



CCP Update



Bishop Yambasu, Sierra Leone (UMNS)

Central Conference Pensions Thanks Its Many Donors

Thanks to the generosity of donors around the world, Central Conference Pensions (CCP) achieved its \$25 million challenge goal in October 2013, during one of the worst economic times in memory. More than \$26.7 million has been raised to date (with \$5.1 million in investment earnings already distributed) to support central conference pension participants.

The General Board of Pension and Health Benefits—on behalf of those who serve in the central conferences—thanks the denomination for its continued support of CCP. This program will help assure sustainable lifetime pension support to central conference ministers and surviving spouses in retirement.

A Special Message from Bishop John K. Yambasu Sierra Leone Annual Conference

"In my many years as clergy and a missionary in Africa, I have lived to see retired pastors die in abject poverty and without dignity. I have seen many young people shy away from full-time itinerant ministry because it was like intentionally signing-on for a life of permanent poverty. Through the Central Conference Pensions, you and your colleagues restored dignity to ordained ministry. Today in Africa, we celebrate the lives of the many young people who now see ordained ministry as a vocation worth pursuing. And we continue to see retired pastors live healthier and longer—and with dignity."

CCP Achievements

Retirees currently receiving CCP support:	1,408
Surviving spouses currently receiving support:	1,424
Total pension amount distributed to date:	\$5.1 million

Central Conference Facts

The central conferences are located outside the United States and include annual conferences in Africa, the Philippines and Eurasia.

Within the central conferences, there are 75 annual and provisional annual conferences.

- 4.4 million members, served by more than 8,000 active clergy
- More than 2,800 retirees and surviving spouses reside in the central conferences



General Board

Pension and Health Benefits

Caring For Those Who Serve



Rosemary Chidzikwe,
Surviving Spouse, Zimbabwe

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Central Conference Pensions—A Connectional Success Story

The story of CCP is truly a connectional success—with the entire denomination working together to support their central conference brethren with pension payments where they are needed. The story begins as General Conference 2000 focused the denomination’s attention on the issue of clergy pensions by creating an interagency task force (made up of five general secretaries and three bishops), and charging it with “launching a pension support plan for the central conferences.” General Conference 2004 reaffirmed the original mandate and amended *The Book of Discipline* to authorize the effort of the Central Conference Pension Initiative (CCPI) to raise the funds necessary to fulfill the original charge. Bishop Ben Chamness led the initial fundraising effort, tasked with raising at least \$20 million to fund central conference pensions.

The people of The United Methodist Church embraced the challenge and responded generously. Annual conferences donated their annual distribution (Cokesbury) check from the United Methodist Publishing House to support this important effort. Local churches also sought ways to give, and individuals volunteered contributions—affirming the desire of the Church to address the lack of pension support in the central conferences.

Throughout the 2008-2012 quadrennium, with guidance and help from the other agencies on the task force, CCPI made significant strides in establishing pension programs throughout the central conferences. Pilot programs were launched across various African countries from Angola to Zimbabwe—the first in Liberia under the direction of Bishop John Innis. In December 2009, after reaching its original \$20 million fundraising goal, an additional \$5 million challenge goal was announced to facilitate specific conference needs identified during the pilot projects.

In January 2013, CCPI celebrated the fact that all of the central conferences now had a pension plan in place. Even though the plans differed in detail and reflected the economies and cultures in each area, they all focused on building sustainable pension systems that will eventually become self-funded and self-governed.

CCPI achieved its \$25 million challenge goal in October 2013. A generous donation from the General Board of Discipleship (GBOD) completed the fundraising effort—making it possible to retire the CCPI once all pledged contributions are received. As a result, “Initiative” was removed from the name, and the program re-branded—Central Conference Pensions (CCP). GBPHB General Secretary Barbara Boigegrain commented on the achievement: *“We are so grateful to the thousands of individuals, local churches, conferences and others, and now the GBOD, who contributed over the years to make it possible for our United Methodist Church clergy in the central conferences to also have hope for the future.”*

CCP serves as a model of cooperation and commitment within the Church—a successful effort to fund pensions for central conference clergy, who without Church support, would have little or nothing in retirement.

We thank you for your generosity and kindness!

Central Conference Pension Initiative Timeline

2000

General Conference 2000 •
Central Conference Pension Initiative task force launched



General Conference 2004 •
Directed fundraising for central conference retirees;
CCPI established



2004-2008 Quadrennium
Donated "Cokesbury checks" help fund CCPI

2003-2006
Reviewed African and Russian pension needs



Bishop Chamness

2006 •
\$20 million fundraising campaign, led
by Bishop Ben Chamness

January 2007 •
First pilot program in Liberia, led by
Bishop John Innis



Bishop Innis (UMNS)

May 2009
Anonymous \$500,000 donation received;
denomination challenged to match it; challenge goal
increased by \$5 million to \$25 million based on
a better understanding of the need



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August 2009 •
Baltic Episcopal Area visited

September 2011 •
Benefits officers met in Johannesburg, South Africa,
for training and best practices



January 2013
All UM clergy around the world have reliable pension
support through their conference or government
program—13 CCP pension plans throughout Africa,
Asia and Europe cover 2,832 retirees and surviving
spouses; more than 8,000 active pastors



September 2013 •
Second central conference benefit officers forum held

October 2013 •
General Board of Discipleship contribution
completed \$25 million fundraising goal



November 2014
"CCPI" retired—changed to "CCP;" more than
\$26.7 million pledged and \$5.1 million distributed
(from earnings on the donations) to plan participants

2014



Rev. Titus Panzela Nhancale
Retiree, Mozambique

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Your Support is Changing Lives

During 2014 trips to Africa and the Philippines, CCP staff interviewed retirees and surviving spouses who are receiving pension support. Each is thankful to donors around the world for the continued generosity that helps improve their lives.



The Reverend Dr. Zebediah Marewangepo

Retiree, Zimbabwe

Zebediah retired in 2003 after serving churches in Zimbabwe for more than 20 years, most recently as the country's Director of Evangelism. He also worked at the General Board of Global Ministry (New York, NY)

in various positions. The Reverend remembers fearing for his own life as he traveled to many countries in Africa during the 1990s that were embroiled in civil wars.

With regard to the CCP payment he now receives, he says, *"words cannot express how this has helped our people."* And he offers this advice to people going into ministry—*"If you are hearing a real call, you will not be alone because God will always be with you."*



Ms. Annah Matongo

Surviving Spouse, Zimbabwe

Her husband spent 30 years as a pastor, serving four circuits (about 25 churches) during his ministry. Because he had as many as seven churches in a circuit, he was not able to visit every church, every Sunday, so Annah would

travel to some of the churches to preach and conduct Sunday school.

She also chaired the United Methodist Women's group in the circuits her husband served, as well as handled many of the children's and youth ministry efforts. Annah remembers much of the harassment she and her husband suffered during the civil war activities of the 1970s. She had 10 children, and although six have died, the remaining four have given her nine beautiful grandchildren.



The Reverend Patrick B. Cengimbo

Retiree, South Africa

Patrick began his ministry in 1971 and was ordained in 1974. Like many United Methodist clergy in South Africa, he first served the British Methodist Church, later becoming United Methodist when his church

moved into the growing UMC.

Ministers were moved to a new church every year, as was the practice at the time. Patrick met his wife early in his career so she was aware of his constant movement—yet she married him anyway, he joked. Since ministry didn't pay well, Patrick supplemented his income by working as a carpenter.

He is very thankful for the CCP payment he receives every month—on-time and in the correct amount. *"Be obedient to the church authorities and your congregation, and do no harm,"* he advises new pastors just entering ministry.



The Reverend Elias Alavera

Retiree, Philippines

Elias is 75-years-old. He retired in 2007 after a full career in ministry, including 20 years as a district superintendent. When asked about his church career he said, *"I loved my congregations."*

He now leads a not-for-profit organization that provides micro-finance lending to people throughout the Pampanga district—north of Manila—with a focus *"to strive for the moral transformation of the community."* Elias is also starting a new church in a small town about 45 minutes from his home. He has four children and 10 grandchildren, and is very proud that his oldest daughter is a deaconess in the UMC.

Questions?

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