

Daily Christian Advocate

THE GENERAL CONFERENCE OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Cleveland, Ohio

Wednesday, May 3, 2000

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Colorful Festivities Open General Conference 2000

In a colorful, festive ceremony with international accents, The United Methodist Church opened its first General Conference of the twenty-first century on May 2, here in Cleveland.

Robes of blue, red, gold, black, white, and purple blended with liturgical dancers, banners, and African drums. An estimated 3,000 persons present in the Cleveland Convention Center expressed their enthusiasm with prolonged applause.

Banners and dancers shared the procession with about 100 bishops from the United States, Africa, Europe, and the Philippines. The opening ceremonies began with the singing of the traditional Wesley hymn "And Are We Yet Alive." The Scripture was read in four languages. The opening carried out the theme: "We who are many are one body."

UM News Service—Mike DuBose

After the sermon by Bishop Robert C. Morgan, Louisville Area, bishops, 992 delegates, and visitors received Holy Communion at 100 stations positioned around the vast auditorium.

Following worship, delegates took a break before beginning the business that will occupy them during the next ten days. In another tradition of General Conference, delegates found homemade cookies awaiting them outside the main arena.

With the legislative formalities cared for, delegates gathered in ten legislative committees where, throughout the rest of this week, they will review nearly 2,000 petitions filed by more than 12,000 groups and individuals. The subject matter of the petitions ranges from the routine to the highly controversial.

The Faith and Order Committee will have the most petitions to consider—348. Committee actions will be brought to plenary sessions that are expected to consume most of next week. Officers for the legislative committees, elected late Tuesday, attended special training sessions.

Agenda for Wednesday, May 3

8 A.M.	Choral Music
8:15 A.M.	Worship
9 A.M.	Conference business; committee mtgs. Laity Address Connectional Process Team Report
12:30 P.M.	Lunch recess
2:30 P.M.	Conference business; committee mtgs.
5 P.M.	Dinner recess
7:30 P.M.	Evening programs, conference business, committee meetings

A traditional opening event of the quadrennial legislative assembly provided a new look this year when Bishop Emerito P. Nacpil, Manila Area, the Philippines, delivered the “State of the Church” episcopal address on behalf of the church’s Council of Bishops. Bishop Nacpil was the first bishop from outside the United States to present the address.

“Your bishops believe that the making of people as disciples of the crucified and risen Lord, and forming them into a community of discipleship, is the most radically significant event that can happen to humanity and to the world,” Nacpil said.

The church must “continue working for a more righteous global social order, even if we suffer for it in the struggle,” the bishop asserted.

“Slavery and apartheid have been outlawed, but racism and ethnic cleansing are still with us—and we must rid the world of these demons. Colonialism and totalitarianism are no longer politically viable options for us, but we still use power to dominate, violate, and oppress, instead of to liberate, to enable, and to let be.”

On Wednesday Jim Nibbelink, Cincinnati, will deliver the laity address. Nibbelink, lay leader of the West Ohio Annual Conference, is a member of Armstrong Chapel United Methodist Church.

The tradition of the laity address began in 1980. Since then, a competition has been held every four years to select a layperson to make the speech.

—Robert Lear

May 2 Sermon Highlights General Conference Theme

“Do we need to remind ourselves we are many? We who are gathered are many, but we are gathered as one body. Our unity is a gift and a promise to be claimed, but we must claim it.”

As delegates to the 2000 General Conference worshiped together for the first time, Louisville Area Bishop Robert C. Morgan, Council of Bishops president, preached, using as his text Mark 5:1-20.

“Did you listen closely to this story?” Bishop Morgan asked. “The man is possessed by so many demons he calls himself ‘Legion.’”

Noting the man lives in a graveyard and is so tormented strong chains cannot hold him, Bishop Morgan asked, “How many people is he?”

“Jesus Christ sees this man, bruised, twisted—chaos seething through him—but he sees not as we see. Jesus sees a loved, blessed child of God, not as he is, but whole, full of life.”

Can we as a General Conference, Bishop Morgan asked, see ourselves in this account? Do we, who are many, appear as Christ sees us? “The gospel is filled with hope,” Bishop Morgan

proclaimed. “When Christ touched Legion, he was restored. His many voices were stilled to one, who was then told to go and tell what the Lord had done. He was speaking with one voice, not many.”

Does that mean unity at any cost? “Christ himself paid a high cost,” Bishop Morgan continued. “But we can have unity without uniformity. Unity does not mean sameness. When we come to the Communion table, we need to remember that we did not make up the guest list. All are invited to the table. To spare the world our differences, we must allow the hands of Christ to touch us. When we come to the table, the claim of Christ is upon us to be his body, his voice, his presence in the world. We then can tell the world one thing: What God has done for us, and what mercy has been shown us in Christ Jesus. Nothing can heal us but the mercy and love of God.

“Go,” the bishop urged, “speak of this mercy. We who were once aliens have now been redeemed by Jesus Christ. This must be our primary focus: to tell the world of God and Jesus Christ.”

UM News Service—Mike DuBose

—Erik Alsgaard

Rain Rouses Revelers at Rock and Roll Hall of Fame

“Rain” as a song title appears several hundred times in the computer log at the famed Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in Cleveland, but downpours April 30 on the shores of Lake Erie

Highlighting the reception for bishops and their spouses was a bishops’ band composed of five episcopal leaders and one professional musician rocking the corridors with thirty minutes of jazz, Dixieland, and other fast-moving numbers that had the crowd calling for more.

“When we heard the reception was to be held in the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, a little live music seemed appropriate,” said Bishop Peter D. Weaver, Philadelphia Area.

Bishop Weaver played trombone, accompanied by bishops Susan W. Hassinger, Boston Area, on flute; John L. Hopkins, Minnesota Area, bass guitar; Edward W. Paup, Portland Area, drums; and Sharon Zimmerman Rader, Wisconsin Area, keyboards.

Dubbed the “Purple People Leaders,” the band was anchored on trumpet by Jim Wonnacott, a professional musician and United Methodist layman from Columbia Station, Ohio. Other live groups from the Cleveland area included a praise band, a bell choir, a praise chorus, and a violinist.

—Robert Lear

Bishop Edward Paup plays the drums at the Monday evening bishops reception.

[UMNS photos by Mike DuBose]

didn’t stop an estimated 1,500 United Methodists from attending a festive opening of their international legislative assembly.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- An area of prayer has been designated for General Conference delegates and guests in the Little Theater and hallway behind it. The area includes 10 prayer stations based on the Lord’s Prayer. Visitors to the prayer area will have the opportunity to receive Communion, pray with a prayer team and have a place for silent prayer.
- FREE 1996 Book of Discipline Software Edition while supplies last at the Cokesbury.com booth in Exhibit Hall A.
- The youth and young adult hospitality room “Sanctuary” is in R201. Youth and young adults will have nightly meetings there. “Sanctuary” also features Internet access, a stereo system, couches and a big screen TV with movies.
- Beginning today there will be a daily concert of prayer in the Little Theater from 1:45-2:15 p.m.
- The deadline for youth and young adults to register for their Friday, May 5 cook-out and Sunday, May 7 swim party is today.
- The General Board of Church and Society cordially invites you to attend their General Conference Banquet this evening from 5:30-7 p.m. at the Holiday Inn City Centre Lakeshore, 1111 Lakeside Ave., Cleveland. Tickets are \$25 and seating is limited (first come, first served). Rev. Dr. Joseph Lowery, one of the nation’s leading civil rights activists and former president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, is the featured speaker.

It's Only Rock-and-Roll

I was on a mission. Attending the Bishop's Reception at the Rock-and-Roll Hall of Fame, I asked people if they knew why that popular tourist site is located in Cleveland. First, I went searching for the answer to the question: Who coined the term "rock-and-roll"?

Only four people knew the correct answer. Details in a moment. Here are some of the more creative (beyond a simple "I don't know") answers. No names were changed to protect the innocent. And no one was allowed to phone a friend.

Tom Burger, communications director, West Virginia Conference: "Little Richard."

Jackie Euper, delegate, Detroit Conference: "Oh, I know this one; I saw him on TV! Chubby Checker?"

Merle Griffith, Columbus, Ohio: "I don't have a clue. I'm not old enough to remember rock-and-roll."

Chester Jones, general secretary, General Commission on Religion and Race: "Little Richard. That's my final answer."

Bishop Susan M. Morrison, Albany Area: "Elvis? Dick Clark?"

Bishop Donald A. Ott, Michigan Area: "I haven't the foggiest idea, but I think it might be Donny Osmond, the first time he took on *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*."

Bishop Edward W. Paup, Portland Area (fresh from his on-stage performance with other bishops): "Fred Flintstone."

Duane Sarazin, delegate, Minnesota Conference: "Jerry Lee Lewis."

Bishop Mary Ann Swenson, Denver Area: "I really don't know. It was way before Elvis, and it wasn't Buddy Holly."

Gretchen from East Ohio: "Elvis Presley?" Beth from East Ohio: "Bruce Springsteen?"

Finally, I turned to Bishop Hans Växby of the North Europe Area. Without a pause, he uttered the correct answer: "Alan Freed, a disc jockey." Did he know where Alan was from? "No." But how did he know the answer? "I know my history," he said.

The other three people to answer correctly: David Bard, district superintendent, Minnesota Conference; Cathy Farmer, communications director, Memphis Conference; and Tom Slack, communications director, West Ohio Conference.

For all the trivia buffs out there, Alan Freed was hired in March 1951 to host a classical music show on WJW radio station in Cleveland. At the urging of a local music store owner, Freed changed the format of his show in July to rhythm and blues. He adopted the on-air name of "Moondog" and called his show a "rock-and-roll sensation."

Don't feel bad if you didn't know the answer. You're in good company.

After all, it's only rock-and-roll.

—Erik Alsgaard

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Longtime Conference Attendee Reflects on Six Decades

Louise Short, 94, widow of Bishop Roy Short, has attended every General Conference since the 1939 uniting conference. She also attended the last General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South in 1938. However, this is the last General Conference she plans to attend, she says, since she will be 98 by the next one and participating would be “just foolish.” Healthy and vibrant, she still drives. Her son and grandson are joining her as visitors during the first three days of the 2000 conference. She notes there has been a Short at every General Conference since 1934. She hopes her seven grandchildren and 18 great-grandchildren will continue the tradition. Married 74 years ago, Mrs. Short attended her first annual conference a month after her wedding and has attended ever since.

Her husband Roy was elected to the episcopacy in 1948 and served as bishop in Florida and Cuba. She attended the 50th and 75th anniversary celebrations of Methodism in Cuba and was among 27 former missionaries who attend the 100th anniversary of the Cuban Methodist church. She recalls it was an “overpowering moment” when the former missionaries saw each other for the first time in 39 years and worshiped at the church where her husband had broken ground for the building. She contends the Elian Gonzalez case has nothing to do with the child and everything to do with politics.

Mrs. Short lives in McKendree Village, a retirement home in Nashville, Tenn. Her life, she says, has been “wonderful.” Through the World Methodist Council, she has met many global leaders. However, of all the people she has encountered, Mrs. Short says the church’s laypersons have most inspired her. Because of the laity, United Methodism “is the church it should be.” “The greatest lesson I’ve learned,” she adds, “is appreciating the laity.” She considers the laity the foundation of United Methodism.

Asked for one message she would offer the 2000 General Conference delegates, she replied, “Be appreciative of your heritage.”

—Patty Meyers

Cokesbury display is largest ever

If one of the 50,000 copies of 2,500 different books Cokesbury has brought to Cleveland doesn't interest you, tell Edward Kowalski about it. He'll have a book shipped in for you.

—Dean Snyder

In addition to books, Cokesbury's display has altarware, Sunday school and vacation Bible school curricula, pictorial church directory services, jewelry, church signs, and more than 300 pulpit gowns and choir robes.

Still, if you can't find something you want, Kowalski, senior vice president of sales and marketing, will try to find it for you. "If you are looking for something, we want to get it for you. We'll have shipments coming in during the conference," he said.

Cokesbury's display, filling 25,000 square feet of Exhibit Hall A, is the largest ever at a General Conference, according to Don Sherrod, vice president of sales. The display must be large because United Methodists have come to expect more choices in products than when he first staffed a General Conference Cokesbury display 16 years ago, he said.

The material on display was selected to be representative of materials available at Cokesbury's 40 full-service stores and 30 seminary bookstores throughout the United States, Kowalski said.

iPreach and *iTeach* are on-line libraries completed just in time to be demonstrated at General Conference. For a monthly fee, subscribers get Internet access to reference materials and commentaries, including the New Interpreter's Bible, worth \$2,000 if they were purchased in book form, according to Paul Franklyn, director of electronic publishing and commerce. Franklyn has three computers connected to the Internet to allow delegates to sample products during General Conference.

Destination Transformation, a new curriculum featuring materials for children, confirmation classes and adults, and Club Can Do, Cokesbury's vacation Bible school material, as well as the Disciple Bible Study program and the new Christian Believer program are on display.

During General Conference, 46 authors will host book-signings in the Cokesbury display area, according to Tammy Clark, Abingdon Press's publicity and events manager. Bishop James K. Mathews will autograph his new book *Global Odyssey*, and James Moore will sign his popular volume *Some Folks Feel the Rain, Others Just Get Wet* Wednesday, May 10, from 1:30 to 2:30 p.m., Clark said.

Cokesbury is open from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. daily during General Conference except Sunday, May 7.

Thanks, Gary

A group of 50 recorders, assistant secretaries and elected legislative committee secretaries gathered for training over the dinner hour last night. Gary Bowen, General Conference business manager, realized the trainees would not have time for dinner and arranged to have box lunches for each of them. The lunches were delivered to the training room.

Unfortunately, the lunches were delivered to the room before the secretaries arrived. Meanwhile, the Legislative Committee on Independent Commissions was meeting in that room when the sandwiches were delivered. "Hey, isn't this great; they're giving us a lunch," said legislative committee members as some complained there weren't sufficient meals for the whole committee.

When the secretaries arrived at the room expecting they would have something for dinner, they found only empty plastic containers. Bowen dropped by to check on the trainees and was surprised to find some very hungry people hard at work. Not to abandon his hungry flock, the business manager rushed to the nearest pizzeria and returned with a tasty meal to the applause of the volunteers.

All in the Family

If you are a delegate with a relative who is also a delegate, please give your name and the name(s) of your relative(s) to Tom Burger (Mailbox #35), in the newsroom (Exhibit Hall C). We hope to run this information in the May 5 issue.

Thank you.

Baptism Legislation Clarification

Decision 811 of the Judicial Council deemed paragraphs 215, 222.1-5, 227.2 and 231.1-2 in the 1996 *Book of Discipline* unconstitutional.

Paragraphs 216.4, 222, 223, 224, 232.1 and 2 from the 1992 *Book of Discipline* are the United Methodist Church's governing law on baptism. Those paragraphs follow:

¶216.4. Persons in preparation for full membership make up the preparatory roll of the church. All baptized children shall be listed on the preparatory membership roll, and other persons who have declared their interest in church membership and have been enrolled in confirmation preparation may be listed as preparatory members. (*See also* ¶¶ 223, 232.2.)

¶222. The pastor of the church shall, at the time of administering the Sacrament of Baptism, furnish the parents or guardians of the child who is baptized with a certificate of Baptism, which shall also clearly state that the child is now enrolled as a preparatory member in The United Methodist Church. The pastor shall also admonish members of the congregation of their responsibility for the Christian nurture of the child. The pastor shall be responsible for seeing that the membership secretary adds the full name of the baptized child to the preparatory membership roll of the church. When the baptized child lives in a community not served by the pastor who administers the Sacrament of Baptism, the pastor is responsible for reporting the baptism to a pastor or district superintendent who serves in the area where the baptized child lives in order that the child's name might be properly entered on the preparatory membership roll. (*See* ¶ 223.)

¶223. The pastor shall keep and transmit to the succeeding pastor an accurate register of the names of all baptized children in the charge, including both those who have been baptized there and those who have been baptized elsewhere. This register of baptized children, along with a list of other preparatory members (¶ 216.4), shall constitute the preparatory membership roll of the church. It shall give the full name of the child, the date of birth, the date and place of Baptism, and the names of the parents or guardians and their place of residence.

¶224. All baptized children under the care of a United Methodist church shall be retained as preparatory members in the church until this status is terminated by: confirmation and reception into full membership after a proper course of training both in the church school and in the pastor's class, transfer with their families to another United Methodist church, transfer with their families to a church of another Christian denomination, death, withdrawal, or transfer to the constituency roll of the church at the age of nineteen. The preparatory membership roll shall be corrected each year by

adding and subtracting the names received and removed during the year, using the forms provided for this purpose.

¶232. Each local church shall accurately maintain the following membership rolls:

1. Full Membership Roll (¶ 209).

2. Preparatory Membership Roll (¶ 216.4), containing the names and pertinent information of baptized children and youth of the church eighteen years of age and under who are not full members, and other persons who have been enrolled in confirmation preparation.

Changes in Delegates Listings

Alphabetical List of Voting Delegates and First Reserves

Remove:

Beltran, Olive C. (North Central Philippines)

Caraway, Ray M. (Louisiana)

Inere, Oscar C. (North Central Philippines)

Johnson-Arther, Barbara (Central Texas)

McElroy, Amber (Holston)

Morris, Jim W. (Red Bird Missionary)

Ryon, Susan M. (Iowa)

Waters, Carolyn R. (Nebraska)

White, Raymon E. (Holston)

Young, T. Mike (Central Texas)

Add:

Abram, Charlotte (Nebraska)

Banda, Josephat (Zimbabwe)

Butrus, Luka K. (Nigeria)

Cabasal, Dominador (North Central Philippines)

Danburam, Anthony G. (Nigeria)

Factora, Corazon T. (Northern Philippines)

Gaspar, Levi E. (Northern Philippines)

Huber-Rohlf, Ruth (Central Texas)

Humphreys, Dennie D. (Holston)

Kane, Liatu J. (Nigeria)

Kangara, Pedzisai (Zimbabwe)

Landis, Robert C. (Red Bird Missionary)

Mandac, Flor (Northern Philippines)

McKinney, J. Eric (Central Texas)

Mullins, Sue B. (Iowa)

Munoz, Bismark Sesma (Mexico)

Nhiwatiwa, Eben (Zimbabwe)

Olusiyi, Solomon (Nigeria)

Pascasio, Jovita (North Central Philippines)

Randolph, Jr., Edward G. (Louisiana)

Raul, Carcia de Ochoa (Mexico)

Tolentino, Elwin C. (Northern Philippines)

Woody, Angee A. (Holston)

Yaro, Salamatu M. (Nigeria)

Yohanna, John Wesley (Nigeria)

Zvinoira, John (Zimbabwe)

Additions and Changes to Listing of Voting and Reserve Delegates (from pages 1175-1228)

Central Texas

Remove:

Young, T. Mike (resigned)

Johnson-Arther, Barbara (deceased)

Add to end of reserve list:

Golloway, Bob, pastor, 313 N. Center, Arlington, TX 76011

Vanzant-Williams, Annette, conference staff, 464 Bailey, Fort Worth, TX 76107

Chair of Delegation: *Doyle Allen*

East Africa

Chair of Delegation: *Nzoyisaba, Justin*

Eastern Pennsylvania

Correct Name: *Charles Yrigoyen, Jr.*

Holston

Remove:

White, Raymond E. (Resigned)

McElroy, Amber (resigned)

Add to end of reserve list:

Wilson, Carol E., pastor, 355 Piney Flats Rd., Piney Flats, TN 37686;

Hurley, Mai Belle, city council, 1068 Constitution Dr., Chattanooga, TN 37405

Illinois Great Rivers

Correct Name: *Cox, Danny F.*

Iowa

Remove:

Ryon, Susan M. (resigned)

Add to end of reserve list:

Smith, James A., heavy equipment operator, 205 Parkhurst, New Sharon, IA 50207

Louisiana

Remove:

Caraway, Ray M. (resigned)

Add to end of reserve list:

Williams, Jared R., student, 2108 Elmwood Dr., Monroe LA 71201

Mozambique

Chair of Delegation: *Bacar, Salvador*

Nebraska

Remove:

Waters, Carolyn R. (resigned)

Add to end of reserve list:

Williams, William, district superintendent, POB 469, Scottsbluff, NE 69361

New York

Remove:

Elin, Sarah S. (resigned)

Add to end of reserve list:

Hunsinger, Robert, account manager, 63 Pickerel Rd., Monroe, NY 10950

Nigeria

Chair of Delegation: Yohana, John Wesley

North Central Philippines

Add First Reserve:

Cabasal, Dominador

Pascasio, Jovita

Re-number listed reserves accordingly.

Northern Philippines

Chair of Delegation: *Gaspar, Levi E.*

Northwest Philippines

Chair of Delegation: *Viloria, Manuel S.*

Oklahoma

Correct Name: Oden, Tal

Red Bird Missionary

Remove:

Morris, Jim W. (resigned)

Add First Reserve:

Landis, Robert C., pastor, 65 Circle Pine Dr., Coalgood, KY 40818

Zimbabwe

