



WON'T YOU BE MY NEIGHBOR?

Jantz Black (Conference Music Director and Director of Music Ministries at Midland 1st) donned a red sweater and welcomed Annual Conference members to a beautiful day in the neighborhood on Friday morning. Sharing childhood experiences and quotes Jantz concluded, "There are those who see the need and respond. I consider those people my heroes. Thank God for the wisdom of Mr. Rogers."

NEIGHBOR continued on back

Today's Highlights

- 8:30 AM Worship
- 10:00 AM TOM Talks
- 10:40 AM Mission Award
- 10:50 AM Legislation
- 2:00 PM Celebrating Ministry
- 4:15 PM TOM Talks
- 4:50 PM Legislation
- 7:00 PM Engage
- 7:30 PM Legislation
- 10:00 PM Q & A with Bishop

BARD: SPACE FOR AND SPACE BETWEEN

ACME, Mich. (MIC) – Over the past year Michigan United Methodists have been reading a lot about the work of the Commission on A Way Forward. On Friday afternoon, June 1st, Bishop David Bard spoke personally about the Commission's work of the past 18 months.

"The Commission was formed by action of the 2016 General Conference "to do a complete examination and possible revision of every paragraph of the Book of Discipline concerning human sexuality and to explore options that help to maintain and strengthen the unity of the church." The Council of Bishops is now drafting specific legislation that will go to a special called session of General Conference to be held February 23-26, 2019 in St. Louis, MO.

"The conversations have been rich but heavy," the bishop said. A video featured comments by bishops Ken Carter, Cynthia Fierro Harvey and Bruce Ough on the "One Church Model" being recommended by the Council. Bishop Bard added his observations. "The appeal of the model for me and many of the bishops, is that the model is relatively simple (requiring no constitutional changes), it holds together important values that have been articulated in this process (expanding United Methodist witness, recognizing different contexts of ministry, seeking as much unity as possible given our diversity), and it offers space in two senses – space for and space between."

He then offered conference members four things "you should do now." 1) Breathe and cultivate a mind of wisdom and a heart of peace. Listen well and speak gently;

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"Go and do likewise."

- LUKE 10:37 *NRSV*

TOM TALKS AND PEOPLE LISTEN

The first seven of nine **TOM** Talks were shared throughout Friday's session. The "Transformational Outreach and Ministry" presentations focused on the 2018 theme of engagement. "The Rev. Paul Perez, Associate Director of Mission and Ministry for the Michigan Conference, provided context: "We will hear from some of our own firebrands in Michigan. How they are putting Old Man Wesley's advice into action. The hope is we will catch a few of their sparks." **Go to vimeo.com/miumc to hear the full TOM Talks.** Here are teasers ...



Matt Witkowski-ENGAGE Your Community "You cannot get to know the neighborhood inside the church building."



Julie Liske-ENGAGE With The Poor: "Togetherness is more than aid. Love causes togetherness."



Raquel Owens- ENGAGE With Your Neighbors: "Everyone has a skill set to welcome a stranger."



Sonya Luna, Ellen Zienart, Patty Gandarilla, Sari Brown - ENGAGE With The People: "Go home and welcome God's people and you will welcome Jesus."



Rob Cook, Eric Mulanda, Darryl Totty - ENGAGE With The World: "Your church can overcome privilege, prejudice and racism."

NEIGHBOR continued



The Rev. Ben Bower, Lead Pastor of Redford: Aldersgate UMC continued the home-street theme in his sermon, Who is my neighbor? "How do we step into the ditch if we haven't already made a connection?" he asked reflecting on Luke 10:34. See the online Daily News link for full sermon.

SPACE continued

2) Remain engaged in this conversation without losing focus on mission and ministry that remains ours in Jesus Christ; 3) Pray. The Council of Bishops is inviting all United Methodists to a weekly 24-hour fast and a daily three-minutes of prayer from now through the 2019 General Conference in February; and 4) Take part in the dialog, starting Saturday night after legislation is over and continuing this fall at places soon to be announced. A full text of Bishop Bard's remarks will appear in his blog, "A Joyful Journey," June 6th in MIconnect, the weekly e-newsletter of The Michigan Conference.



Rev. Chris Grimes and Rev. Rosaline Green join Senior Pastor Kevin Smalls as he accepts the One Matters Award conferred by Discipleship Ministries.

ONE MATTERS AT SOUTHFIELD HOPE

Rev. Gary Step, Michigan Conference Associate Director for Congregational Vibrancy, was at the mic on Friday afternoon to help confer Discipleship Ministries One Matters Award. Created in 2015 the award recognizes churches that rise up from zero baptisms and professions of faith. A \$1,000 gift encourages further work in discipleship. Step introduced the Rev. Kevin Smalls, senior pastor of Southfield: Hope United Methodist Church. Following a period of decline, the congregation "stabilized between 2016 and 2017," Step explained. "They now average 500 in worship, had 81 professions of faith and 19 baptisms." Pastor Smalls introduced his staff and noted, "God has given us amazing results." More in next week's MIconnect.

TODAY'S SWEET TWEET @MIUMC18

 **Curtis Clarke** @CurtisClarke2 · 2h
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#MIUMC18 - at Grand Traverse Resort and Spa



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