

FLORIDA CONFERENCE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The Board of Trustees continues to oversee the property entrusted to the Conference throughout Florida, including the Conference Center, Episcopal residence, Camp and Retreat Center properties, Campus Ministry properties, mission properties and closed and abandoned local church properties. The Board of Trustees oversee approximately seventy properties with total book value of approximately \$56,000,000.

The Conference Center continues to require maintenance and repairs typical of a property its age. The Center was reopened to the employees who work at the Conference Center and the public in early 2022. The Board of Trustees owns this property jointly with the Florida United Methodist Foundation and leases space to the United Methodist Connectional Federal Credit Union.

The Annual Conference approved in 2021 for the Board of Trustees to market the Episcopal residence located in Lakeland, FL for sale. The Episcopal residence did sell in October 2021. The proceeds from the sale of the parsonage have been invested and the Bishop serving the Florida Conference is receiving a housing allowance.

The Board of Trustees executed an interest only note from the Florida United Methodist Foundation in 2019 for the purpose of buying and renovating property on the campus of Florida A&M University to serve as a Wesley Foundation. Construction of the Wesley Foundation is nearly complete. It is anticipated that the Foundation will open before the beginning of the fall 2022 school term.

With the approval of the Annual Conference in 2015 the Trustees coordinate all property management and transactions dealing with closed or abandoned local church property. To aid in this process the Trustees have hired a property management firm that coordinates ongoing maintenance and provides expert guidance on future use for each property. The Trustees review each property for best use in consultation with the Cabinet, which can include, but is not limited to transfer to another chartered church, use as a district mission, sale, lease, or use for a new church start. Since the last Annual Conference, the Trustees sold the following properties:

Kathleen UMC and Parsonage, Lakeland, FL – 6/30/21
Trinity UMC and Parsonage, Lighthouse Pointe, FL – 7/31/21
Springhead UMC and Parsonage, Plant City, FL – 9/30/21
Village UMC and Parsonage, North Lauderdale, FL – 11/30/21
Ellenton UMC Parsonage, Parrish, FL – 2/17/22
Palm Bay UMC Parsonage, Palm Bay, FL – 3/22/22

At the 2020 Annual Conference, the Board of Trustees received approval by the Annual Conference to sell all, or portions of Riverside Camp and Retreat Center if the Board of Camps and Retreat Ministries (“BCRM”) determined any such sale to be in the best interest of the Florida Annual Conference. After additional discernment and exploration, BCRM voted to allow the Board of Trustees to market the property for sale. Riverside

Camp and Retreat Center was placed on the market in May 2021 and a sale was closed on February 17, 2022. The proceeds from the sale of Riverside Camp and Retreat Center have been placed in the reserve funds of the BCRM for future deferred maintenance needs at the Warren W. Willis Camp and Conference Center.

The Board of Trustees oversees the work of the Trustee Investment Committee which works with the different Conference Committees to identify each committee's investment objectives and recommend the investment vehicles to achieve these objectives. The total investments under the oversight of the Investment Committee were approximately \$167,000,000 as of December 31, 2021. Most of these funds are held to fund future liabilities related to the Conference's pension obligations, to fund potential future liabilities of its self-funded Ministry Protection program, and to support new ministry initiatives at local churches and district missions. Vernon Swartsel has served as chairperson of the Investment Committee since its formation in 2015. Beginning on July 1, Mickey Wilson will begin serving as chairperson of the Investment Committee.

In January, 2022, the United Methodist Church negotiated a tentative \$30 million settlement with the Boy Scouts of America in connection with the Boy Scouts Bankruptcy Reorganization Plan that was filed in response to claims made against the Boy Scouts related to sexual abuse. If the Bankruptcy Court approves the Reorganization Plan, the Florida Conference will contribute \$1,898,876 toward the \$30 million settlement. This contribution was approved by the Conference Board of Trustees, the Cabinet of the Florida Conference, the Council on Finance and Administration and the Ministry Protection Committee. The Florida Conference has also made a commitment to the healing of survivors of abuse, education and prevention that seeks to remediate past wrongs and prevent future recurrences of sexual abuse.

Another important work of the Board of Trustees is locating and resolving ownership issues surrounding abandoned cemeteries and cemeteries and memorial gardens connected to closed United Methodist churches.

In 2017, the Annual Conference voted to close Bayshore United Methodist Church in Tampa, FL. After the Annual Conference voted to close Bayshore UMC, the Board of Trustees requested that the former trustees of Bayshore honor the trust clause and transfer the property to the Annual Conference Trustees. The former trustees of Bayshore have not transferred the property to the Annual Conference Trustees. In 2018 the Conference Board of Trustees filed a lawsuit against Bayshore United Methodist Church, Inc. and Bayshore Christian School, Inc. requesting that title to the church property be transferred to the Conference Board of Trustees. In early 2021 the court gave possession of the two former parsonages of Bayshore UMC to the Conference Board of Trustees. Litigation related to the church and school campus is ongoing.

Respectfully submitted,

Florida Conference Board of Trustees