



Sus'ann Busley greets Terry and Jackie Euper as they arrive on Wednesday afternoon. The registration desk in the resort lobby was a time for first-time members and veterans of many annual conferences to meet, greet, and pick up the things they need for four days of conferencing. ~ mic photo/JonathanTrites

Today's Highlights

- 10:00 AM Opening Worship/Memorial Service
- 1:30 PM Clergy Session
- 1:30 PM Laity Session
- 4:30 PM Plenary Session
- 7:45 PM Legislative Committees
- 9:00 PM Wesley Jazz & Refreshments

 **71° CLOUDY**

“Finally, all of you, have unity of spirit, sympathy, love for one another, a tender heart, and a humble mind.”

- 1 Peter 3:8 *NRSV*

COME, SPIRIT COME!

ACME, Mich. (MIC) – As members to Annual Conference enter the lobby of the Grand Traverse Resort, much is familiar. After three years at the Grand Traverse Resort, folks are more comfortable navigating the hallways and elevators. Nametags, totebags, handouts, the usual stuff is there to pick up. After all, Annual Conference is just that ...a once-a-year coming together of members for “Christian conferencing.” We’ve been doing this in Michigan for lots of years, 51 to be exact as a United Methodist Church. Except for first-time members in 2019, it is not surprising that everything seems “as usual.” And yet, something is clearly different this year.

Much has happened between the 2018 Session of the Michigan Annual Conference and the 2019 Session that convenes today. A new staff model and new districts began operation on July 1, 2018. The Michigan Conference became “official” in every way on January 1, 2019. Then the Special Session of the General Conference took place in February 2019, causing United Methodists around the globe, of every theological persuasion, to look deeper into what it means to be a follower of John Wesley and of Jesus Christ.

This Michigan Annual Conference acts in the space between that 2019 General Conference and the next General Conference held in Minneapolis, May 5-15, 2020.

SPIRIT continued on back

Thursday



Why is Annual Conference important to you?



Mona Dye, Pastor of Wolf Lake UMC

“Number one, I get to hear really good singing and preaching. I get to see folks I haven’t seen in a really long time. And I get to hear stories about how the church is moving. For me that’s the best.”



Ethan Chu, Central Bay District

“It is important to be a young voice. It’s important for us to be part of the church, and this is a great way to do so statewide rather than just locally. Hopefully, in the future I will be involved globally.”



Celia Peters, East Winds District

“It’s important for your voice to be heard in the church. Annual Conference is a really good way to make a statement and be included.”



Edith Cooper, Saginaw Ames

“You get to meet a lot of new friends and you learn more about the Methodist tradition. I enjoy it because there’s always something new that you can learn. The Methodist Church is doing a lot of good things for people.”



Jim Searls, Conference Rules of Order

“I really enjoy connecting with people and seeing what’s going on in the church. This year I hope we have reasonable people elected to the 2020 General Conference.”



Nancy Powers, Perry and Shaftsbury UMCs

“I love seeing all the people. I love the worship. I missed the last two annual conferences because my husband was sick, and this year I am happy he is here with me.”



Gordon Grigg, Ishpeming Wesley UMC

“I think Annual Conference is very important. Michigan is so huge that people from Detroit and people from Calumet are barely able to connect. So, I think it is great that we all can connect at one central location to talk and figure out how to make our United Methodist denomination better.”

SPIRIT continued

Members gathered in the Governors’ Hall of Grand Traverse Resort will elect the delegates to that future session and they will decide whether to take a straw vote on positions on issues acted upon at the past session in St Louis. These are not ordinary times at The Michigan Annual Conference.



The theme of the 2019 Michigan Annual Conference, Bold and Effective Leaders, is one that is appropriate for extraordinary times such as this. Various speakers will talk about the wisdom, heart and courage it takes to be a bold and effective leader. Perhaps the important thing to remember is that leaders are not just those on the stage

in Governors’ Hall. The clergy and laity seated in the hall are gifted by God and equipped by the church to be bold and effective leaders, too. And, when the Holy Spirit is in this place, anything can happen.



These MIUMC Golf Scramblers were among those who raised \$1,820 for Campus Ministries of the Michigan Conference. The 2019 scramble was held May 29. Taking 1st place was Team Vanlente – Schumacher – Shaffer - Combs. Tony Schumacher was closest to the pin. Andy Vorbrich scored longest drive. The real winners . . . the young people on our campuses!