

In other action, members:

- heard the Lay Leader's Address given by Mrs. Gloria Morgan as she highlighted the ways laity are serving their neighbors in each district and spreading the love of Christ. "South Georgia United Methodists are alive together in Christ and are telling our story," she said.
- heard an inspiring sermon by Bishop James Swanson, episcopal leader of the Mississippi area, during the Opening Worship Service. Bishop Swanson reminded us that, "There is no togetherness without the power and presence of the Holy Spirit. We can only be together and alive through the Holy Spirit."
- heard a moving message from Bishop B. Michael Watson in the Memorial Service as we remembered those who have gone before us. "Those we'll name have outrun us to that great homecoming. We can be grateful that God has got them. Just like he has us."
- collected nearly \$25,000 for Disaster Response ministry.
- recognized Statesboro First as the church with the largest net gain in membership, Centerville (Early Co.) as having the best ratio of professions of faith, and St. Luke (Columbus) with the largest number of professions of faith.
- recognized St. Luke (Columbus) as giving the highest total amount to missions and Danville as the highest per capita given to missions.
- honored Rev. Matt Hearn, pastor of Gateway Pooler, and Mrs. Teri Nave, CFO at Harvest in Byron, with the Harry Denman Evangelism Awards.
- supported the Conference's local mission agencies, donating toiletries, school supplies, etc. to Magnolia Manor, the Methodist Children's Home, Open Door Community Center, Vashti, Wesley Community Centers and Wesley Glen.
- approved two resolutions: the first, a "Resolution in support of a Coordinated Action on Behalf of Undocumented Neighbors," was written and submitted by South Georgia Hispanic pastors and allies. It calls on the presiding bishop to form a task force to develop a strategy to educate clergy and laity about the history of immigration and human and civil rights concerning undocumented members of society and to encourage South Georgia United Methodists to engage in works of piety and mercy towards their undocumented neighbors. The second resolution approved, the "Multiculturalism Taskforce Resolution," resolves that the bishop appoint a diverse task force to consider the implications of multiculturalism education.
- voted on five constitutional amendments.
- approved a \$10,662,813 million budget for mission & ministry for 2018.

 The *South Georgia* Conference
of The United Methodist Church

2017

South Georgia Annual Conference Session

June 4-7
Jekyll Island, Georgia



www.sgaumc.org

2017 South Georgia Annual Conference Session “Alive Together in Christ”

Worship Leadership

Along with Bishop R. Lawson Bryan who preached the Ordination & Commissioning Service, worship leadership was provided by Bishop James Swanson from the Mississippi Area who preached at the Opening Service, and Bishop B. Michael Watson, Ecumenical Officer for the Council of Bishops, in the Memorial Service.

Service of Ordination and Commissioning

During a Service of Ordination and Commissioning June 5, two people were ordained as Full Conference Members (Elders):

Jonathan Fitts Fuller

James Clayton Varnell

Four people were commissioned as provisional elders:

Gerald Ray Akin, Jr.
John Pierce Grantham

Eric Kyle Mayle
Scott Dozier Stanfill

Retirement Recognition

Clergy were recognized during a retirement recognition service:

Larry Bird
Dwight Bishop
Don Black
Andy Brownley
Mark Carter
Roland Fall
Rick Holt
John Irwin
David Johnson
Wesley Kaylor

Bill Lee
Jim McIlrath
Cecile Mitchell
Randy Nease
Joyce Payne
Leigh Ann Raynor
Woody Roberts
Jennifer Sherling
Kenneth West

Fifty Years in Ministry

Clergy recognized for serving fifty years in ministry were: Jack G. Atkinson, Richard G. Aultmann, Roy L. Dial, C. Grayton Helms, Ronnie O. Howell, and Ronnie Wills

Service of Remembrance

Thirty-six clergy and clergy spouses who died in the past year were remembered during a Memorial Service on Tuesday afternoon.

A complete list of the 2017-2018 Clergy Appointments as well as full coverage of the 2017 Annual Conference Session can be found at www.sgaumc.org.

Alive Together in Christ

The Jekyll Island Convention Center was filled with red as the South Georgia Annual Conference celebrated Pentecost and convened for its 151st session Sunday, June 4.

Meeting under the theme “Alive Together in Christ,” this year’s Annual Conference session was held June 4 through June 7 at the new, oceanfront locale.

Beautiful views, ocean breezes, and a new facility gave the conference a casual, relaxed, family friendly atmosphere.

Bishop R. Lawson Bryan presided over his first annual conference session since becoming South Georgia’s episcopal leader.

During his episcopal address on Monday afternoon, Bishop Bryan introduced Appreciative Inquiry, which focuses on strengths, alignment, and being alive together in Christ.

“We are alive together in Christ,” Bishop Bryan said. “The more we know about that the more we can have it with others.”

The “Alive Together in Christ” theme was woven throughout the Annual Conference session as Dr. Lovett Weems, Distinguished Professor of Christian Leadership at Wesley Theological Seminary, taught three sessions based on his book, “Overflow: Increase Worship Attendance and Bear More Fruit.” Each of the sessions were geared toward helping the conference achieve its goal of increasing average worship attendance by 10 percent.

Bishop Bryan presented attendees with a “Vital Signs for Healthy Congregations Assessment Tool” that can be used for personal reflection as well as direction for critical conversations within local congregations. More tools can be found at www.sgaumc.org/vitalsigns.

One highlight of this year’s Annual Conference session were the Vital Signs moments. These brief, interactive snapshots of ministries showed the various ways South Georgia agencies, ministries, and people are Alive Together in Christ.

While some used video to tell their story, others featured quick question-and-answer sessions, and others told their stories through the giving of awards, all showcased the exciting and transformative work that’s being done through South Georgia clergy and laity.