The 2017 Annual Conference opened with vibrant worship along with a welcome and call to session from Bishop Julius C. Trimble. Bishop Trimble and First Lady Grandberry-Trimble, who are experiencing their first Annual Conference in Indiana, were met with a warm welcome and standing ovation.

A humbled and tearful Bishop Trimble preached “Believe in Miracles”, sharing from the Gospel of Matthew on the miracles of Jesus, particularly the feeding of the multitude.

“Jesus Christ never performed miracles to display his power, He always used his power to aid, relieve, heal the most needy and oppressed.”

Bishop Trimble also reminded us that we shouldn’t worry about the future of The United Methodist Church because “our God is able and in fact it’s not your church anyway!”

Bishop Trimble celebrated Bishop Mande Muyombo as the first graduate of Africa University to be elected as a bishop of The United Methodist Church. He spoke of Indiana’s impact in aiding the fight against malaria and HIV/AIDS.

After the Bishop’s message, the attendees came together for a time of prayer and worship, including a multi-lingual singing of “How Great is Our God.”
Encouraging the Call of Young Leaders Luncheon

The luncheon began with an opening address by Emily Krach, Associate Director of Leadership Development – Emerging Leaders. Krach introduced six emerging leaders who shared their personal journeys to faith and service within the church.

Deanna Hedges, Merritt Johnson, James T. White, Janet LaFuze, Emily Hudson, and Sarah Fuquay, spoke in turn of the importance of God’s calling on their lives. Despite personal obstacles, all testified of the power of Christ to work through those who faithfully choose to serve those in their home communities and in communities abroad. The luncheon concluded with a blessing prayed over all emerging leaders in attendance.

Thursday Plenary Session

The Thursday afternoon plenary session began with first orders of business, setting the bar and the adoption of the program book and agenda.

Rev. Charlie Wilfong introduced the episcopal family, Bishop Julius C. Trimble and First Lady Racelder Grandberry-Trimble. The Episcopal Concerns Committee proceeded to present Bishop Trimble with a Stole and a $1,000 gift for the Indiana Miracle Offering for Global Health made in the Bishop and First Lady’s honor.
First Lady Racelder brought greetings to the Conference, reminding us that “words do matter”

Business continued with a vote on the five amendments to the constitution of The United Methodist Church. The amendments were passed during the 2016 General Conference and are currently going before all annual and central conferences.

Amendment I adds a new paragraph between current Para. 5 and 6 in the 2012 Book of Discipline regarding gender justice.

Amendment II changes Para. 4, Article IV, of the Discipline also to modify gender equity language. The rationale notes that adding gender to the Constitution affirms and protects the UMC’s commitment
Clergy Spouse Session

Behind many successful pastors are what are often described as “unsung heroes of our United Methodist churches”, their spouse.

During the 2017 Indiana Annual Conference, clergy spouses gathered, shared memories, and encouraged one another to pursue joy.

Laity Session

The Laity gathered Wednesday, June 8, for their annual session at the Indiana Annual Conference, where they used this opportunity to catch up and mingle, learn and reflect, and bask in a moment of spiritual rejuvenation.

This year’s gathering consisted of several segments that were designed to not only show the work of laypersons throughout the United Methodist Churches of Indiana, but to celebrate their strides throughout the past year, and highlight their continued mission and renewed focus for the road ahead.
Dr. Joseph Daniels, Jr. preaches on transforming congregations

Dr. Joseph Daniels, Jr. has served in various ministry roles throughout his career, but it’s not difficult to detect his passion for teaching God’s Word. His keynote sermon, the evening of Thursday, June 8, was part Sunday-morning gospel, part interactive course on how to engage, revitalize, and transform your congregation. His message was crafted for anyone, whether in the church or outside, lay or clergy, an experienced church member or novice, to feel inspired to promote change in their church and community.

Friends of Africa University Breakfast

Africa University has become a beacon of light, hope, and knowledge for communities across the continent of Africa. Throughout the past few years, we’ve been blessed with several encounters with former students who now serve as spokespersons for the meaningful work of the university, its ministry, community involvement, and its ability to grow leaders from all backgrounds for the transformation of Africa.
Morning Worship and Bible Study brings renewal to the soul

Friday morning allowed for a time of centering, worship, and bible study prior to starting the business of the day.

Rev. Dr. Kim Reisman taught on our Annual Conference theme scripture passage, Ephesians 4: 4-6. While also referencing Genesis, Reisman talked about the difference between approaching scripture with a wide lens versus a zoom lens.

“We excel in an individualistic interpretation of just about everything – we’re all about understanding Scripture in terms of ourselves – but it’s dangerous to only use a zoom lens – it’s dangerous to use our own circumstances as the single interpretive lens”

The Garden Community Church receives Charter at AC17

The Garden Community Church received its official charter at the 2017 Indiana Annual Conference, in a service with Bishop Trimble and members of the Indiana Conference. The Indianapolis church, led by Rev. Dr. Carolyn Scanlan-Holmes, was chartered Sunday, June 4, 2017. The Garden began gathering as a congregation years ago, under the leadership of Linda McCoy, who was then the associate pastor at St. Luke’s UMC Indianapolis. The premise of the church was to draw in those who are seeking an alternative from the traditional church, as The Garden gathers at the Beef & Boards Dinner Theatre in Indianapolis. Bishop Trimble was joined by Conference Superintendent serving the Central District Jim Bushfield, Director of Church Development Steve Clouse, and Emily Reese, Associate Director of Church Development.

Purdue University Wesley Foundation receives award

Emily Krach, Associate Director of Leadership Development - Emerging Leaders presented The Francis Asbury Award to the Wesley Foundation at Purdue University. The Francis Asbury Award offers recognition to individuals who have made a significant contribution to fostering the church’s ministries in higher education at the local, district, or annual conference level of the church.
Celebrating the service of those retiring

The Friday afternoon plenary session began with a moment to recognize our retirees. Those going into retirement this year served a combined 1,271 years in the United Methodist Church. While their full-time service in The United Methodist Church has ended, we lift them up in prayer as they continue on in the callings God has placed on their hearers and in their lives.

Friday plenary sessions invite celebration, handle business

The Friday afternoon plenary sessions allowed for a time of celebration as we celebrated all God has done through our various ministries in Indiana as well as look forward to the future. The afternoon plenary session also approved resolutions and the Conference budget.

Resolutions

| Resolution #1: Expanding our Ministries in Creation Care | Action Taken: Resolution was referred to the Annual Conference Mission and Justice Team to be reported on at the 2018 Annual Conference Session. |
| Resolution #2: Help end suicide and homelessness among lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, questioning (LGBTQ) youth | Motion made to replace the title of Resolution #2 along with several lines of the resolution. Amendment to Motion made to replace the second whereas. MOTION PASSED AS AMENDED. View the amended resolution as passed at inumc.org. |
| Resolution #3: New elections for special General Conference Session | Action Taken: Resolution was not passed. |
| Resolution #4: Responding to anti-Semitism and recent acts of hate | Action Taken: Resolution was not passed. |
| Resolution #5: Welcoming the migrant in our midst | Action Taken: Resolution was referred to committee. |
| Resolution #6: Wesley Seminary & The University Senate | Action Taken: Resolution was referred to committee. |

Note: All amended versions will be available at the reports and resolutions page upon completion of the minutes by the Conference Secretary.
The Indiana Miracle Offering for Global Health impacts nearly 40,000 lives

On April 3, 2017, Bishop Trimble called for the Indiana Miracle for Global Health inviting congregations across the state of Indiana to give extravagantly so that together we could impact thousands of lives affected by HIV/AIDS and malaria. The Indiana Miracle Offering for Global Health supports initiatives, Imagine No Malaria and the United Methodist Global Aids Fund. The unprecedented miracle offering called for clergy and church representatives to take up an offering at their church and then bring that offering to the 2017 Annual Conference. The miracle offering received more than $400,000 during the Annual Conference Session, along with additional gifts that continue to be received. During an order of business on Friday, June 9, the Indiana United Methodist Church celebrated the impact our contributions will have in providing treatment, education, and hope for those affected by HIV/AIDS and malaria.

As contributions are still being submitted, an updated amount will be made available in the coming weeks.

Learn more or make a contribution at [http://www.inumc.org/globalhealth](http://www.inumc.org/globalhealth).

Blessing Backpacks

More than 900 backpacks were donated during the Annual Conference Session to help those experiencing homelessness. The backpacks are given to donation centers, churches around the Indianapolis area.
Morning workshops bring attention to The Four Areas of Focus

Workshop: Creating New and Renewed Congregations

More than 500 clergy and laity filled the 500 ballroom at the Indiana Convention Center Friday to learn ways they can become more vibrant communities of faith throughout Indiana. Attendees prayed together for their mission fields, and learned ways they can incorporate four key areas into their ministries for fruitful communities - invite, connect, disciple, send.

Workshop: Developing Principled Christian Leaders: Encouraging the Call

Attendees of the Developing Principled Christian Leaders workshop learned that “calling is a journey of self and God-awareness, you start asking really deep questions when you are discerning what God is calling you to do. It is a journey that is transformative, no question, in a amazing and positive way. But it takes some time and some patience.”

Workshop: Engaging in Ministry with the Poor

Rev. Jeff Newton, Ann Mead, Rev. Angie Kidd, and Rev. Randy Davis shared stories and lessons from their various ministries across the state. All emphasized the importance of building relationships with the people you serve. Another key to ministering to the poor is granting dignity to those receiving assistance by allowing them to become involved within the ministry itself. “We're working WITH the people, not for them.”

Workshop: Improving Global Health

Ashley Gish, Assistant Campaign Director for Imagine No Malaria, shared insights, statistics, and encouragement on topics of global health. Gish was joined by Gary Henderson, Executive Director for the United Methodist Global Health Initiative and Kathy Griffith, who works with the United Methodist Global Aids Fund who also spoke to issues of global health.

All workshops can currently be viewed on the Indiana Conference Facebook page.
Service of Remembrance and Holy Communion

On Friday Night, United Methodists gathered in a community of faith and peace, in a spirit of thanks and restfulness, to honor those who have gone on to the Church Triumphant. The Service of Remembrance and Holy Communion commenced with a procession by families and friends of late Indiana Conference clergy and clergy spouses who had passed away throughout the past year, followed by members of the Conference Cabinet. Led by Rev. Larry Whitehead, Conference Superintendent of the North District, the ceremony shined a spotlight on servants of faith who died during 2016 and the early portion of 2017, and allowed loved ones to show their respects, as well as representation in solidarity, faith, and love.

Indiana Conference and Community come together in prayer

Reverend Phillip Gulley, Quaker writer, pastor, speaker from Danville, IN, preached a message on the importance of grace and honesty. In our striving for unity, we must envision others as being equally loved by Christ, whether we agree or disagree with them. “It is impossible to hate someone while imagining them being held by Jesus.”

To conclude the breakfast, prayer leaders encouraged attendees to tie strips of cloth together and pray as one as a symbol of unity.
A Celebration of Ministry: Commissioning and Ordination Service

“The undisciplined call is not worth giving. We must surrender who we were to become who God wants us to be.”

Bishop Latrelle Easterling, Baltimore-Washington Conference, challenged as she preached ‘A Life Worthy of the Call” during Saturday morning’s Commissioning and Ordination Service.

Our call is to strive to live, love, listen, and lead well, because we are the only translation of God’s word that some people will ever see. Speaking from 1 Corinthians 13, Easterling encouraged all to bear with one another in love, despite differences and disagreements. “We may not agree on all the matters facing the church, but we must remember that we are more together.” Easterling concluded with a charge to the ordinands and commissioners: that in the face of trials and disagreements, “Walk worthy anyhow! Walk worthy of the call of Jesus the Christ!”

Of those commissioned were 1 provisional deacon, 8 provisional elders. Bishop Trimble, who conducted this portion of the service, recognized the ordinations of 1 deacon and 8 elders as full members as well as the ordinations of 3 members from other Christian faiths as full elders.

New tools help educate, inform, and tell the story of the Indiana Conference

In an effort to communicate more fully the ins and outs of the 2017 Annual Conference as well as the empowering work for the Kingdom displayed throughout the Indiana United Methodist Church, new forms of digital technology played a big roll at the 2017 Annual Conference Session.

Sched, a digital calendar, created the ability to access information throughout the conference on sessions attending, as well as, allowed for the chance to deepen our connection with each other.

Visual storytelling allowed us the chance to celebrate all that has been done in our various ministries throughout the year as we looked forward to the years ahead. As the old adage says, ‘you never can know where you are going until you know where you’ve been.’

This year reports were accompanied by short videos that encouraged, challenged, and renewed our call as United Methodists serving in Indiana. Additionally, daily wrap-up videos and other inspirational stories were shown prior to the beginning of business sessions.
2017 Statistics

Membership stands at 189,400 down less than 1% from the previous year; average worship attendance stands at 96,530, down 2% from the previous year; Christian formation groups, 88,340 down 2%; Professions of Faith, 3,105 down 2%; Baptisms, 13,748 down 9%.

Number of persons engaged in mission 48,813 16% increase.

2018 Budget Approved

Members of the 2017 Indiana Annual Conference passed a budget of $35,159,408.00 which includes $19.8 million dollars, 57% of the budget, designated for Care and Wellness. The reason for this designation includes that fact that 505 individuals or families’ healthcare needs are met through our health insurance program. In addition, over 400 retirees receive a subsidy to help cover their monthly health insurance expenses, and 628 clergy and Indiana Conference lay employees are provided with longterm financial security through participation in the Wespath pension program. Our General and Jurisdictional Church Apportionments make up 15% and funding for our core ministries, Leadership Development, Church Development, and Connectional Ministries including our focus on Mission and Justice as well as our Impact 2818 Outdoor Ministries program also receive an invested 15% of the budget in 2018. The remaining 13% of our 2018 Budget goes to our ministry of administration, which includes ministries such as administration and support services, communications, Episcopal Office, and Appointed Cabinet.

Annual Conference 2018 dates set

The 2018 Annual Conference Session of the Indiana Conference of The United Methodist Church will be held June 7-9, 2018 in Indianapolis.

For more in-depth stories, summary videos, photos, and information from the 2017 Annual Conference, visit http://www.inumc.org.