

V. DAILY PROCEEDINGS
174th SESSION OF THE IOWA ANNUAL CONFERENCE
Des Moines, Iowa

Saturday morning - June 10, 2017

1. CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME. Bishop Laurie Haller called the 174th Session of the Iowa Annual Conference at 9:00 a.m. Following the call to order Bishop Laurie offered words of welcome.
2. WORSHIP. Opening worship – Rev. John Wagner, Conference Worship Chair and the worship team from Ankeny First UMC. Preacher: Bishop Laurie preached on “Creating Difference Makers: Have we fruit?”.
3. INTRODUCTION. Bishop Laurie introduced her husband Rev. Gary Haller. He offered remarks.
4. ANNOUNCEMENTS. Nitza Dovenspike, Conference Secretary.
5. BREAK.

CLERGY EXECUTIVE SESSION
Saturday morning – June 10, 2017

1. GATHERING MUSIC.
2. OPENING LITANY. Rev. Deborah Stowers, Chair, Board of Ordained Ministry.
3. PRAYER.
4. HYMN. “One Thing Remains”.
5. CLERGY WELLNESS. Conference Wellness Coordinator Kae Tritle.
6. ORDERS RETREAT EVENT. Announcement of the Orders Retreat event scheduled for October 3-4, 2017.
7. RECOGNITION of Full Membership Ordination Anniversaries of 70, 65, 60, 55, 50, 40 and 25 years.
8. PURPOSE OF CLERGY SESSION. Rev. Deborah Stowers, Chair of the Board of Ordained Ministry.
9. VOTING RIGHTS. Rev. Deborah Stowers, Chair and Lisa Steel, Director of Ministerial Services and Registrar.
10. MOTION. Rev. Stowers moved the bar of the clergy executive session be the chairs in the meeting room with an understanding that only ordained clergy in full connection and the members of the Board of Ordained Ministry may vote on matters before the clergy session (§ 605.7, *2016 Book of Discipline*). Seconded and adopted.
11. MOTION. Rev. Stowers moved, in accordance with §605.7 of the *2016 Book of Discipline*, the following persons be given permission to be present at the clergy session with voice but no vote: Director of Ministerial Services Lisa Steel, Bishop Haller’s Executive Secretary Diane Brockmeyer, Conference Secretary Nitza Dovenspike, Chancellor John Moorlach, pastors of

other denominations who are serving under appointment in the Iowa Annual Conference, and Diaconal Ministers of the Iowa Annual Conference. Seconded and adopted.

12. CALL TO ORDER AND OPENING REMARKS. Bishop Laurie Haller, Resident Bishop.
13. CELEBRATING the ministry of those retiring (Business of Annual Conference [BAC] # 53, 354, 56. Dennis Tevis and Gary Armstrong, Co-Chairs, Conference Relations.
14. APPOINTMENTS IN LESS THAN FULLTIME (BAC #72.a). Dennis Tevis and Gary Armstrong.
15. APPOINTMENTS OF DEACONS IN FULL CONNECTION (BAC #72b). Dennis Tevis and Gary Armstrong.
16. APPOINTMENTS OF INTERIM PASTORS (BAC #73). Dennis Tevis and Gary Armstrong.
17. CELEBRATING the lives of ministers who have died this year (Business of Annual Conference [BAC] #48). Rev. Jodi Rushing and Rev. Scott Lothe. Prayer of remembrance by Bishop Laurie Haller.
18. OFFERING for the Clergy Assistance (Sustentation) Fund. Rev. Jackie Bradford, Dean of the Appointive Cabinet.
19. APPOINTIVE CABINET REPORT (BAC) #17. Rev. Jackie Bradford, Dean of the Appointive Cabinet.
20. REGISTRAR'S REPORT. Lisa Larson, Director of the Office of Ministerial Services and Registrar, reported on certified candidates for ministry (BAC #19)
 - 20.1 The Registrar presented those who have completed the studies for license as a local pastor, are approved, but are not now appointed (BAC #20). Approved.
 - 20.2 The Registrar presented those approved and appointed as full-time local pastors (BAC #21.a) and as part-time local pastors (BAC #21.b). Approved.
 - 20.3 The Registrar reported those discontinued as local pastors (BAC #22). No vote required.
 - 20.4 RECOGNITION. New graduates of the Course of Study were introduced by the Registrar and greeted by the Bishop: Charles J.A. Johnson and Dan L. Rogers. Bishop Laurie led prayer for them and their ministry.
 - 20.5 The Registrar reported those ordained ministers from other Annual Conferences or Methodist denominations approved for appointment in the Iowa Annual Conference while retaining their conference or denominational membership (BAC #24.a, b).
 - 20.6 The Registrar presented those clergy in good standing in other Christian denominations who have been approved to serve appointments or ecumenical ministries within the bounds of the Iowa Annual Conference while retaining their denominational affiliation (BAC #25.a, b). Approved.
 - 20.7 The Registrar presented the one who is an affiliate member (BAC #26.b). Approved by 2/3 vote.
21. EXAMINATION TEAM REPORT. Rev. Scott Keele Kober and Rev. Kerrin Kirkpatrick, Co-chairs, Examination Committee, Board of Ordained Ministry.
 - 21.1 Rev. Kober moved the election of provisional member candidates (BAC # 28). Candidates were introduced, then greeted and examined by the Bishop. All were elected, welcomed into the body, and prayed for by the Bishop.

- 21.2 Rev. Kober and Rev. Kirkpatrick moved the election of those recommended for election to full membership and for ordination as elder (BAC #32, 34). Candidates were introduced, then greeted and examined by the Bishop. All were elected, presented membership certificates, welcomed into the body and membership in the annual conference, and prayed for by the Bishop.
 - 21.3 Rev. Kober and Rev. Kirkpatrick reported on provisional members, previously discontinued, readmitted (BAC #35). Approved.
 - 21.3 Rev. Kirkpatrick and Rev. Kober reported those who are continued as provisional members (BAC #29).
22. CONFERENCE RELATIONS TEAM REPORT. Rev. Gary Armstrong and Rev. Dennis Tevis, Co-chairs, Conference Relations Committee, Board of Ordained Ministry.
- 22.1 Rev. Armstrong and Rev. Tevis moved those having been received by transfer from another annual conference (BAC # 38). Approved.
 - 22.2 Rev. Armstrong and Rev. Tevis reported on those moved to another annual conference (BAC # 41).
 - 22.3 Rev. Armstrong and Rev. Tevis moved those who have discontinued as provisional members (BAC # 42). Approved.
 - 22.4 Rev. Armstrong and Rev. Tevis moved one placed on honorable location-retired (BAC #44). Approved.
 - 22.5 Rev. Armstrong and Rev. Tevis moved who have had their conference membership terminated (BAC #46). Approved.
 - 22.6 Rev. Armstrong reported provisional or ordained members who have received appointments in other Annual Conferences of The United Methodist Church while retaining their membership in this Annual Conference (BAC #49).
23. LEAVE OF ABSENCE. Rev. Gary Armstrong and Rev. Dennis Tevis, Co-chairs, Conference Relations Committee, Board of Ordained Ministry.
- 23.1 Rev. Tevis moved those on voluntary personal leave for less than five years (BAC #50.a.1). Approved.
 - 23.2 Rev. Tevis moved those on voluntary personal leave more than five years (BAC #50.a.2). Approved.
 - 23.3 Rev. Tevis moved those on voluntary family leave for less than five years (BAC #50.a.3). Approved.
 - 23.4 Rev. Tevis reported those on voluntary transitional leave (BAC #50.a.5).
 - 23.5 Rev. Armstrong moved those granted sabbatical leave (BAC #51). Approved.
 - 23.6 Rev. Armstrong moved those granted medical leave (BAC #52). Approved.
24. BOARD OF ORDAINED MINISTRY EXECUTIVE STATEMENT. Rev. Scott Keele Kober and Rev. Kerrin Kirkpatrick, Co-chairs, Examination Committee, Board of Ordained Ministry. The statement was written in response to the Judicial Council ruling.
- 24.1 Rev. Michael Wayne Gudka responded to the BoOM Executive statement.
 - 24.2 Rev. Mike Biklen spoke in response to Rev. Gudka's comments.
 - 24.3 Rev. Gallo spoke in support of the difficult decisions that the Judicial Council makes.
 - 24.4 Rev. Gary Hoyt asked a question about the statement from BoOM Executive Committee.
 - 24.5 Rev. Alexis Johnson responded to the question.

25. DISMISSAL WITH BLESSING. Bishop Laurie Haller.

LAITY SESSION
Saturday morning – June 10, 2017

1. MUSIC. Gathering Music—Metro Brass from Des Moines, along with Phil Carver and Colleen McRoberts.
2. CALL to WORSHIP AND WELCOME. Margaret Borgen, Conference Lay Leader.
3. SCRIPTURE. Luke 10:25-37, read by Richard Klinefelter.
4. GREETINGS. Bishop Laurie Haller, “Prayer from Eleanor Roosevelt,” June 1945, based on President Roosevelt’s Four Freedoms.
5. SONG. *Here I Am, Lord.*
6. INTRODUCTION. Board of Laity Members were introduced and each shared favorite quotes.
7. REASON FOR GATHERING. Janice Bolger spoke about why we gather in an Annual Conference.
8. OPPORTUNITIES. Dan Corrow and Marilyn Lancaster spoke about opportunities to get involved in Annual Conference: their booth, the Peace Walk, Prayer Room, reception for our new Bishop, and nine workshops this afternoon.
9. APPRECIATION. Margaret Borgen thanked Barb Mann, Liz and Art in Communications, and Metro Brass.
10. MUSIC. Metro Brass played during a time of quiet meditation.
11. SCHOOL FOR LAY MINISTRY. Jill Eichner Brown spoke about the School for Lay Ministry, and introduced this year’s graduates.
12. LAY SPEAKERS. Colleen Petaros introduced Lay Speakers.
13. PRAYER. Prayer of dedication from Jill Eichner Brown.
14. SONG. *We Are Called.*
15. LAITY AS DIFFERENCE MAKERS. Angela Hansen-Abbas and Lynn Calvert talked about how laity can make a difference: spiritual growth, sharing ways to make a difference, form relationships.
16. CLOSING. Margaret Borgen closed the laity session.

Saturday afternoon, June 10, 2017

1. CALL TO ORDER. Bishop Haller called the session to order at 2:07 PM. Pastor Shawn Hill gave the opening prayer.

2. ORGANIZATION. Dori Collogan, Chair of Business and Agenda, moved the organization of annual conference:
 - 2.1 That the working agenda for the 2017 session of the Iowa Annual Conference be the agenda which most recently has been made available electronically to members of this annual conference session, noting that any times listed for speakers are guidelines only;
 - 2.2 That the voting bar for all plenary sessions of this Session of Annual Conference include the following areas: the plenary and worship platform, the Journal desk, and the area which includes all of the numbered tables;
 - 2.3 That seating within the voting bar during the plenary sessions and legislative committee sessions be restricted to members of the conference; to our Conference Treasurer and our Director of Human Resources who are granted the privilege of speaking in relation to their positions; and to the persons occupying the following positions who have no voice or vote:
 - 2.3.1 conference staff members: from the Episcopal Office for Administration and for Connectional Ministries; from Administrative Services; from Human Resources; from Communications; and from District Offices;
 - 2.3.2 those identified by *The Book of Discipline* (§602.9-10); greeters; hosts; Diakonos; Rev. Gary Haller, Bishop Deborah Lieder Kiesey; and those named by conference action as visitors; and
 - 2.3.3 staff of Iowa United Methodist Foundation;
 - 2.4 That hosts monitor the voting bar to assist the conference in conducting its business in good order and without distractions;
 - 2.5 That each conference member vote only on his/her assigned keypad and not vote on anyone else's keypad, even if asked to do so, as absentee members are not permitted to vote by proxy;
 - 2.6 That speakers be guided by the countdown clocks located on the video display screens;
 - 2.7 That sponsors of any new resolution or program item to be considered by the plenary session take the item to Karen Dungan for assignment to its proper location;
 - 2.8 That all materials to be distributed in our meeting places receive prior approval by Karen Dungan or Dori Collogan;
 - 2.9 That conference members and visitors show respect by keeping conversation and other noise and movement to a minimum during plenary sessions;
 - 2.10 That all conference members and visitors turn off all mobile devices or put them on silent mode during worship services and plenary sessions and that members leave the hall when making or receiving calls.

Adopted.
3. ADDITIONAL ITEMS. Karen Nichols Dungan introduced additional items for conference action that were not included in the pre-conference manual. These items were posted to the Conference's website.
4. MOTION. Karen Nichols Dungan moved to suspend Rule of Order I.D.2.e, which requires that all of the Consent Calendars be addressed before we can return to action on any specific items. This request for suspension is so that we can consider and act upon all the items in Section I—the proposed Constitutional Amendments that have come to us from the General Conference—before we consider any other legislative matters. Adopted.
5. ANNOUNCEMENTS. Nitza Dovenspike, Conference Secretary gave instruction on using the light poles and floor microphones, followed by instruction on the rules and tools for using the voting pads.
6. MOTION. Nitza Dovenspike moved on behalf of the Annual Conference Sessions Planning Committee that the 2019 session of the Iowa Annual Conference meet at the Iowa Events

Center in Des Moines, Iowa on Saturday, June 8 through Tuesday, June 11, 2019. Adopted.

7. MOTION. Melissa Warren moved to refer consideration of venue for upcoming Annual Conference sessions to Sessions committee for the purpose of considering venues that better serve our needs as United Methodists and as a conference. Adopted.
8. ANNOUNCEMENTS. Nitza Dovenspike, Conference Secretary
9. NOMINATIONS Coordinating Committee Report. Rev. Fred Lewis, Chair, presented the 2017 Annual Conference Ballot and opportunities for service.
10. ELECTION OF CONFERENCE TREASURER. Rev. Jon Disburg, Chair of CFA, moved the election of Margaret Biggs as Conference treasurer. Adopted.
11. BUDGET. Margaret Biggs presented the Treasurer's report and the working budget.
12. ELECTION OF CONFERENCE CHANCELLOR. Rev. Bill Poland nominated John Moorlach to be Conference Chancellor. Adopted.
13. RECOGNITION. Karen Nichols Dungan presented Gary Gansemer, Director of Hillcrest Family Services, who spoke briefly and then introduced the new Director, Julie Heiderscheit.
14. TEACHING SESSION. Bishop Laurie Haller introduced Rev. Faith Fowler, pastor at Cass Community United Methodist Church, Detroit, Michigan.
15. WORKSHOPS. Nitza Dovenspike, Conference Secretary provided information about the locations and leaders of the workshops:
 - a. Tiny House Homeless Project | Faith Fowler | Room: 302
 - b. EmpowHer—Successes in Mission Micro-finance | Judy Marnin | Room: 303
 - c. Laity Development through the School for Lay Ministry Experience | John Rothlisberger and Lynn Calvert | Room: 304
 - d. Women at the Well Community Reentry Program | Lee Schott | Room: 305
 - e. Mental Health Support and Advocacy | Gary Gansemer and Julie Heiderscheit | Room: 306
 - f. Immigration—It's a Big Topic, Let's Talk! | Brynne Howard and others | Room: 307
 - g. Prayer—Making a Difference Through Prayer | Bill and Sheryl Daylong | Room: 308
 - h. Benefit Basics: Navigating Your Benefit Options | Joni Mardesen | Room: 318
16. DISMISSAL. Dismissed for afternoon workshops.

Saturday Evening, June 10, 2017

1. RECONVENE. Bishop Haller reconvened Annual Conference. Paul Frederiksen gave the opening prayer.
2. LEGISLATIVE ACTION. Bishop Haller moved to adjourn the 2017 Iowa Annual Conference for the purpose of having the annual meeting of the Conference Board of Pensions. Adopted.
 - 2.1 Rev. Beverlee Bell called the meeting of the Conference Board of Pensions to order.
 - 2.2 Rev. Bell reported on the condition of the Pension Fund and Health Care.

- 2.3 Rev. Bell moved the acceptance of the Board of Pensions report as printed in the manual plus the additional item on the health insurance provided as additional materials to the pre-conference manual. Adopted.
- 2.4 Bishop Haller moved to reconvene the 2017 Iowa Annual Conference. Adopted.
3. ANNOUNCEMENTS. Nitza Dovenspike, Conference Secretary.
4. MONITORING. Monitoring Report from COSROW, Lauren Loonsfoot, Co-Chair presented a gift to Bishop Haller and gave the initial monitoring report.
5. RETIREMENT CELEBRATION. Celebration led by Bishop Laurie Haller, Bishop Deborah Kiesey. Liturgists: Rev. Nick Grove, Rev. Katie Dawson, Rev. Gary Armstrong, Nitza Dovenspike, Rev. Karen Dungan. Offering: Cass Community Social Services.
6. ADJOURNMENT. Adjournment for the evening.
- 7.

Sunday Morning, June 11, 2017

1. WORSHIP. Ordering of Ministry Worship Service. Worship leaders: Bishop Laurie Haller, Rev. Bill Spangler-Dunning, Rev. Lee Schott, Rev. Bill Poland, Rev. Karen Dungan, Rev. Sean McRoberts, Chris Humrichouse, Pastor John Wagner and Worship Team: James D. Walters, Rev. Arnette Pint, Pastor Sam Fisher, Lindsay Drake, Deacon Barb Mittman, Praise Team Musicians, Margaret Borgen, Rev. Deb Stowers, Rev. Chad Jennings, Superintendents, Chairs and Co-Chairs of Board of Ordained Ministry and Fellowship of Local Pastors and Associate Members.
2. ECUMENICAL GREETING. Rev. Bill Spangler-Dunning, Regional Minister and President, Christian Church in the Upper Midwest.
3. RECOGNITION of Course of Study graduates: Charles J. Johnson, Dan L. Rogers.
4. RECOGNITION of those transferring from another annual conference: Okitakoyi M. Lundula, Emmanuel T. Naweji, Stephanie L. Schlimm.
5. COMMISSIONING as provisional elders: Elizabeth Ann Bell, Christopher Eric Childs, Elad Shapira.
6. ORDINATION as elders: Melanie Ann Greengo, Nicholas Daniel Grove, Jae Hee Lee, Kayla Marie Lange, Joy Lynne Mitchell, Jeremy Michael Poland, Eric Zinnah Sayonkon, Michael Chase Slininger.
7. PRAYER for Ministry Calling. Bishop Laurie Haller.
8. SCRIPTURE. Luke 9:18-24 NRSV read by Sean McRoberts.
9. MESSAGE. "Will you bear the cross, or just wear it?", Bishop Laurie Haller.
10. OFFERING. Simpson Youth Academy.
11. FOOTWASHING CEREMONY. Bishop Laurie Haller and the newly ordained clergy.

12. HOLY COMMUNION.

13. CLOSING.

Sunday afternoon, June 11, 2017

1. OPENING PRAYER.

2. ANNOUNCEMENTS. Nitza Dovenspike, Conference Secretary.

3. Craig Scott submitted a question of law regarding the appointment of Reverend Anna Blaedel in writing to the Episcopal Office. Accepted by the Bishop.

4. WORKING BUDGET. Jon Disburg, Chair of CFA, moved the working budget located on page 14 of the pre-conference manual. Adopted.

5. CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS. Nitza Dovenspike, Conference Secretary, presented the constitutional amendments. Vote totals from across the denomination will be added together and results reported by the Council of Bishops per ¶59, *2016 Book of Discipline*. A 2/3 majority of all votes is required for adoption.

5.1 Nitza Dovenspike moved Action Item #101, Proposed Constitutional Amendment – I. Vote was taken.

5.2 Nitza Dovenspike moved Action Item #102, Proposed Constitutional Amendment – II. Vote was taken.

5.3 Nitza Dovenspike moved Action Item #103, Proposed Constitutional Amendment – III. Vote was taken.

5.4 Nitza Dovenspike moved Action Item #104, Proposed Constitutional Amendment – IV. Vote was taken.

5.5 Nitza Dovenspike moved Action Item #105, Proposed Constitutional Amendment – V. Vote was taken.

6. CONSENT CALENDAR AND LEGISLATIVE ACTION. Rev. Karen Dungan presented information about the legislative sections and procedures for voting on consent calendars.

7. CONSENT CALENDAR. Rev. Katie Dawson, leader for Legislative Sections 2 & 3. Brian Oliver, chair of Rules of Order committee explained changes to the Rules of Order and Plan of Organization.

7.1 Katie Dawson moved Action Item 201 as the first Consent Calendar for Section 2.

7.2 Carolyn Bittner moved to remove Item 201 from Consent Calendar. Adopted.

7.3 Katie Dawson moved Action Items 202, 203, and 204 as the second Consent Calendar. Adopted.

8. CELEBRATION. Celebration of Licensing School. Rev. Arnette Pint, Dean of Licensing School.

9. CONFERENCE LAY LEADER. Address by Conference Lay Leader, Margaret Borgen.

10. REPORT. Rev. Barrie Tritle presented the report on the Healthy Church Initiative.

11. CONSENT CALENDAR. John Rothlisberger, leader for Legislative Section 4.
 - 11.1 John Rothlisberger moved Action Items 401, 402, 403, 404, and 405 as the Consent Calendar.
 - 11.2 Jerry Miller moved to remove Item 401 from the Consent Calendar. Adopted.
 - 11.3 Jerry Miller moved to remove Item 405 from the Consent Calendar. Adopted.
 - 11.4 Carolyn Bittner moved to remove Item 403 from the Consent Calendar. Adopted.
 - 11.5 John Rothlisberger moved Action Items 402 and 404 as the Consent Calendar. Adopted.

13. CONSENT CALENDAR. John Rothlisberger, leader for Legislative Section 5.
 - 13.1 John Rothlisberger moved Action Items 501, 502, 503, 504, 505, and 506 as the Consent Calendar.
 - 13.2 Jerry Miller moved to remove Item 505 from the Consent Calendar. Adopted.
 - 13.3 John Rothlisberger moved Action Items 501, 502, 503, 504, and 506 as the Consent Calendar. Adopted.

14. CONSENT CALENDAR. John Rothlisberger, leader for Legislative Section 6.
 - 14.1 John Rothlisberger moved Action Items 601, 602, 603, 604, 605, 606, 607, 608, 609, 610, 611, and 612 as the Consent Calendar. Adopted.

15. CONSENT CALENDAR. Lynn Calvert, leader for Legislative Section 7.
 - 15.1 Lynn Calvert moved Action Items 701, 702, 703, 704, 705, and 706 as the Consent Calendar. Adopted.

16. CONSENT CALENDAR. Lynn Calvert, leader for Legislative Section 8.
 - 16.1 Lynn Calvert moved Action Items 801, 802, and 803 as the Consent Calendar. Adopted.

17. CONSENT CALENDAR. Lynn Calvert, leader for Legislative Section 9.
 - 17.1 Lynn Calvert moved Action Items 901, 902, 903, 904 and 905 as the Consent Calendar. Adopted.

18. CELEBRATION. Celebration of Educational Ministries – Ryan Risdal, Simpson Youth Academy. Christian Menze, Rust College student.

19. UM PUBLISHING HOUSE. Rev. Brian Milford, Lindsay Drake and Rev. Bob Dean.

20. EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES. Len and Diane Eberhart.

21. CHRISTIAN EDUCATORS FELLOWSHIP – Nicole Smith, Christians Engaged in Faith Formation.

22. MONITORING REPORT. Lauren Loonsfoot, Co-Chair from COSROW presented monitoring report.

23. ANNOUNCEMENTS. Nitza Dovenspike, Conference Secretary.

24. MEMORIAL CELEBRATION. Preacher: Rev. Brian Milford. Liturgists: Nitza Dovenspike, Rev. Deborah Stowers, Rev. Matthew Miller, Rev. Dr. Okitakoyi (Michel) Lundula, Rev. Arnette Pint.

25. MEAL BREAK. 4:57 PM.

Sunday evening, June 11, 2017

1. CELEBRATION OF EPISCOPAL FAMILY. A reception and celebration welcoming the new episcopal family was held.
2. ADJOURNED FOR THE EVENING at 8:30 p.m.

Monday morning, June 12, 2017

1. WORSHIP. Fixing of Appointments worship service – Preacher: Rev. Jackie Bradford, Dean of the Bishop’s Cabinet. Participating leaders: Bishop Laurie Haller, Rev. Heecheon Jeon, Rev. Harlan Gillespie, Rev. Karen Dungan, Rev. Melissa Drake. Offering: Morningside and Simpson Colleges Nigerian Partnership.
2. TRAINING. Peacemaker Circle training – Fred Van Lieu led the plenary on a session of learning about peacemaker circles for conversations on difficult topics.
3. BREAK.
4. ANNOUNCEMENTS. Nitza Dovenspike, Conference Secretary.
5. MOTION. Rev. Dori Collogan, chair of Business and Agenda, moved to suspend Rule of Order I.D.2.e, which requires that all Consent Calendars be addressed before we can return to items removed for Consent. The purpose for the suspension is to allow us to address Item 201 before we do other legislative items. Adopted.
6. BUDGET. Maggie Biggs, Conference Treasurer, presented information on transparency in the budget.
 - 6.1 Sean McRoberts moved to amend the working budget by increasing the Board of Global Ministries amount for 2018 to \$869,367. The increase of \$60,000 will be used to support the victim services of MONSOON-United Asian Women of Iowa. Failed.
7. LEGISLATION ACTION. Section 2 – Part 2 – Action Item 201.
 - 7.1 Rev. Katie Dawson moved Action Item 201.
 - 7.2 Rev. Michael Biklen & Rev. Kathleen Moore moved for those members who do not have internet access a preconference manual shall be made available without cost. Members with internet access at home or at church will be asked to pay a charge for a hard copy. Failed.
 - 7.3 Carolyn Bittner moved to add after “without being read to the Annual Conference Session” the following: Copies will be made available at cost by the onsite Treasurer’s Office. Failed.
 - 7.4 Action Item 201 Adopted.
8. CELEBRATION. Change a Child’s Story: Patty Link reported that 84,406 books and 29,631 hours of reading to kids in poverty have been donated so far.
9. REPORT ON HEALTHY CHURCH INITIATIVE. Barrie Tritle moved Annual Conference accept Healthy Church Initiative Team Report. Adopted.

10. ANNOUNCEMENTS. Nitza Dovenspike, Conference Secretary.
11. DIAKONOS. Acknowledgement of diakonos and offering. Rev. Steve Braudt.
12. MEAL BREAK. Jim McIntosh led prayers before the meal break.

Monday afternoon, June 12, 2017

1. NOMINATIONS Coordinating Committee Ballot. Rev. Fred Lewis moved the printed ballot with one addition: add to Northwest District Committee on Ordained Ministry: Missy Brown and Todd Schlitter 2021. Adopted.
2. BUDGET. Jon Disburg, CFA Chair, moved the working budget as the budget for 2018. Adopted.
3. IUMC Foundation.
 - 3.1 Rev. Jacqueline Thompson moved to recess the Annual Conference session for the purpose of convening the IAUMC Foundation annual membership meeting.
 - 3.2 IAUMC Foundation annual meeting was called to order by Kris Manning, Foundation Vice-President, who reported on fund balances, investments, fund performance, trust rates.
 - 3.3 Nitza Dovenspike, Foundation Treasurer, presented the budget.
 - 3.4 Nominees for Board class of 2021: Mike Orthel, Clergy; Tom Bates, Laity; Lesa Moose, Laity.
 - 3.5 Report on programs: Higher Education Loan Program for Pastors (H.E.L.P.), Carma Mohler Grants.
 - 3.6 Kevin Gowdy is retiring on December 31, new director is Katherine Yarnell.
 - 3.7 Board Members and Staff of the Foundation were recognized.
 - 3.8 Kris Manning moved to adjourn the meeting and reconvene the Annual Conference. Adopted.
4. MATTER OF SPECIAL PRIVILEGE. Melinda Stonebraker expressed appreciation for the Foundation loans and scholarships.
5. LEGISLATIVE ACTION - Section 3 – Part 1.
 - 5.1 Bishop Haller reported that Action Items 309 and 321 are withdrawn because they are already in the General Conference Resolutions.
 - 5.2 Katie Dawson moved Action Items 301, 302, 303, 304, 305, 306, 307, 308, 310, 311, 312, 313, 314, 315, 316, 317, 318, 319, 320, 322 as the Consent Calendar for Section 3.
 - 5.2 Jim Sweers moved Item 301 be removed from the Consent Calendar. Adopted.
 - 5.3 Jim Sweers moved Item 303 be removed from the Consent Calendar. Adopted.
 - 5.4 Jim Sweers moved Item 307 be removed from the Consent Calendar. Adopted.
 - 5.5 Jim Sweers moved Item 313 be removed from the Consent Calendar. Adopted.
 - 5.6 Jim Sweers moved Item 315 be removed from the Consent Calendar. Adopted.
 - 5.7 Jim Sweers moved Item 318 be removed from the Consent Calendar. Adopted.
 - 5.8 Jim Sweers moved Item 320 be removed from the Consent Calendar. Adopted.
 - 5.9 Gina Spohnheimer moved Item 322 be removed from the Consent Calendar. Adopted.
 - 5.10 Katie Dawson moved Action Items 302, 304, 305, 306, 308, 310, 311, 312, 314, 316, 317, 319 as the Consent Calendar. Adopted.

- 5.11 Katie Dawson moved item 301. Adopted.
- 5.12 Katie Dawson moved item 303. Adopted.
- 5.13 Katie Dawson moved item 307. Adopted.
- 5.14 Katie Dawson moved item 313. Adopted.
- 5.15 Katie Dawson moved item 315. Adopted.
- 5.16 Katie Dawson moved item 318. Adopted.
- 5.17 Katie Dawson moved item 320. Deferred for discussion.
- 5.18 Katie Dawson moved Action Item 322.
 - 5.18.1 Gina Spohnheimer proposed an amendment to item 322 to insert “mental health first aid” in the last line between words “care” and “advocacy.” Amendment adopted.
 - 5.18.2 Melody Williams proposed another amendment to add, “Be it further resolved, that we encourage the Bishop form a task force to explore ways for the Iowa Conference to support increased inpatient beds, *in particular community-based programs* and trained psychiatrists in Iowa.” Amendment adopted.
 - 5.18.3 Action Item 322 adopted as amended.

6. LEGISLATIVE ACTION. Section 4.

- 6.1 John Rothlisberger, leader for Legislative Section 4, moved Action Item 401, which had been removed from the Consent Calendar.
 - 6.1.1 Jerry Miller added answers to questions on line 42: the amount is \$347,238; on line 44: the amount is \$298,561; on line 46: the amount is \$383,850.
 - 6.1.2 Action Item 401. Adopted.
- 6.2 John Rothlisberger moved Action Item 403.
 - 6.2.1 Discussion about missing answer to the question on item #6.
 - 6.2.2 Action Item 403 adopted.
- 6.3 John Rothlisberger moved Action Item 405.
 - 6.3.1 Jerry Miller added answers to questions on line 41: the amount is \$162,164; on line 43: the amount is \$163,335; on line 45: the amount is \$171,309. Also on line 39, the “2018 Ministry Plan,” is missing.
 - 6.3.2 Jerry Miller moved to table the item. Seconded.
 - 6.3.3 Dr. Mary Lautzenhiser Bellon spoke about the ministry plan.
 - 6.3.4 Miller moved to withdraw the motion to table.
 - 6.3.5 Action Item 405 was adopted.

7. PERSONAL PRIVILEGE. Rev. Chuck Layton requested a point of privilege and spoke about his personal journey with sexuality.

8. LEGISLATIVE ACTION. Section 5.

- 8.1 John Rothlisberger moved Action Item 505. Adopted.

9. LEGISLATIVE ACTION. Section 3 – Part 2.

- 9.1 Bishop Laurie Haller ruled Action Item 320 out of order.
- 9.2 Katie Dawson declared Section 3 finished.
- 9.3 Prayer for concluding legislation.
- 9.4 Tyler Schwaller moved to appeal the ruling of the chair on Action Item 320.
- 9.5 Rev. Sean McRoberts asked for clarification on the basis for ruling Item 320 out of order.
- 9.6 Discussion on Item 320 put on hold.

10. MOTION. Rev. Dori Collogan, Chair of Business and Agenda moved to extend the time of adjournment to 5:00 p.m. Adopted.
11. PERSONAL PRIVILEGE. Warren Thompson asked for a straw poll that we pay no more apportionments to General Conference until the Council of Bishops makes a determination about the topic of human sexuality. Jeff Bixby stated as a point of order that the request was out of order. Bishop Haller ruled Warren Thompson's request out of order.
12. REPORT. Phil Carver spoke about the Commission on a Way Forward.
13. LEGISLATIVE ACTION. Section 3 – Part 3 – Action Item 320.
- 13.1 Bishop Haller ruled Action Item 320 out of order based upon Judicial Decision #1032.
- 13.2 The Bishop ruled that Tyler Schwaller could speak to Item 320.
- 13.3 Tyler Schwaller made comments on Item 320.
- 13.4 Vote was taken on the Bishop's ruling that Action Item 320 is out of order. Adopted.
14. CLOSED CHURCHES. Rev. Jackie Bradford, Dean of the Cabinet named closed churches.

14.1 PROPERTY MATTER – RESOLUTION FOR CLOSURE OF THE MESERVEY SALEM UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

WHEREAS the Meservey Salem United Methodist Church located in Cerro Gordo County was founded in 1887 and has had a long and proud history; and

WHEREAS the charge conference of the Salem United Methodist Church voted on June 17, 2016 to discontinue; and

WHEREAS the district superintendent, in consultation with the local church, has recommended the closure of Salem United Methodist Church in accordance with paragraph 2549 of *The 2016 United Methodist Book of Discipline* and transfer of membership to the Thornton First United Methodist Church; and

WHEREAS the property of the church has been sold prior to the church's closure with the approval of the North Central District Board of Church Location and Building, the presiding bishop, and a majority of the district superintendents with final proceeds of the sale for the payment of Apportionments and missions; and

WHEREAS the consent to close effective May 1, 2017 has been granted by the presiding bishop, a majority of the district superintendents, and the North Central District Board of Church Location and Building and all proper *Disciplinary* requirements have been complied with;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Meservey Salem United Methodist Church be closed effective May 1, 2017.

14.2 PROPERTY MATTER – RESOLUTION FOR CLOSURE OF THE MILTON GRACE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

WHEREAS the Milton Grace United Methodist Church located in Van Buren County was founded in 1842 and has a long and proud history; and

WHEREAS the Church Conference of the Milton Grace United Methodist Church voted on August 23, 2016 to close the church; and

WHEREAS the District Superintendent has recommended the closure the Milton Grace United Methodist Church in accordance with paragraph 2549 of *The 2016 United Methodist Book of Discipline* and transfer of membership to Keosauqua United Methodist Church for a year; and

WHEREAS the Superintendent has recommended that the property may be sold; and proceeds are distributed to local missions when sold before December 31, 2016.

WHEREAS the consent to discontinue has been granted by the presiding bishop, a majority of the district superintendents and the district church location and building and all proper *Disciplinary* requirements have been complied with;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Milton Grace United Methodist Church of be closed effective December 31, 2016 and the property be transferred the Trustees of Iowa Annual Conference.

14.3 PROPERTY MATTER – RESOLUTION FOR CLOSURE OF THE ORAN UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

WHEREAS the Oran United Methodist Church located in Fayette County was founded in 1915 and has a long and proud history; and

WHEREAS the Church Conference of the Oran United Methodist Church voted on February 21, 2017 to close the church and

WHEREAS the District Superintendent has recommended closure of the Oran United Methodist Church in accordance with paragraph 2549 of *The 2016 United Methodist Book of Discipline* and transfer of membership to Oelwein Grace United Methodist Church and Fredericksburg United Methodist Church; and

WHEREAS the Superintendent has recommended that the property be sold.

WHEREAS the consent to close has been granted by the presiding bishop, a majority of the district superintendents and the district church location and building and all proper *Disciplinary* requirements have been complied with;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Oran United Methodist Church be closed effective December 31, 2016 and the property be transferred to the Trustees of the Iowa Annual Conference.

14.4 PROPERTY MATTER – RESOLUTION FOR CLOSURE OF THE PEORIA UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

WHEREAS the Peoria United Methodist Church located in Polk County and was founded in 1889 and has had a long and proud history; and

WHEREAS the charge conference of the Peoria United Methodist Church voted on May 1, 2016 to close the church; and

WHEREAS the district superintendent, in consultation with the local church, has recommended closure of the Peoria United Methodist Church in accordance with paragraph 2549 of *The 2016 United Methodist Book of Discipline* and transfer of membership to the Loring United Methodist Church; and

WHEREAS the property of the church has been sold prior to the church's closure with the approval of the North Central District Board of Church Location and Building, the presiding bishop, and a majority of the district superintendents with final proceeds of the sale for the payment of Apportionments and missions; and

WHEREAS the consent to close has been granted by the presiding bishop, a majority of the district superintendents, and the North Central District Board of Church Location and Building and all proper *Disciplinary* requirements have been complied with;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Peoria United Methodist Church be closed effective May 1, 2017.

14.5 PROPERTY MATTER – RESOLUTION FOR CLOSURE OF THE REMBRANDT UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

WHEREAS the Rembrandt United Methodist Church located in Buena Vista County was founded in 1900 and has had a long and proud history; and

WHEREAS the charge conference of the Rembrandt United Methodist Church voted on June 9, 2016 to discontinue the church effective September 1, 2016; and

WHEREAS the district superintendent, in consultation with the local church, has recommended the closure of Rembrandt United Methodist Church in accordance with paragraph 2549 of *The 2016 United Methodist Book of Discipline* and transfer of membership to Peterson United Methodist Church; and

WHEREAS the superintendent has in consultation with the local church has recommended that the property be sold; and

WHEREAS the consent to close has been granted by the presiding bishop, a majority of the district superintendents, and the Central District Board of Church Location and Building and all proper *Disciplinary* requirements have been complied with;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Rembrandt United Methodist Church be closed effective September 1, 2016.

14.6 PROPERTY MATTER – RESOLUTION FOR CLOSURE OF THE TRURO UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

WHEREAS the Truro United Methodist Church located in Madison County was founded in 1875 and has a long and proud history; and

WHEREAS the Church Conference of the Truro United Methodist Church voted on February 3, 2017 to close the church and

WHEREAS the District Superintendent has recommended the closure of the Truro United Methodist Church in accordance with paragraph 2549 of *The 2016 United Methodist Book of Discipline* and transfer of membership to Peru United Methodist Church; and

WHEREAS the Superintendent has recommended that the property be sold.

WHEREAS the consent to close has been granted by the presiding bishop, a majority of the district superintendents and the district church location and building and all proper *Disciplinary* requirements have been complied with;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Truro United Methodist Church be closed effective May 5, 2017 and the property be transferred to the Trustees of the Iowa Annual Conference.

14.7 PROPERTY MATTER – RESOLUTION FOR CLOSURE OF THE FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF GALVA

WHEREAS the First United Methodist Church located of Galva, Iowa, was founded in 1881 and has had a long and proud history; and

WHEREAS the charge conference of the First United Methodist Church of Galva voted on December 21, 2016 to discontinue; and

WHEREAS the district superintendent, in consultation with the local church, has recommended the closure of First United Methodist Church of Galva in accordance with paragraph 2549 of The 2016 United Methodist Book of Discipline and transfer of membership to the Holstein United Methodist Church; and

WHEREAS the consent to discontinue effective June 1, 2017 has been granted by the presiding bishop, a majority of the district superintendents, and the Northwest District Board of Church Location and Building and all proper *Disciplinary* requirements have been complied with;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the First United Methodist Church of Galva be closed effective June 1, 2017.

14.7 PROPERTY MATTER – RESOLUTION FOR CLOSURE OF TRINITY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH, COUNCIL BLUFFS

WHEREAS the Trinity United Methodist Church located in Council Bluffs, Iowa was founded in 1888 and has a long and proud history; and

WHEREAS the Church Conference of the Trinity United Methodist Church voted on May 7th, 2017 to discontinue the church; and

WHEREAS the District Superintendent has recommended discontinuance of the Trinity United Methodist Church and transfer of membership to Carter Lake United Methodist church; and

WHEREAS the property has been sold: and



WHEREAS the consent to discontinue has been granted by the presiding bishop, a majority of the district superintendents and the district church location and building and all proper *Disciplinary* requirements have been complied with;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Trinity United Methodist Church be discontinued effective June 1st, 2017 and the property be transferred to the Trustees of Iowa Annual Conference.

15. WESTMAR MEMORIAL PARK – HISTORICAL SITE RESOLUTION. Carl Bengé presented a resolution submitted by the Westmar University Alumni and Friends Association to the Iowa Commission on Archives and History to create the Westmar Memorial Park from the former Westmar College Campus. Adopted.
16. HILLCREST COVENANT RELATIONSHIP. Rev. Karen Dungan presented the statement creating an associate covenant relationship between the United Methodist Church and Hillcrest. Adopted.
17. AWARDS. Rev. Karen Dungan and Lindsay Drake from the Board of Discipleship presented “One Matters” awards to Graettinger and Terrill churches and Polk City.

- 18. MONITORING REPORT. Lauren Loonsfoot, Co-chair of COSROW and Dan Fernandez, Chair of the CORR presented Monitoring Report #3.
- 19. RECONCILING MOTION. Rev. Karen Dungan moved that the Annual Conference Session authorize the Conference Secretary, the Journal Editor, the Rules of Order Committee and the Annual Conference Session Planning Committee to edit and reconcile the actions of this Annual Conference Session, so they may be published in the *2017 Iowa Annual Conference Journal* and the *2017 Iowa Annual Conference Book of Resolutions*. Approved.
- 20. ANNOUNCEMENTS. Nitza Dovenspike, Conference Secretary.
- 21. CONCLUDING BUSINESS AND THANKS. Rev. Bill Poland thanked the many who make Annual Conference possible.
- 22. SERVICE OF SENDING. Closing remarks by Bishop Laurie Haller.
- 23. ADJOURNMENT. The 2017 Annual Conference adjourned at 4:51 pm.
- 24. ANNUAL CONFERENCE WORSHIP TEAM. John Wagner, Gabe Wagner, Nick Robertson, Elizabeth Buxton, Scott Marler, Amity Wagner, Karlin McGarvey.
- 25. REGISTRATION. 675 Clergy and 793 Laity members were registered.
- 26. OFFERINGS.

Clergy Session – Sustentation Fund	\$ 4,726.02
Cass Community	\$ 5,748.04
Simpson Youth Academy	\$ 6,755.63
Nigerian Students-Simpson/Morningside	\$ 6,646.24
Diakonos	\$ 6,073.83
Bishop’s Fit Walk – Skate Church	\$ 585.00
Bishop’s Special Mission Project – Food Pantry	\$ 500.00
- 27. ASSOCIATE SECRETARIES. Chris Ebbers, Pam Kranzler, Judy Marnin, Cherry Marsden, Jeff McPheron, Kathy Mitchell, and JoAnn Orthel assisted in the preparation of these Daily Proceedings.
- 28. ATTEST OF DAILY PROCEEDINGS.

Presiding Bishop,	Conference Secretary,
	
Laurie Haller	Nitza E. Dovenspike

CERTIFICATION OF ORDINATION**THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT AT HYVEE HALL****IN DES MOINES, IOWA****ON THE 11th DAY OF JUNE, 2017, I ORDAINED:****ELDERS IN FULL CONNECTION****Melanie A. Greengo****Nicholas Grove****Jae Hee Lee****Kayla M. Lange****Joy L. Mitchell****Jeremy M. Poland****Eric Z. Sayonkon****Michael C. Slininger****Signed,**

**Bishop Laurie Haller**

2017 ORDINANDS

Elders in Full Connection



L to R: Michael Slininger, Jeremy Poland, Melanie Greengo, Kayla Lange, Bishop Haller, Joy Mitchell, Jae Hee Lee, Nicholas Grove. Not pictured: Eric Sayonkan

Course of Study Graduates



L to R: Dan Rogers, Bishop Haller, Charles Johnson

Elders Transferring from Another Conference



Okitakoyi M. Lundula



Emmanuel Naweji



Stephanie L. Schlimm and
Bishop Haller

**IOWA ANNUAL CONFERENCE
OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**

**BISHOP'S RULING OF LAW ON QUESTION OF LAW No. 1
PRESENTED DURING THE 2017 SESSION OF THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE**

STATEMENT OF THE QUESTION OF LAW AND DECISION

BACKGROUND AND PROCEDURE

During the 174th Plenary Session of the 2017 Annual Conference on June 11, 2017 at 1:03 PM, Lay Member Craig Scott, Ed.D., of the Chariton, First United Methodist Church, after being duly recognized, rose and verbally requested that I enter a ruling on a question of law which is substantially similar to that set forth below, and attached hereto. I reminded Dr. Scott that I may only provide a ruling on a question of law submitted in writing during the annual conference session. Dr. Scott submitted his question of law in writing by the close of the Annual Conference session, which ended on the evening of Monday, June 12, 2017. This Ruling is attached to my Report for submission to the Judicial Council of The United Methodist Church. Also included with this Ruling and my Report are: Exhibit 1) the relevant Minutes of the 174th Plenary Session; Exhibit 2) a copy of Dr. Scott's signed Request for a Bishop's Decision of Law (hereinafter, "**Scott Request**"); Exhibit 3) a list of names and addresses of interested parties; Exhibit 4) a correct copy of a news article published by Iowa Annual Conference - "The Spirit is Calling Moving Inviting," <http://www.iaumc.org/newsdetail/the-spirit-is-calling-moving-inviting-5117464> (last visited on June 23, 2017), and, Exhibit 5) a news article published the Iowa Annual Conference - "Bishop Trimble Dismisses Complaint," <http://www.iaumc.org/newsdetail/the-spirit-is-calling-moving-inviting-5117464> (last visited on June 23, 2017).¹ These articles were referenced in Dr. Scott's Request for a Bishop's Decision of Law.²

REQUEST FOR DECISION OF LAW

The Scott Request is predicated on two events. Scott Request. The first was the public disclosure on June 22, 2016, at our 2016 Annual Conference, by a United Methodist elder and member in full connection, Rev. Anna Blaedel, who is duly appointed to ministry in the Annual Conference, that she, among other things, is "a self-avowed, practicing homosexual." See Exhibit 4 at 2. The second event was the dismissal on a complaint arising from Rev. Blaedel's June 22, 2016 statement by Bishop Julius C. Trimble, who was then serving as the resident Bishop to the Iowa Annual Conference. See Exhibit 5 at 2-3 (reporting Bishop Trimble's public statement regarding the matter). The Scott Request then states, accurately, that Rev. Blaedel continues to serve in the Annual Conference as an appointed elder in good standing. Scott Request.

The Scott Request then continues:

¹ After receiving the Scott Request, my office received an unsolicited, ex parte "friend of the court" brief via e-mail, but I have not relied on the arguments or authorities contained therein in coming to the conclusions set forth below. I do not therefore, consider that brief a part of the record to be included with my report.

² The internet address provided here for Exhibit 5 is slightly different than that offered by Dr. Scott, however, I believe Exhibit 5 is the correct document cited by Dr. Scott in his Request. Dr. Scott did not attach paper copies of the articles to his Request.

Therefore, in accordance with ¶¶51 and 2609 of the *Book of Discipline*, and in light of ¶¶304.2, 304.3, 310.2d, 605.7, ¶2702.1 (a), (b), and (d), Judicial Council decisions 920, 1341, and other relevant church law, I request a bishop's decision of law on the following:

1. Before the complaint against the Rev. Anna Blaedel was dismissed in August, did a review process conducted in accordance with ¶362, Judicial Council Decision #920, and related church law include Rev. Blaedel retracting her statement at the 2016 Annual Conference session to say that she was not really "a self-avowed practicing homosexual," include a determination of fact otherwise being made that she was not really "a self-avowed practicing homosexual," or include Rev. Blaedel being directly asked if she was a self-avowed, practicing homosexual?
2. If not, was the complaint properly dismissed in accordance with ¶362 and other relevant church law?
3. If Rev. Blaedel has not retracted her public statement that she is "a self-avowed practicing homosexual" and her statement has not been disproven by any proper review process, may her ministerial office be subject to further review under ¶362?
4. Does someone who states directly to the bishop, multiple superintendents, and multiple members of the board of ordained ministry, as Rev. Blaedel did before the entire 2016 Iowa Annual Conference, that she is "a self-avowed practicing homosexual" or an "out, out, queer, partnered clergy," and never retracts or contests the accuracy of such a statement, meet the minimum requirements for ordination and appointment under 304.3 310.2d, and 2702.1 (a), (b), and (d)?
5. Does ¶605.7 require that the bishop/cabinet report complaints dismissed under ¶362.e.1 as pertinent information required under ¶635.2m, at least upon request in the clergy session?

Scott Request ¶¶ 1-5.

RULING, ANALYSIS AND RATIONALE

Pursuant to the requirements of The Discipline of the United Methodist Church 2016 (hereinafter, *The Discipline*), I am instructed to respond "with a ruling to all submitted questions of law." See "Guidelines for Bishop's Rulings on Questions of Law," Rules of Practice and Procedure, The Judicial Council of the United Methodist Church, Appendix A (last revised on October 28, 2016) ("**Guidelines**"). I must do so even "if the ruling is simply that the question is moot, hypothetical or improperly submitted." *Id.* (quoting Judicial Council Decision 799). I address each of Dr. Scott's inquiries in turn:

1. I am asked whether the proper procedure was followed by Bishop Trimble in response to the complaint filed against Rev. Blaedel, as set forth above, under Paragraph 362 of *The Discipline*. See Scott Request ¶ 1; Ex. 5. I have no authority to rule on this question. As the Judicial Council as ruled, a "bishop has no authority to make substantive

rulings on judicial or administrative matters.” Dec. 799 (“Questions which are procedural or substantive matters relating solely to action in a judicial or administrative process are not proper questions to be addressed in a substantive ruling by a bishop.”). To decide otherwise would be address a question is not a matter “concerning the regular business of the Annual Conference.” *Id.*; see *also* Dec. 867.

2. I am asked whether the complaint, as set forth above, was properly dismissed in accordance with ¶362 and other relevant church. For the reasons and authorities set forth in my response above, I have no authority to rule on this question.

3. I am asked whether Rev. Blaedel retracted her public statement that she is “a self-avowed practicing homosexual” and her statement has not been disproven by any proper review process, may her ministerial office be subject to further review under ¶362. This request also asks me to review a judicial or administrative process, something I do not have authority to do. Dec. 799. Further, as this sub-request also asks me to determine whether Rev. Blaedel’s ministerial office is subject of further review under Paragraph 362, it is moot and hypothetical. The subject complaint has been dismissed. Dec. 799 (“The council has repeatedly noted that questions of law must relate to actual situations and must set forth the circumstances or acts upon which a specific ruling may be rendered.”); Dec. 867.

4. I asked whether “someone who states directly to the bishop, multiple superintendents, and multiple members of the board of ordained ministry . . . that she is “a self-avowed practicing homosexual” or an “out, out, queer, partnered clergy,” and never retracts or contests the accuracy of such a statement, meet the minimum requirements for ordination and appointment under 304.3 310.2d, and 2702.1 (a), (b), and (d).” This is a hypothetical question and so one on which I may not opine. Dec. 799 (“The council has repeatedly noted that questions of law must relate to actual situations and must set forth the circumstances or acts upon which a specific ruling may be rendered.”).

5. I am asked whether under ¶ 605.7 of *The Discipline*, that the “bishop/cabinet report complaints dismissed under ¶362.e.1 as pertinent information required under ¶635.2m, at least upon request in the clergy session.” This request requires me to opine on a procedural matter which is not in my authority to do. Dec. 799. It is also a hypothetical. See Dec. 33 (“It is not the duty of the presiding Bishop to rule upon any hypothetical question which may be propounded, nor to answer requests for information which involve no legal matter.”).

Bishop Laurie Haller