

# Annual Conference

JUNE 6-9, 2018

INTENTIONAL  
DISCIPLESHIP

Dotson presents ideas and  
resources to the lay members

ON THIS ROCK I WILL  
BUILD MY CHURCH

Local ministry paints rocks,  
decorates campus

CONFERENCE  
LEGISLATION

Planning and new appointments for  
2019 and beyond

Harbison Chapel, Grove City College



Bishop Cynthia Moore-Koikoi, Western Pennsylvania Annual Conference





# ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2018

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## SOUL RESTORATION AND

Nearly two thousand attendees gathered in Grove City in early June for four days of worship, business, and fellowship.

This year's Western Pennsylvania Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church featured a series of thought-provoking speakers in addition to conducting church business. Nancy Beach offered a seminar on the development and fostering of healthy teams; Rev. Dr. Shively Smith delivered a series of Bible study sermons on Ephesians; and Rev. Junius Dotson from Discipleship Ministries discussed intentional discipleship with the laity. Bishop Cynthia Moore-Koikoi delivered a powerful State of the Church address.

The State of the Church, she says, is strong, and we are dressed in hope for a bright future. She encouraged us to be aware of the lack of support on Conference-level agencies, and stated that the numbers on our efforts to dismantle racism within the church are discouraging. However, through all the issues, there is hope for healthier, growing communities, and greater inclusion of people of color.

Roots of Faith, a ministry based out of Faith UMC in Fox Chapel, decorated the campus with brightly-painted rocks, for the attendees to collect and bring home to share with their communities.

Further information on daily proceedings is available at <https://www.wpaumc.org/2018dailyproceedings>.





# GO WHERE I SEND THEE

FAREWELL TO PASTOR DAVE

Pastor Dave was reassigned to serve Eighth Avenue/West Homestead/Swissvale as an associate pastor. Dave's heart for the mission provided by Eighth Avenue is strong, and we wish him well in his new church.

Pastor Dave served here at Baldwin Community UMC since 2011, and has been ministering as a Part-Time Local Pastor during that time. Currently he is pursuing an additional course of study.

His wife, Jenn, will remain in her position as Youth Coordinator here at Baldwin.



# HERE I AM, LORD

AND WELCOME TO PASTOR  
THOMAS AND HER FAMILY

Joining our leadership is Ginger Thomas, Associate Pastor. Pastor Thomas comes to us from Fully Alive Retreat Ministries, and brings with her a warmth and compassion for spiritual formation and for children's ministries, as well as a strength in administration. She is a graduate of Duke Divinity School and has received additional training in Spiritual Formation and Clinical Pastoral Education.

Pastor Ginger's husband, Rev. Dr. L. Roger Owens, is an associate professor at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary; and they have three children.







Junius Dotson, General Secretary of Discipleship Ministries, led an enthusiastic session for laity on coordinating and fostering discipleship among our members, encouraging us to truly see all the people God has called our communities to serve.



# INTENTIONAL DISCIPLESHIP IN OUR CONGREGATIONS

"DISCIPLESHIP IS NOT A CLASS YOU  
GRADUATE FROM," DOTSON REMINDS LAITY

"Sawubona" is a Zulu greeting that translates to "I see you."  
How are we going forth to see all the people God has called  
us to serve?

Rev. Dotson started off this session by proudly showing attendees a photo of his son, who just graduated from college and began a career as a sports journalist.

"I don't like baseball," he said, "but my son taught me that if you don't touch first base, nothing you do after that matters."

For the church, first base is equipping and empowering our own disciples, and providing opportunities for them to grow in their faith. If we fail to take care of our own people and enable them, we miss everything else that comes after that.

"We've got to stop trying to fix churches and focus on making disciples. If you build disciples, you will build the church."

So what does that mean? It means our commitment to growing as disciples is vital to our service in the church. Our call to "See all the people" is not about fixing churches, it's about developing relationships.

Dotson encouraged us to consider three questions:

- (1) How have you grown in your faith this year?
- (2) What spiritual discipline/practice has been most helpful?
- (3) What is your plan for spiritual growth this upcoming year?

These questions, he says, will help us move forward as disciples and will enable us to reach out to the communities around us.

Many resources are available for free at <http://www.discipleshipministries.com>. These include devotionals, resources for leading groups of all ages, tools for Covenant Discipleship and Stewardship, and topics for international ministries. Printed materials can also be ordered.

The traditional response to "Sawubona" is "Yebo, sawubona", which translates to "Yes, I see you too." May the intention of seeing one another and the people around us encourage deeper connections.

















General Examination  
of Candidates







#### FURTHER READING

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Western Pennsylvania Conference of the United Methodist Church

<http://www.wpaumc.org>

Daily Proceedings

<http://www.wpaumc.org/AC>

<http://www.wpaumc.org/2018dailyproceedings>

Discipleship Ministries--Devotionals and other resources for the local church

<http://www.discipleshipministries.org>

<http://www.seeallthepeople.org>

<http://pathsofstudy.upperroombooks.com/>

Building Healthy Teams

Nancy Beach, <http://www.nancybeach.com>

The Anatomy of Peace by The Arbinger Institute, <https://ws.arbinger.com/anatomyofpeace/>

Crucial Conversations: Tools for Talking When the Stakes are High by Kerry Patterson, available on Amazon and Barnes & Noble

Roots of Faith

<http://www.faithfoxchapel.org/rof>