



THE AMEN REPORT



Ω
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The 2013 Pacific Northwest Annual Conference Sessions

BY PATRICK SCRIVEN

PHOTOS BY AMY PAZAN & JESSE N. LOVE

June 14-16, 2013 • Wenatchee, Wash.

The 140th session of the Pacific Northwest Annual Conference took place at the Wenatchee Convention Center in Wenatchee, Wash., on June 14-16, 2013. Bishop Grant J. Hagiya was the officiating bishop.

Wenatchee was a new location for the annual Conference to meet, and the session was shorter than the previous year by about a half-day. This year's gathering launched a new "Change the World" day sponsored in part by United Methodist Communications. The Rev. David Valera was

key in advocating for this new emphasis, a focus that aligned well with the Conference theme, "Disciple is a Verb."

Members of the Conference affirmed the Conference budget, reduced by 3.36% as proposed by Finance and Administration Chair Scott Anderson, and a variety of related financial items. They rejected a petition to reduce the budget and cap district superintendents' compensation well below current levels.

The Conference affirmed their partnership with — and the contin-

ued financial and prayerful support of churches and individuals for — the Jamaa Letu orphanages in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The body also passed a petition requesting that the United Methodist Board of Pension and Health Benefits exclude companies involved in the Israeli occupation from PNWAC investments.

On the domestic front, members supported petitions calling for compassionate immigration reform, increased gun regulation and mental health measures in

Washington and Idaho. A petition to make all Conference properties weapons-free by default was referred after much debate. The body affirmed the Western Jurisdiction's Statement of Gospel Obedience that asserts that The United Methodist Church is in error on the subject of homosexuality's incompatibility with Christian teaching. It passed a statement "reaffirm(ing) its commitment to working for the full civil and

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The News Blog of the PNWUMC
pnwumc.org/news




ecclesiastical rights and privileges of all persons, including LGBTQ persons” and also supported a resolution suggesting a penalty of 24 hours for clergy or bishops convicted of conducting a same sex wedding, and ordaining or appointing a self-avowed, practicing homosexual.

The Conference voted to approve the four constitutional amendments from General Conference 2012 by overwhelming majorities in each case.

Worship continued to reconnect members of the Conference to each other and a common sense of purpose. A litany in opening worship reminded all of how God moves to upset and to bring new life. During his sermon at the Memorial Service, Hagiya offered thanksgiving for the families who, having lost loved ones, remained a testament to hope.

A class of 20 retirees was celebrated on Saturday morning while new members were welcomed at the Service of Commissioning and Ordination that night. Retiring Conference Treasurer and elder, the Rev. Craig Parrish delivered a message for the ordinands. Closing Worship led by the young people of the Conference called people to remember Jesus’ admonition to feed his sheep and go where we don’t want to go. United Methodist Board of Global Ministries US-2 Tara Miller was the preacher.

The average age of the three individuals who were ordained as elders and admitted to full connection is 33.6 years old. The average age of the four individuals who were commissioned in preparation for the order of elder is 39.5 years old.

- Membership stands at 46,165, down 2,597 from the previous year.
- Worship attendance stands at 20,167, down 269.
- Church school attendance stands at 4,778, down 34. 

Patrick Scriven serves as director of Communications and Young People’s Ministries.



AC 2013 Legislative Report

PREPARED BY GRETCHEN ENGLE

CONNECTING FOR MISSIONS – DOMESTIC

Petition #1-1 – IMMIGRATION REFORM

The PNW AC voted to support comprehensive Immigration Reform on the Federal Level as it is presented in the legislation before congress.

1. The time required to wait for citizenship should be no longer than 7 years.
2. Work permits should be provided to those waiting for citizenship, along with the same wages and working conditions as citizens.
3. Limit the citizenship process to no more than three years.
4. Allow those born in this country and elsewhere, that have lived here for more than ten years to access education grants and loans even if they are citizens whose parents are not documented, and that no tuition increases be levied against them because of their status.
5. Block the deportation of parents who have citizen children when no serious crime has been committed.

Petition #1-2 – GUN CONTROL

The body supported a recommendation to the Washington and Idaho legislatures to ban assault weapons and large ammunition clips, require background checks on all purchases, even those at gun shows and private sales, and that the state provide funding to enable the legislation.

Petition #1-3 – MENTAL HEALTH CARE

Our Conference voted to go on record as supporting a comprehensive renewal and overhaul of the Mental Health Services in Washington and Idaho, and to increase services and reopen community mental health service centers. The petition also encourages people to write to their state legislators regarding this issue.

Petition #1-4 – RESOLUTION FOR WEAPON-FREE PROPERTIES

This petition was referred back to the Connecting for Mission – Domestic body to review and revise to give the petition more clarity.

Petition #1-5 – SUPPORT OF ACTION BY THE 2012 WESTERN JURISDICTION CONFERENCE

The PNW Conference voted to affirm and embrace the concept of “Gospel Disobedience” which was adopted by the 2012 Western Jurisdictional

Conference. The statement of Gospel Disobedience tenets are: The UMC church is in error on the subject of “homosexuality’s incompatibility with Christian teaching” and therefore, bishops, clergy, local churches and ministry settings should operate as if the statement does not exist.

Petition #1-6 - WELCOME AND INCLUSION OF ALL GOD’S PEOPLE

The PNW Conference reaffirms its previous position to work for full civil and ecclesiastical rights and privileges of all persons and declares its opposition to restrictions of church laws on the participation of LGBTQ people in the UMC.

Petition #1-7 - RESOLUTION SUGGESTING PENALTY FOR CLERGY OR BISHOPS CONVICTED OF CONDUCTING A SAME SEX MARRIAGE OR ORDAINING OR APPOINTING A SELF-AVOWED, PRACTICING HOMOSEXUAL

The PNW Conference affirmed and supported the resolution of the 2012 WJ Conference that the penalty for those convicted of the offense of ordaining or appointing a self-avowed practicing homosexual is a suspension of 24 consecutive hours and that those clergy found guilty of performing a same-sex marriage or using a UMC building receive the same suspension.

Petition #1-8 – 2013-2014 CONFERENCE ADVANCE SPECIALS APPLICATIONS

The following agencies were designated as Conference Advance Specials:

Tacoma Community House
Atlantic Street Center
The Church of Mary Magdalene
PNW Conference and Retreat Ministries
Disaster Relief
Early Response Teams (renamed from UMWIM – Disaster Response Teams)
P.E.T. (Personal Energy Transportation)

CONNECTING FOR MISSIONS – INTERNATIONAL

#2-1 – JAMAA LETU ORPHANAGES IN THE CONGO

The Conference reaffirmed its commitment to encourage churches to support the orphanages, with churches helping through donations to their scholarship fund for higher education.

#2-2 - ALIGNING INVESTMENTS WITH VALUES REGARDING PALESTINE/ISRAEL

The Conference voted to instruct its investment managers, Westpath and the NW United Methodist Foundation, to exclude Caterpillar, Motorola Solutions and Hewlett-Packard from Conference portfolios until these companies end their involvement in the Israeli occupation and that PNW UMC boards, agencies, churches and individuals consider doing the same.

#2-3 ELECTION OF CONFERENCE SECRETARY OF GLOBAL MINISTRIES

Joan and Keith Hackett were elected to be co-Conference secretaries of Global Ministries for 2013/2014.

PROPERTY AND FINANCE

Petition #5-1 – ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT (formerly COUNCIL ON FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION)

The PNW Conference budget for 2014 was approved, which includes the Office of Connectional Ministry. Officers for the CFA for 2014 are Wendie Hansen (chair), Robin Pentland (vice-chair) and Bill Green (secretary).

Petition #5-2 – COMMISSION ON EQUITABLE COMPENSATION RECOMMENDATION ON MINIMUM COMPENSATION

The minimum salary for full time service was set at \$38,159 per year.

Petition #5-3 – MOVING ALLOWANCE

This petition set moving allowances for clergy & candidates, depending on appointment status.

Petition #5-4 – RETIREMENT ANNUITY RESPONSIBILITY

The body voted to fund the retirements of 19 clergy and one deacon.

Petition #5-6 – RETIREMENT GRANTS

Grants were given to former clergy who have taken Honorable Location or withdrawn from the Conference prior to 1973.

Petition #5-7 – DISABILITY BENEFITS

The body voted to provide disability benefits to six clergy.

Petition #5-8 – RETIREMENT BENEFITS FOR PART-TIME APPOINTMENTS

The body voted to use a new defined contribution plan for part-time clergy, and set contribution percentages depending on the person's part-time status.

Petition #5-9 EXTEND HEALTH FOR THOSE COVERED BY MEDICARE AS PRIMARY

Effective January 2014, those covered by Medicare will be able to choose a supplemental health coverage from a wider variety of providers than previously allowed.

Petition #5-10 – RENTAL/HOUSING ALLOWANCE FOR RETIRED, DISABLED, OR FORMER CLERGYPERSONS OF THE PNW CONFERENCE

This legislation was brought forward to reflect the inclusion of severance pay with the adoption of the Voluntary Transition Program adopted at General Conference. It has been broadened to include the housing benefits to those who voluntarily leave active ministry.

Petition #5-11 PNW CONFERENCE 2014 COMPREHENSIVE BENEFIT FUNDING PLAN

This petition lays out the plan for funding pensions, medical benefits, etc. This legislation passed.

Petition #5- 12 - DIRECT BILL CLERGY HEALTH COSTS

This petition would have required churches to directly bill their full-time clergy for health benefits. This legislation was referred to the Conference Board of Pensions.

Petition #5- 13 -CLERGY HEALTH INSURANCE

This petition would have increased the cash salary to full-time clergy to compensate for the direct billing in the previous legislation (Petition #5- 12). This legislation was referred to the Conference Board of Pensions.

Petition #5- 14 - CAP DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT'S TOTAL COMPENSATION

This petition would have capped the District Superintendent salary at \$100,000 which includes cash, salary, utilities allowance, housing allowance, professional expenses, pension, disability benefit health flex premium, out of Conference travel and continuing education. This legislation failed to make it to the consent calendar, so it was not brought to a vote.



Petition #5-15 OFFICE OF CONNECTIONAL MINISTRIES BUDGET

This petition proposed to keep the Office of Connectional Ministries budget capped at the same amount as 2013. This legislation failed to make it to the consent calendar, so it was not brought to a vote.

Petition #5-16 – SEATTLE: HIGHLAND PARK CLOSURE

The body voted to accept the Seattle: Highland Park congregation's request to discontinue.

Petition #5-17 – DISSOLUTION OF COVENANT BETWEEN WATERVILLE FEDERATED CHURCH AND THE PNW CONFERENCE OF THE UNITED METHODISTS IN THE MINISTRY IN WATERVILLE, WA. AT WATERVILLE FEDERATED CHURCH

This petition was referred to the Conference trustees for further consideration.

CONGREGATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

This committee did not have any legislation. Their new officers for 2014 will be Karla Fredericksen (chair), Katherine Makus (vice-chair) and Helen Smith (secretary).

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

This committee did not have any legislation. Their new officers for 2014 will be Douglas Evans (chair), Randy Behrens (vice-chair) and Terri Stewart (secretary).

MISCELLANEOUS LEGISLATION / MOTION FROM THE FLOOR

A motion was presented by Rev. Rich Lang to request time on the floor at the 2014 Annual Conference for a forum on the issue of "Can United Methodist Pastors Preside over Same Sex Marriages?" The forum would be moderated by the Reverends David Parker and Rich Lang. The motion carried and was referred to the Annual Conference Design Team for implementation. Ω



How are you going to bear fruit? And Why?

COMMISSIONING & ORDINATION SERVICE

BY LAUREN SHORT PHOTOS BY AMY PAZAN & JESSE N. LOVE

On Saturday night of this year's session of Annual Conference, I attended the Commissioning & Ordination Service. For those that do not know, this is the time where those on their journey to becoming deacons or elders are either commissioned as a provisional member or are fully ordained. It is a time where the church affirms a candidate's call to ministry. As a young person, it is always a time of great joy to see those whom I look up to take the next step in their ministry.

Those that were being admitted to Full Connection and Ordained Elders:

Ann Elizabeth Adkinson • John Michael Helmiere • Kathryn (Katie) Frances Klosterman

Those that were being commissioned in preparation for Order of Elder:

Emma Donohew • Henry (Hank) Heschle Terri Jane Stewart • Lisa Marie Talbott

Bearing Fruit

This year, the Rev. Dr. Craig Parrish preached from John 15:1-11. This particular text talks about being the vine and if abiding in the Lord, we will bear much fruit. In his sermon, "So you wanna bear fruit?" Parrish channeled his message from "Presence: Human Purpose and the Field of the Future" by Peter M. Senge and C. Otto Scharmer. It was a resource suggested by Bishop Grant Hagiya. Through this resource and his own personal experience after 41 years of ministry,

Parrish gave advice to those who are taking the next steps in their ministry.

Check your ego at the door, but not your self-esteem.

The part of you that screams "me-me-me"... check this at the door. The work of ministry is not your fruit, but something God produced through you, offered in a moment in time. Despite all of us having egos, it's not about you.

Ask yourself "why" you want to bear fruit.

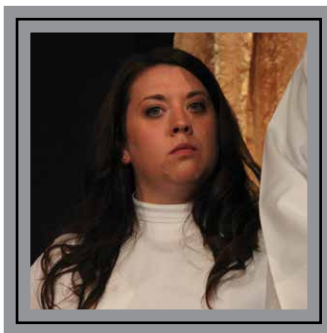
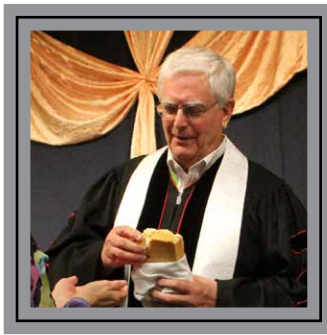
The "why" of our work is what starts people on their journey – it is because we have answered a call.

Develop a vision.

"Make Disciples of Jesus Christ for the Transformation of the World" is a good one. "Presence..." prompts us to consider: it is not what the vision is, but what the vision does.

You can't bear fruit alone – you need the laity.

We all have gifts, talents, and abilities. But, we don't have every ability. You need other people around you. Your colleagues and coworkers are not your enemies – despite some who may be controlling or obstinate. Empower your laity so that they may go out into the community to share stories and experiences in being Jesus Christ in the world.



Remember who you are and have clarity regarding crossing boundaries.

You have the power. There are times you may have needs, but the church must never fulfill those needs. People may attach themselves to you in healthy and unhealthy ways. You have the power to not cross boundaries. There may be times you may consciously cross boundaries, in particular those in the Book of Discipline. Members of your church may ask you to preside over their same-sex marriage – know who you are and whose you are. You will be defining the work of your ministry in your mission field.

Develop skills to become inter-culturally competent.

Learn about your culture and learn about others and their worldviews. People who may not look like you are also looking for a spiritual home, too.

Listen to other voices in your ministry.

There will be others who have different theological understandings than yours. In order to bear fruit, you need to listen to people and their wisdom.

As someone who is not on the path to ordained ministry, I still found points that are very important to my ministry as a lay person, like “Check your ego at the door, but not your self-esteem”. As a lay person, we can always take this to heart because although we make up a large portion of the church, we must also remember that we are here to minister to those outside of our church walls.

Along with his advice, Parrish encouraged us to “Remember who you are and whose you are.” We are children of God. We are also United Methodists and our goal is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. So when we are frustrated with our pastors, our church members, or society, remind yourself of this statement. We should approach everyone with love and grace.

While reflecting on this passage after Annual Conference, I am looking forward to applying this to the ministry I am involved in at Green Lake UMC and with the Conference Council on Young Adult Ministries. Ω

*Watch the
Commissioning & Ordination video
at <http://bit.ly/ordination-video>.*



Closing Worship challenges Conference to **RECLAIM THE NAME “DISCIPLE”**

BY JESSE N. LOVE

The 2013 Pacific Northwest Annual Conference Sessions concluded in worship as children welcomed a new member into the Christian family; attendees were challenged by the insights of a young adult missionary; and Bishop Grant Hagiya blessed our appointed ministers as they go with renewed energy to make a difference in the communities in the Pacific Northwest.

Welcome Brexton

The family of the Rev. Dayton Edmonds welcomed baby Brexton into the Church through baptism. Bishop Grant Hagiya along with the children of our AC session shared in a “holy moment” by assisting in the baptism ceremony. The families along with our Conference were tasked to support and guide Brexton on his journey of faith.

Tara Miller Reclaims the Name

Closing Worship was prepared by the PNW’s Young People’s Ministries. As a participant in the US-2 program of Global Ministries, Tara Lynn Miller serves at Mary’s Place in Seattle – nurturing her passion for social justice as she engages and walks alongside the homeless women of the Seattle Area. Miller presented her message, “Disciple: Reclaiming the Name”.

Miller began with silent reflections asking the Conference to consider ways we are helping the community - then identifying the barriers that prevent us from doing so. She made the distinction between “sheep” and “lambs” in the context of John 21: 15-19. Those who are followers and who are the most vulnerable & faithful have needs that Christ has commanded us to meet. But, such needs are more than physical.



Miller deals with “all kinds of brokenness” in her position at Mary’s Place. She names addictions, mental health issues, and issues of trust as just some of the needs she and the staff at MP are engaged in. “You have to care less about how you are being perceived and more on how the needs are being met,” Miller shares.

The work of this particular ministry requires participants to overcome the barriers that many face. Having the willingness to talk to others about “faults and fears,” being vulnerable, and following paths to where people don’t want to tread are just a few of the difficulties in serving as a missionary.

But despite these challenges, the people of the Church are not alone. As Christians are summoned by Jesus’ call to “follow me”, Miller assures that tending to sheep and feeding lambs can be a reciprocal process for those helping to meet needs of the flock. Miller reminded our Conference that if not connected to the Source of Life, one will be unable to go to places that he



or she may potentially be spiritually changed for good.

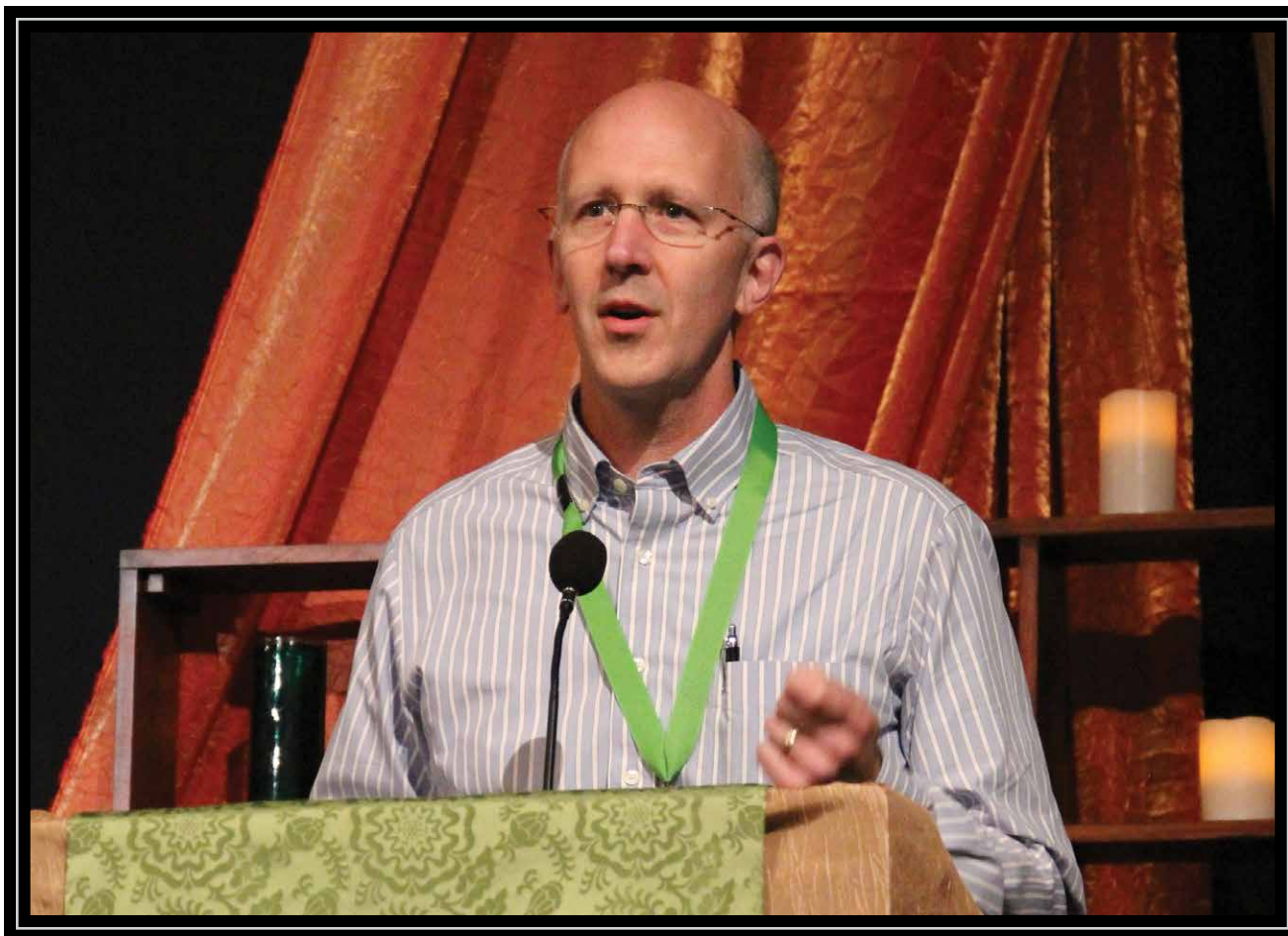
“Love doesn’t offer security. It won’t be easy,” Miller says. Feeding and tending to those with the deepest needs will be a task that requires help from many within our community. This work may involve risking reputations, emotional comfort, and can even leave one open to personal criticism. But, in feeding sheep and lambs while allowing oneself to be fed, the Pacific Northwest Conference is closer to being a Church that is working to reclaim

the name “disciple”.

Let’s Go

Following the sermon, Bishop Hagiya echoed some of Miller’s message as he blessed the PNW church appointments for 2013-2014. Briefly, Hagiya explained that maintaining and growing a church in the 1960s was different from today. Now, a higher level of energy is needed. Bishop Hagiya then sent forth the Annual Conference ready for the work of discipleship as a verb. Ω

*To view the Closing Worship video from Annual Conference, visit: <http://bit.ly/closing-worship-video>
Check out photos from Closing Worship on Facebook: <http://bit.ly/closing-worship> and <http://bit.ly/closing-worship-2>
Special thanks to Tyrone Olds. Jesse N. Love serves as the print & publications manager of the PNWUMC*



Get to know

BRANT

Henshaw named PNW Conference treasurer in 2014

Brant Henshaw has been working in the Conference office for the past five years as the assistant treasurer and assistant benefits officer. He also served as the executive director for Camp and Retreat Ministries before transitioning over to the Treasurer's office. He is a member at Aldersgate UMC in Bellevue, Wash.

Henshaw is a Seattle native and lifelong Methodist who, after grad-

uating from the University of Puget Sound with a degree in Economics and Finance, headed off on a planned 18-month backpacking trip through Asia. With several detours under his belt and time spent working in Australia, Japan, and Hong Kong; he "settled" in Taipei, Taiwan for 11 years managing a not-for-profit that served ex-patriot members of the community.

In 2001, he returned to the Se-

attle area and put down roots with his wife Lynn and sons (Dawson and Will) who keep him humble while also keeping him on his toes. When not involved in family activities he is a fan of college basketball, likes to compete with himself in athletic endeavors (Columbia Tower Climb, running), read books in a variety of genres and topic areas, travel, and loves learning new things and having new gadgets. Ω

After completing all three annual conference sessions I am somewhat relieved that it is all over. I love annual conference session, but the intensity of the schedule, the need to constantly focus mentality, and the lack of sleep makes for a demanding time. One annual conference is usually enough for most of us, but having to oversee three makes it fairly challenging!

What I absolutely love about annual conference sessions are the relationships that have been forged through the years of attending. Annual conference is always about the depth of the personal relationships of the past, the new relationships that are formed, and our shared history together. We need to revel in these relationships - It is what makes our church great!

Of course, there are always twists and turns with every annual conference session that makes it unique. There are always surprises, and these are small revelations from God that keep us on edge. Some of these surprises are good and some bad, but always the collective body tends to handle them well, and with God's help, we are able to turn them into some form of learning and growth.

What was your biggest surprise this past annual conference session? Be sure to share this with your church and colleagues. You can drop me an e-mail (bishop@pnwumc.org) also to let me know what you think. I believe it is important to debrief any major experience that we go through together, and we always set aside time with the Annual Conference Planning Committee, Extended Cabinet, and staff to talk both formally and informally about what happened at our session. Often times, it is the informal discussions that are the most important and fun. What made us laugh, cry, or get angry are important benchmarks for us to note. I encourage you to share with others about what you experienced.

In the recent past, I have been more critical of the central place



A MESSAGE FROM OUR BISHOP

GRANT J. HAGIYA

THE GREATER NORTHWEST AREA
OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

and purpose of annual conferences in the life of our church. They are getting more and more expensive, and take up huge blocks of time in terms of preparation and planning. I have reasoned in the past, that perhaps our time could be better utilized in some other form of revitalization or growth event.

However, after they are over, I tend to change my opinion and believe that they have a central place in the life of our church. Whenever we United Methodists gather together with a focused purpose, worship richly together, enjoy the

deep fellowship, and do the necessary business of the church, it is well worth our time and effort.

Since the conferencing structure mirrors itself at every level of the church, we might well ask the question of every local church that has ability to do this each and every week. Are you conferencing, worshipping, ministering, and reaching out to the depth of what God requires of us?

I pray that God was happy with our three annual conference sessions of the Greater Northwest. No other purpose is higher than that! Ω

Throughout plenary at The 2013 Pacific Northwest Annual Conference, Pazan was welcome to the same table where Bishop Grant Hagiya was presiding. She had a chance to moderate and even field questions during this year's Conference through the social media site, Twitter.

This year at Annual Conference we decided to take a chance and have a young person on Twitter live tweet the plenary sessions as they happened. Social media in the church is something congregations are still trying to understand – especially in the best ways to use these tools to help their congregation. With Annual Conference, we decided that social media was going to be a part of our holy conferencing.

One might ask, “Why add social media to an already busy Annual Conference?” We added an official tweeter because we saw the need and wanted to try something different. Tweeting through the Conference’s Twitter page and personal tweeting with the hashtag #pnwac13, people had the opportunity to voice their opinions both good and bad, amidst some of the struggles we were having at the time. We even poked fun at things that were entertaining or annoying.

Being the lead tweeter was rather daunting at times. While sitting at the Bishop’s table with his crew, we were overlooking the whole body of Annual Conference. I needed to make sure my emotions of my own opinions didn’t get in the way of helping people to understand what was happening during plenary. I have to admit there were a few times I had to ask the Twitter world what we were discussing during plenary because I was completely lost by all the amendments and motions people were tossing out. If you happened to see me making faces while at the table, I may or may not have been having staring



Social Media

at #pnwac13

BY AMY PAZAN

contests with my incoming and outgoing DS's in the Seven Rivers District (thanks Mary and Juli).

I'm sure people are wondering if tweeting was easy. In all honesty it was both easy and confusing at times. Trying to figure out what to tweet, when, and how to write the tweet in a mere few seconds before the discussion passed. I often got fielded questions by people tweeting on where to find more information about a topic. The second thing people tweeted to me the most or texted me about was the click of Bishop Grant's pen. Numerous times I was asked to please figure out a way to silence his pen. Being the lead tweeter had its advantages as well. I could see the wide range of perspective of people's opinions on different legislative topics. I as a young person at the head table, I had the advantage of informing Shirley DeLarme and Bishop Grant to recognize young people's need

to speak on topics rather than just letting the young people be voiceless when we need a voice in today's times.

I hope the conversations we had at Annual Conference through social media will serve as an example to other congregations around the Conference and will help break boundaries in new ways for the Church to connect. Using social media is a viable option not just for your own church members, but for reaching out to people who wouldn't normally step foot into our churches. So, next time you see a person on their cellphones in church, don't tell them to get off, but be involved and ask how the church can connect with them. The younger generation has a lot to share with the earlier generations about social media. We do care about the Church and want to share our faith with others...especially through social media. Ω

Amy Pazan is a member of Aldersgate UMC and is a student at Central Washington University in Ellensburg, Wash. Pazan also co-blogs about the future of the church at <http://theprogressivemethodist.blogspot.com/>