

**President's Report**  
**Louisiana Interchurch Conference**  
**September 24-25, 2018**

The time since our last Annual Assembly, when we gathered in Baton Rouge March 5-6, 2018 has been filled with ongoing touch points of advocacy as we continue to extend the hand of Christ in our communities across Louisiana.

Many parts of our state are still recovering from the 2016 floods and the added damage caused by Hurricane Harvey. Shootings, human trafficking, hunger, child poverty, mass incarceration, racism and HIV-AIDS continue to plague our communities adding to the complexities facing our nation and the world. Migration and the unification of families weighs heavy on our hearts. The strain for peace on the Korean Peninsula, the stories of abuse in our churches and the harm done to the women and men who are part of the #MeToo movement are burdensome. There has never been a better time for the church to be the church. The ministry of the LIC continues to serve as a witness in our very fractured world.

As we reported at the March meeting a group met with the governor in February in support of the Justice Reinvestment Act of 2017. The meeting was fruitful and has provided the groundwork for continued efforts for reform in subsequent legislative sessions including support for ending the death penalty.

This important advocacy work requires the unification and amplification of our voices. My hope is that we might embrace this work and learn and grow to be even greater advocates for a more just society. I am delighted that Rob Tasman is with us and has agreed to help lead us as we take our place of leadership at this critical time.

The Bread or Stones campaign is gaining support from congregations as we work to make a difference in the lives of children and their families. According to 2016 data, there are over 300,000 children in our state living in poverty. THIS. MUST. CHANGE. That change begins with each of us and the congregations we represent. In a state where food is what we are

known for – there should be no reason a child ever goes to bed hungry. I was pleased that at our Louisiana Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church this year there was major support for Bread or Stones and one of our offerings went to this important part of our life and work.

I would be remiss if I did not take a moment to celebrate the work that Father Dan Krutz is doing across the state. He is everywhere and representing us well. Together along with Bishop Rinehart and others we celebrated the installation of Bishop Duca as the new bishop in Baton Rouge. In my role as the President-designate of the United Methodist Council of Bishops I had the privilege of participating in several ecumenical conversations and events that I hope will produce fruit for us as I serve you. I attended the World Methodist Council in Seoul, Korea in July as we gathered with our Methodist related family – the Nazarenes, CME's, AME's, Uniting Church of Australia, Canada, Italy, British Methodists and others. In August I had the privilege of attending the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration of the Concordat between the British Methodists and the United Methodists held in London at the historic Central Methodist just steps from Westminster Abbey and the British Parliament buildings. The United Methodist Church continues its dialogue toward full communion with the Episcopal Church and of course celebrates its ongoing communion with the Presbyterians and Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

We have much to celebrate yet there is much work for us to do and I pray that together we will be difference-makers and life-changers in Louisiana and around the world.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Cynthia Fierro Harvey  
Resident Bishop of the United Methodist Church  
Louisiana Annual Conference