

# *four areas*

## OF FOCUS



Open hearts. Open minds. Open doors.

**The people of The United Methodist Church®**

*Enclosed are examples of ministries funded through World Service dollars to the general church, enabling us to work in partnership and benefit from specific strengths and areas of expertise.*





*“Do you love me more  
than these?”*

*-John 21:15b, NRSV*

# 1234

**4 AREAS OF FOCUS +  
NEARLY 14 MILLION MEMBERS =  
1 TRANSFORMED WORLD FOR JESUS CHRIST**

### *The Creation of the Four Areas of Focus*

Throughout our connection a movement has been set in motion to reinvigorate The United Methodist Church. It started as a conversation, led by the Council of Bishops, and spread to the Table of General Secretaries, the Connectional Table, annual conferences and local congregations. It has become a movement to sharpen our mission and direct all critical aspects of our ministry together as a church rooted in the Wesleyan tradition.

The movement has led to the creation of four “areas of focus.”

The Council of Bishops, the Connectional Table, the Table of General Secretaries and the general agencies are calling for the church to apply churchwide resources to bring these areas of focus to life in a wide range of ministries—not just for the next four years and beyond, but for the sake of the Gospel.

Countless ministries related to the four areas of focus take place every day in the local church and the annual conference and through such channels as Volunteers in Mission, the Youth Service Fund, loans and scholarships, UMCOR, the Upper Room, The United Methodist Publishing House, and the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits. This document provides more than 50 examples of the mission and ministry funded through the proposed general church budget.

These four areas of focus areas provide unprecedented opportunities for us to work in partnership and to benefit from our individual strengths and areas of expertise. Indeed, this transformation will go beyond the next four years!



“Feed my lambs.”

—John 21:15c, NRSV



# DEVELOPING PRINCIPLED CHRISTIAN LEADERS FOR THE CHURCH AND THE WORLD

*World Service Request: \$96,396,111*

*The denomination in the United States faces a crisis in clergy and lay leadership. Our leadership must expand and grow with the demands and expectations of the world. The church must recruit young people for ministry and provide them with the skills necessary to be effective in this new time of opportunity. That includes women and people of color the world over. Similarly, we must offer leadership training for lay people who are in ministry in countless ways.*

By 2012, we will . . .

- Establish distance-education centers, fully functioning in Africa, Europe, Asia, Latin America and the United States, to educate and train ordained clergy and lay leaders.
- Support the communications needs of church leaders by providing leadership information through [www.umc.org](http://www.umc.org).
- Engage United Methodist colleges, universities and seminaries as key partners in educating leaders around the world.
- Provide at least 100,000 lay and clergy leaders with the communications skills to encourage connectional giving in the 21st century.
- Train 20 percent more youth and young adult leaders each year of the quadrennium to help transform the world.
- Provide short-term mission experiences for 100 young people, giving the opportunity to reflect on a possible call to professional Christian service.
- Train at least 100 men's ministry specialists.
- Train 9,500 persons in theology, church administration, evangelism, discipleship formation and mission outreach in Africa and Asia.
- Provide first-level theological training for pastors in Laos, Cambodia, Nepal and Thailand through Bible schools.
- Publish leadership journals six times a year with a circulation exceeding 300,000 in English, Korean and Spanish.
- Connect Methodist institutions of higher education through technology to deliver teaching and training around the world.
- Increase by one-fourth the number of candidates for ordained ministry who are younger than age 35.
- Provide scholarships and leadership-development grants for 1,000 international students to complete degree and non-degree programs relating to the four areas of focus.
- Build a network of 100 prophetic pastors and lay members around the world and provide them with opportunities to experience social justice firsthand.
- Increase by 20 percent the number of women senior pastors serving large-membership churches in The United Methodist Church.
- Increase by 20 percent the number of United Methodists approved or endorsed in extension ministries.
- Bring 200 new laywomen and clergywomen younger than age 35 into annual conference and general church leadership positions.
- Develop distance-education digital communications systems in the African Central Conferences, using satellite and radio technology to create dynamic places of worship.
- Provide internships to 40 racial/ethnic young adults in The United Methodist Church.
- Increase by 20 percent the number of ordained deacons in full connection, engaging the church in ministry with the marginalized.
- Train 500 lay and clergy teams across the church on the foundational understanding of Christian discipleship, worship, stewardship and evangelism in order to develop a congregational plan for making disciples of Jesus Christ (Discipleship University).
- Provide communications training to 40,000 leaders (adults and youth).
- Introduce teen-welcoming resources to 10,000 teens and leaders.

*“Tend my sheep.”*

*—John 21:16b, NRSV*



## NEW PLACES FOR NEW PEOPLE AND RENEWING EXISTING CONGREGATIONS

*World Service Request: \$66,732,527*

# 2

*The United States alone has more than 180 million unchurched people, making it the third-largest mission field in the English-speaking world and the fifth-largest globally. The Path 1 Team, composed of many partners across the church, is focused on re-evangelizing the United States by creating a national strategy to train and equip church planters to start new congregations. In addition, existing congregations that are ready to be renewed into vital, vibrant churches will be energized with a passion for living out the Good News.*

By 2012, we will . . .

- Recruit, train and provide resources for 1,000 new church planters to start 650 churches in partnership with annual conferences in the United States, targeting 50 percent of those churches to be racial/ethnic congregations.
- Develop 400 new churches and faith communities in Africa, Asia, Latin America and Europe.
- Increase attendance of core congregations by 25 percent at public launch.
- Train bishops and district superintendents in implementing tools to help decide where to locate new congregations.
- Ensure new church planters and new congregations succeed by training and equipping lay and clergy leaders with an exceptional online library of best-practice resources on how to plant and grow vital congregations.
- Assist in the development of 10 new intentional multicultural churches.
- Assist in the revitalization of 22 town-and-country and urban churches.
- Provide more than 10,000 congregations with vital evangelism, stewardship and worship resources for congregations engaged in revitalization efforts.
- Create a sustainable system of resource-sharing and staff deployment in Central Conferences that provides access to indigenous basic Christian-formation resources.
- Supply needed training, tools and resources to equip lay and clergy leaders in annual conferences that prepare them to shape their churches into vital faith communities (quadrennial training).
- Revitalize congregations by training 100 participants online in connectional giving.
- Publish six new collections of global music and worship resources.
- Reach 95 million people through a media-awareness campaign (adult seekers, ages 18-54).
- Increase awareness for 35,000 United Methodist churches in the United States through regional advertising.
- Increase overall attendance by 10 percent in congregations using matching grants for local and regional advertising.
- Increase first-time attendance by 5 percent in tracking congregations.
- Provide 40 new churches with training, advertising resources and media grants for public launch.



“Feed my sheep.”

—John 21:17b, NRSV



Photo by Paul Jeffrey/ACT

FOR



## ENGAGING IN MINISTRY WITH THE POOR

*World Service Request: \$54,457,252*

# 3

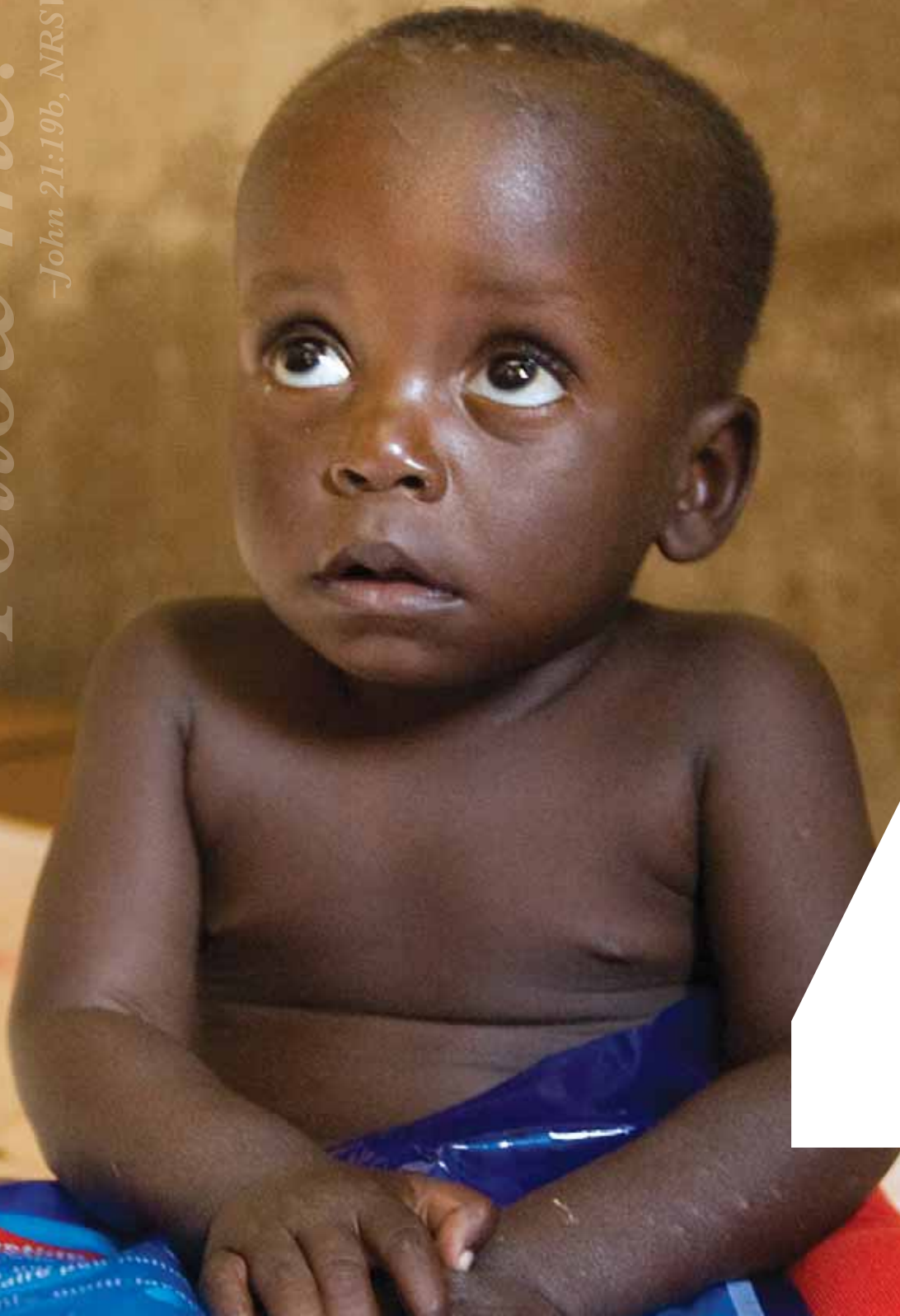
*Ministry with the poor will mobilize United Methodists to reduce poverty and embrace the poor as valued members of the family of faith. Strategies include Bible study and prayer, confrontation with poverty's root causes, health care, housing, employment, micro-loans, services to economic migrants and public policy advocacy on a global scale. Projects will explore the effectiveness of a range of ministry forms.*

By 2012, we will . . .

- Promote awareness of poverty and advocacy for poverty change, support adequate funding of anti-poverty initiatives at all levels of government, and engage local congregations as advocates for justice and economic development to end poverty.
- Develop five pilot projects and numerous ancillary projects to provide appropriate and significant responses to poverty in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the United States.
- Establish a communications network with satellite centers in Africa, Asia and Europe to support ministry with the poor and develop multimedia strategies and communications to reach 95 million people with a message about poverty and how The United Methodist Church is responding.
- Increase by 25 percent service to the poor by the 102 existing mission institutions in the United States.
- Equip United Methodists to understand the connection between greed, over-consumption and poverty and to take personal, congregational and communitywide actions to share more equitably in God's abundance.
- Train and place with strategic mission partners 50 emerging indigenous leaders with the capacity to respond to critical issues of importance to women, children and youth.
- Equip the order of permanent deacon to address the causes and effects of poverty.
- Train a generation of graduates from United Methodist colleges and theological schools to address issues of poverty.
- Provide immersion experiences for students to experience global poverty.
- Promote human dignity, compassion and hospitality through civil and human rights advocacy.
- Sponsor listening sessions with women living in poverty (or working in ministries addressing poverty), providing recommendations to The United Methodist Church on how to engage in authentic, effective ministries with women in poverty.
- Provide young people globally with educational resources for sustainable living.
- Partner with the World Council of Churches and other ecumenical bodies to eradicate poverty.
- Train one advocate for the poor in every annual conference.
- Provide micro-loans to four businesses initiated by young people in the Central Conferences to enable the creation of resources for a sustainable existence.
- Develop a minimum of 52 news stories per year to promote awareness of and advocacy for ministry with the poor.

“Follow me!”

—John 21:19b, NRSV





## STAMPING OUT KILLER DISEASES OF POVERTY BY IMPROVING HEALTH GLOBALLY

*World Service Request: \$39,425,768*

4

*The United Methodist Church has played a significant role in educating others about diseases such as HIV/AIDS and malaria, and treating and preventing their devastating effects. Already 700,000 bed nets have been distributed to families in Africa, and the denomination is poised to launch a new global health initiative aimed at creating better health conditions for people around the world. This area of focus will mobilize United Methodists to action, strengthen health-care infrastructure, and advocate for health policies and global approaches that promote health for all*

By 2012, we will . . .

- Deploy 53 new missionaries for global health, along with other medical missionaries, to Africa, Asia and Latin America.
- Educate the people of The United Methodist Church on global health issues through mailings, presentations and conference meetings.
- Enlist global health advocates to monitor legislation and to identify fund-raising sources to address the importance of faith community and global health alliances to policy- and decision-making bodies.
- Be a recognized leader in global health issues.
- Establish three self-sustaining community radio stations to address ongoing social, spiritual and health issues.
- Build strong communications and technological capacity for distance learning in Africa and the Philippines.
- Develop opportunities for 60 percent of the annual conferences to become involved with advocacy for health issues that affect all lives, such as access to health care, disease and infant mortality.
- Enlist health champions and parish nurses in each annual conference to advocate for the denomination's efforts to improve global health.
- Expand by 20 percent the Faith Partners program of the Special Program on Substance Abuse and Related Violence to address these issues.
- Rebuild the existing infrastructure of the United Methodist health-care system in Africa.

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By 2015, we will . . .

- Work with international partners to reduce by 66 percent mortality of children younger than age 5 from malaria.

## WHAT HAPPENS WHEN NEARLY 14 MILLION UNITED METHODISTS FOCUS ON AN IDEA?

*In a single quadrennium, The United Methodist Church plants congregations, trains leaders, inspires young adults, recruits missionaries, nurtures disciples, encourages giving, communicates in new ways, addresses poverty and saves lives. The following bullet points highlight what's inside this booklet.*

Inside, you will find more than 50 examples of World Service dollars at work for the transformation of the world in each area of focus. Here are 12:

By 2012, we will . . .

- Train, equip and deploy 1,000 church planters to start 650 churches in the United States (including 50 percent racial/ethnic congregations).
- Develop 400 new churches and faith communities in Africa, Asia, Latin America and Europe.
- Train 9,500 persons in theology, church administration, evangelism, discipleship formation and mission outreach in Africa and Asia.
- Increase by 25 percent service to the poor by the 102 existing mission institutions in the United States.
- Provide at least 100,000 lay and clergy leaders with the communications skills to encourage connectional giving in the 21st century.
- Launch a new discipleship university that provides more than 10,000 congregations with worship, stewardship and evangelism resources and trains more than 500 lay and clergy congregational teams to develop a plan for making disciples of Jesus Christ.
- Train 20 percent more youth and young adult leaders each year who will help transform the world.
- Work with international partners to reduce by 66 percent mortality of children younger than age 5 from malaria .
- Bring 200 new laywomen and clergywomen younger than age 35 into annual conference and general church leadership positions.
- Deploy 53 new missionaries for global health, along with other medical missionaries, to Africa, Asia and Latin America.
- Establish three self-sustaining community radio stations to address ongoing social, spiritual and health issues.
- Create a sustainable system of resource sharing and staff deployment in Central Conferences that provides access to indigenous basic Christian formation resources.