

How & Why We Apportion

Memphis Conference, The United Methodist Church

West Tennessee and Western Kentucky ~ www.memphis-umc.org



Information about 2012 apportionments

Theological Foundations for apportionments as a System of Giving

The role of steward in the life of God's community is both deeply rooted in our biblical history and tradition and richly filled with possibilities for understanding our ongoing life as the people of God.

Prayer and study of biblical writings and Christian tradition make apparent that connectional ministry funding patterns cannot be considered apart from a theology of stewardship that informs and undergirds all aspects of the financial life. Within the church, many of our new members are joining without the benefit of growing up in church families, bringing little or no foundational understanding of stewardship. Among our members, there is a marked decline in an understanding of regular, sacrificial giving, as many no longer center their personal/family finances within the context of their faith and religious devotion.

At the local church level, there is a great need for a renewed and expanded theology of stewardship. For many pastors and laypersons, the concept of stewardship is usually limited to money management in general and the annual budget campaign in particular. We are convinced by new conversations and resources, both in The United Methodist Church and in the wider ecumenical church, that the centrality of the biblical role of the steward must be reclaimed if the church is to fulfill its mission in this new millennium, and that patterns of funding and financial management in the church are to be seen in their proper context as practices of faith in the community of God's stewards. From this perspective, an apportionment is less a claim on the local congregation, a tax on their resources, and more a mechanism of enabling our shared stewardship, of undergirding our connectional mission and ministry.

In a turbulent economic climate, the age-old question out of Israel's experience of Babylonian exile is still our own: "How can we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?" As we face the strange land of our own financial future, there is a note of fear in such a question, a fear that our singing might be overcome by our anxieties and uncertainties, our problems and our crises. The prophets of the exile understood that to sing the Lord's song in the crises of any age requires a rootedness in the memory of the faith community, on the one hand, and the courage of vision in confidence that the future is God's future, on the other.

To remember the biblical and historical traditions of what God has done in the experience of those who went before us, and to dare to dream dreams and see visions of the possibilities that God is opening up before us, frees us from the tyranny and paralysis of present crises. The role of steward in the life of God's community is both deeply rooted in our biblical history and tradition and richly filled with possibilities for understanding our ongoing life as the people of God.

For Christians to claim the role of steward is to be reminded that all that we are and all that we have come into our care as the gift of God. In John Wesley's sermon "Free Grace," he said that a steward is a person given the responsibility for the care, management and utilization of something that belongs to another, a role that implies trust and partnership on the part of the owner toward the steward. To be a steward is to be entrusted through God's grace, a role that seems especially appropriate for a church descended from John Wesley's preaching of the centrality of grace. The various arenas in which we exercise the role of steward are all interrelated and are to be understood as arenas where we receive, reflect and proclaim the grace of God. To be a steward is to be called to a vocation of God's grace.

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We are called to be stewards of the gospel.

As the church, the most fundamental gift entrusted to our stewardship is the good news that God, who created the world and grieves over its brokenness, is at work to redeem the world and restore it to wholeness. God's redeeming work has found its central focus in the life, death, and Resurrection of Jesus Christ, and will be completed in the full restoration of God's reign over all the Earth. The stewardship of the gospel is the prologue and the presupposition of all of our other practices as God's stewards. What we do and who we become in our use of God's gifts must always be understood as extensions of our response to the gift of God's redeeming work, which we are invited to share.

We are called to be stewards of God's creation.

Our well-being depends on the well-being of the whole of creation, and our stewardship of the Earth's resources is foundational for our personal, social and economic life.

Our very being and all those resources that enable our lives come as the gift of God's creation. Creation is relational in character. We experience the wholeness God intended in creation only when we are harmoniously related to God, to others and to the Earth itself with all of its plants and animals. As human beings, we are created in the image of God, which means that we represent the Creator in our dominion over the Earth. This makes us stewards of the Earth and not its masters. Our well-being depends on the well-being of the whole of creation, and our stewardship of the Earth's resources is foundational for our personal, social, and economic life. In a culture that often idolizes self-sufficiency and ownership, our biblical faith calls us to recognize our interdependence on the whole of creation and our stewardship of resources that belong to God as true owner.

We are called to become a community of stewards.

The world God created for wholeness and life has become characterized by brokenness and death. Although God is at work to redeem the world, God has also raised up a community as partners in this work: first, in the covenant community of Israel, and then, in the post-Pentecost church. These communities are called into being in response to God's acts of saving grace in exodus and resurrection. Out of their experience, these communities recognize the source of new life and restored wholeness in God's grace. In recognizing, receiving and responding to that gift of grace, the community of God's people becomes a community of stewards.

In the community's gathered life, the experience of God's grace is remembered, celebrated and proclaimed. In its ritual and its symbols, the community of stewards acknowledges the One they serve and the redeeming tasks into which God has invited them. For the church, this gathered life focuses in doxology, word and sacrament. Beyond its gathered life, the community seeks to live as God's stewards in the world. The community holds its members accountable for this mission in covenant with God and with one another. This covenant as God's stewards creates an alternative community to the communities of the world and their self-serving goals.

We are called to the practices of stewards in the world.

In personal relationships, the practice of stewards is characterized by love.... The willingness of Jesus to lay down his life for the sake of others models the full expression of such love.

To live as a community committed to God's purposes in the world generates a characteristic pattern for the practices of stewards in various arenas:

- In personal relationships, the practice of stewards is characterized by love. In our biblical tradition, this love is understood both in terms of the love committed in faithful covenant to the well-being of another, which Israel called *hesed*, and the self-giving love, which the early church called *agape*. Such love is the mark of our stewardship of all relationships when they are understood as gifts of God's grace: family, personal commitments, friendship, marriage, parenting, hospitality and corporate fellowship (*koinonia*). Such love is also the mark of our stewardship of our own self, our individual well-being in body, mind and spirit: health, emotional maturity, personal and spiritual growth, self-esteem and personal relationship to God. The willingness of Jesus to lay down his life for the sake of others models the full expression of such love.
- In political relationships, the practice of stewards is characterized by justice. In our biblical tradition, justice is understood as a recognition of the right of all to have needs for wholeness and well-being recognized and enabled by the corporate life of the community. Participation, shared power, and channels for redress of grievance are crucial to the practice of stewards in the political arena. The community of stewards has a special concern for those who are exploited, oppressed or marginalized. The practice of the community of stewards is one of advocacy for those denied justice. Jesus modeled such justice in his own association with and advocacy for the outcasts and marginalized of his own time. Indeed, to know Christ is to know him in "the least of these."
- In economic relationships, the practice of stewards is characterized by equity in the distribution of the resources required to meet basic human needs and to provide for enjoyment of human life. In our biblical tradition, the stewardship of economic resources is related to sufficiency rather than excess, inclusive sharing rather than exclusive ownership, and open access rather than hoarding. Jesus spoke more often on economic matters than on any other subject in the Gospels and stressed giving as a crucial mark of faithful discipleship. The practice of the community of stewards, if marked by these biblical understandings, would provide both critique and alternative to the frequent emphasis in our time on acquisition, consumption and accumulation.

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2012 Apportionments: Memphis Conference

Apportionments are the Memphis Conference's first mile of mission giving. They form the framework for the rest of connectional ministry and mission. Read below and see additional information on back page.

World Service Fund: \$875,282.....Trying to describe the ways the World Service Fund contributes to The United Methodist Church requires the use of many "ands." It helps build new churches and pay the salaries of missionaries and expand Bible studies and provide leadership for youth ministry, and much more. World Service is the financial lifeline to a long list of Christian mission and ministry throughout the denomination.

Connectional Ministries: \$894,913.....The mission of the Memphis Conference Connectional Ministries is to assist 427 local churches as they fulfill their mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ. Gifts to Connectional Ministries also provide monies for Memphis Conference outreach agencies.

New Church Development: \$145,155.....This fund helps establish new faith communities in the Memphis Conference and prepares church planters.

Lakeshore Assembly: \$270,300.....Lakeshore is the summer camp and retreat ministry of the Memphis Conference. Located in Eva, TN, its mission is to offer ways for all to encounter life, love and the God of Grace.

District Superintendents: \$801,200.....District Superintendents (seven in the Memphis Conference) serve as shepherds, supervisors and spiritual leaders. This fund provides for all personnel, administrative, training and programming expenses.

Episcopal Fund: \$266,614.....Bishops are an integral part of the spiritual and administrative leadership of The United Methodist Church. Bishops are elected and consecrated to speak to the church and from the church. This fund helps pay bishops' salaries and covers office and travel expenses; it also provides pension and health benefit coverage.

Episcopal Residence: \$6,108.....Because the Memphis and Tennessee Conferences share a Bishop (Nashville Episcopal Area), they share equal responsibility for providing and maintaining the Episcopal residence, located in Nashville, TN.

Equitable Compensation: \$200,000.....Each year, a minimum salary level is set for full-time elders serving in ministry in the Memphis Conference. This fund helps smaller churches receive the leadership of a Full Elder.

Missional Salary Support: \$58,500.....This fund allows Memphis Conference District Superintendents to support full salary levels for those engaged in missional settings.

Transitioning Packages: \$27,000.....This fund allows Memphis Conference District Superintendents to support clergy development within their districts.

Clergy Wellness Commission: \$1,628,699.....Healthy clergy enable healthy churches to be faithful to their call. This fund provides healthcare and disability benefits for active and retired clergy, their spouses and dependent children, as well as Memphis Conference clergy and lay staff who serve beyond the local church.

Conference Board of Pensions: \$2,014,137.....This fund provides pension benefits for retired and active clergy. Lay staff of the Memphis Conference and local churches have the opportunity to be participants in the pension plan.

General Church Administration: \$99,966.....This fund attends to the business of The United Methodist Church by ensuring trustworthy systems of oversight and financial accountability. This fund finances the administrative activities of the church, in addition to underwriting the basic costs of General Conference, funding work of the Judicial Council, maintaining United Methodist official documents and historical artifacts, and designating historical shrines, landmarks and sites.

Jurisdictional Support: \$99,365.....This fund supports the work of Lake Junaluska Conference and Retreat Center in North Carolina, which is the home of the Foundation for Evangelism, as well as the site where the Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference gathers every four years. This fund also supports the Hinton Rural Life Center in North Carolina and Gulfside Assembly on the Gulf Coast.

Nashville Area Executive Assistant: \$62,723.....This Executive Assistant supports and helps facilitate the work and schedule of the Nashville Area Bishop. The Nashville Episcopal Area includes the Memphis and Tennessee Conferences.

Conference Administration: \$784,335.....This fund supports the basic infrastructure of the Memphis Conference. It provides for administration of the funds of the conference. The fund assists with ministerial support, planning the Memphis Annual Conference, coordinating and communicating with regional and general boards and agencies of The United Methodist Church, as well as maintaining Memphis Conference property.

Ministerial Education Fund: \$290,402.....This fund is essential to continue its commitment to recruit and educate quality pastoral leadership. Helping to defray the costs of getting a seminary education, this fund is one way The United Methodist Church supports those who are called into ordained and licensed ministry. This fund also equips the Memphis Conference with local pastor courses of study, continuing education and many other efforts to recruit, educate and support people called to ordained and licensed ministry.

Africa University Fund: \$25,923.....Africa University is the only General Conference-approved, degree-granting institution of higher education supported by The United Methodist Church on the continent of Africa. Men and women from 27 countries in Africa receive postsecondary education and postgraduate degrees. Support of this fund nurtures students in Christian values and develops visionary leaders.

Black College Fund: \$115,828.....This fund helps the 11 historically Black United Methodist-related colleges and universities to maintain solid, challenging academic programs; strong faculties; and well-equipped facilities.

Campus Ministries: \$283,726.....John Wesley, founder of the Methodist movement, was a campus minister. The Memphis Conference continues the tradition of a college-related church by supporting college campus ministries.

Interdenominational Cooperation Fund: \$22,987.....This fund enables United Methodists to have a presence and a voice in the activities of national and worldwide ecumenical and interreligious organizations. It provides the UM share of the basic budgets of these organizations, and pays for the travel expenses of UM representatives.

Deficit Recovery Fund: \$400,000.....This fund replenishes the operating reserve fund which has steadily declined over the last several years. Apportioned items that are designated as priorities must be paid, regardless of the income received toward them. As the percentage paid by Memphis Conference churches toward apportioned funds is increased to a functional level, this item will be eliminated.

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- In ecclesiastical relationships, the practice of stewards is characterized in the church itself as *koinonia*, as mutuality and partnership with the whole company of God's people and the church in every place for the sake of God's mission in the world. In our biblical tradition, this partnership is never an end in itself. When even worship turned inward in biblical times, the prophets demanded that "justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an everflowing stream" (Amos 5:24). This partnership in ecclesiastical relationships requires us to honor and draw upon the richness of all our diverse gifts as a part of the church as the "one body of Christ." The church as *koinonia* is to be a living example of mutual sharing and solidarity. It calls forth the mutual sharing of resources entrusted to us: spiritual, programmatic and financial/material. It requires the sharing of different opinions in a spirit of common commitment to our covenant relationship as we seek to discern God's purposes for the church. As the community of stewards, we should model in our own institutional relationships the qualities of love, justice, equity, mutuality and partnership that we seek to further in the world to which we are sent.

This partnership in ecclesiastical relationships requires us to honor and draw upon the richness of all our diverse gifts as a part of the church as the "one body of Christ."

We are called to be stewards of hope.

Because we know a past with God (memory) and trust that the future is also God's (vision), the community of stewards can love every present as filled with the possibilities of hope.

The community of God's stewards trusts that our lives and all of human history both originate in God and will be consummated in God. Thus, all of time itself is a gift given into our care as stewards. The community of stewards can never live in the present moment as an end in itself, whether in the despair of crisis or in the careless pursuit of self-gratification.

The biblical understanding of Sabbath observance stands as a reminder of the gift of our days, which God has given into our care. Because we know a past with God (memory) and trust that the future is also God's (vision), the community of stewards can live ever present as filled with the possibilities of hope. Our time cannot then be squandered in despair or self-satisfaction but must be used in the service of God's hopeful purposes and our partnership with those purposes as the community of stewards.

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Memphis Conference 2012 - The United Methodist Church

See inside for explanations of each line item.

	LOCAL	REGIONAL	NATIONAL	GLOBAL
WORLD SERVICE & CONFERENCE BENEVOLENCES				
1. World Service				\$ 875,282
2. Connectional Ministries	\$ 894,913			
3. New Church Development	\$ 145,155			
4. Lakeshore Assembly	\$ 270,300			
CONNECTIONAL MINISTERIAL SUPPORT				
5. District Superintendents	\$ 801,200			
6. Episcopal Fund				\$ 266,614
7. Episcopal Residence		\$ 6,108		
8. Equitable Compensation	\$ 200,000			
9. Missional Salary Support	\$ 58,500			
10. Transitioning Packages	\$ 27,000			
11. Clergy Wellness Commission	\$1,628,699			
12. Conference Board of Pensions	\$2,014,137			
ADMINISTRATION				
13. General Church Administration				\$ 99,966
14. Jurisdictional Askings		\$ 99,365		
15. Area Executive Assistant		\$ 62,723		
16. Conference Administration	\$ 784,335			
HIGHER EDUCATION				
17. Ministerial Education Fund			\$290,402	
18. Africa University Fund				\$ 25,923
19. Black College Fund			\$115,828	
20. Campus Ministries	\$ 283,726			
ECUMENICAL MINISTRIES				
21. Interdenominational Cooperation				\$ 22,987
DEFICIT RECOVERY				
22. Deficit Recovery	\$ 400,000			
SUBTOTALS	\$7,507,965	\$168,196	\$406,230	\$1,290,772

More information: 731-664-5540

BUDGET TOTAL \$9,373,163