



Campaign Update



United Methodist Worshipers in Mozambique

Continue to support the CCPI campaign by:

- talking to your friends in the United Methodist community and sharing CCPI's story,
- hosting a CCPI reception for friends or church members,
- visiting the CCPI Web site to download materials or contacting the CCPI office to request materials to share with those you know in other churches and conferences,
- encouraging interested individuals to support the campaign, and
- considering an increase to your pledge or gift.

Mozambique Pilot Project Under Way

Retirees and Surviving Spouses Now Receiving Pensions

On January 1, 2009, the second Central Conference Pension Initiative (CCPI) pilot project officially began. Ninety-nine retired clergy and surviving spouses in the North and South Mozambique Annual Conferences are now receiving a monthly pension payment of \$96 to \$128, based on years of service.

The Mozambique pilot project is different in many ways from the Liberia pilot project, which began in January 2007. In Liberia, pensioners must travel to conference offices or rely on district superintendents to hand-deliver payments. In Mozambique, payments are sent by bank transfer and deposited into recipients' accounts. Also, unlike Liberia, Mozambique has a national pension system, the National Social Security Institute (INSS), which is similar to Social Security in the United States. Mozambique's national government retiree benefits are based on the amount of contributions that are paid into the system.

In addition to partnering with CCPI to secure pensions for retired clergy, the Mozambique Annual Conference is committed to ensuring that all active clergy are enrolled in INSS. This combined approach provides for today's retirees and helps build a solid retirement base for active clergy serving in Mozambique.

(see Mozambique Pilot Project on page 2)



GENERAL BOARD OF PENSION AND HEALTH BENEFITS
OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Caring For Those Who Serve

Donor Spotlight

Alta's Gift

Alta Lunsford's \$15,000 January gift to CCPI was truly an example of the power of word-of-mouth. Alta—a surviving spouse who lives in Vancouver, Canada—recently sold a piece of land she inherited from her father. Although she wanted to tithe to the Church, Alta needed guidance to decide which cause she would support.

Alta's brother-in-law, The Reverend Emery Percell, suggested that she give to CCPI. He told her about the many central conference retirees and surviving spouses who struggle to survive with little or no pensions. Alta—who is very comfortable in retirement due to the pension she receives from the Northern Illinois Conference—made a personal commitment to help ensure that central conference surviving spouses receive comparable levels of support to hers.

"I can empathize with widows in the central conferences," says Alta. "I have been well taken care of and don't need this money to live on. This is what the Lord would want me to do."

Join us in thanking Alta Lunsford for her generous gift. We'd like to extend a special thank you to Rev. Percell for sharing the story of CCPI with Alta.

Mozambique Pilot Project *(continued from page 1)*

Pension support has been eagerly anticipated by retired Mozambican clergy, many of whom served the Church for decades despite dire local conditions. While Mozambican pastors have seen much suffering, they've also been a part of a new beginning for their country, directing many improvements in the Church and their communities. For more than 100 years, Mozambican clergy have overseen the construction of new schools, developed new congregations and helped guide investments that provide for better health care.

After years of dedication and sacrifice, these faithful servants deserve to be able to afford basic necessities—food, shelter and medical care. The goal of the Mozambique pilot project is to provide for these necessities.

Angola to Manage Countrywide Pensions in Single Plan

The bishops of the two annual conferences in Angola—the East Angola Annual Conference and the West Angola Annual Conference—recently reached an agreement with CCPI providing for all future pension support for central conference retirees in Angola to be handled through one plan. This decision facilitates compliance with government regulations and greatly improves pension administration and distribution.

There are 42 retirees and surviving spouses in East Angola and approximately 125 in West Angola. In August 2008, CCPI held its first meeting in Angola to determine how to approach pension support and administration. Further discussions about the planned pension support were held in January 2009, during which CCPI proposed a single pension plan for the country. Bishop Domingos of West Angola and Bishop Quipungo of East Angola, as well as financial leaders from both annual conferences, attended this meeting.

Liberia Plan Description Completed

The pension plan description for Liberia is complete and has been recommended by the Liberia Board of Pensions for adoption at the next annual conference. The plan includes provisions for voluntary contributions, which are being made by many in Liberia. This level of participation is encouraging, especially since many pastors in Liberia report that they receive no financial compensation at all while they are in active appointed ministry.



Liberia Pilot Project Update

CCPI completed its second process review of the Liberia pilot project from March 8-18, 2009. The purpose of this visit was to re-evaluate the pilot program to ensure that funds have continued to be properly distributed and to identify any challenges that still need to be addressed. At the end of 2008, 530 retirees and surviving spouses were receiving pension payments of up



Mr. Thomas Wornie (left); Rev. Julia Williams (center); Ms. Lucy Dargbeh

to \$60 per quarter (depending on clergy category at retirement) as a result of CCPI's efforts. Those who have been participating since the inception of the pilot project have now received nine quarterly payments.

The 2007 process review identified weaknesses in the record-keeping process for payment distributions—for example, dated signatures were recorded for only 50% of payments. In 2008, the Liberia Board of Pensions changed office procedures and educated district office personnel about the importance of using dates to monitor delivery-time effectiveness.

For 2008, payments were documented with either a signature or a thumbprint from the recipient. The recipient validation rate increased to 99%. Every pensioner received all quarterly payments.

These dated signatures also have allowed CCPI to accurately track payment arrival times. In Liberia, cash payments are hand-delivered by district superintendents to pension recipients in 20 districts throughout the country, many of whom live in remote areas that are difficult to reach. Arrival times reported in 2007 were only based on half of the receipts. During the process review for 2008, it was possible to track the number of days-to-payment based on the dated signatures for all recipients. In 2008, pension delivery in Liberia required between 40 and 80 days.

The evaluation team also traveled throughout the country to interview a random sample of recipients about their experience with the pension program. During the 10-day visit, 61 retirees were interviewed, all of whom are grateful for the support they are receiving. They use the funds for food, medicine and school fees for their children or grandchildren.

One retired clergyperson said that he has saved every nickel of his pension payments to buy building materials for his house. "Now my house is strong and complete and will last me the rest of my life," he said. Another pensioner, a surviving spouse, missed many mortgage payments during wartime. She lived in constant fear of losing her home. In a few years, the pension payments she receives from CCPI will allow her to pay off her home. Each of these retired clergy and surviving spouses are grateful to the generous donors who have made their pensions possible. Their gratitude may be best summed up by a comment from a surviving spouse, Hanna Zuu, who said, "May God bless you for what you do. May God add days to your days."

The CCPI campaign would not be possible without the dedication of our committee, composed of clergy and laity from each jurisdiction. In addition to attending meetings, helping solicit major gifts, providing feedback and welcoming CCPI into their churches and conferences, all committee members have made financial gifts to the campaign. "Thank you" to our hard-working committee members!

Rev. Dr. Brian K. Bauknight
Northeastern Jurisdiction

Neal Berte, Ed.D
Southeastern Jurisdiction

Barbara Boigegrain
General Secretary
General Board of Pension and Health Benefits

Rev. Dr. Timothy K. Bruster
South Central Jurisdiction

Bishop Ben R. Chamness
South Central Jurisdiction

R. Earl Cox III
South Central Jurisdiction

Rev. Paul Dirdak
Director, Central Conference Pension Administration,
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William Green, Ph.D.
Northeastern Jurisdiction

Larry Hollon
General Secretary, United Methodist Communications

Rev. Dr. J. Gorman Houston
Southeastern Jurisdiction

Emmy Lou John
North Central Jurisdiction

Bishop Linda Lee
North Central Jurisdiction

Bishop Cal McConnell
Western Jurisdiction

Rev. Greg McGarvey
North Central Jurisdiction

Dan O'Neill
Managing Director, Central Conference Pensions,
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Bishop Ann Brookshire Sherer
South Central Jurisdiction

Bishop B. Michael Watson
Southeastern Jurisdiction

Bishop Peter D. Weaver
Northeastern Jurisdiction

Rev. Dr. J. Edsel White
Western Jurisdiction



What are the United Methodist Central Conferences?

- The central conferences are those in countries outside the United States.
- There are currently seven central conferences in three regions: Asia, Africa and Europe. They are composed of 71 annual and provisional annual conferences in 42 countries.
- The central conferences include more than 6,900 organized churches with more than 3.5 million lay members.
- More than 9,300 clergy members minister to this rapidly increasing population in our Church.



Conference Boards: Key to Our Success

Since CCPI began raising funds to create pension plans for our central conference retirees, support from annual conferences and conference boards of pensions has been key to the campaign’s success. Support has come in many different forms—all of which are greatly appreciated!

U.S. annual conferences first voted to forward the United Methodist Publishing House “Cokesbury checks” to CCPI in 2002. By 2008, all 63 annual conferences, as well as the Norwegian and Puerto Rican annual conferences, had donated a Cokesbury check to CCPI at least once, and many had been donating these funds every year. Annual conferences also have supported CCPI over the past three years through special offerings and other designated giving.

Conference boards of pensions have been generous, too. Petitions brought forward during annual conference sessions have provided funding. Some boards have tithed (or “double-tithed” a full 20%) from their reserve funds or from the earnings on their reserves, and some boards have named specific dollar amounts for their gifts to this effort.

Regardless of the type of support, these gifts make a big difference. We are eternally grateful for your support in helping central conference retirees achieve financial security in retirement.

Spreading the Word

As news of CCPI circulates, more and more individuals, churches, districts and conferences are providing support to this important effort and bringing it closer to the fundraising goal of a minimum of \$20 million.

We extend a heartfelt “thank you” to our bishops, clergy and laity who have been so instrumental in spreading the word about CCPI in their conferences and throughout the denomination. Because of their dedication and support, specific, focused activity is now underway in the following conferences:

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|-----------------------|-------------------|----------------------|
| Alabama-West Florida | Louisiana | Texas |
| Arkansas | Nebraska | West Michigan |
| Central Pennsylvania | New Mexico | Western Pennsylvania |
| Central Texas | North Alabama | Wisconsin |
| Detroit | North Carolina | |
| East Ohio | North Georgia | |
| Holston | Northern Illinois | |
| Illinois Great Rivers | Northwest Texas | |
| Indiana | Oklahoma | |
| Iowa | South Georgia | |

Contact Information: Questions? Interested in Helping?

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