



April 16, 2015

To the lay and clergy members of the Arkansas Conference,

Four years ago at the 2011 Annual Conference a motion was passed directing CFA to examine the current apportionment formula of the Arkansas Conference and to bring back recommendations for a simplified approach more reflective of the conference's four core measures. That simple motion moved us in new and unexpected directions.

For four years we have been diligently working to not only develop a new way of budgeting but also a new way of funding our connectional ministries that is simple to apply, easy to understand, fair to all, and financially sustainable. We call it "The Arkansas Tithe Initiative."

This year, at the 2015 Arkansas Annual Conference, we will be presenting a resolution that, if adopted, will move us from our current expense-based apportionment formula to a radically different model based on a tithe of revenue. Our hope is that through a new approach to apportionments we can help foster a pattern of Christian financial generosity among Arkansas United Methodists that is seen as a clear response to God's marvelous generosity to us.

In the packet accompanying this letter you will find our main report and resolution, along with a number of supporting documents. These will also be available on our conference web site, www.ac2015.arumc.org. In addition, pre-conference meetings will be held in each district to further explain our proposal and to answer questions you might have. The schedule for these meetings will be shared online and in the May issue of the *Arkansas United Methodist* newspaper.

We believe that this is the time to be bold. Now is the time to engage our membership in a new understanding of apportionments that will move us toward a system that is more easily understood, interpreted and embraced in order to strengthen our entire conference.

Much discernment will be needed as we move forward, and we humbly call on all Arkansas United Methodists to join us in prayer as together we seek the guidance of our Almighty God for the Arkansas Conference of the United Methodist Church.

Yours in Christ,

Rev. Jim Polk
President, CFA

Mr. Bill Wisener
Vice-President, CFA