

## VIII. DAILY PROCEEDINGS

### SUNDAY AFTERNOON AND EVENING

June 3, 2018

#### Laity Session

**First United Methodist Church, Plano, Texas, 3:30 p.m.**

The laity session of The North Texas Conference was held at First United Methodist Church of Plano. The First United Methodist Church Rowlett Evening Praise Band set the mood for the North Texas Annual Conference Laity Session on Sunday, June 3<sup>rd</sup>. Conference Lay Leader Jeff Bouis welcomed United Methodist Lay Members, expressing gratitude for their service and introducing the theme, “New Faces, New Spaces.”

Attending to Conference Business, Lead Delegate to the General Conference Tim Crouch clarified the need for legislative action on Constitutional Amendment 1, regarding gender justice. Voting by members of the Annual Conference is scheduled to take place Monday, June 4, at 1:45 p.m.

Members of the Conference Council on Youth Ministry led the gathered laity in honoring lay members of Annual Conference and lay leaders who died in the past year. Each were remembered with the calling of their names and the ringing of a bell.

The Youth and Lay Harry Denman Evangelism Awards were presented to Anna Shipley of First United Methodist Church Rowlett and Vicki Busby, Grace United Methodist Church, Sherman.

Amber Benson, visiting lecturer in advertising at Southern Methodist University and a student at Perkins School of Theology, presented the keynote address, “All Things New: Biblical Models for Innovation.” Reminding listeners that Jesus’ Great Commission was to “Go and make disciples” rather than “wait for disciples to come to you,” Benson proposed lessons from three biblical examples of God’s appearing in new spaces: in tent (Exodus), temple/ruins (Nehemiah), and table (Luke). She commended the laity gathered to go and do likewise, in all manner of new spaces.

#### Clergy Session

**Christ United Methodist Church, Plano, Texas, 3:30 p.m.**

The North Texas Conference clergy gathered at Christ United Methodist Church, Plano, and Bishop McKee called the meeting to order at 3:40 p.m. Vic Casad moved that local pastors be included throughout the business session. The motion was seconded and the body approved. Host pastor Don Underwood welcomed the clergy and opened with prayer. Tim Morrison led clergy in singing “And Are We Yet Alive,” a tradition, and a reminder of circuit riders and the short lives for so many.

Bishop McKee noted that every time clergy gather, they do so as a church. He referenced Matthew 4:18, when Jesus walked by the sea and saw two brothers, and said to them, “Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.” He said that each person there had been called into ministry and that this was a great time to recognize those called. He recalled his own call at four years of age.

Bishop McKee called on Tim Morrison, Board of Ordained Ministry (BOM) chair. Morrison acknowledged Duane VanGiesen and Janet Thompson and the work they have done in the Conference Ministry Center to support the BOM.

Morrison moved the approval of Questions 18a, members who constitute the Administrative Review Committee. Motion passed. Morrison then moved that all alterations to the BOM report that are accepted come to Marsha Middleton. Motion passed. Morrison introduced Jill Jackson-Sears.

Jackson-Sears, Candidacy Registrar, called attention to question 19, the list of certified candidates, and encouraged all clergy to go online for instructions on candidacy process. Jackson-Sears then introduced Marsha Middleton for the Local Pastors' report.

Middleton noted the list of those who have been licensed and appointed as local pastors – full time and part time. Clergy voted to approve those for whom licenses are approved including those not appointed. They then voted to approve those who will be appointed. Bishop McKee gave a special word of appreciation to Middleton and to local pastors. He asked the local pastors to stand, and the session gave them a round of applause.

Andy Lewis addressed question 24a and b and then moved question 25 which passed as well as question 26b, concerning those who have been appointed from other Annual Conferences or Methodist denominations and those who have been approved to serve from other Christian denominations. The body voted to approve. Lewis then introduced Billy Echols-Richter, Chair of Preparation and Qualifications.

Echols-Richter read the names of those recommended as Provisional Members, both deacons and elders. They came forward, faced the body, and each was voted on individually. They were all approved as provisional members, were received with a standing ovation, and Bishop McKee shook their hands.

Echols-Richter called attention to question 29, those being continued as provisional members.

Echols-Richter then read the name of those recommended to be elected as members in full connection, deacon, and those recommended to be elected as members in full connection, elder. They came forward and Bishop McKee asked them the historic questions. Each was voted into conference membership and introduced to the body. All new members in full connection received an extended standing ovation.

The following person was presented for election into full membership and ordination as deacon: Camille Reeder May.

Those to be elected as members in full connection, elder, were: Omar Al-Rikabi, Justin Miller, Scott Gilliland, Julie Richter, Adam Young, Raegan Gilliland, Patrick Littlefield, Chad McSwain, Katie Newsome, Samantha Parson, and Ramsey Patton.

Lewis addressed question 38 concerning those who had been received by transfer from other annual conferences of The United Methodist Church. They are: Joy Gonzales, transferring from the Missouri Conference to the North Texas Conference; Jeff Lust, transferring from the New Mexico Conference to the North Texas Conference; and Stefani Reed-Meyer, transferring from the Central Texas Conference to the North Texas Conference. They were approved. Lewis noted question 21 and introduced Paul Gould.

Paul Gould moved question 43, who has been granted honorable location. The body approved. The body then voted on question 46a, approving the withdrawal to unite with another denomination of Traci Loveman, and 46b, approving the withdrawal from the ordained ministerial office of Charlise Hill-Larson. The Bishop reminded the body that those who died during the year would be remembered later in the evening. He then called for a moment of silence and offered a prayer for those elders and local pastors who died during the year.

Bishop McKee then recognized those provisional and ordained members who have received appointments in other Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church while retaining their membership in the North Texas Annual

Conference. Those are Judith Brandt, Alan W. Clark, Russell Floyd, Martha Myre, and Troy Sims.

The body then voted to approve those ordained members on personal, family, or medical leave.

The names of those retired elders, deacon, and local pastors were read. Their retirement was approved. They were invited to the front of the session where the Bishop shook their hands and they received a standing ovation. Those were Joy Anderson, Nicki T. Lyford, Linda Roby, Laura Rothe, Sarah Squires, deacons, and Peter V. Adrian, Lyle Benson, Vivian Joyce Crowson, Reid Fade, William B. Lawrence, Ardith Marie Mitchell, Janet Bell Odom, Clara M. Reed, Eric V. Rothe, Allen Wesley Snider, and David Turner, elders; and Roslyn Eugster, Cindy Griffin, Don Hood, Michael Langdon, and Sylvesta Shed, local pastors.

Elizabeth Moseley presented questions 58-63 regarding specialized ministry and lay ministry.

Question 72a was presented by Tim Morrison regarding those elders and deacons who have been approved for appointment to less than full-time service. The body approved. Morrison concluded his report, and the body approved the BOM report. Bishop McKee thanked all the members of the BOM.

The body then sang “O For a Thousand Tongues.” Bishop McKee invited everyone to close the session in unison with a prayer from Archbishop Oscar Romero, “A Step Along the Way.”

The clergy session concluded at 4:42 PM. The next Conference Session will be held at Christ United Methodist Church, Plano, June 2-4, 2019.

The full reports of the divisions of the Board of Ordained Ministry are printed in this journal in Section X. BUSINESS OF THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE and Section XIV. AGENCY REPORTS under the heading, Board of Ordained Ministry.

**Worship Service**  
**First United Methodist Church, Richardson, Texas, 7:00 p.m.**

At opening worship, the music of the evening was provided by chancel and youth choirs from First United Methodist Church, Dallas, directed by Dana Effler, and by St. Luke “Community” UMC Sanctuary Choir, directed by Monya Logan. Music throughout the worship service included “Clap Your Hands,” “Will the Circle Be Unbroken,” a rousing “Hallelujah! From Christ on the Mount of Olives” and “Hallelujah is the Highest Praise” sung by all three choirs.

Clayton Oliphint, senior pastor of FUMC, Richardson, welcomed the congregation. Alfred White and Jenna Morrison led the Litany of the Saints. Andy Lewis named those ministers and ministers’ spouses whose lives were being remembered for the life of service to others they had lived, as their pictures were shown on the sanctuary screens. Those remembered included ministers Carolyn Allbritton, Cletus Baine Beights, William J. Bryan, III, Donald G. Coke, Lazarus (Larry) C. Krohn, H. Neill McFarland, Ben Read, Don Truitt Shaw, Robert L. Spencer, and John D. Edwards. Clergy spouses remembered were Mary David Allen, Margaret Carroll, Belinda (Linda) Cloyd, Linda Rae Dean, Georgia Kifer, Corinne (Connie) McFarland, William G. Milsap, and Serita Nadine Hamilton Yeager.

Bishop Tracy S. Malone, East Ohio Annual Conference bishop, was the speaker for the evening. Her message was “Therefore, Go...!” The scripture from Matthew 28:19-20 was presented before Malone spoke. Amy Spaur moved into the sanctuary and the chancel area by speaking the scripture in both English and Spanish, as other liturgists stepped into the chancel area, speaking and signing the scripture in Spanish, Shona, Urdu, Tagalog, Korean, Fanti, American Sign Language, and Korean Sign Language.

Bishop Malone proclaimed that if the church would allow the spirit of God to take up residence in our lives to lead

and guide, the church would be a powerful force. Malone stated that we are a big tent church and when we think small, we begin to shackle the Holy Spirit. God is not calling us just to “do” church; God is calling us to “be” the church.

Malone then asked what it means to “be” the church. She referenced John 3:17 and professed that the church is called to be an instrument of that mission of loving the world, asking “What if the church were to love the world the way God loves the world? What would that look like?” God is saying, “Go!” she said, then asked, “How are we doing in our going beyond our comfort zone? In our following? In our making of disciples -which means loving all, all the time. Who are the new faces among us? What new spaces are we creating for the none and the done?”

Malone observed that we cannot have faithful and vital churches without faithful and vital Christians. It matters how we show up. In the midst of it all, there is the church, a powerful cultural influence, whether we are doing something or whether we are doing nothing. She quoted from Barbara Brown Taylor’s *An Altar in the World*, “The hardest spiritual work in the world is to love your neighbor as yourself, simply as someone who can spring you from yourself if you will allow it.” Finally, Malone, said, “If we are going to create new spaces for new faces, there needs to be a renewing of the spirit so that we can be the church in this beautiful but broken world.” She closed with a prayer which hangs over the door at St. Stephen’s church in London, “O God, make the door of this house wide enough to receive all who need human love and fellowship.”

At the end of the service, more than 100 young adults were commissioned as interns at local churches, Bridgeport Camp and Conference Center, Connect to the Kingdom, GO Camp, Lydia Patterson institute, Project Transformation, and QuadW Missional Internship. The offering for the evening went to support Project Transformation.

A reception followed the service, hosted by Bishop and Mrs. McKee honoring Bishop Tracy S. Malone and the families of those remembered in the service.

## **MONDAY MORNING BUSINESS SESSION**

**June 4, 2018**

### **Organization of the Conference**

Lucretia Facen opened with prayer and Clayton Oliphint welcomed everyone to FUMC, Richardson.

Conference Secretary Judith Reedy then organized the conference. Reedy moved that the bar of the conference be established as the chancel area and the entire floor of the sanctuary, and that the balcony be established as the visitors’ section. The motion was approved. Reedy moved the election of persons to serve the 2018 business sessions as assistant secretaries: Eric Markinson and Marsha Middleton; head teller, Dretha Burris; and the teller group, as appointed by each of the district superintendents. They were elected.

Reedy moved the approval of Legislative Item number one in the conference workbook, [LA 1], for the equalization of clergy and lay members. The motion was approved.

Bishop McKee then called on Andy Lewis to introduce the consent calendar. Lewis explained that the consent agenda would facilitate the business of the Annual Conference and that if any items needed floor debate, a written request signed by five voting members of the Annual Conference must be presented to the Conference Secretary within twenty-four hours.

### **Standing Rules**

Anne Todd brought Legislative Item #2 [LA 2] as it pertained to Standing Rule 1.B.1.c., changing the Center for New Church Development and Congregational Transformation to the Center for Church Development.

The Standing Rules' changes were approved.

### **Episcopal Address (as delivered by Bishop McKee)**

In his Episcopal Address, Bishop McKee said that small acts have a way of impressing upon our hearts that we are beloved children of God. He asked the Annual Conference the traditional questions asked at baptismal services. He then spoke of the Uniting Conference 50 years ago and the sermon preached by Dr. Albert Outler, then a professor at Perkins School of Theology. It was a seminal moment.

Since 1968, much has changed but much has not. McKee shared that Francis Asbury would ride away on his horse as soon as appointments were read each year but that one circuit rider was “on to him” and demanded he change his appointment. The reality is that there is still a frontier, even though it is somewhat civilized, and we must be willing to ride into a new frontier to go where people are, not wait for them to come to us.

Wesley and his followers went to new places to share the good news. There is a large frontier of nones, dones, unchurched, re-churched. Faith in Christ is transforming. Why do we shy away from sharing? McKee remembered an experience he had in Rochester, N.Y. He was the guest preacher and a blizzard happened the Sunday morning he was scheduled to speak. They still had church. The first service had 500 or 600, and the second service was packed with 700 or 800. It's not tough if you proclaim the good news and go into the community and love the world as God loves the world.

In his sermon 50 years ago, Outler talked about the three things the church would have to be: truly catholic, truly evangelical and truly reforming. At a meeting in Chicago in April, the General Secretary of the General Commission on Archives and History – Fred Day – began to unpack these words. Truly catholic means that the church has to be inclusive and open, bound only by the essentials of Christian faith. Inclusivity means that any time we gather we would look like the demographics of the population of the 21 counties of the North Texas Conference – younger and diverse ethnicities. We would realize we need to expand our line of sight to those who are needing and waiting for the Gospel.

We are called to be mission-centered, the bearer of the good news of Jesus Christ, and we must love others as God does. Being truly reforming means that it must be new and renewed, and we must realize that we will be judged more by the future than the past. “We are the prophets of a future we shall not inhabit.” Theology is not the setting of doctrine but the way we talk about our experience of God. It is an art, not a science. It is about somebody saying something and leading us into a deeper conversation. An Irish preacher said, “The larger the island of knowledge, the greater the coastline of mystery.” The more we know, the more mystery there is. The witness can never fully encompass the mystery. Friends, we must look to the future, said McKee, and decide that we are going to be witnesses to a future we will not inhabit. It is our choice. Pray that it will be “yes.”

### **Renewal of Baptism**

Following the Episcopal address, Ron Henderson and Cammy Gaston, district superintendents, led the body in a liturgy celebrating the baptismal covenant. DeAndre Johnson, worship and music leader for the Annual Conference 2018, led the congregation in “The Jesus In Me.” The reverends Proshek, Hancock, Onuoha, and Meyer led the liturgy of Thanksgiving over the Water. All were invited to come forward to a station where newly commissioned

deacons and elders attended, and touch the water and renew their baptism. The service ended with “I Need You to Survive” and a blessing from Bishop McKee.

### **New Spaces, New Faces**

A video showed Wesley UMC in Sulphur Springs and their ministry with children as an example of new spaces for new faces.

### **1968 Merger**

A video showing the merger of Methodist Episcopal South and Evangelical United Brethren was followed by a litany.

### **Retiree Video #1**

**Reid Fade** said that she is most grateful to God and for growing up in a parsonage. She advised ordinands to practice good self-care because it is hard to take care of others if you cannot take care of yourself. In addition, she advised them to preach and teach the Wesleyan way of salvation and use the three general rules. When she retires, she plans to visit other churches and worship with the congregations.

**Sylvesta Shed** has truly enjoyed his experience of serving churches in the North Texas Conference. He recalled meeting Dr. Zan Holmes in the course of study. When he told Holmes that he was going to Wichita Falls, Holmes said the wilderness was a good place to start. Shed advised ordinands to continue their studies. Shed is going to stay involved in Kairos and continue making a difference in lives of others.

**Joy Anderson** remembers her mother saying, “People will lose their religion, but they will always have kids. Get your teaching certificate.” Anderson is grateful for the amazing church members she has come to know. She advised ordinands to be faithful to their calling, to be compassionate, to learn to listen and to follow. Anderson is going to continue to work full time in mission and outreach.

During the morning break, a video from GBHEM played.

### **Episcopacy Committee**

Clayton Oliphint was joined on the platform by other committee members of the Episcopacy Committee to make their report. Oliphint acknowledged how blessed the North Texas Conference is to have Bishop McKee as bishop. Oliphint noted Joan McKee’s particular involvement with Project Transformation and announced that the conference would be making a gift to Project Transformation in her honor. The Episcopacy Committee presented a gift of tickets on American Airlines as a gift to both Bishop McKee and Joan so that they can travel to California to see their grandsons.

### **Board of Ordained Ministry**

Tim Morrison, chair of the Board of Ordained Ministry, invited board members to join him and asked all those serving on DCOM to stand as well and be thanked for their time and ongoing ministry as stewards in the ministry process. He then called on Elizabeth Moseley, chair of certification in specialized ministry. She called on Bishop McKee to recognize the persons seeking certification in specialized ministry. Moseley presented Dorian Albert, certified in youth ministry; Kathy Braem, certified in children’s ministry; and Susan Hale, certified in Christian education. Bishop McKee prayed a blessing over those being certified.

Marsha Middleton, Director of Local Pastors' Education, introduced Cassie Wade, who will replace Middleton as of July 1. Middleton thanked Duane VanGiesen and Janet Thompson for their twelve years of supporting work for Local Pastors' education. Middleton invited all those who had completed licensing school in 2018 and currently serving in churches to come forward and receive a gift from Wade. Those were: Martha Hagan-Smith, Scott Luginbill, Idalia Luna, Tamara Mitchell, David Owsley, Nancy Russell, and Martha Segundo.

Middleton then recognized four Course of Study graduates: Cindy Palmer, Jack Cloyd, Lucia French, and Joel Scheller. She invited the congregation to applaud all those serving on behalf of the church in this capacity and acknowledged the ever-increasing needs they fill.

Middleton then introduced Billy Echols-Richter, chair of Preparation and Qualifications. Echols-Richter presented eight persons to provisional membership: provisional deacons Jennifer Chickering, David Finley, Sarah Marsalis Luginbill, Kim Meyers; and provisional elders Jacob Fields, Jeffrey Pehl, Bryant Phelps, Silvia Wang. They were welcomed with a standing ovation.

Echols-Richter reported that twelve members had been elected as full members to be ordained: deacon Camille May; elders Raegan Gilliland, Scott Gilliland, Patrick Littlefield, Chad McSwain, Justin Miller, Katie Newsome, Samantha Parson, Ramsey Patton, Julie Richter, Omar Al-Rikabi, Adam Young. All were congratulated by Bishop McKee and they were welcomed by the body.

Paul Gould, chair of Conference Relations committee, presented the 2018 retirees, representing 455 years of service to Christ and the church in every field. They were: Joy Anderson, Nikki T. Lyford, Linda Roby, Laura Rothe, Sarah Squires, Peter V. Adrian, Lyle Benson, Vivian Joyce Crowson, Reid Fade, William B. Lawrence, Ardith Marie Mitchell, Janet Bell Odom, Clara M. Reed, Eric V. Rothe, Allen Wesley Snider, David Turner, Roslyn Eugster, Cindy Griffin, Don Hood, Michael Langdon, Sylvesta Shed. Children joined the retirees, as children have been blessed by the ministry of these ministers, and presented pins to all retirees and Emma Williams offered a blessing. The Conference expressed their gratitude and sang "God Will Take Care of You," led by Johnson.

Morrison called on Matt Tuggle and Blair Thompson-White and affirmed their hard work and creativity regarding the Residency program. He then invited Cammy Gaston to join them and explained that they would be transitioning from Tuggle and Thompson-White to Gaston as she assumes directing conference Center for Leadership Development. Morrison called attention to the conference workbook for a list of dates regarding candidacy process. He thanked the board for their discernment of candidates hoping to live out their call. He then moved the approval of the BOM report. It was approved.

### Retiree Video #2

**Allen Snider** has experienced seeing lay folks who work doing great things and that has inspired him. There have been incredible moments in worship, feeling God's presence. Being invited to be a part of people's lives in baptism as well as the last moments of their lives has been a privilege. Working with youth and children and those who, even in their own limitations, realized such joy from serving others, has been a great experience.

His advice to ordinands was to be faithful to God and to self. Snider plans to continue serving the church he serves which will meet on alternate Sundays and visit the churches of friends on other Sundays.

**Clara Reed** finds it easy to be grateful. She is grateful for the opportunities to serve, beginning with All-Nations UMC, a church diverse by design and Christian by faith, intended to be a place that looked like heaven. She appreciated the opportunity to serve as District Superintendent and to serve as adjunct professor at Perkins School of Theology teaching preaching. Then there was the St. Luke experience. At St. Luke "Community", leadership on Sunday morning was "off the chain." Everyone was on point, and it was a joy to be a part of worship.

Clara's advice to ordinands was to pursue their calling, stay connected, and be in communication with the leadership of the North Texas Conference. Reed initially intends to do a little bit of nothing and to reconnect with her husband of 46 years. She intends to travel, write, mentor interns, and be available to serve the conference. She will spend time with her 13-year-old granddaughter, which includes getting ice cream.

**Don Hood** is grateful for the opportunity to be a minister. His first career was law, even though he had felt a call to the ministry earlier. He was raised in the Methodist church but did not respond to the first call. When the call came again, he could not refuse. He is deeply thankful for being able to grow.

His advice to ordinands is to learn to take care of yourself and set boundaries. If you do not take care of yourself, no one will, and if you do not take of yourself, you will not be able to care for others. Hood has no plans for retirement as he will continue at FUMC, Richardson as an associate in the caring ministry.

### **Keynote Speaker: Rev. Adam Hamilton**

Bishop McKee introduced Adam Hamilton, founding pastor of Church of the Resurrection in Leawood, Kansas, the largest United Methodist Church in America with over 20,000 members. Bishop McKee lifted up Hamilton's decision to be as involved in United Methodist Church as he has always been through teaching and involvement in annual conferences.

Hamilton graduated from Perkins in 1988 and was assigned to start a church for thinking people whether unchurched or non-religious in 1990. There were four charter members – Hamilton, his wife, and their two small daughters. The only available place at the time was a funeral home, so the name Church of the Resurrection was a logical choice.

Hamilton said that there is an increasing acceptance of spirituality without church. Churches of all denominations are in decline. United Methodists have been in decline for 55 years, declining last year by about 70,000 in worship. We are not losing people to other churches but to the eternal kingdom and we are not replacing them.

Hamilton invited the conference to look at three areas of leadership revival. He began by showing a video of a two point charge in Calhoun, Missouri where attendance was 7 and 30. Eight years ago, the current preacher had been asked to fill in until Christmas. She accepted and is still there with worship services now at 45 and 85. Whereas existing members had no hope, they now had a preacher who preached from the heart and encouraged them to step out in faith.

Hamilton noted two kinds of leaders: lamenters and radiators of possibility, each working with the same information. He then gave a personal example through a video clip of his making an obvious mistake in a baptism and being able to laugh at himself. The advice to pastors was not to take themselves too seriously and not to be the heroes of their stories, rather to strive for humility.

The congregation of any church should be reminded at least once every 28 days of why they exist. Pastors are responsible for preparing for the future by leading change. Referring to Harvard Professor Emeritus John Kotter's *Leading Change*, Hamilton described the difference between good managers and good leaders. Good managers plan and budget; good leaders establish direction and cast vision. Good managers control and problem solve; good leaders align people and resources to achieve a vision. Good managers create predictability and order; good leaders create chaos and change.

The people who make the greatest impact, said Hamilton, are the ones who do not give up. Jesus spent most of his time with the lost, and that is the model for all leaders. Good leaders have good people skills, a clear mission and vision plan, are willing to change, innovate and improve, practice intentional discipleship with some idea of where you are trying to take people, and practice discernment by “nausea,” always asking which option is better – the safe and easy option or the risky option.



### Retiree Video #3

**Sarah Squires** is grateful for those in leadership in the North Texas Conference who have mentored her and taught her, but she is especially grateful for those people whom she has met beyond the local church. They have challenged her and blessed her as she has been privileged to walk their journey with them and hear stories that are often unheard. She would not have fully understood God and Christ's being in the world had she not had the opportunity to work with those people.

Squires' advice to the ordinands was not to get too comfortable behind a desk and don't get too comfortable behind a pulpit. Go into places that are challenging and will push you to think in new ways. Her future is one that she and her husband have dreamed about since they were teenagers. They are building a home in and then moving to Colorado and planning to spend time with their new grandchild.

**Bill Lawrence** is most grateful to his wife Naomi. They married in 1969, the same year he was ordained. He is grateful to many others and has often said that he has never walked through a door in his life unless somebody else has opened it or kicked it in on his behalf. He has had tremendous mentors, teachers, and colleagues in ministries and he has had the privilege of getting to do a lot of ministry. Lawrence and Naomi have moved 11 times in 49 years of marriage.

Lawrence's advice to the ordinands is to listen to the church, not just the congregation where you serve, or a group of friends, but the whole longitudinal history of the church. Listening to the church includes listening to Augustine, Aquinas, Wesley, Luther, and Teresa of Avila, and everyone in the history of the church who has unfolded what it is we experience. Listen also to the church that is not yet present with us. Listen to the church that is about to become. Listen to the church who is yet to be born, the people who are going to hear the gospel 150 years from now. What should we be doing to prepare the church and the world for the ministries of those people?

Lawrence has had to set aside some research and writing interests that he has had. He has now finished one of the four books that he hopes to write. He and his wife hope to spend time traveling and a great deal of time watching their grandchildren grow.

### Recognition of Attendance

Conference Secretary Judith Reedy recognized that this is retired elder John Taylor's 60<sup>th</sup> year to attend Annual Conference. Ricky Harrison closed the morning session with prayer.

## MONDAY AFTERNOON BUSINESS SESSION

DeAndre Johnson led gathering worship as the afternoon session opened. Danny Soliz offered the prayer.

The Center for Missional Outreach introduced Jason Lewis as the new Executive Director for One + One Dallas which includes the Center for Missional Outreach and First UMC Dallas and Dallas ISD.

Bishop McKee introduced Chelsea White, the executive director of Dallas Bethlehem Center (DBC). White touted DBC's history of 72 years and said that recently the decision was whether they should call it quits or pour energy into growing DBC. The decision was the latter, and White was hired. White recalled coming to DBC three months ago for the first time, thinking that she had seen everything and prepared not to be alarmed by anything she saw or heard. On a Thursday afternoon she heard what she learned were gunshots right in the neighborhood and made the observation that people sitting on porches, walking the streets, and playing outside did not even seem to notice. She

realized then the work ahead for DBC. White introduced a video highlighting DBC and its partnership with South Dallas/Fair Park children and families, creating a brighter future through education, food security, empowerment, and neighborhood development.

### **Legislative Action - Amendment One**

Bishop McKee introduced Clayton Oliphint and Tim Crouch, delegates to General Conference, to explain why the body was voting again on Constitutional Amendment One. Crouch explained that when the annual conferences voted last year on five amendments, three of them passed. One of the two which did not pass failed by only 36 votes and there was an error in the text of the amendment. Therefore, all annual conferences are voting on Amendment One again, with the correct wording as it was passed at General Conference 2016.

When ballots had been distributed by tellers to all voting members, Jenna Morrison spoke in favor of Amendment One. As she spoke women throughout the conference were joined by several men for the duration of her reading of support for Amendment One. Morrison received a round of applause. Reedy read the amendment again, and the voting began. Bishop McKee explained after voting how the ballots are accumulated and that only after all annual conferences have voted will the vote tallies be released. Bishop McKee related the significant concern from women and men about the amendment's failure the first round.

Bishop McKee then introduced a video featuring another new space for new faces in the NT Conference – Webb's Chapel begun in 1845, partnering with Immanuel Korean, bringing new life to those at Webb Chapel as well as those in Immanuel Korean.

### **Keynote Address #2: Rev. Adam Hamilton**

Adam Hamilton's second keynote focused on unleashing the power of the laity. He asked how many people knew that the work of the pastor is to prepare God's people for ministry. He recalled how he once thought he had to be the pastor for everyone at every time. Even when Church of the Resurrection was growing and pastors were being hired, one pastor can really only care for about 50 people. Then came Stephen Ministry. It helped but it was reactive and men would not ask for Stephen Ministers. One of the most important ministries at Church of the Resurrection involves congregational care ministers. They involved volunteer congregational care ministers and each had business cards. Hamilton then showed a video of Jennifer and asked if she or Hamilton would be the best to visit someone with cancer at the hospital. She had survived stage three colon cancer and made a better care giver in the hospital for someone with cancer. Hamilton found that most people who serve as congregational care ministers have been members of the church for at least three years, go through training, and now comprise a group of 200 ministers who are trained.

Hamilton then focused on effective worship and preaching. He referred back to Margie Briggs, the preacher assigned a two point charge with a total of 21 worshippers that had now grown to a total of 130 worshippers. Even though Briggs had not had all the preaching courses and worship courses that many have, both churches said they loved her preaching. She was enthusiastic and she expected them to have the experience of the living God, the living Christ, and the Holy Spirit in worship. He said that the preacher needs to have some idea where they are taking people. What is the mission? How do we help the congregation get there? We begin by greeting them with enthusiasm and energy. We expect them to have the experience of the living God, the living Christ, and the Holy Spirit in worship. We have a call to action, stories that connect, and cards that entice them to come. We can start with biblical/lectionary preaching and go to the human condition or we can start with the human condition, then exegete back from that. Jesus only began with scripture once, on his first sermon.

We need to be aware of those hymns, phrases, practices that are unknown to others. Explain in a passionate way the background of a hymn before it is sung. Teach them something they did not know before so that they will have a

new heart and change their ideals.

Five types of sermons are preached at Resurrection: fishing expeditions, the kind of sermons that would cause people to come back; discipleship sermons that teach scripture, spirituality; pastoral care sermons addressing where people are struggling; equipping God's people for action; and sermons that address issues in the church such as stewardship. These five types of sermons overlap with each other. At least once in a while, there needs to be a sermon series on why – why do the innocent suffer, why do our prayers go unanswered, why can't I see God's will for my life, and why God's love ultimately prevails.

### **Award Presentations**

Jane Wood from the Foundation for Evangelism came to the North Texas Conference to present the Distinguished Evangelist Award. Wood's organization exists for one purpose – to be a catalyst to equip disciples to share the Good News of Jesus Christ. They work on a global level to prepare disciples to DISCIPLE. This year the foundation will provide grants in U.S., Germany, Russia, and Zimbabwe. Here in Texas, they partnered with Perkins to sponsor an evangelism specialist at this year's Lay Academy.

Traditionally, the Harry Denman Evangelism Award is the highpoint of the Foundation's year when they announce the Distinguished Evangelist of The United Methodist Church. Markers include someone who is: an innovator; a practitioner of evangelism in the Methodist context in a United Methodist setting; known for the tangible ways in which their ministry transformed lives of those they lead, mentor, and shepherd; nurtures, mentors and develops "Timothy" leaders; and states clearly "Why Jesus" in their ministry.

Last November, Bishop McKee, Mary Brooke Casad, Vic Casad, and Wood visited Plymouth Park UMC in Irving to present the Distinguished Evangelist award to Kay Schecht. Schecht had responded to the pain God put in her heart following the killing of seven children in the neighborhood around her church in Irving with prayer and with action. Schecht went to her local church because she had taken seriously the vision of her pastors, the LaBarrs, that the face of the congregation should look the same as the face of the community that surrounded it. When she talked about her call, her church answered YES. Kay listened. She sat down with children and listened. Schecht said the children knew what they needed.

When Wood attended Plymouth Park, Schecht sat off to her left surrounded by loving, shining faces, each a story and each a life transformed by her quiet, faithful ministry. At the end of the service, a family of three generations, all touched by Schecht, was welcomed into the Body of Christ known as Plymouth Rock UMC. That is a distinguished evangelist. That is what the church can be. Bishop McKee noted that Schecht is a lay member and that others should go and do likewise.

Marti Soper presented the Harry Denman award for clergy. This year the clergy recipient is Marie Mitchell who has served as the lead pastor of The Woods UMC for the last four years. She encourages, empowers and leads her way into community ministry. Her leadership and message have effectively reached her mission field, producing 84 professions of faith in her four years and becoming more ethnically diverse. This is significant for a congregation that worships around 200 weekly. One member said that Pastor Mary reminds them that they are servants of God and living in the spirit of God is the most important aspect of the church.

Jeff Bouis presented the Harry Denman award for laity to Vicki Busby of Grace United Methodist Church, Sherman for a multitude of reasons, including her extensive anti-racism work and leading workshops in that, her work in United Methodist Women advocating for public education, her work with UMCOR leading emergency response teams including Hurricane Harvey, and her work with missions teams to Guatemala and twice to Africa. She is president of her local UMW, works with her local church's missions board, its fellowship teams, and adult ministries teams.

Marti Soper presented the Harry Denman award for youth to Anna Shipley from First UMC, Rowlett. Shipley is a graduating senior and headed to the University of Texas at Austin. She is an active member at Rowlett, in youth and working with children; she is an active mentor and Bridgeport counselor.

The One Matters Discipleship Award was presented by Ron Henderson for churches that have gone from zero professions of faith and baptisms to discipleship work, baptisms and professions of faith. The award was presented to Jacob Fields, Blue Mound UMC. Blue Mound moved from zero professions of faith to six professions of faith in 2017. What is significant is this is the first time they have had professions of faith in two years. Their worship has increased 11%. The members of the church have embraced Jacob and his family, inviting their children and grandchildren to church and Christ-centered worship. In addition to the award, the church receives \$1,000.

Andy Lewis presented the Bishop William B. Oden Ecumenical award for the person or church that has opened the doors to communities of faith in other denominations and leads to dialogues and pathways to peace. This year's award was presented to Todd Harris, pastor of First UMC, Allen. In the fall of 2017, Harris cast a vision for a worship series called "Building Bridges" which focused on fostering relations with people of other religions, sexual orientations, and gender identities. We live in a global community, he said, and asked the question, "How can the Christian community serve to understand other practices and in turn be understood for our practices and beliefs? Building bridges can be hard work, but perfect love casts out fear." This series went beyond a Sunday morning worship experience as FUMC Allen established a relationship and welcomed into their worship people of different faiths.

Edgar Avitia presented the In Mission Together/Mission Initiative Award to the North Texas Conference for their support of the Puerto Rican people. Through the Advance, UMCOR received more than 40 million dollars for disaster response, 20 million going to Puerto Rico.

Ben David Hensley and Francis Long, North Texas Annual Conference's and South Central Jurisdiction's Archivist, representing the Commission on Archives and History, presented the Kate Warnick Historical award to Casa Linda UMC for the preservation of history in the small church category in the North Texas Conference. Shirley Boyd was invited to receive the award for Casa Linda for the first completely bi-lingual history received in its history, the story of 66 years of faithful service.

Nakhoon Cho closed the afternoon business session with prayer.

### **Toolbox Sessions**

Following the afternoon break, conference members were invited to choose one of the four toolbox sessions offered for the afternoon. Adam Hamilton focused on "Unleashing the Laity," spotlighting the way laity have started ministries in the church. Leanne Hadley described how to create sacred circles for all ages. Dave Farish and other members of the board of laity gave guidance on giving leadership. A panel of six clergy and church staff, all from new places for new faces, shared stories and answered questions about how to create new spaces for new faces. The panel included Debbie Lyons, Steve Cook, Mark Hutchison, Cheryl Bishop, Christopher O'Riley, Lynda Mayberry, and Sul Chol Kwon, each with a unique experience of having created a new space for new faces.

## **MONDAY EVENING**

### **Service of Ordination First United Methodist Church, Richardson**

Reverend Clayton Oliphint welcomed the conference to First United Methodist Church, Richardson, for the service of ordination, recognition of orders and commissioning. Music was provided by Highland Park UMC, directed by

Alan Raines. Twenty servants of God were presented, on behalf of the Board of Ordained Ministry in this Annual Conference, for commissioning and ordination.

Those persons commissioned as provisional members were: Jacob Wesley Fields, Jeffrey Alan Pehl, Bryant Xavier Phelps, Silvia Shih-Han Wang, Jennifer Diane Chickering, David Taylor Finley, Sarah Ann Marsalis-Luginbill, and Kimberly Rankin Meyers.

The persons ordained as elders were: Raegan Jane Gilliland, Scott Parker Gilliland, Patrick Evan Littlefield, Chad Edward McSwain, Justin August Miller, Katherine Harrison Newsome, Samantha Ann Parson, Ramsey Burke Patton, Julie Kris Richter, Omar Harnid Al-Rikabi, and Adam Christopher Young.

Ordained as deacon was: Camille Elaine May.

Bishop McKee's sermon for the evening was based upon John 21: 4-14. Bishop McKee said that he remembers kneeling in 1979 in Waco, Texas, being newly ordained. He said that every time there is an ordination it is a reminder of the privilege the ordained have to sit by the bedside of someone who is sick, or dying, to be present for a birth or marriage, and think, "It must be from God."

Bishop McKee reminded the ordinands and the congregation that it takes a church to form a minister. He recalled A.J., who, when he had had all he could manage, would say, "Mike, I'm going fishing." Bishop McKee then posed, "What was it like for Peter?" He asked if folks had ever had those moments when everything in their life was going to unravel. For Peter, three years of his life was down the drain. He and his fishing friends went home and went fishing – and caught nothing. Finally, someone comes along and says, "Why don't you cast that net on the other side?" When they pulled up 153 in the net, they said, "It is the Lord." They pinched themselves and then they began to share.

When Jesus asks the question, "Do you love me?" the demand gets higher and higher. Bishop McKee assured the ordinands that that would happen to them and there would be times they would be wondering. Then will come the question, "Why don't you do something different?" Ministry is harder today, Bishop McKee assured the ordinands, and this moment begins a part of their life journey that is a privilege.

As Bishop Michael McKee placed his hand on the each person, he called upon Christ Jesus to "pour out your Holy Spirit" upon these messengers of God's Word as we send them out to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ.

Emma Piyakhun, Conference Council Youth Ministries, and Joseph Bradley, Conference Staff, Camping and Retreat Ministries called for the evening offering which was dedicated to support Bridgeport Camp. Chrystie Hicks, Mezzo Soprano, Highland Park UMC Chancel Choir, punctuated the message during the offering with Moses Hogan's arrangement of *Certn'ly Lawd*.

A reception honoring the Commissioned and Ordained followed immediately after the service in the Bartula Family Life Center.

## **TUESDAY MORNING BUSINESS SESSION**

**June 5, 2018**

DeAndre Johnson led the conference in song and Dallen Morgan opened with prayer.

Bishop McKee introduced Matt Jacob and Kim Kaufman and the conference's new website. Jacob, a storyteller himself, gave thanks to all who help to tell the story in North Texas.

A New Spaces, New Faces video featured Powderly UMC and pastor Mark Hutchison joining with four other churches, each of the five supplying meals, donations, and guest speakers for those in the Celebrate Recovery program. Members of Celebrate Recovery witnessed to the transformation in their lives from opioids and from living lives of desperation. One woman testified that she had come from a Celebrate Recovery program in another town and had relapsed. She said Hutchison approached her and asked what the church could do for her. She told him about the Celebrate Recovery program that had been so positive in her life. That was the beginning of a new space in Powderly for new faces. Bishop McKee acknowledged the transformative work of the new space and the conference applauded Hutchison.

Bishop McKee then introduced ordinand videos by affirming the Monday night ordination service, the music of Highland Park choirs, and the work of the Board of Ordained Ministry.

### Videos of Newly Ordained

**Julie Richter** said that most of her time at FUMC Richardson has been spent creating New Spaces for New Faces. The new worship facility opened in 2016. The words that she continues to come back to are “trust and truth.” The problem with those words is that we often don’t trust those who do not look like us. Yet, the truth of the gospel is that when we believe in the body of Christ then we don’t see things the same way; and for the body of Christ to be effective and functional, we can’t all be alike. She continues to be called to create new spaces for new faces. She knows that God is not calling her to have all the answers but to be present and hopeful. She is called to help people discover the vision God has for them.

**Chad McSwain** did not grow up in church. In high school he went to church on the invitation of friends and remembers all the questions he had. He thinks about that with those new faces that are coming: those who are coming because they decided when they got to be an adult, they would try church but don’t know what to expect; and about the young wife who calls and says that her husband is an atheist but is willing to come to church. He thinks about the questions they might have.

**Ramsey Patton** has seen that new faces are not only being brought back into the church but are being empowered to serve. Three years ago she felt inspired to start a weekly service with those with special needs. The Feast is a weekly service for families with special needs and is based on the heavenly feast to which all are invited and included. Those with special needs read scripture, sing, and serve communion. She hopes that God will continue to use her despite herself.

**Justin Miller** believes God is using him in two ways to provide new spaces for new faces. He has been taught to be patient, and he hopes that if we are really intentional about providing new spaces, that we will be patient enough to do it right. Secondly, he has learned that we should never accept failure but always keep trying. He is relying on God to help him be a great leader wherever he serves, in every church.

**Adam Young** has always been an includer. At any gathering, he is always looking to the edges to see who is not included. Young believes God awakens in us who we have always been and begins to work through that. We are co-creators with God. When God begins to work in us, God is creating new life in the places we go and in unexpected ways. We become a new creation at that intersection of who we are and the Holy Spirit. In Methodist theology, we believe that God is at work in all of us.

**Raegan Gilliland** has always been drawn to people in a different age group from herself. As a teen, she valued older people and younger people, always looking around the table for diversity. For a time, she became too content with same, but she has really pushed herself in the last two years to look outside her world into people with whom she may not always previously have been comfortable. She has discovered that people do not want flashy leaders. Pastors are set apart but not to separate themselves. There is something important about being authentic.

### Keynote Address #3: Rev. Adam Hamilton

In his final keynote address, Adam Hamilton addressed mission and evangelism. He regards marriages and funerals as awesome opportunities to minister to people as mission. It is part of the pastor's job to help people believe that there is something special about our church. Congregations want to know that the pastor is proud of them.

In Matthew 9, Jesus actually went to where all the people were. In Luke, the gospel of nobodies, chapter 7, Jesus asks, "Do you see this woman?" She is a child of God. Part of the role of the pastor is to tell people who they are as a church. Hamilton went through the steps of preparing for visitors, beginning with giving up the better parking spaces, good signage, voicemails that are helpful when they call, greeters outside the doors, ushers who hand out attendance books so that visitors take the time to sign in, a brochure inside the attendance book, a newsletter and coffee mug to first-time visitors. People become Christians because they are cared for and loved. "I would love to hear your story."

Building Better Moms is a model for how Church of the Resurrection is reaching young moms. Make specific requests from the pulpit such as "Read the gospel of Luke. When you finish, find your favorite verse." Have a coffee with pastors. Any church only has a future to the extent we are helping young people.

Hamilton suggested a sermon series on "Why?" Why do people need Jesus Christ? Why do people need the church? Why do people need this particular church? He said that evangelism and social justice are two halves of one gospel and we are to "mind the gap." Hamilton concluded with four keys for a future with hope: compelling worship, preaching and community; calling and equipping outstanding new leaders; starting new faith communities; and incarnational and compelling mission ministry. He emphasized the power of the Wesleyan approach to the gospel.

### Center for Leadership Development

Marti Soper, Director of Center for Leadership Development, presented a report on handling sexual harassment. She referenced the 2016 *Book of Discipline* ¶605.9 requiring each annual conference to adopt a comprehensive policy for handling sexual and gender harassment of clergy when laypersons are the perpetrators. Soper called attention to the AC workbook on pp. 48-54, offering a clear process for both clergy sexual misconduct against a layperson and misconduct involving a lay person against a clergy person. The guidelines come directly from the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women (COSROW). They utilize the expertise of the CART crisis teams that have particular training to care for both victim and perpetrator and families as well as congregation.

Soper noted that the Response Guide encourages local churches to adopt their own guidelines around the topic of sexual and gender harassment as well, referencing COSROW's website for more information on creating a policy tailored to context. In addition, Soper expressed hope that the AC would continue to refine the policy under the guidance of COSROW and reminded the conference of the upcoming sexual ethics required training.

Ben David Hensley asked if the conference was voting to adopt a report as policy. Soper replied that this policy, as well as all other policies related to the annual conference, will be included in a new policy section of the journal and referenced in the standing rules beginning with the 2019 journal. This will make it easier for the laity and clergy to locate the policies.

### Clergy Spouse Report

Sarah Stobaugh, president of the Clergy Spouses' organization, joined by other clergy spouses on stage, extended an open invitation to all spouses of clergy, male or female, young or mature or anyone in-between. Clergy spouses gather several times throughout the year for fun and fellowship as well as an annual retreat, which, said Stobaugh, is always awesome. Stobaugh said that all of the spouses are proud to be clergy spouses, but that it is not without

its challenges. She followed by presenting a short, humorous video featuring several clergy spouses singing, “It’s a Hard-Knock Life,” lyrics changed to reflect those challenges.

### **Young Persons’ Address**

Morgan Randall offered a prayer and Emma Piyakhun, incoming chair of the North Texas Conference Council on Youth Ministries, reported on the past year’s ministries and activities. The cornerstone project was the annual Midwinter retreats at Bridgeport Camp and Conference, attended by 434 youth over two weekends. They explored what it meant to live life differently as a Christian. Together they raised \$3000 for the Youth Service Fund.

Piyakhun read the address of CCYM’s outgoing chair, Anna Shipley, because Shipley was taking exams to graduate high school in two days. Shipley reflected on the impact of youth worship at midwinters, quoting from surveys received after the midwinter regarding youth led testimonies. She sees youth engaging in intentional and hard discussion, trying to find common ground and loving each other despite differences in beliefs. She said that many youth professed their experiences in worship and at midwinters as life changing.

Shipley is grateful to be in a conference that has so many opportunities for youth to be open to incredible mentors, retreats, camps, events and more that provide chances to experience the spirit and grow in relationship with God. She said that so many youth are first and foremost interested in sharing Christ’s love. Missions and service is just one of the ways young people are doing this. Youth groups across the conference are engaging in meaningful fellowship with those in need, participating in mission projects, trips, and intentional prayer for those serving their communities and those in need. She expressed gratitude for being able to be a part of the force that is the young people of the North Texas Conference.

### **Laity Address**

Jeff Bouis’ talk was entitled “Unleashing the Power of the Laity.” Bouis said that as the cabinet began thinking about priorities, vision, and strategic direction for the conference, the model of New Faces New Spaces developed, and what became increasingly evident was the overwhelming importance of the laity. He recalled a figure he had shared the previous year reminding the laity that the membership of the North Texas Conference is 99% laity.

Bouis encouraged the laity to take a message back to those in the pews that they are also in ministry and that ministry happens in daily life, in your job, with your family, your neighbors, and with people you don’t like. Everyone is in ministry, said Bouis, and the New Faces New Spaces initiative recognizes the crucial importance of the laity in new ministries. Bouis showed a slide of Jackie Trenholm at FUMC, Leonard. Trenholm is a Certified Lay Servant, teaches courses for Lay Servant Ministries, and serves Lannius UMC each month as a lay speaker. At Leonard, she leads Bible studies, serves as a liturgist, is on the admin council, SPRC, finance, VBS and the church’s food pantry.

Bouis then showed a slide of Vickie Reed at College Mound UMC. After years of being the youth leader and VBS director, Reed is now president of the local UMW, director of their Emergency Response Team, drives the bus for groups, and makes blankets for newborn baptisms as well as cooks meals for the sick.

Bouis said that it is the work of the local church that connects us to others, to Christ, and can transform the world. We cannot underestimate this work. It is the local church that provides the structure to support new things and when a church provides new options, they do their own members a service as well. There is room for new, vibrant ways of doing ministry. In addition to the inherited church, there is a need for pioneers and entrepreneurs with the gifts and graces to gather people in new ways.

Bouis shared that similar work is being done around the country as well as right here in the North Texas Conference. From growing gardens to juvenile detention, from coffee shops to helping the homeless, the NT Conference already has an undercurrent of activity just waiting to have the permission and opportunity to be unleashed. He asked the



conference to imagine what it would be like to no longer be leashed to the usual way of doing things. The conference is providing support for those who want to start something new. Remember, counseled Bouis, that new approaches do not need to happen in the church building or be large. They just need to gather new faces to make new disciples. He concluded with asking that the laity put their focus on unleashing the power of the laity.

### Report of Center Directors

Andy Lewis, director of Center for Missional Outreach; Marti Soper, director of Center for Leadership Development; and Owen Ross, director of Center for Church Development, teamed together to bring a report of all three centers. They opened with a reminder that The United Methodist Church has experienced 50 years of decline in membership as well as prestige and, that for many, the church is out of touch and irrelevant. The church must do something new. The good news, said Ross, is that we worship a God who specializes in doing all things new.

The focus of the combined report was New Faces in New Spaces. The chief strategy of the centers is to help all churches be successful at connecting with the mission field and making disciples of Jesus Christ. They pointed out that many churches are already gathering new faces in new spaces: St. Luke “Community” UMC asked themselves, “Where do young Black men already gather?” The answer was the barbershop and lay member Will Collins created a new space for young black men to study the Bible in a barber shop.

The STAR ministry at First UMC, Gainesville, made an intentional shift of their Second Time Around space and began to look at their neighbors in a way that is relational not merely transactional. Now, STAR’s newest, daily volunteer is a gentleman who first came in need of clothing and, in addition to volunteering every day, worships regularly at First UMC Gainesville.

Winnsboro UMC pastor Debbie Lyons made an effort to meet all the Main street entrepreneurs in Winnsboro. One of the shop owners who had not attended a traditional church in years offered the loft above her shop for a Bible study, and The Gathering is now a weekly event that allows shop owners to get to their shops by their 10 a.m. opening.

The vision is for every local church, large and small, urban and rural, to be dreaming about new spaces and working toward creating them. The vision is for laity to be creating these new spaces and to recapture the Methodist zeal for reaching the mission field in innovative and creative ways.

A new space gathers new faces, meets regularly, relates to a UMC entity, and forms disciples. The North Texas Conference remains committed to resourcing churches and existing spaces as well.

Liliana Rangel reported that the Healthy Church Initiative is celebrating five years since the first churches entered the initiative in 2013. In these five years, more than 50 churches have participated in HCI. HCI was based on a book called *Renovate or Die*. Ross said that the book is helpful for churches looking to make changes for their mission fields, but HCI is not for everyone. New Spaces, said Ross, does not say, “Renovate or Die.” New Spaces says, “Create!”

New Spaces requires leaving the building and getting to know communities. Emma Williams said that the neighbors may speak an unfamiliar cultural language, based on national origin, political ideology, race, gender or age. Maria Dixon-Hall led a two-day equipping event in the spring on cultural intelligence, the belief that everyone has a primary cultural language that scripts their behavior and communication but that everyone can learn new languages. To do that, said Dixon-Hall, we have to be aware of our own invisible cultural scripts and know that our biases can blind us and prevent us from successfully engaging in cross-cultural relationships and ministry. The NT Conference hopes to deploy this trained team of leaders to support congregational learning where there are cross cultural appointments, or where neighbors or colleagues may speak a different cultural language.

Like cultural intelligence training, said Andrew Fiser, the Zip Code Connection, which began in 2013, is another way the centers are exploring how to gather new faces in new spaces. The Zip Code Connection first had two orienting goals: to focus with neighbors in one rural area and one urban area for the purpose of overcoming systemic oppression and generational poverty and to extrovert the learnings that happen in those two areas to the rest of the conference so that similar efforts can be strengthened. Today, residents of Clarksville/Red River County and South Dallas/Fair Park desire that the places they live become more fully vibrant, thriving communities recognized as a good place to live, work, learn, do business, raise children and practice one's faith.

Fiser explained that they have learned a great deal and are confident that some of their new efforts will make them even better partners with neighbors in these communities and beyond. Joshua Manning described two of the new efforts: convening local advisory teams and adapting the Holy Conversations discernment process; testing a new ministry model in Warren UMC, aimed at encouraging and resourcing Warren as we live into the call to be a ministry hub, the church, at the corner of Malcolm X and MLK in Dallas.

Fiser extended an invitation to all churches to explore the development of similar work in their community. Members of the Center for Missional Outreach (CMO) staff team will be glad to preach, present, facilitate a learning group or just talk about ideas. He then introduced the newest member of the CMO, Jurrita Williams.

Williams is serving as an associate director for the CMO. She stressed the importance of One + One ministry and introduced a video of One + One at FUMC Dallas. Holly Bandel, associate minister for Mission and Advocacy at FUMC Dallas, shared their experience over the past four years with faith community-school partnerships and the difference they can make on the morale of students and teachers and churches. She introduced Jason Lewis, their newly hired Executive Director whose role is to connect communities of faith with Dallas ISD schools and share best practices for faith community-school partnerships with churches all across the North Texas Conference.

Williams responded that she and Lewis would gladly come to churches and preach and present and facilitate learning, and that their hope would be church-school partnerships for every public school in the community, allowing the spirit of Christ to open up new ways to improve schools and get to know new faces. There are a few pioneers out there anticipating this leap.

Soper said that as a conference we are embracing a call to cultivate relationships with new people who have little or no connection with our churches. This calls for pioneering work. Pioneers are entrepreneurial, action-oriented, comfortable with risk, and tend to be idea people.

Williams reported on the opportunities for spiritual growth, community and leadership for children and youth, especially A Time for Children program designed by Leanne Hadley. So far, 30 churches have been part of the three-year cohort model of learning. Joseph Bradley introduced a pilot program for Youth Leadership designed to give young people real opportunities to serve and lead at Bridgeport Summer Camp.

Owen Ross introduced Matt Temple and explained that the center's new name Center for Church Development meant that they are committed to working with all types of churches to develop new ways of doing church. New Spaces are not necessarily designed to "grow up" into traditional worshipping communities. New Spaces are a new way of doing church, yet the conference is not done planting churches. Matt Temple explained that they have organized a design team made up of planters in the conference discerning what support church planters need during each stage. They discerned that planters need a space where they can work through a process of discernment and clarify their vision for planting. They are calling that the Genesis cohort and starting July 1, they will have approximately 20 people at various stages of the planting process entering the cohort. At that time he introduced planters Taylor Smith, Josh Esparza, Ricky Harrison, Kris Melvin, Carlos Ramirez and Idalia Luna. Temple introduced a video on the work being done by coaches in the North Texas Conference.

Advanced Leadership Coach Kelly Carpenter uses techniques that promote transformational leadership such as being present, listening deeply, asking powerful questions, expanding possibilities and action planning. The coach approach process helps leaders – clergy and laity – discern the God-sized things that need to happen, develop a plan to get there, and celebrate with them when they do. In the coming year 20 trained coaches will be deployed to approximately 100 clergy, lay staff and lay leadership across the NT Conference.

S. Dianna Masters thanked Bishop McKee for his dream to strengthen Black Churches in the NT Conference. They will work to make sure their pastors have rich coaching and will partner with Perkins School of Theology and Alyce McKenzie in the center for preaching excellence, because in the Black Church Initiative (BCI), preaching excellence is a must. Masters thanked the BCI design team, chaired by Ouida Lee, and those members standing with her.

Ross said that he has visited over 120 churches in all four districts since starting last July 1. He said that the centers and district superintendents are aligning their work around the strategy of New Faces in New Spaces and preparing to throw their resources behind it. All centers are using coaching and cohorts because ministry is hard. Lewis shared upcoming vision days and conference call times as well as a Pioneer Retreat planned for early 2019. Lewis said that their approach of gathering new faces in new spaces is new but they believe that God is calling the North Texas Conference to do this kind of pioneering work.

Herman Totten offered the prayer before lunch.

## **TUESDAY AFTERNOON BUSINESS SESSION**

Jamie Nelson opened with prayer.

### **Golden Cross and Methodist Hospital**

Robin Daniels and Linda Roby introduced a video about ministry through Methodist Health Systems. Steve Hines and Carol Somers-Clark shared the underlying concepts grounding the Methodist Health Systems and Golden Cross. Golden Cross and Methodist Hospital are just about synonymous with one another. They would not exist without United Methodist support. Golden Cross began in the early 1920's at FUMC Dallas. Hines came along in 2004 after a robust capital campaign that made possible the current building. Very early on, Hines met Carol Somers-Clark and understood her vision for expanding the Golden Cross ministry to include the concept of a medical home for patients.

They discovered Med Assist and found that it works for everything. The three prongs of Med Assist are medical assistance, education about the chronic illness of the resident, and social work assistance which looks at the living situation that detracts from the resident's ability to fully engage in health care.

Golden Cross is intentionally inclusive and addresses body, mind and spirit. Congregations need to know that Golden Cross continues to be relevant and current. They provide more charitable healthcare in Dallas than anyone except Parkland.

### **Ordinand Videos #2**

**Scott Gilliland** feels that God has prepared him to see new spaces for new faces by giving him a heart to see the church and become a place where open and honest dialogue can happen. Disappointment in the church about division or not answering or addressing questions or doubts seems to have infiltrated the church. We have to see ourselves, rather than ministering to them, to walk alongside them and show them the love of Christ. We have to be

ready to minister to people wherever they are. He hopes God leads him to preach Wesleyan theology in a clear and compelling way, and teach the Bible in a clear and compelling way. He hopes that God can lead through his ministry to keep it well, to establish a culture where we can keep it real.

**Samantha Parson** loves how the Bishop is always calling them to meet the people who do not know God and teach them about the God they do not know. She loves to welcome people. New faces are the people she has not yet met but whom God is wooing. They reveal the face of Christ. When people encounter Christ, as a follower of Christ she gets to welcome and receive the Christ that is in that individual. She hopes, like Paul, to be daringly courageous to believe that Christ will work in and through her in spite of herself and that God will accomplish in her more than she can imagine. She hopes that she can, through God, be an impact in others' lives similar to the way others have impacted her life.

**Omar Al-Rikabi** went to the Waffle House and was wondering how he would answer the question of what new spaces for new faces meant. A man approached him and asked him why he was wearing orange Chuck Taylors. Al-Rikabi told him that his nine-year-old daughter wanted orange Chuck Taylors for her birthday and since his birthday was close to hers, she wanted her daddy to have Orange Chuck Taylors. As he talked to the man, the man said that he could tell Al-Rikabi was a man of the good book, and then he proceeded to share things with Al-Rikabi from having been a surfer to having a son who needs a kidney transplant. At that moment Al-Rikabi knew that he did not need to wonder about what creating new spaces for new faces means. All he had to do was get out of the usual places and meet people that he never would have met anywhere else and be ready to listen. He is called to tell an alternate true story, that God is love, and not only to believe John 3:16 but to live out I John 3:16 that says we should love our brothers and sisters in the same way Christ loved us.

**Patrick Littlefield** quoted the Pulitzer prize-winning artist Kendrick Lamar from his album *Fear* with a line that says, "Wondering if I'm living through fear or through rap," leading him to say that God is awakening him to inhabit a place of creative authenticity, not sweeping evil and injustice under the rug but being real with regard to things that are wrong in the world and real about the church being a place for all. In Romans 12, he said, it says "Let love be genuine." He hopes to have an authentic presence in ministry and to create a sense of belonging. Howard Thurman wrote "It is a strange freedom to feel adrift in the world of humans without a sense of anchor in the world." The church can be that anchor in the world, especially as we all grow in the holy loving freedom of Jesus Christ. Mother Teresa said that if we have no peace, it is because we have forgotten we belong to each other.

**Camille May** thinks that God has been preparing her for her whole life to gather new faces for new spaces, particularly in her self-care. Learning to care for oneself so that you can care for others has been a primary means of preparing to meet people where they are. She has worked as a chaplain at Children's Hospital. The work that you do there has been a primary preparation to meet people where they are. She hopes to meet people where they are and to grow in the area of listening, because she thinks that is a way to overcome a lot of the polarity and opposition encountered daily.

**Katie Newsome** says that what has been really formational for her has been getting a chance to be a part of Union Coffee House. She especially resonated with John Wesley's sermon on the omni-presence of God. She said that Wesley asked, "What should we make of this awful consideration that God is present in all things? Should we not labor continuously to acknowledge God's presence?" She thinks that's what meeting new faces in new spaces is acknowledging; that God is present in all things; we are partners with God. She hopes that God will work in her and in her ministry that people will come to know the one who is love intimately, that they will know God is love, experience that in themselves and in her neighbors. She hopes that God will just surprise the heck out of her and do great things far beyond her wildest expectations.

### Report on Hurricane Harvey

Hurricane Harvey, Category 4, slammed into the Texas Gulf Coast on August 25, 2017, resulting in \$125 billion in damage, the second-most costly hurricane to hit the U.S. mainland behind only Hurricane Katrina. In the 17 counties comprising the Rio Texas Conference, over 12,000 households will require outside assistance in order to rebuild. Andy Lewis reported that United Methodists in North Texas had responded with a total of \$362,258 given to the NT Disaster Relief Fund, not including additional gifts given directly to UMCOR. North Texas churches responded with compassion, preparing 3,000 Cleaning Buckets, Hygiene Kits and School Kits. Several Early Response Team trainings have been hosted by churches in all four districts. 140 persons have been trained to join the existing 2,000 already trained ERTs. Several NTC Church ERTs volunteered to provide a caring Christian presence in the aftermath of disaster. Ten NTC churches have led Early Response Teams of 7-25 people on disaster relief trips; they have been the hands and feet of Jesus Christ for the people along the Texas Gulf Coast. Janet Bell Odom asked those present wearing their green disaster response or colored church t-shirts to stand as the conference showed their appreciation.

Churches as well as homes were damaged by Hurricane Harvey. One of the 44 damaged churches was FUMC of Portland, near Corpus Christi. Their church sustained \$1.5 million in damage and, after insurance, they had a gap of \$286,000. Pastor Larry McRorey was able to deliver some good news on Easter Sunday. The North Texas Conference had partnered with Highland Park UMC to fill the funding gap and cover all \$286,000. Later this month, after 10 months, the congregation will move back into their church, debt free.

Lewis introduced McRorey and Lisa Stewart, director of outreach ministry and Vicki McCuiston, disaster recovery resource manager. McRorey thanked the annual conference for their generous gift of resources and volunteers. Lewis said that Bishop McKee and the CMO have cast a vision for the conference to be in long-term partnership with the Rio Texas Conference. Captivated by this vision, they have set a goal of sending a total of 300 mission teams to Rio Texas in 2018, 2019, and 2020. 300 churches, 300 teams. The CMO has sought to equip churches to live into that vision with guidance, information, and grants for planning and leading their own recovery trips. The CMO is committed to sponsoring multiple four-day recovery trips to Rio Texas each year in the coming years. Any adult from any of the NT churches is welcome to sign up with the scheduled trip on September 17-21, 2018 for the third trip.

#### Keynote Address #4: Rev. Dr. Leanne Hadley – “A Time for Children”

Bishop McKee introduced Leanne Hadley, the keynote speaker for the afternoon, and commended her and the 30 churches who have already participated in Hadley’s “A Time for Children” training. Hadley brought greetings from the Kentucky conference, thanked the bishop for believing in her vision, and began her address with scripture: “Let the little children come unto me.”

She showed what blessing a child looks like. Either put their little face in your hands and say, “You are a blessing,” or touch them, take them in arms, and bless them. Hadley said that the problem is that we have never lived out these words of Jesus. Early on in the church we adopted Greco-Roman culture. Children are an empty slate. They have no brain until they are 12. Plato was repulsed by children. The Jewish culture of Jesus looked upon children as a blessing. God owns the children. Hadley likes Paul, but she does not like what Paul said about children. He was trained in Greco-Roman culture. Once you thought like a child, says scripture, placing a very low regard for children. Then along came Augustine with the concept of original sin, so children are sinful.

We set out to teach children, hoping to push out original sin and pour God into them, so we push them out of the sanctuary. Hadley’s goal is to break down the stereotypes of children, so she shared her theory. Seminaries have eliminated their education classes. We abandon children when they need the church the most. She commended Bishop McKee in calling the North Texas conference to be a flagship conference. 90 congregations joined together, 30 in the NTC, providing a pastoral care model for children.

Hadley developed listening stones to get children to express themselves in U-shaped circles of spiritual transformation with prayer and reflection. All children start in the upper third of the U and move into the heart of God with prayer practices or Bible or holy listening – training, sharing, reflecting, adjusting. Children became transformed and went out spontaneously and blessed others – parents, grandparents, neighbors, doctors and entire nursing staffs. We need to bring in people, but we need to know that they have been spiritually transformed. Invite others to come. When children take sacred circle time home and practice sacred circle time, their parents say, “I want that (church).” Children are natural evangelists. Can we use this model for all generations? Of course.

Hadley shared what that would look like but she was present to remind all what Jesus said, that it is hard for adults to drop their masks and that they are so overworked. Children are the first adaptors. We have to give up our old models. We have entered a difficult time in the life of the church. The next year will be filled with controversy and it is easy to become hopeless but children will not become hopeless. They will remind us.

Is part of the reason we are stumbling because we have not taken children seriously? Let’s turn them around. Hadley asked those involved with The Time for Children to stand. She then announced the upcoming September training. Wesley said that we must meet with the children every week. Hadley implored leaders to spend one hour per week with children and bless them. As Mary Poppins said, “The children have come to save us!”

### **Bishop’s Report on “A Way Forward”**

Bishop McKee began his report on “A Way Forward” with the statement that people with opposite views can all be faithful Christians. He described the Council of Bishops (COB) meeting in Chicago as one of the most inspiring. Even though there are differences, all are committed to The United Methodist Church and its mission. After conversations, prayer and times of discernment at COB meetings over several months, the Council recommended the One Church Plan. The other two plans are being sent as a part of the historical narrative. The COB’s recommendation clearly represents the best path forward for the Church.

The rationale for this recommendation is that the values of our global church are reflected in all three plans and that the Council will make all the information considered by the Commission and the COB available to General Conference delegates, acknowledging that there is support for each of the three plans within the Council but that the majority of the Council recommends the One Church Plan as the best way forward for The United Methodist Church.

Full details of the plans and accompanying legislative proposals will be released as soon as final editing of the entire report is completed and translated into the official languages of the General Conference. It is estimated to be no later than July 8; therefore, the COB has agreed not to discuss details or legislative proposals of the plans until they are available to everyone.

Bishop McKee specifically asked the conference to stay focused on our mission and to continue to invite people to join in the Praying the Way Forward initiative.

### **Center for Connectional Resources**

Jodi Smith came forward to present the report from the Center for Connectional Resources. She thanked all those who have worked on CF&A and Board of Pensions and Insurance and introduced Todd Harris, chair of Pensions and Insurance.

### **Board of Pensions and Insurance**

Todd Harris said that the Board of Pensions had a busy but good year. The economic projection team met to review

the long range funding plans for all retiree benefits and determined that we remain on course to meet all obligations and that our current pension and retiree medical plans are fully funded, barring any dramatic changes in the market.

The health insurance rates for next year have come in and will actually decrease by 3/10 of 1 percent, or \$3 per month. Clergy opting to stay in the most expensive plan will see a 1.7% increase in their premium. The default plan set by the Board of Pensions is the second most generous plan in a selection of 6 plans. The difference between the amount that the church pays for the most expensive plan and the amount that will need to come from the pastor's salary is \$64 per month. Of the six plans offered, 5 have decreases in premiums, and only the most expensive will have an increase over last year's rate.

The defined benefit portion of the clergy's pension will remain flat in 2019, actually decreasing by \$4 per year. The defined contribution portion of the pension remains at 3% of plan compensation, so if a pastor receives a raise, that portion of the pension payment will increase.

The Comprehensive Benefit Funding Plan has been approved by Wespeth and our Board of Pensions [LA 7]. Standing rules require that some legislative items be brought to the floor for a vote. Legislative Item #4 [LA 4] presents the 2019 budget as approved by the BOPHB and CF&A. The total change is 1.5% decrease, primarily due to a change in the life and disability insurance programs. The new program is not only less expensive, it also allows the participant to purchase additional life insurance as well as disability insurance should they choose. Legislative Item #4 [LA 4] was approved.

Harris then presented Legislative Item #6 [LA 6] recommending the Pre-82 service rate be set at \$780, a percentage increase known as the "Cost-of-Living Adjustment" as published by the Social Security Administration. It is the established rate for the annual increase at the rate of 2% for this year for pre-1982 service years. The resolution carried.

### **Trustees**

Jodi Smith spoke to Legislative Item #9 [LA 9] which lays out the process for a local church to pursue a historical marker for its property or congregation. The Board of Trustees met with the Commission on Archives and History to develop a policy for our local churches seeking an historical designation for their church in accordance with the BOD 2512.7. Essentially, if the church wants to obtain the UM Historical designation, the conference policy is that the church must be in consultation with the conference trustees to determine if there are potential restrictions the church may face down the road with a particular marker. Some churches have encountered unmanageable restrictions as a result of certain historical markers. Since laws change and restrictions related to markers can change, the policy establishes that any church seeking a governmentally designated historical marker obtain the approval and consent of the conference trustees as well as the bishop and the cabinet.

Fred Durham, retired clergy, objected to including Recorded Texas Historical Landmark as one of the entities which place restrictions on the modification of the physical structure. Smith said that line would be struck. Bishop McKee called for a vote and the legislation passed.

### **Committee on Finance and Administration (CF&A)**

Jodi Smith explained that the conference needed to vote on Legislative Item #3 [LA 3] before voting on the budget. Smith explained that Legislative Item #3 [LA 3] is regarding equitable compensation, setting aside money for churches who are on that path and have pastors who need subsidies. Smith has been working with the CLD on this amount. The amount needed in the budget for 2019 is \$55,832, and the minimum amount necessary for elders is \$48,868 calculated by the same amount of increase as district superintendents receive. The legislation passed.

Smith then introduced Larry Womack, chair of the Committee on Finance and Administration, who presented Legislative Item #8 [LA 8]. Item 1 recommended that we continue with Ratliff and Associates as the auditor for the Annual Conference. This will be our 6<sup>th</sup> year with this firm. Item 2 recommended a budget which reflects an increase of 0.83% in the apportionment budget. 32% of the budget is given to us from the General and Jurisdictional Conferences. The remaining 68% of the budget is what the bishop, center directors, district superintendents, staff and CF&A have been working hard to manage. The NTC portion of the total budget request reflects a 0.31% increase – less than one third of one percent. One quarter of the budget is affected by the General Conference apportionment, a 3% increase.

Womack said he listened to Bishop McKee and Bishop Malone, both telling us to go into the mission fields where the people are and not to wait for them to come to us. They encouraged us to be catholic, to think outside the box and these things resonated with Womack and made him feel very good about the budget that CF&A is recommending.

The Center Directors have a great spirit of collaboration between the directors as they make efforts both to streamline internal functions within the conference office and still maximize the resources that are being made available to local churches. Womack said CF&A is most proud of: a strong focus on stewardship development for pastors, new church starts, campus ministries and camps; resources in Church Development focused on New Faces and New Spaces; and Go Camps! Go camps provide opportunities for kids in both urban centers and outlying areas to experience camp like so many others have. Womack showed a video of Go Camp and then moved the adoption of the 2019 budget as presented. The budget was approved.

In a point of order, Bill Gavin encouraged providing more detail regarding the budget in next year's presentation.

### Legislative Matters

John Dorff, a lay member of annual conference from Highland Park UMC, moved that any resolutions regarding human sexuality be tabled through the end of Annual Conference 2018 and allow for the report of A Way Forward Commission to be revealed in its entirety. The motion was seconded.

Fred Durham, retired clergy in the annual conference, asked for clarity on what resolutions were included. Conference Secretary Judith Reedy named them: "In Our Churches" [LA 13], "Uniting Conference" resolution [LA 14], "For the Healing of the United Methodist Church." [LA 15]. Durham pointed out that the first resolution, "In Our Churches," was not about human sexuality but about the discipline of the church and should not be included in the tabling but should be before the body. Durham also stated that the authors of "For the Healing of The United Methodist Church," Durham being one of those authors, had been planning to withdraw the third resolution but would accept that it be one of those tabled.

Bishop McKee clarified that the first resolution "In Our Churches" is about same-sex marriage, therefore, is about human sexuality.

Durham said that if that was the case, he would like to request a decision of law after the vote.

Bishop McKee called for a vote by show of hands on tabling all three resolutions. The majority voted to table. Durham then requested two decisions of law. Bishop requested that Durham present them one at a time.

Durham stated that since the resolution "In Our Churches" submitted expresses a need for clarity and attempts, he believes inappropriately, to resolve the meaning of "in our churches" in Par. 341.6 of the 2016 Book of Discipline, he requested a decision on the following question of law: Does the phrase "in our churches" only include within the walls of the sanctuary or other church buildings or does it not also include on the steps of the sanctuary or other church property, whether inside or outside the walls of the building?



Bishop McKee asked for a second, and Durham then requested parliamentary rule because he was asking for a decision of law from the chair. Durham went on to say that this request is covered in the *BOD* ¶51, article 7.

Bishop McKee stated that he believed this requires a vote of the conference. Counsel Pam Liston advised that it does. Durham stated that there is something called a declaratory decision which requires 1/5 of the annual conference to do it, however, it is appropriate to ask the bishop to make a decision of law. Durham then referred to *BOD* ¶51, article 7, in the constitution, saying that a bishop presiding over an annual conference or judicial conference shall decide all questions of law coming before the bishop in a regular business session, provided such questions be presented in writing (Durham had them in writing) and that the decisions be recorded in the journal of the conference.

Durham added that episcopal decisions shall not be authoritative except for the pending case until they have been passed upon by the jurisdictional council, the point being that bishops are always asked to make these decisions. They then go in for review to the judicial council.

Don Wiley, lay member of Lovers Lane UMC, asked for a point of order, stating that this is a question on a piece of pending legislation that has not been adopted so the pending legislation is no longer pending. It has been tabled so the request for a ruling of law is not in order at this time.

Durham responded that it is not about legislation. It is about what has come before an annual conference and this came before the annual conference.

Wiley stated that it is no longer before the annual conference. Durham observed that he asked prior to the resolution being tabled if he could ask for this question of law after the vote to table.

Wiley said that it has been tabled so it is no longer before the annual conference and is a matter of parliamentary procedure that once it has been tabled, it is no longer in front of the conference.

Counsel Pam Liston ruled that it had been laid on the table and would require a new vote to remove it from being laid on the table. Bishop McKee said that the decision is if it is before us and he contended that it was not before the conference. He then referred back to Liston who said that it had been laid on the table which is a phrasing under rules of order that means that it is not before the conference and it has been laid on the table. It is not that it can never be taken off the table but it had been laid on the table.

Ben David Hensley, clergy from Oak Lawn UMC, in a point of order, stated that the request for this rule of law did not pertain to any resolution. Rather, it was simply a request on an interpretation of a ruling on Par. 341.6 of the 2016 Book of Discipline, so the way it sounded was that Durham was actually asking for a ruling of law irrespective of any legislation that had been put on the table or not.

Liston responded that requests must be regarding matters related to the annual conference.

Durham agreed and said that it was related to annual conference and the work therein, not necessarily something that was on the table, because the constitution says nothing about it having to be an item before the conference.

Bishop McKee said that the paragraph that Liston read says that it has to be before us. The only thing that is before us now is the consent calendar. There is nothing before us. We have tabled everything before us, and once that happens, any consideration about those resolutions is off the table.

Durham stated he would like to appeal the decision of the chair.

Charles Harrison, lay member of First UMC, Wichita Falls, ask for a clarification on whether the vote to appeal the

decision of the chair requires a 2/3 or majority. Bishop McKee responded that it takes a majority. Bishop McKee then repeated his ruling that the legislation is not before us so he would not entertain Durham's request for decision of law. The vote for appeal of the chair failed.

Wes Magruder, clergy from Kessler Park UMC, moved that pursuant to Par. 2610.1 of the 2016 BOD, the North Texas Annual Conference request a declaratory decision as to the meaning of the phrase "in our churches" in Par. 341.6 and whether the resolution entitled "in our churches" which was tabled is consistent with the meaning and application of the phrase "in our churches" as declared by the judicial council. Liston ruled that the issue is the same. It would require being off the table to be discussed. Magruder asked if we could then simply ask a decision on the meaning and application of the phrase "in our churches" in Par. 341.6 period. Liston responded that it was not before us.

Becky David Hensley moved that the North Texas Conference build on the detailed and comprehensive work of the CLD to date and, in tandem with the local COSROW team, represented and chaired by Jean Wood, standing with Hensley, do the work to expand the policy on sexual harassment for amendment at AC 2019. The motion was seconded by Wood and approved by the body.

Doug Miller called for the bishop to consider calling a special conference together after the July revelation in detail of A Way Forward plan.

### **Consent Agenda**

Andy Lewis presented the consent calendar. No items had been removed, and the consent calendar was adopted.

### **Nominations Committee**

Andy Lewis and Jeff Bouis presented the nominations for 2019. Lewis described the process which dates back to 2011. Persons in the NTC are invited to complete profile sheets for a desired position.

Lewis also described the makeup of the committee including representatives from each district. He said that the committee on nominations was able to fill 75% of the 36 open positions by persons who had completed profile sheets. The percentage not used were in cases where more than one person had applied for the same position. Lewis made one correction. The nominations report passed.

### **Wesley-Rankin**

Shellie Ross, new executive director of Wesley-Rankin, shared a bit of the history of Wesley-Rankin beginning with Hattie Rankin who went over a bridge to West Dallas and hosted educational opportunities in her backyard and church services in her home. Like Rankin, the United Methodist Women came along and lived out the belief that once you become family, you are family. Wesley-Rankin continues to bridge inequality. Just because something is normal does not make it right, said Ross. Thus, the work of Wesley-Rankin continues to be relevant and current. A video was shown of participants and work of Wesley-Rankin.

### **Annual Conference 2019**

Bishop McKee called on Don Underwood for an invitation to next year's AC. Underwood said that he and his staff did not hesitate when the bishop called to ask if they would host AC 2019 at Christ UMC, Plano. They are excited about the opportunity. The body responded affirmatively with a round of applause.

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### **Hamilton Park Video**

A video of a new program begun by Christopher O’Riley at Hamilton Park revealed the genesis of his idea of Mind the G.A.P. – God’s Anointed People, an idea he had while looking at a GAP ad. G.A.P. takes the people of Hamilton Park out of the building and sometimes into restaurants to sit at tables with people who do not necessarily look like the profile of those at Hamilton Park and to have meaningful discussions about issues that shape their lives. G.A.P. is another example of providing new spaces for new faces.

Bishop McKee thanked Alexandra Robinson and David Lessner for being the brains behind the conference agenda and keeping the conference on track. He thanked Clayton Oliphint, the staff and laity of FUMC, Richardson, for their generous hospitality in hosting AC 2018.

### **Closing Worship of Communion and Sending Forth With “Reading” of Appointments**

Bishop McKee, the newly ordained, and the cabinet served Holy Communion to the Conference as the names of churches and those appointed appeared on the Conference screens.