



# Campaign Update



Campaign goal  
**\$20 million**

Raised to date  
**\$13.4 million**

Percentage  
of goal raised **67%**

*Retired clergy and surviving spouses  
in Liberia.*

There are many ways you can continue to support the CCPI campaign:

- Talk to your friends in the United Methodist community and share CCPI's story.
- Host a CCPI reception for friends or church members.
- Visit the CCPI Web site to download materials, or contact the CCPI office to request materials to share with those you know in other churches and conferences.
- Encourage interested individuals to support the campaign.
- Consider increasing your support.

## \$13.4 Million Pledged to CCPI Campaign

The Central Conference Pension Initiative (CCPI) recently reached an important milestone—pledges and gifts of \$13.4 million—more than half of the amount needed to reach our minimum \$20 million goal. As we receive these funds, they are held and invested under our socially responsible guidelines by the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits. The CCPI campaign has received donations and pledges from individuals, local churches, general agencies, annual conferences, foundations and conference boards of pensions.

“The excitement surrounding the campaign can be demonstrated by the generosity of those who have made contributions,” says Dan O’Neill, managing director for CCPI. The Detroit Conference Board of Pensions, for example, made a recommendation to their annual conference to make a gift of \$1 million to CCPI, but the enthusiasm of the members was overwhelming—they voted to approve a \$2 million gift! Not to be outdone, the West Ohio Conference Board of Pensions matched the Detroit pledge. Other annual conferences, led by clergy and churches, are also in the process of considering their own levels of CCPI support.

In addition, several annual conferences have invited CCPI staff to work with their local churches to raise pledges and donations. *(see Fund-Raising on page 2)*



GENERAL BOARD OF PENSION AND HEALTH BENEFITS  
OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Caring For Those Who Serve

# Donor Spotlight

## Milford United Methodist Church

Milford UMC has 350 members and serves a small farming community near Lincoln, Nebraska. Milford UMC has supported CCPI in a big way. In less than a year, the church and its members have contributed nearly \$35,000 in support of central conference retirees.

The campaign began with a reception hosted by The Reverend Michael Curd and has continued with large gifts from individuals, special offerings and gifts from the Evangelism and Outreach Committee. The outpouring of support from Milford UMC has been inspiring and would not be possible without the tremendous dedication the church has had to missions over the years.

When asked how a small community is able to make such a large impact, Rev. Curd replied, "The people of Milford UMC love God and take very seriously the ministry of outreach to persons at home and around the world who are in need. They are willing to redistribute their own 'wealth' to ensure justice, making the ministry of the UMC global and ensuring parity in clergy retirement."

Thank you, Milford UMC!

## Fund-Raising *(continued from page 1)*



With the help of the CCPI office, each conference has created a customized fund-raising plan to fit its circumstances. In the coming months, we will begin working with several additional conferences. In addition to the Detroit and West Ohio Conferences, we would like to thank the following conferences that have already contributed nearly \$1 million in pledges from their churches:

- Alabama-West Florida
- Central Texas
- Indiana
- Nebraska
- North Alabama
- Northern Illinois

We are grateful for the generosity from across the denomination. With your assistance, we expect to exceed our original goal of a minimum of \$20 million, providing a better future for those who serve in the central conferences.

## Enjoying Retirement

### *A Message from our Campaign Chair*

*Dear Friends:*

I know I speak for the entire Central Conference Pension Initiative committee in saying thank you for your support of our campaign. As you know, CCPI is meant to provide urgently needed retirement support to central conference clergy. Our progress to date shows that we are on the path to success—your investment is helping us provide security for clergy in the central conferences.

I retired with confidence, knowing that my pension will allow me to spend more time with my family, travel, relax and enjoy life in general. Although I have looked forward to this time, I am troubled by the challenges facing my peers in the central conferences who also are facing retirement. For many of them, retirement just means that they will need to find a new way to provide for themselves and their families—by farming, running home businesses or subsisting on the meager contributions that their local church may occasionally provide. Based on the stories I've been told, their retirement is filled with struggle rather than enjoyment.

Again, thank you so much for helping to meet the urgent need of our brothers and sisters in Christ around the world by choosing to support CCPI. Your commitment and support are creating a more just and hopeful world.

With many blessings,  
*Bishop Ben R. Chamness*

*The people of the Central Texas Conference recognized Bishop Chamness by making more than \$300,000 in contributions to CCPI in his honor upon his retirement.*

## Your Support Is Changing Lives Across the Globe

### *An Update on the Liberia Pilot Project*

In January 2007, retired clergy or their surviving spouses in Liberia began receiving a quarterly pension as part of a pilot pension project. The pension amount is determined on a scale according to clergy status at retirement. Distribution is difficult and requires local cooperation, but benefit amounts



released to date have been documented through written receipts, ensuring the appropriate pension funds have been delivered to the intended recipients.

The Reverend Paul Dirdak helps administer and track central conference pension distribution. Paul gained valuable information while visiting Liberia for a process review in early 2008. The review provided assurances that funds are being distributed properly, and that

distribution time has decreased significantly during 2007—in short, the system is constantly improving. A key to the success of the program to date has been the active participation of the annual conference in Liberia. Conference leaders maintain and update the list of retired clergy and surviving spouses and manage the distribution of funds. In addition, some clergy and their local churches are starting to provide financial support to the future of the pension program through scheduled contributions.

## Mozambique Retirees Set to Begin Pension Program

CCPI's second pilot project is scheduled to begin on January 1, 2009, in Mozambique. To date, there have been four on-site meetings in Mozambique focused on defining the country's pension needs and creating a plan to address them. Coordination of local church contributions, the government's social security system and funding from CCPI is now almost complete.

## Donor Spotlight

### Will and Dianne Green

The CCPI campaign celebrated an exciting start with a leadership gift of \$1 million from Will and Dianne Green, members of Highland Park United Methodist Church in Dallas. In making their gift, the Greens remarked, "We are very grateful to have the opportunity to make this gift in support of the retired clergy and surviving spouses in the central conferences. These leaders in our Church are very much in need of our help." The gift from the Greens brought the campaign to a new level by providing momentum and setting the bar for future gifts.

Join us in thanking  
Will and Dianne Green!



The CCPI campaign would not be possible without the time and energy of our dedicated committee. The committee is composed of clergy and laity from each jurisdiction. In addition to attending meetings, helping solicit major gifts, providing feedback and welcoming CCPI into their churches and conferences—100% of the members have made a financial gift to the campaign. *Thank you* to all our hard-working committee members!

**Rev. Dr. Brian K. Bauknight**  
*Northeastern Jurisdiction*  
**Neal Berte, Ed.D**  
*Southeastern Jurisdiction*  
**Barbara Boigegrain**  
*General Secretary, General Board of Pension and Health Benefits*  
**Rev. Dr. Timothy K. Bruster**  
*South Central Jurisdiction*  
**Bishop Ben R. Chamness**  
*South Central Jurisdiction*

**R. Earl Cox III**  
*South Central Jurisdiction*  
**Bishop Cal McConnell**  
*Western Jurisdiction*  
**Rev. Paul Dirdak**  
*Director of Central Conference Pension Administration*  
**William Green, PhD**  
*Northeastern Jurisdiction*  
**Larry Hollon**  
*General Secretary, United Methodist Communications*

**Rev. Dr. J. Gorman Houston**  
*Southeastern Jurisdiction*  
**Emmy Lou John**  
*North Central Jurisdiction*  
**Bishop Linda Lee**  
*North Central Jurisdiction*  
**Rev. Greg McGarvey**  
*North Central Jurisdiction*  
**Dan O'Neill**  
*Managing Director, Central Conference Pensions, General Board of Pension and Health Benefits*

**Bishop Ann Brookshire Sherer**  
*South Central Jurisdiction*  
**Bishop B. Michael Watson**  
*Southeastern Jurisdiction*  
**Bishop Peter D. Weaver**  
*Northeastern Jurisdiction*  
**Rev. Dr. J. Edsel White**  
*Western Jurisdiction*

## Q&A with the CCPI Office

*How was the distribution process in Liberia evaluated?*

The pension distribution process in Liberia requires that each of the 19 districts distributes quarterly payments to nearly 500 retirees and surviving spouses.

To begin the process review, we examined the complexities of transferring funds from our bank in the United States to the Liberian Bank for Reconstruction and Development—the bank that the annual conference has used for some time. Each district's receipt book was then examined to check for dated signatures from all recipients for every quarter. We discovered that dating signatures is a new idea within some of the cultures represented in Liberia. When we explained the importance of

“on-time” pension payment delivery and the use of dates to monitor delivery time effectiveness, the participants readily saw the merits of changing their lifelong behavior of not dating signatures.

Finally, we calculated a representative, random sample of all recipients, and we traveled throughout the country to interview the people identified in that sample. We located and interviewed more than half of these individuals. Destroyed bridges, impassable roads and the unseasonable timing of the review prevented us from making direct contact with some recipients. A goal of future reviews is to improve this process by holding the review during a different season of the year and allowing more time to overcome travel obstacles.

*What were the findings from the review in Liberia?*

The Liberia Board of Pensions' first process review allowed us to improve the bank transfer process and identify the need for educating central conference employees about the dated-signatures requirement. For 2008, we changed the workflow for the pension office and the district superintendents and remedied weaknesses in the system.

The Liberia review also showed steady improvement in pension arrival time. During 2007, “on-time arrival” of pension payments improved from 60 days to 37 days. On-time arrival represents the average number of days that it takes funds to leave the investment account in Evanston and arrive in the hands of the recipient—a Liberian United Methodist retiree or surviving spouse.

*Can you share some examples of people who have benefited from these pensions?*

*The Reverend Moses Abenige* reports that 2007 was much better for him than previous years—thanks to the new pension program. “I put my grandchildren in school, and all of us were able to eat good food,” he says. “I have great hope for tomorrow. My pension allowed me to go to the doctor. The outpatient visit and the medicine cost me \$34 U.S. dollars, and my pension is \$55 per quarter. But I took the medicine and got better. Before, we simply would not have gone to the doctor, and our sickness either would have gotten better or gotten worse.”

*The Reverend Nyan Gami Zuaggle* says, “My wife and I support our grandchildren and great-

grandchildren. I am 90 years old. I teach Sunday School, and help out in other ways at church. With my pension, I will be able to make my tithes to my church. I think that a pension helps us in our evangelism; it helps me and others like me to continue bringing people to church far beyond our working years.”

*The Reverend Barbor Gbolso* says, “I was born in 1930. I am grateful for all of God's blessings. I will always pray that tomorrow will be better. My pension helped me go to the hospital and educate my grandchildren. I do not have a house. I will use some of my pension to pay for building materials. When I have enough, I will get help to build a small house.”

### Questions? Interested in Helping?

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