



**Evangelisch-methodistische
Kirche in Deutschland**

**United Methodist Church in
Germany**

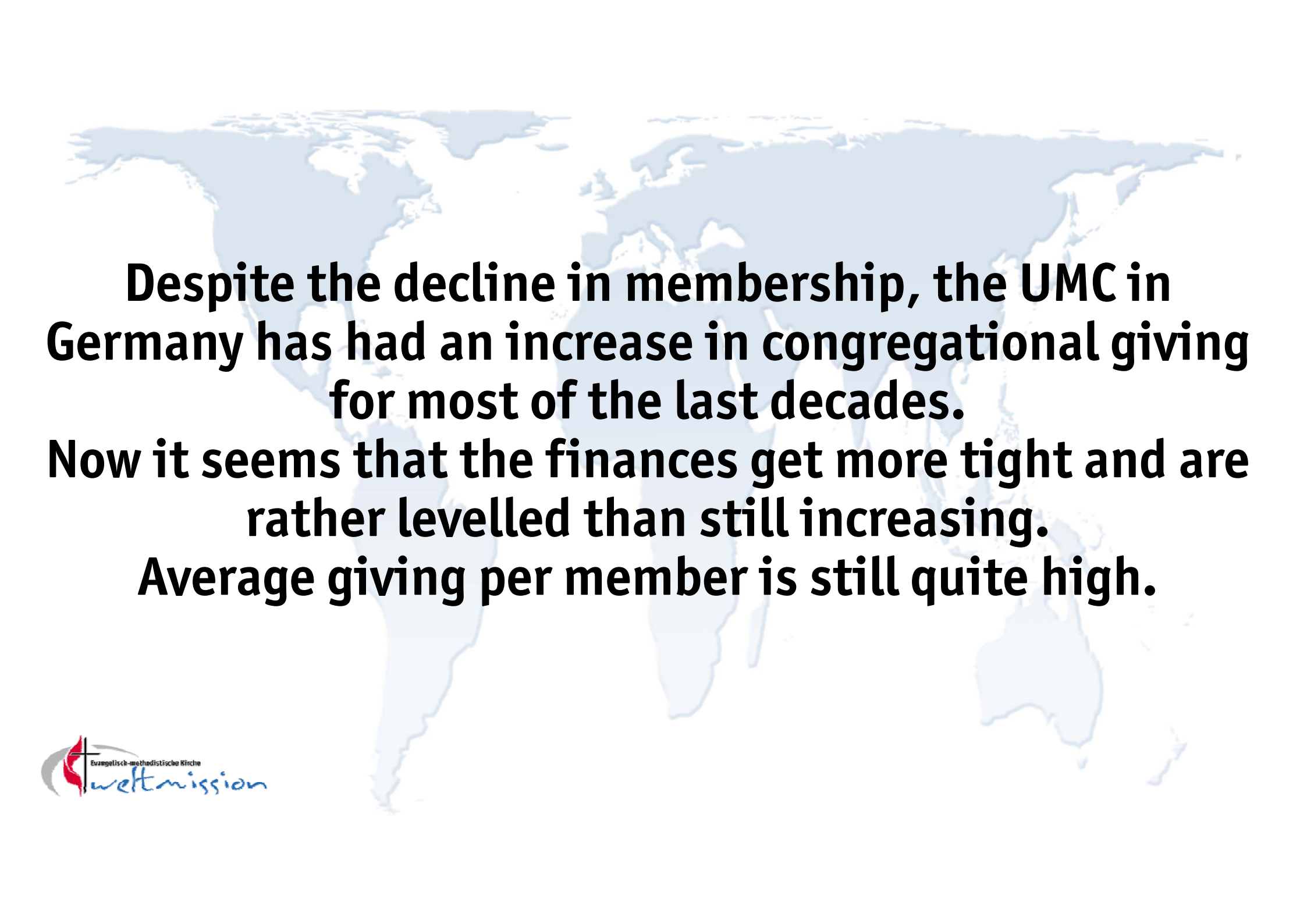


**Organised in three conferences (North, East and South),
one Central Conference, one Bishop
~240 Circuits, ~480 congregations, ~320 Pastors,
~33.000 confessing members,
~60.000 including baptised members and friends**



In the last 40+ years the UMC in Germany had a constant decline in membership of around 1% per year.

Over the years most circuits have started social activities and tried to reach out better to the local community



Despite the decline in membership, the UMC in Germany has had an increase in congregational giving for most of the last decades.

Now it seems that the finances get more tight and are rather levelled than still increasing.

Average giving per member is still quite high.

The UMC in Germany also has a multitude of diaconal institutions (hospitals, old peoples homes, nurseries, drug rehabilitation centres,)

Work with children and youth is supported by offices in all three conferences, many regional and national activities are organised.

The UMC also has an education department, Women and Men fellowships, departments for evangelism, diaconal and social activities, world mission ...

The UMC is engaged in ecumenical work and has close contact to many other churches in Germany.



The UMC in Germany also runs Reutlingen theological school (together with Switzerland and Austria), a seminary based in the South-West of Germany. It got the status of a government acknowledges higher education institution (just under a university). About 50 students are accredited there.




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Work with children and youth is supported by offices in all three conferences, many regional and national activities are organised.

The UMC also has an education department, Women and Men fellowships, plus several other departments.

EmK Weltmission (UMC World Mission department) was established 1968 to help the whole church to be in mission and in partnership with brothers and sisters worldwide.

Our general idea: The church is in mission (supported by the Weltmissions office), but has not established the office to do mission for the church!



EmK Weltmission has 4 staff in Wuppertal, 3 German missionary couples, 2 Nationals in Mission, one 3-way partnership (with Brazil and Mozambique), several (~7) young volunteers on a year program and also sends experienced experts for short term trips.

EmK Weltmission works together with 12 partner churches or institutions.





EmK Weltmission gives grants to over 50 projects of its partners per year, ranging between less than 1.000 Euro to more than 50.000 Euro.

Our overall income is around 1,4 Million Euro, in the last couple of years we have spend more than that and reduced our reserves.

The background to this consultation:

- partnership is a ongoing discussion point in our board meetings**
- other German mission agencies have more inclusive models of working with their partners**
- the British Methodist Church had an “All-Partner Conference” in 2010 that inspired us**
- the Bishops Council meeting provided the right time to look together into the future**

*The issues / questions / discussion points
from our side are:*

1) Partnership in general

- we are partners because God has brought us together. Where is this reflected?
- we proclaim partnership on equal terms (or at eye level), but we all have great differences in finances (dependency issues), structures, cultures etc.
Is eye level really possible?

1) Partnership in general

- do we need a balance between giving and receiving?
- learning from and sharing/meeting with each other should work in both directions, but is still a bit one sided
- what are the definitions and images of partnership that guide us?
 - is partnership just a word to cover up a donor – recipient relationship?

2) Decision making

- there are great financials needs and limitations too.
how can we together and openly decide about finances/grants/distribution...?
- who determines or influences the priorities and the criteria to find/determine them?
- do we have an open and trustful communication culture to help us in decision making?

3) Capacity building

- training of key future leaders. How can we achieve it and make sure, those persons serve the church?
- project management, reporting etc. how important is this and who is training staff to cope with it?
- transparency and fighting corruption are important issues. Who sets the rules/goals, who helps the people involved to come to terms with these issues?

4) Other issues

- **self sustainability**
- **our goals: the kingdom of God or just keeping the church/project alive?**
- **how reliable are we as partners?**
- **growing churches / shrinking churches – with different needs and capacities. How does this effect future partnership?**
- **personal exchange in both directions: Still necessary?**

4) Other issues

- respect in both directions towards the partner
- humility of the “donor-side” not to determine everything through its economic power
- clear focus/goals on all sides, commonly agreed regarding the partnership