

2016 Zimbabwe Partnership Report
Baltimore Washington Conference
Dr. Joseph W. Daniels, Jr. — Chair

The year 2016 was yet another year where the fruits of labor through the Zimbabwe Partnership continued to multiply. While odd-numbered years are years that the combined conferences share in holding the Pastor's School, which has now been offered on 10 occasions, the even-numbered years still find deep, substantial work done by several of our congregations and members in communities in Zimbabwe grateful for our work together. The collective work of the Baltimore-Washington Conference and the Zimbabwe Episcopal Area is an example to all for how global partnership can work in our connection to build the Kingdom of God together.

Specifically, the conference's Volunteers in Mission group continues to expand its work from helping to build sanctuaries to working with church and community entities to construct medical clinics and lay groundwork for stronger communication networks. Spearheaded by churches such as Community UMC in Crofton, Bel Air UMC in Bel Air, and others, as well as the steadfast work of people such as Charlie Moore, Jim Gourley, Sue McCann, Dave Talbot and countless others in the conference, hope and healing is being instilled in the lives of many.

Some very creative work has been done by Emory Grove UMC in Gaithersburg and Mill Creek Parish in Durwood through the leadership of the Rev. Tim Warner around the fundraising and instillation of bore holes in the center of communities in the Mutare area. These bore holes, constructed for as little as \$5,000, become wells in which communities deprived of clean water access find themselves having this lifeline re-established in their areas. Long-term support of the Ishe Anesu school in Sakubva, one of the most economically challenged areas in the country, continues through congregations such as Emory UMC in Washington, D.C.

This year will be Bishop Easterling's first occasion to travel to Zimbabwe as we celebrate the 20th year of the Zimbabwe Partnership this summer. A team of BWC leaders led by our bishop will join with Zimbabwe Episcopal Area leaders to hold the 11th Pastor's School at Africa University from July 17-21, 2017. This gathering of almost 500 clergy from across Zimbabwe provides education for pastors, many of whom cannot afford to go to seminary or are very new to the ministry as congregations continue to pop up in Zimbabwe faster than pastors can be identified and trained to go and lead them.

We really have a powerful partnership with Zimbabwe that, since 1997, continues to grow and flourish in great ways. A new covenant was established in 2015, and through it, Pastor's schools will continue and the Volunteers in Mission work will expand through churches, schools, clinics and other projects that the Holy Spirit orchestrates. The Zimbabwe Partnership is without question a great source of joy, celebration and testimony to the extensive global work of the Baltimore-Washington Conference. Our hope in the future is to have more leaders from Zimbabwe come to the BWC to equip and train our leaders with skills and talents in congregational development. The possibilities are endless. To God be the glory!