Daily Proceedings

Minutes of the 33rd Session
Desert Southwest Annual Conference
The United Methodist Church
June 15–18, 2017
Renaissance Hotel & Spa in Glendale, Arizona

Bishop Robert T. Hoshibata, President
Rev. Nancy Cushman, Secretary
Carla Whitmire, Associate Secretary for Proceedings

Orders of the Day
Rev. Ann Thomas

Recorders
Rev. Jennifer Lambert, Dina Reid
OPENING OF ANNUAL CONFERENCE
PLENARY SESSION 1
Bishop Robert T. Hoshibata
Thursday, June 15, 2017
8:30–11:30 a.m.
Renaissance Glendale Hotel & Spa, Media Center

Call to Order
Bishop Hoshibata called the session to order at 8:34 a.m. with prayer.

Organizational Matters
The Bishop introduced Rev. Nancy Cushman, Conference Secretary. Cushman welcomed all to the 33rd Session of the Desert Southwest Annual Conference. She pointed out that all the information needed for this Annual Conference could be found on the Annual Conference Guidebook App and hoped all had found it and were familiar with it. She stated that Tech Help was available. Cushman also noted that the nurse was located on the opposite side of the room to the northeast. Finally, Cushman prayed that the time together inspired and filled those present with the Holy Spirit.

Cushman addressed the following procedural motions. Cushman moved

- the names of the people who registered for the Conference constitute the official roll call for the 33rd Session of the Desert Southwest Annual Conference;  

  Approved

- those persons who requested and received permission to be excused from Annual Conference through their District Superintendent were excused. Requesting to be excused were: for the entire Conference—Active Clergy: Eric Brown, John Fairchild, Valerie Fairchild, Meredith Grandy, Larry Johnson, Sandra Johnson, Tom Kiracofe, Michael Patzloff, Sharon Ragland, Scott Ritchey; Retirees: Jim Ek, Suzanne Getz, Patricia Goss, Bert Lewis, Stewart Lewis, Madonna Moess, Peter Vaught, Marilyn Ware, Marico Wilson; partial time away: Don Benton, David Devereaux, Lana Fong, Janet Kefler, Michael Kefler, James Wallasky;  

  Approved

- the entire floor of the Imaginarium constitute the Official Bar of the Conference; and that our Annual Conference operate under the “trust” system:

  • only those laity who were officially elected Lay Members from their churches, diaconal ministers, deaconesses, home missioners, United Methodist Women & United Methodist Men conference presidents, or conference & district Lay Leaders and  

  • only those clergy who are deacons and elders in full connection, provisional members, associate (related to local pastors) members and affiliate (related to pastors in extension ministry) members, local pastors under full-time and part-time appointment and campus ministers were allowed to cast a vote when a vote was taken.

  Clergy of another denomination or other Annual Conferences may not vote;  

  Approved

- all preliminary minutes and audio recordings of the Sessions were the property of the Conference Secretary and as such are part of the official proceedings.  

  Approved

Cushman explained that the Commission on Religion & Race and the Commission on Status & Role of Women has a disciplinary responsibility to monitor the proceedings of the Annual Conference, and our leadership affirmed our Conference’s desire to have them do so. Cushman moved that the monitors sit on the floor to observe and be granted time Friday and Sunday mornings to give a report to the Annual Conference.  

Approved

Cushman then addressed the following additional procedural matters, pointing out:
• the 2016 Journal contained the rules of order for this Annual Conference;
• the four microphones located in the Bar of the Conference. She instructed those wishing to speak
to wait to be recognized by the Bishop, then go to the microphone indicated by the Bishop and
begin by stating their name and church;
• Conference Rule III.G. which limited a speaker to one speech on any one question and limits the
speaking time to three minutes;
• if making a motion, the motion was to be emailed to Cushman, Carla Whitmire, and Trinity
Donovan, the Conference legislative coordinator, if email was not possible, Cushman asked that
the motion be submitted in writing on the motion pad;
• announcements to go up on the screen were to be given to Christina Dillabough, Director of
Communications;
• presenters on the agenda needed to arrive 15 minutes before report time and to sit at the
designated table.

Cushman then moved that the persons listed in report C.1.f. of the Preconference Journal constitute the
Conference Secretary’s Staff for this Annual Conference and she encouraged those having questions to
call on those staff members for assistance. Approved

Cushman asked that all clergy members of the Conference moving to a new appointment, retiring, or
those who have made any changes to their contact information in the last year, please go on the
Documents and Procedures section of the Guidebook App and complete the Change of Address form.

She requested that all cell phones be set on vibrate or turned completely off during Conference sessions
and if a call was received, the person taking the call move outside of the Imaginarium. Cushman shared
that the hotel has asked that no food be taken out of the dining room to eat in the hallways or in the
Imaginarium.

Cushman explained that Spanish and Korean translators and translation equipment were available.
Translating devices were in an area near the Communications Booth.

She called the Conference’s attention to the Reporting Guide in the Preconference Journal as a useful tool
in gathering information to be shared with your local church. Cushman encouraged the checking of the
media screen each morning for room changes. That concluded Cushman’s organizational matters.

Bishop introduced those at the front table: Marilee Clark, Conference Chancellor; Rev. Ann Thomas,
Agenda and Orders of the Day; Nancy Cushman, Conference Secretary; and Laurie Lineberry,
Conference Lay Leader.

Introduction of Monitors
Diana Volere, Chair of the Commission on Race & Religion, and Rev. Dr. Kristin Hansen, Chair of the
Commission on Status and Role of Women, were introduced. Volere invited the monitors to the stage.
She thanked the monitors for their service. Hansen and Volere stated that during their reports, they have
chosen to recognize Super heroes of inclusivity. They invited the Conference to pay attention, and to be
the kind of people who uses words and opportunities to help create safe spaces and inclusive
relationships. They led the Conference in a prayer.

OPENING WORSHIP
Bishop Robert Hoshibata, Preaching
Theme: Courage

Rev. Dr. Rula Colvin, Chair of Annual Conference Worship, introduced DeLyn Celec, the Annual Conference song leader. Bishop Hoshibata offered a call to worship followed by readings and congregational singing. The Scripture was Colossians 1:1–10. The Bishop’s Episcopal Address was titled, *Becoming What God Wants Us to Be*. The worship concluded with a Blessing/Sending out by the Bishop.

Introduction to Holy Huddles
Bishop Hoshibata instructed the ushers to distribute folders to the Conference to be used through the Holy Huddles. He indicated that each table would have a monitor to record the discussions. The Bishop invited to stage those leading the first Holy Huddle; Jerry McGuire, Rev. Jessica Goad, Rev. Beth Rambikur.

Holy Huddle #1—Values
Rev. Jessica Goad explained the contents of the folder the Conference members received at registration. The folder contained the product of the various surveys, listening sessions, and holy huddles, in which members have engaged in the past year as part of the Initiative for Growth and Vitality. Goad explained that there would be five Holy Huddles during the Conference, providing an opportunity to hear about and engage this compelling vision for our life and ministry in the Desert Southwest Conference.

Goad introduced the first Holy Huddle, titled “Our Values,” which was found on page 2 in the folder. She stated that our values form the bedrock of our lives together. Throughout the surveys, listening sessions, and Holy Huddles, many values that are important to our work in growth and vitality were lifted. However, there were six that seemed to rise to the top as foundational values for being a Courageous Church: Loving like Jesus, Acting for Justice, United in Hope. These are six values (trust, compassion, relationship, authenticity, boldness, collaboration) we aspire to live into; deep yearnings that have been identified as ways we desire to live together; and new ways of living into which God is molding our various ministry settings to bring about growth and vitality with and beyond our communities.

Goad added that as a connection of courageous lay and clergy leaders, we share the responsibility of determining how these values are and can be embodied in our various contexts. She invited the members to reflect on each of these values and write down an image or thought or emotion as the value was spoken and an image appeared on the screen.

Jerry McGuire shared that while all of these values are important, the focus of the first Holy Huddle would be the value of trust. McGuire shared that developing a culture of trust within our ministry setting and within the Conference is the foundation upon which growth and vitality are built. Trust enables the other values to emerge and grow—to be bold and collaborate with others, to develop authentic relationships, to have compassion for all. Trust enables us to be a courageous church with a firm foundation in God. To engage in an understanding of our trust in God, McGuire invited the Conference to sing verses 1 and 2 of the hymn, *How Firm a Foundation*.

McGuire shared that the hymn reminds us that our firm foundation is our confident reliance on God. Two components of trust helped the committee to identify in their work together over this last year; 1) that we confidently rely on God; that our Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer is working in the world around us and in each of us, this is trust in God; and 2) that we confidently rely on one another because God is working through all people. He added that trusting God means we believe God is actively leading, calling, and
McGuire stated that this deep trust in God looks different across our ministry settings. He invited the Conference to answer the following questions around their table; In your unique ministry setting, what would it look like to believe, to expect, that the awesome wonder of God will show up in all you do? How might your ministry change with that kind of trust and expectation?

Rev Jonathan Arnpriester recognized the recorders for the Holy Huddles and thanked them.

Rev. Beth Rambikur explained that the second part of trust is confidently relying on one another. We believe each and every person is uniquely and wonderfully made and equipped with strengths different from and complementary to our own. We also believe each and every person is called by God to serve in unique ways, equipped with our unique strengths. Engaging in ministry with one another in a culture of trust requires us to build relationships with one another, confidently relying on each other’s God-given strengths and God-inspired callings. It also requires us to lead those in our ministry settings in a way that builds and practices this trust. This type of servant leadership allows people to serve as they are called and resists the structures and temptations that say “no” to pursuing that calling. This trust in one another does not come without its barriers—broken trust, lack of trust, fear, and more. It is important to identify and work to remove or reconcile with these barriers that keep us from trusting one another. Rambikur shared that Bishop Robert Schnase would lead the Day of Learning and share more on this topic.

Rambikur added that we know from the surveys, listening sessions, and Holy Huddles there is a lack of trust in our congregations, in our Conference, and in some of our relationships with each other. We heard personal stories of broken trust, even betrayal. We know barriers exist to building trust but as a people of confession and accountability, we believe naming these barriers and places of brokenness gives God the power to move us from hearing to healing.

Rambikur invited the Conference to practice some boldness and authenticity during an opportunity to share around their tables. She asked them to reflect on where you have found or experienced broken trust and to reflect on a practice or action that could bring healing in that situation. Recorders were asked to take brief notes of the barriers and practices that are named.

Rambikur thanked the Conference for their diligent and courageous work, engaging the value of trust. She asked them to thank each person around their table for this gift of time and sharing. She indicated that the responses shared would be posted to the guidebook app. Goad led the Conference in a trust activity. She invited the Conference to choose a river stone available on the table, write the word “trust” on it, and find a partner to pray a trust prayer together.

Bishop Hoshibata shared that Rev. Tweedy Sombrero Navarette lost her grandson recently and will not be able to offer the message at the Service of Memorial. The Bishop announced that Rev. Louie Lyon would share the message at the service. The Bishop offered prayer for Rev. Sombrero and her family.

Nominations
Julie Yarrow, Chair of Nominations, directed the Conference to the Nominations and Leadership Report found in the Guidebook App. Yarrow stated that there are two Nominations documents. The first was the traditional document from years past. The new document was sorted by last name of members on each committee. Yarrow asked the Conference to review the documents for any corrections to spelling or contact information. Changes were to be submitted to Rev. Anthony Tang, Rev. Beth Rambikur, or Yarrow by 8:00 a.m. Saturday. Yarrow added that the Nominations Committee worked to improve both the age diversity and ethnic diversity of our committees. A new priority was to place new members on committees on a yearly schedule to avoid a large turnover of committee members in any given year.

Committee on Episcopacy
Rev. Gary Kennedy, Chair of the Committee on Episcopacy was introduced. Kennedy shared the functions of the Committee on Episcopacy as described in ¶637.3 in the United Methodist 2008 Book of Discipline. Kennedy invited Bishop Hoshibata to join him. Kennedy thanked the Bishop for all that he does and asked the Conference to thank him with applause. Kennedy stated that a donation has been made in honor of Bishop Hoshibata and his wife, Greta, to Africa University.

Legislation: Rule Changes
Rev. Nancy Cushman directed the Conference to the Routine Organizational Matters for Annual Conference Rule Changes, item D.1.a. in the Preconference Report. She explained that the rule change was to add the opening and closing motions which are made each year to the Conference Rules and to update the references to publication methods that are outdated. She moved that the rule change be approved.  

Announcements
The Bishop reminded the Conference that there was a free book table supplied by the retired clergy. He thanked Rev. Jonathan Arnpriester for coordinating the recorders for the Holy Huddle sessions. 
The Bishop asked Rev. Camille Penstil to close the session in prayer. Adjourned at 11:12 a.m.

LAITY SESSION
Thursday, June 15, 2017
1:10–3:10 p.m.
Renaissance Glendale Hotel & Spa, Media Center

Laurie Lineberry, the Desert Southwest Conference Lay Leader, opened the Laity Session with greetings. Lineberry introduced Bishop Hoshibata for his greetings. Bishop Hoshibata welcomed all to the Laity session. The Bishop opened the time with prayer. Lineberry introduced the District Lay Leaders; Paul Browning, East; Phyllis Murray, North; Martiza Velazquez, south; Alice Brown, Conference United Methodist Women President; and Sheryl McKinney, Conference Lay Servant Director.

McKinney introduced Demi Prentiss, author of Radical Sending—Go to Love and Serve.
Prentiss talked about hospitality, how to practice radical hospitality, how this calls for courage, and how it opens the door to be all God would have us be.
Prentiss explained to the laity that there are three parts of radical hospitality: inviting, inclusion, and radical welcome. She stated that hospitality is a process we are always being called to practice. She stated there are two parts of hospitality—welcoming in and sending out.

She invited the laity to sit quietly to think about ways their church exhibits hospitality and how to take it to the next step. The laity then talked in small groups about how to take the churches to the next step and what that next step might be.

Two important ways we share our ministry is by sharing the Good News and telling our story.

Prentiss shared that in her book, *Radical Sending*, we are asking the church to understand that people are in mission every day, in the places they live, work, and spend their time, mainly outside of church. She asked the church to take a risk, to understand itself differently. Jesus calls us to risk; Jesus calls us to step out of our comfort zone. Prentiss thinks Jesus asks us, “What are you willing to change about yourselves—as an individual and as a congregation?”

Prentiss compared trekking with hospitality, talking about being equipped and establishing a basecamp. The base camp is not the goal; it exists for the good of the hikers. The church is not the goal; it exists for the people. She stated that the church serves as our base camp to support the people.

Prentiss shared that it is important for us to understand ourselves as sent, and read Matthew 28:18–20 from The Message. This is one of the most important things for us to do. We need the support of the church to come back to, a place to be refreshed, and to share the experiences of sharing in the world.

According to Prentiss there are four areas to practice discipling people in the pattern of radical sending, including formation, worship, pastoral care, communication

Prentiss called the laity to practice radical hospitality, to be a courageous church.

Announcements

The session was adjourned at 2:34 p.m.

**CLERGY EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**Thursday, June 15, 2017**

1:10–3:10 p.m.

*Renaissance Glendale Hotel & Spa, Cira B & C*

The Clergy Session was opened by Julius Keller, chair of the Board of Ordained Ministry with prayer. Keller recognized the Board of Ordained Ministry members and Rev. Dan Hurlbert the previous chair of the committee.

**Point of Privilege**

Nancy Cushman, Conference Secretary, reminded clergy to check their service record in the 2016 Journal and send any corrections to Cynthia Satchel. The Book of Discipline requires publishing clergy service records each year in the Journal. The published service record is by law the official record and will have
the last word if there is a discrepancy for retirement calculations. It has been the practice of our Conference to include clergy contact information along with clergy service records in the Journal.

Cushman shared that publishing personal contact information is not required by the General Conference. The Journal is a public document and this year DVDs of the Journal will not be sent to each delegate and church. and instead be published in a downloadable Journal online. This raised concerns about clergy and privacy. Personal contact information will not be included in the Journal this year.

Cushman asked the clergy if they use the clergy directory that has been published in the back of the Journal. Would they use a clergy directory if we made one available through electronic means? Discussion followed. It was decided that a Clergy Directory available only to clergy will be produced.

Tina Rees, secretary of the Board of Ordained Ministry, moved that Julie O’Neal, Administrative Assistant to the Bishop, be admitted to the session with voice but no vote. **Approved**

Rees moved that licensed local pastors, both full and part time, and local pastors who have entered into retired relationship be allowed to be present at this clergy session and given the right to speak should someone be moved to do so. **Approved**

Additionally, she reminded the group that all things stated in the session were in strict confidentiality.

Sarai Case, registrar of the Board, presented the Business of the Annual Conference pertaining to ordained ministers and local pastors.

18. Who constitute:
   a) The Administrative Review Committee (¶636)? (v)
      Members: Deits, Bob; Lansberry, Candace; Self-Price, Deanna; Alternates: Bonneau, Ed; Jeff Procter-Murphy **Passed**
   b) The Conference Relations Committee of the Board of Ordained Ministry (¶635.1d)?
      Grandy, Janice; Keller, Julius; O’Neal, James; Ragland, Sharon **For information only**

19. Who are the certified candidates (¶¶ 310, 313, 314)
   a) Who are currently certified as candidates for ordained or licensed ministry? **For information only**
   20. Who have completed the studies for the license as a local pastor, are approved, but are not now appointed? (¶315 — Indicate for each person the year the license was approved.) **For information only**
   21. Who are approved and appointed as: (Indicate for each person the first year the license was awarded. Indicate what progress each has made in the course of study or the name of the seminary in which they are enrolled. Indicate with an asterisk those who have completed the five-year course of study or the M.Div. (¶319.4). (3/4 v)
      a) Full-time local pastors? (¶318.1) **Passed**
      b) Part-time local pastors? (¶318.2) **Passed**
      d) Students who have been certified as candidates in your annual conference and are serving as local pastors in another annual conference while enrolled in a school of theology listed by the University Senate (¶318.3) **Passed**

22. Who have been discontinued as local pastors (¶320.1)? **For information only**
24. What ordained ministers or provisional members from other Annual Conferences or Methodist denominations are approved for appointment in the Annual Conference while retaining their conference or denominational membership (¶¶331.8, 346.1)?
a) Annual Conferences
b) Other Methodist Denominations

25. What clergy in good standing in other Christian denominations have been approved to serve appointments or ecumenical ministries within the bounds of the Annual Conference while retaining their denominational affiliation (¶¶331.8, 346.2)? (v)

PASSED

26. Who are affiliate members:

b) Without vote (¶¶334.5, 344.4)? (2/3 v)

PASSED

28. Who are elected as provisional members and what seminary are they attending, if in school? (under ¶¶322.4, 324, 325)

a) Provisional Deacons under the provisions of ¶¶ 324.4a, c or ¶324.5(3/4v)

PASSED

b) 3/4 Provisional Elders under the provisions of ¶ 324.4a, b or ¶324.6 (3/4 v); ¶ 322.4 (v 3/4)

PASSED

29. Who are continued as provisional members, in what year were they admitted to provisional membership, and what seminary are they attending, if in school (¶326)?

a) In preparation for ordination as a deacon or elder? (¶326)

For information only

30. What ordained clergy, coming from other Christian denominations, have had their orders recognized (¶347.6): (v)

PASSED

32. Who are elected as members in full connection? (3/4 v)

a) Deacons

PASSED

b) Elders

PASSED

33. Who are ordained as deacons and what seminary awarded their degree?

a) After provisional membership (¶330)? (3/4 v)

PASSED

b) Transfer from elder (¶309)? (3/4 v)

PASSED

34. Who are ordained as elders and what seminary awarded their degree?

a) After provisional membership? (¶335) (3/4 v)

PASSED

43. Who are on location?

a) Who has been granted honorable location (¶358.1)?

For information only

c) Who has been placed on administrative location (¶359)?

For information only

44. Who have been granted the status of honorable location–retired (¶358.3):

b) Previously?

For information only

46. Who have had their conference membership terminated?

b) By withdrawal from the ordained ministerial office (¶360.2, .4)? (v)

PASSED

48. Deceased

a) What associate members have died during the year?

For information only

c) What elders have died during the year?

For information only

d) What deacons have died during the year?

For information only

49. What provisional or ordained members (elders and deacons) have received appointments in other Annual Conferences of The United Methodist Church while retaining their membership in this Annual Conference (¶¶331.8, 346.1)?

For information only

50. Who are the provisional, ordained members or associate members on leave of absence and for what number of years consecutively has each held this relation (¶353)?

a) Voluntary?

(2) Personal, more than 5 years (¶353.2a 3) (2/3 v)

PASSED

(3) Family, 5 years or less (¶353.2b 3) (v)

PASSED

52. Who have been granted medical leave due to medical or disabling conditions (¶356)? (v)

PASSED
53. What members in full connection have been retired (¶357): (List alphabetically. If retiring in the interim between conference sessions (¶357.2d), indicate the effective date of retirement.) (Under ¶357.1, no vote required; under ¶357.2, v; under ¶357.3, v 2/3) Passed
54. What associate members have been retired (¶357): (List alphabetically. If retiring in the interim between conference sessions (¶357.2d), indicate the effective date of retirement.) (Under ¶357.1, no vote required; under ¶357.2, v; under ¶357.3, v 2/3) Passed
56. Who have been recognized as retired local pastors (¶320.5)? For Information Only
72. Who are approved for less than full-time service?
   a) What associate members, provisional, or full elders are approved for appointment to less than full-time service, what is the total number of years for which such approval has been granted to each, and for what fraction of full-time service (in one-quarter increments) is approval granted (for purposes of equitable compensation claim and pension credit) ¶¶338.2, 342.2, 1506)? (v 2/3, after 8 years v 3/4) Passed
   b) What deacons in full connection and provisional deacons are approved for appointment to less than full-time service (¶331.7)? Passed
73. Who have been appointed as interim pastors under the provisions of ¶338.3 since the last session of the annual conference, and for what period of time? For Information Only

After all the connections were voted on, the Bishop referred to Gina Campbell speaking at the Next Conference, in April 2017, who encouraged us—how we live with Scripture and the importance of stating, “I believe that the Bible says...” rather than, “The Bible says...” Bishop also spoke of the Commission on the Way Forward and that there is hope. He stated we can keep the church together by praying, talking, and serving together. Bishop closed the clergy session in prayer.

PLENARY SESSION 2
Thursday, June 15, 2017
3:15–4:45 p.m.
Renaissance Glendale Hotel & Spa, Media Center

Call to Order
Bishop Hoshibata called the session to order at 3:24 p.m.

Legislation: Resolutions/Rule Changes
Kent Olson, interim Chair Church and Society, presented to the Conference the Resolution Protecting the Right to Peacefully Address Injustice Through Boycotts, Divestment, and Sanctions; item D.4.d. in the Preconference Report. He moved that the resolution be approved. The Bishop led the Conference in prayer. The Conference discussed the resolution at their tables. There were no speeches for or against the resolution. Approved
Olson presented to the Conference the Resolution on Holy Land Travel, item D.4.e. in the Preconference Report. He moved that the resolution be approved. Laurie Lineberry, Conference Lay Leader, led the Conference in prayer. The Conference discussed the resolution at their tables. Keith Roberts, West District Lay Leader, spoke against the resolution. Rev. Sandy Johnson, Boulder City UMC, spoke for the resolution. Deaconess Martha Lundgren, St. Mark’s UMC, spoke against the resolution. Howard Moses, Faith UMC, spoke for the resolution. Willie Wheeler, Spirit of Hope UMC, spoke against the resolution.
Holy Huddle #2—Courageous Church: Loving Like Jesus

Bishop Hoshibata introduced Barbara Davis Hines and Rev. David McPherson. Davis Hines and McPherson spoke about love and shared quotes about love from Lao Tzu, “Being deeply loved gives us strength,” and Judith Smith, “Loving others is really hard. Hate is easier than love. Lazy self-service is easier than love … the commandment to love is humanity-wide (see Matthew 22:34–40). Whether it’s loving our families, other Christians you may not see eye-to-eye with, or those who share different political beliefs, the commandment is the same. Jesus’ commandment isn’t the feel-good warm and fuzzy kind of love. It includes loving our enemies, just as Jesus did …” They stated love transforms lives and communities, but it takes courage. McPherson shared that one theme emerged to the Convergence Team and to the churches, “We want to be more involved in our communities. We need to be more involved.”

Davis Hines and McPherson stated that Jesus showed courageous love to the sick, the afflicted, the wounded, the weary, the lost, the broken hearted, the bereaved, the poor, the starving, the prodigals, the sinners, the lonely, the persecuted, the devastated, all those in need, the hurting, the abused, the marginalized, the harassed, the helpless, those needing deliverance…the list is endless. They asked, “What is stopping us?”

Davis Hines led the Conference in a Holy Huddle, focusing on the following questions, What is the most courageous thing your church has done to be loving like Jesus? and What is Christ calling you to do now that will take courage?

After table conversation, the Conference watched a video. McPherson reminded the Conference that being involved in our communities isn’t just to get people to church. It’s to build relationships that will transform us and it’s to serve.

Davis Hines led the Conference in a Holy Huddle, focusing on the following questions, Of the six values mentioned earlier, which ones might your church need to focus on that will help shift the church culture from comfort to courage, from loving relationships with each other to building loving relationships with people in your church neighborhood? and How might you help the church make the shift?

The Conference watched a video presentation showing examples of the Desert Southwest Conference churches loving like Jesus.

Equitable Compensation

Pastor Winona Dye, Chair of the Commission on Equitable Compensation, was introduced. Dye referred the Conference to the report and recommendations in the Preconference Journal.

Recommendation #1—1.5% increase in minimum pastor salaries for 2018 Approved

Recommendation #2—Proposed Conference Arrearage Policy Approved

Dye directed the Conference to the Equitable Compensation Rule Changes, item D.1.c. in the Preconference Report. She explained that the rule changes more clearly defines that equitable compensation subsidies are to be used only for pastor compensation and benefits, not church operating expenses. And the Rule Changes state that the expectation is that churches will not generally receive
equitable compensation subsidies for more than five consecutive years. She moved that the rule change be approved. 

Approved

Adjourned at 4:39 p.m.

A SERVICE OF MEMORIAL
Rev. Louie Lyon, Preaching
Thursday, June 15, 2017
5:00–6:00 p.m.
Renaissance Glendale Hotel & Spa, Media Center
Theme: Love


Before the service, Bishop Hoshibata met with the families and presented each family with a “Blessing Bowl” in remembrance of their loved one. Summer Kemp-Schlemmer led the reading of the names to be remembered. As each name was read photographs were shown and a brief statement was read about the deceased. Harpist Shannon Schumann provided musical accompaniment. Those remembered included: Cheryl Jones Cumbee, Robert Farley, Tanya Griffith, Lawrence Hinshaw, Alita Holt, Mariano Moreno, Robert Remp, Susan Roots, James Stewart, Donna Usher, Helen White. After the remembrance, an invitation for the offering was offered which would benefit Justice For Our Neighbors. Bishop Hoshibata gave the benediction.

PLENARY SESSION 3
Friday, June 16, 2017
8:15–11:30 a.m.
Renaissance Glendale Hotel & Spa, Media Center

Call to Order
Bishop Hoshibata called the session to order at 8:23 a.m.

Centering Moment
DeLyn Celec led the Conference in gathering music. Rev. Dr. Rula Colvin ended with prayer.

Monitoring Report
Rev. Dr. Kristin Hansen, Chair of the Commission on Status and Role of Women, and Diana Volere, Chair of the Commission on Race & Religion, were introduced. They thanked the Conference for being heroic. They reported that there have been only good comments. The worship team was acknowledged as superheroes of inclusivity. Volere praised the worship team for their inclusivity. Hansen presented the worship team with stars. Volere shared from the epistle of James. “But everyone must be quick to hear, slow to speak, and slow to anger; for the anger of man does not achieve the righteousness of God.” She asked the Conference to remember inclusivity isn't just in picking wise words when we speak, but it's listening in grace.
Cabinet Presentation

The theme of the Cabinet report was Seasons of Love. Rev. Dr. Dottie Escobedo-Frank, South District Superintendent, greeted the Conference and invited the District Administrative Assistants to the stage and thanked them with a gift. She introduced the new South District Administrative Assistant, Cynthia Holly.

The Cabinet shared events and changes that happened in the past year.

Marriages and Engagements

Rev. Dr. Kristin Longenecker, Desert Foothills UMC, and Christian Hansen were married October 21, 2016.
Rev. Angie McCarty, Santa Cruz UMC, and Jonathan Bell are engaged to be married July 1, 2017.
Rev. Rock Fremont, Central UMC, and Ernie Gregg were married December 7, 2016
Pastor Michael Patzloff, University UMC, and John Lafever were married September 30, 2016.

Additions to Clergy Family

Pastor Michael Patzloff, University UMC, and John Lafever finalized the adoption of Oliver Patzloff in August, 2016.
Rev. David, First UMC–Mesa, and Rebecca Rennick are expecting a baby girl June 25, 2017.

Clergy who moved out of the Conference

Rev. Angie McCarty, Santa Cruz UMC, is moving to Kansas City.
Rev. Michael Herdt, St. John’s UMC–Kingman, is moving to Great Rivers Conference.

The Cabinet asked clergy who had lost family members to stand. Bishop Hoshibata offered a prayer.

The Cabinet shared changes in the local churches. New names signal a new life, a new start, a new vision…

Santa Clara UMC celebrated their new name, New Hope/Nueva Esperanza UMC
Green Valley Community of Arizona celebrated their new name, UMC of Green Valley
The Hispanic new faith start in Las Vegas celebrated their new name, Global Community UMC.
Albright UMC & Creighton UMC celebrated their merger, becoming The Bridge UMC.
Celebrated the union project of Korean UMF & First UMC
Celebrated the cooperative ministry of Mountain View UMC & Haven UMC

Moving to a new location gives new imagination, and shows great courage

Journey UMC, Las Vegas–North District

Closing Churches

Methodista Iglesia de Somerton, Somerton–West District
San Simon UMC, San Simon–South District

The Conference affirmed the closing of Methodista Iglesia de Somerton and San Simon United Methodist Church. Leftwich prayed for the congregations.

Rev. N. Susan Brims, East District Superintendent shared that in 2012 a new season began for the District Superintendent. The Book of Discipline made a change in describing the role of a superintendent.

These words were added: “The Church expects, as part of the superintendent ministry, that the superintendent will be the chief missional strategist of the district…” (Discipline 2012 ¶ 419, 1)
Brims shared that the Cabinet is asking for the Conference’s help to further define the role of Missional Strategist.

The Cabinet gave a presentation about the four areas of focus for the role of Missional Strategist. Brims started by sharing a definition of MISSIONAL. Missional is intentionally living as someone sent by God. A missional community sees the call of Christ to go into all the world.

Escobedo-Frank, South District Superintendent, shared the first area of focus for the role of Missional Strategist, “to challenge the church into creative imagination, focus, and risk taking that is rooted and grounded in the organic mission of the church.”

Leftwich, West District Superintendent, shared the second area of focus, “to encourage the church to develop real life-changing relationships with the vulnerable, overlooked, and invisible people in the community.”

Morley, North District Superintendent, shared the third area of focus, “to call the church to create innovative, and collaborative partnerships to resist evil, injustice, and oppression in whatever forms they present themselves.”

Bishop Hoshibata paused the Cabinet report to take a special offering for the congregation of Zion UMC who recently suffered a fire destroying their Sanctuary. Donations can be made online at www.dscumc.org/zionumc. Morley prayed for Zion UMC and their community.

Brims, East District Superintendent, shared the fourth area, “to persistently strengthen the connectional church as it lives into the reality of being one with Christ, one with each other and one in ministry to all the world.”

Brims led a prayer closing the Cabinet Report.

Holy Huddle #3—Response to Cabinet Presentation

Rev. N. Susan Brims directed the Conference to the response sheet in their Initiative for Growth and Vitality folder for Holy Huddle #3. Brims led the Conference in a Holy Huddle, focusing on the following question, What did you hear that signals a change that will help us grow and become even more vital than we are now?

Rev. Neil Leftwich led the Conference in a Holy Huddle, focusing on the following question, Which of the four strategies excites you and has the potential for energizing your church?

Rev. Dr. Dottie Escobedo-Frank led the Conference in a Holy Huddle, focusing on the following questions, How could this concept of “missional strategist” benefit the mission of your local congregation? How can we be more helpful to your church?

Bishop’s Award

The Bishop’s Award for 2017 was given to Paul Browning.
Bishop shared that Paul Browning is actively engaged in ministry in his local church. He has been a member of Desert Foothills UMC since shortly after the founding of the church. He has served in many leadership positions on boards and committees at Desert Foothills UMC. He has also served as Lay Leader for the church and is a Stephen Minister.

Browning gives of his time in mentoring and developing spiritual relationships with others, and volunteers within his congregation to help people move, prepare taxes, and offers support for those struggling with alcoholism and drugs. He and his wife Deb watch out for local homeless individuals and they advocate for them in the community, all while building relationships with them, even reconnecting them with their families and relatives in other states.

Browning serves as the East District Lay Leader and also serves on the East District Superintendency Team.

During Church Conference season, Browning attended almost every Church Conference. When he encounters laity, he engages in supportive ways, often making a return trip to learn about a ministry at a local church, to meet with a particular lay person, or simply to worship with that congregation. Browning works diligently to connect churches with larger ministries, such as Justa Center.

Browning serves with a gentle heart, giving willingly of his time and talent. He holds nothing back from serving God and God's people, while holding a full-time job. His family includes his wife Deb, his children, and grandchildren.

Legislation: Constitutional Amendments
Rev. Nancy Cushman, Conference Secretary, led the Conference in voting on the Constitutional Amendments from the 2016 General Conference. Cushman explained who was eligible to vote. She explained that the results would not be announced at the Annual Conference, but would be reported later with that of other conferences across the denomination.

Rev. Bob Cutlipp, Willcox UMC, asked that the Conference allow all provisional clergy members, associate and affiliate clergy members, and local pastors to vote for the Constitutional Amendments. Bishop explained that if that was allowed the vote would be invalid.

Constitutional Amendment I
There were no speeches for or against the Constitutional Amendment. Bishop Hoshibata prayed before the vote.

Constitutional Amendment II
There were no speeches for or against the Constitutional Amendment. Laurie Lineberry, Conference Lay Leader, prayed before the vote.

Constitutional Amendment III
There were no speeches for or against the Constitutional Amendment. Bishop Hoshibata prayed before the vote.

Constitutional Amendment IV
There were no speeches for or against the Constitutional Amendment. Bishop Hoshibata prayed before the vote.

Constitutional Amendment V
Rev. Dee Dee Azhikakath, family leave, spoke against this amendment.
Rev. Lynn Bartlow, Trinity Heights UMC, asked the Bishop for his opinion. Bishop deferred to Rev. Dan Hurlbert, first elected clergy to General Conference from Prescott UMC, to speak. Hurlbert spoke against the amendment.
Wendy Kreider, St. Francis in the Foothills UMC, spoke against the amendment.
Rev. Janessa Chastain, Grace UMC–Mesa, asked who originated the resolution. Mark Hrabe, St. Mark’s UMC, shared the resolution came from the Western Pennsylvania Annual Conference.
Rev. Jimeliva Pettiford Martin, Calvary UMC, asked if voting against this amendment would break the unity. Bishop responded to her question that the needs of the jurisdiction do not draw the jurisdictions away from a sense of unity.
Lineberry prayed before the vote. The ballots were collected and given to Cushman.

Conference Finance & Administration Overview
Rev. Matt Ashley, Chair of the Conference Council on Finance & Administration, presented the 2018 Conference budget totaling $6,134,778 a 0.4% decrease from the 2017 budget. Recommendations will be presented on Sunday from the Preconference Journal. The Bishop thanked Ashley for his work with the Conference Finance and Administration.

Appointments: West District
The Bishop, Rev. Neil Leftwich (West District Superintendent), and Keith Roberts (West District Lay Leader) announced the appointments for the West District for 2017–18. The Bishop first appointed Leftwich as Superintendent of the West District. Leftwich then read the names of churches and extended ministries, and the Bishop the names of the pastors. When completed, Roberts prayed over the appointments.

Appointments: East District
The Bishop, Rev. N. Susan Brims (East District Superintendent), and Paul Browning (East District Lay Leader) announced the appointments for the East District for 2017–18. The Bishop first appointed Brims as Superintendent of the East District. Brims then read the names of churches and extended ministries, and the Bishop the names of the pastors. When completed, Browning prayed over the appointments.

Appointments: North District
The Bishop, Rev. Dan Morley (North District Superintendent), and Phyllis Murray (North District Lay Leader) announced the appointments for the North District for 2017–18. The Bishop first appointed Morley as Superintendent of the North District. Morley then read the names of churches and extended ministries, and the Bishop the names of the pastors. When completed, Murray prayed over the appointments.

Announcements
Rev. Nancy Cushman, Conference Secretary, shared that a family from our Desert Southwest Conference traveling in London has a 14-year-old son missing. Cushman asked for anyone with a connection to a church in London to see her. Cushman prayed for the family; Len and Christina, their daughter Hope, and son Aiden who was missing.
Rev. Jimeliva Pettiford Martin, Calvary UMC, asked the churches of the Desert Southwest Conference to move in compassion and boldness to the least of those in our communities as the temperature rises to the extreme heat, to open our churches to those in need of water and cool shelter.

Adjourned at 11:29 a.m.

PLENARY SESSION 4
Friday, June 16, 2017
1:00–5:30 p.m.
Renaissance Glendale Hotel & Spa, Media Center

Call to Order
Bishop Hoshibata called the session to order at 1:14 p.m.

Rev. Nancy Cushman announced that Aiden was found and is safe. Bishop shared that Pastor Robin Lee, Hope UMC, woke with pain related to his accident last year. Bishop offered prayers for Lee.

Convergence Team
Bishop invited Sally Hecht and Roanne Wallace to the stage and thanked them for their assistance facilitating the Convergence Team. Bishop expressed his appreciation for the Convergence Team members for their service and presented them with a green, growing plant. The members included Christina Dillabough, Director of Communication; Jerry McGuire, North District; Rev. Dave Summers, Paradise Valley UMC; Dan Morley, North District Superintendent; Barbara David Hines, Desert Mission UMC; Rev. Jessica Goad, Flagstaff Federated Church; Rev. Gary Kennedy, Willowbrook UMC; Laurie Lineberry, Conference Lay Leader; Rev. Dave McPherson, Director of New Faith & Vital Faith Development. Bishop thanked Julie O’Neal, Administrative Assistant to the Bishop, for her assistance and support. The Conference thanked them with applause. Phase Two of The Initiative on Growth and Vitality will implement the vision. We will explore how to make the vision come alive. An Implementation Team has been assembled.

Africa University
Bishop Hoshibata introduced Joel Huffman. Huffman shared some of the facts and history of the Africa University. In 2012, a Desert Southwest Conference group went to Africa University. Jan Huffman shared some of her observations from the trip. Joel Huffman shared that at a reunion, the group determined that they would like to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the establishment of Africa University with a conference-wide effort to provide scholarships for African students. The proposal was approved unanimously by the Conference Council on Finance & Administration.

The Conference watched a video of Pambi Jatutu, a student at Africa University, expressing the life changing gift, given to her as a scholarship recipient of Africa University.

Joel Huffman stated that there are two major flagships of ministry and mission in the United Methodist Church, UMCOR (United Methodist Committee on Relief) and Africa University. UMCOR has brought relief around the world and Africa University is making a difference on the whole continent of Africa.
There are, in any given year, between 23 to 29 countries represented in the student body. (This year there are 25.) The University now has over 5,000 graduates. The student retention rate is 99.3%.

Huffman expressed his gratitude to the local churches for their support of the general church apportionments. Africa University exists because of your commitment to the connectional system. The Desert Southwest Annual Conference has paid 100% of the Africa University apportionment for many years.

Hoffman shared examples of how churches have partnered together to create scholarships with the Usahwira Scholarship program. Huffman asked churches involved in a scholarship program of Africa University to stand and be recognized.

The Usahwira Scholarship program requires an annual commitment of less than $5,800 for four years. Divided between two and three churches, this is not overwhelming. In addition, it is hoped the Conference will build a fund of $130,000 to endow an annual scholarship in perpetuity for a student attending Africa University as well as a fund to provide a post graduate year scholarship for an Africa University graduate at our own Claremont Theological Seminary. Huffman stated that the details of these opportunities will be sent to the local church over the coming summer months.

Huffman shared that the goal is to get 100% of our local churches to participate in the scholarship fund and to help churches understand and become familiar with the great work done by The United Methodist Church through Africa University.

**Board of Ordained Ministry**

The Bishop introduced Rev. Julius Keller, Chair of the Board of Ordained Ministry. Keller recognized and thanked the Board of Ordained Ministry Committee members. Keller thanked Rev. Dan Hurlbert, previous Chair of the Board of Ordained Ministry, for his support and guidance. He invited the Conference to the Ordination Service. Keller invited Rev. Sarai Case, the Registrar for the Board, to the stage. Case invited those to be commissioned to come forward. The following are to be commissioned or ordained: Provisional Elders: Alma Aguirre-Olivares, Kimberly Scott, Erfain Zalava; Provisional Deacon: Joshua Warner; Case invited those to be ordained and those transferring into the Desert Southwest Conference to come forward Elder Full Member: Maria Antonieta Fernandes, Court Fischer, Susan Holden; Deacon Full Member: Patricia Blackwood, Brenda Smith; transferring from other denominations as Elder Full Member: Joel Bullock, Kristin Hansen. The Bishop asked the Historic Questions of the ordinands and those being commissioned. He then presented them to the Conference. The Bishop thanked Keller and the Board of Ordained Ministry for their work.

**Legislation: Rule Change/Resolutions**

Dennis Foster presented to the Conference the Resolution to Measure the Effectiveness of the Resolution for Full Inclusivity as a Path to the Growth and Vitality of the Church as Presented and Passed June 18, 2016 at the Desert Southwest Annual Conference, item D.4.a. in the Preconference Report. He moved that the resolution be approved. The Conference discussed the resolution at their tables. Rev. Cynthia Kristopeit, retired, spoke against the resolution. Randy Gaines, St. Paul’s UMC–Tucson, spoke for the resolution. Rev. Sandy Johnson, Boulder City UMF, spoke against the resolution. Howard Moses, Faith UMC, spoke against the resolution. Bishop Hoshibata prayed before the vote. **Not Approved**
Rev. Anthony Tang, Director of Connectional Ministry, and Paul Gomez, Red Mountain UMC, presented to the Conference the Resolution to Fix Dates of General and Jurisdictional Conference Elections, item D.4.b. in the Preconference Report. They moved that the resolution be approved. The Conference discussed the resolution at their tables.

Rev. Lynn Bartlow, Trinity Heights UMC, asked what would happen if a delegate was not able to serve. Tang responded that if that were to happen a reserve delegate would fill the opening.

Ron Folkwein, Mountain View UMC, asked for clarification as to who would be the delegates in the 2019 Special Session of General Conference. Tang answered that this rule change would not affect any Special Session of General Conference. Tang added that the *Book of Discipline* states that the delegates would be the same as the previous General Conference.

Rev. Jimeliva Pettiford Martin, Calvary UMC, made an amendment to add to the end of line 20 … beginning after General Conference 2020 … Seconded. Amendment was Not Approved

Rev. Dee Dee Azhikakath, family leave, spoke against the amendment.

Kim Ogle, St. Mark’s UMC, spoke against the resolution.

Rev. Dan Hurlbert, Prescott UMC, spoke for the resolution.

Rev. Beth Rambikur, First UMC–Tucson, spoke for the resolution.

Rev. Timote Piukala, Tongan UMC, spoke for the resolution.

Don Booth, St. Mark’s UMC, offered a point of information.

Darlene Bradner, Shepherd of the Hills UMC, called the question. Seconded. Question Called Resolution Approved

Tang and Paul Gomez presented to the Conference the Resolution to Clarify Head Delegate Process, item D.4.c. in the Preconference Report. They moved that the resolution be approved. The Conference discussed the resolution at their tables. Bishop prayed for the vote. Approved

Tony Dawson, Chair of New Faith Communities Committee, and Rev. Eve Williams, Vital Faith Committee, directed the Conference to the New Faith Community Endowment Rule Changes, item D.1.b. in the Preconference Report. They moved that the rule change be approved.

Rev. Beth Rambikur, First UMC–Tucson, asked for an explanation to the oversite. Dawson stated that there is already an application process set up online.

Rev. Cynthia Kristopeit, retired, asked what the balance is on the fund. Dawson responded that there was about $5 million in the fund. The Conference discussed the resolution at their tables. The Bishop prayed for the vote.

Rev. Candace Lansberry, Desert Skies UMC, spoke against the resolution.

Rev. Beth Rambikur, First UMC–Tucson, spoke against the resolution.

Rev. Jody Topping, Faith UMC, spoke for the resolution.

Rev. Cynthia Kristopeit, retired, spoke against the resolution.

Rev. Brian Kemp-Schlemmer, City Square UMF, spoke for the resolution.

Rev. Pam Wagner, retired, asked who can apply for the funds. Williams answered that all churches can apply.

Pastor Jimmy Nelson, Holbrook UMC, spoke for the resolution.

Rev. Dr. Robert Burns, retired, asked if the spending is only on the earnings of the fund. Rev. Dave McPherson answered there is not a rule but New Faith has always said it would only spend the earnings on the funds.

Rev. Anthony Tang, Director of Connectional Ministry, made an amendment to eliminate the words “Ministry Cabinet” and keep the reference to “Covenant Council.” Seconded.
Stuart Salvatierra, North Scottsdale UMC, asked how many lay members serve on Covenant Council. Tang answered there are currently ten lay members on Covenant Council.

Amendment was Approved

Rev. Cynthia Kristopeit, retired, made an amendment to remove the sentence, *This endowment fund may also be used to support loans guaranteed by the Conference should the Loan Guarantee Fund be inadequate.* Replace with *Only interest from the endowment fund will be available, and not the corpus funds.* Seconded.

Rev. Lois Hedden, First UMC–Sun City, asked if this fund had been used to guarantee loans. Randy Bowman, Conference Treasurer, stated that the funds have been used once to approved a loan so the amendment would be for going forward.

Pastor Rolland Loomis, First UMC–Tucson, spoke against the amendment.

Rev. Brian Kemp-Schlemmer, City Square UMF, spoke against the amendment. Howard Moses, Faith UMC, spoke for the amendment. Amendment was Not Approved

Bishop Hoshibata prayed for the vote. Rule Change Approved

Bishop Hoshibata announced that Zion UMC offering taken earlier was $6,400 taken earlier with the online commitments the offering is over $10,000.

Rev. Dr. Dottie Escobedo-Frank offered prayers for Rev. Lori Martin-DeWitt, retired, in the recent loss of her father, and for Payson UMC and the community which effected by wildfire.

**Holy Huddle #4—Courageous Church: Acting for Justice**

Laurie Lineberry, Conference Lay Leader; Christina Dillabough, Director of Communications; and Rev. Gary Kennedy gave examples of churches acting courageously in ministry, facing community wide opposition and lack of funding. Imagine the impact if resources such as money, time, and manpower were not an obstacle.

Kennedy shared that with God all things are possible and we are a connectional church. We need to think beyond walls. There is probably another church or an organization to partner with. If we start by talking to our neighbors to name an injustice that they would like to see end, we could have a whole new group of passionate volunteers. Kennedy led the Conference in a Holy Huddle on the question, *If resources were not an obstacle, what injustice do you wish your church would act courageously to end?*

Lineberry led a Holy Huddle on the question, *What are some steps your church can take to begin this process and courageously act for justice?*

Dillabough encouraged the Conference to go to their church and their neighborhood and ask these same two questions. Kennedy closed the Holy Huddle time in prayer.

**Bishop’s Award**

Sharon Scobie, a member of the Desert Spring UMC, was a recipient of a Bishop's Award for 2017. Scobie joined the Conference via phone. Scobie’s involvement at her church includes leadership as she has served as Lay Leader of the church, UMW Circle leader, women's study group leader, and Lay Member to Annual Conference.

The North District United Methodist Women are proud of her involvement as District President, District Treasurer, and District Coordinator of Program Resources. Additionally, she has served as the District
UM Social Ministries Board member and Executive Director of UM Social Ministries of Southern Nevada. Serving during a time of transition, Scobie brought calm and focus to the organization.

At the Annual Conference level, Scobie has served on committees such as chairing Nominations, serving on the Covenant Council, and serving as a member of the Commission of Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns. Her greatest passion has been the United Methodist Women. She has been the Conference UMW Secretary, UMW President, and UMW Assistant Dean and then Dean of Mission.

On the general church level, Scobie has been a representative to the UMW's Western Jurisdiction leadership and a delegate to UMW Assemblies. She has been the Desert Southwest Conference delegate to General and Western Jurisdictional Conferences.

Phyllis Murphy, North District Lay Leader, accepted the award on her behalf.

Honoring Retirees
Rev. Julius Keller, Chair of Board of Ordained Ministry, asked those retiring to come to the stage. Those retiring included: Mary Lou Adame, George Cushman, David Devine, Alicia Tomkus Huertas Elizondo, Bob Gilfert, Dennis Hutson, Janet Keffer, Mark Lansberry, Lenore Renfro, and Nina Yardley. Rev. Louie Lyon offered a prayer for the retirees. Keller presented a video honoring the retirees, sharing their calls to ministry, highlights of their ministry, and what they were looking forward to in retirement. The retirees were presented with a certificate and gifts.

Bishop asked for an additional 15 minutes to the plenary session to allow the Conference to complete the scheduled business.

Appointments: South District
The Bishop thanked Rev. Dr. Dottie Escobedo-Frank for her service as the South District Superintendent. The Bishop, Rev. Mark Conrad (incoming South District Superintendent), and Maritza Velazquez (South District Lay Leader), announced the appointments for 2017–18. The Bishop first appointed Conrad as Superintendent of the South District. Conrad then read the names of churches and extended ministries and the Bishop the names of the pastors. When completed, Velazquez then prayed over the appointments in Spanish.

Spiritual Formation
Rev. Anthony Tang, Director of Connectional Ministries, shared that the Committee on Spiritual Formation has been working hard to create creative experiences to connect us across our differences as shared members in the body of Christ. Tang shared that the Conference wrote down a fear in their life and added them to the boards available in the hallway of the Renaissance Hotel. He invited the Conference to pray over those fears and to pray for those who have written them, that we may all be filled with the Courage of Christ for the year ahead.

Tang closed the session in prayer. Adjourned at 5:44 p.m.
Call to Order
Bishop Hoshibata called the session to order at 1:02 p.m. He announced the Nominations Report is on the Guidebook App. He asked the Conference to review it and be ready for the vote on Sunday.

Day of Learning
Bishop Hoshibata introduced Bishop Robert Schnase, Bishop of the Missouri Conference of the United Methodist Church.

Bishop Schnase took the stage, and introduced his book, *Just Say Yes: Unleashing People for Ministry*, which was published 18 months ago.

The first portion of Bishop Schnase’s presentation focused on You Can’t Do That, ways churches say no to new ministries or growth opportunities. Bishop Schnase stated that people are not receptive to change and that sometime, church rules block change. There are times when people say no to other people, it stops possible growth or change.

Bishop Schnase reminded the Conference that church leaders and congregations often rest on the faulty assumption that it is their church. The church is God’s church and ministries should fulfill the mission of the church, not the individual/s interests or wants.

Leaders of growing churches say yes to ministries that declining churches say no to.

Bishop Schnase shared another way that churches inhibit growth is “Death by Complexity;” churches with a thousand rules, a thousand steps before making changes, churches that cannot make decisions, churches that are micromanaged, and churches that are afraid of taking any kind of risk.

The second portion of Bishop Schnase’s presentation focused on Ways to Say Yes; how to become a permission giving church.

Bishop Schnase stated that to create an atmosphere for ministry change, we must understand that everyone has unique gifts for ministry. When we receive new members, instead of asking which committee this person might want to serve on, a more fruitful question might be, “What ministry is God calling you to?” Bishop Schnase suggested that churches offer an inventory of spiritual gifts during membership classes. He suggested shifting the focus on members’ and leaders’ strengths instead of weaknesses to multiply these strengths. God calls everyone to service and ministry; it is important to discover where our great gladness and the world’s deep hunger meet.

Bishop Schnase asked that church leaders insure that the church’s mission is outward-focused. As soon as a church looks inward, it starts to decline. He suggested three questions to ask when someone brings a new idea: 1) Does this align with the mission and vision of the church?; 2) Who will do it?; 3) How will it be paid for?

The church is a school for love, helping people grow in grace and in the knowledge and love of God.

The goal of rethinking congregational systems is to make them more accessible, sensible,
and effective in accomplishing multiple ministries.

Bishop Schnase indicated there are times when it is appropriate to say no, including ministries that do not align with the church’s mission or priorities, ministries intended for personal profit, ministries initiated for the wrong reasons, ministries where the leaders refuse accountability, and when the ministry does not bear kingdom fruit.

The last portion of Bishop Schnase’s presentation focused on The Ministry of Encouragement. Bishop Schnase explained that permission giving leaders trust that God is at work through the people. These leaders shift their thinking from, “you ought to” to “I will,” leading by example. Permission giving leaders are responsible risk takers, they grow churches by multiplication rather than addition, they understand that forward motion comes in small steps, and they are able to say yes, even to people they don’t agree with. These leaders are willing to make mistakes.

Bishop Hoshibata thanked Bishop Schnase for his presentation, directed the Conference to a book signing in the hallway, and led a word of prayer. The session ended at 4:58 p.m.

**A SERVICE OF COMMISSIONING AND ORDINATION**

_Rev. Brian Kemp-Schlemmer, Preaching_

_Saturday, June 17, 2017_

_7:00–8:30 p.m._

_Renaissance Glendale Hotel & Spa, Media Center_

_Theme: Justice_

During the processional music, the Desert Southwest Conference clergy processed in followed by an acolyte with the cross, the Board of Ordained Ministry, those commissioned, those ordained, those having their orders recognized, Rev. Brian Kemp-Schlemmer, an acolyte with the Bible, and Bishop Hoshibata.

The Bishop greeted those in worship, and then offered recognition of common ministry and reaffirmation of baptism. Those being commissioned and ordained, those having their orders recognized, Rev. Brian Kemp-Schlemmer, an acolyte with the Bible, and Bishop Hoshibata.

The Act of Commissioning and Ordination followed with Laurie Lineberry and Rev. Sarai Case recommending those to be commissioned and ordained. Lineberry and Case presented Joshua Louis Warner to be commissioned for the work of a provisional deacon; Lineberry and Case presented Alma Lilian Aguirre-Olivares, Kimberly Scott, and Efrain Zalava to be commissioned for the work of an elder; Lineberry and Rev. Ruth Bloom presented Patricia Bowman Blackwood and Brenda Joy Smith to be ordained as deacons; Lineberry and Rev. Lynn Bartlow presented Maria Antonieta Fernandes, Court M. Fischer, and Susan Holden to be ordained as elders; and Lineberry and Bartlow presented Joel Bullock and Kristin D. Hansen for Recognition of Orders in The United Methodist Church.

The Bishop examined the candidates for commissioning followed by A Charge Before Commissioning and the Prayer of Commissioning with Laying on of Hands for each candidate. The Bishop examined the deacons to be ordained followed by the Laying on of Hands and Prayer for the Deacons for each candidate. Each ordained deacon was given a stole, a pitcher, a bowl, and a towel. The Bishop examined the elders to be ordained followed by the Laying on of Hands and Prayer for the Elders for each candidate.
candidate. Each ordained elder was given a stole, a chalice, and a plate. The Bishop examined the elders
transferring from another denomination and recognized them as full members. Each transferring elder was
given a 2016 United Methodist Book of Discipline and a United Methodist Book of Worship.

The Bishop invited those present to respond to God’s call to Christian service and ordained ministry.
Following the benediction those on the stage recessed in the order listed; an acolyte with the cross, the
Board of Ordained Ministry, those commissioned, those ordained, those having their orders recognized,
Rev. Brian Kemp-Schlemmer, an acolyte with the Bible, and Bishop Hoshibata.

PLENARY SESSION 5
Sunday, June 18, 2017
8:30 a.m.–12:00 p.m.
Renaissance Glendale Hotel & Spa, Media Center

Call to Order
Bishop Hoshibata called the session to order with prayer at 8:31 a.m.

Monitoring Report
Diana Volere, via Zoom, and Rev. Dr. Kristin Hansen presented the monitor’s report. Volere reminded the
Conference to use a variety of Bible translations and apologized that the version she used in her previous
report was not more inclusive. Hansen thanked the monitors for helping us become self-aware of in our
conversations and actions. She shared that we were very encouraged using words and language to build
up God’s church. Hansen offered Stars of Inclusivity to Bishop Hoshibata for calling us back to the table
of Grace again and again; to the staff who, through appointment or employment, plan for our time
together each year so that we come to this place, not in pieces, but as a whole. Hansen encouraged the
Conference to work toward greater inclusion efforts for differently-abled persons. Hansen prayed for the
Conference to experience the world as those who are different from them.

Nominations Elections
Julie Yarrow, Chair of Nominations, presented the nominees for the 2018 Committees of the Desert
Southwest Conference. The nominees were elected. Bishop Hoshibata thanked the Nomination
Committee.

Annual Conference Mission Project
Billie Fidlin, Conference Director of Outreach, shared that our mission projects extended the faithful and
generous hand of the Desert Southwest Conference to a variety of people in need. Fidlin shared that over
300 members to Annual Conference loaded their glue guns to make IV bag covers, carried furniture to
help establish a home for a refugee family new to this country, said thank you to police and firefighters
who serve in this immediate area to keep people and their property safe, sorted paper towels and more for
families who experience financial insecurity and need help with items not covered by state benefits
programs, and brought the gift of song & conversation to seniors in a care facility. She thanked the project
leaders; Lita Johnson, Mara Klein, Dave Hepburn, Barbara Lewkowitz, Rev. Louie Lyon, and all those
who participated. Fidlin shared that thanks to the generosity of the conference the team who visited the
police and fire stations was able to give multiple gift cards in addition to saving 50 gift cards to be given
to the firefighters who fought the Zion UMC fire on June 6, 2017.
Fidlin noted that our urban ministries – UMOM, TMM, Justa Center, Wesley Community Center and Golden Gate Community Center– end up serving people from all over the state of Arizona as many vulnerable people travel from rural areas to the urban centers where optimum services are available. The mission projects provided examples of ministry programming that can be duplicated in the community.

The Conference watched a video of the activities for the mission projects. Fidlin thanked the photographers and the Communications team who helped make the video possible.

**Conference Finance & Administration Recommendations**

Rev. Matt Ashley presented the Conference Finance and Administration Recommendations, item C.4.e. in the Preconference Report.

- **Recommendation No. 1–2018 apportioned Conference Budget**
  - Approved
- **Recommendation No. 2–Special Days and Causes**
  - Approved
- **Recommendation No. 3–Conference Advance and Benevolence Specials**
  - Approved
- **Recommendation No. 4–Other Recommendations**
  - Approved

Ashley thanked Randy Bowman, Conference Treasurer, and the Conference Finance staff for their support of the Conference Finance and Administration Committee.

While photos of the former Los Arcos UMC were displayed, Ashley celebrated the legacy and ministry of Los Arcos UMC and the Los Arcos United Methodist Building Corporation. Ashley shared that in 2015 the Board of the Los Arcos United Methodist Building Corporation sold the Hacienda complex; then in March 2017, they selected 14 non-profit organizations to receive grants totaling over $6,000,000. Ashley thanked John Lester, Board President, members of the board, and members of Los Arcos UMC for their legacy.

**Licenses to New Local Pastors**

Rev. Dr. Dottie Escobedo-Frank, South District Superintendent, introduced the new Licensed Local Pastors serving in the Desert Southwest Conference. The Bishop presented licenses to the following who have completed their course of study to be a local pastor: Jamie Booth (not present), Terry Kim, Stuart Salvatierra, Patricia Magyar, and Michelle Kelley. The Bishop prayed for the local pastors.

**Commission on a Way Forward**

Bishop Hoshibata introduced a video explaining that the Commission on a Way Forward is a committee appointed by the Council of Bishops to lead The United Methodist Church on a way forward. The video shared stories from members of the commission as they shared their hopes and dreams and accomplishments.

The Bishop shared that as we engaged in Holy Huddles on the Unity of the Church (17 across the Annual Conference) he discovered as we talked with one another that although we have people on all points of the theological spectrum in our congregations in the Desert Southwest Conference, by far, people were saying, “Let’s find a way to live together despite our theological difference.” The Bishop shared that as the video demonstrated, the Commission is finding that it is possible as we focus on our mission and ministry in Jesus Christ.

The Bishop shared some findings that he took away from the Holy Huddles on the Unity of the Church. People were thankful that we could even talk about such an issue with strangers they had just met. Others shared they hoped to take the conversation into their local churches. The Bishop encouraged the
Conference to have the courage to engage in conversation and shared his hopes and prayers that we will find a way to all live in the big tent, or the house with many rooms, that we believe Jesus has prepared for us as we strive to be followers of His.

The Bishop stated that begins to show how the Commission on a Way Forward is moving as they prepare to report to the Special Session of General Conference in the Spring of 2019. The Commission’s work will be concluded at that time and there may be some action that the denomination may take.

The Bishop asked the Conference to hold the Commission in prayer. He led the Conference in prayer for the members on the Commission on the Way Forward.

Holy Huddle #5 – Courageous Church: United in Hope

Rev. Dave Summers and Rev. Rob Rynders shared what it means to be united in hope. They stated that Jesus’ hope and prayer for the church is that it follows his call to participate in the building of God’s kingdom. It is not always easy to be hopeful, let alone united. God has called the church to be a beacon of hope despite the uncertainty. They added that the inability to hope is rooted in fear and division, but despite these fears and differences, we do not need to look far to see what unites us.

They shared that through communion, we unite around God’s table. We also unite around mission and service.

John Wesley knew it was ultimately God’s great love and the promise of eternal life in Jesus that could bring us together, change our hearts, and help us lean into God’s future. Wesley felt that hearts striving together in perfecting love were more important than minds united in doctrinal agreement. That would seem more consistent with the way UMC’s live our faith.

We can easily focus on our differences, but Jesus calls us to be one - to transcend all that separates us. Jesus calls us to unite in hope.

We are more easily united and one when there is trust between us. When we value relationship and collaboration we are moving closer together as God would want. Hope is grounded in courageous things. It’s not an easy path but the path God calls us on. It is the only way we get there. This is a robust hope, maybe edgy, willing to take some risks, willing to stand with others, willing to take chances that just maybe, God has a different future for us. Summers and Rynders asked that the Conference take some time to imagine what that future looks like and feels like, so that we may begin to unite together for the building of that future.

Summers and Rynders led the conference in a guided meditation about our future and our vision. Then they led the Conference in a Holy Huddle based on the questions:

“What does it feel like when your church is courageously loving like Jesus and acting for Justice? What does it feel like to you, as this is happening?”

“How do we act in the present? How do you/your church come together and live into this hope together so it can begin to happen, so your church can move in this direction?”
"How will you help the leaders in your church experience what you just experienced and share it when
get back?"

They encouraged the Conference to share this experience with their churches at home and to let it unite
them.

**Point of Privilege**

Rev. Jessica Goad, member if the Convergence Team thanked Rev. Rob Rynders and Rev. Beth
Rambikur who were not members of the Convergence Team but stepped in to assist with the Holy
Huddles. Goad also thanked the District Superintendents who are not members of the Team; Rev. N.
Susan Brims (East District), Rev. Dr. Dottie Escobedo-Frank (South District), and Rev. Neil Leftwich
(West District) for their work with the Team and the Holy Huddles they brought to the Conference. Goad
acknowledged Rev. Sharon Ragland, member of the Convergence Team who was not able to be at Annual
Conference.

Bishop Hoshibata thanked the Conference for their work in the Holy Huddles at this session of Annual
Conference. The Bishop indicated that the Conference input would be used as we to move forward in to
Phase Two. The second phase will take the vision and develop ways to help connect with local churches.
The Bishop shared that our vision is unique to the Desert Southwest Conference. Phase Two will
coordinate with opportunities in the Conference and beyond to create ways to inspire leaders in local
church to implement the vision in the local churches. The Bishop announced that Laurie Lineberry, Paul
Browning, Jerry McGuire, Dee Hicks, Nan Lawson, Patty Simon, Rev. Beth Rambikur, Rev. Paul Cho,
Rev. N. Susan Brims, Rev. Khalif Smith, Rev. Jennifer Lambert, Rev. Tony Dawson, Rev. Rick Casebolt,

The Bishop introduced Dr. Jeffery Kuan, President, Claremont School of Theology. Kuan expressed
appreciation to be at the Conference. He was especially pleased during the Ordination to see the growth.
Kuan reported that the 2016 entering class was the largest in 35 years; in 2017 Claremont had the largest
graduation class ever, and the number of United Methodists attending Claremont has grown by 50%.
Kuan shared that Claremont School of Theology has some challenges and decisions to make to help
Claremont to continue to be a school of theology meeting the needs of the church. Kuan concluded by
thanking those from the Conference who served on Claremont’s Board of Trustees; Bishop Hoshibata;
Marilee Clark, Conference Chancellor; Rev. Dan Hurlbert; and Rev. Dr. Dottie Escobedo-Frank.

**Pension and Health Benefits**

Pastor Bob Klein, Chair of the Board of Pension and Health Benefits, reviewed the Pension and Health
Benefit report in the Preconference Journal. Klein highlighted that the liability for the health insurance
benefits for our retired clergy and their spouses is now fully funded!

The board again recommended continuance of the HealthFlex Exchange program for 2018 with a
premium rate increase of 4%. The Board recommended that the Conference pay 4% more, the churches
pay 4% more, and the participants (if their church is not covering those costs for them) pay 4% more. In
2018, each church will be billed a blended rate of $14,676. Klein stated that the Board will offer financial
assistance grants of up to $1,165 for participants paying their portion of health insurance premiums.

Klein reported that the Comprehensive Benefit Funding Plan was submitted and approved by Wespath.
This Funding Plan addresses the financial viability and sustainability of all pension, health insurance, and
other benefit plans for our conference. The Plan was approved by the Conference Board on May 18th and will be included in the 2017 Journal. The board is recommending churches be billed 13% of compensation for clergy pensions.

Klein thanked Barbara Hora, Conference Liaison to Wespath for 20 years, for her knowledge and insight. Hora retired in May 2017. Klein announced Wespath’s Clergy Benefits Academy will be held August 7-9, 2017 in Tempe, Arizona. He encouraged clergy of all ages to take advantage of this important opportunity and stated the Board would reimburse 75% of the early-bird registration fee.

Klein thanked Randy Bowman and Cynthia Satchel who serve as Conference staff to the Board.

Recommendation No. 1–annuity rate and past service obligation Approved
Recommendation No. 2–relating to rental/housing allowance Approved
Recommendation No. 3–relating to local church funding Approved
Recommendation No. 4–relating to HealthFlex Exchange participation Approved
Rev. Beth Rambikur, First UMC-Tucson, asked that the Pension and Health Benefits Committee consider visiting churches to help educate local church finance committees on the Conference’s process of determining rates and increases on Health Insurance. Approved

Personnel
Rev. Jim Wallasky, Chair of the Conference Personnel Committee, presented the following personnel recommendations:

Recommendation No. 1–1.5% increase in 2018 salary ranges for exempt conference employees Approved
Recommendation No. 2–1.5% increase in 2018 salary ranges for non-exempt conference employees Approved

Rev. N. Susan Brims, East District Superintendent, presented two proposed Rule Changes related to vacation. Brims shared the purpose of both proposed rule changes is to allow clergy and conference lay employees to take vacation in their first year of ministry rather than having to wait until year 2.

Rule Change D.1.d. Exempt Personnel and Clergy Vacation Approved
Rule Change D.1.e. Non-Exempt Personnel and Clergy Vacation Approved

Moment of Personal Privilege
Rev. Melissa Rynders, Sanctuary UMC, thanked the childcare staff for their support of Annual Conference.

Acceptance of Reports
Rev. Nancy Cushman, Conference Secretary, moved that all written reports that have appeared in the Preconference Journal on the Guidebook App, the reports presented during this Annual Conference, and the Daily Proceedings with corrections be adopted. Approved

Cushman directed the Conference to the Reporting Guide to Take Information Back to Your Church in the Preconference Reports on the Guidebook App. She encouraged the Conference to use the guide to help in planning how they would report to their church. Cushman reported the attendance at this Annual
Conference was 226 clergy members, 320 lay members, and 137 guests for a total of 546 persons. She shared some additional statistics regarding the attendance at the Annual Conference.

Acknowledgements
Cushman recognized the Sessions Committee, the Conference Secretary Staff, and the Conference Staff. Cushman thanked fathers, and those who act like fathers. She thanked Cynthia Satchel, Christina Dillabough, Carla Whitmire, and Julie O’Neal for their hard work during the Annual Conference. She thanked the Conference for their prayers for the family from her church who lost their son in London. He was found and is safe. Cushman reminded the Conference that Rev. Jimelvia Pettiford Martin asked that we care for the homeless during the coming week of record heat. She encouraged churches to partner with local agencies to address the needs. Factsheets from the Maricopa Association of Governments and the City of Phoenix related to Heat Relief had been added to the Guidebook App under the Documents and Procedures section under Frequently Asking Question. She encouraged churches outside the area to connect with their own local governments.

She thanked the Bishop for his grace-filled leadership. Cushman directed the Conference to the evaluation survey online. Cushman shared that all the communion bread in the closing worship is gluten free.

Cushman reminded the Conference of a couple deadlines. Minutes will be posted on the Conference website and the Conference has 15 days to submit corrections to her, NCushman@dscumc.org. She also reminded the Conference that items for the 2017 Journal were to be submitted to Cynthia Satchel, Csatchel@dscumc.org, no later than July 1, 2017.

Invitation to Annual Conference 2018
The Bishop invited Rev. Neil Leftwich and Rev. N. Susan Brims to the stage. Leftwich invited the Conference to the next year’s Annual Conference on June 14-17, 2018 at the Renaissance Glendale Hotel & Spa. Brims announced that the 2019-2022 Annual Conferences would be in Mesa, Arizona.

The Bishop thanked the Conference Parliamentarian Marilee Miller Clark, Agenda Chair Rev. Ann Thomas, Conference Secretary Rev. Nancy Cushman, and Conference Lay Leader Laurie Lineberry. The Bishop also thanked Julie O’Neal, Administrative Assistant to the Bishop, and the Conference Staff including the District Superintendents. He thanked Rev. Dr. Dottie Escobedo-Frank for her service as South District Superintendent and Rev. Anthony Tang for his service as the Director of Connectional Ministries.

Closing Motions
Cushman moved that this 33rd Session of the Desert Southwest Annual Conference stand adjourned following closing worship. Approved

A SERVICE OF SENDING FORTH
Bishop Hoshibata preaching
Theme: Hope

The District Superintendents; Rev. Dr. Dottie Escobedo-Frank, Rev. Dan Morley, Rev. Neil Leftwich, and Rev. N. Susan Brims, with Rev. Mark Conrad and Kate Lower led the worship service. The scripture was Colossians 1:1-10. Bishop Hoshibata’s message challenged the Conference to be Colossian Christians, to hear God’s call to recapture a love for all persons. The Bishop shared that God is calling us
to be “A Courageous Church: Loving Like Jesus, Acting for Justice, United in Hope.” The Bishop shared his prayer for the Conference from Colossians 1) that we would pray without ceasing; 2) that we would lead lives worthy of God; 3) that we would bear fruit; and 4) that we would pray to grow in our knowledge of God.

The Bishop made a commitment to lift up the churches, pastors, and members of Desert Southwest Annual Conference in his personal prayers. He asked that the members covenant to bring God’s vision to fruition in the Conference. Bishop asked the ushers to distribute crosses donated by Vicky Lerdahl. Each person received a commitment card and two wooden crosses from the Holy Land made from pruned olive trees. One of the crosses is for the person, the other is to be shared in their local church. The Bishop led the Conference in a covenant to intentionally and actively be a part of future conversations and to continually use the Vision Statement in their daily prayers for their church, this Annual Conference, and their personal discipleship.

The offering was taken to benefit the After-School Program at Winslow UMC. Bishop Hoshibata led the Conference in the sacrament of communion. A blessing was offered after communion, followed by the benediction.

The 33rd Session of the Desert Southwest Annual Conference was adjourned following worship at 12:08 p.m.