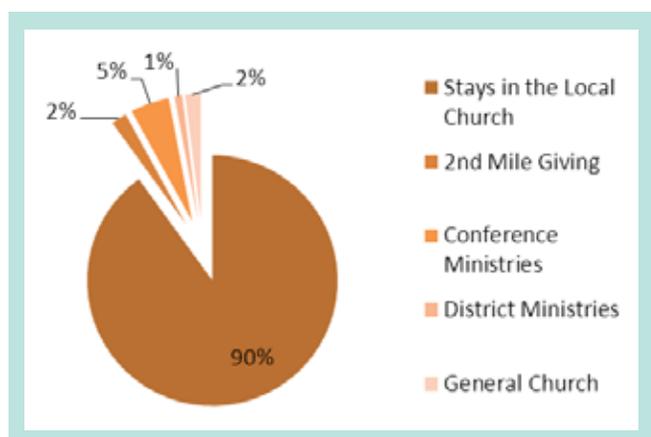




Your Ministry Shares support **MINISTRY and MISSION** *around the world.*

Last year, the participants in our 402 congregations in the West Michigan Conference contributed gifts through their local church which totaled **\$ 61,856,600**. Of these gifts, **90%** (\$55,670,940) remained in the local church for ministry, mission, operations and capital improvements. The remaining gifts of **\$6,185,660** (Ministry Shares) are used in support of the connexional missions and ministries of our General Church, Annual Conference and the Districts to meet the mission of our church.



GENERAL CHURCH
Total gifts \$1,237,132

CONFERENCE MISSIONS and MINISTRIES
Total gifts \$3,092,830

DISTRICT MISSIONS and MINISTRIES
Total gifts \$618,566

2ND MILE GIVING
Total gifts \$1,237,132

GENERAL CHURCH

Your gifts to the General Church make possible a national/global faith partnership that allows your congregation to reach far beyond your community to change the world for Christ. Using the connexional power of more than 14,000 local congregations and 14 million United Methodists, your gifts to the General Church contribute to amazing ministry around the world. For detailed information on how your gifts were invested in ministry and mission, please visit umcgiving.org.

World Service Fund - \$860,836

Through this fund, your local congregation is connected with the global mission and ministry of The United Methodist Church. How these gifts are used is expressed through "The Four Areas of Focus of The United Methodist Church." This is our collective focus for making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world by.

Because of the importance of this ministry, members of the West Michigan Conference have committed to 100% participation in the World Service Fund. This, commitment and our level of special giving, has often made the West Michigan Conference the leading per-capita provider, of any United Methodist Conference in the world, in its support to the World Service Fund and special giving.

Ministerial Education Fund - \$295,538

Now, more than ever, we need well-educated pastors to meet the needs of our local churches. This fund supports the education of tomorrow's ministers through our 13 United Methodist seminaries. One-fourth of this gift remains under the administration of our own Conference Board of Ordained Ministry to assure there are seminary scholarships and loans for those students from our conference.

EPISCOPAL FUND - \$251,363

Bishops of The United Methodist Church, like our own Michigan Area Bishop Deborah Lieder Kiesey, provide spiritual leadership to more than 11 million persons in a broad range of settings on four continents, including North America, Europe, Africa and Asia. Historically, bishops preside over Annual and Central Conferences (regional areas of the church). Our Bishops play an important leadership role in helping to set the direction of the church and its mission throughout the world.

Black Colleges Fund - \$117,882

Your gifts support eleven colleges with predominantly African-American students. The fund provides the opportunity for approximately 16,000 students of all races to be exposed to academic excellence based on the Christian perspective of community, service and social responsibility.

General Administration - \$103,887

Every four years 1,000 delegates, including a delegation from the West Michigan Conference, gather from around the world to set direction for the ministries and budget of UMC and update The Book of Discipline. Your gifts provide for the administration and the safeguarding of The United Methodist Church finances, legal interests and assets, and maintain denominational records.

Africa University - \$26,380

So that we are symbols of God's love for the largest growing continent in the world, we support the first United Methodist University created in Africa. Your gifts provide for the transformation of Africa by educating nearly 1,200 African students each year from 25 countries in sustainable agriculture, disease prevention, peace, leadership and governance, education, church growth and development, business management and administration and ethical leadership.

Interdenominational Cooperation - \$23,102

Through the Interdenominational Cooperation Fund, your gifts allow us to partner with ecumenical organizations (other religious denominations) to advocate and work towards the full reception of the gift of Christian unity in every aspect of the church's life. Our Church fosters approaches to ministry and mission that more fully reflect the oneness of Christ's Church in the Christian community, provides witness to a common Christian faith, and meets human suffering and advocate for global peace and justice all over the world.

CONFERENCE MINISTRIES & MISSIONS

The West Michigan Conference is comprised of 402 local churches and dozens of ministries and missions all committed to create disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. Your gifts make these connectional ministries and missions possible, providing for the education, support and equipping of our faith communities and the 65,000 members we serve.

The Four Areas of Focus of The United Methodist Church



Connectional Ministries Office - \$618,000

Located in Grand Rapids, your gifts provide for a talented group of people called to the ministry of our connection. These faithful people work daily to meet the needs of our local churches and connectional ministries and missions in this conference. This fund also provides a central location to house this ministry team. They are there to help you create new disciples.

New Church Development and Congregational Transformation - \$330,400

Creating new places for new people is a serious commitment of the General Church and our conference. We must continue to develop and birth new faith communities in our mission to make disciples of Jesus Christ. This fund makes new and revitalized places possible each year.

Council on Finance and Administration - \$326,200

So that your gifts are cared for, protected and invested wisely, this fund provides for a Treasurer's office and staff. This also assures an annual financial audit of the Annual Conference is conducted by an accredited independent accounting firm.

Higher Education and Campus Ministry - 308,000

College is a serious time of discernment for many college students. Many young people answer the call to ministry and/or mission during this phase of life. Your gifts provide a meaningful place and support for young people on five university campus ministries (Michigan State, Central, Western, Grand Valley, Ferris State) plus support for our two Michigan United Methodist related colleges, Albion College and Adrian College.

Board of Global Ministries - \$260,000

The mission programs in our Conference include community outreach and ethnic ministries. Receiving support are more than forty local and statewide mission and outreach ministries including promotion and mission education, e.g. UM Community House, Grand Rapids Metro Ministry, Lansing Open Door, Free Stores, Volunteers In Missions, etc.

Equitable Compensation - \$200,000

So that everyone has access to competent faith leadership, your gifts assure that smaller financially challenged congregations and missional ethnic churches are able to support a well-trained pastor. This fund helps provide the minimum salary amount set by the Annual Conference for accredited pastors. In our conference, 15 communities are currently supported through this program.

Moving Expense Fund - \$180,000

Welcoming a new pastor to your local church requires faith, grace, time, and effort to assure a smooth transition. Through the gift of this fund, moving costs never become a financial burden to the local church. Together, you and your new pastor can focus on the ministry of your church instead of the financial costs of moving.

Board of Christian Camping - \$175,000

There is simply no better means for introducing a child to a life-long relationship with God than through Summer Christian Camp. Children receive more Christian education and nurturing in a week than most receive in an entire year. Many give their lives to Christ at camp. Camping is supported by camp registrations and generous gifts of scholarships for children to attend. This fund, supported by your gifts, assures that our five conference camps are led by committed and justly compensated Site Directors.

Conference Property - \$170,000

So that our district and conference staff engaged in connectional ministry and mission have housing and the necessary office space available, this fund ensures that these properties are properly cared for and maintained.

Michigan Area Support - \$152,884

These resources combine with those of the Detroit Conference, so that our Bishop and the Clergy Assistant to the Bishop have housing, office space and support staff to fulfill this role of spiritual and administrative leadership.

Contingency and Reserve - \$56,500

Ministry often encounters unforeseen expenses. So that we do not need to reduce other mission or ministry to care for these unplanned financial challenges, your gifts provide a "rainy day" fund.

Communications - \$100,000

So that you have accurate and up to date information on the missions and ministries of our connection and the opportunities to learn about local church growth and faith advancement, this fund provides for an area communications team and 24/7 streams of information. This fund provides you with news and information you can use through our conference website, numerous social media pages and print information.

Racial Ethnic Local Church - \$90,000

Michigan is becoming a very diverse state. Your gifts assure that United Methodist racial ethnic local churches and ministries are supported in a way that allows for the creation of new disciples: "New spaces for new faces."

Hispanic/Latino Ministries - \$12,000

These gifts will be matched by a grant from the National Hispanic Plan of the UMC so that new ministries can be identified and initiated across our conference in addition to supporting existing efforts.

Board of Ordained Ministry - \$57,500

Local churches and faith communities need qualified, educated and carefully screened individuals to serve as our pastors. This fund supports the development, recruitment, evaluation, professional development, supervision, and assists in the transition and advocacy of clergy as they grow. Thanks to this board, every pastor has received the care, support, nurturing and assessment necessary to assure every local church has qualified faith leadership.

Retiree Health Care - \$50,000

Our pastors and their dependents dedicate their lives to The United Methodist Church and your discipleship. For those who have served us faithfully over the years, this fund helps us keep our promise to their well being by providing a portion of the administration of their health insurance in retirement.

Vital Church Initiative - \$35,000

The Vital Church Initiative (VCI) is a "process" of renewal for growing healthy, vital, fruitful, missional congregations in our conference. This is a new process to engage our congregations for transformation. The process offers hope to leaders of congregations that have lost their outward focus by preparing them for systemic change that will enable them to once again answer God's call to reach out to new people with the Good News.

Conference Secretary - \$16,200

So that you have an accurate report on the actions of our connectional ministry and the focus for the upcoming year, this fund assures that we are able to record, edit, design and publish an extensive annual report known as the Conference Journal. This publication is available free for online reading, or printed on demand and mailed to you for a small fee.

Jurisdictional Conference - \$16,000

Every four years the nine conferences that make up the North Central Jurisdiction meet, in part to assure that each area is assigned the leadership of a bishop. This work and our regional missions and ministries are supported through your gifts.

Archives and History - Our gifts this year: \$15,000

So that you are able to access historical church records of our missions and ministries, this fund assures the safekeeping of our conference records at Albion College, preserving an institutional memory and heritage of the churches of the West Michigan Conference.

Legal Contingencies - \$7,000

When legal support is needed to protect our connectional missions and ministries, this fund provides for legal needs incurred by the Conference Chancellor (attorney).

Ministerial Pension Reserve - \$5,000

As noted earlier, our pastors and their dependents dedicate their lives to The United Methodist Church and your discipleship. This fund helps us keep our promise for their well-being by providing a timely contribution of their pensions for local churches experiencing financial difficulties that delay this monthly payment.

Conference Program Committee - Our gifts this year: \$5,000

Each year your local church sends a lay and clergy representative to Annual Conference, an annual meeting and time of shared worship, typically held each June. This gathering allows us to worship, connect, discuss the progress of missions and ministries, and look to the future of how we are called as God's people. Your gifts help support the planning of this four-day spiritual event.

Conference Nominating Committee - \$4,000

Our dozens of missions and ministries require leadership and support by people just like you. The Conference Nominating Committee helps align the right people with their calling and provides training and development of leaders in the conference.

Board of Lay Ministries - \$3,000

The United Methodist Church is unique in that the leadership of the church is shared equally between pastors and laity (those who are not clergy). This board supports the development of laity leaders and your gifts provide training and mentoring for these important faithful people in our connection.

Conference Council on Youth Ministry (CCYM) - \$5,000

We provide these resources so that our young people have assistance as they plan and participate in leadership development activities to strengthen our youth and young adult ministry.

SECOND MILE GIVING

The Advance (short for The Advance for Christ and His Church) is United Methodist "lingo" for "the second mile of giving" to specific projects through The United Methodist Church. The first mile is referred to Ministry Shares. This year local churches supported countless Advance Specials (ministries) with gifts well over \$1 Million.

Established by the General Church, The Advance allows your local church to give directly to areas that you feel God calling into your circle of care, like disaster relief for victims of a flood, tsunami, or earthquake, or proactive projects that seek to bring education, health care, community development, or transportation and communication systems to those in need.

Every penny of every dollar goes directly to those projects, because the "overhead" has already been covered through regular United Methodist offerings and the One Great Hour of Sharing offering that is received on the first Sunday of March.

Clergy Advocacy - \$2,500

So that we both clergy families and congregations are supported in times of conflict, this fund assures that professional care can be received by clergy during difficult times in ministry. This gift contributes to an environment where grace and healing can occur.

Other Ministries - \$32,500 (approximately)

Staffed by dedicated conference clergy and lay volunteers, these ministries are provided \$500 per year for meeting expenses. These ministries are able to apply for additional funds through the Conference Leadership Team. Included are; Board of Evangelism, Christian Unity, Religion & Race, COSROW, Personnel, UMM, Hunger, Prison Ministry, Disability Concerns, Conference Statistician, Indian Workers Conference, Board of Discipleship, Board of Church and Society, Abuse Prevention Team, Cooperative Ministry Committee. Information on these ministries and missions can be found on the conference website.

DISTRICT MISSIONS & MINISTRIES

District Superintendents - \$1,209,488

Your local church is connected with approximately 50-70 other area churches to form a Conference District. We have six districts in the West Michigan Conference, each led by a pastor known as the District Superintendent. This individual provides spiritual care and supervision for your pastor, supports the needs of your congregation, connects local churches in connectional missions and ministries on this level. Through your gifts, District connectional ministries are fully supported and funded, providing staff and space to help your pastor and local church grow.

At-Large Lay Member Expenses - \$43,000

To assure the voices of laity are shared equally with clergy in ministry and mission planning, this fund provides the ability for each district to send lay members to participate at Annual Conference, regardless of the location of their local church in our conference. This eases the burden of travel costs on lay leaders at more distant churches in our conference.

In West Michigan we call our program for giving to The Advance, "Six Lanes." Find out more about the General Advance at umcmmission.org/Give-to-Mission/The-Advance

Here is a list of Advance Special giving opportunities in 2014 shared through our West Michigan connection:

1. Human Relations Sunday, January 19
2. One Great Hour of Sharing, March 30
3. Native American Ministries Sunday, May 4
4. Peace with Justice Sunday, June 15
5. World Communion Sunday, October 5
6. United Methodist Student Day, November 30
7. Racial Ethnic Local Church Sunday, February 2
8. Golden Cross Sunday, May 11
9. Volunteer in Mission Awareness Sunday, June 1
10. Rural Life Sunday, August 24
11. Christian Education Sunday, September 7
12. Camp Sunday, date to be selected by church
13. Disability Awareness Sunday (without offering) Oct. 26
14. World Aids Day, December 7