



CCP Update



Wespath
BENEFITS | INVESTMENTS

December 2022

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Scan the QR code to watch
Thomas Kemper, a consultant
for the CCP program, reflect on
his trip to the Congo.

Want to Learn More About the CCP Program?

The 2022 biennial report on the CCP program is available at wespath.org/ccp in English, French and Portuguese and provides insights into the pension plans around the world for which CCP provides funds.

Seven Choirs, Aviation Ministry Part of Memorable Congo Trip



Dale Jones (red blazer) and Thomas Kemper (black backpack) meet retired Bishop Nkulu Ntamba Ntambo in Kamina.

Dale Jones, Wespath's managing director of Church Relations, and Thomas Kemper, a consultant for the Central Conference Pensions (CCP) program, spent a week in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) earlier this year meeting with pension recipients, pension officers and bishops. What follows is a recap of a few of the highlights of the trip. Visit wespath.org/ccp and click on the CCP Update Newsletter link for the full story.

June 23 at Kamina, DRC

Jones; Kemper; Bishop Mande Muyombo, leader of the North Katanga Episcopal Area; and other episcopal area leaders flew from Lubumbashi to Kamina in the morning aboard the Wings of the Morning airplane. Wings of the Morning is an aviation program in the North Katanga Episcopal Area connected to the General Board of Global Ministries (GBGM).

In addition to transporting pastors and missionaries throughout the region, pilot Gaston Ntambo Nkulu—who is also a GBGM missionary—and his Cessna aircraft deliver medicine and supplies to remote villages and bring rural residents to medical facilities for emergency care.

From June 23–24, Jones and Kemper met with active pastors and pensioners in the North Katanga pension plan in large-group gatherings as well as at individuals' homes. North Katanga has one of the largest UMC pension plans in Africa.

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CCP Financials as of 11/30/2022

\$27,874,113

Total donations received
Inception to date

\$436,227

Donations received
Year to date

\$899,351

Emergency grants
2006–2012

\$14,025,240

Pension funds distributed
(01/01/2007 to date)

\$1,303,828

Pension distributions
Year to date

June 26 at Kindu, DRC

Jones and Kemper attended a Sunday worship at Eglise Locale Tokolote that featured seven choirs. Among the highlights was a choir's dramatic re-enactment of the Biblical story of Zacchaeus, the chief tax collector who climbed a tree to see Jesus because he could not see the Lord among a crowd of people. Upon spotting Zacchaeus, Jesus urged him to come down and announced he would be staying at Zacchaeus' house that day. Zacchaeus responded by donating half of his possessions to the poor.

Playing the role of Zacchaeus, one member of the choir held onto a window frame and was perched a few feet off the ground. Another performer, playing the role of Jesus, pointed his right arm at Zacchaeus and then lowered it, urging him to come down. After Zacchaeus descended, the two embraced.

Widow Left Children in Zimbabwe with Family, Moved for Work before CCP

Diana Phiri's husband was a United Methodist Church pastor who died of cancer before the creation of the CCP program. Following his death, Phiri and her four young children had to leave the parsonage and find a new home.



Diana Phiri, left, receives a pension through the CCP program in Zimbabwe."

To provide for her family, Phiri left her children with her sisters and other family members and moved to England for work. She worked three jobs and went five years without seeing her children.

Thankfully, much has changed since then. Phiri has returned to Zimbabwe, her children now have families of their own and she receives a pension through the CCP program in Zimbabwe.

Wespath's Ross Lundstrom, the Church Relations manager, and Thomas Kemper, a consultant for the CCP program, traveled to Zimbabwe in late September and early October and met with retired clergy and surviving spouses, including Phiri, to learn about their experiences as plan participants.

Kemper wrote on Facebook that Phiri is "full of joy and love of life." Phiri has 10 grandchildren. She lives with two of her children and their families.

CCP "Is One Way the Church Can be Involved in Those Causes I Care Most About"



Retired Reverend David Deshler feels strongly about the CCP program.

For the retired Reverend David Deshler, the CCP program feels personal. Rev. Deshler knows what it's like for a pastor to retire without the necessary financial resources because it happened to his grandfather.

Rev. Deshler, 92, served as a United Methodist pastor in California and Arizona for several years before becoming an Ivy League professor. Teaching at Cornell University in Ithaca, New York, Rev. Deshler's area of expertise was adult education planning in developing countries. His graduate students worked with government agencies and organizations such as UNICEF, the United Nations Children's Fund.

"I'm really concerned about the issues of poverty and social justice all around the world," Rev. Deshler said. "This (the CCP program) is one way the Church can be involved in those causes I care most about."

Rev. Deshler, who now splits his time between California and Washington, spoke with Wespath employees in October about his story and why he donates to CCP.

Q: Reverend, can you tell us a little bit about your career in ministry? What got you started? Where have you served? And maybe a highlight or two?

A: I guess the first thing you probably need to know is that I'm a third-generation pastor, preacher... I had a pretty good home background, and I admired my father, and I admired many other ministers that I met at our church camps. They were the kind of people that I wanted to be, to be like. My mother (Irene (Marshburn) Deshler) introduced me mostly to the Bible and all of our childhood experiences. I came to really love Jesus. Jesus was the center of what I thought about doing.

I started in 1952, with is 70 years ago, as a youth minister in a Methodist church in Pasadena. (Deshler also served as a pastor in Anaheim, California; Tempe, Arizona; and again in Pasadena, California.)

And then I ended up 25 years in beyond the local church assignment to Cornell University in the east. That period of time, I had mostly graduate students who came from almost all over the world, mostly from Southeast Asia, Africa and Latin America. I was engaged in trying to help them understand what kind of missions they were engaged in and conduct research that would help them in their mission efforts, whatever they were doing. I was most proud of what they did. That was the most meaningful part of what I did there. I retired in 2000, which is about 22 years go. Since then, I've been engaged in adult education in the churches that I've served in, helping with all kinds of classes, and things like that.

Q: Reverend, I just wanted to know how did you become emotionally invested in the CCP program, the Central Conference Pensions program?

A: My first being drawn to it was what happened historically in my own family tree. My grandfather was in a Quaker pastorate and when he wasn't given a charge anymore, he wasn't serving a church anymore, at about (age) 65 or so. He had no retirement. There was no retirement for him. So my father and mother were trying to support him at that time. When Franklin Roosevelt came along and Social Security came up, that was a wonderful thing for him. And I thought about all the other pastors that don't have the (retirement benefits) and would be like my grandfather and would be left to the support of whatever family members that were there.

Q: Is there anything else you think other pastors or other donors or other people should know about you and your connection to the CCP program?

A: I just want to say to all those people that receive any money that I send, I want them to know that there are people who appreciate their service. This is one way of saying that.

Bishop Nhanala's Dedication Among Forum Takeaways

When Wespath hosted the Africa Central Conference Pension Officers forum in South Africa, attendees learned about sustainable investing and audits, among other things.

The forum, which took place October 4-6, also was a learning experience for Wespath's Central Conference Pensions (CCP) team. While the Africa forum was a companion event to the gathering Wespath hosted for European and Asian pension officers in May in Germany, new successes and challenges emerged with the meeting in South Africa.

What follows are the team members' reflections on the big takeaways from the Africa forum:

- Many pension officers made multiple trips to their South African embassies and worked hard to secure travel visas to South Africa.
- The forum started on a high note. Bishop Joaquina Nhanala, who oversees the Mozambique Episcopal Area, led the opening worship service and then discussed the state of the United Methodist Church (UMC) in Africa and answered questions.
- Pension officers shared that many pastors are receiving a minimal salary, or even no monetary compensation at all. Thus, pastors struggle to make pension contributions.













Bishop Joaquina Nhanala spoke and took questions at the Africa Central Conference Pension Officers forum.












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 79 provisional and annual conferences (of which 69 are assisted by CCP) with 5.4 million members.

Statistics:

Country	Active clergy	Retirees receiving payments	Surviving spouses/beneficiaries receiving payments
Cote d'Ivoire 	247	3	33
Liberia 	1,164	213	546
Mozambique 	267	36	44
West Angola 	426	64	77
East Angola 	78	22	21
Sierra Leone 	82	19	17
Zimbabwe 	356	44	51
Russia 	62	26	0
Philippines 	1,536	209	209
Nigeria 	350	41	87

Country	Active clergy	Retirees receiving payments	Surviving spouses/beneficiaries receiving payments
East Africa 	751	183	161
East Congo 	415	88	83
Central Congo 	392	218	115
South Congo 	706	118	203
North Katanga 	917	269	243
South Africa 	8	3	2
Southern and Central Europe 	71	21	8
Lithuania 	2	0	0
Latvia 	11	2	0

Total CCP Statistics

- Active pastors covered—**7,861**
- Retirees and Surviving spouses receiving support—**3,482**
- Total of all pension support funds released to date—**\$ 14,924,591***

**Total of emergency grants and pension funds distributed*

Questions?

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