mike Koob*
- Gender Equity – Andrea Johnson*
- Gun Violence Prevention – Will McBride*
- Immigration Rights – Rev. Julie Wilson*
- LGBTQIA Rights – Rev. C. Michele Johns*
- Racial Justice – Moorosi Mokuena*
- Restorative Justice – Rev. Sonia King and Rev. Brian Jackson*
- Wealth Equity – Rev. Rudy Bropleh*

Wellness & Missions

Mobilizes individuals and teams to address human need and create abundant health and wholeness for all.

bwcumc.org/WM



In mission together locally and globally through

- Heal the Sick Health Minister Certificate w/Wesley Seminary
- Supporting our Global Partners in Latin America, Zimbabwe, Korea and Eurasia
- Local Congregational Health Ministries Support
- UM Volunteers in Mission
- Mission u
- Mission Central
- United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR)
- Abundant Health Initiatives
- Global Missionaries

To learn more about our global partnerships, please visit bwcumc.org/about/global-partnerships

Supporting mission teams across the Connection

- Puerto Rico Long Term Recovery (LTR)
- Appalachia Service Project (ASP) Summer Youth Mission Program
- Camp Hope – Frostburg, MD, Summer Youth Mission Program

missiontrips.bwcumc.org



Missionaries

Carrying the love of Christ

Churches in the BWC sponsor six missionaries serving around the world. Learn more about United Methodist missionaries and how you can support their work at <https://advance.umcmmission.org/Projects.aspx>

- **Jae Hyoung Choi** #13973Z – at Global Ministries headquarters in Atlanta
- **Belinda Forbes** #12109Z – Managua, Nicaragua with Accion Medica Cristiana
- **Miguel Mairena** #12877Z – Puebla, Mexico with Give Them to Eat
- **Nan McCurdy** #1081Z – Puebla, Mexico with Give Them to Eat
- **Jennifer Moore** #3022165 – Christian educator in the Republic of Macedonia
- **Albert Willicor** #15151Z – Chief medical officer in Ganta, Liberia



Clergy health a priority

BWC seeks abundant health for all

Clergy health statistics indicate that the health of pastors in the Baltimore-Washington Conference is ranked among the lowest in the denomination. This is especially true in the arena of mental health, as clergy seek to address the stress that comes with their vocation.

Last year, BWC leaders addressed thoughts of suicide with four pastors.

Bishop LaTrelle Easterling has declared the health and well-being of conference clergy one of her top priorities.

The unique nature of

ordained ministry demands sound mental health, and Health Flex now provides services to assist clergy. Everyone enrolled in the denomination's health care plan receives eight free visits with mental health professionals.

This behavioral health benefit offers support for depression, stress and anxiety, family issues, substance abuse and recovery, eating disorders, balancing work-life issues and more.

To learn more, call 800-788-5614 or visit www.liveandworkwell.com.

Human & Natural Disaster response

- Responding to Disasters in Puerto Rico, Texas, Maryland, and North Carolina.
- Formed Anti-Racism Response Team (offering needed support for vandalized churches)

Seeds of Security

Addressing Domestic & Intimate Partner Violence

The statistics are staggering. On average, nearly 20 people per minute are physically abused by an intimate partner in the United States. In 2019, that added up to more than 10 million women and men. But even more heart-breaking are the stories that lie behind the stats.

Seeds of Security reaches into these stories to provide a safe place for those fleeing violence. Finding such a safe haven, for just a short-term, is often one of the most challenges aspects of breaking the bonds that hold people in these situations. In April 2019, Seeds of Security, a ministry of Baltimore-Washington, hosted a golf tournament and gala and raise funds to address domestic violence.

The event raised over \$7,790. The youth of the BWC, at the annual ROCK event, also collected \$10,680 for Seeds for Security.

To register for the 2020 Golf Tournament, visit: www.eiseverywhere.com/sos2020



The Seeds of Security ministry:

- Expands Regional resource offerings
 - Hosts Inaugural Charity Golf Tournament and Gala to Raise Funds for Survivor Safe havens and Support.
 - Hosts educational trainings and supports statewide DV/IPV advocacy
 - Developed Emergency Grants for survivors seeking temporary Shelter/Assistance
- For more information, visit bwcumc.org/sos.

Educational Trainings



- Opioid Addiction
- Problem Gambling Certificate
- Health Minister Certificate with WTS
- Mental Health First-Aid
- Early Response Team
- Volunteers in Mission

Connect to Missions and/or support
Abundant Health by going to
www.bwcumc.org/wm

Protocol of Reconciliation & Grace Through Separation

Diverse leaders' group offers plan for future

EDITOR'S NOTE: A diverse, 16-member group of United Methodist bishops and other leaders, including the BWC's Bishop LaTrelle Easterling, has offered a proposal that would preserve The United Methodist Church while allowing traditionalist-minded congregations to form a new denomination. The separating group would get \$25 million in United Methodist funds and would keep its local church properties.

Details are in a nine-page "Protocol of Reconciliation & Grace Through Separation," printed in this special section, released Jan. 3 along with an FAQ and press release.

The proposal — reached with the help of famed mediator Kenneth Feinberg, who worked on the federal September 11th Victim Compensation Fund — requires approval by the 2020 General Conference. Drafting of legislation is still underway for the legislative assembly, which is the only body that speaks for the 13 million global denomination.

The full Protocol, along with an FAQ, is online at bwcumc.org/news-and-views/mediation-team-offers-new-proposal-to-separate

###

Statement of Principles

A. Whereas, The United Methodist Church and its members — after careful reflection, discussion and prayer — have fundamental differences regarding their understanding and interpretation of Scripture, theology and practice;

B. Whereas, The United Methodist Church at its February 2019 Special Session of the General Conference in St. Louis did not resolve their differences specifically related to the full participation of LGBTQ persons in the life of the Church;

C. Whereas, The United Methodist Church and its members are at an impasse, the Church's witness and mission is being impeded, and the Church itself as well as its members have been injured;

D. Whereas, The United Methodist Church and its members have a deep desire to fulfill our long-stated mission to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

E. Whereas, The United Methodist Church is committed to recognizing, respecting and protecting the rights and personal dignity of every person, including people of all races, sexual orientations, genders, national origins, ages, and social classes;

F. Whereas, the undersigned came together as an outgrowth



The Mediation Team that drafted the Protocol of Reconciliation and Grace Through Separation pose for a group picture after signing the agreement. Bishop LaTrelle Easterling of the BWC stands in the front row, third from the right.

of a consultation initiated by Bishop John Yambasu and other Central Conference Bishops, and were asked to represent various constituencies of the Church in reaching a gracious and dignified resolution of the impasse;

G. Whereas, the undersigned propose restructuring The United Methodist Church by separation as the best means to resolve our differences, allowing each part of the Church to remain true to its theological understanding, while recognizing the dignity, equality, integrity, and respect of every person; and

H. Whereas, the undersigned, in recognition of the regional contexts and divergent points of view within the global United Methodist Church, proposes separation as a faithful step with the possibility of continued cooperation around matters of shared interest, enabling each of us to authentically live out our faith;

NOW, THEREFORE, the undersigned, seeking to serve The United Methodist Church, hereby agree as follows, to this Protocol of Reconciliation and Grace Through Separation ("the Protocol"):

ARTICLE I: Agreement and Commitment to this Protocol

1. This Protocol is unanimously agreed to by each of the undersigned laity, pastors, and bishops of The United Methodist Church. The undersigned further covenant to fully support this Protocol and each other in our joint effort to seek its implementation. Each of the undersigned also agree to recommend the Protocol's implementing legislation to be voted upon and adopted by the 2020 General Conference of The United

Methodist Church.

2. The United Methodist Church and its members aspire to multiply the Methodist mission in the world by restructuring the Church through respectful and dignified separation.

3. The undersigned will continue to work together to develop legislation to implement the Protocol, to be voted upon and adopted by the 2020 General Conference of The United Methodist Church. The undersigned will not challenge the constitutionality or legality of legislation implementing this Protocol and will jointly and individually defend the provisions of the Protocol and any enabling legislation in case of review by the United Methodist Judicial Council.

4. The undersigned agree to use their best efforts to persuade any groups or organizations with which they are affiliated to support the legislation necessary to implement the Protocol.

Consistent with the commitment in Article I, Paragraph 1, the undersigned will not participate in or support legislation or other efforts that are inconsistent with the principles and terms of the Protocol and the implementing legislation. They may support other efforts to the extent that all signatories to this Protocol agree that such efforts are consistent with the Protocol.

5. The undersigned agree that each of the provisions of this Protocol is integrated with and integral to the whole and shall not be severable from the remainder of the Protocol. Further, should any provisions of the Protocol be deemed illegal by either the United Methodist Judicial Council or by

civil courts, the entirety of this Protocol shall be considered null and void.

6. The undersigned agree that they will bring no claims for, nor will they support any claims for, additional assets of the post-separation United Methodist Church or any of the denominations that will arise from this Protocol and will not be parties to such litigation.

ARTICLE II: Definitions of Terms

1. LGBTQ shall mean the community that includes several subsets of persons who share similar discrimination because of their sexual orientation or gender identity/expression. The letters of the acronym stand for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer (a non-binary, self-identifier).

2. Methodist denomination pursuant to this Protocol shall mean all Methodist denominations created through this Protocol and The United Methodist Church.

3. Post-separation United Methodist Church shall mean The United Methodist Church after the formation of new denominations under this Protocol.

4. Protocol shall mean this agreement by which the parties hereto agree to support the development and implementation of the legislation necessary to implement the terms of the Protocol.

ARTICLE III: Process and Timeline for Implementation of the Protocol

1. To implement this Protocol, The United Methodist Church

Protocol: *Addressing the future of the church*

From page 5

and its members will adopt the following process and timeline for accomplishing restructuring:

a. Registration with the Secretary of the Council of Bishops of intent to form a new Methodist denomination pursuant to this Protocol must occur not later than May 15, 2021.

b. Central Conferences may choose with a two-thirds vote to affiliate with a Methodist denomination pursuant to this Protocol other than the post-separation United Methodist Church. If a Central Conference does not vote, it remains a part of the post-separation United Methodist Church. Such an affiliation vote shall be taken no later than December 31, 2021.

c. Annual Conferences, whether in the Central or Jurisdictional Conferences, may choose to vote on whether to affiliate with one of the Methodist denominations pursuant to this Protocol. If an Annual Conference does not vote, it shall remain a part of the post-separation United Methodist Church. In order for an Annual Conference to consider affiliation with a denomination pursuant to this protocol other than the post-separation United Methodist Church, a motion may be made on the floor of an Annual Conference session to conduct such an affiliation vote. If supported by 20% of those voting at the Annual Conference session, an affiliation vote must be conducted before July 1, 2021. In order to affiliate with a Methodist denomination created under this Protocol other than the post-separation UMC, the vote to affiliate must be supported by 57% of those voting.

d. Any local church desiring a different affiliation than the Methodist denomination pursuant to this Protocol selected by its Annual Conference may conduct an affiliation vote. If a local church does not vote, it remains part of the Methodist denomination pursuant to this Protocol selected by its Annual Conference. If such a vote occurs, the church council shall determine a voting threshold of either a simple majority or two-thirds of those present and voting at a duly called church conference in order for the motion opting for a different affiliation to be adopted.

A vote on a motion to opt for a different affiliation shall occur in a church conference held not more than 60 days after the request for such a vote is made by the church council. Such church conferences must be held in consultation with the District Superintendent who shall authorize such church conferences to be conducted. Decisions about affiliation by a local church pursuant to this Protocol must be made by December 31, 2024.

ARTICLE IV: Financial Agreement Terms of this Protocol

1. To foster this restructuring process, the following steps will be taken with respect to the finances of The United Methodist Church:

a. Local Church Property, Assets, and Liabilities

i. A local church that affiliates with a Methodist denomination pursuant to this Protocol other than the post-separation United Methodist Church retains its assets and liabilities. The Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church to which the local church belongs at the time of separation will not exercise its trust clause and shall release such local church from the provisions of any and all trust clauses. The local church, prior to its separation, shall be expected to maintain its connectional responsibilities through the date of separation. At separation, such a local church shall not be required to pay any sums to the Annual Conference other than previously documented loans from the Annual Conference which shall be repaid according to the terms of such loans.

ii. In the event such local church (or its successor) subsequently chooses to close, or a Methodist denomination pursuant to this Protocol with which they affiliate ceases to exist, the property of such local church will be subject to a lien in favor of Wespeth on its assets in the amount of that local church's then proportionate share of future unfunded pension liabilities.

iii. Should a local church disaffiliate from The United Methodist Church and not become part of a Methodist denomination pursuant to this Protocol, it must comply with paragraph 2553 of The United Methodist Book of Discipline.

b. Annual, Jurisdictional, and Central Conference Property, Assets, and Liabilities

i. The property, assets, and liabilities of Annual, Jurisdictional, and Central Conferences shall be retained by those entities regardless of the affiliation decision with a Methodist denomination pursuant to this Protocol that each makes under this Protocol.

c. Financial Agreements

i. A total sum of \$25M shall be paid by the General Council on Finance and Administration over the ensuing quadrennium to the traditionalist Methodist denomination established pursuant to this Protocol after it is formed and incorporated.

ii. A total sum of \$2M shall be escrowed by the General Council on Finance and Administration for payment to potential additional Methodist denominations established pursuant to this Protocol after they are formed and incorporated over the ensuing quadrennium.

iii. As an acknowledgment of the historical role of the Methodist movement in systems of systematic racial violence, exploitation and discrimination, and as a fair and just step in addressing the impact of such harms, a sum of \$39M shall be allocated by the General Council on Finance and Administration in their budget recommendations over the next two quadrennia to support communities historically

marginalized by the sin of racism. The goal of these earmarked funds shall be to strengthen ministries by and for Asian, Black, Hispanic-Latino, Native American, and Pacific Islander Communities, encourage the full participation of historically marginalized communities in the governance and decision-making of the church, and ensure that the vital work of training the next generation of leaders by Africa University will be maintained. The Connectional Table in consultation with the National Plans, the Program Agencies of the Church, and the Council of Bishops shall be responsible for determining and evaluating programmatic priorities in relation to these earmarked funds. \$13M of this sum represents a contribution from the post-separation Traditional Methodist Denomination, made possible by their decision to forgo receiving these funds and instead contribute them to this fund. This \$13M sum shall remain in the possession of and be administered by the post-separation United Methodist Church for this purpose. In addition, the post-separation United Methodist Church will contribute \$26M for a total of \$39M over 8 years for this purpose. Churches which align with the traditional Methodist denomination under this Protocol shall have the option to participate in programs and grants which serve their respective ethnic groups if they otherwise meet the requirements for such participation through this 8-year period.

iv. The pension plans of The United Methodist Church will remain in place for all current clergy and lay employees affiliated with The United Methodist Church, regardless of the Methodist denomination under this Protocol with which they affiliate. The undersigned support the existing and proposed legislation submitted by Wespeth that addresses assumption of unfunded pension liabilities by Methodist denominations under this Protocol, and the ability of the clergy who are associated with Methodist denominations under this Protocol to continue to participate in pension plans administered by Wespeth. All other property, assets, or liabilities of The United Methodist Church, including its general boards and agencies, shall remain with the post-separation United Methodist Church and other Methodist denominations under this Protocol shall have no claim or entitlement to such property, assets, or liabilities.

v. The Council of Bishops of the post-separation United Methodist Church shall offer to enter into ecumenical agreements with Methodist denominations formed under this Protocol. Such ecumenical agreements may include participation in Boards and Agencies, continuation of various mission activities, or any other matters within the scope of ecumenical agreements.

ARTICLE V: Moratorium

1. As one expression of reconciliation and grace through separation, the undersigned agree that all administrative or judicial processes addressing restrictions in the Book of Discipline related to self-avowed practicing homosexuals or same-sex weddings shall be held in abeyance beginning January 1, 2020 through the adjournment of the first conference of the post-separation United Methodist Church. Clergy shall continue to remain in good standing while such complaints are held in abeyance.

2. The undersigned agree that if there are churches proposed for closure, the church and annual conference shall delay final actions on closure of churches until after the 2020 General Conference of The United Methodist Church, except in those situations where there are exigent circumstances and/or a congregation has voluntarily discerned it is necessary to close a church due to a lack of participation or financial insolvency.

ARTICLE VI: General Conference 2020

In order to enable all parties to transition to their preferred future, the Council of Bishops is asked to work with the Commission on General Conferences and other church agencies to accomplish the following:

1. The Council of Bishops requests a declaratory decision from the Judicial Council regarding the constitutionality of the proposed legislation related to this Protocol to take place prior to the opening session of the 2020 General Conference.

2. The Council of Bishops requests a report from the General Council on Finance and Administration related to the financial impacts of this Protocol to be shared prior to the 2020 General Conference.

3. The Council of Bishops, working with the Commission on the General Conference, identifies an appropriate time on the Agenda of General Conference for the Protocol and any related implementing legislation to be presented.

4. The Council of Bishops will provide meeting space for those interested in creating other expressions of a Methodist denomination pursuant to this protocol at the adjournment of the 2020 General Conference session.

5. The Council of Bishops will call the first session of the General Conference of the postseparation United Methodist Church to organize itself and, if such legislation has not been passed, consider matters pertaining to the Regional Conference plan.

6. The Council of Bishops will call the first session of the United States Regional Conference to consider legislation related to changes in the adaptable portions of the Book of Discipline including the repeal of Traditional Plan legislation and all other portions related to LGBTQ persons.

Signatories to The Protocol

ARTICLE VII: The Signatories to the Protocol

The undersigned persons, after voluntarily participating in multiple confidential mediation sessions with mediator Kenneth R. Feinberg, agree to the terms of this Protocol and will collectively and individually work to support adoption of the Protocol, including the development of all legislation necessary to implement it.

December 17, 2019

Bishop Christian Alsted, Nordic-Baltic Episcopal Area
 Rev. Thomas Berlin, representing UMCNext, Mainstream UMC, Uniting Methodists
 Bishop Thomas J. Bickerton, New York Episcopal Area
 Rev. Keith Boyette, representing The Confessing Movement, Good News, IRD/UM Action, and the Wesleyan Covenant Association
 Bishop Kenneth H. Carter, Florida Episcopal Area
 Rev. Junius Dotson, representing UMCNext, Mainstream UMC, Uniting Methodists
 Bishop LaTrelle Easterling, Washington Episcopal Area
 Rev. Egmedio “Jun” Equila, Jr., Philippines Central Conference
 Bishop Cynthia Fierro Harvey, Louisiana Episcopal Area
 Bishop Rodolfo Rudy Juan, Davao Episcopal Area, Philippines
 Janet Lawrence, representing Affirmation, Methodist Federation for Social Action, and Reconciling Ministries Network
 Rev. David Meredith, representing Affirmation, Methodist Federation for Social Action, and Reconciling Ministries Network, member of UM Queer Clergy Caucus
 Patricia Miller, representing The Confessing Movement, Good News, IRD/UM Action, and the Wesleyan Covenant Association
 Dr. Randall Miller, representing Affirmation, Methodist Federation for Social Action, and Reconciling Ministries Network
 Bishop Gregory Vaughn Palmer, Ohio West Episcopal Area
 Bishop John K. Yambasu, Sierra Leone Episcopal Area

In addition to the above signatories, the following individuals participated in the initial meeting convened by Bishop John Yambasu and other Central Conference Bishops in July 2019 and consulted with the mediation team during the process:

Rev. Dr. Maxie Dunnam	Rev. Dr. Mark Holland	Karen Prudente	Rev. Jasmine R. Smothers
Rev. Ginger Gaines-Cirelli	Bishop Mande Muyambo, North	Rev. Rob Renfroe	Mark Tooley
Rev. Adam Hamilton	Katanga Episcopal Area	Rev. Kimberly Scott	

A word from the bishop

There is a season for everything

Beloved,

We. Are. One.

That was the title of the sermon I preached during my Installation in 2016 at First Hyattsville United Methodist Church. The Spirit led me to preach from Ephesians and emphasize our unity after listening to conversations throughout the conference. Further, as far back as I can remember, my hearing, understanding, and praxis of the Gospel message has centered upon our oneness in Jesus Christ.

While it may seem contradictory, the new Protocol on Reconciliation and Grace Through Separation, now before the denomination, is the best and strongest way we can move forward honoring the Gospel and our call to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. Crafted in a spirit of mutual respect, it lifts us out of the quagmire we've been stuck in for decades and sets us all, with integrity, on a path that brings honor and glory to God. Ecclesiastes teaches us a hard truth — that there is a time for every matter under the sun. The time for moving forward in new and separate expressions of Methodism is before us.

As a member of the 16-member mediation team, which included conservatives, moderates, progressives and bishops, I strongly urge you to read the protocol with a discerning eye, putting aside preconceived inclinations to be feelings of defensiveness. If that is done, I believe you will discover the Holy Spirit is at work among us.

I was deeply honored to participate in the creation of The Protocol. I came to the process after it had already begun. During the November meeting of the Council of Bishops, I became aware of meetings that were taking place comprised of a broad constituency of committed laity, clergy, and episcopal leaders. After some in-depth conversation among the Council, it was decided

that another female voice was needed at the table and I was asked if I would be willing to serve. I reluctantly agreed. I was reluctant because I have made it known that I was not willing to be a part of any group whose chief purpose was to dissolve the denomination or coerce persons to leave.

When I sat at table and saw the diversity represented there, I was heartened. Although not every single aspect of the denomination was present, it was a broad constituency representing very different theological viewpoints. I also immediately came to understand that they shared a consensus that remaining together was no longer a viable option. Therefore, each participant offered ideas and elements that were important to their caucuses and constituencies, and negotiated from that standpoint. While the conversation was intense, everyone made efforts to be considerate of the varying interests, needs, and the goal of separating with dignity. The Protocol of Reconciliation and Grace Through Separation is not perfect, just as no piece of legislation is perfect. But it does represent a viable foundation for developing legislation that will allow for an amicable separation with dignity.

As the Baltimore-Washington Conference, I invite us to read the entire Protocol and the accompanying documents with an open mind. Read it without imputing onto its authors any ill-intent or ignoble motive. Read it with the aftermath of the Special Session of General Conference in mind. Read it with the pain and harm that has been caused by our inability to live within contextual and theological freedom. Read it with an eye toward an opportunity to pour ourselves into mission and ministry without fear of LGBTQIA+ charges, trials, or exclusion.

As a result of The Protocol and my belief in the possibilities it holds, I will not be processing any charges pursuant to the new paragraphs of

the Book of Discipline, which went into effect on January 1, 2020. There was unanimous consent among the mediation team, including the traditionalist voices at the table, that new rounds of charges and trials would not be helpful at this juncture. Rather, all such charges will be held in abeyance until after the General Conference.

It seems providential to me that the churches of the BWC are in the midst of the conference-wide study, “Who Are We: A Journey From Head to Heart,” which was designed to help us reflect upon our theological and scriptural grounding, our Wesleyan heritage, and our life together as the BWC. This study positions us perfectly to determine whether we want to remain within the post-separation United Methodist Church with the restrictive language about homosexuality removed, or go with the post-separation expression of Methodism that will retain those restrictions. Are we a conference grounded in liberation and inclusion, or restrictive practices? I pray that we see ourselves as the former. I believe our 236 years of bold mission and ministry, and our Christ-centered inclusion of all people, indicate that we are.

It has been shared with me by several conservative pastors and lay people in the BWC that they do not desire to align themselves with restrictive practices. They have made it clear that they will remain with The United Methodist Church if this plan passes at General Conference.

As anyone knows who has participated in the separation of any relationship, be it a marriage, a small business or a civic organization, it is never easy. The *idea* of separation tends toward the romantic; the *reality* of separation is anything but.

On the one hand, the cry from the members of The United Methodist Church has been to stop the pain, end the trials, and create an inclusive church where everyone is welcome. But it has become clear that many

people in our church are not able to work faithfully and fruitfully alongside those with whom they disagree. An amicable separation is our best viable option. That is what the members of the mediation

team attempted to create with The Protocol. It is being criticized because it was mediated in confidentiality. Confidentiality is not tantamount to evil. In this case, it was a tool, necessary to allow people with vastly different views to come together in a timely way to accomplish a critically important and time-sensitive task. Members of the team were tasked with communicating with their constituencies to inform the process. They did so, and The Protocol now stands as the best work, and the best hope, of people across the broad theological spectrum of The United Methodist Church.

As we move toward the General Conference session in May, where The Protocol will be considered as legislation, I call all the people of the Baltimore-Washington Conference into a time of prayer and fasting. In the midst of these very logistical and strategic measures to ensure the future of the Church, we must never lose sight of the fact that we are first and foremost a spiritual people, called to be salt and light in an imperfect world.

“God of grace and God of glory, on thy people pour thy power. Crown thine ancient church’s story, bring her bud to glorious flower. Grant us wisdom, grant us courage, for the facing of this hour, for the facing of this hour.”

To God be the glory!

Bishop LaTrelle Easterling



Bishop LaTrelle Easterling

Responses to The Protocol

EDITOR'S NOTE: As news broke of the Protocol of Reconciliation and Grace Through Separation plan, United Methodists throughout the connection responded. We reached out to two BWC caucuses and asked them to write their response. The two statements, below, are printed in their entirety.

Baltimore-Washington Area Reconciling United Methodists Supports Attempt to Form Fully Inclusive Denomination

For many years, Baltimore-Washington Area Reconciling United Methodists (B-WARM) has fought for the vision of a United Methodist Church that is inclusive of all persons, particularly LGBTQIA+ persons. The proposed "Protocol of Reconciliation & Grace through Separation" seeks to make this vision a reality while providing a framework to create one or more new "traditionalist" or other Methodist denominations.

We applaud the effort that was made to include diverse theological

perspectives in the conversation that created this Protocol, including our episcopal leader, Bishop LaTrelle Easterling.

B-WARM supports this attempt to form a fully inclusive denomination. All people deserve a spiritual home where they can be welcomed and loved as their authentic selves. We regret the reality that this inclusive church must come at the cost of separation with Methodists who do not share our fully inclusive vision. Our prayer is that the Protocol

can provide a truly welcoming Methodist home for ALL persons.

Even though the Protocol appears to have broad support across the UMC, there is still much work to be done. No plan for the denomination's future will be put into place unless it is approved by the General Conference.

In the coming months, B-WARM will work to support the Protocol as a potential way forward for an inclusive Methodist denomination. We will offer opportunities for learning and dialogue so that

the people of the Baltimore-Washington Conference can fully understand the great benefits and count the serious costs of this plan. One of these opportunities will come at our meeting at John Wesley UMC, 3202 W. North Ave. in Baltimore, on Feb. 29, starting at 9:30 a.m. We will also advocate for our General Conference delegation to support this plan so that there will finally be an expression of Methodism that welcomes and loves all LGBTQIA+ persons.

Baltimore-Washington Chapter of the Wesleyan Covenant Association Applauds the Negotiated Protocol for Separation

The Board of the Baltimore-Washington Chapter of the Wesleyan Covenant Association (BWC-WCA), applauds the work of the negotiators of the new church separation protocol. This work has resulted in a recognition that an organized separation is the most practical way forward. We are most pleased to see that local churches would be able to associate with the Methodist denomination of their choice, freely and with their church property.

Negotiation requires compromise, and compromise means no party gets everything it wants. Many United Methodists are struggling to digest these

ramifications. The final legislation may turn out to be something no one likes, but everyone wants.

It is essential for all laypeople to get educated in these matters. Any decisions to be made at the local church level will be made by the members. The Methodist movement was its best when led by empowered laity, so we believe our best days are ahead of us.

The BWC-WCA remains confident in God's promise to build Christ's church, and we are excited to be part of that work. We see a future where we share the Truth of transformation and salvation in Jesus Christ in line with historic orthodoxy. We look

to a future of reduced institutional overhead, an associated reduction in apportionments, and a modified role for Bishops who serve and then return to the pastorate. Most of all, we envision a connected, diverse, global denomination emphasizing local church discipleship, global missions, mercy and evangelism.

If this vision is one that you share, we encourage you to let your voice be heard by your pastor, leadership, and congregation. It can be easy to think that someone else will speak up and then let institutional loyalties direct your church's future. But if you want something different for your

congregation; if you want your church's legacy to remain faithful to disciple-making and biblical orthodoxy, then we encourage you to stand up and be counted. The BWC-WCA desires to be a resource for anyone who shares this vision.

For more information, contact:
Rev. Dr. Rudy Bropleh, President
pastorb@4pillarchurch.org

Johnny Hines, Jr., Vice President
jchinesjr@comcast.net

Our website: www.bwcwca.org

STUDY, PRAYER AND FASTING IN PREPARATION FOR GC 2020

REGIONAL MONTHS OF PRAYER AND FASTING

Join your siblings in a time of intentional prayer and fasting on Wednesdays and Fridays from sunrise to sunset.

Western Region: January 15-February 14, 2020
Baltimore Region: February 15-March 14, 2020

Washington Region: March 15-April 14, 2020
Southern Region: April 15-May 15, 2020

BWCUMC.ORG/FAST

*Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to
loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords
of the yoke,
to set the oppressed free and break every yoke?
Is it not to share your food with the hungry and
to provide the poor wanderer with shelter—
when you see the naked, to clothe them, and not
to turn away from your own flesh and blood?*

— Isaiah 58:6-7

New Faith Expressions

Equips and encourages change-makers to gather new faces in new spaces in order to bring the church Jesus loves closer to the people Jesus loves. bwcumc.org/NFE

For decades, churches have operated under the model of “if we build it, they will come.” Of course, depending on your context “it” could be just about anything: a new building, the latest program, or an idea that was successful at another church. The philosophy behind the model was for churches to provide the “best whatever” in order to attract people to us, in order to share our faith in Jesus Christ.

In 2019, the BWC created a new ministry team to take faith out of the sanctuary and introduce God to new people in new places and spaces. The philosophy behind this idea is to go where the people are and share our faith in Jesus Christ with them.

In July, the Rev. Bill Brown finished his interim year of study and investigation and was appointed director of the conference’s New Faith Expressions ministry.

The role of the new ministry is a simple one, Brown said, “To bring the church Jesus loves

closer to the people Jesus loves.”

New Faith Expressions are communities of faith that reach out to those who aren’t currently in a church. They aren’t tied to a physical building. Rather, they are unique expressions of God’s love, grace, mercy, and joy.

A new faith expression could be formed in a tattoo parlor, a dog park, a bar, a yoga studio, a gym, around someone’s dining room table, or anywhere there is intentional discipleship, Brown said.

He is collecting ideas and working with people interested in starting new faith expressions. Some envision new church starts in satellite locations, some see house churches and still others are interested in communities growing in an unusual places.

There are a variety of approaches, he said. However, every new faith expression has four things in common.

1 New Faith Expressions gather new people. This is not about bringing church people together in new ways. They are designed to give unchurched and dechurched people a fresh experience of Christian community.

2 These are not one-time events. They meet regularly, be it weekly or monthly, or something in-between.

3 They relate to a United Methodist entity, and have a supportive connection with a local church, campus ministry, the annual conference, or some other group.

4 New Faith Expressions, when they work well, form disciples, Brown said. The means they use to do this varies significantly, but discipleship is at the heart of everything.

“Who will we never reach if the only thing we have to offer is church as we know it?”

“How much of the church, as we know it, are we willing to let go of in order to follow Jesus?”




As churches and individual begin to consider new faith expressions, the Rev. Bill Brown is encouraging them to do three things: “Pray big. Dream big. Believe big, knowing that BIG stands for ‘Because It’s God.’”

Bethany Korean UMC

Closed church creates legacy

In an act that creates a legacy, when Rockland UMC in Ellicott City closed its doors, the BWC Trustees gave the \$2 million building to Bethany Korean UMC, one of the BWC’s newest churches.

At the signing of the documents transferring the deed, Bishop LaTrelle Easterling hailed the act as “another instance where the conference is supporting faith communities, deepening discipleship and strategically utilizing our temporal assets.”

Bethany Korean UMC started on Pentecost Sunday in 2013 as a new church start, worshipping in the chapel of Bethany UMC,

Over the years, the Rev. Dae Sung Park, seen below with Bishop Easterling, has grown the congregation from four lay people and a retired pastor to more than 100 worshippers.

The congregation is active in missions — creating hot Korean meals for seniors in the area through the Meals on Wheels program, providing Bibles and hygiene items to women in prison, and hosting Gamblers Anonymous meetings. The church also has an active prayer ministry.

“Everything that has happened,” Park said, “is God’s answer to us.”



Coop’s Soups

Church in unexpected places

In 2019, a group of Change-Makers from the Baltimore-Washington Conference continued their dreams of creating innovative ministries.

The group received training as a part of grant for young adults seeking to living out God’s call to innovative ministry through mentoring, missional immersions and vocational conversations. The grant was provided, in part, by the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry.

This year was a banner one for Cristin Cooper of Oakdale UMC, below, who was inspired by the concept of “neighboring.” She started things rolling with training from the BWC Change-Makers in 2018.

Over time, she’s started an intentional Christian community centered around a dinner table and delicious home-made soup, which she now also sells as part of “Coop’s Soups.”

This year, she’s learned that “church happens,” she said, “it just doesn’t always look like it. ... It has been an amazing process.”



Ministry Hatchery

Innovation prompts new hopes

Fifty people, representing 12 churches, embraced the spirit of missional innovation at the first BWC Ministry Hatchery, this year, claiming the time away to imagine and plan new ways of being church in their communities.

Love makes us inventors, explained the Hatchery leader, the Rev. Kenda Creasy Dean.

The values with which one creates are essential, she said “How you do things speaks more loudly than the things you say you want to do,”

To shape shared values, she encouraged those present to: put people first; care for the experiments, not the results; believe it’s safe to fail; celebrate what you want more of; and measure what matters or what you measure will be what matters.

For the Rev. Bill Brown, the BWC’s director of New Faith Expressions, the Ministry Hatchery was an opportunity for people to step apart from church as it has always been done and approach ministry from different angles with new ways of thinking.

“Experiences like this help us shift our stance and look at things differently,” he said. In a variety of creative ways, hope is being hatched.



Leadership Development

Fosters a culture of call, awakens people's spiritual gifts, and equips disciples to be vibrant and spiritually mature leaders.

bwcumc.org/LD

Transition, Transformation, and Training

Making disciples the focus

"Transition, Transformation, and Training" were the main themes of the Leadership Development ministry in the Baltimore-Washington Conference in 2019. According to the Rev. Rodney Smothers, Director of Leadership and Congregational Development, many of the conference's pastors and congregations have experienced a shift in their usual flow of ministry. This led to requests for individual trainings for congregations in the areas of leader development, ministry structures, and mission outreach.

These trainings, he said, were accomplished by on-site and conference-wide training events. The question most asked during these gatherings? "How do we do ministry in a time of transition?"

Uncertainty at the national church level, Smothers said, helped to create uncertainty at the local church level. Many churches requested basic re-training around their mission and vision. Dwindling resources and declining attendance also help fuel requests for "doing more, with less."

"Locally, many churches requested training about the 'Single Board Model,'" Smothers said, "that assists local churches to reorganize their human resources for effective ministry."

At the Conference level, Leadership



Development hosted trainings in a new way. Rather than requiring people to drive to a training event, Smothers said, the training event came to them. Using web-based ZOOM video, "Training Tuesdays" saw hundreds of people tune in for resources and information

in the areas of Staff Parish Relations Committee, Trustees, Finance, Church Council, Nominations, and Unified Board.

"The response we've received to these trainings – not only the content, but the way it was delivered – has been very positive," Smothers said.

Equipped for ministry

Training takes on new formats

"The office also provided conference-wide training through the 'The Laity Fix,' a comprehensive training regarding the roles and ministries of laity in the life of our local congregations," Smothers said. "Additional training in personal discernment of leadership styles and discernment was provided through 'Tending the Fire,' a multi-week seminar that equipped laity and clergy teams for impactful leadership."

The mission of The United Methodist Church is to "Make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world." To assist with this, the office of Leadership Development offered training for local churches to create their own discipleship system.

"Walking people through the '3-D System' helped participants through discernment, dreaming and development," Smothers said. "Also, training was provided in a workshop, 'Multiplying Your Church by Discovering Your Contextual Flavor.' This workshop focused on starting new campuses, new worship services

"With increasing emphasis on communications that are digital, downloadable, and available on demand, we are increasing the portals, places, and pathways that we can distribute information to our constituents."

and other new expressions of faith."

A new Discipleship Leadership team was formed at the Conference level as the Discipleship Agencies increased their effectiveness by involving more laity in the training processes. These servant leaders are having a meaningful impact on training and equipping at several levels in the Annual Conference, Smothers said.

LeaderPOD

Podcast focuses on leadership

The focus on getting the word out about leadership also took the shape of a Baltimore-Washington Podcast, "LeaderPod BWC," a podcast produced by BWC Communications, which aided Leadership Development by helping get the word out about resources for clergy and lay leaders alike.

"With increasing emphasis on communications that are digital, downloadable, and available on demand, we are increasing the portals, places, and pathways that we can distribute information to our constituents," Smothers added.

LeaderPOD 

Laity trained for key leadership roles within the BWC

BWC leads denomination with number of CLMs

At the end of 2019, there are about 121 active Certified Lay Ministers in the BWC. That's according to Linda Flanagan, Director of Lay Servant Ministries for the conference. That doesn't include the 24 currently in training classes, who are prospective CLMs.

"There are three categories, not levels, of certified service to match people's gifts and calling," Flanagan said.

Certified Lay Ministers are a part of a ministry team with

supervision and support of a clergyperson, Flanagan added. Among their duties is to: conduct public worship; care for the congregation; develop new faith communities; preach the Word; and lead small groups.

Flanagan estimates that there are more than 1,000 Certified Lay Servants and Certified Lay Speakers in the BWC. Certified Lay Servants serve the local church or charge (and/or beyond) by: providing program leadership, assistance, and support; leading

meetings for prayer, training, study, and discussion; conducting or assisting in services of worship, preaching, or giving addresses; providing congregational and community leadership and fostering caring ministries; and assisting in the distribution of the elements of Holy Communion.

Certified Lay Speakers serve by preaching the Word when requested by the pastor, district superintendent or Conference Committee on Lay Servant Ministries, among other duties.



Linda Flanagan

For more about serving in ministry as a lay person visit: bwcumc.org/ministries/leadership-development/laity-development/

Young People's Ministry

Engaging, connecting, discipling, and activating young people for the transformation of lives, churches, and communities.
bwcumc.org/YPM

Young People's Ministry Day at Annual Conference

Shifting from recipients of ministry to agents of ministry

Saturday, June 1, 2019, was a special day in the life of the Baltimore-Washington Conference. For the first time in recent memory, an extra day was added to the Annual Conference Session, set apart to learn from and celebrate young people. Conference members saw how transformed lives transform lives as youth testified in video, prayer, word, and deed.

In one of the scenes from the video, a youth is seen holding a cardboard sign reading, "Abused by father." The person turned over the sign that now read, "Re-used by God." In another, the sign read, "I thought I was weak." When flipped over, the sign read, "Through Christ I am strong."

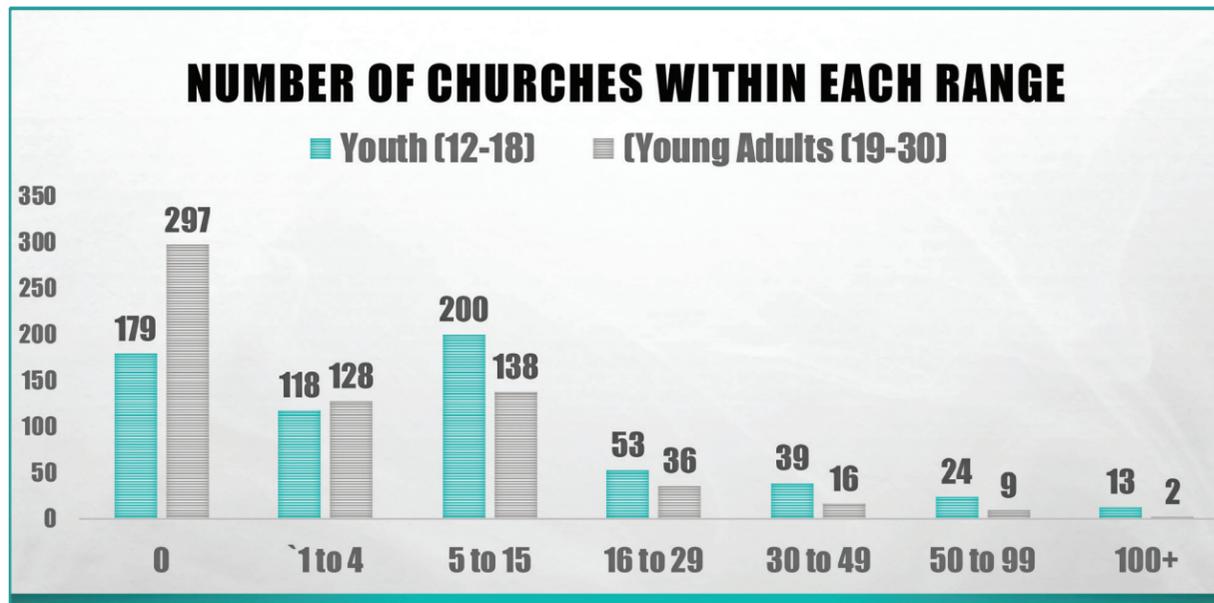
"We thought that something was missing in Young People's Ministry in the Baltimore-Washington Conference," said Shemaiah Strickland, chair of the Young People's Ministry board. "We need to be more effectively reaching

the next generation."

To get that done, from Jan. 2018 to May 2019, Young People's Ministries (YPM) engaged in a process of developing a comprehensive strategic plan for the future of ministry with young people, specifically focusing on 11 to 35-year-olds. The process involved the participation of more than 400 stakeholders throughout the conference who helped in the creation and revising of a strategic assessment report.

At the Annual Conference Session, YPM shared their strategic plan complete with bold goals, values, and a vision: Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, they will "activate, connect, and engage more young people as disciples of Jesus for the transformation of lives, churches, and communities."

Visit www.bwcumc.org/YPM to learn more about how YPM can support your local church.



437 churches in the BWC have between 1-49 youth, ages 12-18, participating in a Christian formation group, such as Sunday school, youth group or other ministries; 37 churches in the conference have 50 or more youth participating in groups; 179 churches have zero youth in groups.

"Our first goal is to inspire and equip churches to grow to the next level of engagement of young people, because we know that local churches transform the lives of youth and are transformed by the ministry of young people every day." - Christie Latona

Campus Ministry

BWC continues its commitment to college-age students

3.5 TONS OF FOOD COLLECTED AND DISTRIBUTED TO FOOD INSECURE STUDENTS AT FROSTBURG STATE UNIVERSITY DURING THE SUMMER THROUGH UCM.

HOWARD UNIVERSITY WESLEY FOUNDATION STUDENTS GROW AND ENGAGE "THE BRIDGE," AT ASBURY UMC IN D.C.

THE TERP HUB AT UMD EXPERIMENTS WITH STUDENT INTERNS LEADING MINISTRY WITH COLLABORATIVE SUPPORT

THREE STUDENTS IN THE PROCESS OF STARTING A NEW UMC YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY AT ANNE ARUNDEL COMMUNITY COLLEGE



MONTHLY LUNCH AND LEARN CALLS WITH LOCAL CHURCHES WHO WANT TO ENGAGE NEW CAMPUSES AND/OR COLLEGE STUDENTS

Retreat & Camping Ministries

The BWC's Retreat and Camping Ministry area welcomed 1,371 summer campers to its three sites.



42%

INCREASE IN CHILDREN AT WEST RIVER DAY CAMP from 194 in 2018 to 276 in 2019



"One foster sibling group described Camp Manidokan as the most stable place to call home that they have, since they come back every year with Camp Connect through Baltimore DSS." - Kirstin Shrom-Rhoads, director of Camp Manidokan

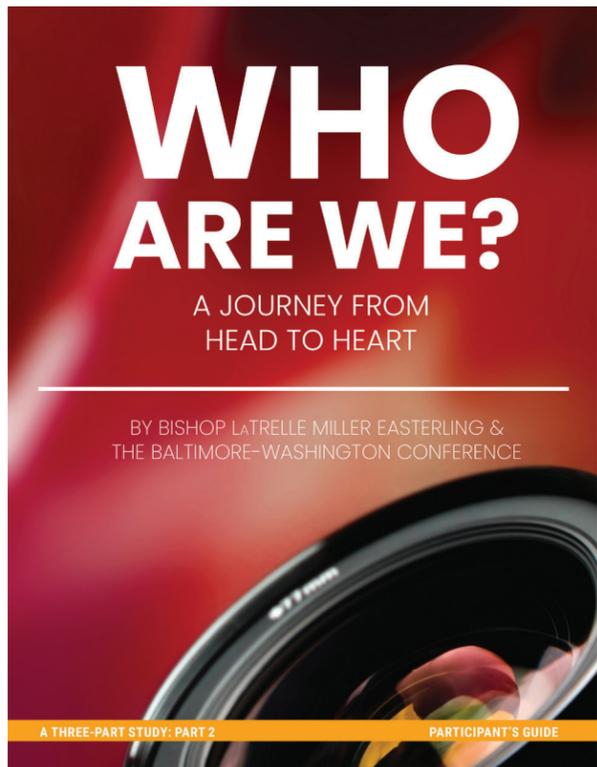
ROCK

ROCK celebrates 25th anniversary with over 4,000 attendees.

"ROCK gave me the chance to realize I was a part of something greater than myself and part of a family. ROCK gave me the opportunity to make a commitment to myself and to God. It's amazing!"



"I am excited because I see so much potential of a loving and inclusive People of God leading this world to a better place." - Jamal Oakman, University of MD student, TerpHUB intern, camp counselor, and ROCK fan.



bwcumc.org/whoarewe

Part 2 of the three-part study, "Who Are We? A Journey from Head to Heart," explores our identity as United Methodists shaped in the Wesleyan spirit. While first and foremost our identity is rooted in our understanding of God and in seeking to follow Jesus, there are uniquely Wesleyan ways of experiencing and expressing that. Methodism began as a spiritual movement, a response of the Holy Spirit to the needs of the world. In the six weeks of Part 2, we'll delve into the theology and passion of this movement of faith.

We invite leaders and faith communities in the Baltimore-Washington Conference to begin Part 2 of "Who Are We? A Journey from Head to Heart."

80 Girl Scouts earn faith pin

SPECIAL TO THE UMCONNECTION

EIGHTY GIRL SCOUTS stood in the sanctuary of New Hope UMC in Brunswick on a recent Sunday afternoon. Together they pledged, "On my honor, I will try to serve God and my country, to help people at all times, and to live by the Girl Scout law."

Tall stained-glass windows painted the room in bright colors as the girls and their troop leaders began a two-hour pin program to earn the "My Promise, My Faith" pin. This award, which can be earned every year by the Girl Scouts, is not tied to any specific faith tradition. New Hope offers a Christian-based program that is open to any Girl Scouts who want to attend. This is the sixth year that New Hope has hosted this event.

"It started to help support Girl Scouting in our community. This was a pin program that many of the girls in my troop did not know how to earn on their own. Our Outreach team figured we could help the girls earn this patch and share the love of God while doing it," said the Rev. Katie Bishop, pastor at New Hope. She is a co-leader for a troop of 28 girls in 5th and 6th grade, having served in this role with church member Cassie Miller since the girls were in kindergarten.

While the membership in the troop has ebbed and flowed over the last seven years, the troop has always had a strong connection to community and to each other, Bishop said.

"As a mom of two daughters, I have seen the way that Girl Scouts empowers Eden and Bethany to learn new skills, try new things, and pursue their dreams," she said. "In a world that often tells them that they are less than, Girl Scouts has emboldened them to be the people they are created to be as they care for other people and God's creation."

During gathering worship, girls praised God with music led by Jillian Trawick and heard testimonies by Trawick, Cassie Miller and Bishop about how their faith challenges them to make the world a better place.



Throughout the afternoon, small groups of Scouts moved through different stations in the church building. At one station, the girls made self-portraits using a variety of found materials. The girls also learned from famous women of faith as each Scout chose quotes to draw inspiration from and reflected on why they were important.

At the Service Station, girls worked with fleece to make knotted blankets for American Legion Post #96 "Blankets for Veterans" program and Valentine's Day cards for Veterans in nursing homes. Each year, the service project has been different – ranging from making "blessing bags" for the homeless, to working with Children of Incarcerated Parents, and the local Brunswick Food Bank.

The "My Promise, My Faith" event is just one of the ways New Hope UMC partners with local Scout groups. Every winter, a Scout Sunday is held to celebrate Scouting Ministry, honoring scouts and the volunteers.

Throughout the year, the Community Partnership — a non-profit born out of the church — offers educational opportunities for Scout groups centered around STEM or technology patch programs.

For more information on how your faith community could partner with local Scouting programs, email Bishop at newhopebrunswick@gmail.com.

2020: A look ahead at key dates

