

United Methodist Missionary 2014 Gathering
Held January 8 to 10, 2015 in Claremont, California at
Claremont United Methodist Church and Pilgrim Place.

Initial activities upon arrival in Claremont

Meeting of the Steering Committee: On Thursday, those members of the Steering Committee who were present in Claremont met from about 8:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. in the lobby of the DoubleTree Inn Claremont. The meeting included the following Steering Committee members and guests: Jim Dwyer, chair, Norma Kehrberg former chair, Richard Vreeland, treasurer, and guests Mona Bomgaars, Merwyn and Barbara Nelson, Ronald and Lois Hines, and others who temporarily joined and moved on. Because of the informal nature of the group, no decisions could be made, but nominations issues were addressed in general, as well as the question of a future vision for UMMA.

Outing to La Plaza UMC in Los Angeles

On Friday morning, 17 members of the Gathering boarded the Metrolink in Claremont for Los Angeles Union Station (LAUS) from which we took a short walk to the La Plaza United Methodist Church, an Hispanic ministry dating back to 1899. We learned that the Goodwill Industries offices adjacent to the church had once been the conference headquarters when Bishop Gerald Kennedy presided there. **Leonora Barron**, Executive Director, **Betty Venegas-Huebner**, Board Secretary, and **Joe Rodriguez** introduced the group to the museum and its current photo exhibit, "Exodus" which portrays the motivation of people to leave their home countries and travel to an alien culture when they have no other hope. We learned of the struggle the church had had with civic organizations to maintain their lease in this historic downtown district, the original heart of the city of Los Angeles. **Jeanne Roe Smith**, Deaconess in LA and representative from NADM to our meeting, offered additional information about the La Plaza historical center of LA and interpreted some of the issues facing the church relating to its presence here and the solution of providing a museum to prevent other development of the property.

The business meeting itself began after lunch in the city and return to Claremont.

In Attendance

Two participated via Skype:

Wesley Neal — Fiji

Glory Mulimba — Philippines

Thirteen traveled to attend:

Mona Bomgaars, Gordon Greathouse, Lois Hines, Ronald Hines, Norma Kehrberg, Nan McCurdy, Miguel Mairena, Barbara Nelson, Merwyn Nelson, Jeanne Smith (NADHM), Dick Vreeland, David Wu, Shirley Wu

Sixteen Residents of Pilgrim Place registered to attend, as of January 8, 2015:

Elizabeth Clarke, Jim Dwyer, Dean Freudenberger, Elsie Freudenberger, Laura Fukada, Robert Fukada, Dorothy Jones Hartzler, Beryl Moore, Stanley Moore, Pat Patterson, Jeanne Audrey Powers, Clara Soto Ivey, Al Streyffeler, Mavis Streyffeler, Cathy Thompson, DarEll Weist

Friday, Jan.9, 3 to 5pm Meeting:

Introductions of all present physically and by Skype.

Presentation of Judy Chung

Words of welcome from Rev. Martha Morales, Assoc. Pastor of Claremont UMC

Devotion (Norma Kehrberg)

Norma's devotion will be offered via an UMMA UpDate.

Norma Kehrberg opened the UMMA meeting with a devotional entitled "Resident Aliens. She drew on the specific character of apostolic missionaries who are called, set apart, sent and received and spend a long part or their entire career in one setting. This enables the person sent to breathe deeply of the

language, culture and nature of the members of the community in which they are placed. In addition to fulfilling or carrying out the specific requirements of the job description, Norma gave examples of such apostolic missionaries who felt called to step out in support of justice ministries with many of the examples from the latter part of the 20th century. Norma drew references from Bishop Roy Sano's paper "Biblical Basis for Mission" given at the 2007 UMMA Mission Gathering. She also referenced GBGM General Secretary Thomas Kemper's remarks in the March-April 2012 issue of New World Outlook where he outlined a vision for the future of mission. Norma included a challenge for present day missionaries and GBGM in sending and supporting missionaries, to always be open to fulfilling ministries' of justice in their assignments. (Full remarks to be published when available.)

Presentation by Judy Chung, Associate General Secretary for Mission Personnel:

Judy brought greetings from Global Ministries and Thomas Kemper.

She is an ordained elder from the Cal-Pac Conference and has worked at Global Ministries for 3.5 years.

Currently there are 340 fulltime missionaries including Global Mission Fellows (who serve for two years). We also have "marinated" missionaries (seasoned, wise, more life experience).

Judy brought resources like the Mission Map. Judy shared about Generation Transformation and UMCOR. We will be commissioning missionaries at General Conference in 2016. She also talked about the commissionings in the Philippines and Ecuador. She talked about the Global Nature of the church and of Global Ministries. She shared that the move to Atlanta includes opening of regional offices. The move will take place in October 2016.

More than 2.5 million dollars was raised on #GivingTuesday. Question: If a Global Mission Fellow completes two years then becomes a long term missionary is the first two years included in their pension calculation (Important question for UMMA Pension Task Force). Judy says that we are moving to a post-colonial model of mission.

UMMA NOMINATIONS REPORT – GATHERING FOR 2014 (January 2015)

Newly nominated and elected members are printed in **bold** and *italics*.

Office	Name	Term	Max	Nominees
<u>ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL (Executive Committee)</u>				
Chair –	Jim Dwyer (2011 - 2015)	2 yrs.	8	
Vice Chair –	Katherine Parker (2012 -)	2 yrs.	8	
Secretary –	Nan McCurdy (2008 - 2016) seeks replacement	2 yrs.	8	
Treasurer –	<i>DarEll Weist</i>	2014-2016		
<u>REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES</u>				
WECSA (1) –	Rukang Chikomb	2011-2015		
WECSA (2) –	Ngoy Kalangwa	2012-2016		
ENAME (1) –	Alex and Brenda Awad	2011-2015		
ENAME (2) –	Kristin Brown	2011-2015		
ESAP (1) –	[Prumeh - don't publish]	2011-2015		
<i>ESAP (2) –</i>	<i>Esther Gitobu</i>	<i>2014-2018</i>		
<i>SA (1) –</i>	<i>Mary Escobar</i>	<i>2014-2018</i>		
SA (2) –	Marilia Schüller	2011-2015		
USA (1) –	Becky Harrell (new region)	2012-2016		
USA (2) –	Lyda Pierce	2011-2015		
<i>Retirees (1)</i>	<i>Eunice Arias (formerly SA)</i>	<i>2014-2018</i>		
Retirees (2)	Doug Wingeier	2013-2017		
CCAM (1)	Belinda Forbes	2011-2015		
<i>CCAM (2)</i>	<i>Alina Saucedo Paucara</i>	<i>2015-2019</i>		

CLASS REPRESENTATIVES

New Class 2014 Nov (1)	<i>vacant</i>	
New Class 2014 Nov (2)	<i>vacant</i>	
New Class 2014 Jun (1)	Wesley & Jerusha Neal	2014-2016
New Class 2014 Jun (2)	George Miller	2014-2016
New Class 2013	Ellyn Dubberly	2013-2015
Mission Interns 2012-2015 (1)	Albert Otshudi Longe	2012-2015
Mission Interns 2012-2015 (2)	Erica Olivera	2012-2015
Mission Interns 2012-2015 (3)	Hillary Taylor	2012-2015
GMF-US (1) 2013-2015	<i>vacant</i>	
GMF-US (2) 2013-2015	<i>vacant</i>	
GMF-Int'l (1) 2014-2016	Glory Mulimba	2014-2016
GMF-Int'l (2) 2014-2016	Kendra Twenter	2014-2016
GMF-US (1) 2014-2016	Gretchen Brown	2014-2016
GMF-US (2) 2014-2016	Katy Wrona	2014-2018

Our Administrative Council consists of the Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer and Secretary. Regional Representatives continuing on the Steering Committee are listed above and those in bold are nominated to serve terms dated beginning from 2014: We moved, seconded and accepted these people unanimously.

Missionary Class representatives.

The new classes and the GMF's elect their own representatives. The new class from June, 2014 asked the Neals (Fiji) and George Miller (Germany). GMF International's representatives: Glory Mulimba and Kendra Twenter. US2 GMF's are Gretchen Brown and Katy Wrona. These six people were nominated and elected by their classes. They were unanimously confirmed!

DarEll T. Weist was approved unanimously as the new UMMA Treasurer. The following letter was approved to send to the bank in order to add DarEll Weist as signatory. A statement approving his addition to our accounts as follows has been forwarded to the United Methodist Federal Credit Union:

"The Rev. DarEll T. Weist was elected treasurer to succeed Richard L. Vreeland. Mr. Weist resides at 619 Leyden Ln, Claremont, CA 91711-4236. He can be reached by email at: dtw4940@gmail.com or by phone on 213-700-1458.

"The Rev. DarEll T. Weist should be added as a signatory on the accounts of the Association at the United Methodist Federal Credit Union located in Montclair, CA, providing for three signatories on the account, including Richard L. Vreeland and the Rev. James A. Dwyer."

2013 minutes were unanimously approved

2014 Report from the Chair, James Dwyer: Unanimously accepted

This year's Gathering seemed not to be able to find a date until the year had already passed. Original considerations of a Forum on Mission in an Interfaith World did not materialize. The October (annual) meeting of Global Ministries directors was greatly shortened because of planned consultations with UK Methodists (about which no report was heard) and due to two planned trips of directors to Africa, one of which was cancelled due to the Ebola crisis. For these reasons we were informed that our now-traditional luncheon with UMMA officers, the two directors assigned as our liaisons and executive staff could not take place for lack of time. In return, Judy Chung offered to be present at our next Gathering, and we welcome her here. And for these reasons, the effort to plan a Gathering in New York in October did not seem appropriate.

Instead, we meet in Southern California after the end of the nominal reporting year of 2014 and will plan to meet again in conjunction with the October meeting of the Directors of Global Ministries in

2015. (The Board of Directors' remaining meetings in this Quadrennium are April 16-18, 2015, October 1-3, 2015, and March 17-19, 2016, each time on the same schedule: Thursday from 2:00 p.m. through Saturday noon, in New York.) The question presents itself whether we would prefer to meet the final days of September or the Saturday afternoon through Monday morning following the Directors' Meeting.

Despite the difficulties in setting the date for this meeting, your UMMA leadership has not been inactive: Especially the Pensions and Benefits task force can point to substantial accomplishments. Their report is also provided to you. The task force has included the following members for part or all of its deliberations: Dakin Cook (chair), Bud Carroll Jr., James Dwyer (ex officio), Zach Ferguson, Gordon Greathouse (ex officio), Frido N. Kinkolenge, Stephen Newnum, Katherine Parker, Marilia Schüller, José Velasco, Dick Vreeland. The group included persons not of U.S. origins, non-US spouses of US persons, women from the U.S. and not from the U.S., retirees, young adult missionaries, as well as your usual suspects of old white men of U.S. origin! After Dick Vreeland and Dakin Cook had ably served on the Pensions and Investment Subcommittee of the Finance Committee of the Board for a period of time, Jim Dwyer and Dakin continued that role in 2014 through teleconference and in-person meetings of the Subcommittee, once at the offices of the Board of Pensions and Health Benefits in Glenview, IL, between stormy blasts of February blizzards, when the meeting was adjourned early to assure that the committee would not be stranded in Chicago for additional days, and again in August in New York.

Looking back at the policy statement on "Guiding Principles for Missionary Service," the adoption of a new Theology of Mission statement and several other strategic planning steps, the Board was able to turn to a new pensions program and a new concept of salary compensation with much input from UMMA representatives as well as Gordon Greathouse (Missionary-in-Residence), and other members of the missionary community.

Details have been shared in the UpDate. Those on standard missionary salary will already have received a first paycheck under the new system.

Four fundamental changes were made in the pay structure:

- 1) The "CoLA" home base was moved from Washington, DC (earlier New York City) to a relatively less expensive mid-western U.S. city (Columbus, Ohio).
- 2) A substantial increase in base pay was set to correspond to a salary which would actually be adequate for living in Columbus, Ohio, at an increase of roughly 35% over the scale still in use in 2014. While the figure used is still US-centric (average beginning teachers' pay), it does offer a concrete and known point of reference by which future pay can be measured.
- 3) The cost of living adjustment from 2015 onward will be based on an international cost of living standard, assuming sufficient flexibility of the missionary to adapt lifestyle to meet the availability of local products without dependence on home-country imports, rather than an adjustment for US-expatriates trying to maintain a US standard abroad.
- 4) Cost of living adjustments will be made negatively in countries where living is less expensive and positively in more expensive countries. (In the past, negative cost of living was never applied. Additionally, shifting of some countries from the group where a negative cost of living adjustment might have been applied to the group where a positive cost of living adjustment ought to have applied was often overlooked or noticed only with delay.) Each of these concerns has been among those raised by UMMA leadership for nearly 20 years now.

UMMA can look back on the provision for a salary scale which is to be adjusted each year or so to reflect changing realities with great satisfaction. In addition to adjustments to the base corresponding to those of the reference group in the U.S., the policy continues in effect that percentage raises provided Board U.S. staff will also be applied to missionary salaries. (Additionally, it is the stated intention that the Treasurer will make proposals bringing all Global Ministries compensation worldwide — including UMCOR and other international workers — into a single salary concept.)

On the issue of pensions, we encountered both heat and light in our negotiations. The desire in New York to change to a more sustainable model of Defined Contributions that would reduce Board exposure to financial liability to replace the previous Defined Benefits met with great skepticism from missionaries. This was due to the correct assertion by UMMA leadership that a percentage contribution to a pension fund based on a totally insufficient salary would result in a totally

insufficient pension. Nevertheless, the discussions proceeded. At the same time UMMA made clear that improved salaries should precede, not follow, changes in pension calculations — to no avail. However, the Directors proved willing to keep an open mind and be open in conversation with us. Especially Scott Atnip, our liaison appointed to us by the Board, who also serves on the Pension and Investments Subcommittee, represented the needs of the missionary community well in these conversations. Thanks to his role as a director and to Roland Fernandes' readiness to respond to concrete proposals and to seek further expert guidance, revisions to the original proposals were made to provide for a 2% annual increase in the Defined Benefit pension rate, unless adjusted upward or downward by intervention of the directors, and an initial additional contribution to the new UMPIP individual personal investment accounts for 2014. Although the new pension plan was in effect for many, salaries were still at their inadequately low levels. This supplement was intended to match the difference between contributions based on the new post-2015 salary scale and the pre-2014 levels still-in-effect.

Unresolved are questions of how Social Security and Medicare benefits and supplemental health benefits provided to persons with U.S. residency and / or citizenship may be properly replaced for those who do not receive them by virtue of citizenship or lack of residency.

I refer you to the UpDate for more details.

Katherine Parker, our vice chair, has been instrumental in moving our mailing lists and UpDate distribution from Google Groups to MailChimp, which is another free service, this one related to the widely used SurveyMonkey. MailChimp allows us to remind people of dues still owed — although occasionally erroneously on the principle of “garbage in –garbage out” — and which provides feedback to tell us whether fewer or more than average recipients are opening messages in our “campaigns” and how many are “clicking through,” e.g., to update their personal information or to look for a document linked from the UpDate text. It also tells us when email addresses provide either a “soft” or a “hard” bounce. Soft bounces indicate someone has not emptied their inbox, or the like. “Hard” bounces indicate the email address is no longer valid and research is necessary to update it. “Hard-bouncing” addresses are immediately removed from our active list and must be reentered if updated information is found.

As a point of reference, when I took over the email list from Ric Schwenk, there were hundreds of email addresses which were bouncing. Our actual readership for the UpDate was thus much smaller than we believed. MailChimp keeps us much more aware of our actual readership! (Our “members” mailing list currently shows a tally of 417; the “complimentary” list 240; and the so-called “post and archive” lists — regular mail and unknown addresses — registers 43. That's a total of roughly 700 recipients of the UMMA UpDate.)

For the past four or five years we have been consistently persistent in (1) formally greeting newly commissioned missionaries via email and, when possible, in person through an UMMA representative during their training or at their commissioning, (2) urging them to name representatives from each class to the Steering Committee, (3) struggling to engage them in what UMMA is engaged in. This has been most helpful, at least to me, in keeping us aware that missionaries arriving in the community at different times have different concerns, and that the demographic make-up of the missionary community has changed in exciting ways and dramatically as young adult missionaries and those over 30 have been recruited from various denominational contexts within and outside the U.S. and from various ethnic and language populations not previously well represented among us.

On the personal level, I have been chair of UMMA through many critical phases of our life with GBGM, both prior to beginning work as area executive in 2007, when I was required to resign my UMMA position by GBGM, and since that stint, when I was reelected chair in 2011. It has been an exhilarating and a frustrating time, filled with hope and hopes shattered, conflict sought and conflict unsought, support and misunderstanding from all sides, and a high personal cost — perhaps even higher for Helen. It has been a real privilege and I would like to think that I have made real contributions. It would be overestimating my role to think I had the stamina and the persistence of a Howard Heiner, the organizational skills and vision to move things forward quickly of a Norma Kehrberg in planning two highly significant Forums which motivated the whole field of those concerned for the mission of The United Methodist Church, or the good spirit and communicative skills of a Jim Gulley, who took over at short notice and moved out again as his own life was redefined by his personal experience of Haïti, its earthquake and the needs of its people, and the loss of

personal friends and colleagues Clint Rabb and Sam Dixon. I do feel that I may have now done what I can.

I kindly request that you identify my replacement to assume office at the time of the next Gathering around October 1, 2015.

I am ready to continue as Communications chair for the near future, and have plans for a new and more inviting website before that time.

I stand ready for other tasks and to support others in theirs. Thank you for the opportunity to serve as I have.

—James A. Dwyer. January 2015

Treasurer's Report for 2014 and Budget 2015 (Dick Vreeland): Passed unanimously:

UMMA 2015 Budget

Richard L. Vreeland, treasurer

Income

Dues		\$4,500.00
Interest		25.00
Total		\$4,525.00

Expenses

Meetings			
Gathering meeting:			
Room	\$1,400.00		
Travel	1,000.00		
Food	150.00		
Miscellaneous	50.00	\$2,600.00	
GBGM Spring meeting:			
Room	\$700.00		
Travel	1,200.00		
Food	150.00		
Miscellaneous	50.00	2,100.00	
Annual meeting — GBGM Fall meeting:			
Room	\$1,400.00		
Travel	1,500.00		
Food	150.00		
Miscellaneous	50.00	3,100.00	
Office expenses			
Postage	\$100.00		
Domain renewal and fee	75.00		
Web services	500.00		
Supplies	100.00	775.00	
Other travel	100.00	6,075.00	
Excess of expenses over income			(1,550.00)

Note - Special meetings are self-funded and are not included in this budget

Certificates of Deposit

UMMA Funds	5,358.78
Event Funds	2,187.31

UMMA 2014 Account
December 31, 2014
Richard L. Vreeland, treasurer

Income:		
	Dues	\$5,634.81
	Interest	32.91
	Gifts	
Total		\$5,667.72

Expenses:		
	Meetings:	
	GBGM Spring meeting:	
	Room	\$825.00
	Travel	735.15
	Food	82.01
	Miscellaneous	\$1,642.76
	Annual meeting — GBGM Fall meeting:	
	Room	0.00
	Meeting room	0.00
	Travel	0.00
	Food	0.00
	Miscellaneous	0.00
	Web page expenses (2013 & 2014)	900.00
	Office expenses:	
	Postage	\$94.36
	Bank service fee	0.00
	Supplies	0.00
	Domain renewal and fee	64.80
	Web services	159.16
	Interest reinvested	24.42
		2,726.34

Excess of income over expenses **\$2,941.38**

Balance,	January 1, 2014	15,634.05
Balance	December 31, 2014	\$18,575.43

Life memberships which apply to future years:

Allen, Diane	\$360.00
Bascom, Maxine	5.00
Boyle, Tim	330.00
Brockman, Patricia	280.00
Butler, David & Carol	400.00
Chang, Jonah & Mary	300.00
Hoover, Ellen & Jeff	480.00
Jones-Hartzler, Dorothy	270.00
Kehrberg, Norma	240.00
Lao, Noriko - Affillate	220.00
Matthews, Gene	180.00
May, Janet & Roy	480.00

Parker, Howard - Affiliate	280.00
Parker, Katherine	360.00
Patterson, Patricia	180.00
Savuto, Bill & Jerri	650.00
Schwenk, Ric	270.00
Vreeland, Dick	210.00
Webster, Claudia	240.00
Welch, Carlos & Sarojini	500.00

TOTAL FOR FUTURE YEARS	6,235.00
BALANCE	\$12,340.43

Certificates of Deposit

	11/1/2014	12/31/2014
UMMA Funds	\$5,340.07	\$5,358.78
Event Funds	2,179.67	2,187.31
TOTAL	\$7,519.74	\$7,546.09
Share Draft		\$25.00

New Treasurer DarEll Weist shared information from our previous treasurer about UMMA Membership and Dues payment.

In 2013, 214 people paid membership, 205 paid in 2014. Our membership list as of Dec. 31, 2014 consists of about 400 family names (people who have paid in the last five years but are not up to date). This does not include the Global Mission Fellows who receive the UPDATE while they are active. For 2015 we already have 70 people who have paid and, to date, we have about 24 lifetime members. About 420 people receive the UPDATE.

Compensation, Benefits, and Pensions Task Force, 2014 Report to UMMA

2014 has been a busy year for the Task Force with two Pension Sub-Committee meetings that were attended in person by Dakin Cook and Jim Dwyer regarding pension issues and a conference call with Mission and Evangelism staff regarding compensation. On both issues we have seen significant progress, yet there are still some issues on the table for which we need to continue advocating. UMMA has been advocating for an overall evaluation of compensation and benefits that looks at these issues as a whole. There has been some progress on this with the Pension Sub-Committee looking at pension issues while Mission and Evangelism staff was working on a new compensation package, but the feeling, both at GBGM and UMMA, seems to be that this is an intermediate step in a process that still needs to be fully developed. The recent decision to move GBGM headquarters to Atlanta and establish regional offices will surely have an effect on this overall process. While it will most probably put the process on the backburner for a while as emphasis is concentrated on the move, it may ultimately open up new perspectives on how we can be a more truly global mission agency.

The Directors' Pension Sub-Committee looked at three specific issues in 2014 and UMMA representatives, as well as the Missionary in Residence, participated in the discussions around these issues and where necessary, advocated for specific policies or decisions:

1. Increase financial literacy education for missionaries
2. Incentivize missionaries to stay longer
3. An emergency fund to supplement for the most vulnerable missionaries at retirement

Increase Financial Literacy

The General Board of Pensions and Health Benefits (GBoPHB), who manages pension benefits for missionaries, provides services available to pension participants through Ernst & Young Financial Planning Services, LifeStage Investment Management Services and LifeStage Retirement Income. The

GBoPHB states that while they are prepared and have experience dealing with international participants from outside the U.S., due to the difficulty in capturing and communicating retirement and investment concepts in various languages and dialects, they do not have written materials in other languages. An English language brochure "Retirement Benefits for Missionaries" is being sent to missionaries and missionaries also have access to their account information via the GBoPHB web site Benefits Access.

Incentivize Missionaries to stay longer

The Directors approved a proposal to incentivize longer-term missionary service by increasing pension contributions for longer service with Global Ministries. The Defined Contribution plan now includes a 12% contribution (based on average missionary salary, excluding Cost of Living Adjustments) for the first 15 years of service, 13% for 15-20 years of service, 14% for 20-25 years of service and 15% for 26 or more years of service. A missionary with 26 years of service or more would receive an annual pension contribution 1/4 larger than a colleague with 15 years of service or fewer. UMMA had advocated for an increase to 14% for 15-20 years, 16% for 20-25 years and 18% for 26 years and over.

Emergency Fund

GBGM currently holds a missionary emergency fund with around 3 million dollars that has not been used in some time. The Pension sub-committee has the responsibility to decide the best use of this fund. Although no decisions were made, the fund can be used to help individual cases of missionaries whose resources have been exhausted or can be used in a more global manner to strengthen the pension fund.

OTHER ISSUES ADDRESSED

UMMA Proposals

In 2014 UMMA initially presented three specific proposals representing what leadership of UMMA would consider fair treatment of missionaries directly affected by the recent pension decisions.

These included:

1. Linking the Defined Benefit plan to a percentage of the Denominational Average Compensation
2. Linking the Defined Contribution plan to a percentage of the Denominational Average Compensation
3. Restoring a Social Security equivalent benefit to missionaries not eligible for the US government plan

The first two issues were addressed in other ways that do not incorporate a link to the DAC (see below), In spite of this and although we would prefer a direct linkage to the DAC, we feel that the actions taken by the Directors will have a positive impact on UMMA's areas of concern. The third issue has yet to be addressed.

Compensation

GBGM approved a new compensation package for Standard Support missionaries to start in January, 2015:

1. The standard support missionary base salary was increased from \$1,712.82 per month to \$2,366.31 per month.
2. The standard expatriate cost of living index has been replaced by the international index.
3. A negative Cost of Living Allowance (CoLA) is now applied where negative cost of living indices exist.

GBGM assured UMMA representatives that no missionaries would receive a net decrease in salary as a result of these changes and predicted that at a minimum some missionaries may receive as little as 1.5% net increase. As of yet, we have not heard of any missionaries receiving a net decrease in salary.

Defined Contribution Pension Plan (DCP)

UMMA has taken the position that the DCP as approved in 2013 (to start in 2014) would not provide a pension for most missionaries under this new plan commensurate with the older Defined Benefit Plan and has been advocating for an adjustment to address this issue. The new compensation package addresses this issue and will significantly affect the Defined Contribution pension plan that

is based on a 12% contribution of the average missionary salary. However, the DCP contributions for 2014 were made at 12% of the old average salary before the increase and so UMMA requested that a one-time supplemental payment of 5% of the calculated 2014 salary base be made to each affected missionary's retirement account. This was approved by the Board and will effectively equalize the discrepancy between 2014 and 2015 payments created by the changes in salary.

Defined Benefit Pension Plan (DBP)

The Directors approved a policy to increase the pension rate by 2% each year for current retirees and "grandfathered" current missionaries, subject to annual review and possible adjustment upward or downward by the Directors. UMMA has been recommending that the DBP rate be tied to a percentage of the Denominational Annual Compensation (DAC), but the Pension Sub-Committee has steadfastly refused to entertain this option; however, this is the first time that a policy has been proposed which foresees annual increases in the pension rate and partially addresses the concerns UMMA has brought forth regarding increases in DBP rates.

OTHER ISSUES NOT ADDRESSED

Restoring an Equivalent Social Security Benefit

In the past, GBGM policy included an equivalent Social Security payment for missionaries not eligible for this US government plan. Missionaries who receive this benefit contribute 6.2% of their income to this plan and GBGM contributes an equal and additional 6.2% to the plan. In effect, this provides an additional GBGM benefit of 6.2% of a missionary's salary to a pension plan for those eligible.

Those not eligible for the Social Security plan do not currently receive a comparable benefit from GBGM. UMMA has been advocating for a policy that would provide those not eligible for Social Security to receive an additional 6.2% contribution either to their DCP or to another pension plan to equalize this benefit between all missionaries. Although preliminary discussions around this issue were generally positive, the Pension Sub-Committee did not bring this issue up for discussion in 2014. We continue to advocate for this benefit.

—Dakin Cook, chair

Report from Missionary in Residence, Gordon Greathouse:

Gordon Greathouse, the current Missionary in Residence shared his experiences at Global Ministries since he began his current placement in August 2012. He reported that he will be leaving this position in July of this year to return to his assignment in Brazil. He has no information about his replacement. He indicated that the experience at Global Ministries was very enlightening on procedures and protocols and he was glad he had been in this position.

He indicated that when he had arrived at Global Ministries in August of 2013, he was not involved in consultations about the new pension plan and only became aware of it the week of the October Board Meeting. He thanked Nan McCurdy and Catherine Parker for opening his eyes to the problems of the new system but said that the increased salary implemented now has helped ameliorate some of his concerns. He said he understood that UMMA has continuously called for salary adjustments based on the Denominational Average Compensation (DAC) and understood the need for regular evaluation and adjustment. He felt that UMMA needed to reevaluate the DAC reference because with the "from everywhere to everywhere" program, the DAC was US based and not a global reference because it did not take into consideration the pastor's salaries of other countries.

He indicated that while he had been pleased with being involved in more recent pension discussions and the new salary plan, he was disappointed in the procedure in which the mandatory nature of medical clearance was removed. He felt that this was an imposed decision that had too little discussion about its impact on missionaries' health.

Gordon's central report was on the Regional Missionary Gatherings that he and his wife have organized. The original plan was for seven Gatherings involving all missionaries with international placements. So far three Gatherings have taken place and one more is planned for 2015. The first was in Thailand (September 11-16, 2014) with missionaries from the Mission Initiatives of Asia. This was followed by another in Germany (October 9 - 14) with the missionaries from Europe and the Middle East. The third Gathering took place in Ecuador (November 15 - 20) with the missionaries of South America and a few from Central America. In all these Gatherings Thomas Kemper gave the

first Bible study focusing on his vision of missionary service. Kemper has been present for most of each Gathering giving time for personal questions and even going on cultural and tourist visits with the missionaries.

In all the Gatherings staff participation was limited to Thomas and the Area Executive with the exception of the first Gathering which included a Communications person. Missionaries participated as well as non-missionary spouses and children and teenagers up to the age of 18. There was a special children's program in each event.

The Regional Missionary Gatherings were important events because they allowed missionaries to have a time of renewal through Bible studies, worship and sharing with each other. In addition, however, time was spent reflecting on their relations together and with the staff at Global Ministries. Each Gathering listed the positive elements (Flowers) and the obstacles to a closer relationship (Stones). Although each Gathering was different there were a number of common themes. Gordon felt that it is important for UMMA to know both the positive and negative elements that missionaries have identified and to be an organization that helps stimulate continued discussion of the elements that missionaries identified as needing work.

Positive elements (Flowers) that the missionaries identified included: improved receptiveness of Global Ministries to missionaries, the salary support system that allows missionaries to serve without first raising salary support, the Educational Endowment for missionary children, assistance in finding and connecting missionaries to local churches, and many other benefits such as health care and others.

The issues that all groups of missionaries identified as **needing additional work (Stones)** included: more family friendly policies, the need for continuing education, health and retirement benefits of non-US missionaries, the need for continuing education and mentoring/pastoral care for missionaries. Missionaries also identified staff turnover and overreliance on internet access as factors that complicate missionaries' relationship to staff at Global Ministries. The missionaries clearly indicated that they want to work closer with Global Ministries although they value the freedom they have for their own creativity. There is a general distrust of the current COLA index as an accurate and effective way of comparing cost of living. There is a concern with the accuracy of this instrument as the new plan of negative COLA is implemented. In all Gatherings the missionaries indicated their appreciation of Thomas Kemper's presence and wanted these Gatherings to be regularly scheduled.

Kah-Jin Jeffrey Kuan – President of Claremont School of Theology

President Kuan took time to address the Gathering on Saturday morning. He insisted that theological education must become more and more global. Having come from Asia, with the natural connections with people in other countries, and being at Claremont on the Pacific rim we have an opportunity to do the kind of Global education that is very necessary: we need to rethink our paradigm. We can no longer afford to think that we who are living in the west have all the knowledge to teach, but need to learn from the other parts of the world. Yes, we have gifts we can continue to bring from the US, from the west. We hear over and over again about the cost of the brain drain on Asia and even more so on countries in Africa. He reported, "I was on a call with a GBGM member recently. We have had conversations about what we can do together. One is sending a student to Claremont from the Congo.

"I want to be sure this person would go back to Congo to benefit the church there. At Drew, where I was Dean, almost every student decided not to go back to their home country. I will commit funds from Claremont to make sure the students can go back to their home country and assure that the person will have a position when they return to their country. An extremely bright student from China is returning to China. I am making sure he will have work.. Many people want him to return after a year to get his doctorate. "

"Another thing I am working on at the 13-seminary level – 8 of them have doctoral programs — Methodist seminaries have a great impact on the preparation of faculty for teaching at seminaries and a bigger role than any other denomination. Bringing people to the US is not the best model. What would it mean to partner with universities in African nations? Many of the people working on a doctorate are already theological faculty. They can advance theological education in their country. The context and nature of the kind of theological education will be more significant and profound.

We need to find ways to partner and collaborate to make that kind of theological education more possible in other countries.

“We also need to promote the kind of theological education we have been recently promoting. In October I was in Malaysia and we had conversations with Muslim leaders, academics, friends and Christian leaders. We talked about the importance of interreligious dialogue. In 2012 at General Conference, Claremont School of Theology was under pressure in terms of the direction we had taken. I think there had been a misunderstanding of what we were trying to do. It was the same GBGM staff member I previously mentioned who stood up and spoke to defend CST. He said that when he reflects about the problems between Christians and Muslims we need interreligious dialogue to help solve problems.

“We want to find a different model of theological education that has significance for the world we are living in. I was raised in Malaysia in an interreligious family. Some are Buddhist and some are Christian. So finding a way to live in this context is important to us.

“Interreligious education would help ground our students even more firmly in their Christian faith, theology and identity. If they are not grounded in this they have no place in an interreligious dialogue when they sit with Muslims who know their tradition and religious history and books very well.

“[One person with whom I spoke] said that because you are such a committed Muslim it has helped me be a more committed Christian.

“When my paternal grandfather died, I had just started my ministry as an associate pastor. I was one of the oldest grandsons. In a Chinese funeral rite there is a carriage that the oldest grandsons will carry. I struggled when asked by an aunt if I would be willing to do that. I decided that out of respect and love for my grandfather I would. It was not easy for my local church or the Christian members of my family. But I must participate and share with people from different religious beliefs and cultures. It did not make me less Christian and I honored my grandfather. We need leaders who can negotiate across cultures and differences to transform and make a better world.

Question and answers – discussion: “Where does the school step up to say ‘yes we believe in freedom of speech but we also believe in respect for other religions’ – you don’t disrespect the deity of other religions.’ Answer: ‘As religious people we need to learn to respect the religious leaders of other traditions. Does freedom of speech give us the right to disrespect the deities of other religions? Other cultures, not just religions take jokes and satire very differently, for example, than the US culture. When we make jokes or show disrespect, how are we relating to the “other”?’

“We have not educated people in the US or in the west about the meaning of Jihad. What is the level of conversation? Again we are talking about a Muslim community in the context of the US and they are trying to do identity work – what does it mean to be a US Muslim today. These conversations need to happen. Bayan Claremont is the first Islamic graduate school, and started by the Islamic Center and CST. Now they have a Master of Arts in Islamic leadership. Their classes are available to our students and Buddhist and Jewish students – our four institutions make classes available to the other.

“One of the most profound experiences for our students happened last spring at our school festival. It was the Pacific Islanders turn to organize the festival. What do they have: a Luau. What do they need – a roast pig. But now they are in an intercultural setting. Out of respect to Muslim students with whom they had become close friends they decided to roast a lamb. The Muslim students said – we understand what this means for you in your culture and we understand the significance of the roast pig in your culture. The Pacific Islanders still decided on the alternative. All of this will make a difference in the future on relationships and understanding.

“We want to put the students from the different religions for a time in a Christian Church, in a Mosque, in a Buddhist temple and in a Synagogue to help them come to an appreciation of the religious other. We have a grant to make this happen and are in discussion with the four institutions. They will then have religious literacy to talk about things that educate their congregations and the population.

“He also spoke about the wonderful relationships and influence he felt from many missionaries including two present – David and Shirley Wu. When he was in Seminary David was his professor and for a time his dean.

“Many of us in our religious traditions lack humility: “What does the Lord require of you? To do justice, love kindness and walk humbly with God”. That passage is defining the humility in our walk with the divine that we have often forgotten. If we think we are better than others then we are in trouble.

Constitutional Amendments and changes in Bylaws: Unanimously accepted!

Whereas, the office of Coordinator of UMMA [quasi business manager] has not been filled since the last incumbent's term expired;

therefore be it resolved that the references to the office of Coordinator be removed from the Constitution and that the bylaws be similarly redacted by amending the following articles and renumbering remaining paragraphs appropriately

Article V E — *[The TOC is faulty here and will be corrected to reflect changes adopted.]*

Amendment 1

For purposes of wider understanding and clarity the term UMMA GATHERING will have affixed to it in its first appearance in the TOC and the body of the constitution and the bylaws the word in parentheses (Annual General Membership Meeting — AGM) and throughout the text in major headings the abbreviation, in parentheses, (AGM), as may be deemed helpful by the editors of the revised documents.

V B 1 e

Current reading:

“The Coordinator”

New reading:

[deleted, no renumbering necessary].

V B 2 d

Current reading:

“The SC shall elect from among UMMA members the Coordinator to operate the UMMA office and administer the funds of UMMA.”

New reading:

[deleted; items e, f, g are re-designated d, e, f]

V C 1

Current reading:

1. Composition of the AC

- The AC shall be composed of the Chairperson, Vice-chairperson, Secretary, and Treasurer of the STEERING COMMITTEE, the Coordinator and the MIR

New reading

1. Composition of the AC

- The AC shall be composed of the Chairperson, Vice-chairperson, Secretary, and Treasurer of the STEERING COMMITTEE and the MIR

No renumbering necessary

V D 6 a i, ii and b i, ii, iii

Current reading:

1. Coordinator

a. Election and Term of the Coordinator

i. The Coordinator shall be elected from among the members of UMMA by a majority vote of the full SC to serve a four year term.

ii. The Coordinator may be reelected for one or more subsequent terms.

b. Functions of the Coordinator

i. The Coordinator shall be responsible for the operation of the UMMA office including correspondence, mailings and financial transactions.

ii. The Coordinator shall be the designated contact person for UMMA in legal matters.

iii. The Coordinator as a member of the AC shall carry out whatever other

duties the AC requests.

New reading:

[deleted; old item V E becomes V D.]

Bylaws

1 a ii

Current reading:

ii. All members & affiliates shall be sent notification by the Coordinator of all GATHERING meetings not less than six months in advance.

New reading:

ii. All members & affiliates shall be sent notification by the Chair (or other designated officer of the Administrative Council) of all GATHERING meetings not fewer than six months in advance.

1 b i

Current reading:

i. Every member has the right to submit a motion, proposal or an item for discussion to the agenda of a GATHERING meeting. Items should be submitted to the Coordinator at least six weeks before the next UMMA GATHERING.

New reading:

b. Agenda

i. Every member has the right to submit a motion, proposal or an item for discussion to the agenda of a GATHERING meeting. Items should be submitted to the Chair (or other designated officer of the Administrative Council) at least six weeks before the next UMMA GATHERING.

2 a vi

Current reading:

vi. Members wishing to serve on the SC or to nominate others to serve from their region should notify the Coordinator not later than April 1 of the same year.

New reading:

vi. Members wishing to serve on the SC or to nominate others to serve from their region should ideally notify the Chair (or other designated officer of the Administrative Council) not later than April 1 of the year in which it is anticipated that a vacancy will occur.

5 e

Current reading:

e. All members, voting and non-voting, shall be sent a dues renewal letter by the Coordinator in January of each year.

New reading:

e. By various means which may change from time to time the Administrative Council will regularly inform members and affiliate of their dues status and provide opportunity for them to bring dues up-to-date by January of each year.

Proposed changes in bylaws

Whereas the Articles of the By-Laws still include provisions for the election of the first Steering Committee under the direction of the MIR upon the formation of UMMA which became obsolete with the election of that first Steering Committee,

Therefore the following amendments would remove references to that first election and revise the descriptions of the MIR in the election process of UMMA.

3 a i, ii, iv

Current reading:

a. Election

i. The first business of the SC following its election shall be the election of a Chairperson, Vice-chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer. All members of the SC except the Missionary-in-Residence (MIR) and Coordinator are eligible for election for any position.

ii. The MIR shall be chairperson pro tem for the elections. Nominations may be made from the floor. Election for each position shall be by a majority vote of those present.

iii. Nominations for Coordinator shall be received from the floor at the first meeting of the SC following elections. Election is by a majority of the full membership of the SC.

iv. When a member of the AC resigns before the completion of his/her term, the Chairperson in consultation with the Coordinator shall appoint a replacement to serve until ten ex annual election. New reading:

a. Election

i. The SC shall undertake the election of a Chairperson, Vice-chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer. All members of the SC except the Missionary-in-Residence (MIR) are eligible for election for any position.

ii. If no officer of the Administrative Council is available, the Steering Committee may elect a chair pro tem to preside at elections the MIR may be asked to serve in this role. Nominations may be made from the floor. Election for each position shall be by a majority vote of those present or voting electronically by tele-conference, email or other means accepted and approved by the SC .

iii. When a member of the AC resigns before the completion of his/her term, the Chairperson or Vice Chairperson in consultation with the other officers of the Administrative Council shall appoint a replacement to serve until the next annual election.

Proposed changes in Dues in 2016:

Current: Annual membership: \$50 (couple) or \$30 (individual), Lifetime membership if under 75*:\$750 (couple) or \$450 (individual), Lifetime membership if over 75*:\$500 (couple) or \$300 (individual). Annual affiliate membership: \$20(interested person, no vote). Lifetime affiliate membership: \$300 (interested person, no vote)* Prior to or after the date of one's 75th birthday (of older partner, if couple)!

Proposed for 2016:

COMPLIMENTARY — 2 YEARS

\$50 -> \$60;

\$30 -> \$35

\$750 -> \$800; \$450 -> \$500

\$500 -> \$500; \$300 -> \$300

\$20 -> \$25

\$300 -> \$325

It was passed unanimously to give Global Mission Fellows complementary dues for two years, with membership if they so desire.

Increase in dues for other members: It was moved to table motion until next year. This was seconded. The majority voted to table the motion until next year.

Motion re Mailing List and UpDates: UMMA will complete our email list to include all of our active missionaries. We will have special shorter UPDATES, one to four times a year, on issues about which the missionary community has expressed concern. Nan McCurdy has committed to make sure this happens at least once a year and to invite different UMMA members to provide the information for the issues. The objective is to get more feedback from the missionary community so that the steering committee will have a better idea of the areas and issues on which we should focus energy and advocacy with Global Ministries. Passed and approved.

Closing Worship (on Creativity): Pat Patterson

Pat designed a very moving worship about Creativity with song and poetry, and used II Corinthians 4:5-7 for a responsive reading.

She included her poetry (which is published in various books and in Nan's opinion, is superb). The poetry was separated into three sections: I. Struggling for Justice and Peace, II. Caring for the Earth and III. Celebrating Aging Life. You can contact Nan: nanmig1@yahoo.com for a copy of the Closing Worship including Pat's poems.

Nan McCurdy, Secretary

James Dwyer, Chair