

Communications

Stories give our lives meaning, they deliver life, make us more courageous, fill us with wonder, challenge and delight us. The Communications ministry has the honor of telling the stories of the people of the Baltimore-Washington Conference. This year, that story included a transition of leadership as Bishop LaTrelle Easterling became the conference's presiding bishop. New faith communities, interesting community outreach and a renewed focus on spirituality as it is lived out in pulpits, pews and beyond, fueled much of our coverage.

The five-member staff of the Communications team inspires, informs and equips the spiritual leaders of the Baltimore-Washington Conference using a number of media, including the award-winning newspaper, the UMConnection; the website www.bwcumc.org; Facebook; Twitter; and the e-connection, a weekly electronic newsletter.

We help interpret and celebrate the connectional giving of the local churches, which this year and last enabled vital ministries to be pursued with the faithful payment of apportionments.

In the past year, during times of high usage, our Facebook presence served more than 5,700 people a day. The BWC's Facebook site is the place to go to find up-to-minute news about United Methodism and the conference, and its reach is growing. If you haven't already, please encourage your friends to Like Us on Facebook.

The past year also saw a change in the BWC's website, which underwent a redesign to increase the site's relevance and make it even more user-friendly. The new features and content continue to be a work in progress. We welcome your on-going feedback.

In other activity, we provided unparalleled print and electronic coverage of the Annual Conference Session, launched an app, renewed our efforts to work with the Stewardship team to update subscription databases, were a denominational leader in new branding efforts for annual conferences, participated in an on-street, guerilla evangelism experience during Advent with ReThink Church, and created, along with the Office for Clergy Excellence, a unique devotional.

We encourage area United Methodists to share the stories of God's love being lived out in their churches and communities. In her children's novel "The Tale of Despereaux," Kate DiCamillo writes: "Stories are light. Light is precious in a world so dark. Begin at the beginning. Tell a story. Make some light."

We owe it to God and one another to create, live and tell each other light-filled stories of meaning and hope.

Melissa Lauber
Director of Communications