



January 2021

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

We have arrived to a new year! What the new year will bring us I really don't know, but I am going to start by wishing you a Happy New Year 2021!

Most of the time the members of our local church feel more comfortable sending resources to a missionary they know personally or to missions that they have heard of. Some people like to support mission people who they have heard share stories about their mission work and how their missionary jobs are making a big difference in the lives of the people in a foreign country that they are serving.

I don't know how often you have heard the word "Apportionments", but perhaps you have heard this word many times. Apportionment funds are received by our local church through a combination of rules. One rule has to do with the budget of the local church and the second has to do with the membership we have. I want to write this article about apportionments in the simplest way so that you, the reader, have a clear idea about why we need to freely contribute to the apportionments as set by the Discipline Resources of the United Methodist Church.

The local church receives a list for contribution options from the Wisconsin Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church. This list is divided into the different mission services that we are supporting. The Annual Conference Financial Secretary deposits the money sent to the Conference, while the Treasurer (on behalf of the Conference) distributes those financial resources to the different entities that we (our local church) decided to support.

Without getting technical and complicated I want to share an experience of mine. Several years ago I was part of the Wisconsin Conference Committee that received more than a quarter of a million dollars to distribute. The committee was made up of clergy and laity from the Wisconsin Annual Conference UMC. The committee received applications from churches in need of financial resources because of various reasons. They either were facing financial hardship, the Bishop wanted them to open a new church ministry, or churches needed support and financial means to carry the mission of Christ into new areas where the Methodist church was not present. During the year 2020 we have spent 28% appointment of the Conference budget to either new ministries or churches already established that need financial aids.

Our denomination covers a very vast geographical area of the mission and ministry of the UMC throughout the whole world. Among the different ministries we support as part of the mission of the United Methodist Church are Africa University, Black colleges, and many nations that are facing the destruction of natural disasters like hurricanes, earthquakes, floods and many other natural disasters.

We support missionaries who are preaching the gospel, or helping people in poor, third world nations to learn new skills on how to use their land and resources in a way that they can make progress that improves the way they are living. This is happening in India, Africa, and South and Central America.

A very small portion of what we give goes to administration, but the administrative staff helps us in Wisconsin to carry out the mission of the church, too. I was part of the committee when a large number of congregations in Wisconsin asked for help. I am not going to tell you specific details about one congregation that asked for help because I would need to write many pages. I will just tell you that we were able to help them to keep their doors open and help them with the mission of the local church in the area they were serving.

Another great example of our apportionments at work is that twenty years ago I went to Central America and visited El Salvador. At that time, they had four new Methodist churches. Today they have 19 United Methodist churches in El Salvador! This is so because of the resources we have been sending to El Salvador from the funds we share and send to the General Board of Global Ministry, which comes from our apportionments. Trinity and Peace UMC are each part of the Methodist family and we do not want to stop doing good because, in due time, we will harvest the fruit of righteousness.

Again, wishing you a blessed and Happy New Year 2021!

In Christ,

*Pastor Rey Díaz*