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WE ARE THE
CHURCH

19

STATE OF THE CHURCH



Photo By: Janni Snider, United Methodist Communications.



Photo By: Mike DuBose, UMNS.



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DEAR FAMILY IN CHRIST,

The United Methodist Church is more than 12 million people engaged in transformational mission and ministry in highly diverse cultural, religious and socio-economic contexts. United Methodists have been commissioned to this work by the same Jesus who once told his disciples, "As the Father has sent me, so I send you." John 20:21.

As God's sent people, United Methodists work in their varying contexts to start new churches and reach out to the stranger — to help cure diseases and provide life-saving aid to desperate people in the midst of disaster. United Methodists work to build wells and fight food insecurity in communities. They advocate for immigrants and give shelter to the homeless. Through these kinds of ministries and by the power of the Holy Spirit, United Methodists help transform lives.

Yet, The United Methodist Church is at a crossroads. Many United Methodists are reconsidering our connection. A respectful separation may be on our horizon. We have come to this place because of our deep theological, missiological and cultural differences around how to be a worldwide church engaged in God's mission with all people, especially our LGBTQIA+ siblings. These differences were on display at the 2019 Special Session of the General Conference, where we did great harm to our LGBTQIA+ siblings, our relationships with each other and our witness. We are all praying that the General Conference in 2020 does not repeat that harm.

We also are praying that, as we contemplate the future of The United Methodist Church, we reflect upon what our church is and is not. As the well-known hymn "We Are the Church" reminds us, our church is not simply its buildings. It is not just its resources and assets, or its structure and organization. It is not even its Book of Discipline. Though all of these are a part of what may define us, they are not the essence of who or what we are.

THE CHURCH IS NOT A BUILDING;
THE CHURCH IS NOT A STEEPLE;
THE CHURCH IS NOT A RESTING PLACE;
THE CHURCH IS A PEOPLE.

Our church, instead, is its people — a people sent by God and empowered by the Holy Spirit to love God and neighbor and to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. Indeed, we realize our mission as a denomination when we "... send persons into the world to live lovingly and justly as servants of Christ by healing the sick, feeding the hungry, caring for the stranger, freeing the oppressed, being and becoming a compassionate, caring presence, and working to develop social structures that are consistent with the gospel." The Book of Discipline 2016, ¶122.

This report paints a picture of our church by celebrating the diversity of our people — sent and empowered to engage in such mission and ministry through their local churches, annual conferences, central and jurisdictional conferences and church agencies. They have been sent and empowered "to live lovingly and justly as servants of Christ." They are our church. We are our church. And our church is changing the world.

BISHOP KENNETH CARTER
President
The Council of Bishops

BISHOP CHRISTIAN ALSTED
Chair
The Connectional Table

BISHOP MICHAEL MCKEE
President
General Council on Finance
and Administration

WE ARE THE CHURCH

This 2019 State of the Church Report comes at a particular time in our lives when we are being challenged to define who and what we are as The United Methodist Church. This is primarily a challenge of identity that calls us to reflect upon our understanding of what “the church” means.

This report is structured around a favorite hymn “We Are the Church” that presents a particular understanding of the church. The hymn claims that the church is not buildings or structures, or a place for rest. It is instead a people—a living, working, dreaming, praying, Holy Spirit-inspired people who, as the body of Christ, are sent into the world to be the hands and heart of Christ.

This report points to the wholeness of that body, as does the hymn, and does so unashamedly, even in the midst of division and possible fracture. To claim such wholeness is to make a sacramental, not organizational, claim. The church is the sacramental representation of Christ’s body.

We see images of this idea of the church in the sacrament of Holy Communion. Christ’s body is represented by the loaf of which we partake. The breaking of that loaf represents the brokenness of the crucified Christ. By analogy, it also represents our brokenness as human beings. It represents the brokenness, which is apparent in our divisions.

In Holy Communion, we recognize that the body, which was whole, is broken in the same way that the loaf is broken. But, through the mysterious agency of the

Holy Spirit within the faith community, the broken body—the broken and divided loaf—becomes whole, just as Christ becomes whole in his resurrection. We become whole through our communion with one another and with the resurrected Christ who is truly present in the meal. As our liturgy reminds us, “By your Spirit make us one with Christ, one with each other, and one in ministry to all the world, until Christ comes in final victory” (United Methodist Book of Worship, p. 38).

WE ARE THE BODY OF CHRIST EMPOWERED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT AND SENT INTO THE WORLD TO BE CHRIST’S HANDS AND HEART.

It is only in and through Christ’s broken and resurrected body, and by the power of the Holy Spirit, that we as individuals and as a faith community are made whole. It is only in this sense—not in some aspirational, head-stuck-in-the-sand sense of denial—that we can claim our wholeness as the body of Christ sent into mission and ministry in the world.

This State of the Church Report claims that we are that church—a broken people made whole in our communion with the resurrected Christ and each other. We are the body of Christ, empowered by the Holy Spirit and sent into the world to be Christ’s hands and heart.

As the heart and hands of Christ, we are the exemplars of his compassion. (The word compassion literally means “to suffer with” and comes from the Latin word “cum,” which means “with,” and “passus,” which is a form of the Latin for “suffer.”) In a Christian sense, to have compassion is to be willing to suffer with and for another in the same way that Jesus was willing to suffer on our behalf.

As his exemplars, we are called to see the hurt and need of others and to be willing to suffer with and for them. This means being willing to allow our hearts to break open with compassion for their suffering and to allow the love of Christ to flow from our hearts into their lives and into the realities of their world. It takes such compassion to be involved in God’s gracious act of transforming the world: to be the church.

This is the story this report tells. Yes, the report includes statistics about membership and growth. But the report finds its center in the stories about the diversity of our worldwide church and of our people, engaged in transformational ministries of compassion. These United Methodists are opening their hearts to immigrants, seeking reconciliation for persecuted minorities, providing safe harbor for LGBTQIA+ youth, welcoming those who have felt left out, giving succor to people impacted by disaster. In such acts of compassion is an image of our common identity as United Methodists and as the sent body of Christ.

The Rev. Kenneth J. Bigham-Tsai
Chief Connectional Ministries Officer
The Connectional Table



Photo By:
Mike DuBose,
UMNS.



Photo By:
Mike DuBose,
UMNS.



Photo By:
Mike DuBose,
UMNS.



Courtesy of:
Casa Linda UMC.



Photo By:
Mary Kienzle.



Courtesy of:
Casa Linda UMC.



Photo By:
Mike DuBose,
UMNS.

DORIAN RESPONSE ILLUSTRATES UMCOR'S WORK WORLDWIDE

On Sept. 1, the first major hurricane of the 2019 Atlantic hurricane season hit Abaco Islands in the Bahamas with maximum sustained winds of 185 mph. Then it smashed into Grand Bahama with equal intensity, stalling just north of the island with unrelenting winds for about 24 hours.

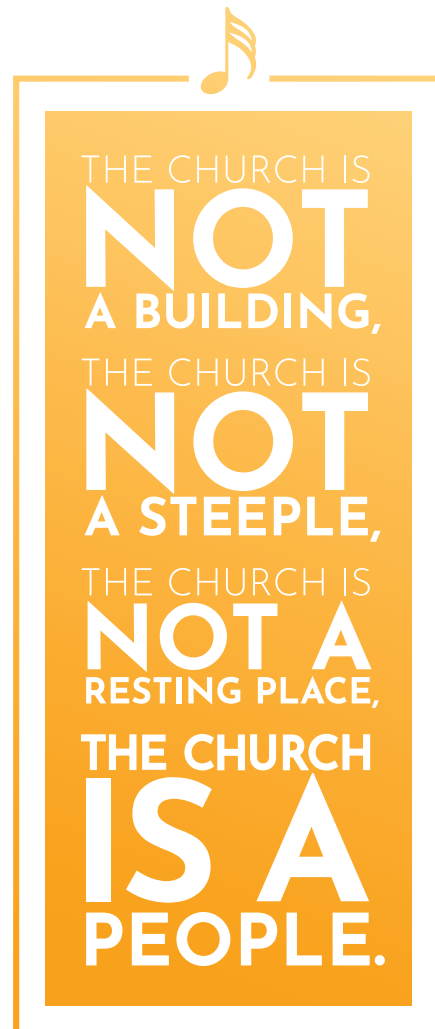
Hurricane Dorian was the most intense hurricane on record to strike the Bahamas. It is regarded as the worst natural disaster in the country's history. The damage was catastrophic. Most structures were flattened or swept to sea, and at least 70,000 people were left homeless.

And in late August, as Hurricane Dorian formed, the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) did what it does best: bring the church together in a time of disaster. Maybe it is a cyclone in the Philippines, a mudslide in Sierra Leone or massive flooding somewhere in the United States. Perhaps wildfires burn out of control in California and Nevada. Wherever disaster strikes, UMCOR is ready to help, coordinating resources across the denomination and beyond. It works with partners, avoids duplication of efforts and fills gaps in service.

UMCOR's U.S. and International Disaster Response teams relate to conference disaster readiness and response coordinators in the U.S. and globally.

UMCOR's International Disaster Response team often responds to storms affecting islands in the Atlantic and Caribbean before they reach

the U.S. In the short term, partners may seek solidarity grants to cover immediate needs, such as food, hygiene supplies, shelter and other basics.



In the long term, UMCOR works with local partners on recovery and reconstruction.

As Dorian struck the Bahamas, UMCOR immediately made a solidarity grant to Bahamas Methodist Habitat, the disaster ministry of the Bahamas Conference of the Methodist Church. Later, it

provided a grant to the Bahamas, Turks and Caicos Islands Conference of the Methodist Church, another Wesleyan-rooted denomination on the island.

"UMCOR is committed to working with both Methodist partners in the Bahamas to respond to the humanitarian need caused by Hurricane Dorian," wrote Katie Hills Uzoka, program manager for UMCOR's International Disaster Response unit. "UMCOR will continue to support the needs of disaster-affected people throughout the disaster cycle: relief, recovery, mitigation and preparedness."

After its ravages through the Bahamas, Dorian proceeded along the coasts of the southeastern United States and Atlantic Canada, leaving behind considerable damage and economic losses in those regions as well. And UMCOR continued its work, connecting with conference disaster response coordinators in Florida, Alabama, Georgia and North and South Carolina. Across the Southeast, Emergency Response Teams (ERTs) were ready to assist, including helping with state-mandated evacuations in some coastal areas.

The Florida Conference temporarily reassigned UMCOR recovery staff from 2017 Hurricane Irma, activating its call center to receive requests and offers of donations and volunteer service.

UMCOR volunteers in Georgia were prepared to help. In the South Georgia Conference alone, 350 United Methodists are ERT-trained. Two

churches opened shelters. The North Georgia Conference offered warehouse and evacuation space.

The South Carolina Conference readied its ERTs for deployment, connected with churches along the evacuation routes and distributed clean up and hygiene kits to staging areas. A team from New Beginnings United Methodist Church brought a trailer filled with chainsaws and safety equipment, health kits and other essentials.

The North Carolina Conference opened a call center and readied its 16 disaster and satellite housing centers. In addition to a solidarity grant, 914 people in 50 churches certified in ERT training provided strong support throughout the state. The Connecting Neighbors program helped churches be better prepared for a disaster and respond more effectively when disaster struck.

As recovery from hurricanes and tornadoes, flooding and fires and other disasters continue, UMCOR and United Methodist volunteers from around the world will be on site offering hands-on and emotional support. The advance preparations, communications and networking across conferences are evidence of years of UMCOR's efforts to strengthen United Methodist disaster response. Its mission embraces the strength of the church, bringing people together to provide help and support where there is greatest need.



Juan A. Maldonado and Carlos Marrero board up a window at Nuevo Pacto United Methodist Church in Sebring, Fla., to prepare for the arrival of Hurricane Dorian.
Photo by:
Rev. Luz E. Maldonado.



Drone photography of Hurricane Florence flooding of Trinity United Methodist Church in Conway, S.C.
Photo by:
Rev. Robbie Bischoff.

AFRICA UNIVERSITY GRADS BUILD THE GLOBAL KINGDOM OF GOD

Meet Dolorosa Duncan of Tanzania. She helped found Women for Change, an organization that helps vulnerable children receive an education, and Tandabui Health Access Tanzania, which develops health projects for those with HIV/AIDS and for mothers and children. She is an Africa University (AU) graduate.

From 2010 to 2018, while serving as regional program manager for Pathfinder International, Duncan led efforts to provide urgently needed maternal, child and reproductive health care services in rural Tanzania. She received an Emerging Voice for Global Health residency and was an Eisenhower Fellow. The program

annually accepts 60 to 70 leaders from around the world for an intensive six-week educational program. Today, Duncan works with the Embassy of Switzerland in Tanzania supporting health-related strategies and programs nationwide.

“Studying at a multicultural institution taught me to collaborate with mutual respect in a pluralistic society,” said Duncan. “It taught me to acknowledge, embrace and respect differences. It has not only simplified my international job responsibilities, but also allowed me to make a significant contribution to my society.”

Health care, education, pastoral ministry, agriculture and many other fields are stronger in part due to the over 7,000 graduates of Africa University in Mutare, Zimbabwe, who are transforming the world and inspiring hope.

“You will find Africa University graduates working and serving in more than 36 countries in Africa, making a difference in Africa and the world,” says James H. Salley, the university’s associate vice-chancellor for institutional advancement. “Africa University has been true to its mission since its founding in 1992: to educate leaders for the continent of Africa. The school does this unashamedly under the cross and flame.”

For instance, Rep. Roger Domah brings his Africa University values to his work as a member of the Liberian House of Representatives.

“AU taught me to think outside the box, especially to be a more inclusive person,” Rep. Domah says. “Liberia is a highly sectional society, but having interacted with a diverse and inclusive population at AU for about four years, I realize that all humans are the same and must be given equal opportunities and attention.”

This realization also helped his campaign. “I was the only candidate who received overwhelming support throughout the district. The secret was that I had had prior meaningful engagements with citizens across the district while other candidates limited themselves only to citizens of their own sectors,” Rep. Domah said.



Dolorosa Duncan speaks at the United Nations High Level Multisectoral Meeting on Human Resources for Health in New York on Sept. 23, 2019.

Courtesy of:
Dolorosa Duncan.



Elected by Nimba County District 7, Roger Domah became a member of the House of Representatives in the Republic of Liberia in 2018.

Courtesy of:
Roger Domah.



Bishop Joquina Nhanala escorts the Rev. Julio Andre Vilanculos to his installation as vice-chancellor of the United Methodist University of Mozambique.

Courtesy of:
Francisco Cumbe.

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ALL WHO FOLLOW JESUS,
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YES, WE'RE THE CHURCH
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“My ability to reach out to people beyond religious, cultural, tribal and kinsmen boundaries was developed at AU,” he added.

He ran for parliament to advocate for the poor and fight corruption in government. He hopes to change the leadership ethos of the legislators to one of servanthood — as he says, “godliness.”

The Rev. Julio Andre Vilanculos’s Africa University education prepared him to lead another church-related institution: United Methodist University of Mozambique, where he serves as vice chancellor.

The school, which opened in 2017, has over 100 enrollees studying theology, computer engineering, management and administration, and education.

Located on the Cambine Educational Center in Morrumbene, the university’s neighbors are primary, elementary, middle, vocational and high schools.

“Thousands of students of different ages flock to the same campus, and that has value for [the university’s] growth, because a good number of its students will come from those schools,” Rev. Vilanculos says.

The United Methodist University of Mozambique can give more Mozambicans access to higher education, he says. It will save them money in travel, room and board. Further, he notes that the University offers a “double blessing of academic and spiritual growth.”

The Rev. Gertrude Mwadi Mukalay and her husband, the Rev. John Kabala Ilunga Ngoie, are helping new African immigrants in the Detroit, Michigan area of the United States find hospitality and help in adjusting to a new country. Both Mukalay and Ngoie are AU graduates and Mukalay was on AU’s faculty. They are starting the Church of the African Diaspora in Birmingham, Michigan.

“Africa University welcomes students from many countries,” said Rev. Mukalay, originally from the Democratic Republic of Congo. “Getting to know them has made me able to minister with people from different countries.”

The two-year-old United Methodist congregation reaches out to African newcomers in the United States and helps them learn English, obtain jobs, receive legal help with immigration

concerns and enjoy fellowship with others from their home continent.

Many of the worshipers spoke French in their home nations, so worship is in French and English. Leaders encourage those attending to pray and speak in other languages as well.

Two of the couple’s six children are also Africa University graduates. Lydie Ngoie majored in health sciences and is now a divinity student at Drew University in the United States. Jonathan Kabala uses his degree in computer sciences as he works in Congo.

“Africa University connects younger Africans to the world,” Rev. Ilunga Ngoie said. “The students are also helping the church to grow. They are involved more in the church, and help the church in many ways.”



WE ARE
MANY KINDS OF
PEOPLE

WITH MANY KINDS OF
FACES,

ALL COLORS
AND
ALL AGES,

TOO, FROM ALL
TIMES AND PLACES.



Worshippers fill Union United Methodist Church in Boston on Easter Sunday. Courtesy of: Union Boston Facebook Page.

UNION CHURCH INVITES, FORMS AND SENDS DISCIPLES

When you walk into Union United Methodist Church in Boston, Massachusetts' South End, you immediately know you are welcome.

Darnell McCarter and his family crossed the church's threshold for the first time in 2000 and were enthusiastically embraced by a member at the door. "Hilda Evans grabbed us, welcomed us and made us feel like human beings," he says. That meant the world to McCarter, a transgender man. Other churches had asked him and his wife to leave.

McCarter pays it forward by inviting friends to experience God's love at this church.

Union's welcome extends beyond the sanctuary. Over its 223-year history, the church has moved to a new location and its neighborhood has changed. Union members don't hunker down, however. In their workplaces, homes, schools and communities, they share and live the gospel of God's love and liberation and urge community leaders to respect neighbors who are poor, overlooked or silenced.

"Biblical faith and social justice are Union's DNA," says the Rev. Jay Williams, Union's lead pastor.

Union's first members were African Americans from Bromfield Street Methodist Episcopal Church. In 1796, wanting to practice the exuberant worship of their Africana roots, they began gathering in their own meeting house. Eventually, they formed a church.

The congregation's long history of practicing Jesus' teachings inside and outside its walls includes hosting the 1950 gathering of the NAACP, where the organization

voted to pursue Brown v. Board of Education. Educator and activist Mary McLeod Bethune spoke at the opening of the then-new building in 1949. In the 1980s and '90s, Union members advocated for the end of apartheid in South Africa and economic equality for all in the United States. They joined the Reconciling Ministries Network in 2000.

Sending people from worship to the world to love and serve their neighbors by feeding the hungry, caring for the stranger, freeing the oppressed and promoting gospel-based social structures has always been Union's mission.

The church is renovating its kitchen so it can better continue to share meals with the community. In addition, church members stock a food pantry and advocate for food security for the poor.

Union's commitment to loving God and neighbors is explicitly drawn from Scripture.

"Because of Union's black heritage, Bible-based preaching is part of who we are," Rev. Williams says. "People come to Union with nostalgia for the Bible-based church of their past, but they also were hurt by their churches. We put those things [the Bible and God's justice] back together."

Now the church's neighborhood is undergoing gentrification. The church will face it with the same gospel values that have always sustained them. They will love their neighbors. They will invite them to join their ministries of worship, spiritual growth, leadership development and service.

"Because the Bible teaches that there is no condemnation in Christ, we don't condemn our new neighbors for having privilege," Rev. Williams says. "We show them that privilege provides an opportunity to transform the world and to speak out for the marginalized."

And, as always, "We will worship our way through it," says Nikki Young, Union's assistant pastor.



Uta Dauner Eisbrenner helps Muhammad Mshehadat during a German class for recent immigrants at the United Methodist Church of the Caller in Frankfurt, Germany.

Photo by: Mike DuBose, UMNS.

→ REFUGEES FIND FRIENDS IN EUROPEAN UNITED METHODISTS

The face of immigration in Germany – where about one in five people are first- or second-generation immigrants with at least one parent born without German citizenship – is complex. Many immigrants, especially from the war-ravaged Middle East, seek resettlement there.

Some of those immigrants have made a new home for themselves and settled into the German culture. Others have maintained their own ethnic communities within the country, says the Rev. George Miller, coordinator for international and migrant ministries for the General Board of Global Ministries. He believes migrants and refugees offer great potential for revitalizing the church with “Europe as a mission field.”

In 2015-16, more than 700 refugees were resettled in Goppingen, a town of about 40,000 people in southern Germany.

Dietmar Honold is a member of Friedenskirche, a United Methodist congregation in Goppingen. He said with a laugh that while he had no official title, he “works volunteering for our refugees and networking for all hotspots in UMC churches in Germany.”

“Many of the people who came spoke Farsi, and they tended to settle where there were others who spoke the same language,” Honold said. “Our church welcomed them. We worked with the local authorities to operate a center where they could get clothes and food. Our local schools welcomed many new students, but found it hard to keep up (with the large influx). Some of our church members stepped in to help with language learning.”

Honold said his church, and German United Methodists in general, are open-minded and accepting of all people. These traits have helped them serve the refugee population well.

“We have continued to work with the people who have come to Goppingen,” he said, adding, “Some of the people said we were the most welcoming and helpful, and they liked us best.”

The number of refugees coming to Denmark has declined from a peak of 21,000 at the end of 2015 to just over 2,000 in 2018, according to the website Refugees.DK.

Even so, Solrød Frikirke (Sun Red Free Church), located south of Copenhagen, has continued to minister to and love people who come into the country seeking safety, freedom and hope.

Solrød, planted in 2002, is part of The United Methodist Church in the Nordic-Baltic Area of the Northern Europe and Eurasia Central Conference. They don’t have a building, but meet in a school, staying fluid and available for ministry.

“Our church started out being a welcoming team when new refugees came to our town,” said the Rev. Mai-Brit Tvilling. “We helped them get settled, helped them with all the normal and daily stuff you do. Even so, there is so much to learn, being in a new place with new customs.”

She continued, “We wanted to be a friend in need, and we invited our refugee friends to all kinds of celebrations so they got to know the Danish way of living. We also tried to help them learn and get used to the Danish language. Many from our congregation became friends, and they still are friends.”

“To help children adapt to life in Denmark, the church invited them to camps, and now many of the youth are part of the national youth and children camps,” Rev. Tvilling said. “We help whenever people have meetings with the authorities or receive letters they don’t understand. We have small groups in which we have talks about religion. We pray and look for what combines us, instead of separating us.”

Sharing the love of Christ is important to the members of Solrød, especially with those who are sad, lonely, frightened and need it most.

“Through the encounter with migrants and refugees, our people have been blessed – and not remained the same,” said Bishop Patrick Streiff, episcopal leader of the Central and Southern Europe Area.

“Sometimes, it began by outreaching to those on a journey, sometimes migrants have found a new home among us,” he said. “Sometimes, they are a few from foreign lands in a congregation; sometimes they have formed their own worshipping community.

“I am grateful for the extravagant hospitality among United Methodists. However, a period follows when our people get challenged by the differences of cultures and habits of migrants who find a home among us. In the encounter with migrants and refugees, we ourselves are transformed. That’s a foretaste of the community in God’s Kingdom.”

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ALL AROUND THE WORLD!
YES,
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TOGETHER!

SPEAKING PEACE TO POWER IN THE PHILIPPINES

“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God. Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” (Matthew 5:9-10, NRSV)

Whether it is protesting extra-judicial killings or bringing a community together, United Methodists are seeking to end violent actions and to increase human rights. Sometimes, the work can be dangerous.

As this report was being finalized, United Methodists were defending The National Council of Churches in the Philippines. On Nov. 5, 2019, the Department of National Defense of the Philippine Government labeled the Council a “front organization of local communist terrorist groups.”



Participants hold signs during an interfaith gathering at Rajah Sulayman plaza in Manila.
Photo by: Gladys Mangiduyo, UMNS.

United Methodist and ecumenical leaders in the Philippines and elsewhere have protested the designation and say they fear for the safety of church leaders and members. Davao Area Bishop Rodolfo A. Juan is the current vice chair of the Council. The United Methodist Church is a member.

“I am bent on defending the council, which I believe is faithfully carrying out its prophetic role to proclaim the truth,” Bishop Juan told United Methodist News Service.

Bishop Juan’s statement is the latest in continuing efforts by United Methodists to protest injustices and protect human rights. In January 2019, United Methodists joined thousands of others in an interfaith rally in Manila to call attention to escalating human rights violations – including extra-judicial killings labeled a part of the government’s “war on drugs.”

Filipino church leaders have also long stood beside the indigenous Lumad community, communal farmers for thousands of years, who face

persecution and displacement as other groups migrate onto their land. They have also been caught in violent clashes between the Filipino military and various rebel groups.

Bishop Ciriaco Francisco was threatened with arrest in 2016 for allowing 4,000 Lumad to take refuge in the Spottswood Methodist Center. The farmers, fired on by police while peacefully demonstrating for rice, remained in the church for days while the military held the center under siege.

Earlier, church leaders opened Redemptorist Baclaran Church in Manila to house 50 Lumad escaping violence in their homeland and hosted a Lumad Solidarity Day.

Whether it is in the Philippines or elsewhere, courageous United Methodists devote their lives to making the longing for peace a reality – seeking an end to violent actions and increased human rights. It is the embodiment of the Great Commandment: to love God and love our neighbors as ourselves.

SOMETIMES THE CHURCH IS MARCHING,
SOMETIMES ITS BRAVELY BURNING,
SOMETIMES RIDING,
SOMETIMES HIDING,
...

NEIGHBORS MAKING PEACE TOGETHER

ALWAYS IT’S LEARNING.

Between Jan. 1 and Sept. 30, 2019, Chicago police recorded 1,633 shootings and 382 murders. Though these numbers have dropped since 2015, they’re still far too high. In Chicago, some United Methodists are advocating for changes in gun laws.

The Rev. Robert Biekman, urban ministry coordinator for the Northern Illinois Conference, develops programs to help congregations address gun violence and its trauma and other tough issues. In February, the Northern Illinois Conference hosted a summit focusing on childhood resiliency after trauma resulting from violence. The program both promoted community safety and helped participants understand “when

people present in a certain way, it is the result of accumulated trauma,” Rev. Biekman said.

In April 2019, the Indiana conference joined Northern Illinois to co-host “Enough is Enough,” a teach-in highlighted by gun violence prevention presentations focusing on public health, public policy and urban ministry.

One presentation featured the Indianapolis Ten Point Coalition. The Rev. Charles Harrison, senior pastor of Barnes United Methodist Church, founded the ministry in Indianapolis. The first Ten Points Coalition was established in Boston several years earlier. Teams of five to seven people walk throughout high-crime neighborhoods several nights a week.

They talk to at-risk youth about the role God has played in their lives and – for many – changed their path. The coalition reports that gun violence has significantly decreased in those areas.

Rev. Biekman is also senior pastor of Maple Park United Methodist Church on Chicago’s South Side. The congregation’s anti-violence ministries include being a site for Safe Haven. This program, developed by Chicago Public Schools, runs after school and during spring and summer breaks, providing students with safe space, nutritious food and cultural enrichment. Community needs and engagement will not be the same in all parts of the city, he notes. “Chicago is several million people in 77 distinct communities in 400 neighborhoods (with) areas within Chicago that have been impacted by the work of The UMC in a positive way.

“The key has been listening to learn how we resource and do community engagement,” he said. “We would not have been as successful without the community, (and) quite frankly, it translated into more engagement in ministries of the church.

“The focus is not only on the transformational aspect but on the relational aspect as well. We must build relationships with those we are serving,” he said.



Smiles abounded during the Safe Haven end-of-summer program at Maple Park United Methodist Church in Chicago.

Courtesy of: Maple Park UMC Facebook Page.

REMEMBERING, REPENTING, REPAIRING

On Sept. 21, 2019, leaders from the Wyandotte Nation of Oklahoma and representatives of the General Board of Global Ministries made history in Upper Sandusky, Ohio. They witnessed the return of two acres of land to the Wyandotte Nation where the Wyandot Mission Church still stands. The site is part of the land from which the U.S. government forcibly moved the Wyandotte people to Kansas in 1843.

The mission church building, constructed in 1823, was among the fruits of the successful ministry of John Stewart, a mixed-race (African and European) preacher and missionary to the Wyandotte. Beginning in 1816, his was the first official mission to indigenous peoples by the Methodist Episcopal Church (MEC). When the Wyandotte were forced to leave, they turned the property over to the MEC to hold in trust.

Receiving the official title deed from Global Ministries General Secretary Thomas Kemper, Wyandotte Chief Billy Friend said, "Today is a monumental day for the Wyandotte people. For the Methodist people to come to us and offer to give the land back to us, we are truly overjoyed."

Return of the land is among the most recent steps toward reconciliation growing from an "Act of Repentance toward Healing Relationships with Indigenous Peoples" during the 2012 General Conference. At least 26 annual conferences in the United States have offered their own acts of repentance on behalf of Native Americans. Many have included recounting historic tragedies and injustices suffered by native peoples from the Trail of Tears to incidents in Native American boarding schools, including some operated by the church.

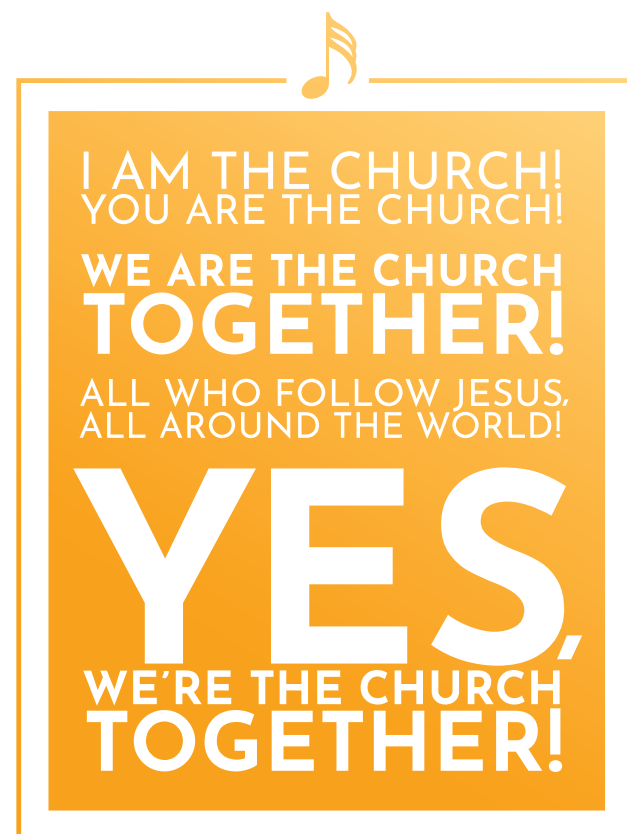
In a gesture similar to the Ohio land transfer, United Methodist leaders in the Oregon-Idaho Annual Conference returned 1.5 acres of land in its Wallowa Lake Camp to the Nez Perce tribe that once lived there. The tribe plans to develop new habitats for local fish species in the lake. The transfer came during an annual camp where tribal leaders teach campers about Nez Perce culture.

Some United Methodist churches, like John Stewart United Methodist Church in Upper Sandusky, acknowledge and celebrate the area's Native American history. For decades,

this church has included the Wyandotte people as full partners in the ministry. Tribe members frequently visit the town to educate the public and reconnect with their ancestral past. In 1967, the local school began offering a six-week course on Wyandotte culture.

Acts of repentance continued at General Conference 2016. Descendants of survivors of the 1864 Sand Creek Massacre and other representatives from the Cheyenne and Arapaho tribes witnessed and participated in remembering the church's role in the massacre and its aftermath. U.S. Army forces led by Colonel John Chivington — a Methodist Episcopal pastor — attacked a camp in the Colorado territory and massacred 200 Cheyenne and Arapaho, including many elderly, women and children. Neither the U.S. government nor the MEC punished Chivington or his men.

General Conference 2016 also condemned the use of mascots by sports teams that stereotype or disrespect Native Americans, but did not prohibit events or meetings in cities that are home to those teams.



Native American United Methodist leaders, through efforts such as the Native American Comprehensive Plan, conference committees on Native American ministries and programs supported by the Native American Ministries Sunday offering, are also helping institutions and communities outside the church learn about and become sensitive to indigenous cultures.

Texas Christian University (TCU) professor of religion Scott Langston reached out to the Rev. Chebon Kernell of the Seminole Nation in Oklahoma. Rev. Kernell is now executive director of the Native American Comprehensive Plan.

He regularly visits TCU to raise awareness of Native American cultures and contemporary issues. TCU now offers courses on Native American issues and an annual symposium that attracts thousands. It erected a monument on campus to the Wichita and other tribes that once inhabited the land on which the university stands. TCU also has events in October for Indigenous Peoples' Day.

"I was looking for ways to bring native voices into the classroom and to interact with them when I read (about the 2012 Act of Repentance). For the most part, what (students) know about Native American peoples is based on stereotypes and little tidbits they may have learned in middle school and in the movies," Langston said. "Part of our goal is to develop respectful, trustful, meaningful, mutually beneficial relationships on both ends to address (this limited information)."

"TCU leaders have been very receptive to suggestions and recommendations



On behalf of The United Methodist Church, Thomas Kemper, chief executive of the General Board of Global Ministries, returns the deed to the land to Chief Billy Friend of the Wyandotte Nation of Oklahoma.

Photo by: Anthony Trueheart.

on how to grow their relationships with Native American and (other) indigenous peoples on campus," Rev. Kernell said. "Whenever institutions recognize indigenous contributions, our stories, our presence, it is a turning point. These moments help us reconstruct our identity and our place in this world that has been shattered through colonization."

Another lifelong United Methodist organizes the Native Moccasin Rock event for the Tennessee Annual Conference. Mary T Newman, a descendent of Cherokee Native Americans, is an advocate for indigenous peoples. She says the event is a time for education and celebration and an opportunity for elders to pass on traditions.

"We still have 573 federally recognized tribes plus state-recognized tribes (and) 363 languages," Newman said. "Then you have a lot of different traditions."

Newman was raised in a time when showing one's Native American heritage

was discouraged. She's glad to see that some United Methodist churches are willing to embrace tradition.

"We're working towards seven generations ahead, not for just the next generation," Newman said. "We say seven generations. We're losing art and culture that is coming back to some native tribes. But we're also reaching people who are not native people."

Reconciliation is a shared act between two parties. The United Methodist Church is listening to and collaborating with Native American communities in all acts on their behalf. Whether the action is a special service, the transfer of land ownership or a new educational program, Native Americans are helping guide the reconciling process. Acts of repentance and reconciliation are more than a way for the denomination to assuage its own guilt. These acts are part of a promise for a new relationship between the church and Native Americans that is loving, Christ-centered and mutually transformative.



Roma children benefit from much of the outreach ministry – including tutoring and soccer-based ministries of the United Methodist congregation in Alsószolca, Hungary.

Photo by :
Üllas Tankler,
General Board of Global Ministries.



During the summers, the school runs Monday through Friday. It offers basic instruction in writing, reading and math to students ages 6 through 14. For some Roma children unable to attend regular public schools, this program is vital. The school also teaches practical skills around gardening, cooking and public safety.

The school also hosts a counseling center where Roma girls discuss topics related to puberty, feminine hygiene and motherhood/family life. Many Roma women are under social pressure to marry young and have many children. Child marriage is not unheard of in Roma communities. The center allows girls to learn and ask questions in a safe and nonjudgmental environment with trusted medical and clinical professionals.

In Tureni, Romania, lay pastor Samuel Goia began a soccer program for Roma children. The games led to Bible studies and a summer camp.

“We have around 20 to 25 kids and 12 to 15 women. We sing, then my wife or some volunteers play with the kids, and I preach the word. We also do social work, helping them from time to time with clothes and some food packages. We hope to be able to find some teachers and start an after-school program because the parents cannot help the kids with their homework,” Goia said.

“Reconciliation efforts between the Roma and their neighbors happen by trying to work towards inclusion,” said Urs Schweizer, assistant to the bishop of the Central and Southern Europe Central Conference.

Social inclusion, participants in the consultation noted, can be interpreted as either friendly or threatening to the Roma, who have struggled to retain their cultures rather than being totally assimilated into the dominant culture where they live.

“One way The United Methodist Church facilitates this is by intentionally including Roma people in the regular activities of (the church) on a regional or national level,” Schweizer continued. “This does not only help Roma people to have positive encounters with the general population; it also helps people not belonging to the Roma population to overcome generalizations and stereotypes by establishing relationships with Roma people.”

It’s a powerful step United Methodists are taking with the Roma to affirm that we are all children of God, created in God’s image, who enrich us as the body of Christ.

TRANSFORMATION THROUGH RELATIONSHIPS

In central and southern Europe, United Methodists engage in ministry and advocacy with the Roma community. The Roma migrated gradually into Europe from India centuries ago and settled into close-knit, scattered communities across the continent. Historically referred to as “gypsies” because of a myth that they came from Egypt, the Roma have been subject to persecution and racism throughout history. Nazis murdered thousands of Roma during World War II.

Roma communities frequently experience high levels of poverty,

illiteracy and alcoholism. In recent years, The United Methodist Church has started 20 to 30 congregations ministering to the Roma. In addition to providing worship space, Bible classes and other ministries, the churches meet basic needs for education, child care, health/hygiene and rehabilitation. The churches also seek to help the community to be neighbors to the Roma by seeing them as people of sacred worth.

During a consultation on ministry with the Roma several years ago, the mayor of Alsószolca in rural Hungary cited ways in which the Roma United Methodists

are improving their own lives and contributing to public life in general. She highlighted the important role of the United Methodist kindergarten in equipping Roma children for public school, which in turn reduces ethnic tensions in the elementary classrooms.

Roma families have more children on average than most European families, which makes education and outreach to the young especially vital.

For the Rev. Laszlo Erdei-Nagy, the church’s early witness had a profound influence. Rev. Erdei-Nagy attended

services as a child at Alsószolca United Methodist Church, one of the oldest Roma Methodist congregations in the world. As a teen, he played guitar during worship. During a Bible study one night, he first sensed his call to ministry. He is now serving as the church’s first Roma pastor.

“I will serve the Lord and hope that, from its beginning, this Roma church will not pass away without fruits. I believe that God wants to continue the mission of our Roma church in Alsószolca,” said Rev. Erdei-Nagy.

In Ohrid, Macedonia, United Methodists run a weekend school for Roma children on Saturdays and Sundays.



AND WHEN THE
PEOPLE GATHER,
THERE’S SINGING
AND THERE’S
PRAYING,
THERE’S
LAUGHING
AND THERE’S
CRYING
SOMETIMES,
ALL OF IT SAYING:

FIRST UMC IN MOHETO, KENYA, WELCOMES ALL

A mother came to First United Methodist Church in Moheto, Kenya, asking for refuge after being sent away by her husband. With the mother was her intersex child, born with anatomy that didn't clearly fit the characteristics of male or female. Taking seriously Jesus' command that they should love their neighbors, church members welcomed them.

The congregation soon began a study on human sexuality. And that led them to vote unanimously on Sept. 1, 2019, to associate with the Reconciling Ministries Network (RMN). Moheto First UMC is the first congregation in Africa to join RMN.

This church passed a statement affirming "that each person, regardless of age, economic status, faith history, tribe, ethnicity, gender, mental or physical ability, marital status, sexual orientation or gender identification, is a beloved child of God and worthy of God's love and grace."

"We have walked this path of justice with intersex children and their parents, and saved some from cruel exclusion and death ... and helped them have a home and education," the church's senior pastor, the Rev. Kennedy Mwita, told United Methodist News Service.

In addition, the church has welcomed and included others who have been shunned by their families or communities, such as transgender persons, gays and lesbians, commercial sex workers, divorced women, orphans, widows and others, he said.

The Rev. Jerioth Wangeci Gichigi, a deacon who ministers with the Moheto church, notes that the decision to engage in such ministry "was a decision made by all members after a long discussion."

That discussion was frank, and members wrestled with concerns that neighboring churches would withdraw fellowship from them and that their relationships with their own sisters and brothers within the annual conference would suffer.

Ultimately, Rev. Gichigi said, "We were all able to come to the conclusion that the love of God is above all."

Because the church is facing criticism from some United Methodist leaders

and congregations, Moheto members are holding seminars to clarify how they came to their decision. In addition to attending to the needs of the LGBTQIA+ community, the congregation sees the importance of serving exploited groups such as oppressed and abused women, people who are sold into slavery in the Middle East and those victimized by human trafficking.

This commitment also helps Moheto First UMC realize the mission of The United Methodist Church and celebrate the diversity of its people, as stated in The Book of Discipline, by sending "... persons into the world to live lovingly and justly as servants of Christ." (¶1122)

"We need to understand and open our ears to listen to the story of those we think do not think like us," Rev. Mwita said. "This is especially urgent for the church. The church belongs to Christ, and no one group of people has more right to belong to the body of Christ than another."



Photo by:
Stratford Productions.



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TOGETHER!

ALL WHO FOLLOW JESUS,
ALL AROUND THE WORLD!

YES,
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TOGETHER!

EMBRACING AND STRENGTHENING YOUNG LEADERS OF COLOR



Kylan Pew leads worship at the 2019 Ethnic Young Adults Gathering.

Photo by: Rev. Gustavo Vasquez, UMNS.

The need for a new generation of church leaders of color who can bridge cultural, linguistic and racial barriers to make new disciples is becoming more critical every day. For instance, according to the General Council on Finance and Administration, the number of Hispanic/Latino United Methodist and multiracial laity in the United States continues to rise. We celebrate an emerging generation of diverse leaders.

A native Californian, Rosie Rios was a delegate to General Conference 2016 and serves on the committee for the National Plan for Hispanic/Latino Ministry. Rios' greatest passion is helping immigrants. "I've worked on the annual conference's immigration task force, serving as the

AT PENTECOST SOME PEOPLE RECEIVED THE HOLY SPIRIT AND TOLD THE GOOD NEWS THROUGH THE WORLD TO ALL WHO WOULD HEAR IT.

project coordinator for *No Estan Solos*," she said. The California-Pacific Annual Conference ministry provides aid and services to unaccompanied minors who arrive at the U.S. border.

Bethany Printup-Davis is a member of the Tuscarora Indian Nation and board member of the Native American Comprehensive Plan. Printup-Davis joined The United Methodist Church in college after attending a gathering of United Methodist students at Nazareth College in Rochester, New York. "I met other Native Americans from Oklahoma who invited me into their community right away," Printup-Davis said. "There is still a lot of distrust toward the church among native peoples, but that feeling of being embraced meant so much to me that I was baptized into the church soon afterwards."

April Castorillo is the daughter of a Filipino United Methodist elder who brought her to the United States when she was an infant. Now a nurse, she recently went on a medical mission to the Philippines. "This was my first time returning to my country of birth by myself. It was enlightening, because I got to see first-hand how my parents grew up in contrast to my own upbringing in the United States. I want to use my skills as a nurse, not just to serve in a traditional hospital setting, but to help those without access to quality health care both here in the United States and abroad," Castorillo said.

In August, the denomination's six racial-ethnic plans hosted the first Ethnic Young Adult Gathering at Garrett Theological

Seminary. This event was an opportunity to strengthen young adults' connection across the ethnic plans and hear their opinions for future collaboration and programming. Rios, Printup-Davis and Castorillo were among the 63 young people who joined in fellowship and worship for three days.



Nicholas Yom addresses the participants and leaders at the gathering.

Photo by: Rev. Gustavo Vasquez, UMNS.

"I loved having the opportunity to come together and learn about one another's cultures and experiences. I do wish there had been efforts at this kind of event in the past," said the Rev. Steve Kim, pastor of Cold Spring Harbor Church in Huntington, New York. Rev. Kim emigrated to the U.S. from South Korea when he was 14. His congregation is majority white.

"My cross-cultural appointment has presented me with unique challenges, but also great opportunities," Rev. Kim said. "While there are barriers and misunderstandings to navigate, my congregants and I also have a unique opportunity to learn from one another as long as we each keep an open mind and curious outlook."

The Ethnic Young Adult Gathering is only one of many events engaging racial-ethnic United Methodist young adults.

Strengthening the Black Church for the 21st Century's National Network of Young Adults (NNYA) hosted its third annual Leading for Transformation (LIT) Conference. The event offered African American students resources and mentoring relationships to grow as clergy and lay leaders.

Gammon Theological School seminarian Kylan Pew was on the design team of the LIT conference. "I love the way the church offers you so many different ways to live out your calling beyond serving traditional brick-and-mortar congregations," Pew said.

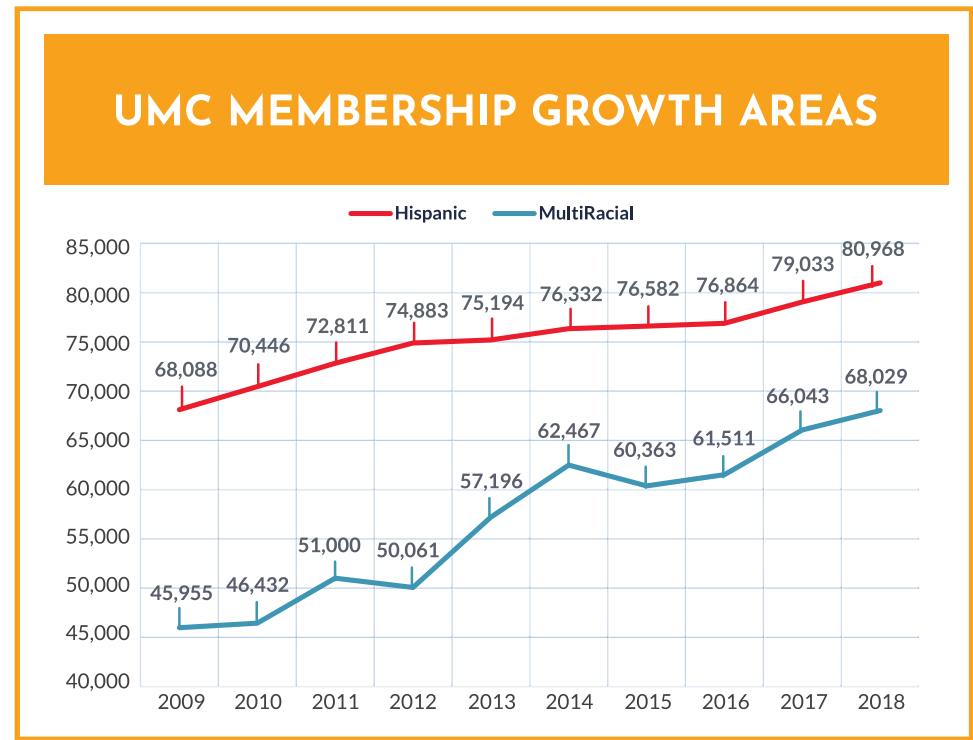
After consulting with the chaplain at Wiley College, where he earned his undergraduate degree, Pew decided to pursue ordained ministry. He is now an intern at Neighborhood Church, a new church plant in Atlanta, Georgia. He hopes to become a bi-vocational church planter. "My work with NNYA has been life-changing. I found my calling in college, but NNYA gave me a platform to fully discern and develop that calling," he said.

Since 2011, Nexus, which means "connecting point," has connected English-



Andrea Alejandra Gonzales is operations director for Youth Over Guns, a youth-led advocacy group formed after the mass shooting in Parkland, Fla.

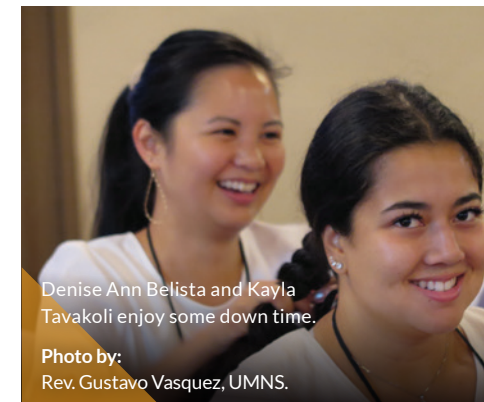
Photo by: Rev. Gustavo Vasquez, UMNS.



speaking youth and young adults within the United Methodist Korean-American community, providing them with the resources and support to become future leaders in the denomination.

The Rev. Daniel Cho, the son and grandson of Methodist pastors, has been attending Nexus for years. Born in New Jersey, as a child he spent time in Russia with his missionary father. He is now the youth pastor at Korean United Methodist Church of Greater Washington.

"Korean American young people experience the same generational divides as most Americans over religion and culture as well as the unique experiences of the immigrant family," Rev. Cho explained. "Language, culture and values can be very different for first-, second- and third-generation Korean Americans. However, this also puts them in a unique position to be a mediator in both conversations between older adults and young people as well as between immigrants and natural-born Americans. Nexus helps young adults embrace the best parts of their identities," said Rev. Cho.



Denise Ann Belista and Kayla Tavakoli enjoy some down time.

Photo by: Rev. Gustavo Vasquez, UMNS.

These young people all agreed on the importance of having a church that continues to hear and recognize their unique voices and perspectives in decision making and vision casting.

"Going to General Conference allowed me to see how diverse and vast we are as a denomination," Rios said. "I hope we continue to be a loving church that includes more young people of color in programming and leadership."

"As Native Americans, everything we do is about making sure we nourish and sustain the next generation. As Christians we also have to leave behind a Christ-like legacy for our children to follow," said Printup-Davis.



A sign at the entrance to the city of Danlí, Honduras, offers an invitation to visit Central United Methodist Church there. The first church started as part of the United Methodist mission initiative in the country, it has been responsible for planting a quarter of the country's now 20-plus congregations.

Photo by:
the Rev. Gustavo Vasquez, UMNS.

→ HONDURAS HAS NEEDS, AND GOD'S PEOPLE ARE FAITHFUL

If daily life in your reality was one of poverty, crop failures, food insecurity, murders, gangs, sexual assaults, drugs, extortion and political corruption, wouldn't you want to leave?

For many people living in Honduras, this is their reality. Every. Single. Day.

Regardless of the political consequences, Hondurans are trying to flee Honduras and its problems.

While there is no definitive number on how many Hondurans are migrating north, the number who are forced to return home gives an idea of the scope. The Honduran Migration and Consular Observatory reports that more than 48,000 Honduran migrants — an average of 128 daily — were deported from the United States and Mexico in 2018. And it isn't just men. Almost 48 percent were women.

Figures from the World Bank say about 63 percent of Hondurans live in poverty. With such poverty comes desperation.

"Staying might kill you, but leaving might also," said Fernando Rodríguez in a United Methodist News Service story. "It is a matter of life or death."

The 19-year-old, who plays various instruments for a United Methodist church band in Tegucigalpa, tried to



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leave home in April of 2018. Gangs had threatened to kill him if he did not join them.

"They gave me a gun and wanted me to sell drugs," he said. He rejected them, but the threats against his life pushed him to accept the drugs for sale.

He left his family and started toward the U.S. border. Along the way, he was again threatened by gangs — and by heat, exhaustion and starvation.

Fernando decided the trip was too hard and uncertain, so he returned home.

"My mother had no idea I was returning, but I called her once I arrived and asked her to please pick me up at the bus station," he said. "She was very happy, just like my dad and little sister, who told me how much she loved me."

Why not go to the police?

"Truthfully, we have more fear of the police than a gang member," Rodríguez said.

For others, the need to support families is the primary motivation for migrating.

Given the poor economy in Honduras, workers who come to the United States can often make enough money here to support themselves and to send some of the funds back home.

Jorge left a wife and son in Honduras to come to the U.S. to work. In Honduras, he could barely make enough money to feed his family, but with the money he makes in the U.S. and sends back home, his wife has been able to buy a small house and send their son to school.

Honduras' needs are many. There are the practical, but also the spiritual. The Central United Methodist Church of Danlí, considered the first organized church of the United Methodist mission in Honduras, helps meet both those needs.

With 200 members and an average attendance of 80 congregants, the church, which began in 1997, has Sunday school for all ages, worship and prayer services, growth groups and outreach ministries. It has started four other churches, and is considering a fifth.

As it grows in Honduras, The United Methodist Church there is standing firm in ministering to the people.

The Rev. Héctor Mauricio Rodríguez Lainez, pastor at Aposento Alto UMC in Fuerzas Unidas, often goes walking around his dangerous neighborhood. If he sees young girls and boys, he stops and prays with them. Prayers are needed in Fuerzas Unidas, a marginalized 11-block neighborhood controlled by gangs that target young girls for sex and pressure boys to sell drugs.

Rev. Rodríguez met a young pregnant teenage girl. She had been raped by 10 gang members in one night. She didn't know which one was the father of her baby. She was desperate.

Rodríguez invited her to church, but she refused, saying she felt too dirty to go to church. He reassured her, saying that what had happened was not her fault, and God could give her strength and comfort.

Even in the worst of situations, God is present in Honduras.

MEMBERSHIP STATISTICS

CENTRAL CONFERENCE/ REGION	2008 MEMBERSHIP	2018 MEMBERSHIP	10-YEAR CHANGE	10-YEAR % CHANGE
Africa Central	400,393	564,021	163,628	41%
Congo	1,141,729	3,326,361	2,184,632	191%
West Africa	1,508,696	2,320,585	811,889	54%
Central and Southern Europe	16,162	14,267	(1,895)	-12%
Germany	33,364	29,657	(3,707)	-11%
Northern Europe and Eurasia	15,293	9,840	(5,453)	-36%*
Philippines	201,166	207,190	6,024	3%
United States	7,774,420	6,671,825	(1,102,595)	-14%
TOTAL	11,091,223	13,143,746	2,052,523	19%

UMC MEMBERSHIP, CONGREGATIONS, CLERGY, CONFERENCES, BISHOPS

2008

	PROFESSING MEMBERSHIP	TOTAL CONGREGATIONS	TOTAL ORDAINED CLERGY	ANNUAL CONFERENCES	ACTIVE BISHOPS
US	7,774,420	33,952	45,958	63	50
Africa	3,050,818	9,796	3,887	27	12
Asia	201,166	1,658	829	21	3
Europe	64,819	1,323	946	20	4
Total	11,091,223	46,729	51,620	131	69

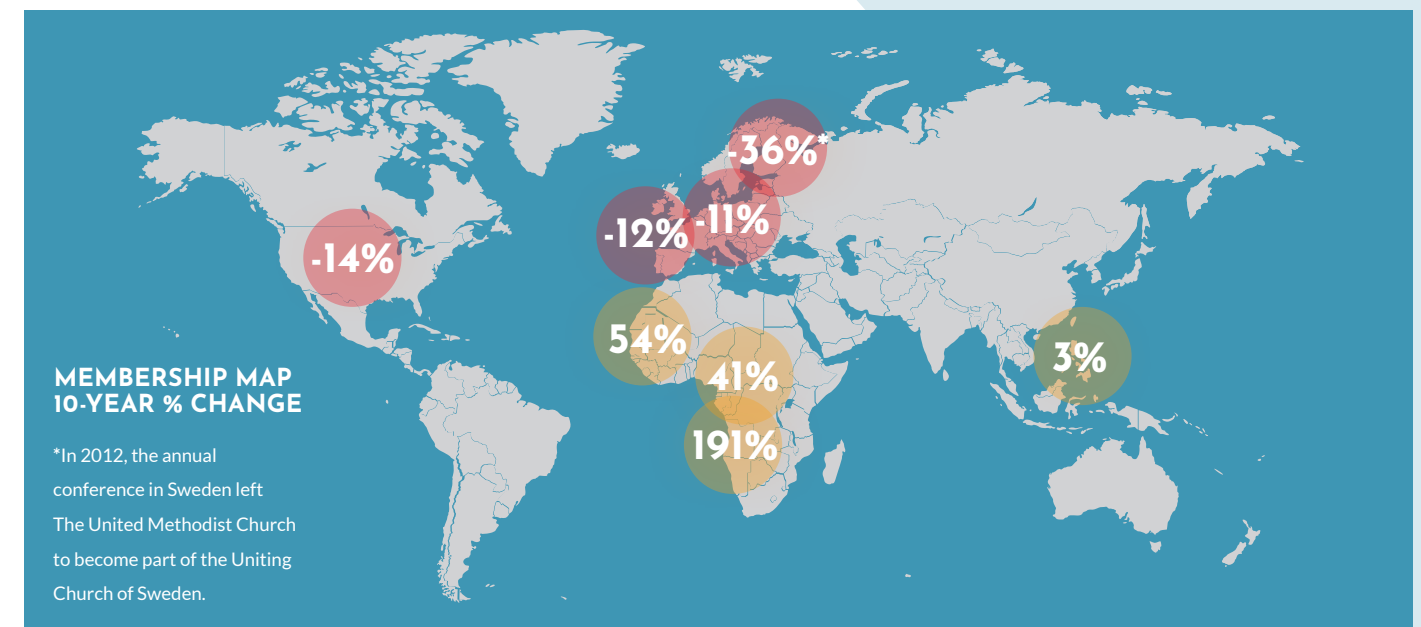
UMC MEMBERSHIP, CONGREGATIONS, CLERGY, CONFERENCES, BISHOPS

2018

	PROFESSING MEMBERSHIP	TOTAL CONGREGATIONS	TOTAL ORDAINED CLERGY	ANNUAL CONFERENCES	ACTIVE BISHOPS
US	6,671,825	30,960	44,387	56	46
Africa	6,210,967	19,682	5,963	32	13
Asia	207,190	1,836	619	26	3
Europe	53,764	1,232	915	21	4
Total	13,143,746	53,710	51,884	135	66

* In 2018, U.S. churches paid more than 90.2% of requested apportionment funding. Work is underway to fulfill a 2016 General Conference decision to expand apportionment collection for the General Administration Fund and Episcopal Fund in the central conferences. While some have contributed apportionment funds in the past, it was not in a formalized collection process.

The General Council on Finance and Administration (GCFA) is constantly assessing the way in which data is collected from central conferences in an effort to make the process as efficient as possible. GCFA conducted comprehensive data collection training in the central conferences in Africa and the Philippines in 2017.



1998-2018* PAID ON APPORTIONMENTS TO ALL GENERAL FUNDS

YEAR	TOTAL FUNDS APPORTIONED	PAID	% PAID
1998	\$118,431,010	\$105,394,783	89.0%
1999	\$119,630,756	\$107,857,724	90.2%
2000	\$121,999,757	\$111,187,769	91.1%
2001	\$127,256,750	\$114,676,537	90.1%
2002	\$127,860,750	\$113,095,935	88.5%
2003	\$129,634,750	\$112,418,090	86.7%
2004	\$132,656,250	\$116,808,070	88.1%
2005	\$139,955,000	\$121,703,502	87.0%
2006	\$142,849,627	\$126,427,676	88.5%
2007	\$145,693,841	\$130,564,022	89.6%
2008	\$150,973,581	\$130,210,994	86.2%
2009	\$150,308,000	\$126,303,259	84.0%
2010	\$150,232,058	\$129,428,321	86.2%
2011	\$149,472,006	\$130,885,848	87.6%
2012	\$147,268,131	\$132,743,590	90.1%
2013	\$143,302,750	\$128,613,187	89.7%
2014	\$143,132,984	\$130,069,948	90.9%
2015	\$142,579,036	\$130,649,815	91.6%
2016	\$143,115,210	\$131,444,245	91.8%
2017	\$144,449,153	\$134,778,609	93.3%
2018	\$147,305,000	\$132,866,000	90.2%

MEMBERSHIP TRENDS*

YEAR	JURISDICTIONAL CONFERENCE	CENTRAL CONFERENCE	TOTAL
2009	7,679,758	3,318,778	10,998,536
2010	7,570,638	3,297,971	10,868,609
2011	7,482,442	4,569,034	12,051,476
2012	7,392,654	4,569,034	11,961,688
2013	7,299,446	5,524,017	12,823,463
2014	7,183,193	5,525,924	12,709,117
2015	7,067,162	5,571,094	12,638,256
2016	6,951,278	5,663,340	12,614,618
2017	6,806,331	6,471,921	13,278,252
2018	6,671,825	6,530,168	13,201,993
2019*	6,537,976	6,588,940	13,126,915
2020*	6,404,850	6,648,240	13,053,090
2021*	6,272,514	6,708,074	12,980,588
2022*	6,141,030	6,768,447	12,909,477
2023*	6,010,460	6,829,363	12,839,823
2024*	5,880,863	6,890,827	12,771,690
2025*	5,752,296	6,952,845	12,705,141

* From 2019 (Jurisdictional) / 2018 (Central), these are forecasted numbers based on historical trends.

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