2017 JOURNAL

Oklahoma Annual Conference
The United Methodist Church
FIRST DAY — MONDAY, MAY 29

Executive Sessions

Lay members met in the Christian Life Center at 1 p.m., at OKC-St. Luke’s UMC, while clergy members met in the Sanctuary at 1:15 p.m. The report of the Board of Ordained Ministry was presented and approved at the clergy session. (See Section F – The Business of the Annual Conference.)

Memorial Worship and Communion – 7 p.m.

Under the leadership of Bishop James G. Nunn, the 2017 Oklahoma Annual Conference began with this service in the Sanctuary of OKC-St. Luke’s UMC. Afterward a reception honoring the families of the deceased was held in the Christian Life Center.

SECOND DAY – TUESDAY, MAY 30

General Session – 9 a.m.

Bishop Nunn officially opened the business session in the Freede Wellness & Activity Center of Oklahoma City University.

Episcopal Address – Bishop James G. Nunn. (See Section H – Reports.)

Laity Address – Conference Lay Leader Chuck Stewart. (See Section H – Reports.)

Enabling Motions – Conference Secretary Joseph Harris made the following motions and they were adopted.

1. That the digital and printed pre-conference workbook be the official program of the 2017 session of the Oklahoma Annual Conference, subject to necessary additions and adjustments.
2. That the minutes of the daily sessions, as prepared by the secretarial staff and reviewed by the Oklahoma Conference Department of Communications, shall be the official record of the conference.
3. That the bar of the conference for voting, debate, discussion and other official business of the Annual Conference be restricted to the main floor of the Freede Center including the stage area.
4. That all materials distributed at registration and on the conference website be considered in the hands of conference members at this opening session so that action concerning them may be taken after 24 hours have passed in any cases where such time interval is required.
5. That the following persons be elected as assistant secretaries: Jan Polson, Marsha Purtell, Kyle Anderson, Brandon Blacksten, Brandon Dollarhite, Cali Depue Eck, Stephen Lashley, and Shyloe O’Neal.
6. That Barbara Perry be elected as head teller.

Organization of the Annual Conference – Joseph Harris was nominated and elected as conference secretary. Norma Gravley-Quinn was nominated and elected as conference treasurer and conference statistician.

Annual Conference Council - Council Co-Chairpersons Aly Shahan and Randy Shrauner presented the New People, New Places report. (See Section H – Reports.) Current grant recipients from Vian and Calumet/Red Rock churches spoke of the positive impact their programs have had on their communities.

Shrauner moved that the requested funds be awarded to those applicants listed in the report. It was approved.
Discipleship Ministry Team – Terry Koehn and Derrek Belase presented the report. (See Section H – Reports.) Representatives from different areas of DMT spoke of their programs and accomplishments over the past year. Those areas include: United Methodist Men, United Methodist Women, Youth Ministries, Young Adult Ministry, Campus Ministry, Five Day Academy for Spiritual Formation, Camps, Evangelism, Youth and Children’s Workers Academy, Oklahoma City University, and Saint Paul School of Theology.

Representatives from different areas of DMT spoke of their programs and accomplishments over the past year. Those areas include: United Methodist Men, United Methodist Women, Youth Ministries, Young Adult Ministry, Campus Ministry, Five Day Academy for Spiritual Formation, Camps, Evangelism, Youth and Children’s Workers Academy, Oklahoma City University, and Saint Paul School of Theology.

Recipients of the Harry Denman Evangelism Award were recognized. The recipients are: youth, Kailee McCrary; laity, Don and Nancy Whittaker; and clergy, Tiffany Nagel-Monroe.

General Secretary of Discipleship Ministries Jeff Campbell told of the One Matters Award, for churches that had new professions of faith after a long time without any professions of faith. One church from each district received the One Matters Award plaque and $1,000. The churches are: Catesby, Cimarron District; Turley, Council Oak District; Guthrie-First, Crossroads District; Fairland, Green Country District; OKC-Selecman, Heartland District; Konawa, Lake Country; Braman, Northern Prairie; and Rush Springs, Wichitas District.

Worship Service of Retirement – 2 p.m.

A worship service was held honoring those who are retiring. (See Section F – Business of the Annual Conference.)

Leadership Development Ministry Team – Audra Fogle and Adam Shahan, co-chairpersons, presented the report. (See Section H – Reports.) Representatives from different areas of LDMT spoke of their programs and accomplishments over the past year. Those areas include: Board of Laity, Board of Ordained Ministry, Academy for Part-Time Local Pastors, Commission on Religion and Race, Commission on Status and Role of Women, Commission on Strengthening the Black Church in the 21st Century, and Hispanic Ministry Committee.

COSROW Chairperson Jennifer Ahrens-Sims presented the Frances E. Willard Award to Linda Lusnia, associate pastor of Anadarko-First UMC and pastor of Mount Scott Kiowa/Apache UMCs of the Oklahoma Indian Missionary Conference.

Via video, those being ordained and commissioned introduced themselves and spoke of their calls to ministry. (See Section E – Daily Proceedings-Certification of Ordination.)

Constitutional Amendments – (See Section H – Reports.) Joseph Harris explained the procedure for voting on the 2016 General Conference Proposed Constitutional Amendments.

Harris presented Amendment I for vote.
Harris presented Amendment II for vote.
Harris presented Amendment III for vote.
Harris presented Amendment IV for vote.
Harris presented Amendment V for vote.
Results of the ballots will not be revealed at this Annual Conference, but announced by the Council of Bishops at a later date.

Context for evening conversation – Bishop Nunn asked delegates to come with openness of hearts for discussion of four questions that will be brought forth after the evening break.

Evening Session – 6 p.m.

The evening conversation was led by Bishop Nunn in the Freede Center.
THIRD DAY – WEDNESDAY, MAY 31

General Session – 8:30 a.m.

Mission and Service Ministry Team – Jeannie Himes and Jeremy Basset presented the report. (See Section H – Reports.)

Agencies that are under the MSMT umbrella include: Board of Church & Society, Criminal Justice and Mercy Ministries, Circle of Care, Cookson Hills Center, Neighborhood Services Organization, Oklahoma UM Retirement Facilities, Oklahoma Conference of Churches, Restore Hope Ministries, Skyline Urban Ministry, Office of Mission (Volunteers in Mission, Disaster Response, Prevent/Recover Ministry, Project Transformation), and Woodworth Estate Committee.

Circle of Care is celebrating 100 years of service to the children in need in Oklahoma. COC is focused on creating more foster homes/facilities/programs that are designed to keep sibling groups together.

NSO works with and provides temporary housing and living skills for young homeless men; housing and daily living needs for those with mental illness; temporary housing and support for homeless single mothers and their children.

Skyline Urban Ministry helps low income people in the Oklahoma City area by providing food, clothing, and services at an eye clinic at very low costs.

Restore Hope Ministries help homeless or people in financial crisis in the Tulsa area through their food pantry and housing assistance.

Residents at Epworth Villa in OKC develop intergenerational relationships by welcoming student visitors and have community partnerships with area infant/children’s programs. Oklahoma Methodist Manor serves over 400 people in that retirement living community in Tulsa.

Conference Mission Secretary Karen Distefano introduced George Howard, GBGM’s general secretary of Global Coaching and Strategic Initiatives. Howard thanked the conference for its support and dedication to mission work.

Meri Whitaker was honored for 30 years of service at Cookson Hills Center, which serves the poor in eastern Oklahoma. Cookson Hills serves seniors, provides daycare, and operates cottage industries that provide jobs and create income. The mission has a pack-and-snack program that provides food to children over the weekends.

CJAMM’s mission is to break the cycle of incarceration by developing Christian relationships through redemption churches, and by operating Exodus Houses, reentry homes for newly released inmates. New Day Camps serve the children of incarcerated parents.

Lydia Patterson Institute in El Paso, Texas, provides education to poor children in the area, many who are from Juarez, Mexico, and have to make a long and sometimes dangerous trip across the border every day to attend LPI.

Deaconess Pat Hoerth spoke of our responsibility to save our planet by our actions in our daily lives and addressing environmental changes, global warming and climate change.

Volunteers in Mission help create and sustain relationships with people all over the world. VIM works with churches/groups as they prepare to go and make a difference in the lives of the people they visit, while also making a difference in the lives of the volunteers themselves.

Disaster Response helps people recover from disasters in their communities.

Project Transformation brings young adults and children together through this literacy program during the summer months. There are 56 college students who will be serving about 500 total children at nine church sites throughout the state this summer.

General Session – 10:40 a.m.

New Faith Communities Ministry Team – Mark Foster and Chris Tiger presented the report (See Section H – Reports.)

Two areas covered by NFCMT are research and church growth. Research focuses on demographics, lifestyle concerns, and emerging cultural conditions. New church starts, restarts, relocations, mergers, and multi-site endeavors are the focuses regarding church growth.

Tiger has been working with 11 potential new churches. Eight are holding worship services, averaging 1,200 total attendance January-May, including three that just launched worship in January.
Episcopacy Committee – Tom Harrison presented the report. (See Section H – Reports.) Janey Wilson presented Bishop Nunn and his wife, Mary, with an infant car seat and gift certificate for their first grandson, born this spring.

There was a motion and a second to approve the Housing Allowance & Episcopal Residence Task Force Recommendation. (See Section I – Resolutions.) It was approved.

General Session – 2 p.m.

Oklahoma Indian Missionary Conference – A video featured David Wilson and Josephine Deere, who spoke of the continuing growth of new church starts within the OIMC. Those church buildings were acquired from the Oklahoma Conference.

Oklahoma United Methodist Foundation – Bill Junk presented the report. He encouraged churches to contact the Foundation to find out about the program Arise, to reach new people in their communities. Over $5 million through the Foundation is available for pastoral education.

Junk introduced the Foundation’s new board chairperson, the Hon. David Russell, who presented the Foundation’s Annual Report and announced it is the third largest United Methodist Foundation in the United States. The Petree Endowment has enabled hundreds of thousands of dollars to go to as many as 20 projects each year. Many opportunities exist to support ministries. Russell encouraged each congregation to find out more about all the programs available through the Foundation.

The 2017 Jim Egan Legacy Award was presented to Bob Long and his wife, Marsha. Since taking over OKC-St. Luke’s UMC in 1991, the Longs have turned it into one of the most dynamic, innovative churches in Oklahoma.

Communications – Taud Boatman presented the report. (See Section H – Reports.) Boatman expressed the need and importance of effective communication on the local and conference levels. Social media is a low-cost and efficient way to communicate and bring about positive change whenever and wherever we can. A new app was developed by Communications Ministry for this Annual Conference.

General Session – 3 p.m.

Administration – Norma Gravley-Quinn asked us to consider the WHY of our past, present, and future in the conference. (See Section H – Reports.) Quinn presented an Oklahoma Commission on Archives & History video. Commission Chairperson Brian Bakeman announced the General Commission on Archives & History presented a 2017 Distinguished Service Award to Jerry Gill from Stillwater-First UMC. Gill was instrumental in helping Stillwater-First become a United Methodist Historic Site. Oklahoma Commission member Elizabeth Anthony, from OKC-Crown Heights UMC, created the video. For any church research, contact Christina Wolf, our conference archivist, whose office is at OCU’s Dulaney-Browne Library.

Bakeman presented the resolution “To Designate the Boston Avenue UMC as a United Methodist Historic Site.” It was approved. (See Section I – Resolutions.) Bakeman presented the resolution “To Designate First United Methodist Church, Oklahoma City, as a United Methodist Historic Site.” It was approved. (See Section I – Resolutions.)

Quinn introduced Jim Cinocca, who chairs the Conference Board of Trustees. Cinocca introduced the following resolutions for approval.

1. For Discontinuance of Catoosa-Disciple United Methodist Church. It was approved.
2. Of Corporate Dissolution of Douglas Blvd. United Methodist Church. It was approved.
3. For Discontinuance of the Franklin United Methodist church. It was approved.
4. Approving Merger and Dissolution of Mount Vernon Church and Worship Center, Inc. It was approved.
5. For Discontinuance of Tulsa-Rose Hill United Methodist Church. It was approved.
6. For Discontinuance of Stuart United Methodist Church. It was approved.
7. For Discontinuance of Tulsa-Epworth United Methodist Church. It was approved.

Bishop Nunn prayed for the congregations of these churches. (See Section I – Resolutions.)
Daily Proceedings

For the present, Quinn presented the 2016 Vital Congregation Statistics. (See Section H – Reports.) Greg Tolle, chairperson of the Commission on Equitable Compensation, presented the report. (See Section H – Reports.)

Several participants in our Health Screenings explained how important this benefit is to our conference. The Health Screenings are offered by the Wellness Committee, which is a subcommittee of the Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits. A participant in our Pension program explained how with the help of advisers she was able to draw from her own plan to help finance a new home and receive retiree benefits.

Mark Commons presented the Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits report. (See Section H – Reports.)

1. Commons made a motion to accept the remainder of Report No. 1 as written.
   It was approved.
2. Commons made a motion to accept the remainder of Report No. 2 as written. It was approved.
3. Commons made a motion to accept the remainder of Report No. 3 as written. It was approved.
4. Commons made a motion to accept No. 4. It was approved.
5. Commons made a motion to accept No. 5. It was approved.

For the future, Robert Gorrell presented the Council on Finance & Administration report. (See Section H – Reports.) Quinn brought forth the 2018 Budget for approval. It was approved.

Service of Commissioning and Ordination – 7 p.m.

The service was held in OKC-St. Luke’s UMC Sanctuary, with Bishop Nunn preaching. Afterward a reception honoring those newly commissioned and ordained was held in the Christian Life Center. (See Section E – Certificate of Ordination.)

FOURTH DAY – THURSDAY, JUNE 1

Nominations Committee – Tish Malloy presented the report with changes. (See Section C – Boards, Councils, Commissions.) Malloy moved to adopt the report as amended. It was approved.

Standing Rules – Robert Harrison represented the report. (See Section K – Standing Rules.) Harrison brought forth the Standing Rules with the recommended changes for approval. It was approved.

Church and Society resolution – Jeni Markham Clewell brought the resolution “Addressing Environmental Challenges, Global Warming, and Climate Change” for approval. (See Section I – Resolutions) It was approved.

Closing Motion – Joseph Harris brought forth the motion that any materials not acted upon be accepted into the record of the Annual Conference. It was approved.

The 2017 Annual Conference was officially adjourned at 9:06 a.m.

Service of Sending Forth – 9:38 a.m.

Bishop Nunn delivering the homily for the Service of Sending Forth.
CERTIFICATION OF ORDINATION

This is to certify that in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, on the 31st day of May, 2017, I ordained, under the election of the Oklahoma Conference of The United Methodist Church, the following Elders:

Nathan Aquilla Mills, Andrew L Nelms, Shyloe Hailey O’Neal, Adam W Shahan, and Desiree L Sharp

This is to certify that in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, on the 31st day of May, 2017, I commissioned, under the election of the Oklahoma Conference of The United Methodist Church, the following Elders:

Jinx Michael Barber, Kaela Elizabeth Patterson Burdge, Stephen Cagle, Michael Alan Carpenter, Christopher Craig Clark, David L Gordon, Jay A Henderson, Victoria Lee Shiuan Hie, Jeffrey Michael Hinton, Benjamin Johnson Pascoe, Jeffrey C Rickman, Emily Loren Robnett, Dylan Pierce Ward, and Raymond E Witzel III

A Bishop of The United Methodist Church

OFFICIAL CERTIFICATION

The foregoing proceedings, with reports herein published, were adopted by the Oklahoma Conference of The United Methodist Church at its forty-ninth Annual Session, held in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, May 29-June 1, 2017, as the official record, and we hereby certify that they are correct.

A Bishop of The United Methodist Church
Secretary of the Annual Conference