

## 2007 payments for apportionment set record

Support for apportionments in the Southwest Texas Conference reached a new high during 2007.

Congregations paid 96.39 percent of the last year's \$10.1 million asking for ministries across the state, nation and globe, the Office of Finance and Administration reported Jan. 23.

The \$9.74 million total for 2007 was \$416,000 more than Southwest Texas congregations had remitted for apportionments in 2006.

Both the apportionment payment amount and the percentage given were the highest since at least 1987, reported the Rev. David A. Seilheimer, conference treasurer. The 2006 payment of \$9.32 million had been the previous apportionment-support record. The percentage-of-payment record—95.96—had been set in 2002 and 2006.

"I'm personally thrilled at the response of our people to the call of the Lord and particularly pleased that we came as close as we did to fulfilling the apportionments totally," said Rob-

### Congregations paying all apportionments by district

District	Total churches	100%
Austin	64	59 (92%)
Corpus Christi	42	38 (90%)
Kerrville	51	51 (100%)
McAllen	35	32 (91%)
San Angelo	38	38 (100%)
San Antonio	62	46 (74%)
Victoria	51	47 (92%)
<b>CONFERENCE</b>	<b>343</b>	<b>311 (91%)</b>

SOURCE: Office of Finance and Administration

ert W. Woolsey, president of the Council on Finance and Administration. "That's the lifeblood of the connec-tional ministry system. Without such generosity we could not do the minis-tries we do."

Of the 343 Southwest Texas congregations with apportionments last year, 311—or 91 percent—paid their 2007 asking in full. That's the highest total in at least five years.

All 51 congregations in the Kerrville District and all 38 congregations in the San Angelo District paid their 2007 apportionments in full.

At least 14 of the 343 congregations with apportionments sent in more than they were asked to pay: Monthalia UMC (109.75); Bethany UMC, San Antonio (108.33 percent); Oak Meadow UMC, San Antonio (105.24 percent); First UMC, Robstown (104 percent); Skidmore UMC (104 percent); Grace UMC, Corpus Christi (103 percent); Richardson Chapel UMC, Hallettsville (101.05 percent); First UMC, Aransas Pass (101 percent); Bruni UMC (101 percent); Scott's Chapel UMC, Kingsville (101 percent); First UMC, Menard (101 percent); First UMC, Gonzales (100.04 percent); First UMC, Edna (100.02 percent); and Oxford UMC, San Antonio (100.02 percent).

Thirty-one congregations submitted at least part of the 2007 asking. Partial contributions ranged from 4.97 to 83.47 percent.

## Johnson City UM honored for disaster response

More than 200 Kerrville District United Methodists recognized two men and two women Jan. 26 in Boerne for exceptional Christian service.

Twenty-three other individuals—13 women and 10 men—received distinguished discipleship honors at First UMC, Boerne, during the annual laity awards celebration.

George Barnette, First UMC, Johnson City, was presented the 2008 Bishop's Exemplar Award for disaster-response work during 2007 following tornadoes in Eagle Pass and flooding in Granite Shoals and Marble Falls.

Bill Meyers, New Fountain UMC, Hondo; Sherry Snyder, First UMC, Sabinal; and Carol Ann Young, Bertram UMC, received the first District Superintendent's Award for Excellence.

Bishop Joel N. Martinez gives the Exemplar Award annually to lay-people selected by each district board

of laity "for witness, commitment and service after the example of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Barnette was chosen, Martinez said, for his work as a volunteer district disaster-response coordinator. Besides service in Eagle Pass, Granite Shoals and Marble Falls, he worked with the Southwest Texas Conference on disaster response, set up district disaster training events and organized volunteers.

"I just want to say thank you to all who earned this for me," Barnette said after accepting the award. "It's yours, too."

Meyers was recognized for giving more than 65 years of service to United Methodist Men and various congregations. He served as a youth director in New Hampshire and a lay member of annual conference and a trustee in Virginia, said the Rev. Bob Allen, Kerrville District superintendent.

At New Fountain UMC, Meyers serves on the administrative council, has been a seven-year laity representative at the annual conference session and helps run heavy equipment. He supervised all subcontractor work on the church's new building and helped build a 7,500-square-foot multipurpose building in 2007.

Snyder was chosen for her work leading the youth fellowship at her church, teaching youth Sunday school, directing a weeklong mission trip every summer and making the "absolute best jalapeño pimento cheese sandwich in the district," Allen said.

Young was honored for teaching women's Bible studies, volunteering to teach children's Sunday school and filling in as an adult teacher. In June, Allen said, lightning damaged the Bertram church building. Young followed up on every issue that resulted.

## Ads set background for invitation campaign

Southwest Texas radio listeners, TV viewers and motorists should notice lots of United Methodist messages during Lent.

Radio commercials, television spots and billboards are intended to establish a media backdrop for Bring a Friend Sunday activities in Southwest Texas Conference congregations, said Douglas Cannon, communications and public witness director.

The advertising is designed to raise awareness of The United Methodist Church just before Bring a Friend Sunday (March 9), Palm Sunday (March 15) and Easter (March 23), he said.

The Southwest Texas Conference is running daily commercials from Feb. 27 through March 8 on five radio stations in Austin, five radio stations in Corpus Christi, three radio stations in



the Rio Grande Valley and four stations in San Antonio.

These ads—part of a \$300,000 regional campaign during 2008 approved by the 2007 annual conference session—are expected to reach half the radio listeners in each area about five times over two weeks.

These radio messages are to set the stage for Bring a Friend Sunday, Cannon said. That's planned for March 9

or 16 in many congregations.

The General Commission on Communication in Nashville, Tenn., is buying 626 commercials on 10 national cable TV networks between March 10 and 22.

The Southwest Texas Conference is reinforcing the radio and TV messages with billboards in Corpus Christi, the Valley and San Antonio, Cannon said. Those signs are to be up through March.

All ads are part of the denominationwide Igniting Ministry hospitality and image campaign. All messages carry the tagline: "Open hearts, open minds, open doors. The people of The United Methodist Church."

The United Methodist communication agency is helping the Southwest Texas Conference pay for nearly \$101,000 in regional advertising.

## 4 groups receive grants for ads

Three Southwest Texas Conference congregations and the Communications and Public Witness Office have received \$68,240 in matching grants for advertising during Lent.

The General Commission on Communication in Nashville, Tenn., announced the dollar-for-dollar awards Dec. 20. The money comes from the denominationwide Igniting Ministry hospitality and image campaign.

Korean UMC, Austin, received \$3,435 to help pay for \$6,870 in Igniting Ministry newspaper advertising during Lent. The ads will include the phrase: "Open hearts, open minds, open doors. The people of The United Methodist Church."

First UMC, Edinburg, got \$12,805 to help pay for a \$25,611 light-emitting-diode sign.

Coker UMC, San Antonio, was awarded \$1,540 to help pay for \$3,080 in cinema advertising during March.

The Communications and Public Witness Office received \$50,459 to help pay for \$100,919 in Igniting Ministry radio commercials and billboard ads

across the region during Lent.

The radio ads from "The people of The United Methodist Church" are to run on stations in Austin, Corpus Christi, San Antonio and the Rio Grande Valley during the two weeks before Bring a Friend Sunday (March 9).

Billboards are to go up along roads in Corpus Christi, McAllen and San Antonio during March.

The Southwest Texas advertising is being done in coordination with a national Igniting Ministry cable TV campaign. The United Methodist communication agency has purchased time in March for commercials on 10 cable networks.

The Rev. Larry Hollon, chief executive of the communication agency, said partnering with conferences and local congregations who want to advertise during the national campaign creates greater visibility and increased reach for United Methodist messages.

The communication agency has awarded about \$1 million annually to conferences and congregations to assist with local Igniting Ministry advertising.

## Churches urged to make pledges

Bishop Joel N. Martinez urged Kerrville District congregations Jan. 26 to pledge gifts to the Southwest Texas Conference's capital campaign for starting new churches.

Conference leaders have already made their pledges, Martinez said in Boerne.

Now congregations are being asked to do their part, Martinez said. Congregations are encouraged to pledge an amount over the next three to five years for new church development.

The campaign, called "Offering Christ today for tomorrow," is more than halfway to its \$5 million goal, he added.

The capital campaign for starting new churches is "very serious," he said. It will take a "serious response" from pastors, church members and leaders to reach the \$5 million goal.