



CCP Update



Wespath
BENEFITS | INVESTMENTS

September 2024

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Visit to Tanzania Cultivates Connections with Africa Delegates

In January, Wespath's Dale Jones managing director, Church Relations, and Thomas Kemper, a consultant for the CCP program, traveled to Dar es Salaam, Tanzania for a gathering of Africa General Conference delegates, pension officers and other key leaders. Funding provided by the Connectional Table, Wespath and other general agencies allowed many delegates to attend in person.



Wespath's Dale Jones and Thomas Kemper with pension leaders.

Hosted by the United Methodist Africa Forum, the gathering's primary focus was advocating for the advancement of regionalization legislation and African United Methodists' continued UMC affiliation prior to the 2024 General Conference. Wespath's team briefly presented on the agency's General Conference priorities and distributed legislation brochures in English, French and Portuguese. The meeting also served as an opportunity for Wespath staff to connect with delegates and gather contact information to provide updates leading up to and following General Conference.

Wespath Presents Legislation at General Conference Orientation

In April, nearly three dozen Wespath staff traveled to Charlotte, North Carolina for the 2024 General Conference. Wespath's General Secretary Andy Hendren, Dale Jones and consultant Thomas Kemper, alongside North Katanga conference benefits officer Didier Banza and conference treasurer Rev. Daniel Mumba, presented an overview on Wespath's legislation to the central conference delegates during the orientation session. The team discussed the need for the since approved Compass retirement plan for the U.S. Church, Wespath's sustainable investing legislation, and the rationale behind introducing regionalization for addressing U.S.-only matters.

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CCP Financials as of 6/30/2024

\$28,094,226

Total donations received
Inception to date

\$59,507

Donations received
Year to date

\$899,351

Emergency grants
2006–2012

\$16,036,287

Pension funds distributed
(2007 to date)

\$674,952

Pension distributions
Year to date



Wespath's General Secretary Andy Hendren (center) and Dale Jones (left) present at the General Conference orientation session in April 2024.

Guest speakers Banza and Rev. Mumba also explained the importance of their pension plan in providing a livelihood for retired clergy and spouses, noting the Congo Central Conference amends their pension plan locally rather than taking changes to the General Conference. Time was allotted at the end of the session to receive questions from delegates. Wespath materials were translated from English into French, Portuguese, Kiswahili and Tagalog to clearly communicate with all delegates.

The event was an incredible opportunity for Wespath to strengthen its relationships across the worldwide UMC Connection, especially during times of change and widespread disaffiliation throughout the UMC community. Given that outcomes from General Conference will undeniably have lasting implications for the CCP program, the CCP team and the Overseas Pension Corporation Board will continue to amend and refine the established guiding principles for UMC division and separation scenarios as situations in the central conferences evolve. The principles aim to ensure that CCP funds are used to support pensions for past and future service in The United Methodist Church, and pension obligations for UMC service are fulfilled.

Rev. Isaac Broune Leaves a Legacy of Good Works, Support for CCP

In May of this year, Rev. Isaac Broune sadly passed away at the age of 48 after a brief battle with cancer.

Rev. Broune was a key leader in the Cote d'Ivoire Annual Conference and an avid supporter of the CCP. Fluent in several languages, he typically joined the virtual calls with Wespath alongside the conference treasurer or benefits officer to offer

interpretation support as well as input and context. Isaac attended the CCP Forum in Nairobi last November and took scores of photographs, as photography was one of his passions. Only 10 days before his passing, Isaac had been elected by the General Conference to Wespath's Board of Directors as a representative from the Central Conference.

Isaac's passion for the Church was matched only by his passion to support communication across the denomination: partnering with United Methodist Communications; offering his skills as a translator; playing a key role in establishing a first-of-its-kind radio station in Côte d'Ivoire; working on Le Méthodiste, the conference newspaper; serving as a correspondent for the Methodist Times in Ghana; becoming a skilled photographer for articles he wrote. In 2012, he was asked by UM News to staff the French news desk at General Conference. Broune was appointed the Côte d'Ivoire Conference's first national chaplain of communication. In 2021, he was ordained a pastor, an aspiration he held for much of his career.



Only 10 days before passing, Rev. Isaac Broune had been elected by the General Conference to Wespath's Board of Directors.*

*Photo credit: UM News

Liberia Conference Welcomes New Director Rev. Alex Harmon

This year, the Liberia Annual Conference welcomed Rev. Alex Harmon as its new director. Most recently, Rev. Harmon served as Secretary of the Board of Ordained Ministry of the Liberia Annual Conference. In the past, he served as Chairperson of the Committee on Ordained Ministry of the Monrovia District Conference of the United Methodist church.

Earlier in his service, he served as senior pastor to churches on the Monrovia District, served the New Georgia United Methodist Church for 10 years, and served the Seventy-Second Community United Methodist Church for five years, he also

worked as principal for three United Methodist elementary and junior high schools and, for five years, Rev. Harmon served as Vice President of the College of West Africa (CWA), a premier school and the oldest United Methodist High School in the Republic of Liberia.

Alex started in the United Methodist Youth Fellowship (UMYF), where he served and rose to the position of District Youth President, and after many years, later assumed the responsibility of District Youth Coordinator of the Monrovia District.

Rev. Jano Sjanta— Recipient Story

Born in 1954 into a Methodist family in Padina, Serbia, Jano felt a call to ministry at age 17 after a life-changing conversion inspired by the writings of Christian fiction novelist Kristina Roy when he heard through prayer, “Now you can fulfill your dream.” After completing his theological training in Osijek in 1978, Jano served five parishes throughout his ministry with the support of his wife, Liljana, who found her own calling in women and children’s ministry. During the disintegration of Yugoslavia in the 1990s, the couple remained steadfast in their ministry. When Jano was called to war, Liljana held church services in his absence and provided refuge to a Serbian family displaced by the Yugoslav Wars.

The couple raised a daughter, Anna, and a son, Daniel, who is now the Superintendent of The United Methodist Church in Serbia. After losing his wife to illness in 2020, Jano retired after 42 years of service and turned his focus to pastoral care. With the pension support he receives from Wespeth’s CCP program, in retirement Jano enjoys providing repairs for his community, woodworking and gardening.



Liberia Conference Makes Moves Towards Plan Sustainability

In July 2024, members from Wespeth’s team traveled to Monrovia, Liberia to discuss the conference’s pension plan with pension leaders, the Board of Pensions and Bishop Quire. The plan has faced many financial challenges over the years, but after a recent audit conducted by the CCP Program audit firm, Holbrook Global, Wespeth had a productive follow-up meeting with the auditor and the Liberia pension team where they

created a plan to work towards added benefit transparency and accountability.

One of the new developments for the conference’s pension board is electronic pension payments via mobile phone, which will be safer, faster and more convenient for recipients. In district meetings in Monrovia, Buchanan and Cotton Tree, the team was able to see these efforts in real time. At the time of the visit, 55 people registered for the mobile service, and Wespeth witnessed their joy of receiving a pension via their mobile device, for the first time! While much more work remains, the Liberia Annual Conference demonstrated its commitment to supporting clergy and their families in the days and years ahead.

Rev. Pete and Kay Crawford Support Central Conference Pensions

For Rev. Pete Crawford and his wife, Kay, supporting the Central Conference Pensions was an easy decision—it was simply an extension of their lived values.

Rev. Crawford spent most of his pastoring on the east side of Michigan, and found the most satisfying parts of his ministry to be the short-term missions and the direct and immediate impact on those individuals within the communities that the missions served. After his retirement, Rev. Crawford spent time doing work around the house to keep busy and active, but he soon discovered that he couldn’t leave his calling. He found his way to hospice chaplaincy, a part-time church role, and prison ministry.

Rev. Crawford credits Kay with getting them involved in and donating to the Central Conference Pensions program. Kay recalled, “The Book of James said that if you see a need, don’t say, ‘Go home and be warm and be fed,’ do something about it.’ We are so wealthy in this country and so grateful for the pension program and health insurance and it’s a good thing to share.”

Rev. Crawford echoed her feelings. “Whatever way our little bit can encourage people, we’ll do that, but it’s their hands-on work, time, energy, and love of Jesus that they’re giving that will make a difference. We’re grateful to be a little part of that.”
























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 	259	3	36
Liberia 	1,148	215	546
Mozambique 	275	35	47
West Angola 	415	92	81
East Angola 	75	18	21
Sierra Leone 	80	18	18
Zimbabwe 	317	51	49
Russia 	54	24	0
Philippines 	1,577	221	215
Nigeria 	350	41	86

Country	Active clergy	Retirees receiving payments	Surviving spouses/beneficiaries receiving payments
East Africa 	828	219	165
East Congo 	405	92	83
Central Congo 	741	236	113
South Congo 	811	136	218
North Katanga 	525	279	254
South Africa 	8	2	1
Southern and Central Europe 	70	19	7
Lithuania 	1	0	0
Latvia 	6	5	0

Total CCP Statistics

- Active pastors covered—**7,948**
- Retirees and Surviving spouses receiving support—**3,653**
- Total of all pension support funds released to date—**\$ 16,935,638***

**Total of emergency grants and pension funds distributed*

Questions?

Central Conference Pensions: Wespeth

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