

## 2017\_18 General Policies

1. The General Conference has ordered these special offerings (2016 *Book of Discipline*, para. 263):
  - HUMAN RELATIONS DAY** -- preferably on the Sunday before Martin Luther King, Jr's Birthday
  - UMCOR SUNDAY (formerly ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING)** -- preferably on the fourth Sunday of Lent
  - WORLD COMMUNION SUNDAY** -- preferably on the first Sunday of October (The local church also shall remit such portion of the Communion offering received at other observances of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper as the local church may designate.)
  - UNITED METHODIST STUDENT DAY** -- preferably on the last Sunday in November
  - PEACE WITH JUSTICE SUNDAY** -- preferably on the first Sunday after Pentecost (The offering goes to Peace with Justice Ministries with fifty percent (50%) staying in the Annual Conference.)
  - NATIVE AMERICAN AWARENESS SUNDAY** -- preferably on the third Sunday of Easter (Fifty percent (50%) of the offering will remain in the Annual Conference to develop and strengthen Native American ministries.)
2. Local Churches are asked to accept the following goals in addition to apportioned giving:
  - \$2.00** per member for the support of the Rocky Mountain College chaplaincy
  - \$2.00** per member for Campus Ministry
  - \$2.00** per member for Blackfeet United Methodist Parish
  - \$1.00** per member for the Congregational Development Fund
3. The following special offerings are authorized within the Yellowstone Annual Conference (2012 *Book of Discipline*, para. 265):
  - CHRISTIAN EDUCATION SUNDAY** -- Shall be observed during the month of September
  - CHRISTIAN UNITY SUNDAY** -- Third Sunday in January during Week of Prayer for Christian Unity (offering to go to Idaho Council of Churches, Montana Association of Christians or Wyoming Association of Churches, as appropriate)
  - YOUTH SERVICE FUND** -- Last Sunday in April
  - THE BLACKFEET PARISH SUNDAY** -- First Sunday in November
  - INTERMOUNTAIN** -- During Advent
  - DISABILITY AWARENESS SUNDAY** -- First Sunday of February
4. Local churches shall respond to emergency appeals from the denomination's General Council on Finance and Administration and the Council of Bishops (*Book of Discipline*, para.819).
5. The conference **shall list**, along with the regular Mission Shares, a "second mile" asking which is ten percent (10%) of the church's Mission Share. The asking is a voluntary contribution to the conference over and above the regular Mission Share.
6. The annual session of the Yellowstone Annual Conference shall be self-supporting.

7. It is suggested that the salaries of Assistant to the Bishop and the District Superintendents (DSs) consist of two parts: Base and Longevity.

Base: It is suggested that the base salaries for the Assistant to the Bishop, the Director of Connectional Ministries (DCM) and the District Superintendents (DSs) be set at 1.07 X the Denominational Average Compensation (DAC) projected for the budget year being considered.

Longevity: It is further suggested that, effective January 1 of each year, a salary increase of 1% of DAC be given for each full year's experience for both the DCM and the DSs, up to 8%.

All increases in salary will be approved and distributed by the Council on Finance and Administration.

8. It is suggested that the base salaries for all staff other than Assist to the Bishop/DCM/DS consist of three parts: base, longevity and merit.

Base: It is suggested that the base salaries for Conference staff other than the Director of Connectional Ministries (DCM) and the District Superintendents (DSs) be set at their prior year base salary times the increase in the Denominational Average Compensation (DAC) for the budget year being considered

Longevity: It is further suggested that, effective January 1 of each year, a salary increase of 1% be given for each full year's experience, up to 8%.

Merit: When warranted, merit increases may be considered for the staff other than DS/DCM. The standards by which they are determined may be developed by the oversight committee/supervisor for each position.

All increases in salary will be approved and distributed by the Council on Finance and Administration.

9. Local churches shall provide health insurance coverage for their full time appointed clergy and deacons through the conference health insurance program.
10. Enrollment and eligibility for the health care program shall be governed by the health plan document on file in the Conference Office.
11. The Yellowstone Conference endeavors to provide a meaningful healthcare benefit in retirement to clergy and lay employees who have faithfully served our local churches and Conference.

An annual healthcare stipend of up to \$1,200 shall be provided, beginning January 1, 2011, to all eligible members. The annual healthcare stipend will be increased by the same percentage of increase as the Past Service Rate (PSR) of the Pre-82 Pension Plan, with the first such increase beginning January, 2012.

Eligibility is determined by membership in or employment to and years of service to the Yellowstone Conference and prior participation in the Conference HealthFlex Medical and/or HealthFlex Medicare Companion plans – as specified below.

Clergy members and lay employees of the Yellowstone Conference at the time of their retirement, or those on Incapacity Leave, who become Medicare eligible, will receive the stipend on a ratio based upon years of appointive service within, or employment to, the Yellowstone Conference. The ratio will be:

Less than 5 years	=	Ineligible
5–9 years	=	\$ 352.00
10–14 years	=	\$ 703.00
15–19 years	=	\$1,054.00
20+ years	=	\$1,405.00

- Those with 30 years of service within the denomination, with the last five (5) years before retirement served under appointment within, or employment to, the Yellowstone Conference, will be funded at the 20-year ratio.
- Surviving spouses will be entitled to receive the same level stipend as the retiree until such time as they remarry.

All clergy, surviving spouses and lay employees will be responsible for 100% of their health insurance funding until they become Medicare eligible.

12. Clergy and lay employees, who participate in the active HealthFlex insurance plan, will contribute \$50.00 per month towards their HealthFlex premium effective January 1, 2010.
13. Those included in the budget for payments of health insurance will be: Assistant to the Bishop, District Superintendents, and other conference staff working 40 hours a week and have reached age 18 and the Blackfeet Parish Pastor. Clergy on first year Leave of Absence, clergy on first year of Sabbatical Leave and clergy on Incapacity.
14. Also included in the budget will be CRSP/ CPP for the Blackfeet Parish pastor, CRSP-DB for clergy on extended active duty (Reserve and National Guard) and CRSP-DB for clergy on Incapacity.
15. The Yellowstone Conference is authorized to establish a conference endowment fund.

16. "Conference-wide appeals" include requests for financial support to all churches in the Yellowstone Conference (2012 *Book of Discipline*, para. 614.5). Conference-wide appeals do not include organization newsletters, which include a donation envelope, or those who work with churches in a specific geographic area. This authorization will be reviewed by the Council on Finance and Administration. The following organizations and groups may make conference-wide appeals.

- Angola Partnership – Mission
- Blackfeet United Methodist Parish
- Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministry (BHECM)
- Camp on the Boulder
- Camping Committee
- Circle J Camp
- Eagles Hope Transitions
- Flathead Lake Camp
- Luccock Park Camp
- Idaho Council of Churches (Salmon/Lemhi Parish)
- Intermountain
- Montana Association of Churches
- Mountain View Social Development Center
- New Church Starts
- Rocky Mountain College
- Wyoming Association of Churches
- Yellowstone Volunteers in Mission
- Yellowstone Youth Ministries

Organizations and groups not included on the list who would like to request approval for a conference-wide appeal, must submit a request in writing to the Yellowstone Conference Council on Finance and Administration, PO Box 20335, Billings, MT 59104