

SOMETHING BIGGER THAN OURSELVES
(A Statement from The Appointive Cabinet)

We, who are called United Methodists, come together as partners with God and each other claiming a shared mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ in fields that are both local, regional, and global. With our support through apportioned and designated giving, local churches are part of something bigger than themselves.

Not one congregation, no matter how large, can build health clinics that are reaching thousands of women and children. It takes an entire United Methodist connection to support a hundred health workers, over a thousand missionaries, advocates for women and children, ministries that address the needs of refugees and immigrants, and support for creating new faith communities for new people.

By combining different portions of gifts into a larger amount of money and services, we have been able to effect change around the world where the poor, the outcasts, the lost, the immigrants, the sick, the wounded, and the hurting are finding their way to the abundant love of God and love of their neighbors.

Isn't this who we are as United Methodist people? Should we not continue to participate in our generosity to God and to God's world together? Are we going to deprive ourselves of the very same thing that has given us joy in life?

With our diverse lives and perspectives connected in faith, each member and each local church shares in the blessings and burdens of attending to God's creation. We are living in-the-midst of the tensions that come with our well-celebrated DNA of grace-filled diversity.

Unfortunately, there are clergy, laity, and local churches who are finding themselves naming theological differences and Biblical interpretations as foundational to the perspective on apportioned giving. Our work together is shaped by the mandate of the Gospel to love God and love our neighbors as we love ourselves.

One of the challenges we are facing is the "mistrust" from our clergy, laity, and congregations who are needing a better way of communicating how apportionments are spent and a greater accountability from those who are entrusted to make decisions on priorities, ministries, and funding. Are we not all co-workers of God in the fields? Let us come together in the presence of God's Spirit and grace, at all levels, to find a better way to celebrate and account for the ministries funded by our apportioned giving!

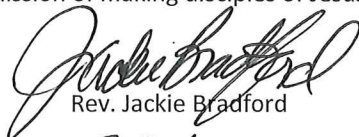
We celebrate what United Methodists have contributed to God's work in the world. Our practice of apportioned giving has experienced some challenges all through the years and more so now in these present times. It is needing our attention as we move into the future.

Much of what we are being called to do for the sake of our mission is dependent upon our connected witness and giving. At the same time, local churches live with declining populations in rural communities and declining membership in congregations. Additionally, there are generational shifts in perception of and involvement with the church.

In our rapidly changing reality, will our hearts decide to put aside the conviction that "God has the power to provide us with more than enough of every kind of grace and that we have everything we need always and in everything to provide more than enough for every kind of good work" (2 Corinthians 9:8 CEB)?

As the Appointive Cabinet, we renew our commitment to support and interpret our shared mission through apportionments. Our hope is for pastors and congregations to renew their commitment to support apportionments with prayers, presence, gifts, service, and witness for the sake of our mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.


Rev. Terra Amundson


Rev. Jackie Bradford


Rev. Thomas Carver

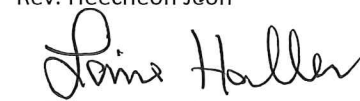

Rev. Lilian Gallo Seagren


Rev. Harlan Gillespie


Rev. Heecheon Jeon


Rev. Kiboko Kiboko


Rev. Paul Smith


Bishop Laurie Haller