

2019 Annual Conference Report

- The California-Pacific Conference is a regional body of The United Methodist Church, made up of some 50,000 members in almost 350 local churches throughout Southern California, parts of Central California, Hawaii, the Pacific Islands, Guam and Saipan. The nickname for our conference is Cal-Pac.
- The Conference is led by Bishop Grant Hagiya'
- The term Annual Conference has more than one meaning; it can also mean the annual gathering at the University of Redlands of all the clergy plus an equal number of laity representing the churches.
- Basic purpose: Ordain new pastors, acknowledge retiring pastors, worship together, report on accomplishments of the prior year, set budgets and salaries for coming year; consider and establish direction, legislation and rules for the conference; every four years-- and this year-- elect lay and clergy delegates to jurisdictional and general conferences. Our work is accomplished in plenary and small groups. About 1200 representatives attended. This year the conference extensively discussed the changes and possible responses to the actions of the February 2019 Special Called General Conference. And the weather was mild!
- The theme was "I See a New Church," focusing on the many ways we as a Church are in a wilderness and are being led by God out of it. Bishop Hagiya shared a vision of a United Methodist Church that is "global in mission and contextual in governance," a vision that comes from Bishop Hagiya's conviction that the California-Pacific Conference's example of staying with one another within our diversity is one that can lead the denomination into a bright future. Bishop Hagiya's assignment for all churches was for each church's vision of a new church to be reported at each church's Charge Conference which would all then be sent to the Conference to be shared at Annual Conference 2020.
- There were 10 ordinations and commissionings, 14 retirements.
- The annual conference budget was reduced by \$1.4 million. An alternative apportionment plan has been provided that allows

congregations to support missions which will do no harm. Cal Hts had not received the new version of the apportionment bill.

- 8 churches were approved for discontinuance: Piru, Woodland Hills First, Valley Central Chatsworth, La Tijera, Big Bear Lake, Arlington Riverside, Desert Hot Springs, Barstow. Bowen and Wesley churches in Los Angeles were approved for a merger and will be called Heritage UMC.
- Voting for delegates to General and Jurisdictional conferences was accomplished with hand-held electronic devices, a new method for our conference which provided for nearly instantaneous results. There were also a couple of informal polls taken of the assembly with the hand-held devices. One showed that the majority of the members are over the age of 50. Another poll and subsequent vote showed that the majority disagree with the legislation of the February General Conference that excludes LGBTQ persons from the clergy and imposes harsh penalties for certain violations by pastors and bishops. Another poll showed that most churches are still considering what path to take.
- Denyse Barnes, associate pastor at Hollywood UMC is the new LGBTQIA+ Advocacy Coordinator. She is assembling a task force to hold listening sessions at churches throughout the conference.
- Cal-Pac and most churches are aware that a major reorganization within the denomination may take place. And with that awareness, the conference is making necessary contingency plans.
- For further information see the website: www.calpacumc.org