

**MEMPHIS ANNUAL CONFERENCE  
RETIREMENT RECOGNITION SERVICE  
Monday, June 4, 2018  
11:05 a.m.**

PRELUDE

GREETING<sup>1</sup> Blessed be God, who has been our dwelling place in all generations.

Friends, we come now to rejoice with those who have journeyed long with God and have now reached the “Promised Land” of retirement. May it be a good and pleasant land, flowing with the milk and honey of God’s unending grace and blessing.

+HYMN OF PRAISE                   “Praise to the Lord, the Almighty”   vss. 1-3                   *UMH 139*

+PRAYER FOR THE CHURCH   *The United Methodist Book of Worship 504*

O God of all times and places,  
we pray for your Church,  
which is set today amid the perplexities of a changing order,  
and face to face with new tasks.  
Baptize her afresh in the life-giving spirit of Jesus.  
Bestow upon her a great responsiveness to duty,  
a swifter compassion with suffering,  
and an utter loyalty to your will.  
Help her to proclaim boldly the coming of your kingdom.  
Put upon her lips the ancient gospel of her Lord.  
Fill her with the prophets’ scorn of tyranny,  
and with a Christlike tenderness for the heavyladen and downtrodden.  
Bid her cease from seeking her own life, lest she lose it.  
Make her valiant to give up her life to humanity,  
that, like her crucified Lord,  
she may mount by the path of the cross to a higher glory;  
through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

SCRIPTURE READING                   2 Kings 2:1-15                   *The spirit of Elijah rests on Elisha*

RECOGNITION OF THE RETIREES<sup>2</sup>

James Appleton	Stephen Shapard
Marita Burkeen	Susan Sharpe
Eugene Burkeen	Randy Stacy
John Holcomb	Jimmy Stahler
Stan McDaniel	Mary Stone

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<sup>1</sup> Psalm 90:1 and Amy Martin, 2018

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/resources/a-retirement-recognition-service>

Bishop:

Brothers and sisters in Christ, you came to us from congregations  
where the Spirit of the Lord was upon you;  
and you were charged to preach to the brokenhearted,  
to visit the captive, to anoint those who were bruised,  
to look beyond the walls of the church to see all the people.  
These things you have done.

People:

**We thank God for the community of the faithful  
in which the Word of God found response.  
Countless persons have depended upon you for help.  
In the providence of God, you know  
that both suffering and joy can be God's way of teaching and healing.**

Bishop:

At your ordination or licensing,  
you received authority to read the Holy Scriptures  
in the Church of God,  
to preach the Word, to celebrate the Sacraments,  
to order the life of the Church,  
and to lead the Church in its service to the world.

By God's grace you did many things  
that seemed to be beyond your power.

People:

**We thank God that you were given the vision to be faithful.  
Death and illness have not come on schedule.  
The truth has not always been easy to preach.  
We know something of the grace by which you have lived,  
and we thank God for your vision.**

Bishop:

Never think lightly of the great good  
that God has wrought through you.  
Continue to be true to your calling.  
May God's love and power be with you always.  
Let us pray together.

People:

**God of grace, you fill your servants with your vision.  
You empower your servants with your Spirit.  
We give thanks for the ministry of these women and men,  
and for the ways in which you have ministered to us through them.  
Give them a sense of your abiding presence,  
that they may continue to love and serve you,  
and ever grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ,  
in whose name we pray. Amen.**

RESPONSES FROM THE RETIRING CLASS

*Members of the retiring class may speak briefly to the conference.*

SONG OF THANKSGIVING      “Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow”      UMH 94

PASSING OF THE MANTLE

*A representative of the retiring class (Susan Sharpe) and a representative of the new full member class (Travis Penney) kneel. The bishop takes the mantle and places it on the shoulders of the representative of the retiring class, saying:*

In the book of Kings we read of the prophet Elijah's ministry.  
The mantle, symbolic of submission to God,  
fell upon the younger prophet, Elisha,  
and the spirit of Elijah rested upon Elisha.

*The representative of the retiring class rises and places the mantle on the shoulders of the representative of the new full member class, saying:*

I transfer this mantle from our generation to the next,  
indicating thereby  
that the responsibilities and dedication of the older generation  
will be caught up and carried on by the young,  
and the spirit of today's Elijahs will rest upon today's Elishas.

*The representative of the new class, rises, turns to the retiring class, and says:*

We who come after you take up the mantle which falls upon us.  
May we inherit a double share of your spirit.

Bishop:

I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord,  
beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called,  
with all humility and gentleness, with patience,  
bearing with one another in love,  
making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit  
in the bond of peace.

There is one body and one Spirit,  
just as you were called to the one hope of your calling,  
one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of us all,  
who is above all and through all and in all.

+HYMN                      “Praise to the Lord, the Almighty”      vss. 4-5                      *UMH 139*

+DISMISSAL WITH BLESSING

Bishop:

For everything there is a season,  
a time for every matter under heaven.  
So, too, there is a time for movement, new adventure,  
fields of service not yet touched.  
With love, we send you forth in the spirit of John Wesley:  
May the world be your parish.

People:

**Go into the world and respond to the love of Christ in all you do.  
Live out the vision God has given you.  
May God's mercy, grace, and peace be with you.  
May you be channels for God's mercy, grace, and peace to the world  
wherever you may be!**

+SUNG RESPONSE                      “Amen, Amen” (chorus only)                      *The Faith We Sing 2072*

+ORGAN POSTLUDE

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Leading in Worship

Bishop William T. McAlilly  
Rev. Scott Alford, Chair, Memphis Conference Board of Pensions  
Rev. Amy Martin, Song Leader  
Dr. Todd E. Hill, Organist and Pianist