

REPORT TO JURISDICTIONAL COMMISSION May 11, 2021.
Baltimore-Washington Conference

A Year of UPS and DOWNS . . .

Of course, COVID-19 brought ALL to a halt

BUT . . .

HIGHS:

The Baltimore-Washington Trustees made a substantial CAPITAL investment of funds at the Lovely Lane Museum--

- (1) Great improvement to the display and research area (Known as the Rev. Edwin Schell Room);
- (2) Upgrade of the Director-Archivist's office space;
- (3) Creation of a shop for sales;
- (4) Most significantly--Installation of a 24/7--365 day a year climate control and ventilation system throughout the Museum, which is up and running.

Unfortunately, this work was nearing completion when the Pandemic hit. When, and in whatever form, the Pandemic is over, The Baltimore-Washington Conference will have one of the finest display and research facilities in the Nation and, indeed, the world.

LOWS:

After much struggle and anxiety, Robert Shiundle, our Conference Staff Person, Archivist, and Museum Director, decided he must resign his position. He had major family health care challenges. In order to care for these ill members of his family, he ceased to be in our employ as of October 31, 2020. For those who have worked along-side Rob, you can appreciate the crisis this has created. The longer he is gone, the more we miss him. We pray God to empower him to perform this labor of love which lies before him.

HIGHS:

The Baltimore-Washington Conference is committed to the replacement of and identifying of a new Director-Archivist as a conference-funded staff position. A search committee has been working. We eagerly and excitedly await the results.

CHALLENGES:

Meanwhile, the continued attrition of congregations in the Baltimore-Washington Conference (not from withdrawal, but simple discontinuance) presents a great archival challenge--as the large number of boxes of records stacked in the Museum attests. The other great challenge is to organize an effective "Pilgrimage" program at the many historical sites scattered throughout our Conference boundaries. Our Conference has within its current boundaries 4 Heritage Landmarks, recognized by General Conference:

- The Strawbridge Shrine
- Lovely Lane Meeting House Site
- Old Otterbein Church
- The United Methodist Building, on Capitol Hill in DC and site of much recent history!

HIGH:

We shall emerge from this period of transition in which we now find ourselves better and stronger to pursue our goals for a comprehensive historical program in the Baltimore-Washington Conference which will embrace the full diversity of our Conference. The Baltimore-Washington Conference will have much cause for celebration and for repentance as we seek to become genuinely anti-racist but at the same time recognize that we have been deeply implicated in a slave-holding culture and racist political system over the years.

To take up this task with renewed vigor will be a wonderful time to be alive!

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