



Rev. Marsha Woolley, DAC Program & Worship Chairperson puts the final touches on stage.

Today's highlights

- 10:00 AM Laity Session/Chapel Clergy Session/Dawson Auditorium
- 1:30 PM Opening Worship
- 3:30 PM Plenary Session
- 7:00 PM LEAD Groups
- 8:00 PM Registration Closed
- 8:30 PM Outdoor & Retreat Ministries Q&A/Rush Hall #124

 **67° PTLY CLOUDY**

“...remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”
-Matthew 28:20

THE STAGE IS SET FOR DAC

ADRIAN, Mich. (MIC) --The members of the Detroit Annual Conference are gathering on the campus of Adrian College. Laity and clergy are in for a full few days that will include the casting of ballots for delegates to the 2016 General and Jurisdictional conferences and voting on two resolutions that will change the future course for ministry and mission for The United Methodist Church in Michigan.

Sixteen laypersons and fourteen clergypersons have been nominated as possible delegates to the General and Jurisdictional conferences next year. Persons should have their #2 pencil sharpened to mark the computer-cards that will eventually elect a total of 3 clergy delegates and 3 lay delegates, who will go to Portland, OR in May for the denomination's top legislative and policy making session. Another 3 clergy and 3 laity will then be elected to make the trip to Peoria, IL in July for the election of episcopal leaders for the North Central Jurisdiction. Two alternates (both clergy and laity) will also be determined. Information about those on the slate are available on the conference website and in print handouts. The first ballots will be taken at the Clergy Session and Laity Session this morning.

See **STAGE** on back



JOURNEY FORWARD

On May 1, Detroit and West Michigan conference members received a letter from Bishop Deb, reflecting on her two-year journey across the State of Michigan. She has engaged in dialogue around the vision to create a new annual conference in five events that accommodated all points on the Area compass. Those settings reached 400 people and countless others who saw the highlights on the conference websites.

The Frequently Asked Questions, plus other inquiries, will be the subject of the LEAD Groups on Thursday evening. Here are some key highlights:

- A unified conference would create a deeper pool to align clergy gifts with churches to be served;
- There are no obvious economic reasons to create a new conference. Bishop Kiesey has discouraged economics as the reason for unifying, focusing instead on Kingdom building;
- Many believe a unified conference would allow the bishop to lead instead of manage;
- If the proposal passes, Bishop Kiesey will be encouraged to establish an area-wide task force charged with creating a plan for the establishment of one unified conference;
- If the North Central Jurisdiction blesses an approved motion from Michigan, it will still take 2-3 years before a final vote can be taken to dissolve the two conferences, allowing many opportunities for input on key issues;
- What will happen to specific programs and ministries will be answered only if the conferences vote to come together. This year's vote is about a willingness to come together, not about a detailed plan.

Some have asked if Bishop Kiesey favors the creation of one conference. Yes. Based on what she has heard in the five listening sessions, Bishop Deb feels the time is right to come together as the Michigan Area. Over 30 area-wide groups already exist and are thriving. She says, "I have a deep trust in the wisdom of the people of the United Methodist Church in Michigan. And whatever decision we make, I believe we will be stronger for having talked together, dreamed together, and share together in honesty and Christian love."

OFFERING FEEDS KIDS

This year there will be one offering taken at Annual Conference. Your gifts will be shared at Opening Worship on Thursday afternoon. As in the past, the contributions will support the Haiti Hot Lunch Program and the feeding program at the Bishop Judith Craig Children's Village in Liberia. This year members are encouraged to give an additional gift to restore and upgrade the facilities at the Judith Craig Children's Village. Please make checks payable to the Detroit Conference Treasurer. Your dollars make a difference!

GOOD FOR YOU!

Certificates for Spotlight Church, Imagine No Malaria and 100% Payment of Apportionments are enveloped together and will be available outside the Registrar's Office, Room 125. Please take time to pick them up.

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STAGE continued from front page

LEAD groups on Thursday evening will enter into conversation on the creation of a new Michigan Area Conference. The actual vote will take place on Friday afternoon. The votes will be sealed until after the West Michigan Annual Conference has voted on an identical resolution when members meet at Calvin College June 5. A webcast on June 10 will announce the result of these ballots.

Also on Friday afternoon the body will be engaged in a second written ballot on the creation of a Michigan Area Board to oversee United Methodist Conference Camp and Retreat Ministries. This ballot will also be sealed and the results announced on June 10. A Q & A session about this proposal is being held Thursday evening in Rush Hall at 8:30 pm. Come and enter into the dialogue.

There are two petitions coming to the floor for sending on to General Conference; one concerning equalization of annual conference membership and the other on the abolition of nuclear weapons. Other resolutions on the regional legislative slate include a Michigan Area Clergy Sexual Ethics Policy; Pentagon Spending; Divestment from companies contributing to Palestinian Occupation; and the support and promotion of homosexuality.