



## Today's highlights

- 8:00 AM Plenary Session
  - Budget
  - Intro to Act of Repentance towards Reconciliation with Indigenous People
  - Cabinet Dean's Report
- 2:00 PM Service of Recognition, Commissioning & Ordination


81° THUNDERSTORMS

*“See what great love the Father has lavished on us”*

-1 John 3

## TIME TO FISH IN DEEPER WATERS

Water was the order of the day on Saturday morning. Conference members approached Herrick Chapel in the rain, umbrellas raised. Once inside, they experienced worship rich with water metaphors, centered around a passionate sermon by the Rev. Dr. William Dobbs.

With apologies to Friday's preacher, Scott Chrostek, who spoke about God's practice of calling misfits, Bill asserted that Jesus called fisherman on purpose. "Those fishermen knew how to work hard. They knew how to work with others and the importance of taking care of their nets," Bill said. And, most importantly, "They understood if you are not catching, you are not fishing."

He then offered three pieces of counsel for churches:

1. Learn to take care of your net. "What catches folks is not us but Jesus Christ...present Christ to them in such a way that people cannot possibly be confused...if we want to flesh out Jesus, we have to be loving and accepting."
2. Learn you won't catch people staying in shallow water. "We can't wait for Jesus to throw fish in the boat ... We must fish in the deeper waters of diversity ... I believe with all my heart we must fish in the deeper water of youth and young adults."
3. Remember to keep Jesus in the boat with you. "When I look at the statistics, it amazes me the number of churches that have had no baptisms ... The days of no baptisms have got to end. We must not be willing to accept empty nets anymore."





## GRACE IS OUR 'FLYWHEEL'

Jorge Acevedo took the Detroit Conference back to its roots during his teaching time on Saturday morning. He cited the ministry approach of the METHODist founder, John Wesley, “Who was organized to beat the devil.” He went on to describe how Wesley’s passion for “practical divinity” grew out of his understanding of grace. Like Wesley, Acevedo asserted, “Our local churches must build a system to make disciples.”

“Wesley ordered the movement after how he believed God works in the world,” Jorge said. The intentional approach to discipleship that the Grace congregations in greater Ft. Myers adopted—“our flywheel”—is a contemporary application of Wesley’s firm focus on grace.

“Societies met on Thursday night, a setting for seekers to ask questions” (Prevenient Grace). “Once people were serious he assigned them to a class meeting where the Holy Spirit would convict and convert” (Justifying Grace). “And after a person professed faith in Christ, Wesley put them in a Band where they could ask the tough questions” (Sanctifying Grace). “This is the stream in which we stand today,” Acevedo said. And then he asked, “What does it look like to drag this rich tradition 250 years into North America and make it sing?”

**FLYWHEEL** continued at right



Ruby Anderson listens intently to Jorge Acevedo’s Saturday morning presentation. Later in the day Ruby was elected as a lay delegate to Jurisdictional Conference.

## 160,000 LIVES SAVED!



*Rev. Dr. Molly Turner, Imagine No Malaria Michigan Coordinator, celebrates the announcement that the Area exceeded the goal of saving 150,000 lives by more than 1000 people. With contributions of \$1,634,362, the amount represents a life saved for each \$10 contributed. Detroit Conference worked over the past year with the West Michigan Conference to achieve the goal with over 90% of churches participating.*



**FLYWHEEL** continued

Grace’s *Reach Ministries* engage and invite the unchurched to experience the love of Jesus: Grace Community Center and the Exceptional Entrepreneurs ministry for persons with special needs. “If the only place people can get into your church is through the front door on Sunday morning, you are toast,” Jorge said.

*Connect Ministries* include Grace’s Starting Point Café, About Grace groups and a new member class called Making Connection. *Form Ministries* help people have a growing and transforming relationship with Christ: Walk to Emmaus, Financial Peace University, and a web-based audio Bible.

*Send Ministries* “release God’s people to make the realities of heaven the realities of earth.” PAWS pet ministry and Shoes of Hope are part of Grace’s “gospel transformation business.”

“A vital congregation is one that creates incubator-like environments for the Holy Spirit to work God’s grace into people,” Acevedo concluded. “Jesus is with us. Are we with him? Jesus will use the United Methodist Church or he will find someone else.”