

Letter to Pastors Regarding the Ezra Year-end Statistical Report

Dear Friends:

The time has come to file the Local Church Report to the Annual Conference. Since 2008, the Alabama-West Florida Local Church Report to the Annual Conference has been submitted electronically. NO PAPER COPIES of the report or instructions will be mailed; we will continue to follow that policy for the current report.

We use the General Council on Finance and Administration (GCFA) Statistical System for reporting. The format of the report has not changed. The left hand column of the form lists the information you reported last January. This is for comparison only. You will not be able to change any of that column's figures. Additionally, you will not be able to change line 1 of this year's report. If you have questions, contact your District Office or Frank Dunnewind at 888-873-3127.

Simple Directions for the Church Level User

Accessing Your Report:

1. You may access your report in two ways:
 - a. This link will log you directly to the log-in page of the UMC GCFA Statistical Input System: www.ezra.gcfa.org.
 - b. There is also a link on the Alabama-West Florida Conference web site that will take you to the log-in page of the UMC GCFA Statistical Input System. Go to www.awfumc.org. There is a link box titled "Local Church Report" on the right hand side of the page in the "Quick Links" section.
2. **Log in** with your user name and password - the same one you used to access the Local Church Report in Ezra last year, NOT the Church Dashboard username and password.

Entering Statistical Data:

3. Before you start entering your statistical information, you may want to print a **Blank Copy** of the tables so you can fill in all the blanks and verify that the information is correct. To do this, go to the "**Reports**" option from the main menu and click on "**Blank Church Input Form.**" When this page loads, select the tables that you want to print and then click on "Run Report." An Adobe Acrobat page will load and your report will be shown. Print that form and you have a blank copy. Close that window and click on "Home" to return to the Main Menu.
4. You should note that while AUTO SUM function is available, it is still important to check your work. However, during the "save" process, the system will perform validations that the conference has set up. For example: the total male members the total female members must equal the total professing members at close of this year
5. Please double check WARNINGS. Be sure the AMOUNT and what makes up that amount is CORRECT - NOT JUST THAT THERE WAS AN INCREASE OR DECREASE. Do not GUESS or SUPPOSE what makes up that number. All of the significant increases in apportionments because of errors had warnings that were not checked carefully!!!

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6. When you are done with entering the information for any table, click on the **“Save”** button at the top or at the bottom and an attempt to save this information will be made. You can save your information at any time and come back later to finish.
7. **CAUTION: IF YOU LEAVE THE PAGE BEFORE YOU CLICK “SAVE”, YOUR CHANGES WILL NOT BE SAVED! YOU WILL SEE A PURPLE OUTLINE ON LINES THAT IMPACT YOUR APPORTIONMENTS**

Submitting Your Information:

8. Continue the “save” process for all three tables until you get no error or warning messages. Once you are finished entering all of your data, go to the “Main Menu” and click on **“Submit Stats Process.”** This will take you to the page that allows you to submit your information to the conference. Read this page carefully. Once you have submitted your information, you will be locked out of any editing in your tables. If a mistake is made, we can “un-submit” for you if need to make corrections.

More Information:

- Instructions for each question on Table I, Table II and Table 3 are available by moving your cursor to the question number. You may also print instructions for Table I and Table II from the church page. Finally, you can download and print all the instructions from the report page.
- Please be sure to report the membership statistics on line 9a through 9i. Also, line 9j and 9k require a breakout of membership statistics by gender. These lines will auto total and must match the total in line 9.
- Do not include apportionments or funds sent to the Conference Treasurer anywhere on the report. Those figures are already available and will be recorded from receipts by the Treasurer. However, you will need to enter direct bill information on Lines 46 and 47, since it was sent to Benefit Development Group for processing and not the Conference Treasurer.
- Report money in whole dollars. Do not report cents.
- When there is nothing to report for a line item, enter "0."
- Print a copy for your records.
- **DOUBLE CHECK YOUR ENTRIES**
- Lines 48 through 57 record your financial strengths for determining next year’s Missional Giving amounts.

The reporting system will be turned on January 3. Reports should be completed and submitted by **January 31**.

I appreciate your cooperation. If you have any questions, please call me at 1-888-873-3127. I will be happy to assist you.

Sincerely
Frank S. Dunnewind