



Campaign Update



President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf and Bishop Ben Chamness greet Bishop and Mrs. Hardt.

Continue your support for CCPI:

- Talk to your friends in the United Methodist community and share CCPI's story.
- Host a CCPI reception for friends or church members.
- Visit the CCPI Web site to download materials or contact the CCPI office to request materials to share with those you know in other churches and conferences.
- Encourage interested individuals to support the campaign.
- Consider increasing your pledge or gift.

Reception Brings CCPI Supporters Together

Her Excellency Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, president of the Republic of Liberia, spoke of her gratitude for her church, its pastors and the Central Conference Pension Initiative (CCPI) during her keynote address at a CCPI donor reception at Southern Methodist University on April 14, 2009. This reception was hosted by Bishop Ben R. Chamness, Dr. William Green and Bishop John Wesley Hardt.

President Sirleaf presented a lecture as part of the university's Tate Lecture Series, then joined 40 invited guests at a private reception, where she shared spontaneous personal remarks on the conditions and dire circumstances faced by UMC clergy in Liberia. She spoke of the ongoing struggle for peace and stability as the country rebuilds after a 14-year civil war, and commended the diligence and fortitude of local clergy. Despite facing many challenges, clergy have continued to develop local churches, maintain schools and keep the connection alive.

Meeting the ongoing financial needs of retired central conference clergy and their surviving spouses is the mission of CCPI. Over the past two years, fundraising efforts have realized \$18.1 million in gifts and pledges toward a goal of at least \$20 million.

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

Caring For Those Who Serve

Donor Spotlight

Bishop's Day Apart

On March 24, the North Georgia annual conference held a Bishop's Day Apart, during which many clergy learned about their pension, disability and health benefits, and were challenged to share with those less fortunate through gifts to CCPI. Approximately 630 people attended the event, which brought in 319 gifts and pledges totaling more than \$340,000.



Bishop James King
South Georgia
Conference



Bishop Mike Watson
North Georgia
Conference

The \$500,000 Challenge

In May, an anonymous supporter in Georgia donated \$500,000 to the CCPI effort and issued a challenge to churches in the state to match the gift. It didn't take long for North Georgia to answer the call during annual conference—more than \$600,000 was raised. South Georgia also kicked off its support campaign, distributing pledge forms during annual conference, with hopes of meeting the goal early this fall. Join us in thanking our anonymous benefactor and the churches who met the challenge!

Donor Reception *(continued from page 1)*

In January 2007, a pilot project to provide quarterly pensions to retired clergy or their surviving spouses began in President Sirleaf's country, Liberia. Currently, 554 retirees and surviving spouses are receiving support. President Sirleaf—a member of the Monrovia UMC in Monrovia, Liberia—was the first woman ever elected as a head of state on the continent of Africa and, in 2008, was the first female president to address General Conference.

Bishops Vote Unanimous Support for CCPI

At its May meeting in Bethesda, Maryland, The United Methodist Church's Council of Bishops unanimously approved a Call to Action. Among other matters, the group collectively decided that by "Working with the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits (General Board), the Council of Bishops, individually and collectively, commits to complete the Central Conference Pension Initiative (CCPI) goal of at least \$20 million."

United Methodist Church bishops provide spiritual leadership to more than 11 million people on four continents—North America, Europe, Africa and Asia. They play an important leadership role in helping to set the direction of the Church and its mission throughout the world. Their commitment is a testament to the significance of the effort to provide financial support to pastors and surviving spouses in the central conferences.

Many of the council members have already fulfilled their pledges by making individual donations, spearheading efforts in their conference to organize church campaigns and spreading the word about CCPI.

We are grateful to bishops who have provided the opportunity for others to participate by calling attention to this important need.

Conferences Answer Cokesbury Call

For many years, annual conferences have received a share of the United Methodist Publishing House (UMPH) proceeds during their annual conference sessions. Since 2002, many conferences have forwarded their "Cokesbury checks" to CCPI. These donations have amounted to well over \$600,000 in gifts during each of the past three years.

In this year's economic climate, UMPH was unable to provide Cokesbury checks. Instead, CCPI encouraged each annual conference to consider a gift or matching grant equal to their 2008 Cokesbury gift for the initiative. Thirty-two U.S. annual conferences have done so, despite their own financial struggles.

Neil Alexander, president and publisher of UMPH, told the United Methodist News Service that the "actions by some conferences this year to give sacrificially in order to continue that practice in a time of unprecedented worldwide economic hardship demonstrates that the commitment to central conference pastors and church workers runs deep and is abiding. This outpouring of love and support is a tremendous witness of fellowship and hope for our Church's future around the world."

DOE Oil Refunds Donated

In June, the General Council on Finance and Administration (GCFA) informed conferences that the Church would receive a \$45,000 Department of Energy (DOE) crude oil refund, of which each conference would receive an equal share. GCFA also provided an opportunity to donate this refund directly to CCPI. As a result, 12 conferences across the United States donated their refunds.

Please join us in thanking the following annual conferences:

- Desert Southwest
- Florida
- Kansas West
- Minnesota
- New Mexico
- New York
- North Carolina
- Tennessee
- West Ohio
- West Virginia
- Western North Carolina
- Western Pennsylvania



Mozambique Pilot Project Update

CCPI visited Mozambique in July to evaluate its pension pilot project, which has been in effect since January 2009. This visit allowed a pilot program evaluation—verifying fund distributions and identifying challenges that may need to be addressed.

At the end of July, 99 retired clergy and surviving spouses in the two Mozambique annual conferences received a quarterly pension payment of \$288 to \$384, based on years of service. They use the funds for food, housing, necessary medications and school fees for their

children and grandchildren. Those who have been participating since the project's inception have now received three quarterly payments.

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Updates to www.ccpi-umc.org



Have you been on CCPI's Web site lately? If not, you may have missed the nine new personal stories we recently added. Also, the 2009 annual conference video is now available on the site.

Take a minute, take a look and tell a friend. We depend on our supporters to spread the word about CCPI's work on behalf of central conference pastors and their families.

Campaign goal: **\$20 M**
 Raised to date: **\$18.1 M**
 Percentage of goal raised: **90.5%**

The CCPI campaign would not be possible without our dedicated committee—clergy and laity from each jurisdiction. They attend meetings, help solicit major gifts, provide feedback and welcome CCPI into their churches and conferences—and all 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, General Board of Pension
 and Health Benefits*

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, General Board of Pension and
 Health Benefits*

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

Liberia Pilot Project

The CCPI pilot project is still going strong in Liberia. The 233 retired pastors and 311 surviving spouses who are participating have now received 11 quarterly pension distributions. Following next quarter's payment, they will have received three full years of pension support—thanks to you!

Sierra Leone and Angola

CCPI visited Sierra Leone to meet with the new bishop, John Yambasu, and Angola, where there are two Episcopal areas. CCPI gathered data in preparation for planning pension systems in both countries. Both countries previously had pension plans, but they were unsustainable during wartime. CCPI plans to work with the Sierra Leone and Angola annual conferences to rebuild their pension plans.

What are the United Methodist Central Conferences?

- The central conferences are conferences in countries outside the United States.
- There are currently seven central conferences in three regions (Asia, Africa and Europe). They are composed of 72 annual and provisional 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.

Mozambique Update *(continued from page 3)*

Payment Discrepancies Resolved

The banking infrastructure in Mozambique is much more advanced than in Liberia, where CCPI began its first pension pilot project in 2007. The ability to distribute funds through the banking system has facilitated on-time payments to these 99 pensioners.

CCPI encountered payment problems with some surviving spouses due to incorrect surnames listed on bank accounts. In Mozambique, women do not always use their husbands' surname in civil or official matters, but they often do in churches. Once this discrepancy was identified, the conferences began reconciling church records with bank accounts. At the end of the first quarter, 19 of 100 cases were unresolved. At the end of the second quarter only five unresolved cases remained—95% of payments were received by pensioners. CCPI hopes to have all cases resolved by the end of 2009.

Pensioners Grateful



During the six-day visit, CCPI interviewed several retirees, all of whom are grateful for the support they are receiving. Lea Jotano Maswanganhe and Esau Jamisse Guambe are a married couple. They both receive pensions from CCPI, which they are using to purchase materials to build a

house. Lea, the first female ordained pastor in Mozambique, and Esau, a former conference treasurer and conference choir director, are thankful for the regularity of payments made possible by the bank distributions from CCPI. Their comments were echoed by Lenor Noa Chume, a surviving spouse who lost her husband 18 years ago while he was still an active pastor. She voiced her appreciation for the convenience and accountability afforded by bank distributions.

The Mozambique pilot program will be evaluated again after it has been in place for one full year. Visit our Web site at www.ccpi-umc.org to read more about central conference retirees and surviving spouses.

Other Items of Note

- The Mozambique social security system, the National Social Security Institute, is now mandatory. Employees will make contributions throughout their careers and receive pension payments upon retirement.
- A new bishop has been assigned to serve both of the Mozambique annual conferences. Bishop Joaquina Nhanala is the first female bishop on the continent of Africa. Before becoming a pastor, Bishop Nhanala worked as an executive for Mozambique's labor department, where the new social security system was designed. Her expertise will be invaluable as CCPI continues to develop the pension program for retirees and surviving spouses in the country.

Questions? Interested in Helping?

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