

## VIII. DAILY PROCEEDINGS

### SUNDAY AFTERNOON AND EVENING

June 1, 2014

#### Laity Session

**Hamilton Park United Methodist Church, Dallas, Texas, 3:30 p.m.**

The laity session of The North Texas Conference was held at Hamilton Park United Methodist Church of Dallas. Conference Lay Leader, Linda Parks, opened with prayer and convened the session in anticipation of Annual Conference “Impact 2014.” The session began with a memorial litany of lay delegates who had died during the past year.

The 2014 Harry Denman Evangelism Awards for Laity and Youth were celebrated with video tributes. Youth recipient was Brooke Foster; laity were Ann Meyer and Debra Dickerson.

The rest of the session was dedicated to the 19 lay United Methodists who were candidates to serve as NTC delegates to the 2016 General and Jurisdictional Conferences.

The session closed with everyone present saying Wesley’s Covenant Prayer together as one body.

#### Clergy Session

**Spring Valley United Methodist Church, Richardson, Texas, 3:30 p.m.**

The North Texas Conference clergy gathered at Spring Valley United Methodist Church, Richardson, and Bishop McKee called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m. Host pastor Clara Reed welcomed the clergy to Spring Valley and introduced Bert Johnson, director of music, and John Tarver, organist. Vic Casad moved that the body fully include the local pastors throughout the business session. Motion carried.

Bishop McKee addressed the session, underscoring that the clergy really are a covenant body and that the persons present are brothers and sisters called by God to do the special work we do. As a covenant body, he said that we have our own callings. They don’t belong to everybody.

In her opening remarks, Jan Davis, chair of the Board of Ordained Ministry, gave special thanks to Duane VanGiesen and Janet Thompson. She said she was humbled by looking at the names on the report. She noted that the business would go in order. She called attention to question 17, which asks, “Are all the clergy members of the conference blameless in their life and official administration?” and answered “Yes, except for those who know their name is on file in the Bishop’s office,” and 18 on which the body voted aye. Davis then introduced Jill Jackson-Sears, Candidacy Registrar.

Jackson-Sears called attention to question 19, the list of certified candidates, and asked that any corrections be submitted in writing. Jackson-Sears then introduced Marsha Middleton for the Local Pastors’ Report. Middleton called forward those who had just completed licensing school. Bishop McKee and Davis congratulated them. Clergy voted to approve questions 21a and b, the list of full-time local pastors and part-time local pastors, as well as 21c, students from other annual conferences serving as local pastors and enrolled in a school of theology listed by the University Senate. Bishop McKee gave a special word of appreciation to Middleton and to local pastors.

Larry George addressed question 24a, adding Albano Tayengo, full member from West Angola Conference, and question 24b, as well as questions 25 and 26, 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. George then introduced Billy Echols-Richter, Chair of Preparations and Qualifications.

Echols-Richter read the name of Laura Echols-Richter to be elected as an associate member. The body voted for her election. He then 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, and they and Echols-Richter were received with a standing ovation, and Bishop McKee shook their hands.

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

The following persons were presented for election into full membership and ordination: As deacon: James Paul Qazilbash, and as elders: Dyan Marie Dietz, David Andrew Forrest, Jason McConnell, Mary Ncurubi Miriti, Penny Mitchell, and Matthew Tuggle.

The body voted to readmit Stephen Swisher, Larry George welcomed those received by transfer from other annual conferences of The United Methodist Church, and Jin Hee Lee, transferred from Korean United Methodist Church.

As question 41 addressed those transferred out to other annual conferences, the Bishop invited Aleze Fulbright to come down and be thanked by the body for her years of service in the North Texas Conference, and William Lawrence noted that he and Bishop Palmer had already signed the transfer for Stephen Swisher on June 1, 2014.

Stan Copeland addressed question 42b and the body voted to allow Michael Moore's voluntary discontinuance as provisional member. Bishop McKee called for a vote on those granted the status of honorable location-retired. The Bishop offered a prayer for those elders and local pastor who died during the year.

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

The names of those retired deacons and elders, retired associate member, and retired local pastors were read. They were invited to the front of the session where the Bishop shook their hands and they received a standing ovation.

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

Question 68 named those diaconal ministers who died during the year.

Jan Davis reported on those elders and deacons approved for less than full-time service. One correction was made. Jennifer Griffith Cobb stated that she had only been part time in 2010-2011 and had been in full-time service since then. The correction was noted.

Davis concluded her report by saying that she had great hope for our conference and denomination when she looks at the names of each of those called into the ministry. She then moved passage of the entire report of the Board of Ordained Ministry and it was approved.

The full reports of the divisions of the Board of Ordained Ministry are printed in this journal in Section XIII. AGENCY REPORTS under the heading, Board of Ordained Ministry.

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

At opening worship, Clayton Oliphint welcomed everyone to First UMC, Richardson. St. Luke “Community” UMC under the direction of Monya Logan set the tone with the choral call to worship, “Send It Down.” Choirs from eleven churches along with a symphonic orchestra led the worship service. Throughout the evening, rousing music was presented and a children’s choir combined with bagpipes from the North Texas Caledonian Pipes and Drum provided inspirational music during the service.

Candidates for Commissioning and Ordination carried in lanterns as they accompanied the families of the saints to be remembered in the opening hymn. Bishop McKee remembered the saints that have been influential in so many lives. A director’s ensemble sang “Time That is Left,” and Larry George spoke the names of the 20 North Texas Conference clergy and clergy spouses who died in the last year as their faces appeared on screens during a time of remembrance. Those who were remembered were: Charles Allen, Richard Dean Atkinson, Mildred Bailey, Esperanza del Rosario, Kathleen Denman, Peggy McLean Frechette, Leta Belle Gorham, Philip Ed Grimmett, Lou Roy Hawkins, William Troy Johnson, Christopher D. Myre, Jerry Paul Ott, Jessie Reed, Linda Riley, Glyn Rives, Mary Rives, Ray Starnes, Granville Eugene Tyson, Glynn J. Vickers, and Walter Zimmerman.

Bishop Sally Dyck, episcopal leader of the Northern Illinois Conference, encouraged those assembled to get mobile. Using scripture from Matthew 9:35–10:1 and 5–10, Bishop Dyck’s message was entitled “You Are The Equipment!” “There are a lot of hurting people in your neighborhood. Go to them. You do not have to go to a faraway place to help people.” She advised those gathered, “If you want to make a difference, teach a kid,” professing that the laity do not understand how important their work is.

She closed by explaining how a newspaper error delivered a message. While reading a page filled with church events, she saw a headline about the First church of God—but the “d” in God was missing, so it read First Church of Go. “I want to go to that church,” said Bishop Dyck. “We all should attend the First Church of Go.” “Each member is to identify with the agony and suffering of the world and to radiate and exemplify the Christ of hope. Go and share it. You are the equipment.”

In response to Bishop Dyck’s sermon, Ken Medema reinforced the message in his spontaneously created “We Are the Church of Go.”

Near the end of the service, North Texas Bishop Mike McKee led a commissioning ceremony for young people participating this summer in outreach ministries around the state, including Project Transformation, Bridgeport Camp and Conference Center, Connect to the Kingdom, Lydia Patterson Institute, and FirstChurch Fellow, noting that several of the Project Transformation interns grew up in the program and are now interns.

The offering was dedicated to Project Transformation and Conference Camp Scholarships. A reception hosted by Bishop and Mrs. McKee honored Bishop Dyck and the families of those being remembered.

# MONDAY MORNING SESSION

## June 2, 2014

### First United Methodist Church, Richardson, Texas

#### Organization of the Conference

Bishop McKee welcomed everyone and thanked everyone for the wonderful worship experience on Sunday night. Ken Medema led the conference with an opening song, and Bishop McKee offered the opening prayer. Paul Rasmussin and Rachel Baughman addressed the conference on behalf of the Annual Conference planning team, referencing recent changes in the sessions of the North Texas Conference. Rasmussin said it was the goal of the planning committee to leave people energized and on fire for the work of the North Texas Annual Conference. Baughman spoke of the nine core values of the planning committee: quality production, pace and flow, inspiring presenters, great music, fun, creativity, valuable content, inspiring worship and participation.

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 at First Church, Richardson, and that the visitors' section be established as the balcony of said sanctuary. The motion was approved. Reedy moved the election of persons to serve the 2014 business sessions as assistant secretaries: Kenny Dickson and Marsha Middleton; Jodi Smith, election chair; head teller, Abril Goforth, 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 Larry George to introduce the consent calendar. George 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.

#### Episcopal Address

The focus of Bishop McKee's Episcopal Address echoed the theme of the Annual Conference: Impact. The Address posed these questions: Are we willing to ask questions; engage in the conversations; do the actions that are necessary to fully engage the world on behalf of and with Jesus Christ, whose life, death, and resurrection has formed us? Will we recover the essence and the identity of the early Methodist movement of personal and social holiness? How do we recover the early heart and passion that the early Methodists had? How can we have an impact for Christ in the communities where we—both lay and clergy—are in ministry?

The essence of impact for the North Texas Conference can be defined in these points:

- Impact is an action word—it requires more than conversation; it requires an implemented and measured strategy.
- Impact requires us to live it out every day through every action.
- Impact is targeted rather than scattered—we must choose a set of areas to impact and commit to them over the long haul.
- The measures of fruitfulness will be IMPACT in your community—not just having programs or increasing worship attendance, but how many people within your worshipping congregation are making an impact in the community/context of your church.

- The commitment to community impact is inherently Wesleyan—whether it was developing financial systems to assist the poor or providing access to health care and education, Wesley and the People called Methodists are remembered and heralded even today throughout the United Kingdom for their impact on the communities in which they lived.
- The emphasis on community impact is rooted in this question: “If your church were to close tomorrow, would anyone in your community even notice?”

*Instead, this challenging environment calls the people of the North Texas Conference to engage in a systematic preparation to make measurable, sustainable, and miraculous impact in the lives of those throughout our communities.*

There are four areas on which the North Texas Conference will focus and measure:

1. **Equipped and Engaged Leadership:** Clergy and laity with a commitment to the United Methodist witness and understanding of the Gospel of Jesus Christ will share the Good News with new people in bold engagement with the community.
2. **Ministry with the Poor:** Each congregation engages with a local school to provide tutoring to students with a goal of 5% of the worshipping congregation serving. Additionally, each congregation focuses on a ministry that is relational rather than transactional.
3. **Community Wholeness:** Initiate a ministry that systemically addresses families, such as domestic violence, children with incarcerated parents, or issues related to human hopes and needs.
4. **Telling the Story of the Christian Faith:** We are called to share our personal faith stories with others so that the story of Jesus can become their story.

Additionally, Bishop McKee shared that if our presence doesn't make an impact then our absence won't make a difference.

### **Episcopacy Committee**

Scott Smith, chair of the committee, was accompanied on the platform by the committee members. Smith asked that Joan McKee be escorted to the front. The McKees were presented with an American Airlines voucher to see their favorite grandson. Mrs. McKee addressed the conference, thanking them for their support of all the children's programs supported by the North Texas Conference and spoke of the impact Project Transformation has made on the lives of children. She reported that several of this year's interns have come up through the Project Transformation program.

### **Center for New Church Starts and Congregational Transformation**

Jim Ozier, Center Director, was joined by Liliana Pena Rangel to present the report. A video showed that thirty-six churches are currently feeling the impact of the Healthy Church Initiative, that new churches are being started—focusing on “The Village,” and that the strategy is to plan for at least three new churches a year, with at least one each year being Hispanic. Ozier asked everyone to consider partnering with an ethnic language church, and referred the conference to page 12 of the conference program which called churches to pray about entering into a partnership with

one of the conference ethnic language mission new church starts: Iglesia Unida (Leonardo Hara), Cockrell Hill (Pablo Guardiola), and Oasis Global Mission (Mary Miriti). The report concluded with “Amazing Grace,” sung in four languages by participants in ethnic language churches in the North Texas Conference.

Highlights of the Bethlehem Center were presented by video.

Bishop McKee directed attention to the first video of retiree reflections, saying that it is important to know that each clergy person is a part of an endless line of splendor and that our ministry is formed and built on those who have gone before us. He spoke of his connections and experiences with this year’s retirees.

The first three retirees on video were Henry Masters, Jerry Colgrove, and Christy Thomas. They answered three questions: What has meant the most to you; what has been the most helpful; what are your plans?

**Henry Masters** said the experiences he has had have meant so much to him, especially since he took an appointment out of the conference for a time. He credited individuals who had mentored him through the early times and his wife who has reminded him of the appropriateness of ministry as well as people in the local churches who have helped him. He plans to spend time with his grandchildren, some traveling and some writing, as well as some free time.

**Jerry Colgrove** said that everything had meant so much to him, but especially being with people during the holy moments. He thanked God for calling him into the ministry and then he thanked his wife who is his confidant, his corrector, his friend. She is the wind underneath his wings. He also thanked his district superintendents; he included Doug King who was there especially at a time of need. He would like to do something different now. He wants to contribute and serve, perhaps serving as a local pastor in retirement.

**Christy Thomas** said it was the opportunity to be involved with people during the disciple-making process. She talked of herself as a midwife of that process as she saw people grasp the possibilities of grace. She thanked the other clergy in the conference as they hung together as well as the bishop and conference for enabling her thirty-year dream to come true. Her plans have already begun. She has already been to England to visit grandchildren, has a trip planned to New York and plans to spend time with her brother in California. She has multiple writing projects going on, including a book which compares the small church to organic gardening and the large church to factory farms. She thinks we need both. She plans to have a lot of fun.

### **Board of Ordained Ministry**

Jan Davis, chair of the Board of Ordained Ministry, presented the Board’s report. She said that the work of the BOM encompasses the life of the clergy person and begins at recruitment, nurturing the call to ministry in people’s lives, continuing through the life of the clergy, helping them become more effective. She thanked the BOM, including the nine laity who serve out in the world. She thanked the four district committees on ordained ministry. The first report came from the local pastors’ director of education, Marsha Middleton. Middleton presented those who had completed Licensing School on May 24th: Virgil Aldag, George Battle III, Darlene Cain, Jacob Fields, Marie Fuhrken, Cindy Griffin, Rosalyn Hilburn, Kris Melvin, Johnny Ray, Courtney Schultz, Cindy Shirley, Jana Showman, Rodney Ward, Angela Williams, Les Wyatt, Adam Young, and Joan Wu. Each was presented with a gift and greeted by the Bishop.

Billy Echols-Richter, chair of Preparations and Qualifications, presented the new associate member Laura Echols-Richter; new provisional deacon Maria Dixon Hall; new provisional elders Edgar Bazan, Rick Davis, Patrick Hoffman, Steve Martinez, Justin Miller, Jenna Morrison, JoAnne Pounds; and the new ordinands—deacon JamesPaul Qazilbash, and elders Dyan Marie Deitz, David Andrew Forrest, Jason McConnell, Mary Ncurubi Miriti, Penny Mitchell, and Matthew Tuggle.

Chair of Conference Relations Committee Stan Copeland and committee members presented the retirees: George Doherty Bond with 46 years of service; David Michael Carr and wife Pamela with 37 years of service; Jerry Colgrove and wife Shirley with 11 years of service as local pastor; Richard Dunagin and wife Theresa with 42 years of service; Frederick L. Durham, Jr. and wife Teresa with 43 years of service; George Fisk and wife Kay with 40 years of ministry; Howard P. Hedges, Jr. and wife Betsy with 35 years of service; Henry L. Masters, Sr. and wife Dianna with 47 years of service; Carole Somers-Clark and husband Ron with 34 years of service; Christy Thomas with 11 years of service; John M. Thornton and wife Lynn with 37 years of service; David Yunker and Beverley with 8 years of service as a local pastor; Sam Campbell; and Natalie Woods.

Bishop McKee thanked the retirees for the sermons they preached, the visits to hospitals they made, for representing Christ. Davis remarked that the retirees would each tonight present a chalice to a new ordinand.

The Bishop called up the “fun person” to come up and hand out some gift cards. Two volunteers played “faceketball” for an iPad Mini.

### Keynote Address

Jim Ozier introduced the keynote speaker, Sue Nilson Kibbey. She is the author of numerous books including *Ultimately Responsible: When you are in Charge of Igniting a Ministry*. She is also the creator of the “Ministry by Strengths” program and is a respected voice in the United Methodist Church, especially when it comes to congregational vitality. She currently serves as missional initiatives director in the West Ohio Conference, working with 1100 churches. She previously served as executive director to Mike Slaughter at Ginghamburg. She cares about the church as it is today, but she is committed to leaving a church for our grandchildren.

Kibbey told the conference that she had been praying for all of them in her devotional time studying Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount. The address was “Small New Decisions,” in which she explained the Primary Leadership Components Survey and described several churches who are working through their primary style to expand ministry. She invited them to think about their pastor or themselves and identify which kind of pastor primarily they were—a systems manager, a shepherd, or a vision crier. It takes all three of these primary leadership components to be at play in order for a church, a movement, to roll forward. If any of the three is missing, things begin to grind to a standstill.

When resistance comes, the tendency is to push harder, or if you are a shepherd, you may not want to push at all. How to rebalance? Objectivity is essential. Maybe this is the moment to bring a little vision crier in to it, or invite others to contribute who have those strengths. Congregations fall into the same categories as pastors. Kibbey brought three stories from the West Ohio Conference as models. Under the leadership of Laura Benson, pastor, one of those stories takes place in the church of St. Andrew in Toledo, Ohio. It was a systems church, with committee members serving terms in excess of ten years. The calendar had not changed. Pastor Laura introduced an element

of vision crier. She also realized that they needed to make some small new decisions. St. Andrew has already reached 52 new disciples for Jesus Christ in one year. They learned how to make those small decisions that make a big impact.

Dave Hood pastors Ft. McKinley UMC in an urban neighborhood in Dayton, Ohio. This had been a proud neighborhood church but had dwindled to 40 members with bars on the windows and “Keep off the Grass” signs on the lawn. They were a tight, spiritual shepherd community with a distant memory of having had a missional DNA and a group of people who still believed that God had hope for them. Pastor Hood looked for a way to bring some new systems and a vision. He spent time in the neighborhood, asking what it would mean to be the hands and feet of Jesus here. Every time they went out into the neighborhood to help and work, people began to come to worship. They committed themselves to loving their neighbors within a fifteen block area.

The third story was about Groesbeck UMC led by Pastor Dave Beck, a vision crier way ahead of his time. The people there had just assumed that people would always come to church there, but as the area became commercialized, the car lot across the street approached the church to buy its property. Pastor Dave presented that to them and even though they voted to do that, the proposal fell through. They then began to canvas the community to ask what it needed. One of those stops occurred at a high school. The assistant principal said that if these students had somewhere to go and people who cared about them, it would change their lives. Most of the people worked, but they decided to be there, frightened as they were. The first day they had about 30 students, then 40, and finally 100. It was chaotic but they navigated through it with sixty retiree volunteers. Kibbey said that the chaos ministry is led by Maxine who is 92 years old. She said they believe that the future pastor of Groesbeck church is among these students.

Ken Medema offered a musical response, and Sheron Patterson closed the morning session with prayer.

## **MONDAY AFTERNOON BUSINESS SESSION**

Ken Medema opened the afternoon session with a song, and Ron Henderson offered a prayer. Bishop McKee introduced Bishop Dan Solomon representing Texas United Methodist colleges. A video was presented.

The Bishop introduced Bishop and Mrs. William Oden and discussed the ecumenism award to be presented on Tuesday. The Bishop announced that we are getting ready to grow by two churches. Rev. Cammy Gaston came forward to present Legislative Item #12 [LA 12] a resolution regarding the reception of two Rio Grande Conference congregations, Agape Memorial United Methodist Church and Casa Emanu-El United Methodist Church. The welcoming resolution welcomed these two churches into the North Texas Conference, both having served faithfully in the North Texas Conference geographical bounds for many years, to be effective July 1, 2014. Bishop McKee asked all in favor to stand and the two churches were welcomed. Gaston observed that Agape is known for their leadership in providing mission to their neighborhood. Casa Emanu-El organized in 2007 and is known by their social justice history and racial inclusiveness, as well as their outreach to children and youth. They both bring a rich heritage and history of the Wesleyan Way. Bishop McKee led the conference in a prayer of blessing.

Bishop McKee then introduced Linda Parks to give the Laity Address.



## **Laity Address**

Conference Lay Leader Linda Parks entitled her address “Finding a Way to Say ‘Yes.’” Parks recently attended a meeting for Annual Conference Lay Leaders where Bishop Robert Schnase of the Missouri Conference was the keynote speaker. He spent time talking about finding a way to say “yes” instead of being one of those “Well...but” people.

Parks noted that it does not mean every ministry idea has to be supported and sanctioned. It does mean that people need to be affirmed and praised for coming up with original ideas regardless of how unworkable the idea may be. Parks said that people should be risk takers and empower others for ministry in new and creative ways. A video followed that depicted risk-taking laity who worked to hear the affirming and sometimes elusive “Yes.”

Through the laity working in partnership with the clergy, said Parks, people will come to know Christ, and the United Methodist Church will fulfill its mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

## **Center for Connectional Resources**

Conference Treasurer Jodi Smith called on Larry Womack to present the report of the Board of Pensions and Health Benefits.

## **Board of Pension and Health Benefits**

Womack had good news in three areas: (1) pensions—the unfunded liability from pre-1982 has been fully funded.; (2) the conference has fully funded the past retiree medical benefit; and (3) because health has improved and there is a continued reduction in claims, churches will receive another health premium holiday during 2014.

Womack then presented legislative items #3–5. Legislative Item three [**LA 3**] is a designation of rental/housing allowances for retired or disabled clergy person. The resolution carried.

Legislative Item four [**LA 4**] recommended that the pre-1982 service year rate for 2015 be increased by 1.5%. It was approved.

Legislative Item five [**LA 5**] proposed a 17.4% reduction in the BOPHB apportionment budget. The item carried.

Bishop McKee thanked Womack and his board for the work that they do.

Smith observed that legislative items from the Board of Trustees had been moved to the consent calendar but she honored the legacy of Hunt County’s White Rock United Methodist Church (Celeste Charge) which is closing. Bishop McKee spoke to the legacy they will provide for faithful ministry. He said that it is our Christian heritage—dying and rising again, death and resurrection. He gave a prayer of thanks for the legacy of that church.

## **Retiree Video**

**David Yunker** proclaimed the most meaningful part of ministry as being part of a person’s growth as a disciple, whether in prayer settings, visitation in hospitals, baptism or other times. To think that we just have a little part in what God is doing is most meaningful. Yunker had a long list of

persons to thank. Every clergy person in the North Texas Conference and about half the laity have disciplined him in the ministry.

Yunker and his wife have purchased a home in Indiana where his grandson lives. It just happens to have two championship 18-hole golf courses. They plan to become “regular people” again. He will never be out of ministry.

**John Thornton** has appreciated the relationship with fellow clergy and the relationships with those in various churches he has served. He has enjoyed playing “kitchen cabinet” with fellow clergy. Work in individual churches, such as relocation of the church, has had great impact. Thornton thanked Jim Garrett and Bob Young who helped him as a young clergy and later Bill Crouch who supported him in his early ministry.

Thornton is very thankful for the meaningful times at Wylie and Lake Highlands where he served each community for 10 years. Thornton has plans to travel with his wife Lynn, but he does not plan to quit ministry. He plans to share the love of Jesus Christ with all.

**Carole Somers-Clark** spoke of the opportunity to serve in very different settings. Having been at Methodist Health Systems for 27 years before retiring, she previously served at Highland Park United Methodist, two very different settings. She “crossed the Trinity.” Not many people have the opportunity to do that—and serve the people. She had earlier had the same unique experiences by moving from University Park to Parkland Hospital, two radically different places. In all, the people were wonderful.

Somers-Clark said the list of those to thank was too long. She especially thanked the learners who have been willing to learn, to test their theology, who willingly entered into looking at their behavior alongside their theology. Somers-Clark has been working full-time since she was a teenager and is the rock, the oldest in her family of origin. She plans now to be a free spirit, which includes time with her new granddaughter. She is really working to define herself.

**George Fisk** thought back to his first church in Leonard, Texas, the memories of which are precious to him. How do you say “thank you?” Fisk said that his whole life has been a gift. If it were not for Jack Soper at one point in his life, he would probably have quit the ministry. He recently lost a grandchild, and friends came out of the woodwork. He thanked the entire church family, from his first job to present. He is thankful to be a part of something that is bigger than he is.

Fisk is going to stay on at White Rock part time as a volunteer helping the new senior pastor Mitchell Boone, and he plans to do a lot of fishing with his grandson.

**Richard Dunagin** was amazed that the church has paid him to do what he loves. He remembered baptizing an 84-year-old man and a “country club” church that developed an apartment ministry that is still in existence as well as a church that was very involved in missions for 30 years with Cambodia and spreading the gospel. He thanked his mentors—Pete Robertson, Bruce Weaver, and the staffs that have served with him. He owes a tremendous debt to his family—his wife and children—who have loved him through it all.

Dunagin hopes to do many things. He wants to paint; he wants to write. He will be teaching online for Fuller Seminary. The biggest thing for Dunagin is that he will now be able to say “yes” when his friends and family ask him to go somewhere.

At the conclusion of the retiree video, Bishop McKee expressed his appreciation to the retirees.

## Center for Leadership Development

Marti Soper, Center Director for Leadership Development, was accompanied by Aleze Fulbright, the Associate Director, to give the center report. Soper called attention to Legislative Item #2 [LA #2] which is to assist churches who are moving from being able to pay their pastor on a part-time basis to full-time, as well as churches in mission settings. Equitable compensation assists in those endeavors. Item carried. Soper called attention to the full report on page 45 of the conference workbook. The vote carried by a show of hands.

The impact exists to help clergy live into the call of living discipleship fruitfulness, leading congregational fruitfulness and developing missional fruitfulness so that we might live out our mission to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. The work of the center is to provide a model of leadership that combines a vital piety with action and participates in God's transformation of the world.

Soper said the students of the Denton Wesley Foundation are working to transform their community. Concerned with the growing number of people on campus who are homeless, they have formed the Shiloh Food pantry that serves upward of 100 students twice a month.

At the close of video, Fulbright invited all to celebrate clergy and the Clergy Fruitfulness Initiative for Elders and Deacons celebrating a 5-year interval of their ordination as members in full connection. 33 were recognized with a combination of 600 years of service.

Soper then presented the Harry Denman Evangelism Awards to Brooke Foster, a youth, Ann Meyer and Debra Dickerson, laity, and Sung Chul Lee, clergy. Soper introduced Jan Davis and David Tyson, so-chairs of the Clergy Effectiveness Initiative. Davis and Tyson explained that the initiative was to identify characteristics of effective pastoral leadership, study current evaluation tools and make recommendations for the future of the conference. They called attention to the booklet all delegates received entitled "Identifying and Sustaining Effective Clergy Leadership in the North Texas Conference," encouraging partnership between the clergy, their SPRC, and the cabinet for ongoing professional formation of clergy with continual growth toward effectiveness.

Soper then introduced Anna Hosemann-Butler, Chair of The Advancing Women's Leadership Initiative. Hosemann-Butler defined the task force as having been formed by Bishop McKee last fall and charged with two goals: Examine the present situation regarding the support, training and promotion of female clergy in the North Texas Conference; make recommendations based on findings which will help correct systemic inequities that exist regarding the promotion of female clergy and thus empower the conference to be better by fully embracing and utilizing the gifts and graces endowed to all of God's people. Hosemann-Butler's final word came as the screens showed a beautiful young girl child. "Who among us is willing to say to her in ten years when she comes before us with hope and calling for a future in ministry, 'We don't have an equitable place for you?'" The report received great affirmation.

## Keynote Speaker—Afternoon Session

Jim Ozier introduced Sue Nilson Kibbey for the afternoon session. Kibbey focused on one core practice, a practice she said had helped unleash churches as they leap forward in missional movement. This practice is crucial. She paused to begin with prayer. She talked about churches that have really "blown up;" these churches have relentlessly practiced a breakthrough prayer initiative. Prayer is the food for the body of Christ.

There are bookend prayers at meetings; there are prayer chains; there is prayer for people who are

sick and grieving, Kibbey said, but a breakthrough prayer initiative takes prayer from a snack to a banquet, and something extraordinary happens. She described this initiative. The pastor is the key leader to this. It cannot be delegated. It is congregation wide, going on everywhere, asking God to break through in miraculous ways in our personal lives as well as missional ways to the church, new ways of doing what we have done. It does not replace other forms of prayer. When it happens on an ongoing basis, the atmosphere of possibility begins to change. Suddenly there is an openness to new possibilities.

Breakthrough prayer is not necessarily praying for something specific but praying that God will break through in miraculous ways. Kibbey defined threshold prayer as something that might happen during the last 10 minutes of a meeting, in a place in the church to silently pray for God to break through in the lives of the church and people. Breakthrough prayer does not take words so all pray silently and someone closes. Breakthrough prayer can be specific. Kibbey presented Pastor Mike Bowie and his church Stoneybrook UMC as examples. The members of Stoneybrook prayed as they walked the neighboring property. They needed more space for parking, and the property was sold to them. At the conclusion of a video portraying Pastor Bowie and some of the members of Stoneybrook, Bishop McKee announced to the conference that Pastor Mike Bowie has been appointed as senior pastor of St. Luke “Community” UMC in the North Texas Conference, effective July 1, 2014.

Kibbey then talked about prevailing prayer that makes prayer the DNA of who a congregation is. She talked about another UMC in Ohio which converted a room into a new prayer center and whose members have walked the neighborhood praying for people. Recently the church voted to replace their pews and replace them with removable chairs to be able to better serve the community’s needs. Last fall they invited 40 different churches to join them in prayer for Madisonville, Ohio, in reaching others for Christ. Kibbey concluded with a story about Norm Koon who began prayer walking and has had many subsequently join him.

Ken Medema offered a musical response based on the initiative of prayer and personalized his song with people and stories that Kibbey had told. Bishop McKee closed the afternoon session with prayer.

## **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 First UMC Dallas Chancel Choir under the direction of Dana Effler and Tim Effler, Organist.

Bishop Sally Dyck was the speaker for the service of commissioning, recognition, and ordination. The scripture for the evening message, “It IS Rocket Science!” was John 21: 15–17. Bishop Dyck proclaimed that ministry IS rocket science. “The church is more and more complex, just like the rest of our world. Rocket science is a collaboration of physics, math and aerodynamics. Ministry is collaboration, too. The church needs collaboration, communication and information. There are so many moving parts; you will need to preach, play with kids, counsel people and more. You are being ordained into rocket science.”

Bishop Dyck gave those being commissioned and ordained two pieces of advice. “You always need to learn. The most important thing is to be lifelong learners, work with each other, and learn

from each other's mistakes." The second piece of advice was "Make sure your people know that you love them. To love Jesus is to love the people that you serve: the cranky, the resistant and the racist. You may be able to quote the Bible and a few dead theologians like Tillich or Bonhoeffer, but you've got to love the people. Just love them."

Bishop McKee presided in the commissioning and ordination rituals. Seven elders were commissioned. Those commissioned for the work of an elder were Edgar Bazan, Richard Steven Davis, Patrick Michael Hoffman, Steven Dale Martinez, Justin August Miller, Jenna Nicole Morrison, and Deborah Linda JoAnne Pounds. Commissioned for the work of a deacon was Maria Antoinette Dixon Hall. Presented for recognition as a person elected as an associate member for service as a pastor was Laura Echols-Richter.

One deacon and six elders were received into membership in full connection. JamesPaul Aidan Qazilbash was ordained as a deacon and Dyan Marie Dietz, David Andrew Forrest, Jason Robert McConnell, Mary Ncurubi Miriti, Penny Lynn Mitchell, and Matthew Alton Tuggle were ordained as elders.

The evening offering was dedicated to support The Zip Code Connection. A reception for the newly commissioned, recognized, and ordained followed immediately after the service in the Bartula Family Life Center.

## **TUESDAY MORNING BUSINESS SESSION**

### **June 3, 2014**

Ken Medema opened the morning session with a song about everyday people walking with courage. Bishop McKee thanked him for his inspirational music and time. Linda Parks opened with prayer.

Bishop McKee explained how the day would go in an election year which is a year early. He called on Richard Hearne who moved that the North Texas Conference authorize three additional alternate delegates, both lay and clergy, to the delegation. Motion was seconded. Hearne described that adding people to the delegation would not cost the conference any money and would serve as a great training ground for upcoming leadership. The Bishop addressed the motion. Motion carried.

Bishop McKee noted that the previous evening was a wonderful experience and that he just could not describe what a privilege it is to actually be the one on behalf of the church to place hands on those being ordained.

### **Videos of Newly Ordained**

Billy Echols-Richter read the names of the newly ordained and announced that we would hear first from the deacon and three of the elders ordained last night. Later in the day we would hear from the remaining three elders.

**Matthew A. Tuggle** spoke of his love for family—his wife Amy and two year old son—and of the idea of a family growing in Christ. He said he was passionate about equipping persons to find a family in Christ and grow together. The hope of the world is in the local church. He hopes to be able to equip the local church. The most exciting thing to him is healing, sanctification, being prepared and challenged by the Lord for ministry.

**Dyan Marie Dietz's** passion is worship. Creative and vibrant worship is what will continue to grow our churches and infuse life and spirit into our congregation. She hopes her ministry will expand the kingdom of God into our world. As a biblical scholar, she hopes that her work will help people connect with the scriptures. As Christians, we have inherited this wonderful collection of holy texts. When we approach them from the history that formed them, we will learn—if we approach them with a kind of scriptural humility. She is most excited about living out her call as a pastor.

**Mary Ncurubi Miriti** has discovered that her passion is working with the poor and those working on minimal income. It is difficult to discover their needs before you build a relationship with them. Once she began building relationships, she was able to hear their pain and their everyday struggles. Most of them feel different because they cannot come to our churches. We must go to them until we build up their self-esteem. She hopes to empower those who have lost their self-worth. She is there for them to help them understand that they can be anybody they need to be. What they need is to be empowered. She is serving a diverse community and with people who understand that diversity is vital in the kingdom of God. In God's eyes, we are all equal.

**JohnPaul Aiden Qazilbash** said that his passion is continuing to serve in pediatric health ministry where they are always seeing new struggles, new families, and peoples from all walks of life, helping them stay connected and reconnect, helping them understand that God loves them when they feel at their least, when they feel they have it the least together. There is room for all their questions. In health care, you have the opportunity to interact with people from all walks of life. It is his privilege to let them know that God has a purpose and a calling for every single one of them.

### **Council on Finance and Administration**

Clayton Oliphint came to represent the Council of Finance and Administration budget. He told a story about discovering his mother writing a check to the church and learning that their family wrote this check every two weeks to express their gratitude for what God had done for them. She taught him the example of first fruits offering—that was the first check she wrote. This carried on with him and his wife. They found that giving the first fruits to God measures and orders all things, expressing that we are living out in gratitude for all that God has done. This is not a tax. It is an impact that we are making on the world.

Oliphint spoke to the generosity of the conference, especially to the Northwest district, having paid 100% for twenty-two years. Bishop McKee asked that they stand. They continue to give faithfully when the drought has affected them most. The East district has paid 100% for nineteen years. Bishop McKee asked them to stand as well.

Oliphint said that the 2015 budget represents a 1.5% increase over 2014 budget, the only change being a \$942 addition which came out of the district conferences. Favorable market conditions have resulted in being able to fully fund the pre-1982 pension responsibility, freeing up funding for new churches and church revitalization and leadership development. On the conference level, only 15% of the budget goes toward staffing (21% of conference apportionments).

Oliphint moved Legislative Item #6 [LA 6]. Bill Gavitt asked for total of conference staff and average salary. Oliphint responded that the total is 1.981 million dollars, and the average salary is \$57,000. Legislative Item #6 passed.

Frank Roby addressed results of the Task Force Regarding Funding for New Church Starts, Scholarships for Candidates for Ministry, and Reduction for Candidates in Ministry. A handout was provided and explained. The charge of the task force was to prepare a definite plan of action

to address increased funding for new church starts, scholarships for candidates for ministry, and debt reduction for candidates for ordained ministry. Legislative Item #13 [LA 13] made six recommendations.

The North Texas Conference must develop 100 new long-term clergy over the next 10 years to support the needs of existing and future congregations due to the growth of the Conference area and retirement plans of existing clergy. The Conference must create 25 new church starts over the same period to meet the needs of expanding communities, mission churches that support the ethnic diversity of our Conference, and unserved pockets within the Conference. Recommendations for funding are \$5,000 per year for 5 years for each candidate accepted into the ordination process who can contribute to the future leadership requirements of the Conference and \$350,000 for each church start over the next 10 years. A capital campaign, rather than increased apportionments, within the conference was deemed the most feasible resource for commitments, the structure and scope to be determined by CF&A. The task force sought a motion to approve the above recommendations and authorize CF&A to approve the final campaign structure and strategy.

Bill Gavitt thought that \$5,000 was too little. Jan Davis pointed out that the BOM provides MEF funds to students of a substantial amount. The conference allowed Justin Hancock to speak even though he would not become a member of the conference until July 1. He suggested it was time to reevaluate educational and financial issues regarding young clergy. They earn so little, many will not even consider ordained ministry as an option. Roby thanked Hancock. David Lessner asked for the cost-benefit analysis of candidates dropping out of the process. When a person withdraws, the funding will stop. Matt Gaston asked if we would be looking at a 12 million dollar capital campaign as early as next year. Roby replied that it could be earlier. Donors have already indicated a readiness to participate. John McClarty asked about the proposed average church attendance of 1,000 each. Roby said that the number came from the Center for New Church Development. Jennifer Cobb expressed concern with allocation of money since attrition rate in candidacy is high. Front-loading, therefore, to her seems dangerous. Roby responded that some would not even attempt the steps without funding. Ben Hensley inquired about long-term latitude in regard to the rising cost of education. Roby replied that the commitment is fixed. Hensley pointed out that not everyone is aware of the BOM funding that is available. Roby agreed.

Clara Reed asked a question regarding supporting ethnic churches. She observed that the definition of “mission” churches has changed over the years. African American churches are still considered “ethnic.” The Bishop affirmed this. Reed also asked what a voluntary capital campaign might look like. The Bishop responded that this would be determined by CF&A. Jill Jackson-Sears asked if there would be any additional funding for the mission plants. Roby said there would not. Mike Baughman asked about unserved pockets, asking if age demographics came into play in identifying underserved areas. Roby used the example of Uptown, which has no church within it. Baughman pointed out that most people don’t choose churches based on geography. MEF funds are set up according to how many years of service a person has. Does this come into play here? Roby responded that that will not prohibit a person from receiving funding.

Jamie Nelson asked about identifying the 100 persons. She would like to see something produced that would help get young people excited about entering ministry. The Bishop pointed out that the point was valid but that the focus was on the task force report. The question arose as to whether those who did not become United Methodist until after seminary were given consideration. The Bishop said that the question is good and needs to be punted to the Board of Ordained Ministry. Jean Wood called the question. Motion carried by show of hands. The bishop asked young and certified candidates to stand. He stated that we are 35% there towards the goal of 100 persons. He added that clergy and SPRCs need to advise folks to seek certification and that not all calls to ministry are calls to ordained ministry.

## **Change the World Weekend**

Change the World Weekend was presented by Christina Cavener, chair of Board of Global Ministries. Bishop McKee had been invited to preach at FUMC, Allen during their Change the World Weekend. On May 17, over 100 United Methodists joined with volunteer residents of zip code 75215 to support the residents and organizations already at work there in the neighborhood. Volunteers and residents broke bread together and served together, in support of Dallas Bethlehem Center, City Square, and more. They looked closely at how they can better partner in 75215 to help them leverage their assets and sustain a productive, sustainable future for themselves and their children. This was just one day in the effort to eradicate poverty by 2025 in zip code 75215 and 75426. The idea is to build partnerships and friendships that will last a lifetime. First UMC, Allen combined with Sun creek, Creekwood, Good Shepherd, and Living Life Church, a mission church of FUMC Allen. They recruited three more area churches, 12 businesses, three Rotary clubs, two Kiwanis clubs, an elementary school and numerous nonprofit groups. 49 boxes were filled with care packages to soldiers in Afghanistan and 15,000 pounds of food for a local food pantry. Rethink Church of Nashville, Tennessee provided more than \$30,000 in funding for event promotions, along with hours of support. In Allen, change the World Weekend began with a Kids Against Hunger packaging event at Chandler Elementary, continued with Meals on Wheels deliveries, a diaper-making event to support children in Honduras, and finished with a Project Linus blanket-making marathon. Bishop McKee asked that the Conference triple the amount of volunteers that participated conference-wide next year.

## **Young Person's Address**

Marissa Harrison, secretary of Conference Council on Youth Ministries, addressed the Conference. She presented a video the youth had made since so many of them were still in school. Maddie Chumley said they focused more attention on district events for mission and fellowship. Over four hundred youth attended two mid-winter events. They focused on how to say “yes” to God in a world which says “no.” Their mantra was “Don’t say ‘no way,’ say ‘Yahweh.’” This year at the Quadrennial Global Young People Convocation, four of the twenty-four delegates from the South Central Jurisdiction will come from the North Texas Conference. Their hope is that CCYM will have an impact not just on youth but on the entire North Texas Conference. They wish to be role models to young and old. They will attend conference events and invite others to be a part of CCYM. There is no better place than CCYM to explore a call to ministry. Meghan Crone, First UMC, Frisco, rallied the conference by having a t-shirt throw. The Bishop thanked Kelly Carpenter for leading the conference youth.

## **Core Leadership Team**

Bishop McKee told the conference that Core Leadership Team has no decision-making authority. It is as much a learning process as anything. They do a lot of monitoring and serve as a sounding board for the centers. Linda Parks presented the Core Leadership Team report and stated that the CLT dreams and strategizes and discusses various topics. Parks highlighted Laity Day with the Bishop in all four districts this year—over 350 laity were present. Parks explained the make-up of the CLT, including the three at-large members appointed by the Bishop. The Core Leadership Team is convened by the Bishop and has representatives from each of the districts as well as a district superintendent and leaders from the conference centers. Parks gave a special thanks to Ruth Robinson who has served in this capacity for four years.



## **Wesley-Rankin Center**

The Bishop then announced a video from the Wesley-Rankin Center. He said he was grateful for Sarah Squires, the executive director of the Center, and for the new missional pieces that were always happening there. The video showed that the past three years have seen a tripling of children served, from 46 to 125, and in summer camp. They have launched an adult program and have made the decision to walk WITH their constituency. Parents are learning to parent; women are learning to be entrepreneurs. The next step is a big one. There are more than 2500 children in West Dallas with no access to critical early childhood education. There are no pre-schools. Wesley-Rankin is launching a pre-school program this fall. They will be going into homes to work with parents and children from birth to age three. The next year they will open classrooms for children ages 3-6 years, and they will launch a capital campaign to create classroom space. Their seniors need bathrooms and doorways that will meet ADA regulations. Squires invited the conference to be a part of Wesley-Rankin's "educating to change."

## **Consent Agenda**

Larry George presented the consent calendar. No items had been removed, and the consent calendar was adopted.

## **Nominations Committee**

Linda Parks and Jeff Buois presented the report of the nominations committee, noting that the report could be found on the green sheets in the canvas IMPACT bags. Parks described the make-up and the work of the committee. New nominations were bolded on the handout. The Bishop reminded the conference that nominations may be made from the floor. The report passed as presented.

The Bishop explained that the voting process would take place separately for clergy and laity. A break was announced and laity were dismissed to hear the keynote speaker in the Bartula Family Life Center.

## **Instructions on Electronic Voting**

Clergy returned after the break for voting. The Bishop asked everyone who was not eligible to vote to move to the balcony. Conference Secretary Judith Reedy thanked the election company LUMI and their technicians present to help conduct electronic voting. She then explained how voting would be conducted. A sample ballot was cast and the first round of voting began. Bishop Whitfield led clergy in prayer. After the second ballot, Bruce Weaver led the prayer at his 69th annual conference.

## **Keynote Address to the Laity**

Kibbey spoke to the laity session about unleashing their church to serve, addressing their wildest life dreams. She used Psalm 37 as the basis for her presentation and talked to laity about a new set of "Givens." These included God-given capacity; fueling the "Atmosphere of possibility;" embracing and multiplying, a breakthrough prayer initiative; and everyone on mission to serve.

The Bishop closed the morning session with prayer and the conference adjourned for lunch.

## TUESDAY AFTERNOON BUSINESS SESSION

Ken Medema opened the afternoon session at 1:45 pm with “Bound Together and Finely/Tightly Woven with Love,” as he instructed people to bump shoulders and scratch backs of others as they sang together. Marvin Guier offered a prayer.

### Board of Ordained Ministry

**Billy Echols-Richter** introduced more ordinands.

**Penny Mitchell** is finding ways to use her gifts and graces to share the gospel of love with those who desperately need to experience it. Her passion is to be a vessel that the Holy Spirit can work through to transform lives. She hopes her impact will be to inspire others to live a Christ-centered life and then equipping them to go out into the world and share the love and hope of Christ with others. She is excited that she can now focus all her time on her ministry and that this summer she will take a vacation. Habitat for Humanity is coming to Pilot Point and is working with her church to begin the process for finding families.

**Andrew Forrest** is passionate about foolishness and weakness. He spent time in prison ministry this summer. It was dangerous, and he started thinking it was foolishness. He saw a prisoner who had been a former white supremacist and yet was embraced by his black inmates whom he had rejected. He thought that was foolish, and it was happening in prison—that reconciliation—and that was foolish. He was reminded of Paul’s words in Corinthians about using the foolishness and weakness to reconcile the world and bring down the so-called strong and the so-called wise. If his life is going to have any impact, he and his congregation will become braver in that foolishness.

**Jason McConnell** is very passionate about the way that people experience life. He is excited about seeing people see the church with new eyes. He is passionate about seeing people really come alive. He hopes to make an impact on life the way people have made an impact on him, from growing up in First Church, Richardson to now, on those who have not experienced that kind of impact of grace. He wants to ask the questions that awaken others and have them come alive. He wants to have an impact in life so that he can talk to his children and other children with abandon and to the broken person so that they can experience grace in its totality. He is excited about feeling that he is a part of the connection that gets to see beyond the small.

The bishop reported to the conference the results of clergy voting.

### Center for Missional Outreach

Larry George was joined by Marji Bishir Hill and Lynn Parsons as he reported from the Center for Missional Outreach. George referred the conference to Bishir for questions about disaster and to Parsons for questions about the Zip Code Connection.

George explained that the work of the Missional Outreach Center is envisioned and implemented through an Advisory Team and four program work areas. The Board of Church and Society awarded three Peace with Justice grants in 2014 to Button Memorial in Little Elm, First Church Lewisville, and a Carrollton church collaboration among Holy Covenant, First Church Carrollton, and Aldersgate. The Board of Global Ministries celebrates with the conference in the recognition plaque from The Advance, awarded to the North Texas Conference for having the highest percentage increase in designated giving in the 8-state South Central Jurisdiction in 2013. George anticipated an important presentation to be made immediately following by the other two program

areas—the Committee on Ethnic Local Church Concerns and the Commission on Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns.

George quoted the late William Sloan Coffin's words, "No sermon on love can fail to mention love's most difficult problem in our time—how to find effective ways to alleviate the massive suffering of humanity at home and abroad. What we need to realize is that to love effectively we must act collectively, and that in collective action personal relationships cannot ignore power relationships...to show compassion for an individual without showing concern for the structures of society that make that one an object of compassion is to be sentimental rather than loving." George concluded that the Advisory Team had, therefore, proposed and the conference had embraced a bold vision to focus resources on energizing the connection of faith to reclaim and recommit to God's vision of vital and thriving communities by eliminating poverty in zip codes with the highest rates in the Conference—the urban 75215—and the rural 75426. He referred the conference to the opportunity for all to participate collectively in the Dallas Mayor's Back-to-School Fair, a commitment to fullness of life for children and families, specifically as a volunteer on August 1 at Fair Park.

### **William B. Oden Ecumenism Award**

Nancy DeStefano and Sam Martin presented the inaugural Annual Bishop Oden Award to two recipients: First United Methodist Church, Bells, for their work in ecumenical outreach to offer food and other assistance to those in need in their mission field and Wesley Magruder for his work in furthering understanding and strengthening bonds with other faiths in our area and for his efforts to assist refugees in need in the Dallas area.

In introducing Bishop Oden, Bishop McKee spoke about an ecumenical service at Highland Park UMC in which he participated when he first arrived in the North Texas Conference. There he was told that Bishop Oden and the then Catholic bishop were responsible for the beginning of quarterly inter-faith meetings and dialogues. Those quarterly meetings have now resumed. While there are differences, they have also found that there is a significant oneness. Bishop Oden has been the pioneer and the hero of what it means to be connected ecumenically. Bishop McKee called on Marilyn to join Bishop Oden at the microphone.

Bishop Oden and Marilyn received a warm welcome, and Bishop Oden said that Thomas Wolfe was wrong. "You can come home again." He spoke to the inclusivity of the 1968 joining together of two churches to become the United Methodist Church, a church that works for healing and wholeness, the abolishment of racism, and for the unity of the church at every level. Bishop Oden said that working for Christian unity and interreligious concerns, therefore, is in our DNA. Bishop Oden then presented the awards to Bells, Texas, and to Wes Magruder.

### **The Golden Cross Ministry**

Bishop McKee spoke about the beginnings of Golden Cross, offering charity care to hospitals. A video told the story of Golden Cross Ministry, beginning in a small United Methodist Sunday School, with everyone in churches across the Conference contributing one dollar to help the indigent toward hospital care. Seventeen churches in the North Texas Conference still practice this. They were listed in the video. Generations later, the vision has endured. Golden Cross has funded life-saving programs. This past year, Golden Cross funds were used to purchase prescriptions for 191 patients at a cost of \$25,437; provided 1,508 prescriptions funded by pharmaceutical companies at no cost to patients; funded \$26,402 worth of medical supplies and equipment through MedAssist; worked cooperatively with a pharmacy technician, clinical nurse educator, and social worker to administer the MedAssist program.

## **Clergy Spouse Organization**

Michelle Corazao, President of the Clergy Spouse Organization of the North Texas Conference, reminded the conference that their first meeting was held in 1939 and that even though the name, the focus, and the composition had changed, clergy families were still trying to live out their calling as a family and make sense of a life in the unique world of church work and ever-present itineracy. She said that a vibrant and healthy Clergy Spouse Organization supports healthy clergy families, and healthy clergy inspire healthy churches.

The bishop thanked Corazao for her report and called for a fifteen minute break, dismissing the clergy to the Bartula Life Center for the Clergy Address from Sue Nilson Kibbey.

## **Instructions on Electronic Voting**

Laity returned after the break for voting. The Bishop asked everyone who was not eligible to vote to move to the balcony. Conference Secretary Judith Reedy thanked the election company LUMI and their technicians present to help conduct electronic voting. She then explained how voting would be conducted. A sample ballot was cast and the first round of voting began.

Bishop McKee addressed the body as to the importance of what they were doing, electing delegates to General and Jurisdictional Conferences. Linda Parks led the laity in prayer. Between ballots five and six, Bishop McKee called on Tom Busby to pray. Leading into Jurisdictional voting, Bishop McKee offered the prayer. General Conference and Jurisdictional Conference Delegates were elected in 14 ballots. Alfred White moved that the next 3 top vote-getters be elected as the three alternates. Motion was seconded and it was explained by the Bishop. Motion carried.

## **Keynote Speaker Clergy Address**

Kibbey presented “Fixed vs. Growth Mindset” to clergy on Tuesday afternoon. She spoke of teachability versus coachability. She asked the question of what limits coachability and spoke of the five practices of coachability: Hunger; Opening the Power Station, the core of which are character and values, the ideas of which include viewpoints, strategies and execution; Assimilating Feedback; Going Outside Your Comfort Zone; and Breakthrough Prayer Initiative where the synergy of change moves forward. Visuals underscored her presentation and she promised the clergy that the outline and presentation would be located on the North Texas Conference website.

## **Resolutions**

Jack Soper presented Legislative Item #14 [LA 14] regarding misuse of database from United Methodist Reporter, Inc. The resolution was to prevent the Institute on Religion and Democracy from continued use of contact information belonging to local churches of the North Texas Conference of the United Methodist Church. Six corrections were made to the resolution, substituting UMR Communications, Inc. for each reference to United Methodist Reporter.

Don Wiley offered an amendment: Further be it resolved that the North Texas Conference develop a written confidentiality policy regarding conference records and refer such matters to the appropriate committee. The amendment passed.

Katy Kiser offered a second amendment: Further resolve that it be determined if any other group or organization has bought the UMR mailing list, and if so, they be subject to legislation as well as the Institute on Religion and Democracy. The amendment passed.

The resolution passed.

Wes Magruder presented a Legislative Item #15 [LA 15] regarding the death penalty on behalf of the Board of Church and Society. Richard Hearne professed his support for the idea but questioned why it only allowed for participation of clergy. Martha Myre pointed out that the only part of the document pertaining to clergy only was the “Clergy Sign-on Letter.” Michael Lewis offered a speech against, referring conference to those unborn babies who are victims of abortion. The resolution passed.

### **Courtesies and Resolutions**

Conference Secretary Judith Reedy congratulated Rev. Byron and Norma Ruth Myrick who were celebrating their 54th wedding anniversary. Almost all their anniversaries have been celebrated at Annual Conference. Jackye Waiters-Lee, chair of Courtesies and Resolutions, was unable to attend the conference because she was seriously ill. She was included in prayers during the conference.

Bishop McKee thanked Chancellor Pam Liston, Gloria Scott, Debra Hobbs-Mason, Clayton Oliphint, the members and staff of First UMC, Richardson, as well as Abril Goforth and tellers, volunteers from various churches, and all those who facilitated this year’s annual conference. He announced that Robert Hasley had invited Annual Conference to meet next year at St. Andrew UMC in Plano, June 7–9, 2015. The Bishop then invited Tim Crouch, who will head the 2016 Delegation and the other elected delegates to all come to the front. Crouch expressed his appreciation to the conference, said that the delegate needs the support of the conference, and promised that the 2016 General Conference would make Methodism better.

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

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

<b>Clergy Ballot Results</b>					
<b>General Conference</b>					
<b>Ballot #</b>	<b>Time Taken</b>	<b>Time Concluded</b>	<b>Elected</b>	<b>Votes Needed</b>	<b>Votes Received</b>
1	Tue 10:52		Jan Davis	160	165
2			Clayton Oliphint	165	170
4			Jill Jackson-Sears	165	182
6			Ron Henderson	167	183
6		Tue 11:25	Don Underwood	167	173
			<b>Jurisdictional Conference</b>		
8	Tue 11:29		Owen Ross	155	171
8			Joe Stobaugh	155	166
9			Lisa Greenwood	165	169
11			Ouida Lee	165	182
13		Tue 12:01	Tim Morrison	168	198
			<b>Alternates</b>		
14	Tue 12:03		Andrew Stoker	155	166
17			Derek Jacobs	162	183
17		Tue 12:13	Holly Bandel	162	176

<b>Lay Ballot Results</b>					
<b>General Conference</b>					
<b>Ballot #</b>	<b>Time Taken</b>	<b>Time Concluded</b>	<b>Elected</b>	<b>Votes Needed</b>	<b>Votes Received</b>
1	Tue 3:17		Tim Crouch	210	250
2			Linda Parks	229	245
5			Kelly Carpenter	235	311
5			Ricky Harrison	235	250
9		Tue 4:08	Richard Hearne	238	270
			<b>Jurisdictional Conference</b>		
	Tue 4:12		Gretchen Toler-Debus	215	290
10			Daniel Soliz	215	244
11			Sally Vonner	219	240
12			Henry Lessner	230	234
13		Tue 4:29	Timmy Clark	235	246
			<b>Alternates</b>		
14	Tue 4:32		Herman Totten	Top Three	209
14			Serna Eckert	Top Three	199
14		Tue 4:35	Don Wylie	Top Three	186