



Today's Highlights

- 8:30 AM Worship
- 10:00 AM Design Team/Corporate Session/
TOM Talks
- 2:00 PM Legislation/TOM Talks
- 4:30 PM Way Forward/TOM Talks
- 6:00 PM Recess for evening

 **58° CLOUDY/COOL**

***“And who
is my
neighbor?”***

- LUKE 10:29 *NRSV*

OPENING WORSHIP: A CLASSIC LOVE STORY.

ACME, Mich. (MIC) – The 2018 Michigan Annual Conference began on the morning of May 31st with eyes on the overhead screens. Five decades of images and memories recalled the people, places and values of the West Michigan and Detroit conferences. “As we meet for the last time as two separate conferences, let’s take these moments to remember,” said narrator Marsha Woolley. With “O God, our Help in Ages Past” playing in the background, the leadership of women, wise financial leadership and a strong heart for missions were celebrated. A special moment to remember – Count Day, June 10, 2015 – when Bishop Deborah Lieder Kiesey announced the will of the two annual conferences to become one. “It was not the first time but it was the right time.” With candle-lighting and portraits on screen, tribute was paid to those in the Michigan clergy and lay member family who passed since last Annual Conference.

Bishop David Bard opened his second Annual Conference as Michigan’s episcopal leader saying, “Wow! Y’all came back. You still look beautiful!” He continued by recounting “what a difference a year makes,” with examples from the culture and church. “As your bishop, I have had wonderful opportunities to see more of you, and more of your incredible work in ministry,” he said. With enthusiasm and confession, he continued, “I hope that there have been times when I have inspired you to think more deeply, dream more imaginatively, pray more ardently, and live more joyfully and hopefully. We have made a lot of decisions this year, and I know that not all of them please everyone.”

LOVE continued on back

ANDERSON WINS BUXTON AWARD



A highlight of the Conference Treasurer's Report each year is the announcement of the recipient of the John Buxton Award. On Thursday afternoon David Dobbs introduced Ruby Anderson as the 2018 honoree. "She has provided creative and dedicated leadership at all levels of the church," Dobbs said. Currently Anderson is a Director of the National United Methodist Women in addition to her district and conference responsibilities. Conferred annually since 1996, the award honors a member of the Detroit Conference— clergy or lay – who exhibits exceptional leadership. The first such award was posthumously given to John Buxton himself for his role in making the Detroit Conference pension program one of the strongest in the denomination.

LET THEM EAT (GOLDEN) CAKE!



Detroit and West Michigan celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the 1968 union of The Methodist Church and Evangelical United Brethren Church to form The United Methodist Church. Bishop David Bard thanks Lisa French, Director of Communications and Annual Giving for United Methodist Retirement Communities who sponsored the reception.

LOVE continued



Singer David Vaughn from Greenwood UMC/Ann Arbor leads the body during Opening Worship ~photo/Hannah Hazen

The bishop preached "plumbing the depths" of the Good Samaritan, "two classic stories wrapped together." Talking about the characters – Jesus, lawyer, priest and levite – he left the congregation with three take-aways on the theme that God has a mission in the world and love is at the heart of that mission." 1) We are both recipients of God's love and bearers of God's love; 2) Love can be complex but we never should use the complexities of love to avoid being moved in heart and soul by the hurts and wounds of the world; 3) Being part of that mission is personally transforming, for it invites us to let Jesus form in us hearts and souls that are deeply moved to care."

"We are here beginning a new way of being together, one conference," he noted. Speaking to the Conference theme, ENGAGE with, the bishop concluded, "Engage is a love word ... It's good to begin with a classic."

TODAY'S SWEET TWEET

