

## **Board of Trustees'**

Once again, it has been a busy and productive year for the Annual Conference Board of Trustees. Our primary role is to safeguard and protect the interests and rights of the Annual Conference. While it would be difficult to summarize all the Trustee Board's work, I would like to note some of the Board's accomplishments:

Much of our attention this year was focused on preparing the Episcopal Residence to receive Bishop Easterling and her family. Thanks to the oversight of Moe Battley and Jan Hayden, the kitchen underwent renovations, floors were replaced and painting throughout the residence was accomplished.

2016 marked the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the death of Frances Asbury, the first Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church. You may not know that he is buried within the bound of our Annual Conference, at Mt. Olivet Cemetery, in Baltimore. In collaboration with the Baltimore-Washington Conference Historical Society, we funded the replacement of the Bishops monuments, as well as other areas of the Bishops Lot.

Once again, we defended the United Methodist Trust clause in several cases, as individuals tried to reclaim properties formerly occupied by United Methodist Congregations. In each case the Conference was successful. We also received the properties of several United Methodist Churches whose leaders voted to close: Kabletown UMC in West Virginia and Centennial Caroline UMC in Baltimore City.

Through our loans and grants, we were able to aid several churches with emergency loans, mostly located in Baltimore City, as well as support new initiatives to aid churches to upgrade their properties to reach new people.

We are pleased, once again, to support the Africa University Development office by providing office space in the Mission Center, as well as providing the necessary repairs and upkeep to the center so that our staff, boards and agencies have a functional place to work and meet.

The Board of Trustees continued this year to provide training at the Regional Leadership Days on the role and responsibilities of local church Trustees, and to support local churches by being available to answer questions and provide guidance on local church trustee matters.

I am grateful to all of the Trustees who faithfully serve, and to the conference office on Finance and Administration. Their cooperation and assistance has been invaluable.

Peace and Joy,

Rev. Dr. Bill Brown, Chair